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**Interview Transcript Title Page**

<b>Collection title:</b>	AJR Refugee Voices Testimony Archive
<b>Ref. no:</b>	54

<b>Interviewee Surname:</b>	Feitl
<b>Forename:</b>	Gertrude
<b>Interviewee Sex:</b>	Female
<b>Interviewee DOB:</b>	28 March 1916
<b>Interviewee POB:</b>	Vienna, Austria

<b>Date of Interview:</b>	25 March 2004
<b>Location of Interview:</b>	Baxendale
<b>Name of Interviewer:</b>	Rosalyn Livshin
<b>Total Duration (HH:MM):</b>	2 hours and 21 minutes

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

**INTERVIEW: 54**

**NAME: GERTRUDE FEITL**

**DATE: 25 MARCH 2004**

**LOCATION: BAXENDALE, LANCS.**

**INTERVIEWER: ROSALYN LIVSHIN**

**TAPE 1**

RL: Now I'm interviewing Gertrude Feitl, and today's date is Thursday the 25<sup>th</sup> of March, 2004. The interview is taking place in Baxendale, Lancashire, and I am Rosalyn Livshin.

RL: So if you can tell me first your name.

GF: Gertrude Feitl.

RL: And what was your name at birth?

GF: Glattau.

RL: Did you have any other names, any nicknames?

GF: Not particularly, no.

RL: Did you have a Hebrew name?

GF: No.

RL: Where were you born?

GF: In Vienna.

RL: And when were you born?

GF: '14, no, in '16, 1916, yes, 1916.

RL: And how old does that make you now?

GF: Now? 88.

RL: And if you can, tell me your parents' names and where they were born.

GF: Why?

RL: Where?

GF: Where. My father, his name is Glattau. And he originally, that's what you wanted to know, comes from Mähren, that is in Czechoslovakia. And my mother also comes from Mähren, but from another village and they meet— they went to Vienna to live, the parents of my parents went to live in Vienna, and there my mother came from— in Czechoslovakia somewhere, and my father the same, but on the other side.

RL: What was your mother's— ok, so this is Tape 1 continued, what was your mother's maiden name?

GF: Mandler

RL: And her first name?

GF: I don't know.

RL: Your mother's first name.

GF: First name? I don't know. I can't remember.

RL: Ok. Staying with your parents at the moment, let's think about your father's family. What can you tell me about his family background, his parents, anything at all that you can tell me about his family background, your father?

GF: I could, but I don't. What shall I— My father was— he had Autos, and then he used the cars for what do you call them, I've forgotten that as well, he was working on the— with the cars to make a living, in Vienna, and my mother had a shop, food shop, like— they had everything in that shop for sale, and she did very well, but had to look after all the children at the same time.

RL: How many children?

**Tape 1: 4 minutes 18 seconds**

GF: How many children? I shouldn't have mentioned that maybe. My brother and me were hers and from an— she was the eldest, she had to look after the sisters and brothers and there were four of them. So altogether there were about six children for her to look after, I remember her telling me. I was one of the younger ones.

RL: Had her mother died?

GF: I don't know, I never knew the grandmother.

RL: You never knew her mother. Did you know her father?

GF: No, no.

RL: You never knew your grandparents, your mother's parents.

GF: No, no, my mother's parents not. Mother's parents, he was called Mandel, well, I don't know. I'd better not say anything that I don't know.

RL: Do you know what happened to your mother's brothers and sisters, where they went, what happened to them?

GF: Well, my father went to France over the border without a passport because he was a Jew.

RL: I was thinking of your mother's brothers and sisters, your mother's, not your father.

GF: My mother stopped in Vienna, she says, 'No, I'm stopping here, looking after everything, it will be soon finished', she were hoping, but it didn't work like that. She was sent to the— Czechoslovakia in a camp, was there for 3 years and *Gott gebe*, she survived and came back. The Red Cross rang me up and said, 'Are you the Gertrude Glattau?' And I said 'Yes', and they said, 'Here is your mother, will you want her back?', 'Ah,' I said, 'don't make a joke, silly joke, will I want her back, of course I want her.' And she said 'No, no, no, no, that's true you know, that's not a joke, she's here.' Of course — well then I had her living here with me after that, two and a half years, something like one and a half year. She saw we were sharper in money with having a family - Margaret was born then - and so she says 'Oh, I'm going to earn and get a job, I'm going to London.' She went on her own to London, really, she went to London and a Jewish family, you know, Jewish dings, looked after these people from the Red Cross, said 'Don't worry, we'll get a job for you', and she did. And she worked another one and a half year before she died. I think she were marvellous.

