

IMPORTANT

This transcript is copyright Association of Jewish Refugees

Access to this interview and transcript is for private research only. Please refer to the AJR Refugee Voices Testimony Archive, prior to any publication or broadcast from this document.

AJR Refugee Voices Testimony Archive

AJR

Winston House, 2 Dollis Park

London N3 1HF

ajrrefugeevoices@ajr.org.uk

Every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of this transcript, however no transcript is an exact translation of the spoken word, and this document is intended to be a guide to the original recording, not replace it. Should you find any errors please inform ajrrefugeevoices@ajr.org.uk

Interview Transcript Title Page

Collection title:	AJR Refugee Voices Testimony Archive
Ref. no:	76

Interviewee Surname:	Black
Forename:	Gertrude
Interviewee Sex:	Female
Interviewee DOB:	13 December 1912
Interviewee POB:	Elbing, Germany

Date of Interview:	6 October 2004
Location of Interview:	Glasgow
Name of Interviewer:	Dr. Anthony Grenville
Total Duration (HH:MM):	3 hours and 30 minutes

**REFUGEE VOICES:
THE AJR AUDIO-VISUAL TESTIMONY ARCHIVE**

INTERVIEW: 76

NAME: GERTRUDE BLACK

DATE: 6 OCTOBER 2004

LOCATION: GLASGOW

INTERVIEWER: ANTHONY GRENVILLE

TAPE 1

AG: First of all, Mrs Black, thank you for agreeing to do the interview with us today. I would like to start by asking you to state your name at birth, please, your full name.

GB: My name was Gertrude Levinsohn and I was born on the thirteenth of December 1912, in Elbing, East Prussia. My father was a lawyer, very prominent in the town, in the town council, everywhere, and we were four children, a brother, and then I, another brother and a sister.

AG: Could you tell me your father's name?

GB: My father was Julius Levinsohn and he was born in Graudenz.

AG: Was that also East Prussia?

GB: It was West Prussia at the time, but now it is all Polish I think.

AG: What sort of man was your father? How do you remember him?

GB: Well, we thought he was marvellous. He told us he was a representative of God on earth for us children and we treated him like that, and, if my father said anything, that was done. I remember I went on holiday to a cousin away from the town, and my father said that every day you have to do half an hour of maths, and I did that religiously even though my father couldn't have checked on me at all. We absolutely adored him. He was a fabulous speaker, my father. He was a small man but very, very clever. He was one of nine children. He always told us we were three and a half thousand children!

AG: Could you tell me something about his professional life?

GB: Well, he was in Elbing, where he was a solicitor, which was also a barrister in Germany, and I remember going to the court which was very near us and listening to him pleading for people, and he was a great speaker and quite well known throughout East

Prussia, I think. East Prussia was exceedingly anti-Semitic because it was the country of the Junkers, and they didn't like Jews; they only made use of them. They used to borrow money and buy goods and, when they came to collect the money, they used to set the dogs on them and that's a fact. I went to a school in Germany. You went to school for six years and I went to something that was called a höhere Tochterschule, higher girls' school, and it was very near our house. In those days you were about 40 in a class and nobody ever thought we were too many because we were so disciplined. If the teacher said anything, that was law. Not like today when the children shoot at the teacher! You see, I was born after a sister who died. She was two years old and she died from something they could have cured today. Her stomach didn't absorb any food and she really died from hunger. My parents had an awful time with her; she died at two years old, so I never knew her. So when I came I was Ersatz [her replacement], and I was absolutely spoiled rotten, and it was good that I had some brothers who kept me in the place of normality!

AG: Could you tell me a little about your mother?

Tape 1: 4 minutes 58 seconds

GB: Now, my mother was eleven years younger than my father, which was not unusual in Germany because men never married before they could provide for a house and for a wife. Not like today when the students marry and the parents and grandparents pay everything that is needed. So my mother was 11 years younger; she was only 20 and my father was 31 when they got married.

AG: When did they get married?

GB: They got married in 1905. My mother came from a place which was called Schloss, Gerdauen, which is like a castle. It belonged to a Graf von Etzdorf, and von Etzdorf's son later on became ambassador in London. I didn't know my grandfather's place, but I did know my grandfather. He was a grain merchant and exceedingly successful. He had six children, four boys and then two girls, so I had a lot of cousins and, funnily enough, the girls were all born within the same years and the boys too, so I had a lot of cousins to play with. And my father bought a house from a client in a place near Elbing which was called Kahlberg, which was on the Frische Nehrung, which is a little land strip on the North-East of Germany. And we had a very beautiful house, which my father bought fully furnished because his client had had a stroke and he didn't like the sea air anymore. This house was a paradise for us children. It was really large, and every summer we spent about four weeks at the sea, and all the cousins came, not all at once, but at different years, and they all remembered that place Kahlberg with great affection. We left Elbing following a big anti-Semitic thing with my father and we moved to Düsseldorf.

AG: Before we get to Düsseldorf I'd just like to ask you one or two other questions. First of all, about your mother. What sort of lady was she?

GB: My mother was a very, very modest, exceedingly intelligent woman. She spoke fluent French. I never had to look up a French word in the dictionary; she knew it all and she also knew most of the English words, so I could hardly ever look in the dictionary because my mother knew it all. And then for fun she learned Italian and she took lessons in Latin. My father had the office. Our house was quite a large house in the centre of the town (Innere Mühlendamm 37), still standing. And it was a big house in the centre of the town with a huge garden in the back, quite a big garden for us children to roam in. Then, on top of it, this lovely villa near the Ostsee (Baltic), so it was really a marvellous childhood I had. My mother was also very interested in literature. In those days the women didn't go out alone like they do here, but they did have what do you call it, Kränzchen, which was like a ring of women, usually four, and they read some literature in various houses. My mother used to know dozens and dozens of poems which she declaimed, and we were brought up on literature and poetry, and we had a huge library in the house. My father was of course very fluent in Greek and Latin and he helped my brothers, so this was very good, and I had a very happy childhood. But I did know that it was very anti-Semitic. When I was about six years old I went to school, and I was a nice little girl, and I remember one of the girls called me a griese Sau, which is a grey sow, and the teacher took me in her arms and said to the class: 'Now look at her. How can you call her that?' But, on the whole, I got on very well in the school. But there was a latent and very strong anti-Semitism.

Tape 1: 10 minutes 25 seconds

AG: Do you remember what happened to your father and your family in the First World War? Did your father join up?

GB: Yes, my father was also called up, and he went somewhere. But he was not really in the war. He was a clerk; he worked as a clerk. I have forgotten where it was, but it was somewhere not too far from Elbing, a few hours by train. But he wasn't really in the war. But I do remember when my younger brother was born. He was born on the 24th of August 1914, when the war had just broken out, and my mother was expecting the baby that was her third child. And the doctor was very late and he apologised. He had just helped his wife to flee because the Russians were coming, and they were freed by Hindenburg, von Hindenburg, who later became President, at the [Battle of the] Masurian Lakes. And I remember when the doctor came I think the baby was already there. And for that reason, how it was I knew that, when my brother was thirteen years old we had a new Rabbi and he found out why Herr Levinsohn hadn't been circumcised. Because at that time it was the beginning of a very severe war and we were nearly in it. I mean they never came to Elbing, but near enough, the Russians, so he had to be circumcised just before his Bar Mitzvah, which I remember very distinctly, so that's how I know. I got on very well with my brothers and sisters, and we had a very hospitable home and there were always cousins and uncles coming. My mother, as I said, she was one of six, my father one of nine, and they all had children and they would love to send their children up to Kahlberg because my parents didn't go there. When we were there we had two maids, and one of the maids always came with us and usually also, when we were younger, a housekeeper, because we were always three of us, the younger ones, and maybe two or

three cousins, so it was quite hard, and we were very unmanageable I would say! I remember one of the housekeepers once said: 'These are not children; these are a plague!' So I don't think we were all that biddable because we were brought up to be very independent and we could phone at a very early age. I remember when I was about fifteen we had a big do at our school: three classes, over a hundred people, and I arranged it all because I was used to it, you know, I was very independent. I remember my parents sent my younger brother and me to an uncle in Danzig, in the Free State of Danzig, and that was from Elbing. There was a river, the Elbing river, and it was like a shipyard, a very big shipyard, probably nearly as big as Glasgow. Very big sea-going ships they built there. And my father was a lawyer also, I think, for the workers, because there was a big strike on, and I remember people standing all the way up to the office, all these workers. There were thousands of workers, but I mean there weren't thousands but a large crowd. My father was very prominent, everybody knew him, and we had a very good position. We had no money worries whatsoever, and my elder brother always said: 'you know our father is the king of Elbing', which was a town of 70,000 inhabitants. But it was a Hanseatic town and I lived there till I was seventeen, when we moved to Düsseldorf.

Tape 1: 15 minutes 15 seconds

AG: About your home life, what sort of house did you live in?

GB: Well, we had a very nice big house in the centre of the town, and my father took a great interest in us. The court was about 3 or 4 minutes from the house, walking distance, so he went in the morning at ten. I don't know when he came back. Then he had clients, and he used to read on Friday evening; we had a Friday evening, he used to read to us. I remember the stories of Gustav Freitag. I remember that quite distinctly, and then he read some Jewish story, and that was a very good family home. We were very cared for and very loved and it gave me great security for later life.

AG: Could you describe the house that you lived in?

GB: The house was a big one-family house. It must have been, well, my father built on two rooms and there were, well, four children, but there were usually three in the house. My elder brother was quite a lot older than I. He was already away most of the time. It had, as I said, a beautiful garden - for being in the centre of the town - at the back, and my father had in the back some swings and some bars. And in the back we were allowed to play. And at the front there was a glass veranda; it was with grapes growing there, which you could eat, and we had a big walnut tree with hundreds of pounds of walnuts, and we had pear trees and we had plum trees and pear trees and cherry, what's Spalier?

AG: A trellis

GB: Yes, it's a wall with cherries, and we had two round grass places and in the front of it was a beautiful cherry tree with lovely blossoms in spring, and the back was for us children; we were allowed to play there. My father had the office upstairs. I think there were three rooms, and he was a very busy, a very successful solicitor. A very big house

and he sold it eventually in 1933 to another lawyer, who paid him for one year, and then he wrote if he needed any more money he should address the SS. He wasn't going to pay him any more, so it was very difficult for us then.

AG: Was it a Jewish observant household?

GB: We were not kosher, but very Jewish. We kept to the holidays and we had Friday evenings. But we did drive on a Friday. In German schools you had school six days; you had Saturday morning. In the summer it started at seven, and then in winter at eight. So the very orthodox girls - there were a few orthodox girls, but not many - they didn't write on the Sabbath. But we were not that way. My father also came from an orthodox family, but he was very liberal.

AG: Did you celebrate the Jewish holidays?

Tape 1: 19 minutes 22 seconds

GB: Yes, all the Jewish holidays we celebrated. We went to synagogue; we had the fasting, the New Year, and Yom Kippur and Sukkot, I was always away for Sukkot. We were always at the sea; we had ten days holiday, and then there were four weeks at the sea again for the whole of July. So I had never been at Schloss Gerdauen as a child. My mother came also from a very, I would say, liberal house. She lived in this place Schloss Gerdauen. It must have been a very vast place, because my mother didn't exaggerate. She said, you know, there were so many rooms you had numbers on it! Honestly, so there were six children and her father. Her mother died when she was seventeen, so she had to help look after the household and they had lots of servants. My grandfather was supposed to be very rich indeed. And my father remembered, he went there, in those days they manured the fields with human excrement, and there was a van, and he used to call: 'Tomorrow comes the Kübel man', the man with a big bucket, and that was collected and spread over the fields. I still remember that; my mother told me. And then they had also a friend who had quite a big shop with papers and toys, and one of her brothers always used to stand at the shop. And one day he came there and he had a big ball round him, and the lady, Frau Markus, she said: 'Max, you always come here and then you go and buy your ball somewhere else. How could you do that?' And he said: 'Well, Frau Markus, I didn't want to disarrange your lovely window!' So it was quite a funny family altogether, very humorous and very relaxed. They had a lake to bathe in right at the door; it must have been a big place. My mother said she was in Bournemouth in one of the huge hotels, and the manager asked her where she came from. And she said: 'I'll tell you, but you won't know it', and she said 'Schloss Gerdauen'. And he said: 'Of course, that's where I came from, near there. And who was your father?' 'Herr Schneider'. 'Oh he was a millionaire!' My mother said: 'I don't think he was a millionaire, but he was quite well-to-do'. So he must have been because my mother was not an exaggerating person. She was a very tactful and a very kind person. She lived in London till she was 85. My father died also in London, at 72.

AG: Did your parents have a circle of friends in Elbing?

GB: A large circle of friends. Not many Jewish people. In the whole of Elbing we were about 500 people, not families. We had a few Jewish friends, not many, but there were about 20 children of reasonable age. There would have been many already, maybe less. We used to have a youth club of one kind. There was one called Kameraden German Jewish club. We used to go for outings and read and I don't know what else we did. We met a few people there. Some of them we know have emigrated. Later on, we lost touch with them when we moved away, except with one girl, or two girls. They went to Israel. I met them again, but they have also died now.

AG: Could you tell me a bit about your first school?

