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**AJR**

**Winston House, 2 Dollis Park**

**London N3 1HF**

**[ajrrefugeevoices@ajr.org.uk](mailto:ajrrefugeevoices@ajr.org.uk)**

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**Interview Transcript Title Page**

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| <b>Forename:</b>            | Gerald           |
| <b>Interviewee Sex:</b>     | Male             |
| <b>Interviewee DOB:</b>     | 18 November 1928 |
| <b>Interviewee POB:</b>     | Berlin, Germany  |

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| <b>Location of Interview:</b>  | Liverpool         |
| <b>Name of Interviewer:</b>    | Rosalyn Livshin   |
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**REFUGEE VOICES:  
THE AJR AUDIO-VISUAL TESTIMONY ARCHIVE**

**INTERVIEW: 26**

**NAME: GERALD JAYSON**

**DATE: THURSDAY 10 JULY 2003**

**LOCATION: LIVERPOOL, ENGLAND**

**INTERVIEWER: ROSALYN LIVSHIN**

**TAPE 1**

RL: I am conducting an interview with Gerald Jayson, the interview is being conducted on Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> July 2003 and we are doing it in Liverpool, and I am interviewing, my name is Rosalyn Livshin.

This is tape 1 with Gerald Jayson.

So if you tell me first your name.

GJ: My name is Gerald Gert Jayson, I kept the Gert, from the past.

**Tape 1: 1 minute 15 seconds**

RL: What was your name at birth?

GJ: Gert Jacobowitz.

RL: When did you change your name?

GJ: Two weeks before our wedding, so it must have been two weeks before the 3<sup>rd</sup> May 1953.

RL: And how did you pick the name that you changed your name to?

GJ: We picked it out of a telephone directory. Well not exactly, but there were so many Jacksons in the telephone directory that we decided on Jayson, despite the fact that the solicitor said, "I am afraid that still sounds Jewish."  
And I said, "I don't mind."

RL: Why did you change the name?

GJ: Because my wife said it was too long a handle to give to our children, in those days, as indeed now for that matter, there was still a tinge of anti-Semitism attached to jobs, getting a job, so that is why I changed the name. Of course my children said they would want to change it back again, but they didn't.

RL: Do you have a Hebrew name?

GJ: Well I suppose I did, I have always said Yaakov Ben Ze'ev.

RL: When were you born?

GJ: On 18<sup>th</sup> November 1928.

RL: What does that make you now?

GJ: Nearly 75, 74.

RL: And where were you born?

GJ: In Berlin, Wielandstrasse acht, which is a certain place in Berlin, and, into a family where they had already one daughter, Edith, and my father was called Wilhelm, he called himself Wilhelm Otto Jacobowitz, which is very, sounds very German, but actually he was born in Silesia. And my mother was born Else Gutmann, and she was called Else.

RL: Where was she born?

**Tape 1: 3 minutes 45 seconds**

GJ: She was born in Dessau, which is the town to the south of Berlin. I don't know about 100 miles south of Berlin.

RL: So if you tell me first about your parents' families, and their family background.

GJ: Well, of course I came at the age of ten, so I don't know all that much, I am sorry, about, but I know more about my mother's family than I do about my father's family. I do remember my father's mother living in Berlin on her own, as a widow. And she was rather poor. My mother's family who lived in Dessau and had a shop in Dessau, they, it was, she had many sisters and one brother who died, so I had quite a number of aunts, and so I had four aunts on my mother's side and one aunt at least on my father's side, and there was also a cousin of my fathers, I think they were quite spread over the world, the family. People came out of Poland, they tried to get out of Poland, to improve themselves, their standard of living, and that was what my father did, just before the First World War, and so he joined the German army as a freiwillige, voluntary, and he was in the German army for four years in the First World War, and so actually I think he got the Iron Cross if I remember rightly, he certainly got bad legs, shrapnel wounds, and he had

to keep on bandaging his legs up, so that the wounds wouldn't open up again, anyway, something like that, anyway he kept bandaging his legs every day.

RL: You mentioned that your mother's parents had a shop ...

GJ: In Dessau ...

RL: Do you know what kind of shop that was? What did they ...

GJ: I am not certain, I think it was, you know things like linen, bed linen and ... they had a shop, but by the time everything moved, as it were, at the time, at the end of the, in the Nazi period 1938/39 of course they had to give the shop up, of course it had already given up really and I think they were already retired, but they still lived in the same house. The shop was still going though, I remember staying there in the attic, under these enormous duchend, big feather things that we slept under. So that is ...

RL: What memories do you have of your grandparents?

GJ: Very little actually, because I only spent say two or three weeks at a time there, and I remember going to the park in Dessau, but it is a lovely memory, it was nice. And my mother went to visit there occasionally, so I have got only pleasant memories.

RL: You say your mother had a number of sisters?

GJ: Yes.

**Tape 1: 8 minutes12 seconds**

RL: Where were they living?

GJ: They were living in, one of the sisters, Tante Meta, was living with us. She in fact was looking after us, or me, because my mother worked in my father's shop. My father had a shop, haberdashery, it was doing better in 1933 and so on, by the time my conscious was awake, it was a small shop and my mother worked with him. So, during the day, or in the afternoon my aunt would look after me. She lived in the same flat as we did, that was Tante Meta.

Tante Hertah was in a way, in inverted commas, a "heroine", she was married to a Braunsberg, and the Braunsbergs were very wealthy, posh people. So she had married very well. That was Tante Hertah. And actually when all the trouble came upon us, we, my sister and I, we stayed, you know, when my parents had been arrested, my sister and I stayed with Tante Hertah for a little bit.

RL: And where did she live?

GJ: She lived in, we lived in Brunnenstrasse, 157, which was N31, but of course it may be different now, they may have called it different. She lived in Grunewald, which is a pleasant outskirts, outside Berlin, and then later she lived in the Erdnerstrasse, Erdnerstrasse 11, and so she had a nice house.

RL: What did her husband do for a living?

GJ: Oh he and his brothers, they owned factories, making fabrics, so, where the Braunsberg, I don't know if I should say this, they are also in England, in London, and they are certainly in Vienna and America, so it was a big industrial thing, in Leipzig the factories were, if I remember correctly. I remember once going with my cousin, in the train, to Leipzig and being told "Achtung Kurve" that means "Attention Curvers Coming", because I put my knife in my mouth, well we were eating. So, they were, they lived in Leipzig. My Auntie Hertah had two children. One was Hugo Braunsberg, and the daughter Rosie Braunsberg. Hugo was unfortunately shot in France, I mean he was escaping, but after helping all of us, he helped all of us and after escaping bit by bit he ended up in a camp in France and was shot there, I think trying to escape. And my Tante Hertah, my Auntie Hertah, and my mother, in the end lived together, when all the Jews were herded into a small area of Berlin and despite the fact that my Auntie Hertah was reasonably wealthy and so on, it didn't make any difference, they just herded them all together in Sybelstrasse, and from there they were deported to Auschwitz. My mother was there alone. my father ... well I will have to tell you the whole story ...

**Tape 1: 12 minutes 50 seconds**

RL: Yes.

We were just talking really about your mother's sisters.

GJ: Yes.

And another sister of my mother actually married a cousin of my fathers. So she married a Jacobowitz, and he, you know when everything became barred, he left for, really my sister could tell me all this better, she is four years older than me, and she, he left for Holland, there were Jacobowitzes in Holland, and he left for Holland, and from Holland, and he was married to Tante Trude, Auntie Trude, and from Holland they left for, well Israel, well Palestine it was then, and he survived actually, that family survived in Palestine. And my cousin Inge, a product of that union, she actually married, she was working for the British in Palestine and she then came over, she married a British officer, which wasn't the, they weren't really meant to meet and so on, and he was sent back to London from Palestine, and she then left Palestine and went to live in London, so that was that, so all sorts of bits are quite interesting.

RL: Did your mother have brothers?

GJ: She had one brother, but he died early.

RL: And then you mentioned your father had a sister?

GJ: Yes ... yes ...

RL: Where was she? Where did she live?

GJ: She lived in Berlin. The Falgenburgs. I think Emil Falgenburg was my uncle. I am ashamed to say I can't remember her name, Falgenburg. They had two children, Ava, whom I knew better, who was my age, and an older brother, a few years older, who my sister knows better. James Falgenburg. And of those three James survived because he went to become a farm worker in Scotland. Sort of, he wasn't on a kibbutz, he worked on a farm in Scotland, but he came out with that story that he was going to be a farm worker, anyway. People were only allowed into England if they were either working or on the land or domestic. So all of us had that attachment to us.

RL: Did you have any idea what your father's father did for a living?

GJ: No, I don't know, I don't know. I just know that he came from upper Silesia, I know more precisely on some document. And he came to Berlin and he joined the German army, and then he became a window dresser and then he opened a shop and I think he did quite well, and after 1933 really it was all downhill.

**Tape 1: 17 minutes 0 second**

RL: Whereabouts, what street was the shop on.

GJ: The shop that I knew was on Gerichtstrasse, and he went there by, very few people had cars in those days, it seems strange now. But he went there on the bicycle to the shop.

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

GJ: I shouldn't think, my mother would have had a very good education, but I don't think my father had such a good education, I know it's terrible to say, that about your father, but I don't think he had a very wonderful education. I mean, they would have had a Jewish education of course.

RL: Do you know what kind of religious upbringing they had?

GJ: How can I put it? It was medium. Now I know all sorts from left to right, if you follow know what I mean. I would think it was sort of medium. We kept the main holidays. If I remember correctly they kept the shop open on a Shabbos. So we kept the main holidays, you know, obviously Pesach and so on, but we weren't deeply religious if you follow what I mean, sort of German Jewish, if I may put it that way.

RL: What synagogue did the family belong to?

GJ: Gezuntbronnen, it was away from the centre of town, I remember, you know when you dance with the Torah, I am forgetting everything ...

RL: Simchas Torah?

GJ: Simchas Torah, I remember sweets and so on being thrown around and so on ...

RL: What level of orthodoxy?

GJ: Of course I can remember Simchas Torah ...

RL: What level of orthodoxy was the synagogue?

GJ: It was orthodox; it wasn't this reform stuff, if you follow what I mean. We weren't living in Dessau, you know in Dessau, you know who comes from Dessau? The chap who started all the reform stuff, what is his name, can I go quickly and look at books? No, I am not allowed to look at books you see. But, in a way the link between Jewish and German was thought out by Mendelssohn, was it Mendelssohn? Moses Mendelssohn came from Dessau actually, and so, it wasn't that, it definitely wasn't that, it was orthodox as far as we could live with it, if you follow what I mean, make a living with it.

**Tape 1: 20 minutes 38 seconds**

So there we lived in Berlin, going occasionally to the Gezuntbronnen Synagogue, we didn't go, I did go, a few times to the Central Synagogue, I can't remember the street now which it was, the main synagogue, which they have rebuilt, you know. Well they are really only museums now, aren't they, apart from the Russian Jews who have gone into Berlin. And ...

RL: Who was the Rabbi of the synagogue that you attended?

GJ: Oh, I can't remember. Well, it is on, well something will be on my Zeugnis

RL: Report

GJ: Reports ... he will have signed it, won't he. So you can tell from that who it was, I can remember my class teacher in the Jewish school, who wasn't ... and there you see, they taught Ivrit like a language, and I got quite good at it actually, but of course when I came over here it all went to blazes anyway. But they were really good teachers and they were really teaching Ivrit well.

You will have to edit a lot of that ...

RL: It's alright.



What is your earliest memory as a child?

GJ: I don't really have an early memory. Oh yes, well, I can remember certain things. I can remember that my father bought live fish to put in the bath. Well in those days there were ice boxes but not fridges, well at least we didn't have a fridge. So we bought carp and put them in the bath, well they were killed afterwards to eat, so I can remember that.

And I can remember my auntie being with me, because Tante Meta, poor woman, see I, it's, there is this terrible shut off, or chop off if I may say so, when everything went crazy, so to remember things before that, I can see a picture of myself in the zoo, but I can't remember it, if you follow me.

RL: Can you remember, can you describe your home?

GJ: Well, we were living on the, I hope the photograph won't show it different, we were living on the third floor in a big flat, it had one, two, two and a half bedrooms. My parents lived in one bedroom, my auntie and me were in the other bedroom, up until the very end, up until nearly the end and my sister was in the sort of box room bedroom, and we had a dining room and a living room and a kitchen and bathroom, so it was quite a big flat, well I think it was a big flat. And, yes, I remember I once got a terrible beating for standing on the window, standing on the window, which I shouldn't have done.

**Tape 1: 24 minutes 44 seconds**

Yes, because, a crowd gathered below, because I was standing on the window, if you follow what I mean, and my father was very cross, so I can remember that. So I can remember little bits here and there. I can remember the 1936 Olympic Games, not as the Olympic Games really, but because my father walked me around with me on his shoulder, not actually going into the games and watching them, but enormous crowds. That is what it was in Berlin, always enormous crowds, the Nazis, enormous crowds, and all screaming, "Ein Volk, Ein Reich, Ein Fuhrer. Nach hause gehn wir nicht bis dass der fuhrer spricht", all this jazz, you know like, like, like a football crowd except not in a football place but outside, you know screaming. I remember, that is what I remember, of course it became, towards the end it became, for me anyway more personal, you know that somebody might say ... I don't know whether you want me to talk now about the ...

RL: Let me just ask you ... and then we will come onto that.

GJ: Yes.

RL: First of all, let me just ask you about your school, and the school, and of the Hebrew school that you attended ...