RL: What did she work as?

GF: Making leather belts, sewing, machine sewing. With that, you know, well, I was always a Mummy's girl and this it worked in me, you know, when she had to go through all that, you know and what happened— do you know in the— she met in the last minute, the last few weeks, Margaret, my daughter's— What was the Granddad, and they both came out of the— the war was over, and they came home. And we were friends, and that's how I met my husband again. We were only courting first, you know, and then it was serious, I brought him over to England as well with me. And we got married.

**Tape 1: 9 minutes 24 seconds**

RL: Now, just keeping with your childhood for the moment, you said that you didn't know your mother's parents. Did you know your father's parents? Did you know his family at all?

GF: No.

RL: You didn't know any of your grandparents?

GF: No, no.

RL: How many brothers and sisters did your father have? Do you know anything about his family?

GF: He had one, yes, one brother, I think, one brother, and that was it. Yes, one brother. No, there were an auntie, another auntie, two sisters, that— we didn't have much connection with them. That's how I didn't remember. And what happened to them, I don't know, I don't know.

RL: Whereabouts in Vienna did you live?

GF: Ottakring it was called, *im sechzehnten Bezirk*.

RL: And can you describe your home?

GF: There's not much to— wasn't so much to describe.

RL: What was it?

GF: Very small, because mother had to look after too many. What did we have, the shop, and *anschliessend* on the shop was a big *Zimmer*, a big room, with so many beds, and the kitchen. That was our living. Very poor, we weren't very— we hadn't the money to do any more. We could help the mother, but we couldn't do any more. Anything else you want to know?

RL: Did your parents belong to a synagogue?

GF: Who?

RL: Did your parents belong to a synagogue?

GF: No.

RL: What kind of level of observance did they keep?

**Tape 1: 12 minutes 1 second**

GF: We had to go to school, and that was it. In school we were called Jew, or Jewess, because I was born like that, but they didn't keep, both of them, to the religion, neither did I. But I learnt part, partly because I— through the school I had to go to the— in the afternoons we had to go to learn religion, the Jews' religion, not the other religion. Some of it is— some of it was always left, you seem to— what shall I say, we were half and half, half Jews and half other people, you know what I mean, I lived in a district— they were all German people you know, so I had no friends like, Jewish people you know. After I went to school for a short time, I met one little girl, another Trudi, after *Klavier*, and they were better situated, and they had a— many times they took me with them when they'd go out, went out, they said 'Go on, fetch your friend Trude, she can come as well.' And that's how I got into that family, you know so— That's how life is.

RL: Is that a Jewish family?

GF: Yes, yes, a Jewish family.

RL: How did you get on with the non-Jewish children?

GF: Just the same, but there was always that little bit; 'You are Jews, you're a Jewess', they were not --- they were not nasty to us, no, but I always wanted to be with the Jewish girl, you see? And I married a half-Jewish boy. But that's how it goes, you stick to it.

RL: Did you have any close non-Jewish friends?

GF: Not so many, not so many. Because this street was all Christians, and I did a lot of sporting, you see, not with the Jewish people, they weren't much for sporting, but for the Catholic people, they were very sporting and I joined there.

RL: What kind of sport was it?

**Tape 1: 15 minutes 22 seconds**

GF: Well, swimming, in a school I had turning, what is it in English? [gymnastics] Where you— no I don't know. Anyway it was Catholic, Jewish people didn't have sport, they had to work for their living.

RL: Did you belong to any other groups, youth groups? Like you mentioned the sports group that you belonged to, did you belong to anything else?

GF: Well, actually no. I joined, yes and no, but I can't say anything about it, because I wasn't long enough with it, couldn't really— I wanted to learn, I wanted to go to school— I wanted to get something, to bring some money home to put it— to put it— we were enough children to look after, you know?

RL: So, how many children were living in your home?

GF: One, two three, I think about five, with me.

RL: With you. And what were their names?

GF: Now then, my brothers and sisters you want to know? Mandel, Mandel was their name, my single name you know, and the others as well. And then they married, I forgot the names, what the married ones– there's one girl who came to England as well, a niece of theirs, and I was asking if I could– Letizia, she was called, and she went– she came to London, and I never heard anything after that. Everyone went into their– to try their best to have a living when they came here, all of us. We couldn't go in clubs and so on, wasn't there, the money.