GB: My school? I think my school was quite excellent. As I said, it was a higher girls' school, higher education. We started at 7 in the summer and 8 in the winter and we worked until one o'clock. And two o'clock in winter. In the afternoon we were usually free, except we had twice a week religious lessons, which were very good. We got a new Dr Neufeld, who was a very good Rabbi. He also taught us a lot of Hebrew and we got a very good grounding, and we used to write Hebrew and really more than the pupils usually learn at school. On top of it, when I was about 15 or 16 we were allowed to have voluntary Latin lessons. So I asked my elder brother, Kurt: 'Tell me, do you think I should take these free lessons?' 'Of course you have to take these lessons', he said. 'Without Latin you can only become a charlady!' So I had two years of Latin, and, when I came to Britain, what I became was a charlady, which is called an au pair now!

Tape 1: 25 minutes 33 seconds

AG: Did you make friends at your school? What was it called?

GB: It was called Kaiserin Augusta Viktoria School, after the German Kaiserin. My father was friendly with the Graf von Etzdorf, the father, because he had property in (?) which was outside Elbing, a beauty spot and they made (?) and the Kaiser had a place there. And I remember also he came to Elbing and we had all to stand Spalier when the Kaiser came through. I don't remember whether I saw him, but I do remember the Kaiser came for a visit. I had a lot of friends. I had a very hospitable house and every afternoon we had rolls with butter or honey and anybody from the street could come in. We were just having coffee. They were very friendly. I still have a friend alive, she lives in Wiesbaden and I still phone with her, the same age as I. Her father was in the town council. He was a.., not a councillor, he did finance. What's it called? Stadtkämmerer, accountant. Later on he got promotion and he became mayor in Grünberg in Upper Silesia. Then we met again when I went to university. The first girl I met was the same girl and the funny thing was her father came also from Graudenz and my father knew the family. We stayed friendly after all these years, from six years on.

AG: So you had quite a number of non-Jewish friends?

GB: Mostly non-Jewish because there were only maybe half a dozen Jewish girls or boys that I knew, because there weren't many. There was one family with three boys. I remember we were friendly with the middle one. And there was one who was the leader of the group, who was the son of a dentist, but as I said very few. If there were twenty children about our age it is about all I can remember. I met some of them later on in Israel, several in Israel.

AG: Do you remember any of your teachers?

GB: I remember my teachers very well. We had one lady she was called Fräulein Fräulein ... had two lady friend teachers, and she was also very friendly with my mother. And I remember my mother told me she met my teacher, and she said: 'How is my daughter doing?' 'Oh', she said, 'she is doing well but she can't do sums. And I said to her: "Trudy, won't you try and do your sums?"' And I'm supposed to have answered: 'I would like to very much but I can't!' Of course that one went around and they thought it was hilarious. My elder and my other brothers, they made sure I didn't get any conceit at all because they kept me down!

AG: Did you have any problems with anti-Semitism at school?

GB: Yes, like I said, there was that time when they called me a grey sow, and yes that was one of the worst things of my life at the time. When I was 15 we had dancing lessons. That was quite usual: boys from the boys' school and girls from the girls' school. There were 40, about 20 couples, and I remember I was very friendly with a boy of a nice German name of Dietrich Schulz and the father was a high-up policeman. And he used to come in and out of the house, very friendly, and he helped me with my mathematics and very nice, innocent, but very friendly for many years. And I remember when you had your Abitur you had something called a Leibfuchs, somebody as an assistant. Almost as a bride has a bridesmaid, and he arranged things. And he came to me, and he said: 'Have you got the invitation for the yearly Abiturientenball?' And it hadn't come. And he got quite pale, and he said: 'These swines; they haven't sent you the invitation because you are Jewish'. I was absolutely dissolved in tears, and I had an uncle there from Königsberg and he was a cousin, and he said: 'I shouldn't break my heart; there are worse things in life'. But that was the first time I felt like ostracised. I mean it was so many years ago; that must be over 70 years ago, and I still remember how I burst into tears and I thought this was terrible. I was one of (what would I say?) like the elite of the town, and they didn't invite me because I was Jewish. That I remember, and not maybe a year or two later, a couple of years, and my father moved to Düsseldorf and Düsseldorf was a great advantage.

Tape 1: 31 minutes 45 seconds

AG: Could I just ask you one thing? You said that your father moved because of some anti-Semitic incident?

GB: Yes, my father was in a place, in a casino that wasn't for gambling, that was a garden and like a club. But I don't think there was any gambling; they might have played cards there but I don't think it was a gambling place. And the others were [...] and my father had a big quarrel with the [...], with one of the judges and, if I remember correctly, my father hit him. And this was very difficult, and he had to have a court case, and then I think he didn't get punished at all, only admonished, and then, after that, he went to Düsseldorf.

AG: And had this judge insulted your father?

GB: The judge had made some anti-Semitic thing, and my father said: 'You sit here at my table and drink my drink or something, and then you say anti-Semitic things', and then he hit him. And my father was a very small man and, you know, he was probably a great big German. I remember, but it was kept completely private. I never heard that, except for my elder brother. He knew already. I must have been about 16 years, but I was kept out of the family. I didn't hear anything from the paper or from anybody. But my elder brother told me about it. And then we moved to Düsseldorf where we had a completely different life because there was a big Jewish community. In Elbing we had also a lodge where my father was a member and in Düsseldorf he also was a member and my mother. We were children. We were delighted. We went to the Jewish Jugendbund so we had loads and loads of boyfriends suddenly and loads of company; it was absolutely marvellous. We had a cousin in Düsseldorf of my father; he was really a second cousin. And he introduced us, myself and my younger sister, and we had an absolutely marvellous time. But, in the beginning, I was terribly homesick for my hometown. Because I was born and brought up there and I was very happy there.

AG: Where did you live in Düsseldorf?

GB: In Düsseldorf we lived in a flat first. It was Kaiserswehrterstrasse number 70. It was a big flat and later we went to Rochusstrasse. Both very big comfortable flats. My father worked still at the high court then. But I would say it was like a semi-retirement, and he did work now and then, but I don't think he would have made a big income. He was comfortably off. As I say, if he had got a hundred thousand pounds from the house it would have helped, but I mean he wasn't poor. He never talked about money. We went on holidays. We were brought up quite properly. I remember when my parents went on holiday and I was the eldest in the house. We had two maids and he told me: 'Look, you have to watch the maids; you have to spend so much'. And showed me how to book keep and all that. So I was brought up with that. When I went to university in Berlin he said to me: 'Here is your budget. You need to have so much for your room, roughly so much for breakfast, and then you eat at the university canteen and you need an underground thing, and so much. And at the end of the month you must always have five marks over.' And that is how I was brought up, which stood me in very good stead, because our circumstances changed so completely that it was quite difficult.

Tape 1: 36 minutes 20 seconds

AG: So you did your Abitur. Was that still in Elbing or was that in Dusseldorf?

GB: Elbing? No. Elbing didn't have a university. My first university was in Lausanne in Switzerland, because my father said: 'You see, if you go to Lausanne you will pick up French'. Well we had ten years of French, four lessons a week. When I came to Lausanne I could hardly find a room so bad was my French, because we only read and translated. But we did not speak at all. It wasn't practised in those days and the teacher we had was very good, but she had never been out of Germany. So I remember sitting at the university listening to a history lesson, and all I could understand was one word, Bismarck! So this was too terrible. I thought: what is the use me going to Switzerland and I still can't speak any French? I got myself a job as an au pair in a lovely place called [...] which was in the mountains where they only spoke French. It so happened, while I was there, there was a Mr Rowntree, the chocolate Rowntree from England. They had a daughter. It was a little pension not a hotel. The woman was a very good cook. She had a son who was very backward and she had to look after him; he was a man already. I went with these Rowntrees. They had a daughter. Only the father and the daughter, we went on some outings so I learned some English as well at the time. We had had ten years of French, four lessons a week, and we had seven years of English, about also four lessons a week. The English was better, because the teacher probably spoke some English. But French! I mean reading and translating was good and I was a good pupil, but we never learned to speak. When you come to a country, when I came to Edinburgh I had had English lessons as well. I would say my English was reasonable, but not very good, not fluent. I remember going to Woolworth's and looking up all these things you never learn in school: toothpaste; you never learn hairbrush; you never learn underwear; you never learn any food what it is all called, you do not learn. You might learn coffee and tea and breakfast and knife and fork, and then I went to Woolworth's. What is this? Laces, shoelaces. You didn't know what that was. And then I learned in England proper English, even though I have a bad accent. But I am quite fluent apart from that.

Tape 1: 40 minutes 0 second

AG: How long did you stay in Switzerland?

GB: In Switzerland, only three months at university there were short semesters, then I was about a month six weeks up in [...] and then I came home. When I was au pair I don't think I got paid there. I just worked and went out and got quite a lot of time out you know. It was a small pension, maybe about four people.

AG: What did you do when you came back to Düsseldorf?

GB: When I came back to Düsseldorf my father just said : 'Now the next semester you go to Berlin'. Berlin was very good...

[Phone rings]

AG: What year was it you went to Berlin?

GB: I remember exactly when it was. It must have been 1932. I remember in 1933 I personally saw the Reichstag burning. One of my friends I met, Irmgard Böß, who loved me as a daughter, phoned me up and said, come quickly the Reichstag is on fire. We were all going to see it. We all had free passes on the underground, well not free we paid, and we went, and we saw the Nazi hordes singing in the street: 'The Reichstag is burning. We don't need a Reichstag; we can govern this ourselves'. And I saw and heard that with my own ears and eyes, and that was in January '33, and when the Reichstag burned that started the fire in Europe. That was the end of our life in Germany. After that we had only one wish: how can we escape and how can we build a new life? This was so terrible. I mean most of us, we were quite settled and our forefathers had been in Germany for three generations and all in quite good conditions and educated people. We never thought we would have to leave the country. But then everybody more or less started to look for a way out.

AG: Before we get onto the Nazis could you tell me a bit about your studies and life at the University of Berlin in 1932?

GB: Yes, like I said, at Lausanne I would say I learned very, very little at the university. It was very nice; it was completely international. There were Poles; there were French; there were a lot of Americans. I would say very few Swiss, and every student group had their own parties: the Germans had theirs and the English had theirs. It was a most enjoyable time. But academically I would say zero is what I learned, zero. In Berlin, different. Berlin was excellent, and in Germany it was the custom to go to a different university. You never stayed in your one university; you went to two, three or four universities and, after your time was up, the exams were so geared that you could go from any university. So I was only one semester in Germany and there were friends of mine from Elbing. I remember the son of my dancing teacher and he had a funny name of Rüdiger Schmalz. Schmalz is like 'fat' and Rüdiger is a very German name. He used to fight duels at that time. I didn't see the duels; they were only for boys. And when they were fighting they had big, what do you call it, scars, and they kept them open, putting salt in, so later on they had these scars, that was like a medal. You had been a member of a fighting student group and that was like high up, you know, that was like an order. We learned a lot. I started, I wanted really to be a journalist, and I started with German and I found it to be absolutely useless because we only learned the beginning of the language and Mittelhochdeutsch and all these things which wasn't what I wanted. Then we had a very, very good professor, Petersen, and he was in journalism and he was excellent. And when you were at university you could go to any lecture you like. I think you paid, probably it was very little, but you did pay. And I remember also we went for fun to a lecture in hypnotism and this was like a theatre and it was crowded out. And the history was a very famous man. I have forgotten. He had written history books, but he was dead boring. The German university lecturers were not used to public speaking because they read it out and you could really go to asleep over it. The majority were not good talkers. They might have been very erudite scientists but it didn't leave much behind. I was only there again about three months or so, and when I came home I couldn't go back because

there were already riots in the university and they hated each other and the Nazis were there, and then I tried to go abroad, and then started my wandering from then.

Tape 1: 46 minutes 55 seconds

AG: So do you actually remember when Hitler was appointed Chancellor?

GB: Oh yes. That was also on 30 January in '33 if I am right, about then. I remember that very well. They had (what do you call it?) a Fackelzug, like with lanterns, a torch parade. I remember that very well. But at that time it was already not funny. I mean I had non-Jewish friends and the one boy said to me: 'It is not really fair; your father called you Gertrude. Gertrude is a very German name. It is somebody who carries a spear. It is a very German name. They should have called you Hannah or Ruth or something', because then he would have known I'm a Jewish girl and he would have kept away.

AG: Did you find that your friends began to distance themselves from you?