GJ: Well, I went to an ordinary public school, if you follow what I mean. Not a public school, but an ordinary state school, not too far from where we lived, you can see all that through my reports, that was alright, there might have been some comments about Jews, but I was a very unfeeling child if I may put it that way, you know, you might say callous, so it wouldn't have mattered to me, you know, I was a boxer, if you follow what I mean, so it wouldn't have mattered to me all that much, it wouldn't have registered on my brain all that particularly. When I was eight my father sent me to a Jewish boxing club, YBCB, Judische Boxing Club Berlin, as opposed to the Maccabi which was the other boxing club. And I don't know why he sent, well I know why he sent me there, so I could defend myself easier, more or less, so I was just about the youngest person there, with a few other boys, and, so I don't know why, anyway I can't remember any anti-Semitism in this first school that I went to, but of course I had to leave it.

RL: Did you have friends, non Jewish friends at that school?

GJ: I don't think so. Do you mean ones that I bought home? What do you mean by friends? I talked to people of course, but all I remember really by looking at the photo which I have lost, is Zuckertute. When you first went to school you had a Zuckertute, you were given a thing with sweets, I always remember the sweets. So I remember that, I had that when I started school. I probably didn't start the cheder immediately, but because I went to a non Jewish school I had to go to a cheder, and, so Gezuntbronen in that area, there was I think there was a Jewish hospital and a Jewish, oh yes, I went to a Jewish nursery, that's right, but I can't remember that really, well vaguely, I can't really remember, and yes, the Synagogue was in that area as well.

**Tape 1: 29 minutes 44 seconds**

So there was a little Jewish community in Gezuntbronen.

RL: Were there other Jewish children at this non Jewish school?

GJ: I can't remember, I can't remember.

RL: Who were your friends at the time? Who did you play with?

GJ: My cousin, Ava, I played on my own really, my sister was four years older, and so it didn't really register then.

RL: Were there other Jewish people living in the block?

GJ: I don't know, I don't think so, but there were other Jewish people living in the street and so on, because my father used to play skart, that is like, I don't know whether it is like bridge because I don't play bridge, but he used to have card evenings with other people who had shops, you know, I remember there was one person who repaired shoes, a shoe ...

RL: A cobbler?

GJ: Yes ... and a cobbler's shop.

[Phone rings] Oh that is because it has a separate bell in the hall for us to hear ...

RL: We were thinking of your father playing cards and who he was playing with and the different ...

GJ: He was a member of, my father was a member of the Reichsbund Judischer Frontsoldaten which was the equivalent of AJEX, Reichsbund Judischer Frontsoldaten. And I suppose he thought that with an Iron Cross, I don't think he had an Iron Cross first class, he had an Iron Cross anyway, he thought nothing could ever happen to him, you know, typical. On the other hand at the very end he learnt how to make shirts. So ...

RL: Did he belong to any other organisations? Was he active in the community?

GJ: I can't remember. No he wasn't ... sort of ... a ganze macher, he was a halbe macher.

RL: What did they do in that organisation?

GJ: I should think, I don't know, I should think it is the same as AJEX, they had reunions and talked about things, they had the occasional meetings.

**Tape 1: 32 minutes 17 seconds**

RL: Did your mother belong to anything?

GJ: No ...

RL: What did she do?

GJ: Well, I don't know - no I don't think so. She was helping my father in the shop and she was a hausfrau, you know a typical German, and she looked after the children when she was at home.

RL: How many people worked in the shop?

GJ: Well, my father, mother and I think one other person. I occasionally went to the shop and set up, you know a cardboard tray or something, I certainly learned how to use an electric sewing machine, not an electric sewing machine like nowadays but one my father put a motor in where you press the thing down, you know the treadle, it was a treadle sewing machine and he put a motor in so that when you pressed down it would work if you follow what I mean. So I certainly learnt how to use that.

RL: What were you making?

GJ: I don't know, I was just playing around, I am not very good at it now, a decent sewing machine.

RL: So was your father, was he using the machine?

GJ: Only I think to do alterations, now you see, the lady who sold my father nightdresses had a sister who lived, who had married a gentleman from Northern Ireland, she was a Turkish lady and so was her sister of course, a Jewish Turkish lady, and she married somebody from Northern Ireland, and when it all fell apart she went to her sister in Northern Ireland, and that is how I came to go to Northern Ireland, because the Northern Ireland refugee committee took people from Vienna, they had some relationship with the Jewish community in Vienna, they didn't take German Jews particularly, they took Viennese, so we were by chance in a way, that is how we ended up in Northern Ireland after coming over on the Kinder Transport.

RL: We will go into that again later. Yes.

So you say it was like a haberdasher shop?

GJ: Yes, yes. Selling different things, you know nightshirts and, I suppose, it was in a working class area, it was am Wedding, that is an area in Berlin, just like ... Brunnenstrasse wasn't in that area, it was some distance, they were separated by a

### **Tape 1: 35 minutes 36 seconds**

Park Humbold Heim, the Humbold Heim was a park which I used to go to, where I used to go sledging, well it had hills and things, so that is what I, and I used to go skating, in Germany you used to go skating in the winter, obviously, but you go skating because they put the water on the tennis courts, they were covered with water and it freezes and you have got a skating rink in the winter. But in the end "Yuden verboden", Jews were not allowed to go and we still went. I wasn't an absolutely nice boy, if you follow what I mean, that is what I mean by not paying attention to somebody saying this, that and the other.

RL: When were you first aware of anti-Semitism? Or when did it first make an impression on you?

GJ: Well of course it made an impression on me when I had to go to the other school, but it didn't make ... I just had to go to the other school, I loved going to the new school because it meant I was going on the underground from where we lived into the centre of Berlin and by walking one station I could save money and buy myself a sardine and malt beer, so I loved it. But I, it didn't, it sort of, there wasn't a time when I definitely noticed it, it was suddenly there. You know, it was there all the time, but I suppose I must have been, well my parents kept everything from me, they kept everything, all that stuff from

me. So I suppose they must have said ... we couldn't walk on the same sidewalk, what is sidewalk?

RL: Pavement.

GJ: Pavement when an Arian came, we had to step off it, but of course you didn't know if it was Arian or not. I had a very short hair cut, with just a tuft at the front, that is what my father made me have, and so I was sort of bald, the hairdresser just went like that and took everything off behind which was a German boy's haircut. I suppose he did it on purpose, as well, like he sent me to this boxing club. And, so, anyway, so I wasn't particularly outstanding if you follow, I didn't look you know with peyers and tzitzit and all the rest of it, so I didn't look Jewish all that much, but I did really, they could smell it, you know, they, and so I, but you hear about people who survived who went the whole hog, they pretended to be Christians and all the rest, so I suppose I was somewhere in between. And, so I didn't look particularly, but I was, you know. I remember going into Wertheim into big stores and going in the paternoster. You know the paternoster and being frightened going around the top, so I remember a little, you know I remember doing this, that and the other.

RL: Were you ever discovered?

GJ: Not really, no. Only when, we were, I think my sister was, had things said to her and so on, but once you were discovered it was bad. I was in the shop in November 38 when they came round, like sort of about 40/50 people coming round to write Jude on the

**Tape 1: 40 minutes 40 seconds**

windows and so on, or break the windows, but my father quickly let down the, you know the ...

RL: Blind?

GJ: Blind, yes ... well it wasn't a blind, it was like a roller thing, he let it down. So they only got one window, the shop had three windows, so he quickly let it down, and we were in the shop, which was uncomfortable, but of course I wouldn't have ... you know ... and so ...

RL: Were these local people?

GJ: Yes. Not SS, the SS came later. These were SA people and people who weren't in uniform. You know, just screaming, just shouting and carrying on, you know "Jude, Jude, Jude rausen", and all that sort of thing, well we are now talking 38, and on all the benches in the parks where I lived sort of thing was written "Juden Verboden" and there were some benches on which there were "Jude", where you could sit, well I didn't sit but my mother or aunt might have. And well, she wouldn't have sat where it said Juden Verboden, because that was a sort of crime and so I gradually, it was part of life, it wasn't

how disgusting or outrageous, it was just part for a child, it was just part of, it wasn't outrageous or disgusting it was just part of life, that they all went round and had marches and you know, were standing at corners.

RL: Did you witness a lot of that?

GJ: Just in the every day, it was just part of life. I saw it near in small groups and also my father took me to a few films, not Nazi, crime stories, you know. "Neunzign minuten aufenhalt" but anyway, he took me too, when my mother, sometimes my mother went to Dessau without me, you know, or without us, meaning my sister and myself, and my father looked after us, that is when I went to the pictures.

RL: Was that at a time when the pictures were forbidden or before they were forbidden?

GJ: They must have been forbidden. Anyway we went. Well you adapt yourself to everything, you know, I mean if they came here with ridiculous laws it would be the same, wouldn't it, I mean people just wouldn't keep them, and my father had to give his gun up in 1938, you know, at the time of Krystall Nacht, and he had to give his gun up. He also had a tort schlager which is a steel spring thing, it is for beating people with, which when you do it like that it comes out and then you have a thing for defending yourself, so the poor fellow, he had all these things, a gun and a tort schlager and he had to give it up, the gun anyway, Jews weren't allowed to have guns, Jews weren't allowed to have businesses, but all the previous people you have interviewed will have told you that, where they would have been far worse off than me.

**Tape 1: 45 minutes 12 seconds**

RL: Did you witness any large rallies?

GJ: I suppose I must have done, Brunnenstrasse is a main street, not the main street like Unter Den Linden or something but it is a big street. You see, they were marching, marching into the centre to meet and they were obviously horrible, you wouldn't want to get into their hands, I mean a crowd of Germans or Nazis, the Nazis were Germans.

RL: Did you see Hitler?

GJ: Only on ... How did I see Hitler? I can't remember seeing Hitler. But of course I saw him on the newsreels, and infinitely often afterwards in the UK.

RL: You say you moved schools. When did you move schools?

GJ: Well it would show on the reports. In 1936, it was the Nuremburg Laws, it was the racial laws that Jewish children should be educated separately. Actually I went to a very good school.

RL: Which school was it? Which one did you go to?

GJ: Die Knaben-Volksschule in Judischen Gemeinde in Kaiserstrasse which was quite near to the Gestapo headquarters actually. It was an old boy's school.

RL: Did that cause any problems? It being so close to the Gestapo.

GJ: No ... no ... I suppose they thought they had everything under control.

RL: How big a school was it? How many children?

GJ: I can't remember. It was quite a big school. I was only ... at the very end I moved school again to the Jewish secondary school. My sister was there for four years. I have forgotten the name, Die Grosse Hamburger, The Big Hamberger it was called. They weren't hamburgers in those days you know, and that is what we called it anyway, because Hamburg and I was only there for a few months, and the only thing I learned there was ... "the ... the ... the ... the", because you don't have that in German. The th sound, didn't learn any more English. She had learned some English, I mean she was in higher classes.

RL: So you just began English lessons at that school?

GJ: Yes, but I never learnt any English, just how to pronounce th. But of course when I came over I did and I learned t was th.

**Tape 1: 48 minutes 46 seconds**

RL: Did you know any of the children at the Jewish school that you went to in 36?

GJ: No, I don't think I did, I mean they came from all over town, didn't they, because they all came from, not all of them, there was some who had been there, because it was a religious school and I am sure that everybody was properly, thoroughly, through and through religious there, and it was also, it was, it had a Zionist side to it, I think, I don't know. I mean I remember my book, "Dan v Gad", Dan and Gad, you see. And so it was a very good language from a Hebrew point of view, from Ivrit it was, they were very good. They would teach it like a language, not like out of a Siddur, which, well I think it's better, you know.

RL: Did you stop going to cheder once you started the Hebrew, Jewish schools?

GJ: Yes, of course.

RL: What was the cheder that you went to?

GJ: That was the one in Grunewald or whatever, that was attached to the Shul there, anyway you can see it all on those reports.

RL: How long did you attend cheder?

GJ: Well, as long as I was at that state school, and then again in Northern Ireland. That poor teacher, the poor teacher in the village school and the poor teacher at cheder, he came out from Belfast. I know you can laugh now, but he came once a week. Fundaminsky. That was his name.

RL: In Germany you were at the Jewish school, did you talk amongst yourselves about what was going on? How aware were you?

GJ: Oh, I am sure we did, but I was playing detective, rubbish, yes I am sure we, it wasn't, we lived with that, we lived with it, it was part of life, if you follow what I mean, it wasn't as it was going to be later where people disappeared now and again, you know what I mean, it got worse and worse until they disappeared, until the Jews disappeared completely, out of 54,000 I don't know how many thousand were left.

RL: Do you remember any anti-Semitic incidents with yourself personally?

GJ: Only the ones with the shop, only the Krystall Nacht business. They weren't particularly anti-Semitic within the house, you know we had to go up and down three flights of stairs, I can't remember anything happening on the stairs.

RL: And in the street?

**Tape 1: 52 minutes 24 seconds**

GJ: Well, I can't remember.

RL: Did you ever need to use your boxing skills?

GJ: No. I am glad about that. Well I did, actually at Queens I boxed, that was a mistake. Well because, there were some very hard hitting boxers at Queens. When it came to representing Queens in Dublin, you know ...

RL: Did you belong to anything else in Germany?

GJ: No, but in the holiday we, I was put with other children, where they went out once, for the day only, out of, you know to Grunewald, you know somewhere nice, outside, I am using Grunewald wrong, I must have used it wrong for where the synagogue was, but anyway, what you did was, you joined the group, well perhaps there was a group to do with it, it was a Judischen Gemeinde, in Berlin, they had arranged for holidays, and you know you took your son or whatever daughter, I can't remember, and you went out with them. The only thing that I remember about that, well it was lovely going out into the country obviously, and lying in the woods and so on and playing around, but I remember, what do you call the book, having a book read to me, having books read to me, and the



book was, what do you call it, you know that story where the chap is caught by monkeys and brought up by monkeys ...

RL: Tarzan.

GJ: Tarzan, the Tarzan story, in the German translation, I remember hearing that there. And I also read some of my father's crime stories when I was in Germany, and so that led automatically into the library on the farm. Because some people on the farm had brought there books with them, library books, because not everybody came in 1939, some people had come in 1938 and some people had come with more than just a suitcase, if you follow what I mean, or two suitcases, so they had come with their books, so there was a German library on the farm, from which you could borrow books.