RL: So going back to Vienna, what age did you leave school?

GF: 14.

RL: And what did you do after you left?

GF: And then I had– I went to *Dienst* [or dings?] school, *bis* 16 it was altogether, for office work, I went up to 16. We were *gezwungen*, we were *zwing*, we had to, until we were 14, and then it was up to you if you wanted to get another class, a higher one, and that was what I have done, until Hitler came. Two and a half years.

RL: What was your school called? Did it have a name?

GF: Yes, if I remember. I can't tell you: I forgot, I forgot.

RL: So you say you learnt office work and what did you do after that?

GF: *Arbeitslos*. We didn't get a job, we didn't get a job. So we went to the– like here, you go to the office, you know. Yes, we didn't get anything, they didn't give us anything. So we had to see if we can get a job less paid and so on. That was after the First World War, in the twenties.

RL: What was the first job that you got?

**Tape 1: 20 minutes 17 seconds**

GF: My first job? Looking after the children, that was my first job. Looking after children, put them to bed, and feed them and so on. I hadn't time to go to another class, that's life.

RL: And how long did you do that for? Did you have a job after that?

GF: Couldn't get one, couldn't get one. So we had to get our living with that food in the business. You know, what my mother had.

RL: Did you help her?

GF: Yes, I helped her.

RL: Where was the business? Where was it?

GF: *Im zwanzigsten Bezirk von Wien*. There were quite a lot of Jewish people.

RL: And it was food, was it?

GF: Food, yes mostly food, and some other things, I don't know what things we had there, I don't know what my Mum sold besides, I don't know what it was, big pans, I can't remember what the name was...

RL: And did you help in the shop?

GF: In the shop, selling [inaudible] butter, and et cetera and et cetera, a *Lebensmittelgeschäft* [grocer's]. Now you don't see them shops any more here, only big shops. They were little shops.

RL: What would you do in your spare time?

GF: There? There wasn't so much spare time. We had to get up early and go to bed early, there wasn't— it wasn't like it is now, that's heaven.

RL: Would you ever do anything for entertainment? Did you ever go anywhere?

GF: No, no, I didn't. I would have liked it, but I never did. No.

RL: What about holidays?

GF: Holidays? Yes, we did, when we could afford it here. But in Wien—

RL: I'm talking about Vienna.

GF: You want to know in Vienna?

RL: Yes.

GF: Well, holidays, when I started going out with boys you know, I started going out with boys and we'd go for a holiday there, and for a holiday there, behave yourself, and I did, I always have done. That's what Mama said, 'Now you can go there and there, don't

spend too much, and behave yourself.' And I always did. I wasn't one to— like you find some, when they have the chance— No I didn't take the chance.

RL: Would you go away on family holidays?

**Tape 1: 24 minutes 4 seconds**

GF: I've never been on family holidays.

RL: In Vienna.

GF: Oh, in Vienna. No. I can't remember, I forget these things, because we didn't get so many, so you forget.

RL: Were your parents active at all in any societies or in the community in any way, did they belong to anything, your parents?

GF: No, they hadn't time for that. My father liked his cards, so he enjoyed it, he enjoyed everything, but I doubt my Mum, she had to look after the children with me. I was one of the --- I was the eldest actually.

RL: And what siblings did you have? Did you have a brother?

GF: Yes.

RL: What was his name?

GF: Alfred.

RL: Did you have any sisters?

GF: No.

RL: So it was just the two of you?

GF: Yes.

RL: And you were the oldest?

GF: Yes.

RL: Do you know what happened to your father during the first World War? Did he have to serve in any army?

GF: Not that I know of, not that I know of. Don't know.

RL: And in terms of religious observance, was there any kind of customs kept in the house at all? Was there any level of Jewish observance in the home in Vienna?

GF: What do you mean?

RL: Were there any customs, any laws kept Jewish-wise? You know, you said they didn't belong to any synagogue.

GF: Oh, no, everybody said they're Jewish, they're Jewish and that's the synagogue there, yes. Only we never went.

RL: Did they keep anything, any of the Jewish laws and customs, was anything kept?

GF: There were some people, quite a lot of people who kept to it, for instance, a friend what I said, the other two, they were very religious, the father and the mother went down to the dings— and they kept to it on a Saturday and a Friday - is it Saturday or Friday - special meals and they all collect and so on and so on, but not my parents. That's what I always said, 'You say I'm a Jewish girl, where's the Jewish with me? There's nothing.' I was in no religion. I sat in the back of the religious man at school and did my homework and when I finished, he said, 'I thought you listened to our religion.' I said, 'No, I needed some homework' He never said anything, he was nice, he didn't say anything against the Jews, I must say that, I didn't find that. I wasn't— I didn't want to change it. No.