GB: Yes of course. Well, I still had my friend, Irmgard Böß, a girl I went to school with. Her father was liberal and had nothing against me. We had two or three girls. We met every week together. I had plenty of friends. On top of that, I had absolutely hordes of relatives because my mother had her only sister living in Berlin, who had daughters exactly my age, one a few months older, one a few months younger. And then my father had various of those nine children were there, and some were half brothers and sisters and uncles, and they all wanted me to live with them, which wasn't feasible because they all lived in different places and I lived in Berlin Charlottenburg. And I went, I was in a private house with Jewish people and I got the room of the daughter. I still remember the whole room was very nice, full of little china ornaments, and my cousin from my aunt, the daughter, came with me and she said: 'You don't want all that rubbish.' She collected them all on a big picture frame, and she went to the landlady and said: 'You know, my cousin is a bit careless; you had better put them away in case she might damage them', so I got a nice clear room with all these little dogs and figures whatever there was. I'm trying to think if she brought us coffee and I ordered a roll in the morning, and then all the other meals we had at the university canteen. I had loads of friends and it was very very enjoyable, but when I went I couldn't go back any more you see. That was the end then. The lawyers couldn't practise any more; the doctors couldn't, and so of course it was very difficult. And then I was supposed to go to Spain and I made an application for an au pair and it was all arranged, some town in Spain, and when they asked religion, they were all Roman Catholic, and when they heard Jewish it was no. So I went then and my brother, my elder brother said: 'You should try and get out and then do something from there.' So I went to Antwerp, and I have forgotten the name. It was a very famous painter, who had a museum in Roermond, an old man, and his wife was German, also painting. But he painted great big walls and in the house he had a whole gallery. I can't remember the name. It was a couple with no children, and I remember they had asparagus in the garden, which I had never seen, and I had quite a nice time there. But then I went away because I wanted to learn French and they spoke German and Flemish, and during the war they were badly treated because they sided with the Germans; the Flemish

people, they were on the side of the Germans. Then I went to a place called [...], which is a watering place in Belgium. It's near France, very near to the French border. And I was in a place, a kind of very small boarding house, and they had three or four children, and the man was on crutches. And I remember the mother had had tuberculosis and she did the cooking and then there was a mother. And I slept in the room with two girls and I remember I didn't like it because I couldn't read at night, and I took the children out for walks. I think one or two children they had there, and when the holiday came I tried to get away. And the man must have opened one of my application letters and he said to me: 'I see you want to get away', and he threw me out. But it didn't worry me. I had an uncle in Paris and he was probably the most famous of the family. His name was Richard Levinsohn and he was editor of the *Vossische Zeitung*, which was quite a post, very, very clever. He had two degrees, I think, one in history and one in medicine, and he was a bachelor. And that was the youngest half brother of my father, and he lived in Paris and I, or my father, wrote to him. And he said I couldn't live with him; he was a bachelor but he had a Russian girlfriend who spoke seven languages. She was from a house like Krupp of Essen in Russia, a very nice lady, Olga, I have forgotten her name. He rented for me a place in a hotel and I stayed in Paris and then I looked for a job. And Paris was fabulous. There were a lot of Jewish refugees. And Rothschild had donated a big first floor flat.

[Phone rings]

Tape 1: 54 minutes 24 seconds

AG: You were telling me about Paris?

GB: Rothschild had rented a flat for the Jewish refugees, a beautiful flat on the first floor. Champs Elysées, couldn't be better, and we had lunches there. They might have been free. If they weren't free, they were very cheap. I remember helping there with the lunches as well. I was there a week or two, I can't remember, and I met very nice boyfriends there again, all refugees. Then I got myself a job as an au pair with some parents, some grandparents who had a son there. That was near the races, outside Paris. I can't remember now.

AG: Longchamps?

GB: No, not Longchamps, the other one very well known. I have forgotten, and I looked after the little boy, and I used to tell him stories in French. By that time, my French was quite good. And then, when I came back, I got a job in an office in France, but it was very difficult. You weren't really allowed to work, and eventually I lost the job. I went back to my parents, who were still living in Düsseldorf, and, by that time, it was much better in Germany because they had the Olympic Games in '36 and, by that time, the anti-Semitism was all quiet.

Tape 1: 56 minutes 25 seconds

Video Tape ends. New tape.

TAPE 2

AG: Gertrude Black tape two. You were just telling me you came back to your parents in Düsseldorf around the time of the Olympic Games in '36. Could you tell me how things were then?

GB: Yes, when I came back to Düsseldorf, I am trying to think. I'm not quite sure. It might have been then I went then to a commercial college. And it was a six month course, and it was the only decent thing of any use that I ever learned with all the schooling I had and all my time at university, and that was a very, very good course, and you learned accounting and you learned book keeping, and commercial accounting. They didn't have a computer or anything, I remember. At the time we typed,. And I remember I was the only one who could already type because I used to type on my father's machines, and I got an electric typewriter that far back and I used to type for the head teacher. So it was a quite good education and we had to write about all sorts of commercial things and I really learned a lot in that six months, more than in the ten years at school.

AG: And you were allowed to attend this college with Germans?

GB: Yes, there were Germans. I remember there were all girls and three boys and the beginning of the term, I remember, they had something like lifting the flag. What do you call it?

AG: Hoisting the flag?

GB: Hoisting the flag. And, at the end of term, the flag was put down again. And there were three boys and I don't know if they were all in SS uniform or just one of them. But nobody bothered me at that time. It must have been either when I came back from or before I went to university. I can't remember. But those six months they really stood me in good stead. I would advise anyone, any women particularly, to take a commercial course. Nowadays, you would do computer and all that. But even the shorthand typing and writing things were very good.

AG: How were your parents getting on under the Nazis?

GB: Well, my parents at the time they were still in Düsseldorf and my father couldn't work any more. He was forbidden; lawyers no more work. I am trying to think. After I left the commercial college I got a job with a man. His name was Herr Holländer (?). He was a Jewish fellow and it was the most terrible job I had. I was a copy typist. I had to write by hand, by typewriter, hundreds of letters the same: our man will come on Tuesday 23rd...

[Phone rings]

GB: My parents got on reasonably well, I think. They had a flat in Düsseldorf and they had a lot of Jewish friends, and then my father and mother they were going to emigrate to Amsterdam, where my elder brother worked at a bank. But they didn't go at the time. I must have worked in Düsseldorf one or two years, and I went to Marienbad. My parents always went on holiday to Marienbad in Czechoslovakia. It was for people who get thin. My mother was very thin, but she had a bad heart. The water was supposed to help the heart. Anyway, with that wonky heart she survived them all; she lived to 85 and, as far as I know, she wasn't much ill at all. I can't remember clearly the sequence, but I met a fellow in Marienbad I was supposed to marry. But I didn't fancy him.

Tape 2: 5 minutes 25 seconds

AG: You and your parents could go in and out of Germany?

GB: Yes, at the time we could still go in and out. I'm not quite sure, but it must have been after '33 because we went to Marienbad, and then I came back and then I met my husband.

AG: How did you meet your husband?

GB: It is a long time ago. I met him in '36 so that's a long time ago. What happened was I was working for a lawyer in Düsseldorf. Do you know Düsseldorf?

AG: No.

GB: It is a beautiful city. The main street is the Königsallee, which is a dream, a dream. You have been in Edinburgh?

AG: Yes.

GB: It's the same idea. There is a big town in the middle and a big park, like Edinburgh only they have the castle. A beautiful town, probably one of the nicest. I was working in the Königsallee, in the lawyer's place, and he was working odd hours, and he said: could I come in on Sunday? So I came in on Sunday. I really didn't work an awful lot. I think he was a wholesaler in iron or steel or something. I don't think I did any bookkeeping, just letters and telephone, and I had nothing much to do. There was a newspaper lying there, the Sunday Frankfurter Zeitung, which was like the Telegraph, one of the main papers. There was a man looking for a lady in the paper. I came home. I think I cut it out. I asked could I take it with me. I said to my mother: 'I think that looks very nice.' If I remember correctly my mother wrote the letter. I think I told her what I wanted her to write, and he came to Düsseldorf. He lived in Munich, and we fell in love funnily enough.

AG: What was his name?

GB: His name was Julius Schwarz and he had a grocery place in Munich. But it wasn't a little grocery shop. He told me in Germany nearly every child gets properly trained. Not like here in Woolworth's or Debenhams, where they put them in and let them sell. You get trained. My father-in-law sent him at 16 years after school, after like A levels, after some level you left at 16. They sent him to Wiesbaden in a very good delicatessen (Feinkost) shop to learn. When he came back after two or three years his head was full of new ideas. But my father-in-law said: 'Look here, boy. I have been doing this now for twenty years. I am not really short of ideas. You just carry on and do what I tell you.' So my husband, who was very bright, my father-in-law had another friend and he had an ironmongery business. Again not a little shop but a whole building over three stories, selling kitchen equipment and plates and mainly beer mugs, and my husband was very friendly with them. He said they were like his second parents. He went to them and he said: 'I am really at the end of my tether. Whatever I suggest, my father says: "I have been doing it for twenty years, I don't need your ideas"'. And they said: 'Leave your father alone; just you let him carry on. Why don't you go and visit the hotels?' (Because round Munich - I don't know if you have been - it is very beautiful countryside, and there are hundreds of hotels.) 'From the Zugspitze hotel to the hotels in Munich and all the lakes and you can always give them regards from me, because I supply them with beer mugs and cutlery and they all owe me money.' So my husband told me the man said: 'Don't go to the small hotels; start with the big hotels'. So my husband thought they had just at that time, not long ago, opened the Zugspitze hotel on the highest mountain in Germany. So my husband went to the station and he asked what time the director, who was living in Munich, was going up, and they told him such and such a day. So my husband happened to be in first class, which normally he wouldn't go for, and sat there and got a chat. What was he doing there? 'Well', he said, 'I am really here to try and sell groceries because we have a very good grocery place in Munich and I want to start the hotel business.' Of course, the man introduced himself and he got his first big order in the Zugspitze hotel. And, later on, the business grew and grew, and they had a man who went out one day every week, one day to Berchtesgaden one day to Bad Wiessee and another place and, every Tuesday there, every Wednesday there, and my husband went and got the orders. And then they had a delivery man who did the deliveries and the retail shop grew and my father-in-law had just had a little shop but that was then extended. It was a very, very big shop. I even had a picture of it. There were about eight windows, which was very big for a grocery. He had thirty-eight employees, which again is very big for a grocery. Usually they just have two or three. So it became the second biggest in the whole of Bavaria. In Munich there was one bigger than he. And he did very well and expanded and not only did he have 38 employees, his brother, who had started to be a lawyer, couldn't practise and came into the business. His brother-in-law, the father, had had a shoe factory. It went bust. He came in; his sister came in; and the mother and father and I were in the business. I remember when we got married my husband asked if I wanted to go into the shop in the morning or the afternoon, and I never let on that I didn't feel that I wanted to go in the shop at all, because I was fairly stuck up you know. Coming from a lawyer's house you don't go in a grocery shop. But I said I preferred the morning and I don't think my husband when he died ever knew I didn't want to go in the grocery shop. But I thoroughly enjoyed it. I went through all the departments and, when I was pregnant, I worked upstairs in the offices till my baby was born.

Tape 2: 13 minutes 48 seconds

AG: When were you married?

GB: I was married on the 18th of May 1937.

AG: Where was the ceremony?

GB: It was already very anti-Semitic and the wedding took place in Düsseldorf in my parents' house and we had a rabbi. There was one very famous Rabbi, (what was he called?) Eschelbacher. You might have heard of him.

AG: Yes, he came here.

GB: We were very friendly with him and I was very friendly with the family. But another one, who was the head of the youth club, Rabbi Klein, who went with his community into a camp and was killed. He had a wife and children, and I believe one daughter is married in the Lake District and I think there is also a son somewhere here. But I don't know if they all came out. We had a very nice wedding with a [...] in my parents' house, only very small, maybe 20 people, only next of kin. Then we went on honeymoon and we went first to Switzerland because my husband's mother was born and bred in Switzerland and had again a host of relatives there. But we didn't see them. I said, we can see them on the way back. But unfortunately we were sighted by one of the family and they were slightly taken aback that we didn't come and visit them. But we visited them on the way back. And we went to Venice, which was absolutely gorgeous, and you can't get a better time, in the Grand Hotel, and that was the same time that (what was it called?) the son of the king who had to abdicate. He had his wedding also and he was married about the same time, not when we were there, was also in Venice.

Tape 2: 16 minutes 0 second

AG: The Italian king?

GB: No, he wasn't Italian. You know the son of the king who had to abdicate.

AG: Oh, the Duke of Windsor.

GB: The Duke of Windsor was there with his wife, not at the time we were there but a month or so. That was all going about that time that the man who gave up his throne for the love of that woman, who I don't think did him much good altogether, but anyway.. that was all happening at the same time. And I remember we were at this beautiful hotel, Grand Hotel, right on the sea, and I was lying in a deck chair and my husband wandered up across the seaside and he met one of his customers. 'Oh Herr Schwarz. How nice to see you. I'm here with my niece. She will be so pleased to see you'. And my husband went: 'Very nice. I'm here on my honeymoon.' 'Goodbye Herr Black'. This all was very

very funny. And then we lived happily after, ever after, till my husband still had the business and I worked there and that was till my daughter was born. My daughter, Hannah, was born on the 4th September '38, '39, '38. No, when the war broke out.

AG: the war broke out in '39.

GB: '38 and on the 4th September '39 the war broke out yes.

AG: So your daughter was born in the autumn of 1938?

GB: I was in Munich and there came the Crystal Night on the 9th November and my husband had been out. We lived on the Isar on the outskirts of Munich in a nice modern flat.

AG: What was the district called?

GB: It was called Bogenhausen, a very well-known, very nice outside. But we had no car at the time; we went by tram and took a quarter of an hour. And my daughter was born on the, yes, on the 3rd, the 4th of September 193... Wait now, we were 38, yes, and then on the Kristallnacht, on the 9th November, my husband disappeared. He had this flat and I phoned my mother-in-law and said my husband hadn't come home and she got very agitated and said he must have been taken away. But it turned out he had bought suitcases, thought he would go to Berlin because he was very well-known in Munich. You know if you have a big shop in the middle of the town you have hundreds of people you know, and he was caught. He looked very Jewish. There he is, you can see, very Jewish, you could see, and they interned him and I sat there with a child.

Tape 2: 19 minutes 34 seconds

AG: Where was he imprisoned?

GB: Dachau. In Dachau. So I was really beside myself, nothing I could do and I remember I was still breastfeeding the child and I was very terrible. When my daughter was born, first of all I was in labour from Thursday night to Sunday morning, which was not very funny because in those days she was a breach, that means the bottom first. And the bottom took that long they had to take her out with forceps, and she was a beautiful baby, proper weight and all. And the next morning my husband and my mother-in-law and his sister all standing round my bed crying. She had found the child in a big lake of blood and was so bad the doctor couldn't turn her and gave her an injection in the leg to stop the blood and that got septic and she still has a scar to this day. And then they put her in a nursing home and my doctor was a Jewish doctor. He said: 'it's my last confinement'. I stayed the night. Dr ..., a very well-known Munich fellow. And I got the baby so I had to go home and breast feed her every day, squeeze out the milk and bring it to the hospital for four weeks. And then she came home and she was never ill again; she's the healthiest girl; she's now 66. She has two big boys. So that was that.