RL: Did you belong to a library in Germany?

GJ: Not that I can remember.

RL: Were you interested in sport at all?

GJ: Yes. But, I, the only thing I did was boxing. There wasn't things like you have got here, like football clubs, they had, oh yes there were football clubs in Berlin of course, but I am talking about little boys playing. There was a Maccabi, there was a Maccabi, I don't know where, and the Maccabi was the main one, the Maccabi was a sporting club for Jewish people, Jewish children.

**Tape 1: 56 minutes 24 seconds**

Don't forget there was quite a big Gemeinde. They were well organised, that actually was already ... it is flashing the red light ... that was one of their. Is it supposed to be? Yes. That was one of their great strengths or weaknesses, to be well organised, to be well organised for the Germans, you know. Like we used to say, in America we do so and so, in Berlin they used to call us "Berline Gross Schnauze", that means Berlin big mouths or something worse.

RL: Were you interested in music?

GJ: Not really, no. I mean I listened to tunes and I learned various things that I shouldn't have learned.

RL: What about Zionist activity?

GJ: I heard about Israel. No, Zionism I came into on the farm where all the Bachad Chalutzim were waiting for us to dance horas from morning to night.

RL: But in Germany?

GJ: No. There were probably Zionist organisations, but I wasn't one of them.

RL: Were your parents ... ?

GJ: Middle class ...

RL: So really we are up to 1938 and the events ...

GJ: It is getting worse and worse ...

RL: If you can take me through that ...

GJ: Well after 1938, after November 1938 my father, oh yes already then they started selling their furniture, the first thing they sold was their bedroom furniture, which was very nice, I remember very nice furniture, so they could sell that just about, so then ...

RL: I think we will just stop here because the film is about to come to an end, and we will continue.

## TAPE 2

RL: This is tape 2 with Gerald Jayson

So I was asking you about the events of 1938, if you could tell me the events leading up to Krystall Nacht and then what happened at Krystall Nacht, from what you remember.

GJ: Well, Hitler made out of Grynszpan a million, or something like that. Grynszpan was the Jewish chap who killed the ambassador in Paris, and as a result of the assassination in Paris which of course was due to the fact that Grynszpan's relation were being mauled around, he said that the Jews in Germany had to pay money, or something for that, or something, and not only that, but the Jews were no longer allowed to own any property or to have a business or anything, and immediately of course my father couldn't earn a living any more. And I suppose it was then that he put his shop up for sale and he sold the bedroom furniture and God knows what not from our flat. And that is what happened, and it was a very bad time for the Jews. And the Germans took all the Polish Jews because Poland had said they would make the Jews stateless, and the Germans didn't want a lot of stateless people, Jews in particular, and they took them all off in the middle of the night, of a cold winters night, November/December, in northern Europe and put them all on the German/Polish border and said, "Off you go". And naturally a lot of people died as a result of that, anyway they didn't care about killing Jews; it was the operation or the situation even then.

So you have to remember that before that, the Jews since 1933 were being demeaned and discriminated against and spat at and it was a life of, for the grown ups anyway, not for the children, of demeaning and making life as horrible as possible. And all the dentists

wanted the Jewish dental practices, and all the lawyers wanted the Jewish lawyer practices and it was absolutely horrible for the Jews naturally, not for the Germans.

**Tape 2: 3 minutes 47 seconds**

So anyway in 1938, so I cannot tell you what I really feel, because you couldn't put it on a tape. As for the usual question, "Have I forgiven them?"

So anyway, so, it was a very tough time, for my parents in particular, of course they wouldn't tell a ten year old boy really anything, so I just lived there and as far as I know I still went to school. Yes, I still went to school, whereas they had a horrible time of it, and that is what happened. I suppose we cut back every which way and my Auntie Meta who lived with us, she must have had it horrible as well. But she, poor woman, I think she was older than my mother, I have it somewhere, she wasn't even married, so she was an unmarried lady and they were absolutely horrible.

RL: Have you got specific memories of Krystall Nacht?

GJ: Well only that I was in the shop and my father letting down, not the blind, letting down the ...

RL: Shutters ...

GJ: The shutters, yes.

RL: That was Krystall Nacht itself?

GJ: Well it was in the afternoon. It wasn't nacht.

RL: Yes.

GJ: They didn't smash up the Jewish shops just in the night. They smashed them up in the afternoon. I mean you wouldn't expect decent Nazis to get up in the middle of the night to smash Jewish shops, and decent Germans, whichever you want. And so ...

RL: What happened to your Synagogue?

GJ: No idea. I should think it was smashed up as well. Certainly that big Synagogue in the centre of Berlin was burned. I mean they rebuilt it x years ago. And now it is wonderful.

RL: Did you see any of the fires?

GJ: No, I didn't see any or them. So, my father of course had to go to the local police station and all this kind of jazz, so it was barred, so we lived like that for five months.

RL: Did you continue going to school?

**Tape 2: 6 minutes 50 seconds**

GJ: Yes. And this is on the Kaiserstrasse and of course they didn't meet as much, you know playing cards and so on.

And then it all changed again. I think it was March, it was May or March, it was March I think, March then, two Gestapo guys came, not big fellows, little fellows, in their leather coats and so on, cowardly, because they had the law on their side, you see, they could do what they want, not because they were Gestapo, because they were Germans and we were Jews, they could do what they want. Anyway they came because for some reason or other, oh of course, my father, in the meanwhile, you know after November and so on learned how to make shirts, because he was going to leave, obviously, and open up a shop somewhere else. But you couldn't get out of Germany, there was no place to go, I mean people went, that I was aware of, people went from one location to another location to another location trying to get a visa, trying to get out, but it was all blocked, you couldn't, the United States had quotas, so if you weren't on a peculiar quota like Lithuanian, you know where they hadn't filled up quota, you certainly couldn't get out under the German quota because everybody was trying to get out. So they went to one day, it was, you can get a visa for China, you can get a visa for Brazil, you can get a visa for ... it was a state of, well the underlying thing was angst, there was fear everywhere, there was fear everywhere. You had to get out, you had to get out. Of course you couldn't live there, you couldn't make a living. And I mean, all the people who worked in the civil service had been thrown out in 1933 and now they were all business people being kicked out, but you couldn't get out anywhere. You weren't allowed to live there and you couldn't get out anywhere, so it was a desperate thing, so, I don't know.

But anyway these two guys came and said, they did a search of the flat, and I don't know whether I was there from the beginning, I was there either half the day or from the very beginning. Anyway, they searched, and they said, "Well you haven't declared everything; you haven't declared all your valuables." So, and, "Also you have sent money out of the country." Yes, of course if you left, you couldn't take any money out, and you couldn't send any money out, so you had to start from the very beginning. Like in the UK as a domestic, not that it is wrong, nothing wrong with being a domestic or a farm worker, but I am just saying, you know, even if you got out you had, it was barred, so they said, first of all you haven't declared everything valuable and the other thing is you have sent some money out of the country, well that was funny, because they didn't have any money to send out, they had to live. So, you will accompany us, and they just left with them, my father and mother, just left with them, I never saw them again. So they were put in prison, in Fuhlsbittel which was a prison in Hamburg, so they were put in a prison in Hamburg, they were later released in 1940, of course by then all the borders were shut. But the very fact that they were put in prison in March saved my sister and my life, which was sort of, absolutely, definitely, but horrible, because my sister and I, not having any parents were then an emergency case, an emergency case, and that is what

bought us on to the, they put us onto the Kinder Transport. So my parents were arrested in the March or May, 1939, by two small Gestapo in plain clothes but leather coats, and I

**Tape 2: 12 minutes 33 seconds**

tried to find out afterwards, but I couldn't, after the war, who they were, and so on but I couldn't.

RL: Was your auntie still with you?

GJ: Yes, I don't know, my auntie disappeared somehow. My auntie I think probably went back to Dessau and our life was taken over by our cousin Hugo, who had just come out of the concentration camp because he appeared with a bald head, you can see he was a beautiful fellow, and he had a completely bald head, and, but like that, but he looked after us, and I found afterwards that he also looked after other people, so he must have been a terrific fellow, he was only young, probably about 22 or something, but he took us, he made us pack our things and go to his mother, Tante Hertah, that is how we came to be living right at the end before we left at the Erdnerstrasse, number 11, with my Auntie Hertah, his mother. So we were dead lucky really, we went to live with our reasonably well off aunt, well she still had a house, and at that time.

RL: Were you in contact with your parents?

GJ: No. My sister, you can read her book, she went to the headquarters of the Gestapo, and so, no we weren't, but my parents had, we left in June, my parents had to sign a paper permitting us to leave Germany, so they knew we were leaving. They were in an ordinary prison, Fuhlsbuttel, in Hamburg, and then there were a law case which of course after the war they reneged, they went back on it, which my father was, they had served their time already, by the mid 1940, and they were let out, and my mother was let out back to Berlin, but my father was let out to the concentration camp to the north of Berlin. I can't remember ... but, so my father never got out of the concentration camps. My mother, got out, and lived with my aunt in Sybelstrasse, you know where they put all the Jews, and she did war work for the Germans. She wasn't allowed to sit down on the tram. This is from letters from different people, non Jews, once she was going to this, she didn't get very much for it I shouldn't think.

RL: How was it arranged that you would go on the Kinder Transport? And did you know what that was?

GJ: Of course not. It is my cousin who did it. So, we were put on this Kinder Transport and they saw us off and he bought us, we had, I have still got the suitcase, if somebody wants the suitcase they can have it. You know, they way they collected for that suitcase, I have still got our suitcase, or one of our suitcases, and he also bought two baskets, so if somebody wants a suitcase from that time, you know the Manchester Museum, I mean it is just a horrible suitcase. Well no, in those days it was quite a good

suitcase it has just been banged about so much here and there. So we were put on this Kinder Transport on 22<sup>nd</sup> June or whenever it was and that was it.

RL: What did you take with you in your suitcase? What did you have?

**Tape 2: 17 minutes 33 seconds**

GJ: Well our clothing, and because the Braunsbergs had money they bought us things. And, a few spoons with J on for Jacobowitz, but that became J for Jayson. Sort of, two spoons each, my sister and I and so on, so we have got that memory, we are not stupid, so that is all.

RL: How did you feel leaving?

GJ: Well, that was a great adventure. That was sort of wonderful really. I mean, to begin with my sister thought we were going to a rich English family, we knew that much from films. A rich English family, we were going to go to a rich English family, and, well some people actually did, which was funny, but, we were on the train with all the others, with the other children and of course there was a big carry on. I mean, you know how children are on trains, of ten, between ten and fifteen, there were probably some eighteen year olds as well, and some younger ones, and when we came to the German Dutch border we pulled the blinds down ... and then cheered at the other end.

RL: Were there adults accompanying you?

GJ: There were some adults. But they weren't conscious in my mind. And then in Holland we got food and drinks and sandwiches from the Yiddish women there. They had it all organised. The thing was all organised. And then we got to Hook of Holland and got on the boat and slept. And woke up in Harwich, but we cheered when we crossed the German Dutch border.

RL: Did guards come on the train?

GJ: You mean German guards? Yes, I think they did go through. But of all this, I can't, I can't sort of consciously remember, I was so involved with other kids and this, that and the other.

RL: How many children would you say were travelling with you.

GJ: Again, I can't say, I should have thought probably 100 or something.

So we arrived in Harwich, and after that really Germany was cut off because the only letters we got were 25 word letters, so we really, all we wrote was via Sweden, via some relation in Sweden to Germany, but we always wrote that our parents were our uncles, for some reason or other we didn't want to call them our parents. Not us, we were told what

to do or what to write. So, even in the 25 words we were very careful what we wrote, we said we were well and all the usual stuff.

RL: What happened when you arrived at Harwich?

**Tape 2: 21 minutes 38 seconds**

GJ: Well, I thought we went into the big hall in Harwich. But there is all this thing about Liverpool Street, is it Liverpool Street? In London, what do you call the station? Where they are putting up a statue with a suitcase and stuff? That is what made me think of mine, but didn't they put up ... no, is it Liverpool Street? You know where all the refugees arrived they are putting up a statue, that is where we arrived. But we, it is either there, or, I thought it was in Harwich myself that we went into this big gym, a big hall, and we were all sat down in this hall, you know, with our suitcases. And different people came and collected different children. So we arrived and we ended up in a big hall, which I knew was a gym, there was also some boxing things there, and we all sat there and we just waited, and then people arrived, English people, English Jews, and I don't know if they were Quakers or whatnot, and they looked up their lists and different children went with different groups. And that must have been quite painful because there was a lot of crying because some brothers and sisters were separated, you know. And some didn't go to Jewish families, all sorts, it was a mess. But you know, I mean, I am not shouting at anybody, we were out of it. So it was alright really, but I could have ended up, no I couldn't have ended up, we were picked up to go to Belfast, I think it was Mr Bervitz or the wife of Mr Bervitz. Anyway, they picked us up, my sister and me and took us I suppose to London, and put us on a train to Belfast. So we went straight to Belfast.

RL: Just the two of you?

GJ: Yes.

RL: Have you any idea how that happened?

GJ: Because the lady who sold my father nightshirts had a sister in Belfast to which she had gone, and Mrs Wolfe this was, the sister, and she had gone to Mr Berwitz and must have said I know of these children who are on the Kinder Transport, or are being put on that Kinder Transport, and can we pick them up as part of our refugee effort. And she won't have said I have given some money towards it, as they all did in Belfast, God bless them, and they said ok, but we will take people from Vienna, so that is how we came to be in Northern Ireland, I am really Northern Irish, and that is how it came, she lived in Ballymena. I have forgotten ...

RL: What happened when you arrived in Belfast?