RL: Did you ever come across any anti-Semitism in Vienna?

**Tape 1: 28 minutes 28 seconds**

GF: Oh yes.

RL: Can you tell me what you came across?

GF: Well, they used to hit them, and scrub the floor, the stones and so on. They had to kneel down and so on, that was in the latest times I noticed it, because I just packed my clothes, dresses and went over the border with a passport and I says, 'I want to live in England' and I got here.

RL: Was that after Germany had come in?

GF: Yes.

RL: What about before Germany came in? How was it then? Did you experience any anti-Semitism before Germany came in?

GF: Yes, to a certain— sometimes, but we weren't so— they just said 'Well you are one of ours,' and I said 'Yes' and that was it, they didn't take anything off us. Because they felt we are like them and I didn't feel like it in that way. But when I came on the end with my

passport, I had to take everything off and they checked me, what I take with me, I hadn't anything to take with me, but they did that, and I didn't expect it, you know. That was what they did to me. But they wrote everything, everything was written down when I came to the border. You know what I had, how much I had? Ten shilling! With that I had to make a living. So I was glad to get out, on the other hand I wasn't so much here neither. You know, they weren't very nice here when I came here and sometimes they are still like it, like [Inaudible], you know what I mean, I don't want to say it too much, because it can't be helped, because we live outside, there's only one or two like her, me, nobody else in Jewish religion.

RL: And do you feel that there is some anti-Semitism?

GF: Oh, yes, sometimes I feel like they are at home and they were [makes whispering motion behind hand, like a person talking behind someone's back], you know, so I went into my room and didn't bother any more. But it's not nice. Don't you feel it here? Do you not?

RL: It's not for me to say really, this is your story. Just coming back to Austria, can you remember the day of the Anschluss, the day that Germany came in?

**Tape 1: 32 minutes 10 seconds**

GF: Yes.

RL: Can you describe to me what you remember?

GF: I didn't remember anything, I didn't think anything, I didn't want to think anything, I'm here now, and that's what— I'm going to work, whatever I get I have to take, and make my life here. When I came to here.

RL: I'm thinking before that, when you were still in Vienna and Germany came in. Do you remember that when you were living in Vienna?

GF: Yes. As soon as Hitler came, we had to have a thing, wear it and walk around: 'I'm Jewish, I'm Jewish'. With me having connections in houses you know, they were very nice to me in our house and in the next house and so on, and they helped me more than—they said 'Go on in the cellar, they are coming' et cetera, you know, and I did what they said and I got away with it, quiet. But one girl said to me— I remember they were— they had a shop across the road with wine and things like that, you know - and they had to scrub the outsides, the flags right on the street, and they hit them, they hit them continuously while they were doing that, they were very, very— they had done what they shouldn't do. But I went in own home and I didn't go out. But some people had to go out.

RL: What about your parents, did anything happen to them at this time?

GF: At this time? Well, the shop was emptied, they took everything out of the shop and we couldn't sell anything any more. They took it out and said, 'That's ours, you go and do what you want.' That was at that time and what I wanted, I mean I went on the— past the Holland side --- anyway, I went past there, and my father and my brother went another way, we were supposed to meet again wherever we are to help each other, and the father was in France and he was a few months in a thing, in a home, in - where was that? - after the war they said it was all— I can't remember that, anyway my brother went here, and my father went there, and my father was in France, in Paris, and he was all right, he wrote to me 'I'm all right, don't worry about me,' and my brother was in a home in Holland, and Holland had like we had it here, they were looking after them, and Hitler came there and they were all taken to these *Konzentrationslager*. And the same happened with my father, they were just sent to the camp and I never heard anything. Never heard anything after that. I tried, if somebody got— but nobody.

RL: So were you left in Vienna with your mother?

**Tape 1: 37 minutes 5 seconds**

GF: No, I was already on the way as well. I went to— where did I go through, not Holland, the other one, next to Holland, another country. I went straight into England.

RL: How did you arrange to come to England? How did you go about finding somewhere?