Now we were going, my husband was interned, what to do? I was at home. I had a nurse at the time because the child has been so ill. It was a Jewish girl, and on my landing in the ten..., well a tenement, it was a nice house, a nice flat house. There was a banker on the same steps and I think his son had fled the country and the Nazis were in and out of his flat all the time so the nurse got worried. She went home to Berlin. So I was alone with the baby. So my parents-in-law sent my nephew; he was 13. He said, John he will, Hans he will come and sleep in the flat; you're not all alone. You know it's very eerie for a young woman - not that I was very worried about being alone - but still. And then at one time nearly every shop in Munich had a poster 'we will not serve Jews here.' Now, if they had all gone through with it, we would have starved in a very short time. But there were a lot of people; neighbours would offer to shop for you, and come in with goods, and come in with offers of money, and a whole lot of very decent Germans helped us. So I don't have this terrible hatred, like my friend; she doesn't even want to know. But I feel there were very very kind people and I tell you if you go against the government and they intern you, you might still do it. But, if they say we'll take your children or your wife, you will not open your mouth, which I can understand, it is only human. If they say if you say anything at all we'll take your boy into the concentration camp and he might never come out, you will keep your mouth shut. And that's what they did in Germany. It was absolute terror. And even neighbours, they'd dare hardly speak to you in case they were caught speaking to a Jew. They would go on the other side of the pavement. You know... so and...

As I say we had a very large staff and our main sales lady spoke to customers and said: 'it's really terrible our young boss - my husband, when he married his father gave him the shop, the business, and I don't know probably gave something to the sister. They were a sister and a brother. Anyway, my husband became owner of the shop. I suppose the father still got payment. I've no idea, anyway we were very comfortably off because it was a very good growing business and he had (what was it?) yes, he had to sell it. And he sold it to somebody. It was sold for a big sum, and again, after a month or so, he said not paying anymore and if there's any complaint he can take his complaint to the SS or the SA. He won't pay him anymore. That was that. So this first sales lady, Frau ..., she spoke to one of the customers and said: 'It's terrible, our young boss..' And it was like a family business, you know. They called my parents-in-law the father and the mother, you know, they were a real... They were there 25 or more years. No, my father had already had the business 50 years when I came in, so it was an old established business with a lot of very nice and grateful employees.

And she said to one of her customers, 'it's so terrible our young boss is interned in Dachau and there's a young woman with a newborn baby and she's beside herself, she doesn't know what to do, how can they get out?' And this woman said: 'Look, I am a Quaker and I have some connection to the Quakers in Edinburgh, the Friends. Get your boss's wife to write a letter to Edinburgh Friends House and they'll probably help her. So I sat down and I wrote a letter to whom it may concern, 'I've got this from another Quaker friend and I'm in Munich and I'm that old and I have a little girl of a few months old, my husband's interned and we're really at the end of our tether can you help us get out?' And I put in a little photo. In those days you photographed the children naked on a

bear skin. I don't know whether you've seen it? They get to lay on their tummy on the bear and the two parents standing beside, and I sent that photo to Edinburgh to the Friends House.

And it so happened, among other volunteers - British people are very very charity-minded, much more so than I've ever seen anywhere, and all the people who have enough to live and are older, they all do voluntary work. And this lady she worked there in Edinburgh and she saw that photo. And her husband was a minister of the Church of Scotland and he had been a missionary in China, a Mr Hope Moncrieff, and he was, he had met his wife out in China and he had lost his first wife when his first son was born. And he married this Mrs Moncrieff that I met then and he said well you run there every week, what are we going to do to help? The papers all full, how terrible for the Jews in Germany and what to do? And these are people with a conscience and he said: 'Well, we should do something'. And she said: 'You know, it's funny. I just saw this morning a photo of a baby with the parents; they looked so innocent. I think we take them'. And I'd written to home that we intended to go to America. Most Jews wanted to go to America, but there was a quota and our waiting list number was 72 thousand and something, so I knew we couldn't go for months and months. So I thought, well, I'll go to England and, when the number comes up, we got to America. So they offered us a home; they would take us in till we were ready to go to America.

So this was after the 9th November. Then I had to get my husband out of the camp and I had to get ready to go away. Now, if you went away as a Jew from Germany you couldn't just pack and go. First of all, most countries didn't want you because you had no money, you had no skills. They didn't want salesmen; they wanted joiners and plumbers but not salesmen, and this was very, very difficult. And the people went to Cuba and they went to Malaysia; they went to Hong Kong; they went wherever, Cuba a lot, where they could get in.

Tape 2: 30 minutes 8 seconds

So I had now this invitation to come to Edinburgh and the people said they would look after us so not be a burden, not like the refugees that come now. The government has to give them rooms, has to give them food. They paid not a single penny for any Jews that I know, not one. They all came in; they had no help from the government to come in and, on top of it, one of my husband's cousins from Switzerland, I think he sent £500 so that he wouldn't be a burden to the British government. So I sat there now with still my husband in concentration camp. I remember I was completely fearless at the time. I went right in the Gestapo place and I said: 'So I wonder what's the matter. Why is my husband interned? He hasn't done anything.' 'If he is interned he will have done something! Go away', so no use. So I was sitting there.

One day the bell rings. I was alone with my daughter, my little daughter. We had a little flat; we had four rooms: kitchen bathroom, three and a half rooms, a nice little flat on the first floor. The bell rings. 'I'm from the income tax' and the man said: 'I am here because you know if you wish to emigrate you have to pay the special tax'. They called it the Jew tax or whatever it was. How it was, if you took a sofa away and the sofa costs

you, say £200 when you buy it, yes sure you can take it just pay another £200 to the tax. If you take a table costs £50, sure you can take it pay another. So you had to make a list, everything German, everything Prussian, everything in triplicate, make a list all you wanted to take. So this man was there checking up what did I want to take and how much did I have to pay and after he had been for a few minutes he said, 'so where is your husband then?' I started to cry and said he is in Dachau, was very upset obviously, and he said: 'Don't upset yourself, I will get him out'. A complete stranger, the first miracle. I never met him before or after. No money changed hands. He said: 'I will get him out'. I said: 'How are you going to do that?' 'I will say that he is prepared to flee the country and take all the tax with him and he was quite well to do and had money in the bank and he will have to pay that first before he goes and I will get him out don't you upset yourself'.

I thought he was talking rubbish, but never mind. So he went away and that was about a few days before my birthday, which is in December. And on my birthday, which was 13th December, this tax inspector, who I don't know, and even my brother didn't believe me when I told him the story it seems so unlikely, Christian man, who saw a poor little woman there with a baby and crying for her husband to come and save her. He had been to the camp and the commander called 'Schwarz! Come out, come out!' So my husband said: 'What's happening now?' 'Of course you know you are going to be shot now.' That was always the answer. He had been four weeks in Dachau, which was near Munich - only half an hour. Then they took him to this man in the taxi in the car, and he said: 'Don't get upset. I will take you to the tax office. But don't get upset. It's only a formality. You can phone your wife from there. I will get you out.'

It's like a miracle. He took my husband to the tax office and he had to sign something. Whatever money he had he had to pay whatever money was due. My husband rang up and said: 'I'm coming home'. And he was home within a quarter of an hour, and it was my birthday. He gave me a great bunch of white carnations, which were my wedding bouquet. We were just married two years. He arrived. He had lost about two stones. They had shaved his hair all off and he was changed. He was changed. He was very, very frightened. If you live for four weeks under such mental and physical pressure and see people running out committing suicide, running against the electric wire to get killed it does stay with you. Before my husband was very jolly and very easy-going but after that he was... He never told me very much about the camp. They were told if they open their mouth they getting re-interned, but he was home.

And it took me from the 13th December till the 18th of May till I got all the papers, all the payment, all the furniture - we had just been married less than two years. On our wedding day, 18th May, two years we were married, we left Munich with the baby, with a lot of luggage, a whole lift that came to Edinburgh, and no money. Not like you know money. One pound for my husband, one pound for myself and ten shillings for the baby. Full stop. So we went then by train to Sankt Gallen, that's where my mother-in-law was born in Switzerland and where she was by that time. They had emigrated by that time to Switzerland. But they only let her and her husband come. Her two sons and her daughter they wouldn't let. So we were there and they were staying in Sankt Gallen in a furnished

flat. I don't know how they lived. I think an uncle, a brother paid for her. And, afterwards, I think my sister-in-law paid them back. He was a lawyer in Zurich. And she had, I think she had three, two sisters and two brothers. They were five children. One was an American. And we were there in that flat with my mother-in-law and my father-in-law and the baby, my husband and me.

We had permission to stay three weeks in Switzerland. I don't know whether you know that all the Jewish passports at that time were signed with a J for Jew. So was ours. After the 20th day we stayed in Sankt Gallen the police came and said if you're not out tomorrow we have to intern you and send you back to Germany. So we had already our flight from Zurich to London. And then London I had already my brother and sister here. My sister was in London. She was five years younger than I. She came here with fifteen or so years. And she was an au pair, which was really more or less a child woman. You worked about ten, twelve hours a day you know. And you got fifteen shillings a week less two shillings and eighty pence for the stamps. And she was in London at the time. She worked at the time in the, what you call it something court, Inns of Court. But for a lawyer or judge. And her husband had come there. She wasn't married, he was a boyfriend, and she was beside herself because, instead of learning English, she had learned Spanish because they had a Spanish uncle somewhere. So he had to learn English and he started off as a packer and later on became an accountant and became quite well. All took time. So my sister really had nothing and we had nothing. And I think the relatives from Zurich they gave us five pound or so but very little so we took a furnished room.

AG: Could you describe your arrival in London?

Tape 2: 40 minutes 22 seconds

GB: Yes, well, I arrived in London. My brother Walter, he was a year and a half younger than I and I was very close with him, and he collected us. And we had, I think somebody had already rented a house, a flat but it was too dear, not a flat, a room, a bedroom. So we went on. I remember we had a flat in Camden Town, which was very cheap at the time, now going up, but at the time was very cheap. And I remember we had a double bed and a cot for the child and one morning she went right into the fireplace, which hadn't been cleaned of course, and got all dirty. But it was not a wonderful thing and my husband tried to get some connection, some recommendation. And then we went by train about a week we were there and there were some other refugees who we met, and we went the week beginning of June we came to Edinburgh. And Mrs Moncrieff came with her son Peter. Peter was thirteen. And he had to give up his beautiful room overlooking the castle and Brunfield, a very good district in Edinburgh, first floor flat. And he had to go in a side room and we got on very well, I got on very well with him. And I'm still getting on very well with him; he's in Edinburgh still. And I was there when he got married. And he couldn't have children; his girl couldn't have children. They adopted two children and I was there with them all and they have now two adopted children a boy and a girl and they have four grandchildren. And I'm still in touch. But Peter's not well. He has dementia now. I used to go over... like a son to me you know. Well I've known him all that time. I

was at his wedding. He was at the wedding of my daughter, of my granddaughter. Still my granddaughter's wedding he was still fairly all right, but now he's very bad; he's in hospital. I still phone with them.

And the Moncrieffs were unbelievably good. With a tact that really needs remembering. The first day we came and you feel like the last dirt on earth. You have no money; your language is very bad; and you have nobody. You have no doctor; you have no uncle; you have no aunt; you have nobody, in a strange city, in Edinburgh had no relatives .. and what did they do? She lays the breakfast table for me, my husband and Hannah, who was nine months old, in the lounge, and she lays a table for herself, her husband and the boy in the kitchen. Wonderful! You know, makes you feel like a Mensch again. Wonderful! So they were very, very good to us. And I mean I did the housework for them. And my husband, on top of being in Edinburgh, he wasn't allowed to work. He tried everything but not permitted to work. He could've gone, some of my friends went as a married couple. But my husband was a businessman; he could hardly boil an egg. You know in Germany the men were brought up not to go in the kitchen. There was a cook there and if they went in the kitchen they would make a joke: Have you an affair with the caterer? So he was no use. So we were there in Edinburgh, and Mrs Moncrieff also helped me to bring up the daughter and they treated her - She had lost a little girl in the birth - she treated her like her own daughter. And they couldn't have been better to us. They were quite wonderful. And I got on with her husband very well too. And her husband... Yes, then the next thing was Paris fell. After Paris fell, was a war now. After Paris fell they said: 'intern the lot!' Didn't want all these foreigners, Jews or whatever, they pretended that they may be spies,

AG: Going back a little bit, didn't you have to go before a tribunal?

GB: Yes, we had to go to the tribunal. My husband, I don't think I had to go. But I don't know how he first got a category C, which was exempt. But when Paris fell parliament, they said, intern the lot and I would say the large majority were interned in Dachau [sic]. And my husband, as I said, he always did everything thoroughly, he stayed there 14 months. Some got out after a week; some got out after four weeks; some got out after two months; my husband was there for 14 months. Because he had no reason to get out. He had no profession of any use. He had no relatives. Eventually he got out. I think my mother was in London and she went to Eleanor Rathbone and she did a lot for the refugees.

AG: Do you remember where your husband was interned?

Tape 2: 46 minutes 33 seconds

GB: Do I what?