GJ: Well, that was over night again, on the boat, which was quite a shaky boat across the Northern Irish Sea. Well, we were put in this hostel, there was a refugee hostel, they

had a refugee hostel, in which already there were some children, and grown ups as well, so I was given a bed, and that was it. And it was one week, or two weeks to go, it was June, we arrived on June 21<sup>st</sup>/22<sup>nd</sup>. And it was one week to go until the summer holidays, and so we were taken to this farm in Millisle County Down so then, the refugee committee must have said that is a very good idea, we will get all those children

**Tape 2: 26 minutes 48 seconds**

and for their summer holidays they are not going to Londonderry, or London, or Edinburgh, we will put them on this farm, the Bachad farm we've got, and they got some big tents, dormitory tents, and one tent for the boys and one tent for the girls and we will put them onto this farm, so after one or two weeks in Belfast, of course all the Viennese could speak German and we were taken to this farm, the Bachad farm, with all the chalutzim on it.

RL: How many of you were taken there?

GJ: Probably about ten/fifteen. Or actually quite, not just the children, if you have a look at the photograph, that photograph of them standing outside the tent, also bigger boys.

RL: So was it everybody from the hostel?

GJ: Yes, more or less.

RL: Was it a smallish hostel?

GJ: Everybody who wasn't working at something or other.

RL: Right.

GJ: I can't remember, I didn't think it was very big, you know a house, like this kind of house except in all the rooms there were beds apart from where people were eating, so it must have been bigger than this, a big old house.

RL: And you were taken to the Bachad farm?

GJ: Yes and I immediately started fighting with the boys from Vienna about who had the better fire engine. And you see, that boy, Robert Sugar and Harry Borgenicht, they were from Vienna, and they became my friends and stroke enemies if you follow what I mean.

RL: So you were the only two from Germany?



GJ: Edith, no there must have been a few more from Germany, because people got to Northern Ireland also by different ways from the refugee committee. But, our path was the path leading to the farm. On the farm some of the Chalutzim were from Germany. You see because the Bachad had its main office in England, there was a David Eder farm, I think, I don't know if you have ever heard of it. And was that the Bachad farm, Bachad also had also a farm in England as well as in Northern Ireland.

RL: How many people would you say were on this farm?

**Tape 2: 29 minutes 54 seconds**

GJ: Too many. In Northern Ireland it was only about, no, I can't remember the acreage, I thought it was about 90 acres but I am being optimistic. It was quite a reasonable farm, it had quite a lot of fields and so on, but of course they had to build. All the Chalutzim were sleeping in the byres, you know they had whitewashed the byres. Do you want to hear all this?

RL: Aha ...

GJ: Well they had whitewashed the byres and made them into bedrooms. So, because there were too many, there were not too many cows, so they were sleeping there. And then they went into the main farm house, they adapted the main farm house for the Chalutzim, and, but we were living in tents until October/November and it was raining, and in Northern Ireland you know it was always raining. We were in a quagmire really, once we stepped outside the tent. And every day we took our bed line, I don't know if you want to hear all that, everyday we took our beds outside, they were camping beds, you know, and you never slept with the same sheets or blankets. Anyway, so that wasn't so terrible. Anyway, but after a while they built huts, long wooden huts, in which there were dormitories, and then we lived in these dormitories, and there were some little rooms for, there was Mrs Letzter, anyway for definite people you know, who were grown up and with their kids, but we shared a big dormitory with big boys, and there was a lot of fighting, as well.

RL: What did you do during the day?

GJ: I suppose we were playing quite a lot of the time. But of course, when the summer holidays were over, they didn't take us back to Belfast. The war had started in September and they thought, well they are best out there rather than coming into Belfast, because Belfast might be bombed. It was bombed twice, or three times, but anyway, they are best left out there, so in the following year they built the huts, these long wooden huts where we lived and where there was a Shul in it. One room was a Shul and another room was a library, there was a music room. They were from Vienna and were very artistic. And I was a Berlin loudmouth, and so on and so forth.

RL: Did you have any English lessons?

GJ: I think some people tried to give us English lessons, yes. I mean Mr Mundheim, hand-grosse acht, hand size 8, in case we didn't behave ourselves. He gave us a few lessons, but if you want to know how we learned English, it was The Dandy and The Beano. We got The Dandy and The Beano and later on The Hotspur and so on. We got them after the kids, the English kids in Belfast, the Jewish English kids in Belfast had finished with them. The members of the committee, the ladies, came out, sort of once a week, I suppose to look after us, I don't know. We were looked after by the girl Chalutzim, the girls and boys were moved around, a month

**Tape 2: 34 minutes 33 seconds**

in the laundry, a month in the kitchen, a month looking after the children, so we were part of that, so we were looked after by Tamara, Leah and all these people, which by the way, they also gave the cows these names you know, not the horses. So they were all right, so they looked after us, and somebody looked after the children, I suppose they had games and so on, and we made model planes and stuff like that. There were various changes at certain points in the farm.

RL: Did you help with the animals at all?

GJ: Chickens, well the chickens, feeding the chickens. But not seriously, later on we helped seriously, when we were 14/15, in our holidays of course, and there were the special potato holidays, digging potatoes and weeding, and there was this farm manager, Patriasz, from Hungary, and he treated all of us as if we were Hungarian slaves. Even the Chalutzim.

And there was one chap from the village, so we had some contact with the people.

RL: You said you learned English through the comics ...

GJ: Oh yes, English. Well I learned it through the comics, but Robert and Harry already spoke a bit of English, they had been to school in Belfast.

RL: Who were Robert and Harry?

GJ: Well they were two boys who were with me. Robert Sugar and Harry Borgenicht, you know, and there was Felix Sussmann, he was from Czechoslovakia, he had a different lead, he came via the Berwitz family in England, and of course we went to the village school, after Christmas 1939, we went to the village school. Not just us, there was another five years higher if you followed me, because I was 11 then, so people who were 15 went as well.

RL: And the first time you went to school was after Christmas?

GJ: Yes, I wasn't at school between coming in June and Christmas.

RL: So up until then, you were just playing?

GJ: More or less, yes.

RL: What kind of ...

GJ: Well not playing, you know ... yes ...

RL: What kind of things did you do to occupy your time?

**Tape 2: 37 minutes 56 seconds**

GJ: Well we played, not monopoly, we didn't have it then, what do you call it, you know the street game, Oxford Street, you know when you land on it you had to pay rent.

RL: Monopoly?

GJ: We played all sorts, we played chess and we played drafts and we played with a ball and we made models, and later on we went collecting paper and metal from the surrounding farms. And, no, I did that I Germany, thread work, I don't know.

RL: What happened Yom Tov time? Rosh Hashona, Yom Kippur, what happened then?

GJ: Well it was Yom Tov ...

RL: You didn't go anywhere else? You stayed ...

GJ: No we stayed there. We had our Shul there and there was some people who were very frum. I think they had mainly come from Germany, anyway there were some people who were very frum who could pray and knew the service, and we had a Sefer Torah, so there was no problem. And they danced Hora from morning tonight, oh no, they must have done some farm work, it just seemed to me, you know, "Ashreinu, ashreinu mah tov, mah tov, mah tov chelkeinu" and stuff like that all the time, all the time, and they could keep it up, they could keep it up for hours and hours.

RL: Was this the Chalutzim?

GJ: Yes, they are the ones, they are the main core, despite the fact that there were many grown ups, other grown ups and the children there, they were the core of the farm, if you follow what I mean. They were the ones who did the work, you know the farm work.

RL: What work needed doing on the farm?

GJ: It never stops. Ploughing, sowing and weeding, and it depends what you are growing.

RL: What did they grow?

GJ: Well, most things, carrots, I mean they need weeding, don't they, and I suppose cabbages they were growing, and they had lots of chickens. And we only got chicken, I am complaining, it is ridiculous, we only got chicken at Pesach, but we sold them, so we only had a kosherer coming down at, before Pesach time. What do you call it again? Anyway, but otherwise we, like the queen, we killed the chickens and sold them and sold the eggs. We had all sorts of things like that. Once the chicken house caught fire, you know the big chicken house where you grow all of the chicken, and the Chalutzim girls ran with big bath pans, all the way to the chicken house to put the fire out. But the

**Tape 2: 42 minutes 18 seconds**

point was, to run all that way with a big pan of water, it was ridiculous. There were ridiculous things. It was a crazy place, because the refugees were crazy. They were slightly nutty, everybody.

RL: In what way?

GJ: They weren't in a normal atmosphere, it wasn't a normal atmosphere, they were funny people who did funny things at different times.

RL: Can you give me an example?

GJ: I don't know, there was a big fellow, who one day wouldn't get up, a big refugee, who one day wouldn't get up out of bed, he just stayed in bed all the time. And always there was a carry on with it, attached to all these things, you know ...

RL: How old was the youngest child there?

GJ: Maxi, I didn't dare to say hello to him. He was probably about four, he came out with his sister, his sister actually didn't stay on the farm. My sister didn't stay on the farm, my sister became a nurse, apart from being a nurse to different Jewish families, you know, she became a nurse, in a hospital, where they starved her, but anyway she became a nurse at the Newtonards Hospital. And, so some people left, those with a bit of guts, if you follow what I mean, and ... but I didn't say guts, if you didn't leave you didn't leave!

RL: Who looked after the four year old?

GJ: Nobody in particular. Well he was just one of the children, a special child, later on we also had a baby, you know where a lady got a baby. That is why I said Mrs Letzter, because Mrs Letzter had one of the little rooms. And we used to run around shouting, "Shhhh! Larry is sleeping!" It wasn't an ideal place, can I put it that way, because you can hear everything through wooden walls, so ...

RL: Was there a routine to the day?

GJ: Yes, there was, especially if you worked.

Anyway, we all went to the village school, and there was Mr Palmer, who already, he had all the classes apart from the baby infants. Mrs ... the lady had the baby infants in one room, and he had all the classes up to class 7, in the other room. And he already had children from the orphanage, I think they were treated worse than us, because they blamed them for being not quite legitimate. Anyway, he had all those children, the ordinary village children, and then he got the refugees, poor fellow. I often thought about

**Tape 2: 46 minutes 17 seconds**

him afterwards, and he had all these children, and he ran all these classes at one and the same time, so he used to give us hundreds of sums to do, I mean, I know now, just to keep us quiet. And of course the refugee children wouldn't behave correctly. For instance, if he said, "Hold out your hand." Sonia wouldn't hold her hand out and she got hold of the cane and broke it that is Sonia Mechlowitz. You have got somebody called Mechlowitz in Manchester, I have often wondered whether that person is related to Sonia, who went to San Francisco, either Los Angeles or San Francisco, anyway, that was one big row. And then, they were playing cards at the back of the class, you know with little cards, those little toy cards. So that is where I learned most things, I learned my English there, spelling, you see, spell surrender, with a cane like this, you didn't get caned if you spelt it correctly. That was Mr Palmer, he was very good, but he couldn't sing. That was the village school, for all I know it is still there, it is probably built a magnificent school.

RL: Did you mix with the other children?

GJ: Oh yes, we played football with them.

RL: How did they get on with you?

GJ: They just took it, we were the children from that farm, just more children on that farm than on other farms. It is a holiday resort now, it is a lovely place, you are just beside the sea. We were told you mustn't point out to the sea. Because that might be a signal to an enemy, so although we walked every day to and from the farm along the sea road to school, we didn't point out, we didn't want to be ... so it was wartime.

RL: Did you feel any hostility towards you at all?

GJ: Not really. I mean we weren't living in town, we were in the country. I am sure there were some people who were not pleased to have a refugee farm near to them. I remember there was once somebody who tried to, you know, tell us about religion. It was a pretty hopeless case, I mean it is a joke now, but it actually happened, you may not believe it, "What are you?" "What religion are you?"

RL: "Jewish"

GJ: "Are you a protestant Jew or a catholic Jew?" But we were in County Down, it is protestant, very protestant, I don't know about Millisle will be as well, so we were in that, of course we wouldn't know anything, if I wasn't all that aware in Berlin, well I was slightly more aware in Northern Ireland. But, anyway that is where I learned English and sums, I knew already knew my tables in German, and my alphabet in German, and when I came ...

**Tape 2: 50 minutes 39 seconds**

RL: How long did you go to the school for? How many years was that?

GJ: It must have been four years. And I got my leaving certificate, to Gertrude Jacobowitz and, so then, there was, at that point, the two other boys, Harry and Robert, were already going to a grammar school, Bangor Grammar in Bangor, which is just up the coast, and as I wasn't intellectual, or not thought to be as good as the other two I was going to go into the air force at 15, because you could get a sort of apprenticeship, and I was going to go to Donaghadee which was quite near to do motor mechanics. And that didn't come off because Mr Jacobi, who was our nurse, he was actually a saxophone player from Vienna but I think he did marvellous for us, Mr Jacobi got, the government was paying for refugee children and I don't know how quite, some money for their schooling, I don't think quite refugees necessarily, anyway he was paying for the schooling if they could get into school and, so I didn't go into the air force, and I didn't do motor mechanics which probably was a terrible mistake actually, now that you think of it, and of course I could have had a garage and he got me to go to Regent House School which was another grammar school in Newtownards this time, so they two went to Bangor and I went to Newtownards. By bus and by train I went to school.

RL: Every day?

GJ: Every day, that's right, and, that is how I got to grammar school.

RL: How old were you when you went?

GJ: I was 14, coming up 15, I was always slightly behind in age in a way. I was 14/15.

RL: What happened when you were 13? Did you have a Bar Mitzvah?

GJ: Yes.

RL: What did they do?