GF: Finding somewhere? In those days you didn't find anything, you just took it. Well, we went— first of all, I had to have a passport. Which I had to queue up to get it, and luckily - and I was lucky in a few things, quite a few things - a man says to me, 'Hello Trudi, what are you doing here?' like this, and I says, 'Well I'm after a passport and I've had to stand here some— hours and hours and I can't get it.' 'Leave it with me, just stand here and wait.' And he came with my passport. After hours and hours I stood there. And I says where— I thought he wanted some money and I says, 'I have nothing, I can't give it to you.' He says, 'Never mind that, just go home now and pack your things and go off, don't talk to anyone.' And he explained it to me what I had to do, you know. He wasn't a Jew. Half-Jew. And he says, 'I got that because I was half and half'. And that's what came to me now, you know. Was from one daughter, like half sister to me, was ex-husband, and he saw me and he was helping me, was a nice lad, but she didn't— she couldn't— that Mitzi's mother she was divorced then, but that was besides. And I went on the border then, to England and I never went back, oh, for ages.

RL: How did you get a permit into England?

GF: I ask myself, I ask myself. Because I had nowhere, what I had, what they allowed me only for cleaning, I can only go somewhere for cleaning, and I took that job. I've never done a lot of cleaning, but I took the job. And I had to be for quite a while in cleaning job.

RL: How did you hear of it?

**Tape 1: 40 minutes 34 seconds**

GF: How did I hear of it? Yes there were a Jewish place, they sent us into different places. They said, 'Now you can go there, you can go there, and do your job. And we didn't have any payment, just the food, only I wasn't a very good help, I must say. What I did, I went to a farm, they fetched me to a farm. And of course you know we were so frightened of everything, my Mum put me big things, all packed with linen and so on, and what she could get for me when I got married I could have that, and I had to take it with me. And I came with my case and my clothes, and what did I get there, yes, the farmer fetched me from the station, couldn't speak English, just said, 'Wait here', and showed me, that I understood, I learned a bit in English in the hostel, in the school but that's beside now, I am getting there....and I worked there. She had three or four children and was a young— quite as young as me practically, and she expected of me to look after all these children when they come home from school, and feed them and clean the house and in the morning get up at six o'clock. I thought, 'I'm never going to do that, I'm not that strong, you know', but I tried, and because I didn't do exactly what they expected, she started fighting me and gave me a smack. I thought, 'Well that's enough now', that was after a week, I gave her a hook, like this, and she flew in that corner and I run up in my room, just took what I thought I need for the moment, and I run away. And then I run away and I didn't know where I run, you know, and I thought, 'What am I doing now?' Well, I saw a little shop, further when he brought me up, there was a little shop, oh yes, and I said, 'Well, I will go in there and I will see what they can do for me. And I go in the shop and say, and he says, 'Yes, but what do you want?' and I say, 'I'm hungry, hungry,' I didn't know the words and everything, you know, and the lady said to me, 'Oh, you are from that farm up there'. 'I'm not going up there any more, she hit me.'

**Tape 1: 44 minutes 37 seconds**

'Oh has she? Now we'll show her,' she says. 'Come on, love,' and I understood the words, because I learned a bit, you know, and I said, 'Oh, I can't go in there', and she said, 'I'll allow it,' and she took me in her room. 'Are you all right?' 'Yes'. She made me a kitten [sic], the fish, and bacon, and I don't know what else, I was hungry through and through, and she says while she gave me all that, she rang up to the police, and I said, 'What have I done?' She was ringing the police, 'I haven't done anything.' The policeman came, I explained as much as I could, that I had that case there, you know, and he said, 'Don't worry, love'. "'Worry"? What is "worry"?' It's kept in my head because it was so stupid. She said, 'He will go with the push-roll,' the policeman, went with a roller, to fetch my case to her; to that woman she says, 'I'll take it home if she wants me to leave it here until she is put in the right place.' I said, 'Yes, thank you,' because I thought I wouldn't get anything in any case. I said, 'Thank you very much,' and she really sent everything on. Sent it on, she paid for all that, I was lucky, that's all I can say, that people were kind to me like that. But they saw I didn't make a joke out of it, it was real hard

work, to live with people like this. The police came after two hours, something like that, and said, 'We have something.' Took me to a children's home, a home where children have no parents, and they have one room on their own, you know, and they let me have that room, and I was there a few days. And they said, 'Have you anybody in Liverpool?' That was near Liverpool. I says, 'No. But a school friend is there', not thinking that they'd want me to go there, you know. 'Would you like to go there?' I said, 'Well, I can't go there, I have nobody there to look after me, to help me.' 'Well, we'll see what we can do.' And they find me a job again as a cleaner for children, but looking after two children, and they were Jewish people. They must have said something to them, the police must have gone to them and said, 'Could you help that girl and so on. I don't know what happened, but I was taken there. That was my last thing in Liverpool, I was alright there, they were very nice there. I looked after the children, and it was— they said, 'You don't need to go cleaning, I have someone for cleaning, you look after my children.' They were in a better situation. I says, 'I would gladly do that.' I was so long there, and then where did I go after?