AG: Do you remember where your husband was interned?

GB: Yes, on the Isle of Man. I don't know whether it was Onchan, one of the big camps. And of course there were lots of people from Edinburgh. The terrible thing was he was

interned just suddenly. The police came and said he had to pack his bag, and they took him away. And they didn't take him to the Isle of Man; they took them to something called Donaldson Hospital in Edinburgh, where they collected them. And we went there next morning. Hannah who was at the time just over a year, we saw and she saw her daddy and there was barbed wire and she tried to go near him and, at night, when I give her a bath she was all full of sticks from the barbed wire fence. Was really terrible and she was terrified. Her father had disappeared. Next time mother will disappear. For a child terrible in a strange surrounding. So I remember a bit later I went, when my husband was interned, I went to... just trying to think where I went to... I think I went to Ilford, Essex, where my sister was, and my parents were there. Just trying to think whether my father had also been interned, whether he was already out. But I remember my father took... we went in to London. I wanted to see some friends, and Hannah threw herself on the floor and created because she said now her mother's going away, her father's gone. Was very, very difficult. She was really traumatised. And, anyway, my father and mother did what they could for her and gave her nice doll and very nice and then I stayed, I can't remember, a week or two. I don't know, yes, I think I was still in Ilford. I'm not sure. Later on, my mother went to a school friend of hers, girl from the Pensionat, you know, the well-educated girl. They went to a boarding school, special, to give them good manners mainly, a Pensionat friend she had met in Königsberg, and she had a flat and she rented out a flat in Willesden Green. And that's where my mother ended up. And she was there for quite some time.

Tape 2: 49 minutes 31 seconds

AG: How had your parents managed to get out?

GB: Well my parents it wasn't so difficult because they went out to Holland and my brother had been there working in a bank. And then when..don't know.. they must have been worried and they came to my sister. Luckily. Because the ones who stayed in Holland they were all interned. Nearly all died, nearly all. Because they got paid, the people, to denounce the Jews there..We pay you so much for every Jew.. and they all..hardly anybody in Holland survived. Hardly. Like my best friends' parents. Father. mother and only sister in Holland, Amsterdam. Nothing you could do. And you read Anne Frank, the Anne Frank exhibition. It was very, very bad. I would say the Dutch people at the time, they said we could've come over and they would look after the baby. But luckily we went to England. We thought there's a channel in-between. Düsseldorf you could almost walk to Holland, you know, over the frontier, not difficult. And my parents got to Holland and from Holland they went luckily to my sister. And my sister had really nothing. I mean at the time I think her husband was working as a packer or something for four pound a week. And I think she worked in a diamond factory. Mostly Jews. I think she mainly washed the dishes and made the lunch. So they were very hard up. And... both my parents lived with my sister for a time. Till, later on, they went to this Breslau, she came from Breslau in Germany. And she stayed with them afterwards. And my brother went to France. And in France he was caught, Jewish looking... and how he got caught... never seen again. He was somewhere taken to Poland. My elder brother, he was about five years older. So he was away. My younger brother was with my sister and

that was the three of us out. But my brother perished. And my husband's brother, Max, he had studied law. He couldn't get on. But he was to go to London. But he fell into the clutches of (what d'you call it?) a thief or whatever you call it. And he said he would get him to England and he paid some money and it all fell through, and he was also interned, never seen again. And, as I say, we were in Edinburgh and the Moncrieffs were fabulous for us. But, a war's a very, very hard time. And then, when my husband was interned, I was there with the Moncrieffs still. The minute my husband was interned she said: 'Now I pay you a wage', because of course she hadn't paid you. She was looking after the three of us. So I got the normal wage, twelve shilling and... what was it? Twenty pence... It was fifteen shilling was the usual pay for full time work. And most people you had to work for fifteen and more hours. So I was in Edinburgh and most people don't know but Edinburgh became a protected area. You might know, but most people don't know, and we had to leave Edinburgh within 72 hours. And I went to the police and said: 'Look here, I got a little girl of a year and a half. I have to leave the town, where am I to go? And he said: 'I really don't care but if you're still here we will have to intern you'. So Mrs Moncreff said: 'You're not going out of my house before I know where you're going'. And she was a pacifist, she was against war, and Quaker, and she said she phoned a minister in Glasgow and said: 'Look, I've a young woman here with a little girl. Can you get her somewhere in Glasgow to live?' And he said: 'Well, we don't need anybody'. She said: 'She can help in the house, she's ok.' And then he got me a place in Scotstoun the other end of the town. With an old lady she was about sixty something, and she had nursed her father who had just died, and she had a maid, a little maid of 17 or 18. And, of course, like all the British maids who had any sense, they went in the W.R.E.N.S or in the A.T.S because there was loads and loads of boys wanting to marry them. So this girl Ethel went away. So Mrs ... said: ' Well, I really need a help.' I said: 'Well, I can do that quite well, but I need a permit. I went to the Labour exchange in Partick, that was another part of the town. I said: 'Could I have a permit as an au pair? 'Oh no, you can't have a permit. We have plenty of girls want jobs.' I said: 'I must tell you this is a personal friend of mine and if you send other girls out they will just be sent back, you're wasting your time.' I got my permit. So I worked there with this Mrs ... at the fabulous wage of fifteen shillings, less two shillings eighty pence for the stamp. And she was very good to my daughter and I was quite contented and I met people by and by. They had a club in Glasgow, a refugee club, and I met then all the people including later on the ..., the parents of the Mrs ... and old Mrs ... She was in Nuremberg. As you heard, she lived underground. And she came here. She came, so I had in Glasgow one hundred... two hundred... several hundred I would say refugees in Glasgow.

In Edinburgh we had also a very good club. There was a lady by the name of Dr ... Dr ... was a children's specialist. And she had a daughter who had studied geography. They were very wealthy. They had a beautiful house in Edinburgh with a huge winter garden and every Friday night she invited all the refugees for supper. And I became very friendly with her help, who came also from Germany, and she was very good and my husband became also secretary or something. Anyway, they were very, very good to us. So then we had plenty of friends in Edinburgh and people to talk to. And I remember the treat was on Sunday afternoon: we went to a club, and you got sweet and sour bread with margarine. And that was the treat of the week seeing all the people and Hannah was in

the pram and everybody round her and she had a marvellous time. All these uncles and aunties, and there were only one or two children altogether in the whole of Glasgow, so young you know, and she was a nice girl with curly hair, very friendly, and they all made fun of her, and she was very bright, Hannah.

And they founded something called Mutual Refugee Aid Society and that went out for years helping people who weren't so well off. And every Hanukah we had a big party. So we had one party in a hotel near the station in Glasgow and I remember Hannah was to recite a poem. So Hannah was about four and a half maybe, so she was very small, and they put her on a table and there were more than a hundred people, and she said some poem. She said: 'And if they clap I do another one.' And there was Miss Gál (?). You know the brother there, and she came to her. She said: 'Hannah, aren't you frightened... all these people?' Hannah said: 'Yes, I was a bit, Miss Gál, in case I fall off the table'. The idea that you could be frightened because there were people never entered her head because she was brought up from the day she was born with people round her. That's the end?

AG: The tape's coming to an end

TAPE 3

Tape 3: 0 minute 3 seconds

AG: You were just telling us about the refugee clubs in Glasgow and Edinburgh and how all the refugees got together. Your daughter recited the poem. Is there anything else you'd like to say about these clubs?

GB: Well, as I say, when I came to Glasgow it was even better because there were not fifty or twenty... in Glasgow we had several hundred and we met them all, made some very good friends. I had one couple, they are now in Israel and he was... he went to [...] in Germany, and he and his wife (I think they also came from Breslau), and they went... I'm just trying... Probably just after the war and it was very, very hard to get into Israel. But they got in and he got a job as a gardener for Mrs Sieff of Marks and Spencer - which was not too great a success because she wasn't all people are cracked up to be. And she said she wasn't very pleased. And then he got a job as a head gardener at one of the big hospitals. He's now living with his wife in Ashkelon; he's now over eighty; he's just been here; he's a vegetarian; he came to a congress and his wife... and they have three children: two of them are my own children's age and one other one. And their son is a garden architect in Israel, and one daughter went to America. She's very artistic and she played a guitar on an Israeli ship

AG: Can we go back to you? In Glasgow and Edinburgh

GB: OK. So as I said I was in Edinburgh and then I came to Glasgow. And Glasgow in a way was much better. First of all I was earning. And after a time.. about.. I must have been with Miss ... for about a week and at the time the war had ended and a lot of Scottish people visited their relatives in New Zealand and Australia. Loads of Glasgow

people went and you could also... I had very close friends here and they emigrated. You could go to New Zealand for ten pound, assisted passage, and these people I am still in touch with. There's a lady, she's just had her 90th birthday. I was very close friends with her, also from Breslau. She came in from the south of Germany, very nice lady. And no children. Oh I brought them together. I got them together; they got married. I said they would suit each other and they lived happily ever after. Very nice couple. And then I had a lot of friends in Glasgow, quite a lot.

And then Miss ... went away from Glasgow to visit her relatives in New Zealand and Australia. So Miss S... had to get me a job... I try to think... I had a job in-between... that's a long time ago. Miss S... got me a job in Edinburgh, again in a minister's house, Church of Scotland. By now I was used to it, and they were again very, very good to me and to Hannah. And the minister used to take a great interest in my daughter. Their children were grown up; they were at university. They had a girl and a boy, and he used to wash her ... and teach her poems and Hannah had a wonderful memory and remembered long, long three, four verses she could. That's how she went up in the hotel on the table. It was nothing to her to say poetry, you know. And she wasn't frightened of people; she was only frightened she might fall off the table.

And I was quite happy there. And my husband then eventually got out, He had..yes.. he came out from the internment camp and Mr Moncrieff - that was the minister Reverend Hope Moncrieff - he had a farm in Calder Park outside Glasgow, between Glasgow and Edinburgh, and he got my husband to do some work for him there on the farm. My husband was used... He was terrible, like confetti to a funeral. He was no good at any of these jobs. Anyway, he was there and then I had a friend, also very well known in the refugees from Austria, [...] You didn't come across her? She played a big role in Glasgow. She was very left wing, socialist, very political. And she had a friend who married. I think he was a finance minister in Austria and, but she died in between... But she had two children. So we had a lot of connections. By-and-by we got connections, but when you come it is so hard. You have no doctor here, no lawyer, no restaurant, no reference. You really are thrown down in the deep end and no money is very, very hard. You know, like they say, no money.

But as I said we were very well looked after most of the time. Then Grete Gál, she sent me to Lenzie that is outside Glasgow, 8 miles. If you go to Edinburgh you go through Lenzie or to London. Lenzie, it's about the first stop or second stop. And this was, you know, was a little town or village, and I worked there for the minister and they were very, very good to me. And I met another refugee in the bus. We had the Wednesday afternoon off and I spotted her and we became friends and that's the lady where I got the husband for, [...] from Breslau... and he died when he was 92, 94. And she just phoned me, she had her 90th birthday.

Tape 3: 7 minutes 34 seconds

And then eventually my husband came out of the internment. Was it my mother, I think? She went to Eleanor Rathbone and spoke to her and eventually he got out after 14

months. And the minister called Moncrieff.. I've forgotten what the other fellow was called ... it will come to me. There was this minister I was in Lenzie for also best part of a year and then the lady said: 'Look, it's all right with you and your little girl, but I don't want to have your husband as well.' But you can understand, so we had to look for a place. So my husband got out and he was friendly with this [...]. And [...] was very active in affairs and she worked for the Co-operative Society. And now the Co-operative Society at that time had twenty-five per cent of all the turnover in Scotland. They buried people; they sold groceries; they sold menswear, women's wear, children, the shoe; they made cigarettes they.. I remember when I was with this Miss [...], every morning a young boy came on the bike asked for your order and brought it back on the bike and you got percentage... very little, half percent or so of all the things you bought and, at that time, the wages were low, everything was low. But there were thousands of people, members and the Co-op, as I said, every twenty-five percent of all the turnover of was done by the Scottish Wholesale Co-operative and retailing. They had hundreds of shops. Now it's much, much smaller ...

They still have the Co-op, and my husband through her, she was very friendly with the man in the Co-op, who was manager for the employees, and got him a job in the Co-op in [...], which was right out, further than this, from Lenzie. It was about an hour in the train in the morning but still got the job as a packer and I in my innocence and stupidity, I thought: Well, he's very capable. My husband was a very capable businessman. If he gets in such a big business he'll work his way up. Not so. If you are a packer, a junior will not let you go in an office or anywhere else, so he stayed a packer. So, after a year, I said to him: 'This is really not good enough'. He had the fabulous salary of three pound and fourteen shilling a week for three of us. And I said: 'Look, this is not good enough. You must get something better.' So, after a year, he got a rise: two whole shilling a week. Three pounds sixteen shilling. I said: 'Look it's no use you staying in that job you can't get on, we can't live on that.'

I had a job in an office, but it was only part time because I had to take Hannah into a kindergarten and that was very good. That was from nine to four and I collected her. I had a job in the furrier's place as a secretary and I went in the morning from Lenzie. It was about quarter of an hour in the train and then the bus and then in the centre of the city, and then I went out to Partick, which again outside and then I had to collect her at four o'clock and take her home. And then I had to see to the house and it was not an easy life. But I think I made all of two pound, which was all right and helped. You know, two pound at that time was a lot of money every week. And then I said to my husband: 'This is not good enough'. So we went all over Glasgow, wrote may be a hundred applications, and wherever he was they said: 'Why do you want to change? The Co-op is a marvellous firm to work for. They are so good to their employees'. They had what nobody else had: a pension. When you left after thirty or forty years you got how much? One pound a week pension.