GJ: Well, in the dining room. They did a special sort of little meal. And I got some presents, a watch from my sister. So it was a proper Bar Mitzvah. What was the problem? Was, I didn't do my Haphtarah, because Bernard Sell had beaten me up

enough, because, I mean I can still say “Vayaan Laban Vayomer El Yaacov habanot benotaya vehabonim bonay” Anyway, the thing is, I learned, to begin with, there wasn’t any question of doing the whole thing and doing Haphtarah as well, I couldn’t afford the time, so I learned the parsha, at the end, the two sections at the end or three sections at the end, and then there was my Bar Mitzvah and I haven’t done my Haphtarah. So I did my Bar Mitzvah that much and they made a special little do, that was in 1943, just when my parents were being sent to Auschwitz, so my parents came out of prison in 1940, having served their time for not declaring some valuables, or sending 100 Marks out of Germany or something, and, I told you what happened to them, my

**Tape 2: 55 minutes 35 seconds**

mother went back to Berlin, and she went to Sybelstrasse, and she lived with Aunt Hertah and my Aunt Meta had already been sent east, to some camp in the east, and it says in that big book to which camp she had been sent, but the big book isn’t all that accurate I believe, I don’t know, I am no more accurate than it is. As I say, my father went to a concentration camp, I suppose working, he was such a good German, and they both, and my mother, it is precise what transport she was on, but my father, I don’t know when he went to Auschwitz, but he went to Auschwitz, it is all documented, they have a document that you, when they said they didn’t know. That big book, was a PHD thesis, or two people’s PHD thesis. Anyway ...

RL: Coming back to you, I haven’t asked you about food, what kind of food were you eating on the farm?

GJ: Yes, cholent ... well we didn’t eat chicken, we only had that once a year. I don’t know, I can’t remember really. Did we have vorsht? We weren’t very wealthy on this farm, it was all ridiculous, amongst thousands of chickens, and we, on a Shabbos we had a mixture of rice and beans, you know, heated from the previous day, or cold, and we had lots of potatoes, in Northern Ireland you had lots of potatoes. So we had lots of potatoes, and we had things like carrots and cabbage and did we have ... did we eat a lot of lettuce? I don’t know. We had apples. We had apple trees, and we had a kitchen garden as well, you know, above the kitchen. Well, they were all learning to be agriculturist, all the Chalutzim were learning, I don’t think they came from farms in Germany. Well some came from a farm where they had been training in Germany, just moving across, the Bachad. Most ended up in Israel.

RL: We will just have to stop here.

GJ: Yes.

RL: The tape is about to end.

**TAPE 3**

RL: This is tape three with Gerald Jayson.

So we were on the Bachad farm and you were going to school in the village school and I think I asked you about food, it was the last thing we had spoken about. Were there any particular events or happenings that you remember happening on the farm that stand out in your mind.

GJ: I don't know, every day was an event, something happening, somebody going funny, you know.

RL: Was there any medical support for the children? Or any psychiatric ...

GJ: We had a dentist come round on, I can't remember, he had a bicycle, he had a drill that was operated by the foot, a dental drill, operated by the foot. I remember him pulling eight teeth out in one go out of Harry Borgenicht. Medical, I think there was a doctor, but he didn't come all that often, I don't think we were, well I wasn't all that ill really, there were people who, who when they came back from the army, someone had malaria.

RL: What about psychologically? Was there any support for the children in any kind of ...

GJ: No, no. It is very funny that when we meet now in the AJR they are worried about our psychological state, which may be true, we may need improvement and so on, but we never had any psychological advice or anything like that, they just left us to it, so if anybody was slightly crazy, if anything they were encouraged, so I am afraid we didn't get any saner. This was particularly unfortunate for the grown ups who were of course in a far worse psychological state, perhaps healthy but in a far worse psychological state, perhaps healthy but in a worse psychological state than we children were.

RL: How many grown ups were on the farm?

GJ: Oh, there must have been about 40 to 50.

RL: Were they working on the farm or were did they go out to work elsewhere?

GJ: No, they were working on the farm and then some of them then left and did different things, but a few had already qualified in Germany and so they were already engineers in Germany. And some became accountants, one became an accountant.

RL: Were they different to the Chalutzim?

GJ: Yes, of course, they hadn't come, they weren't part of the Bachad. But we all mixed.

**Tape 3: 4 minutes 7 seconds**



RL: How many Chalutzim would you say there were?

GJ: Probably about 30, 30 to 40. Perhaps I am being optimistic, about 30.

RL: And children?

GJ: Well there were about, at the most 12/14. People came and left to some extent. At the very end all the ones that were going to Palestine had gone. The farm broke up around 1947, it had broken up by then, and by then those who were going to go to Israel had gone, but the children went all over the place. Robert went to New York. Harry went to Columbia. Because somebody else had the name of Borgenicht so Mr Jacobi worked it out that they must be related so he went to Columbia. Felix became an architect, he went to Belfast first and went all over the place. And went also to Belfast to go to Queens University.

RL: So let me just take you through your education then. You were in the village school at the moment.

GJ: Yes.

RL: What happened after that?

GJ: Well, Mr Jacobi, a little fat man, who played the saxophone in Vienna, incongruous, he was our nurse at that time, at the very end. You know, all the Chalutzim, oh no, that happened in 1943, he managed to get finance for us to go to secondary school, either a scholarship or finance from somewhere, so that is how I managed to get finance for school in Newtonards, so that is where I went for four years and while I was there I managed, well I don't think I did it deliberately, but I came to the top of the class, particularly in mathematical subjects. There was ordinary maths and advanced maths and so on and so forth, and anyway in physics and all the rest. I happened to get to the top of the class, so that by the end, I would have got a scholarship from the county if I had been born there. So I ended myself at the university, this doesn't sound quite kosher, and anyway I ended myself at the university and I got a wonderful CV or write up from my science master and with that I went to the treasurer of the refugee committee which by then was sort of breaking down, or breaking up, because there was no more farm, the farm was breaking up by 1947 and I was supposed to have been sent to London but somehow they must have had a discussion in the committee and said I could stay on in Belfast, so I went to Queens University, Belfast and did chemistry.

RL: And did they fund that?

GJ: Yes.

RL: Did you have much ...

**Tape 3: 8 minutes 10 seconds**

GJ: It wasn't as much as it is nowadays.

RL: Did you have much contact with the committee over the years?

GJ: Not really. We used to get ten shillings a week pocket money and we lived with, I lived with Felix who was an architect and we lived with Mrs Simons who was the widow of the Shammas, the ex-Shammas, and so they did two things at one and the same time, that is how they paid for our staying there.

RL: So this is when you were at university.

GJ: Yes.

RL: When you were in the second school ...

GJ: Yes ...

RL: Were you still living on the farm?

GJ: Yes.

RL: And travelling backwards and forwards.

GJ: Yes, all the time.

RL: And how did you get on in that second school? How were you treated by the other children and the teachers?

GJ: Oh, wonderful, it was wonderful. It was for me like a haven from the farm, not that I wanted to go from the farm, but it was, it was another life, and the, I was clever then, not like later, but the algebra and all the mathematics, three dimensional geometry and all that stuff suited me down to the ground and I enjoyed it, the pathos.

RL: Were there other Jewish children in that school?

GJ: Yes. Felix went to the same school as well. And Erica and Daisy went to that school. Newell, they changed their name to Newell. They had their parents with them, in the refugee life there was an awful difference, not just with life on the farm, but generally when you speak to refugees between people who came over with their parents and those who didn't. Those that came over with their parents, it was almost, almost, normal. Even if you came with just one parent, Robert Sugar had his mother in England, not on the farm, but he had her in England, and our friend whom you talk to in Penny Lane, what was his name, Goldsmith, he came over with his mother, and other refugees that I

**Tape 3: 11 minutes 18 seconds**

know about, those that came over with their parents, their life was completely different. No, that is not true either, but, their make up, their life was different, because I suppose they had somebody to cling to, or to complain to, and, so that was quite different. Anyway these two girls, Daisy Neubart and Erica Neubart, they had their mother with them, their father was somewhere else. Their mother was a milliner to, to the Austrian emperor, going back and back and back so they were different. And Marianne, Marianne Renner had her parents and grandparents with her on the farm. She became a doctor in New York, so her life was different, so it did, although you were on one of these combined things, it did make a difference whether you had your parents or not.

RL: Did you get these letters from your parents, like the Red Cross letters?

GJ: The 25 word letters?

RL: Yes.

GJ: Yes. Only for a time of course, not after 1943, and, but my sister dealt with them mainly. I mean, I got them to look at.

RL: When did you find out what had happened to them?

GJ: At the end of the war there was a great wailing and carrying on, that is when people, that is when people heard.

[Telephone rings] I am afraid my sister has to go to answer that, unless she is in the garden, in which case she wouldn't hear it. I will just go... There was a break in the video when he went to answer the telephone.

I don't know what I was talking about. Parents?

RL: How you heard ...

GJ: Oh yes. After the end of the war we must have all heard, because, but it was too late to say Kaddish, we didn't know when we should say Kaddish, and we were advised to say it on Yom Kippur. I sort of heard from others talking.

RL: Were you on the farm?

GJ: I mean we were, we had the Red Cross in Berlin looking for our parents, but of course they didn't find them.

RL: Were you on the farm still at this time?

**Tape 3: 14 minutes 47 seconds**

GJ: Yes, when that happened. That was 1945. Yes, I had another two years to go in school and it was a great, all the women cried when they heard that their relations had died, and I suppose the men as well.

RL: How long ...

GJ: But I was so selfish I don't think I was ever upset.

RL: How long after the war had finished did you find this out?

GJ: A good, I think quite a while, we didn't know it immediately, in other words I wasn't, the red cross went into Germany and then into Berlin and so on, and there was no uncle or auntie to let us know, you know there was no relation there to let us know what had happened or where they had gone, there was just nobody left.

RL: How often did you see your sister?

GJ: When she was in Newtonards in that hospital I saw her once every two weeks. Later on I didn't see her any more, and then I went to live with them again in 1950, we are now jumping after my degree, I am working at J Lyons in London, I was a food analyst and then I lived with them for a bit, because I didn't have a job of course.

RL: Coming back to your second school. Did you, what were the exams that you took at the end of that school?

GJ: I took, junior certificate, after two years and after four years I took the senior certificate and I also took the Cambridge, like the GCSE it was, so I took one English certificate as well, just in case I ended up in England I suppose.

RL: How was your English by then?

GJ: I should have thought reasonable, you know. I mean I was reading English books and doing English language and literature, in fact my English grammar was better than my German grammar I should have thought, I mean I was very good at German, I was second in Northern Ireland in German in the senior certificate, that was my foreign language. The chap I shared my room with, Robert Sugar, he was first, the two of us were first and second in Northern Ireland in German. We had very good teachers, my poor German teacher wanted to know whether she had an accent or not, it was quite amusing. It was so unfair, you know.

RL: Having come over from Germany to Northern Ireland did you find the country strange in any way, or different from what you were used to.

**Tape 3: 19 minutes 6 seconds**

GJ: Oh yes, it was a different, the climate was a different, it was different, and I was living in the countryside, oh yes it was quite different, I couldn't go to have an ice cream really, at an ice cream parlour in the city. There we had sliders and you know, kit kats, so it was different.

RL: What about the people?

GJ: Well they were different as well. They wouldn't run in the rain. Well if it started raining they wouldn't start running to get out of the rain, they just kept on walking in the rain, fellow pupils, you know, I found it strange. I wasn't all that much with people there until I got to university, then I was with other people, but before that I was with the people on the farm, who were strange enough. And, well I will have been strange as well, you know, funny as well, I mean when we played monopoly, or, what do you call that game that you play, anyway it was taken very seriously, you know with touching under the table, if somebody landed on your property, and when I was first on the farm there was also, there was a terrific row, you know a fight between people, over the game. Of course the boys who were older than me, you know 18/19, many of them went into the army, they were interned to the Isle of Man and then went into the army from there, so you've got somebody living in Manchester, Mr Gossel, I think its Harry Gossel who was on the farm, so you can ask him about the farm.

RL: Did you ever have to appear before a tribunal?

GJ: No, why should I? I was too young to go into the army. I was less than 16, I was only 16 in 45, 28 and 45, mind you that is 17, but I wasn't called, they didn't call people up in Northern Ireland because they didn't want to get any republicans into the army, mix, if you follow what I mean, because IRA was really siding in a way with the Germans, you know, it wasn't England or it certainly wasn't Northern Ireland.

RL: Did you have to register as an alien?

GJ: I think we all had, I can't remember doing it myself, but I should have thought they had all of us on a register, especially on a farm full of Germans and Austrians and God knows what else, Czechs.

RL: But did you have to inform them if you changed address, when you moved to ... ?

GJ: Oh yes, oh yes.

RL: When you moved to university?

GJ: Oh yes, you couldn't just move to another address you had to tell people where you were. I mean I was an enemy alien, which was funny because we hated the Germans more than anybody else, naturally.

**Tape 3: 23 minutes 20 seconds**

That is why in the end they allowed people out of internment and into the army, and there were some very tough fellows, not just the Chalutzim but also some other chaps who joined the British army, and some who got wounded.

RL: You went to university, and how did you find it there?

GJ: Tough, it wasn't as easy as school, there were people at university who knew far more than I did, who had already done part of the course at school, for example I hadn't done any organic chemistry and they had done organic chemistry.

RL: What course were you doing?

GJ: Chemistry. I had Professor Ubelohde who was head of department, he later went back to Imperial College, but there were some professors who were refugees actually who had come over from the continent. Well I wasn't that... anyway I found it tough. I found mathematical physics tough, I can't remember the professor who taught mathematical physics but it was very, very tough.

RL: Were you involved in any university activities?

GJ: Well, only, I did a little bit of boxing for a little bit. But I didn't get to represent Queens, other people did.

RL: Was there a Jewish Society?

GJ: That is a funny thing, I didn't, I am sure there was, but I didn't join it, not until I got to the University of Newcastle. Well it was called Kings College then, University of Durham in Newcastle. That is where I met my wife that is how I met my wife. She was the secretary of the Jewish Society.

RL: So can you take me through it then. How many years were you at Queens?

GJ: Three.

RL: And what did you gain?