So my husband said, well, he wanted to get a better job so in the end ...so in the end I said to him: 'Look here, it's no use. You tried everything, but we don't have to be...'. Meantime, we were in Lenzie, in a Mrs Wilson's house, and they had a beautiful big

house, and they had something nobody else had at the time, they had central heating. Central heating about fifty years ago unknown of. Only the very rich or the very... He was an engineer at central heating in a beautiful villa in Lenzie and they took us in without pay.

Tape 3: 13 minutes 45 seconds

Yes, how I got it? I went, there was a greengrocer, no it was a plantation of tomatoes, a gardening place; they sold tomatoes and other fruit and they had a little hut and the woman was called Kate of the Hut. I went there with my little daughter. You could walk there and buy. I usually bought all of a quarter pound of tomatoes because more I couldn't afford at the time. And Hannah always said poetry and amused them and they had fun with the child and I said: 'I don't know what to do'. I was at the time in the place called [...] and [...] was one of the big owners of a wholesale business in Glasgow. He came from Switzerland. I don't think he was married and he had an awfully ugly sister not married either living with him. And what stood for me, they lived in a big house and they rented me a room. But I wasn't bright enough to realise they had gaslight, gaslight for lighting the house at that time. And you would say: so what? Gaslight. But we rented a bedroom and the lamp was over the double bed, which was all right in summer. As the light got dark we had pull the whole double bed away and put a table under there so you could write a letter because the light was - well like that one, on the wall, you couldn't move it. Gas you can't move.

So we were there for a time and Mr ... said, oh he's very friendly to Jews and of course that's all our own fault because we are being punished for not being Christian, not believing in Jesus Christ. But we should come in his living room anytime. So any time we did come in the nice living room he started to preach at me. And I still remember in detail, he had a book which I had to read which was written by a converted Jew, and it was called I Met Christ in Prison, and it was written by a Jewish fellow called [...] who was converted, and he told me all what would happen. And also my husband went in the bus to the Co-op every morning. That was about an hour, and he also met a minister there who said: 'You know if you convert we can give you pocket money every week', and it was quite a pressure. Of course we didn't want to know.

So I was there, I can't remember, a month or two months. I remember there was one evening a Hanukkah party and Miss [...] said she would look after Hannah. She slept all the night through, no bother and I could go. So this was great because I wasn't going out for months on end and never with my husband because you can't leave a child alone. So I come home Miss [...] absolutely beside herself. She had gone in the room with a pocket lamp and put it at Hannah and of course she waken, and she saw that grisly face there staring at her and she started to cry like anything. She said to me: 'You know if you have a child you have to look after her, you can't get other people to look after her'. So I thought, good, so I get away. So I got from there.

I then got to the Wilson's which I got through Kate in the Hut. They had a whole flat upstairs empty. And they had taken people who had been bombed out from Clydebank.

They had two rooms and there was a kitchen and shared bathroom and there were still two rooms left. And Kate said to me, go over there, but don't mention me because we have fallen out, and say maybe you could rent it and see what happens. So I went there with my husband and I said: 'Well, I've heard you may have some rooms. Could we possibly rent one?' And she said: 'Yes. In fact I have two rooms and I'll think about it. So what's your husband doing?' I said: 'Well he works in the Co-op', which was quite respectable at the time you know, and she gave us these two beautiful rooms. One was a dining room where we had a cot for Hannah and one a beautiful double room and there was a lovely bathroom, hot and cold water, and there was central heating through the house, beautiful garden and right at the station going to Glasgow.

And no we didn't pay anything. They just let us stay. I mean I helped in the house a bit... can't remember, no I don't think, I don't think I paid at all. Very, very nice and they had three daughters and one twin. One of the twins was backward. They had terrible trouble with that twin later on. She had to go a mental hospital; she couldn't manage anymore. And the other girl, who was older, she married and went to Newcastle on Tyne. She didn't get on too well with the daughter. And the other twin was in the house and one morning she came in and she was dead; she had died. And we were with those people for I don't know, for maybe a year or so. And then it came time for Hannah to go to school. So I needed to go to Glasgow.

Tape 3: 20 minutes 28 seconds

So we took, off Great Western Road, which is a big thoroughfare in Glasgow, one of the terraces. We got a room. I think it must have been a double room and a smaller room with a cooker. And there we stayed for a few months, I think. And paid rent. I was just wondering how we managed... I think with my job. And I came home at, how was it? I came home at six and the girl came out at four, and I needed somebody to look after Hannah and at first the younger daughter looked after the girl, in the house. And then, one day, I came and the daughter had disappeared. I think she was mental; she had tried to strangle her elder sister; she was disappeared. So that was very eerie for me because she was supposed to have looked after Hannah, you know. So then we looked for another place.

Yes, and then I went to the Wilson's. No, I was in Glasgow then. No, I got from Glasgow. Yes, I went to Kelvindale. Kelvindale is overlooking the mental hospital and the little boating pond on Great Western Road. Very good. And this man, a Mr Tracey, he was head of the welfare department in Glasgow corporation. And he didn't live with his wife or she didn't live with him, but they weren't divorced. And she was headmistress of a place in Fife somewhere, and she had a son Angus, that lived with her. So we had in Mr Tracey's house two bedrooms and use of the dining room to ourselves and shared the kitchen and bathroom. And he had a big lounge and a bedroom and I paid rent at the time I think. We paid about two pound a week. I'm not sure. But we were very hard up the whole time. And then when my husband came out of internment he eventually... He first got the job in the Co-op which was no use. Then, I said: 'Look it's no use you going on like that; we don't have to stay in Glasgow. We can go to London, go to London.' So we

went to London by bus, which was three pound return, because we just... we were skint you know, every pound... So we went to London and he went to somebody called Morris ... and he was a head of a tobacco factory. They made Craven A and Black Cat cigarettes. He had a great big factory, might have been in your time in London still. Did you know Craven A and the cigarettes anybody ever smoked? Big factory. They made three million pound turnover, which was enormous at that time. So he came there to this Morris ... And how he came to him - he was a director, and he said that's very good that you come. We just need somebody in Glasgow because it was still during the war and they had a zoning system and so the cigarettes didn't come in packets to Mr Smith. They came in bulk from Ballymena, where they're being made in Northern Ireland. They came to Glasgow, every morning three million cigarettes. And my husband had to distribute them. Of course not himself. He then got a staff, and he got a secretary, and you got another help and then he had a big depot.

Tape 3: 25 minutes 9 seconds

and the cigarettes came every morning. And he had just to arrange to have them distributed all over Scotland. And the same they had in Manchester. They had another depot and somewhere in Wales so I think they had five people who did that and the more people he employed the higher his salary came and the less he had to do. The only thing it was far out from where we lived. He had to take a long, long tram ride but couldn't be helped. But then he ended up with eleven pound a week, which was more than double what we had before. Eleven pound at that time was a decent thing and they had free holidays. They were very good. The [...] were one of these people who do things, social work. They had a holiday home. My husband could go for weeks on holiday there, in Brighton or somewhere, and they took out an insurance for him, and very sociable people you know.

And he was there till after the war. And when they didn't need anymore zoning they didn't need anybody more who managed the zoning, so all the five people or directors or whatever they were, the managers, they lost their job. And my husband was fifty-three years old, hardly possible to get a job and too young to get a pension and I think he got from Carreras, if I remember rightly, five hundred pound. Full stop. No more and that was all we had. We really had no money you know. Now, in the meantime, I had another child, which I had in Glasgow when I still was living with Mr Tracey. And he said very nice you, your husband and Hannah, but one child is plenty and you better look for somewhere else.

AG: Was it a boy or a girl?

GB: That was the man from the welfare department...

AG: No, I was asking about the child, was it a boy or a girl?

GB: Little girl again.

AG: And what was her name?

GB: Her name is Marion and she married a doctor, who's a professor now, in Liverpool. And the other one is married to a German-born Jewish boy, also Jewish, and the parents, he was a dentist in Glasgow, well-known. And he has two shoe shops in the Lake District; he's doing very well; he's very clever. He went to a technical college or tannery or whatever it's called. He learnt at a proper thing; you get training.

Tape 3: 28 minutes 20 seconds

to treat the leather, to make into shoe leather, you know the skins into shoe leather. Anyway, he worked there for many years and then I think the man went bust and George took the main sales girl, they had a shop for seconds from the factory, and he took that salesgirl George, and took her for him, and took the shop and then later on, at one time he had four shoe shops and one day, the one shoe shop was in Barrow-in-Furness in the main street and one day the manager of the electricity work came to him and said look this is a very good place can we buy that we want to have our headquarters here. So he sold it and I don't know what he got, a million or so for the place, and then he rented another shop...

AG: Could we go back to you in Glasgow please?

GB: Pardon?

AG: Can we go back to you...

GB: ...in Glasgow.

AG: Yes. Your second daughter was born...

GB: Yes, my second daughter was born on the 15th January 1945 and she was a little girl born in the maternity hospital in Glasgow. And I wanted a boy of course, but my daughter informed me: 'Mummy of course we got a little girl, I prayed every night for a sister.' So my elder daughter took her over really. She read her books; she could read at that time. She was six and a half and all that, and she thought I need special cow milk unless I feed her. But I was feeding her myself and she grew up and we lived there with that Mr Tracey until he threw us out. And his wife said: 'That's rubbish. My husband shouldn't throw you out, you can stay.' But then I didn't want to stay there anymore.

Tape 3: 30 minutes 38 seconds

Now difficulty. Where do you go? You try and rent a house. So I went maybe in twenty, thirty, forty people, who rented out houses all in [...]. And I spoke to Mrs Moncrieff. I said: 'I really don't know what to do. The man has thrown us out. I'm trying to rent a house.' Scottish people are not very fond of children; they are very fond of animals. They're crazy about their animals; children they send to the boarding school when they

can afford it. If they cannot afford it they put a latch key round their neck and let some roam the street. They do not on the whole look terribly well after their children. If they have a dog and anything happens they go absolutely hysterical.

AG: So what did you do about finding somewhere to live?

GB: So what do I do now, I couldn't get a house to rent. Mrs Moncrieff. Number two miracle. She said: 'Look here, Trudy' - we were at that time very friendly, got on very well. She said: 'Look here, Trudy. It's impossible to rent a house. You have to buy a house. I have a little money from my father left. I can give it to you for the down payment. Miracle number three. A friend of mine, a man from Berlin also, a friend of mine who had a pharmacy in Berlin, much older than I, he said to me: 'Look'. There was a house for sale in Glasgow. I looked and it had ten rooms. It was a second floor and an attic flat with five rooms. Ten rooms, kitchen, bathroom, in a good district in Glasgow and it was for the low [...] three hundred pounds. Even at that time, very, very reasonable.

So this pharmacy owner friend said to me: 'Look here. I come with you to the public group.' I didn't know what a public group was. That was the Scottish expression for a sale. I didn't even know flats were sold in such a way, that you can bid for them. I didn't know that. I went to this public group or public sale with that Herr Levy, and he said: 'The main thing is if you go to an auction sale you must make the first bid. Then they have to ask you before they conclude the bid: will you go any higher? They cannot let... you don't lose it by default. So it went off: three hundred pound, three hundred ten, three hundred twenty, and on and on and on and, as I said, we had no money. And it went up to six hundred and forty pound and we got it.

My husband said with such a head [face?]: 'What to do, such a big house what we need, such ten rooms that's stupid.' I said: 'It's not stupid. It's better too big than too small.' So I phoned my friend. I said: 'Dorothy, I'm terribly sorry. The thing went up to six hundred and forty pounds. And my husband had to pay fifty pound down straight away and fifty pound he got when he was by Carreras. He had an accident, a horse went in and the [...] fell down and glanced his forehead, which he had to the end of his life, and he had fifty pounds compensation. And that was all the money we possessed, cash you know. So 'Mrs Moncrieff', I said: 'I'm terribly sorry. It's gone up to six hundred and forty.' 'Oh', she said, 'that's so little I can let you have the whole amount'. Miracle number two. Miracle number three. I said to my husband: 'Look, we can't leave her like that. We need to be a contract. When we buy that flat we go to the lawyer. We need to make a clause that says it's really her flat and we pay up every year a pound a week, fifty pound, fifty pound a year.'

And the lawyer was a very famous man in Glasgow; he was a Conservative MP, Henderson, in Glasgow. He was one of what they call now the ...what they call it... the pig that doesn't like women... didn't like women... the women were stupid. I went there with my husband and every time I asked anything he said: 'Yes, Mr Black, that is so and so.' He just ignored me completely. So he kept on saying, so I said: 'We need to put in a

clause because this money is a loan from a friend' And he said: 'Yes, what is the interest?' I said: 'There is no interest.' He said: 'My good woman, you don't understand. In our country if you get a loan you have to pay an interest'. I said: 'No, I understand completely, but this is a close friend who wants to help us in our predicament.' He was so impressed he cut his fee in half. Miracle number three. Now, great. Now we had ten rooms. So Mr Levy said to me: 'You know Trudy, the best is if you get a builder to convert it into two flats'. It was big, you know it was a big second floor flat and a big third floor flat - one very big room and the others were [...] but perfectly good. Good district, roomy terrace, good district in Glasgow, not bad. I mean not the rich but good. So I said to him: 'That's all very well. I haven't got any money to pay the builder.' So my husband had all the tradesmen at that time through Carreras, so he knew the builder. He had to do things for Carreras, which of course he didn't have to pay for their conversion. So the builder said: 'I tell you what. I will try and get the permits - you need the permits during the war - then you can pay me for that but then... and you sell it with the permit to build.' So we had the flat advertised and was very easy to sell because it was very hard to get cheap flats. So I had it advertised for three hundred pound. I got three hundred forty pound and who bought it?- the manager of the BBC, the second in command of the BBC, Gordon Geldart (?). He had been lieutenant or something in the army. He and his wife, they were our neighbours up there. We got very friendly with them and they took us to the BBC and we were visiting, really friendly with them, till they moved away years later. And... we were in clover. We put... yes I think I gave Mrs Moncrieff straight away a hundred pound and then I said: 'Well, every year we'll pay fifty pound back'. And this was a squeeze to save every week a pound. And we paid her back and when she was paid she said: 'What a pity. Now I don't get it anymore', and she was as sweet as can be. And we lived in this house for many years. And then... yes, now I had this upstairs and I had three hundred... I had hundred pound I needed. That house was a beautiful flat, a corner flat with a look over meadows and on the other side two bowling greens, very nice, private, off Dumbarton Road. Very good.

And I said: 'Now, I will rent out two rooms. I had five rooms, kitchen, bathroom, I had two girls, two girls for one room, one room for my husband and myself, big, big beautiful room with bay window, big room for the children and a beautiful lounge with two big windows, bay windows, beautiful flat. And I got a lady, an elderly lady for herself, and she wanted two rooms: one for a bedroom, one for a sitting room. And I got two pounds a week. Two pounds a week paid all my electricity and all my rates and my husband only had to earn the food. So we were in clover. So then we were fine and lived there happily ever after and my daughter got married from that flat and we had yes... then was very bad.

He met this boy from a German background, father had been a dentist and he had been in Spain, and he had been a dentist there. And they wanted to make him a government dentist and he said: 'What did the last dentist do?' And he said: 'Oh we've just shot him.' He'd done something wrong. So he went back to Germany and then he came out to Britain where they needed dentists and he could work here. So the father was doing very well. He had two sons, and the elder son... Hannah, how did she meet him? She went, yes, she went to a dance with the lady upstairs, not this one, another one from Germany,

who had also a son, and that was a best friend. And she met this George Gummersheimer and they married. She met him well before Christmas and they married at... they married at the end of June. And they moved to Leeds. And he was a tanner and he was a manager in a factory so he had a decent wage. I don't think he was in clover, but he could keep her...

AG: Where did your daughter go to school?

GB: Both my daughters went to the same school Hillhead High School which was in the west end when we first were there in the terrace. Belgrave Terrace was round the corner. And I remember that was a big school, school of boys and girls, and in Germany my father always told me the boys' schools are much better; the good teachers always go to boys' schools; only the second class go to the girls school. So I thought: 'OK. I'll get her into a mixed school'. Very good school. It was a corporation school, and they had a school fee. You paid fees, but they were subsidised by the corporation of Glasgow. All we paid was four guineas a year, which for me was hard to get, if you are very short. But you could just get it. So I then, we went there and then we had this house. I had... I rented out this flat... two flats to one old lady, and I said to her: 'Look, I'd be awfully glad... I haven't been out with my husband for years. Would you now and then baby-sit?' And she said: Every week, once or twice for my children. And we could go out together and we had two pound a week and we were in clover. All our troubles were gone.

Then came miracle number three, came the restitution. Meantime, my husband had had a heart attack and we were two stairs up and I needed to go to a low down. And I bought a bungalow in Giffnock, where I lived round the corner from here, which I bought at the time for five thousand three hundred pound. And I remember the lawyer was beside himself. He said: 'You realise you're paying a thousand pound for each room'. It was a beautiful (what do you call it?) architect-built house. There were only two of them, with a fabulous garden. A beautiful house. And it cost five thousand three hundred and I think we had to pay rates of one pound a week, which at that time we thought was a lot. And I sold it twenty years later. After my husband had died I sold it for sixty-four thousand. But, if I had it still, I would now get quarter million, anyway, if not more.

AG: What year did your husband pass away?

Tape 3: 46 minutes 0 second

GB: My husband died I think in '79 and he was...I think he was also going on for... I think he was 77 going on for... Yes this was terrible too. He died on the 5th April so you say: 'so what?' The trouble was by that time he had lost... he left Carreras. And when he left the job this was very difficult to find a job. And the husband of my friend said: 'Look, why don't you do agency? You're a good salesman.' And my husband's first agency he got through my brother in London, who was very friendly with a fellow who had a coat hanger factory in London. And he was manager and he said to my brother: 'Look. Is my husband any good at selling?' He said: 'He's very good at selling.' 'Would he like to have a job for coat hangers?' And he came to Glasgow. Everybody was pulling his legs: coat hangers. You can hang yourself. You want to sell coat hangers? Nobody

knows coat hangers. There are more than a hundred different kinds of coat hanger; there's a big catalogue. They all mainly came from Poland, the wood, and they also made coat hangers with silk and coating and leather and coating, like you saw with leather and things, and coat hangers and shoehorns. And my husband made more in commission from coat hangers than after eleven years in Carreras. So he sold wagonloads of them, trainloads, you know. Because, if you go to hotel, they need hundreds of coat hangers, preferably with their name on, and people steal them and it's a good advertisement. Honestly. All these things you know nothing about. So my husband did that. And then, after he had that, there was a thing advertised for a knitwear factory in... not Nottingham... near Nottingham there... a knitwear factory and my husband said to me: 'I think I'd better go there and visit this factory.' And the man said to him: 'Oh that's good that you've come. I've over eighty applicants, but you are here. If you're any good then you can have it.' You got the knitwear factory for cardigans and pullovers. And at that time a proper woollen cardigan or pullover was sold for a pound. So my husband had the manager here or the salesman from... where was it? Not Nottingham... Leicestershire somewhere. One of the big factories he had. And he went with the manager, the sales manager, with whom I'm still friendly now, lives in Leicester, went with him and they sold I think for forty thousand pound in a few days because he is a very good salesman. And he didn't know where the bottom of the... where the side or the back from the pullover was.

So he went to one of the big places in Glasgow. He said: 'Look here, I've just got this agency knitwear, I've no idea', could he have a look at it, and it's from such and such a place in Leicestershire. And the man opened up and he gave him an order and he explained it all to him. And of course all the others... all the wholesalers in Glasgow, nearly all, bought these knitwears and they were sold by the gross or so, you know, so it was quite good. So my husband had this knitwear and the hanger and then he had various other... He had also some cloth. But none of it did as well as the knitwear. The knitwear did fabulously well. And then, well then we needed a car, he needed a car, and he needed to drive and I needed to drive. And then my husband had a heart attack. We were up there that was before my daughter got married. And Mrs Moncrieff gave her a hand sewing machine and my husband carried it up to the second floor and maybe that... but it could have been something else. But he collapsed the next day in a show room somewhere. The man took him home and he came home.

He had a severe heart attack, and I got the doctor who lived round the corner, very good doctor in Glasgow, and he said, you want him in a hospital. I said: 'Oh no. I prefer if I can keep him here.' So he stayed in bed at the time for about four weeks and the doctor came nearly every time, mainly because he got some whisky - doctor called... a very, very well-known doctor with a rough outside. He had been a military doctor, but an excellent doctor - and my husband lived, as I say, to 77, nearly 78. And then, when we bought this bungalow, a beautiful prestigious bungalow in a good place. And by that time we could afford it you know, and by that time we had paid up Mrs Moncrieff years ago, and I think she was still alive. We went to... I say, yes, she was still at Hannah's wedding. Hannah's wedding. We were still in Broomhill and there [...] was bad luck. We went to... We were going to have it in Jenners. Jenners was the biggest and oldest caterer in

Glasgow and at that time they had a beautiful hotel. And, just four or six weeks before the wedding, it was sold. Mr Jenner said to me: 'I am very sorry. I had such a good offer I couldn't refuse it.' And my husband insisted and other people to George they had to be married on a Sunday so they didn't have to take time off. So they were married in Jenners' old place, which was very, very well known, very good food in the Gorbals, which at the time had a bad name. But now its all rebuilt, it's O.K. But at the time that was really where the poor immigrants started

Tape 3: 53 minutes 38 seconds

in the Gorbals. The district of Glasgow where you get through.

AG: I know the Gorbals.

GB: Now it's all rebuilt, it's perfectly all right,

AG: Which year was your daughter married?

GB: My daughter got married, Hannah, trying to think. She was twenty, she was born in...

AG: '58?

GB: Pardon?

AG: 1958?

GB: 1945. No. '45 Marion was born, that's not true. Marion was... yes must have been fifty... '54 or so.. So she got married and then they went to Leeds, was also funny and we gave them a down payment to buy a house. The house was in the district called Alwoodley. Because it was mainly Jews there they called it Alyidley. But it was called Alwoodley. So then they bought there. There was nothing there. They had just put the water and electricity and gas in and that was at Easter. They got engaged and I said to my son-in-law George, who was very bright: 'Look here, George. This is all very well you getting married, but you won't get in that house. They don't build so fast round here.' He said: 'Rubbish. I went to the foreman. I said: "Look here. You have to build all these; you have to start with my house. I'm getting married on 30th June"'. The house was ready: central heating, and everything in it, garden and everything. And we got them the furniture and down payment - can't remember what we paid, probably several hundred pound, and we had a wedding for Hannah. As I say, it didn't cost much. We were forty people in Jenners. And, by the time Marion got married, we had 200 people. By that time we were over the worst. But there you are.

AG: When did your second daughter get married?

GB: Second daughter got married... '45... She was already 25, so must have been '50, '60, 1970. Yes, could've been. She's been married now... I think they had their silver wedding, yes. And my other one will soon have her gold wedding. And my big daughter has a son who's a lawyer, and the second lawyer, George, gave him the other shop. They have two very prosperous shoe shops in the Lake District, near Lake Windermere. One is in [...] in Lake Windermere and one is in Barrow-in-Furness, where they sold the one shop to the Co-op and he has now only two. And he's doing fine and Marion's husband is retiring now. Half-time he's working. He specialises in laser and he's head of the International Laser Association. What they do, lasers, they go through the mouth or through the back. They don't cut a piece so, if they go to your liver or your heart they go through that, and it's a very speciality, and he's the head of that. And he goes and gives lectures. He was three weeks in Africa, in... what is it - the big Africa country? - the Sudan. He gave a lecture there showing them how to do laser because it's very important work and I mean it does away with cutting you open. And, if they can anything at all that they can, the doctors now do not cut you open. Like before I had a hernia operation...

AG: I've got to change the tapes; I'll have to stop you there

Tape 3: 58 minutes 15 seconds

TAPE 4

AG: Gertrude Black tape 4. There's a couple of questions I'd like to ask you if I may. The first is did you ever go back to Germany?

GB: Yes

AG: Did you ever go back to your home town?

GB: I went back twice. I was living in London and I, what happened? And I heard people were invited and I wrote first... can't remember. First, I think went to Munich where my husband comes from. And I wrote to them and I said whether they invite former German citizens and they said yes and I said I have a friend, can I bring him, yes. Got it all paid, both journeys, and a good hotel. They bought a big bouquet and they gave me, they invited us to the ballet... I think once was the ballet and once was an opera, and they gave us a round trip through Düsseldorf and we had a fabulous time. And I phoned that friend... no, that was in Düsseldorf ... in Munich, in Munich they took us to an opera and also a conducted tour and they brought us flowers and very, very, very well treated. Everything paid; it didn't cost me a penny. From house to house for two people.

AG: Do you remember at all what sort of year you went to Munich and to Düsseldorf?

GB: I went to... it's a long time ago. It must be...I mean... seven years here... I was eleven years in Glasgow... it must be about eighteen years. Eighteen years something like that.

AG: Eighteen years after you arrived in Glasgow?

GB: No, eighteen years from now.

AG: Oh right, eighteen years ago.

GB: Seven years in Glasgow. I was eleven years in London. From London I went to both places. It's about fifteen, sixteen years. And I think I went first to, first to Munich which was fine. In Düsseldorf I found the people not nice because the Rhinelanders had to be very jolly and very friendly and I found them very egoistical, very nasty-minded. I remember we had a free tour through Düsseldorf, conducted tour and we didn't have to pay. And the busman said to me: 'So why do you have free tickets?' 'Well', I said, 'we're former citizens; we were oppressed by the Nazis.' 'Oh they shouldn't give you a free tour', something like that. Very, very unfriendly. Not of course the people I met to do with Jewish affairs; they were very nice. I think they had a Heine society in Düsseldorf; they were all very nice, but the people who work for Jews and friendly to Jews. But the other people not as nice as Munich. In Munich I felt more at home. I went to school in Düsseldorf. In Munich I was absolutely two years to the date. I got married on the 18th May and I went out on the 18th May, two years after.

AG: Have you ever been back to Elbing?

GB: No I haven't. I would quite like to go but it is complicated. There is a club from Ostpreussen. Did you know that? There comes a magazine out every..., twice a year, very good. People from former East Prussia.

Tape 4: 4 minutes 16 seconds

Which is completely now Polish. But the girl, Eva Braun, Eva Blau, she lives, lived in... she lived in... forgotten now... in West Germany now near Düsseldorf, one of the big towns, I've forgotten now. She lived and she got an Ehrenkreuz from Germany for fostering friendship. I got that twice a month, I get these if you want to see one; it's all in German, and it shows my former school building and the school building of the humanist schools. That was the boys who learned Greek and Latin. And the modern, they called it the Realgymnasium, it was more French and English and chemistry and things. And the three buildings are there and they tell everybody who has died and where they are and that's how I kept in touch. The girl who did it came to visit me here in Glasgow. And I met her once. I phoned with her. I think she was twice here with her husband and she ran that newspaper, and I don't think, well I don't think they would pay. I don't know who'd pay that because the newspaper was very cheap. But she's died now just very recently and I don't know if they can continue that without her.