GJ: BSc 2:1

RL: Did you mix at all with the Jewish community there?

GJ: Not very much. I mean, I did go to the club a few times. We once performed for the Jewish club from the farm.

**Tape 3: 26 minutes 29 seconds**

“We are the children of the farm  
Oh what a crowd, but we will do you no harm  
By speaking too long  
Or singing a song  
We believe in action  
And for your attraction  
We are going to make a short little play  
It is not so good, but anyhow gay.”

We once came up, at Chanuka was it, to perform in Belfast.

RL: Did you put on performances anywhere else?

GJ: Oh, we must have done. On the farm we had performances. Where we had to entertain us, there was only the cinema in Donaghadee where you could go for thruppence, that is the old thruppence, and there was, but that was much later, dancing in Millisle but we didn't go to that so we had to make our own entertainment. We played quite a lot of table tennis. Harry Borgenicht was very good at table tennis. I believe he became a good tennis player. So, that is the kind of thing we did, and some of us, not me, had bicycles.

RL: So, when you finished university, what was the next move?

GJ: Well, I went to London, and I couldn't get a job for a while, so for a while, I was a postman. And after that, I got a job with J Lyons and Company, you know the tea shop company. They had a food laboratory out in Hammersmith and I worked there for just over a year, as a food analyst.

RL: Were you living with your sister at that time?

GJ: Yes, yes, for the first bit anyway.

RL: Had she married?

GJ: Yes.

RL: Who did she marry?

GJ: She married Len Baum.

RL: What was his background?

GJ: He had been in the air force in the war.

**Tape 3: 29 minutes 24 seconds**

RL: Was he English born?

GJ: Yes, yes. They were both very, shall I say left wing, you know in those days, well, towards the war and after the war, and there was Europe, anyway ...

RL: What were they involved in?

GJ: I don't know. And, however they are still married. They have been married for 50 years, whether that means anything and, and they had a boy, so I have got a nephew, very musically talented, a violin player. And, he doesn't do it for a living, he nearly does it for a living, but he doesn't do it for a living, he does something else, he works for some big musical company, you know tapes and so on, anyway, so, they were living there and I was a postman in Harrow and then I became a food analyst then for J Lyons, and at J Lyons I met, when they were painting downstairs laboratories, I met Hannah Loebel who was in a way similar to me except for she had a PHD already and she was older. She had done a PHD with Joe Weiss who was a co-worker of Fritz Haber. Fritz Haber was a poison gasman from the First World War, who had been the poison gasman for the Germans, and of course he was kicked out of Germany as well. Worst things should have happened to them, to him. But anyway, Joe Weiss was working with, he was a reader already, he was a reader at Newcastle University, and she had done, he was doing radiation chemistry by then. Really free, radical chemistry, and she had got her PHD with them and he had a whole lot of people from Israel and Newcastle and so on working with them, about four or five and I wrote to him and I got a studentship. It wasn't very much, I could hardly live on it, and so I started working up there.

RL: First of all, what did you think of London when you were living there.

GJ: Oh it was fantastic. Anyway it was fantastic, in 1951 the exhibition was on, after the war. I had been to London before, while I was a student I was a kitchen porter at the 1948 Olympic Games. That was wonderful, £5 a week and all that food. I was working in the Scandinavian camp. Anyway, London was great, but it didn't, I was going to do a PHD in London, but I couldn't, I was going to do it part time, and I wasn't able to really. And, so I just gave it up, and I was later working with someone who got the Nobel Prize as well. You know a supervisor; the supervisor got the Nobel Prize. It was nothing to do with me whatsoever, it was him. He was a brilliant organic chemist, and, so I went to Newcastle and did radiation chemistry which was the effect on ionising radiation on chemical systems, so we were then working with the effect of x-rays on solutions which releases free radicals in the OH radicals in the solution and oxidises any solid you may have there. So that is what I did.

RL: Where were you living?

GJ: I was living in Newcastle, I can't stay nasty things, Newcastle is ever so cold, it is five degrees colder than Manchester for example and the cold hit me from the mattress

**Tape 3: 34 minutes 51 seconds**



upwards, not from the blanket down. Anyway, I got a room there, I was living in a room, on my own, and I got, I joined the, I finally, the Jewish feeling got to me I suppose after all that, and I joined the Jewish Students Society and told the Rabbi, Rabbi Toperoff, was it, Rabbi Toperoff, that is where we met, that is where I met my wife, Sylvia.

RL: What was she doing?

GJ: She was doing medicine. And I am afraid I made her finish it, I mean I made her do her degree, finished, and I eventually finished my thesis and my PHD, and then I went to work for Unilever at Port Sunlight.

RL: When did you marry?

GJ: 1953.

RL: Where were you at that point?

GJ: I was at Kings College, Newcastle.

RL: And where did you marry?

GJ: In Hartlepool, in the rooms over something or other. We didn't marry in the synagogue, Reverend Evans married us, he was the Reverend, not the Rabbi in Hartlepool, he later became the shomer at Rakusens or something. So whenever I eat Rakusens matzah afterwards I thought of him. But anyway, so he married us and we didn't get married in the Shul, because it was a Sunday, and Sylvia's uncle was the Lord Mayor, not the Lord Mayor, the Mayor of Hartlepool, and I think he didn't want to offend the local people, but I can say all that, she isn't here. And, so we married in the rooms above, you know it was a proper wedding, but it was just that ...

RL: What was Sylvia's maiden name?

GJ: Gutmann, it's funny, it is the same in a way as my grandparents, nothing to do with each other. And so we got married.

RL: And where did you live after marriage?

GJ: We lived in various flats, I think the first one was Mrs Bineman, we lived with Mrs Bineman, but the poor lady died when she was away at her sister's funeral in Hull or Grimsby, it is one of those ports, and we had to move. Those were the days of, you know when you couldn't shift the rent and whatever, and once we lived over a pickle factory and you could smell it all over. So we lived in Newcastle.

RL: And then you moved to?

**Tape 3: 39 minutes 10 seconds**

GJ: Beddington, to Liverpool, we moved here, because I got a job at Port Sunlight.

RL: Was your wife working?

GJ: No, not then.

RL: And what children do you have?

GJ: Three. Ruth is the first and then there is David and then it's Michael.

RL: When were they born?

GJ: 1950s, 57, 59 and what is 59 and 40 ... 1963, and we had moved, I had got another job with Liverpool Polytechnic, it wasn't a polytechnic then, but by 1960.

RL: First of all the job at Port Sunlight, what were you doing then?

GJ: Physical chemistry of surfactants, physical chemistry of washing in other words, absorption studies and stuff like that and then we set up a radio chemistry lab because somebody thought radiation chemistry and radio chemistry are the same things.

RL: And how did you get on with them there?

GJ: Alright, fine, so I said to them, "If I have got to do radio chemistry, can I please go on the course at Harwell so that is what I did and that is how I became a radio chemist as well, so I did surface chemistry and radio chemistry and radiation chemistry. But you only do the radio chemistry for a purpose, that is to follow atoms or molecules around.

RL: Why did you decide to leave that job?

GJ: Because I wasn't capable of doing the research all the time. What I mean is every three months you had to write a progress report, and, so you had to keep something back, it was like the soviet union in a way, you had to keep something back so that you had something for your next progress report, because it is quite easy not to have any results at all, I mean you might be working like mad, and you don't have, you have results but they are all negative. Well that is very bad in a way because people who don't do science think that you are doing something positive all the time, whereas you can go, so I found it bothersome that I had to produce something positive all the time, which I did, it was alright, but in the meanwhile I had learned to do radio chemistry and in the meanwhile, I do not know if this is relevant or not, and in the meanwhile there had been the accident up the nuclear place in Cumberland, you know a big accident there and the United Kingdom atomic energy, you know there was a big enquiry and what should they do in

**Tape 3: 43 minutes 11 seconds**

the future and so on, and one of the things they decided was that they wanted to train their managers, you know, their managers, their senior managers, outside the establishment, so that it isn't an internal thing all the time, so this chap at the Liverpool Area Technical College came from the United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority and he wanted another person there as well to run these radiation safety enhance physics courses. So, it just so happens, that I had learned how to use a gamma spectrometre, because we are all together really, you know you meet each other, and so he said, "Come on and work for me", so I went to the Liverpool Area Technical College, which became eventually the Poly and then it became The John Moores University. Anyway, so I worked with them, and we set up this two weeks course, and these managers came from Windscale and so on and they all went on the radiation safety course and I hope we made it safer. But anyway, so that is how I got into that, and of course while I was doing that I kept on doing surface chemistry, absorption studies and so on, and I also kept on doing a little bit of radiation chemistry and I did that at the, in Manchester, at the, what do you call the cancer hospital in Manchester?

RL: Christies.

GJ: Christies, where they had a linear accelerator. They had a pulse radiolysis unit, and, well I knew some of the people there, because I had done radiation chemistry and you meet each other at these conferences. Anyway, so I got one afternoon a week on this apparatus, which is pulse radiolysis, where you give a pulse and you see what happens, so you produce a pulse of OH radicals and then you can follow the rate of reaction with different materials, so I did research and then I started teaching. In those days there wasn't a degree course at Liverpool Area College. There was a member of the institute of chemistry, you know, which became the Royal Institute, which is now the Royal Society of Chemistry where you can do a sort of degree on that, but later on we got a degree, a BSc and I got Research stud, altogether I had sixteen PHD students. I shouldn't smile about it because it was pretty horrific, I mean it as very hard supervising them, until you've, you know its one of those things, until you've done it and you've kvetched over their PHD, over their thesis and they are going to an external examiner you don't know how hard it is, I mean doing it yourself is hard, but supervising them is just as bad, it is like doing it all over again.

RL: How many years were you teaching?

GJ: My pension is 34 years, so I had a long stable life. After that, after all that beginning I had a long, stable ... it is so incongruous really.

RL: And how, what position did you go to?

GJ: Well I started off as senior lecturer and eventually after years and years and years I became a reader and then I became a prof, at the very end, for the last five years. That is because of the research, they couldn't really, you know, you know they made, they put

**Tape 3: 48 minutes 5 seconds**

Criteria. You have to apply, or it is offered to you, but it is a bit different at the polytechnics or these new universities, you don't have to be a wonder kid in the research, but it helps. You anyway, you don't have to in fact they didn't look on the research that was wonderful, teaching was the important thing, or being an administrator was a great thing, but by the time I got towards the end of my working life I had done so much research, you know, published and so on, that they could hardly say no. I had a little school, I had two senior lecturers under me, all doing different bits of radio chemistry and they were doing inorganic chemistry and analytical chemistry and so it was quite a little school.

RL: What research had you done?

GJ: Well I had, the effect of radiation on chemical systems. The surface chemistry, absorption studies and solution studies and radiochemistry onto those other things, I mean I would have to look up the titles of all the papers. Different students did different subjects, each produced about three papers ... so I am being interviewed for a job, oh, I haven't got a tie on.

RL: Did you publish any books?

GJ: Yes, with other people. I can give you a copy of the latest. I don't think it will interest you but I will give you a copy of the latest.

RL: What was it called?

GJ: Radioisotopes I think. This has to do with the applications of radioactive materials to medical diagnosis and somebody in the biochemistry department and the radio pharmacist from the main hospital here, they wrote it with me.

RL: Do you ever come across any hostility at all in the university or in the technical college?

GJ: You can't tell. Because the whole life was so hostile, I mean, what do you mean. You mean because of being Jewish? Yes, I mean people made remarks and so on, they would say, "Are you one of those?" "What do you think of so and so?" But not like Germany, I mean, and also you may not, if you are not promoted it may not, it may have something to do with it, or it may not. Who can tell? You can't tell. You just have to take ... I mean, it is your own character as well, compared to others, and why weren't the others promoted. I mean you can tell with regards to research by looking at the papers that are published and so on, but it is almost impossible to tell because you don't know why people take different decisions, they just take decisions because they are in the job. But I suppose if you are super good, if you are like that Professor in London, the genetics fellow, you become the Lord don't you.

**Tape 3: 53 minutes 0 second**

RL: Did you belong to any societies?

GJ: Oh yes, millions of them. I mean it is all on that list. I am a Fellow of the Royal Society of Chemistry and The Society of Chemical Industry and I was – oh all sorts – you just, you do automatically, you know it gets a bit much. You do automatically.

RL: Did you belong to any other organisations? Not connected with work.

GJ: I belonged to a Shul.

RL: Which Shul?

GJ: Allerton. I was chairman there for three years. That was tough. I was secretary for three years and then chairman for three years.

RL: Was that the Shul you joined when you came to Liverpool?

GJ: That's right. I am not one of the top religious people there I have to say, there are people better than me. We have Rabbi Golomb, I don't know if you have heard of him, there is a whole family of Golombs, in Sheffield, I think his brother is.

RL: And where were you living? When you first came you were living ...

GJ: In Bebbington over on the Wirral, to be near where I was working, I used to walk to work.

RL: And when did you move?

GJ: In 1960, just a bit after I changed my job. Well we wanted to move because of the children. There was the King David School here.

RL: Did they all go to King David?

GJ: No, they didn't actually, only one went to the King David, Michael who lives in Manchester.

RL: Where did the others go?

GJ: My daughter went to the school behind us, where they are rebuilding. And my other son, we sent to Clifton, it has got a Jewish house, that wasn't successful, anyway ...

RL: What made you send him there?

**Tape 3: 56 minutes 6 seconds**

GJ: Because it is a posh school and my wife had started to work. We could afford it. They got marks

RL: Can you take me through your children? (sound on video was bad here)

GJ: Am I supposed to talk about all that?

RL: Yes.

GJ: Well, my daughter wasn't very good academically. In fact, there was something not quite right at the birth and so on, but she is alright. She lives in Leeds and is married to Douglas Taylor, who has his own Shul I think, that is the way it appears to me. What is the Shul called, it is very religious, very religious, and when I go there they all say, your son in law is a wonderful person, and he does, sometimes when he comes here for Shabbos and so on he does the Haphtarah and so on, he Lehen almost every week, he only comes here when he has got somebody else to Lehn. So we are absolutely super religious when they are here, absolutely, and I mean everything is spot on anyway but I mean it is even glatt.