Of course, the majority of people - I was one of the younger ones you know. I've been here over sixty years. Henry Wuga has not been that long because he's only eighty. At least ten years younger than me. You know even if he came at seventeen or fifteen. I don't know what year he came here, I was already twenty-six or -seven when I came here, so big difference. I mean they're all dying out. Upstairs we have a lady Mrs [...]

She is going to be ninety-five. She's a refugee. And their son introduced my daughter to her husband.

AG: What is Elbing now called?

Tape 4: 6 minutes 50 seconds

GB: Elblag, and it's Polish. And Königsberg is Kaliningrad I think. Is it Kaliningrad? And those were two, like Glasgow and Edinburgh - not quite as close. I think it was two hours by train or maybe three hours - and my grandfather lived there and my uncles.

AG: The other thing I was going to ask you is whether you could tell me something about your connections with Jewish life in Glasgow.

GB: Yes well, I've been in the Association of Jewish Refugees which is in London, been there since we came, and I've been in the one in Glasgow, of course that goes with it. And now we have this Kindertransport and now we have a girl. Have you met her? Suzanne Green. Very nice woman. She's a friend of my daughter in Liverpool. And they have holidays as you may know or may not know. They have holidays in St Annes-on-Sea and as I was all on my own. I went from here to St-Anne's-on-Sea and I was received like a close cousin. They all couldn't have been nicer, including Suzanne Green, and I went to the other lot close to Bournemouth. I've been twice there. I went once, no, I've been twice by air. You can go by air from Bournemouth direct. If you go by train you can also go direct but it is twelve hours. And they've all been exceedingly nice and helpful and I've a lot of friends. I've a lot of friends in London, Jewish friends, a lot of friends still.

AG: Do you go to a synagogue here?

GB: Do I go?

AG: To a synagogue in Glasgow?

GB: Yes sure, I'm a member, I'm going tonight. We have now in Glasgow the first woman rabbi here. And the funny bit is: my granddaughter and her husband, they emigrated to Canada, and they were living in Toronto, and I visited them a couple of years ago. And I have a second cousin of my husband's outside Toronto, and they came in and they said our rabbi is going to Glasgow. And that is Nancy, Nancy Morris. And that's the first Jewish, first female rabbi in Glasgow.

AG: And what is the name of the synagogue?

GB: Her name is Morris.

AG: No, the name of the synagogue?

GB: The synagogue? Glasgow New Synagogue. It's just away from here, by car about ten minutes, down the road. Very near here it's in [...] before you come to supermarket.

AG: Right.

Tape 4: 10 minutes 15 seconds

GB: It's very near from here. She's very good, excellent.

AG: And is this a synagogue where there are a number of former refugees?

GB: There are quite a few. They also have quite a number of converts because they're easier. They also have to take a year or two, but they can become Jewish, quite I would say. Don't know how many percent, but quite a percentage is married to a Jew either woman or man. Quite a few.

AG: And I would also like to ask you how you see yourself in terms of your national identity? Do you still feel German?

GB: I feel Glasgow is my hometown. I was very happy in Elbing, completely integrated, I would say. I was very happy in Düsseldorf. And I was quite happy in Munich, but it's all gone and I've been here... I came in 1939, just three months before the war I came to Edinburgh. 1940 I came to Glasgow and I've been here ever since, except the eleven years when I was living in London. But I still went and visited my friends here in Glasgow. I feel I belong to Glasgow. And I open my mouth on the bus, say there's a discussion or something, and they say, 'Where do you come from?' I said from Glasgow. 'No dear, I don't mean that. I mean before.' They hear the accent. But you cannot lose...

AG: One other connected question. I didn't actually ask, and should have done, whether you and your husband were naturalised?

GB: Oh yes, as soon as we could, which took about six years or so at the time. You know the war years you couldn't. After that we had some Glaswegians who vouched for us and there was no trouble at all.

AG: That's all I wanted to know.

GB: Of course we could work it was a big difference. Because then you got a work permit. Of course with Carreras you could work; these big firms could do everything. They got the work permit, you know. And the Co-op.

AG: You were going to tell me about the German consul.

GB: Yes, I must tell you. First of all after my, no just before, the wedding of my elder daughter, my husband had a serious heart attack and I decided, he got through it, and I decided we can't go to very steep stairs, up was 90 steps to and no lift. And then we

moved to this house, which Mrs Moncrieff helped us to acquire. And we wouldn't have got it without her and that was fine. And then when the reparations came through my husband had had a terrible accident again for a time before he went to Carreras or after he went to Carreras. He was looking to make some money and he had the friend where the husband had died and he supplied pet shops. So my husband helped the widow to keep the business going and the business woman said to him: 'Look, you better get rid of it. I cannot be at that business killed my husband. We worked so hard at it', and he was only, I think, in his late fifties. And she said: 'I don't want to have any money. I don't want to know that business.' So my husband carried on that business as a sideline and visited pet shops. And he went to London and he bought, I still remember, he came home with several hundred pounds worth of toys for birds cages, little [...] that all had bells and little stand up things and little dolls and everything made noise and you had to count it up and I said: 'My goodness, what are we to do with all these hundreds and thousands of toys?' And he said: 'Don't worry'. He went to Lewis's, and he spoke to the manager of the pet shop, and he said: 'Look, I've got here this stuff.' He said: 'Show me what you have.' He says: 'Sell me the whole lot'. Got rid of it straight away.

My husband was a very likeable man, very, you know, nice to talk to. He could sell himself. He was very genuine, very kind-hearted and everybody loved him. You will not hear anybody said a bad word about him. Everybody. And the same with the salesmen. And he would go to them and they would all do what they could for him. He was very successful as a salesman. And then came, yes, and my husband had this terrible accident. With the pet shops it had to do. Because we were selling bird baths and bird baths take a lot of room. And we had a car so we got a roof rack. And the roof rack had this thing over; it's called a spider. You put it on. So, one day my husband went down to put it on and this thing went loose and went into one eye. And he lost the sight of the one eye. And not only that. He was terribly depressed, much more than the heart attack. And it was terrible. He was for weeks and weeks in hospital and then they said we... I said: 'I think he can see a bit with that eye'. And they said: 'No, there's a cataract growing over it. But it's no use taking it off because it'll only make it funny for him to look.'

So he managed with the one eye quite well to drive and to carry on his business. So while he was ill came the reparations through. And they came very late for Munich because there had been some crooks there and it was all put back. I don't know whether you remember that, but it all took may be two years longer than everybody else. So it came through. So I had to go to the consul on my own. Of course, husband ill in hospital. Herr von [...] – von, you know as in nobleman - charming man. And he asked me a hundred questions. He said: 'Look, Mrs Black, you will think we are dreadful. First, we throw you out of the country; we take all the money you have; we kill your relatives; and, now you come here, we treat you as a liar.' He said: 'But we have to find out whether everything you say is true. But', he said, 'I will help you all I can. I will get your application for your reparations in with my own mail'.

And my husband got put - I don't know whether you know that's how the reparations worked - he got like civil servant whatever your income was, or whatever you were, either like a teacher or like a doctor or like a something, my husband got in the very

highest thing, and he got the highest reparation you could have. And then he got also; he was interned and he claimed for his health, which was definitely impaired because his whole life was destroyed. You know if you have four weeks there and every time you open your mouth you get killed, you now getting shot, and you see people dying, and people dying from lack of diabetes medicine and things, it does change your whole [...], so the doctor confirmed that. He got one for his health and one for his loss of memory, loss of living, and I got one because I worked in... as a secretary, and I got that again through somebody from London.

But, again, you won't know by any chance [...]? There was a Dr [...], a lawyer, no, and he went then to the Rhineland, not to Düsseldorf, to the next place there, and he became something you do with the consulate. And he put my thing through for Germany and I had to pay several months, I hadn't worked long enough, and I got three good pensions on which I live now. I couldn't live on my eighty-three pound a week. I could not live on that, you know. So I am quite happy. I am quite contented. I think I've been very lucky and the consulate couldn't have been nicer and I met very many, very kind helpful people and I never had to ask for... It was all offered. Like all that money, no interest, and you know the man who went to the concentration camp. I didn't know the man. I didn't know he could go there. I mean I've really, really been very, very fortunate on the whole. I know I had my ups and downs like everybody, but, on the whole, I think I have experienced a lot of miracles

AG: One thing I haven't asked you about is the years you spent in London...

GB: Yes I went to London. I tell you, I met this friend through the AJR again, saw an advert. He was looking for a companion. Very well-known family, Lux, L-U-X. There was a Doctor Lux everybody knew. He was completely unknown because he lived, because he lived part of his life in Africa. He came... he must have studied at the same time as I in Berlin but we never met. And he was few years older, and I was already 72, and he was 76. And we lived happily ever after in London till he died. We lived in, as I said, Shepherd's Hill.

AG: In Highgate?

GB: In Highgate. And he has a son Jonathan Lux, who is a very prominent lawyer in London, one of the most prominent in a firm called Ince and Company. They mainly work for shipping and aeroplanes. And he has just been two years in Hamburg to spread the business there, but he's back now. I'm very friendly with his wife and the children. I got a letter from the girl just now, treat me like their grandmother because their grandmother was dead when I came, you see.

AG: And how did you get on in the years in London?

GB: Very well. Well I had Marty Lux, very good. He had a brother and wife and a niece. I got on very well. I got on well with his friends. I had a sister in London with umpteen friends, a brother with dozens of friends, sister-in-law. You never met anybody? You not

met [...] either? Anyway, I have lots and lots of relatives in London and lots of friends. And then I had all Marty's friends and all his children's friends. Was very happy in London. But then he died, my friend Laura, whom I've known for over fifty years, she said: 'Look, there's a flat for sale'. She bought it; I didn't look at it. She told me what to buy, what not to buy; she got it all ready and fixed. I came here, so I'm very, very fortunate.

AG: When did you come back to Glasgow?

GB: I've been now... I came February, beginning of February. I think I've been now over seven years, going on for the eighth year. But I lived before here all that time. And in between I was every year once or twice here. And Laura's only son lives in London round the corner, and I've known him since birth, and he's like my own son. So I was very, very lucky.

AG: Good. I don't know if there's anything else I can...

GB: No, I can't tell you any more.

AG: Well, you've told us all plenty. One last thing I'd like to ask you. We'll send you a copy of the interview and if you show it say to your children, grandchildren.

GB: Oh lovely. I shall enjoy that no end

AG: I wondered if you had any message that you would like to tell them, anything that you've learned from your life that you'd like to pass on.

GB: Oh I would love that, oh I would love that.

AG: Is there anything you would like to say to your grandchildren should they come to watch this interview?

GB: Well, as I say, I think I had a very difficult life. But I have been unbelievably lucky, and I have a very optimistic outlook on life, and I think I had a very good life. And I hope that all my children are well, and the children are nice, and I'm very fond of them and I just hope they will have as contented a life as I've had.

AG: Splendid. In that case Mrs Black I'd just like to say thank you very much for doing the interview with us.

GB: You're most welcome.

PHOTOS

GB: That is a photo of my father Julius Levinsohn. He was born in 1875, I think. This would have been taken probably in Düsseldorf

AG: And when would that have been?

GB: Pardon?

AG: When would that have been?

GB: In Düsseldorf when I went to school there. That was 1929.

AG: Thank you very much.

GB: This is my mother [...] Levinsohn, née Schneider. She was born in Schloss Gerdauen in East Prussia which is north of Tilsit. It was probably taken about the same time as my father in Düsseldorf. But I couldn't tell you. She might have been forty at the time, but might have been fifty, I really wouldn't know.

AG: Thank you very much. Who are the people in this photograph?

GB: This is my wedding photo and that is my husband Julius Schwarz and it was taken on the 18th May 1937. And we were married in my parents' house. That's on our sofa, in our dining room in Düsseldorf.

AG: Thank you very much. Who are the people in this photograph?

GB: That is my elder daughter Hannah, and my younger daughter Marion, and there are six years between them.

AG: And when would this have been taken?

GB: This was taken in Glasgow, but I can't tell you the time. They must have been about 12 and 6.

AG: About 1950?

GB: Yes, about that.

AG: Thank you very much. Who are the people in this photograph?

GB: This is my husband Julius Black and myself, Trudy Black, and that is my younger daughter, Marion Black, and Hannah Black.

AG: And where was this taken?

GB: This was taken in Glasgow

AG: And when?

GB: I am not sure. It must be quite a long time ago because Hannah is now 66.

AG: It's probably about 1955.

GB: Yes, I couldn't tell you.

AG: Thank you very much.

GB: This is a photo of my daughter, Hannah, now Hannah Gummers and her husband George Gummers. It's taken on a holiday, I'm not quite sure, either in Portugal or somewhere near, in a hotel, and it's about three years old.

AG: Thank you very much. Who are the people in this photograph?

GB: This is my daughter, Marion, with her husband, Professor Neville [...] with their first grandson and his name is [...], and he was born in Canada, in Toronto. And this picture was just taken just four weeks ago

AG: And where was it taken?

GB: It was taken there now in America and I don't know where they took it... probably in New Jersey where they live.

AG: Thank you very much indeed.

Tape 4: 30 minutes 49 seconds

END.