RL: Does your daughter work?

GJ: No.

RL: I think she does go to a Jewish school and help with the ... feeding, food or something?

RL: Did she work when she left school?

GJ: Yes, in a solicitors office. But nothing, you know.

RL: Do they have children?

GJ: No, I am afraid not. They tried but they couldn't. She had a miscarriage [whispered].

Anyway, so they live in Leeds and we sometimes go to Leeds to see them, once every month.

And the second one is, I am telling you all our secrets here, it is terrible, you have an advantage ... and David who went to that posh school in Bristol, he lives in Ainsdale, you know outside Southport, I don't have to tell you ...

RL: OK, we will stop here because the film is about to end.

**TAPE 4**

This is tape 4 of the interview with Gerald Jayson.

You were just taking me through your sons and you were just about to tell me ...

GJ: Well David did a medical degree in Liverpool and he is now a consultant anaesthetist in Southport, and he has got three children, all with very Jewish sounding names, the youngest is Becky, the next one is Stephanie, that is not such a Jewish sounding name and the son is called Jonathan, and they are quite old.

RL: Who did he marry?

GJ: A nurse. That got into bed with him ...

So they live in Southport, quite happy.

RL: How old are the children?

GJ: Jonathan, the eldest is 16/17, he has just done his A whatever it is. Before A levels that they introduced before.

By the way I never told you, I had three months in Burma, but anyway ...

So he has just just done, and the girls are younger, Sylvia knows the exact ages, so they live in Southport.

RL: And your other son?

GJ: Michael. He went to the King David. And, he did math at Manchester University and then did accountancy with a firm in Manchester, I can't remember which one, so he is an accountant, he was in London first with Ernst and Young, and now he is an accountant in Manchester with KPMG. I don't know, he has done alright, and he is married to Natalie who is a teacher.

RL: What was her maiden name?

GJ: Shapiro. And they are from London, and actually her parents have moved up to Manchester. And her sister has moved up to Manchester as well and is married here. Sylvia knows all the exact details. And as far as I know he is happy living in Whitefield.

RL: Do they have children?

GJ: Two children, two boys, one is Sam, Samuel, and the other is George, I don't quite understand it, but anyway it is George. It sounds such a serious name, he is the littlest thing you could imagine.

**Tape 4: 4 minutes 8 seconds**

RL: Did you name your children after anybody?

GJ: Not really, no. I don't know if Sylvia did, I didn't. Except after David the King, Michael or Ruth.

RL: You know I was asking you about what organisations you belong to, how long have you been connected with the AJR?

GJ: I haven't been connected with them at all. I was keeping away from the refugees, like many others, you know, and they had their 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, to which I didn't go, and when they had their 60<sup>th</sup>, and they said it is our 60<sup>th</sup> and the last, I said, "Oh well, we had better go to this, you know." So we better go to it, so I joined the Kinder Transport Reunion as it was called, run by Bertha Leverton, and that is how I really got into it again. In the meanwhile, Robert Sugar, who had been over here for the 50<sup>th</sup> got me, he is actually running it I think, in New York, he is some important and we had our own reunion, a farm reunion, of Felix, Robert, myself and Harry, the four boys, we had our, I mean all the others are too old really, I mean we had our own reunion in London.

RL: How did you feel going to a reunion?

GJ: It felt all very peculiar, and they were bald, it was peculiar. I mean I am talking personally, I am sure they were quite normal but to see them old and so on, and Felix is an architect, he has done buildings all over the world, and in Bahrain or somewhere he has built big hotels, so ... look how ... and Robert is to do with books, a printer of books and a compiler of books, and some are children's books, and so he is doing that, he is not working for anybody, he is self employed in New York, and he has written that his mother died only a little while ago. It is amazing really, she must be ninety something.

And Harry lives in Columbia, but he is often out of Columbia, the people he went to, the Borgenichts, they had a factory there, a bulb factory, glass bulbs, he was making glass bulbs and Christmas lights and he went into a very rich milieu if you follow what I mean of factory and big thing, so he has done very well, and he has been playing tennis up to a few years ago, perhaps he is still playing.

RL: Did you keep in touch with these boys?

GJ: With Robert, yes, by at least one letter a year. Harry I didn't actually. And Felix I haven't really. Felix came to Ruthie's wedding, he was always very good with films, he won, you know you see these people, that you knew, now and again, once we watching telly in the early days of telly, when he got a prize for doing a film about some railway or other, and so, I must ring Felix, he lives in London, which is not so far away, not like Columbia. And Harry has moved, his children are out of Columbia, so he goes to the United States quite a bit, anyway Robert is in touch with everybody, apparently, or so he says.



**Tape 4: 9 minutes 38 seconds**

RL: You know you said you used to try and keep away from refugees ...

GJ: Well, I did ... I am not doing so now.

RL: Why was that?

GJ: Well, you know, after the whole debacle, really, you wanted to live a normal life. When the Korners left the farm, they had a tea or a get together and they called it "Back To Normality", the get together, back to normality, because they were leaving. They opened a toy, a doll shop in Belfast, I think even the woman might still be alive, and they said something about everybody as they were leaving, about me they said, "Du wirst noch viel Dreck fressen müssen" which means "You will still have to eat a lot of dirt in your life" which was rather nice really! They had two daughters, Ruth and Dinah, Dinah and Ruth, Dinah became a doctor and crashed in Central America somewhere, in a plane crash, but I think Ruth is still alive, and in his letter he mentions Gertie has had a cancer operation, so, she lives in Canada. Quite a number of the girls went to Israel but then their children left Israel and they followed them out so she has gone to Canada. I haven't really told you about the girls, there was Eleanor, Gertie, Sonia, Daisy and Erica, that is five, well you can see them all on the photograph, and Marianna, although she was really with her parents.

RL: And these were all the children who were with you?

GJ: Yes.

RL: And did they all emigrate?

GJ: Well, Daisy and Erica, by the way, she changed her name from Daisy to Devorah, they went to live in London. Gertie and Eleanor went to Israel and Sonia went to either San Francisco or Los Angeles, it depended on where they had left there, or some of their relation had ended up.

RL: Did you keep in touch with any of them?

GJ: Well, no, not really. (Phone is ringing) Can you hear me mother?

There was a kibbutz in Israel for all of the farm people, well most of them went, on one kibbutz. One of these wonderful kibbutzes, you know a big one, a rich one.

RL: Do you think you have been affected by your experiences? You know you talk about the children being strange or acting strange? Do you think it had a long term effect on you?

**Tape 4: 13 minutes 46 seconds**

GJ: Well naturally I don't think I have been, I have been terrible normal, but I am sure its affected me in someway, somewhere, in some ways.

We certainly never, well you couldn't get justice for what they did. You know, it's impossible, I know I couldn't, this that and the other, the biggest joke was that I got some money, in the 1950s, for between 45 and 55 we got some money, you know like, we got a few hundred pounds for this and for that. One of the, I think I got £200 for loss of education because I hadn't been educated in Berlin, which is really a joke, because I would have gone to a Handels Shule, which is a trades school, you know, to learn how to be a tradesman, I wouldn't have gone on to be a scientist, in a hundred years. So I got a couple of hundred pounds for that, we got a few hundred quid for our furniture, which my parents lost. I didn't get anything for the shop. My father, well he didn't get it, we got it, a few hundred pounds for loss of liberty. You know what loss of liberty that was? It was the loss of liberty for my father for the period of time between when he was first arrested and being let out, so it was, no it was the loss of liberty from being first arrested and going to Auschwitz, he lost liberty, nothing for his death, just, or my mother's death, it took us, what is it, 2003, 1989, the border between east and west Germany went down, then west Germans could apply for property they had before the war in east Germany, and they allowed Jews then, east Germany wouldn't allow Jews in to ask for anything. They allowed Jews then to claim for property, of course Dessau was in east Germany, so our grandparents had had a house in Dessau, so my sister and I, and my cousin, applied for this house that we were legal heirs, and it was a Nazi lady who had bought it, or it was her husband who was a Nazi, because everything had to be sold to Germans, and they sold it to Nazis who bought it for nothing. And she applied as well, well it was said that we were the true heirs, and because the west Germans made a firm TLG to take over all property in eastern Germany that was being questioned, they had a bit of it that was added on during the war, and it is only now that his solicitor has managed to sell it, but she can't sell it all at once, she can sell it, there is a Chinese gentleman where my grandparents used to live, you know a Chinese restaurant, and he is buying it in four bits over a period of time in four bits, I think he is, and the solicitor has drawn up the thing for it. It is only now we are going to get it. And this is 2003, and my grandparents probably died at the beginning of the war because they were already so old, so they died in 1939, that is 61 years, and three, 64 years later. You know, anyway I wasn't really going to talk about that, I was going to talk about these few hundred quid.

So the point is, if it has really affected you, you feel bitter about it, although I haven't been, you know, when you tell me on the phone, you are lucky to be alive, I thought being alive was natural, you breath in and out, you are lucky to be alive, what are you shouting about, there is something wrong with the food or you haven't got toothpaste or something. On one hand I am lucky to be alive, on the other hand, so are you, if they had come over here they would have done everybody in, because they virtually did everyone in, particularly in Berlin.

**Tape 4: 19 minutes 38 seconds**

RL: Have you ever been back to Germany?

GJ: No. Oh I have been back to Germany because I went through Germany to Southern Austria. It is very easy for me, I can speak. And they all think I am a tourist from Berlin, but of course the minute my family opens their mouth it is all up.

RL: Have you ever wanted to go back?

GJ: No, not really, because I have got a guilt, you know it all sounds so childish, I have got a guilt feeling, that I never did anything for my dad really. Or I never ... you see the Americans did the mass action, the American lawyers did the mass action, they said to the Swiss, "You are not going to do any trading here if there is this, if these legal things are left over, if you don't clear them up." So the Swiss paid all that money to the, what is it, to the holocaust commission, and now the Americans are also doing it with the Swiss, not the Swiss, the German insurance firms, Alliance and all these big insurance firms in Germany never paid up the insurance things that they insured people for, the Yidden, because of course most of them were dead, so they never paid it up, and the Germans, oy, well I can see him on the telly, well the Germans, very sadly agreed to pay up so they can do insurance deals all over north America, so there is a mass action going on there. And my parents and grandparents are on the list that the Germans published, so it depends whether the insurances they were involved with were paid up in 1935 say, or whether they were still running in 38, because they couldn't have been running in 39, or by the end of 38 they couldn't have been. So they may have made that an excuse, I don't know, but the name certainly appeared of my father and my mother, of my Aunt Meta and of my grandparents.

RL: How do you feel towards Germany?

GJ: Oh, how could I feel? I mean, you see, what everybody all, you know when you talk to people who have lost people in Northern Ireland, you always waiting to hear them say I forgive them, which to me is, really, is, I can't understand it, so how do I feel? It's not just that they pulled up a rifle and shot them, or that they gassed them and burned them, because it wasn't done like that, it wasn't done suddenly, it wasn't a quick death, it was a slow death, from 1933 the whole of the German nation, and that is another thing, there were some good Germans, but I didn't meet them, the whole of the German nation downgraded the Jews. They denigrated the, they dismissed them, they ... I don't know, we don't have that, we don't have people going around saying, "The bloody Irish", "The Irish are the cause of all our misfortune". Look at all the income tax I have to pay because of the Irish. They are the fault of our losing the First World War, do you follow? I mean this continues and they did that to my parents, my lovely mother. They downgraded them; whenever my parents went out they would see it. Whenever they put on the wireless they would hear it, you couldn't hide yourself from it completely, and you know it got worse and worse and worse, until they finally sent them to be gassed and

**Tape 4: 24 minutes 39 seconds**

killed. So the gassed and killed is one thing, but all that happened before, in the nine, in the, in the, what is it 33, seven years before, I mean all that, I know about that, I know what happened then, you know, “Juden verboten”, and “Der Juden ist undere ungluck, und “gekauft nicht bei Juden.”

RL: You say there were some good Germans, did you come across any?

GJ: How could I? I was only ten.

The lady wants it. Have I got more than one?

A voice in the distance. You've got three

GJ: Well you are giving away one third.

Lady's voice: I'm not I'm just showing it to them.

RL: The ... How do you feel about Israel?

GJ: I am naturally pro Israel. I am sorry for the Yidden there because: a) They had to, they were chased out of Europe because they went to Israel. They were chased out, they were stateless people. After the war the allies treated the stateless people worse than the Germans, didn't they. I mean stateless people were hounded out of Europe, Europe hounded these people, most of those people, I know there were some Zionists, oh there were plenty, but a lot of the people who went to Israel went there because they couldn't go anywhere else, there were still the quotas, still the American quotas. When you look at the asylum seekers now that is really laughable compared to the behaviour before the war, you couldn't come here; you weren't allowed to come here, whatever happened. So, they all went up against a stone wall. So that was another thing in a way. They even went with that boat, they went to Cuba and came back, you know, let's put it this way, I feel bitter. What else can you say? But, I know, that there is a force that people don't know about, or they don't want to know about, I mean you know everything nowadays happens by hysterics, you know, because the most amazing thing happened Lise Meitner, because was a woman who first said the atom can be split, she was working with that scientist in Berlin, she was kicked out of course, because when the Germans invaded Austria she became a Jew, not just an Austrian citizen, and she had to leave Berlin, the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute And she was the one who was with Otto Frisch in Denmark with Niels Bohr, took the results, the Berlin results and said, what is happening here is that the Uranium atom is splitting, so there she was, she was the finger we are all talking these days about the weapon of mass destruction, aren't we, all the time, and it is like a rucksack that stayed on human beings ever since the last war, when it was discovered, well she is the one who put her finger on it, and when Neils Bohr to the United States, he spoke about what her results, well not the results, but what she said the results meant, and so the weapon of mass destruction is here, and that is where it came

**Tape 4: 29 minutes 16 seconds**

from, she wasn't a super ... she was a good scientist this Viennese woman, a Yiddisher woman, a middle aged woman, because she had been working at the Kaiser Wilhelm since the First World War and they never gave her. That is another joke, they never gave her the Nobel Prize and they gave Haber, not Haber, what is his name, the fellow who stayed behind, who obviously became a Nazi, anyway they gave him the Nobel Prize, anyway all that happened in 38, all that happened in November, so you see the attack, I am now hanging myself, the attack on New York was amazing, that was to the advantage of those poor people in Israel, because I mean who was on their side in Europe? We've made anti-Semitism respectable in Europe again. The Germans would have never said anything against Israelis, or not much, if we hadn't for 50 years continuously been against, this continuous propaganda and spinning against the Jews, and now you have the spinning against the Jews the whole time. There isn't a day when the bias broadcasting corporation, or BBC for short, isn't spinning against Yidden. There isn't a day, if they don't say one thing, they say another. I mean the other day, they were for two days they said nothing about Israel, they had nothing, then they started again on Lady Porter, you know, 27 million or some fantastic sum. I mean I dare say they are right, legally, but I mean how often do they bring things like that up, for other people. So there isn't a thing, they are spinning all the time, but against that there is that other thing, there is that weapon of mass destruction which they carry with them all the time, and the Germans, eventually it will happen, either from the east, the south, most likely, or the west. And they must know it, because for example, because Herr Schroeder isn't going to Italy, because the Italian president of Europe said, "You should act as a kapo in a film."

RL: Have you been to Israel?

GJ: A few times, yes.

RL: How did you find it going there for the first time?

GJ: Oh, I mean it's great, isn't it. They are lucky, they have got lovely weather, well it's warm, and our foster daughter went to live there, she went on a kibbutz, she went to live there for a bit. Oh, it is alright, on one kibbutz there are some people from the farm, but I didn't see them.

RL: When did you foster the girl? How did that come about?

GJ: Oh, I don't know, there was an advert in the paper, saying that a baby girl to be fostered, so we applied for the baby. That we have already take up. So, we were asked were we willing to take her, I don't know how old she was, 14 ... 16 ... anyway she was quite old, 14, and they asked if we were willing to take a girl and we said yes, and three women came and stood at the door and the biggest one was the girl. When did that happen, 1960 something?

**Tape 4: 34 minutes 15 seconds**

RL: How long did she live with you?

GJ: Not all that long, four years. She went to the farm school in Lancashire and learned cheese making before going out to, before going on Hachshara.

RL: What was her name?

GJ: Sheila. I can't remember. I mean we know, so, I was once for three months in Burma for the IEA, International Atomic Energy Agency. They were putting up a radiochemistry lab at the Arts and Science University, you can see the two elephants as you go out in the vestibule, all these African looking things are actually Burmese, you couldn't, you weren't allowed to take any money out of Burma.

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

GJ: I am British, British and proud. And I am afraid I am also German. You know how that comes about? Because the Germans wouldn't give, you know, like the pension, the national pension that you get, the Germans said well we will only give people who are of German nationality the national pension. So I became German, when I was 65 or whatever it was, you know like our national pension. That is another queer thing, they give it because for all the years we have lost in Germany, you know like they argued about the teaching, the studying business, so I suppose I am half and half now, but everywhere I put British.

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

GJ: Not really, cynical, more cynical, I don't know, you know older people feel, you mean do I believe Blair as much as other people, no more no less.

RL: Do you think you have any kind of continental identity?

GJ: The only thing is that if I go to a German speaking country I can immediately speak German. Or write it. When I first came I could do the Gothic writing because I learned that before I learned the Latin writing.

RL: Is there anything that you miss about German culture or about German life?

GJ: I just read it up, if I want to I just read it up. You mean Goethe and Schiller and Beethoven, well that is really going south, I mean, you know Max and Maurice, well I could talk to you about on Rita the child there Emil und detective, that is known internationally isn't it, and well I read all those books of Erich Kastner. I think even before I came, I read certain things before I came. I mean somewhere in the far distance of the brain I have some German identity, just a little bit, I never use it, only sometimes.

**Tape 4: 39 minutes 47 seconds**

RL: Do you feel at home here?

GJ: Of course.

RL: Are you worried about the rise of anti-Semitism here?

GJ: Not really, it is raining here, the mob is different here, if you follow what I mean, I am worried about this hysteria, that can be drummed up here, and the misinformation but I am not really worried about that, perhaps I should be, if somebody knocks you on the head because you look funny. The mob is different, really. And the thing doesn't go on for ever, so you could say, well the Jews, you know, what I mean is that anti-Semitism is absolute craziness, like people saying, "It is the Jews fault that you went into Iraq or Iran or Japan." Do you know what I mean? Well, and somebody hits you on the head for it, that is the trouble, because if they don't hit you on the head for it, it doesn't matter who they think is responsible for it. You know, absolutely crazy, "Der Juden ist undere ungluck" that the Jews lost in the First World War, you know what I mean, what have we lost, we have lost a cup, the European Cup, you know the football cup, that is the Jew's fault. Actually Rabbi So and so, you know, was standing at the side and he made them miss kick it, well you are laughing but that is what it is, that is real anti-Semitism, it goes to that extent, it goes to that craziness. You know, Manchester United is run by a secret Jewish Kabal , you know like the old MP said, I can't remember his name, I am pleased to say, but you know he said it, that the president of the United States and the Prime Minister here are run by a Jewish Kabal , an MP can say that! Well that is alright as long as it is only him, he is so bloody crazy, but when, if everybody believed it and they hit you on the head for it, that would be pretty bad, wouldn't it? So I don't think, I can't think see how that could happen here. But everything is possible, it was possible there with all these brilliant scientists and engineers they had before the war, and then why can't it happen here? But I am not as afraid as I would have been when I was there. There it did happen. They picked people off the streets and hit them on the head.

RL: Who do you feel most comfortable with in this country? Jews or non Jews?

GJ: Well obviously with Jews. I mean I can say to them so and so is meshuga or you know. Are you going to that lecture next Sunday? I am reasonably comfortable with non Jews.

RL: When did you naturalise?

GJ: 1948. I got it easy, or did I get it easy. They allowed all children who were from another country to naturalise, without something or other. I had to go to a notary and I had to swear allegiance to the crown.

RL: You remember I was asking you about the AJR, and you were saying how you went to the reunion ...

**Tape 4: 45 minutes 0 second**

GJ: Yes.

RL: So had you ...

GJ: So what happened then was, the Kinder Transport people amalgamated with the AJR. The Kinder Transport is now part of the AJR, that is how I really got into the AJR, but my feeling is that AJR is a lot of Austrian Jews in London, you know who care a lot about painting and music. That is me being nasty. They just continued their café. Have you ever been to Vienna? They just continued their Kafé klatsch, their sitting outside and having their coffee and talking and nattering. They just continued that in London when they came over here, just like the German refugees in Israel. Stayed German in northern Israel, along the coast they were, I was amazed in Israel when I was on the beach and so on to hear German spoke. You know by whole groups of people.

RL: Do you go to any AJR meetings? Are you involved in any way?

GJ: Susan Green, who is the northern rep for AJR has put me on the, I don't know why she wanted to get me on that, you know making an agenda, you know she has got a little group making an agenda for the next talk and so on, she has put me on that for Liverpool, and there used to be a gentleman on it, but unfortunately he had a heart attack and is poorly, so I am now the only male on it, so there is Susan Green and these two other ladies, only one of which is a refugee actually.

RL: How often do you meet?

GJ: Once every month or once every two months. And we just, Susan really decides who the next speaker is going to be. And we have had Goldsmith and we have had the Italian gentleman, telling their life stories, just like today. And so that is the kind of people we have.

RL: What did you, when you retired from university, have you done anything since then?

GJ: I was for three years until 1966, well apart from being the radiation safety officer still for a few years until they got into the habit of paying somebody else, or another firm, I worked for my wife, as a practice manager. Just then the fund holding was coming through, she was doing fund holding with several other single handed practitioners because you had to have more than 3,000 patients to do fund holding, so you had to do it by a modem, computing, so I worked for her as a practice manager for three years, and then when she retired I had to retire. Now she is still working. She is still, she is doing locums now.

RL: What are you doing?

**Tape 4: 49 minutes 26 seconds**



GJ: Nothing, I am a househusband. I am confessing all this on to a tape. I peel the potatoes ... if I buy them big enough.

RL: Did your children show interest in your background? In your history?

GJ: Well I made actually a point of not telling my children, or of telling them just the minimum and I made a point of not teaching my wife German, and not teaching any of them German. For one thing I know the Germans like to spread their language, and the French like to spread their language, and we do, so, not only because of that, but I didn't see why they should go through the trauma that I went to. Well I didn't really go through a trauma, but I didn't see why they should have an excuse for a trauma, and the AJR all the time has second generation people attending their meetings, and has special meetings for second generation people. I know we shouldn't forget, "Lest we forget", but when you do it, I don't know, I just, and most refugees must have agreed with me, because for 50 years they hadn't said a word, have they? It is only now you are doing it. Why are you doing it now? It is 60 years after I was here. You know what I mean I could have probably talked to you much more if you had done it 50 years. And you could have talked to far more interesting people, who had far fuller lives on the continent. So, it is a bit crazy really, it is another part of the crazy thing, and the refugees didn't say much, to begin with you wouldn't have believed them really, because the things they did, the fear, the angst, was so horrible that: a) you couldn't actually tell it and you couldn't believe it that people would be so crazy, I mean the Nazis, look what they did to children who weren't quite right. You know, they killed them, that is alright as well if you are a follow of euthanasia, not euthanasia, no picking genes or breeding cows to specification, but they went, they were crazy really in all that Germanic, Aryan thing, to them they weren't crazy, now it is easy to say they are crazy, or they were crazy, but then it was for real, absolutely.

RL: Would you have been willing to have speak about your life, going back years, or is it something that you may not have wanted to speak about?

GJ: Not particularly, look how much I talk now. No, because, should you talk about bad things of human beings. A human being is an animal, I know you may disagree with me, but a human being is an animal, why should this animal ... a) why should you bring out all the bad things about this animal. I mean it isn't nice, it isn't nice that people should behave in such a way towards each other, because really that is what we are talking about, and then all live together on a farm crazy. I mean if you were continuously living in a football ground, and there was a continuous football match going on, that is more or less what it was like. Der Fuhrer.

RL: Have your experiences affect you in terms of religious belief, or religious belief in any way?

**Tape 4: 55 minutes 1 second**

GJ: Well, I, to begin with, we are in the middle of infinity, you know, on the one side that is infinity and on the other side infinity, and I think religion to some extent is an attempt to make that sense, the Rabbi calls it ewiger, that is a German word, everlasting. And, so we are living in infinity, we have got to live with infinity, so that is what we are living with, infinity, because we can, you can go to such small measurement and such a wide time space, I suppose you can get away from us, down and up, to infinity, and that is our religion, religiousness, so, if you like, he if he sees us only a little bit in this infinity, or scarcely sees us, that is why I think it is so peculiar when things happen, like this women telling about fission and that growing into this enormous nuclear industry and weapon and human beings didn't invent it, they just suddenly saw it, it was revealed to them if you follow what I mean. So there are all sorts of things going on that you can't explain, like infinity, anyway we don't live long enough to see the whole story. So I don't know whether I am religious or not, I am not really religious in terms of, well I try and be religious, to cover all exits if you follow what I mean, but I am not very, I have got a blockage against Hebrew, I don't know why that is, I can't, I have tried at different times of my life to learn it, but I suppose I should have gone to Israel to learn it, but I somehow can't learn it, I just have to read it all the time, read it, read a brocha. You see when I see other people, they just speak it ...

RL: Now this film is just about to end.

GJ: Good.

#### **Tape 4: 58 minutes 30 seconds**

#### **PHOTOGRAPHS**

GJ: So how old was I then?

This is a picture of my grandparents at their 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary. Here is my grandfather, Herman Gutmann, Emma Gutmann, this is in Dessau.

Here is my father Wilhelm Jacobowitz, and my mother Else Jacobowitz and my sister Edith Jacobowitz and myself Gert Jacobowitz. My Tante Hertah, Hertah Braunsberg and her son Hugo Braunsberg and my Aunt Meta who live with us, Meta Goldman. And here is my cousin, Inge.

RL: When was it taken?

GJ: In 1936.

This is my father Wilhelm Jacobowitz and the date is the First World War 1914 to 1918 and the place is on the western front. He was in the German army for four years as a freiwillige

#### **Tape 4: 59 minutes 50 seconds**

This is the engagement of my parents, Wilhelm Jacobowitz and Else Jacobowitz and the date is 1920.

RL: In?

GJ: In Berlin I suppose.

Ok ... Anyway this is my mother Else Jacobowitz with my sister Edith Jacobowitz and myself Gert Jacobowitz and this must have been taken about 1930 and the place is the zoo in Berlin.

This is my travel document when I came from Germany, notice the Nazi stamps all over the place, and on the other side the big J for Juda. The date is the, 1939.

This is where we lived; we had the flat on the third floor.

These are the children on the Millisle Refugee Settlement Farm, County Down, Northern Ireland, I am this person here, this lovely young boy, and they are the children together, we are being taken in front of the huts, oh the date must be 1943.

This is myself and my wife, in England, in the year 2000.

This is the wedding of my son Michael to Natalie. There is also on this photo my daughter Ruth and my son David and our foster daughter Sheila.

These are our grandchildren, there are Jonathan, Becky and Stephanie, Sam and George.

This is the AJRs tablecloth from the Liverpool group, it has the name of all the AJR members in Liverpool.