**Tape 1: 48 minutes 47 seconds**

Oh, meantime my husband came over, yes, I— again we were lucky that he could come over here, you know. How it was with him, I don't know, I just wrote a letter asking whoever it was there, that was when Hitler was— when they were finished, after the war, you know.

RL: After or before the war?

GF: That was—

RL: Before the war?

GF: What?

RL: Before the war?

GF: Before the war, I get all mixed up now.

RL: Was this your boyfriend at that time?

GF: Yes.

RL: Not your husband at that time?

GF: No, no he was a boyfriend, you know, and I was to help him and he went through some, some— I don't know, I forgot what, she[looking off camera] wasn't there then, you know but she's telling me what to do [laughs].

RL: So you wrote a letter?

GF: I wrote a letter for him if it is possible that he can come over. I can stand for him for so much, it wasn't a lot, and I paid that in, and he came over and then of course he says, 'Well, are we not getting married?' and I says, 'No, not yet, we want to have something in the hand, go to work.' 'Oh yes, I'm going to work, naturally, naturally.' And he got a job, and I was nursing, as nurse you don't get— you didn't get much pay at that time. They sent me to— Where did I go? Where?

RL: Had you done any training to be a nurse?

GF: No, no. It— they were training me, it was supposed to be for 4 years, then the government said I haven't— we haven't— all the refugees on the coast have to come inland. So I had to leave that job, and go again to the office, Jewish office, I haven't got a job. And they found me something and him as well.

RL: Where was that? Where did you go?

**Tape 1: 51 minutes 47 seconds**

GF: In Liverpool.

RL: Did you not have to move from Liverpool? Or you stayed in Liverpool?

GF: No I had to live in a big— in Liverpool first and came back again. I was in a hospital there in Liverpool, sent to no, Edinburgh. Now then, and I lived in Edinburgh for a few months, and then that came, so I had to come back again to Liverpool. And we both then started to live in Liverpool for quite a long time. And then war...the war began. My husband started a job in— I mix it up. In— I mix it up. In Liverpool, yes he came back to Liverpool.

RL: What kind of job did he get?

GF: He was in the shoe trade in Vienna, and he got something in the shoe trade here at the time, but very short money. But we had to live with it. And then I got something else, what did I get? I forget all that.

RL: When did you get married?

GF: When did I get married? When I came back from Liverpool— from Edinburgh, yes. When I came back from Edinburgh, I said, 'I have no job now.' He said, 'Well, never mind, we will have enough when we both go into work.' We had enough then. We had no children, we could live on what we earned.

RL: Where did you marry?

GF: Where? In— here, here. In, here, where is it? In Blackburn, yes, in Blackburn. Margaret knows better than me. In Blackburn, and the thing came from Manchester, in Blackburn it was very, very little, for a little thing, for little for Jewish people, you know, and he was very kind, he was singing so lovely for us, and asking us after if we wouldn't— would come to the house, because we had nowhere to invite people; I didn't know anybody and so on and made a tea for us. I think it was very, very kind. That was then when we started saving up and buying this and buying that.

RL: What year was it that you married? What year?

GF: What year did we marry?

RL: 1940.

GF: 1940 see, my ears want cleaning.

RL: So you married in 1940. Did you have to register with the police?

GF: No. Yes? See, she remembers better than me.

RL: Do you remember going to the police station and registry?

**Tape 1: 56 minutes 0 second**

GF: No, I don't remember all that. [Speaks to person off camera] You do?

RL: So after you married, where were you living?

GF: In, in, no, in Blackburn? I don't know, I don't know, it's gone now. Well I told you all sorts.

RL: What do you remember about those war years when you got married? What do you remember about that time?

GF: Well, Margaret was born, and I had Margaret and my husband, and I had enough to look after. In Accrington, or Clayton.

RL: In Accrington? And did you— were you renting somewhere?

GF: Well, yes, in Clayton.

RL: In Clayton, right.

GF: Yes, two bedrooms, no bathroom. You know how they were at that time.

RL: Now this tape's just about to end, so we'll just stop here.

GF: Yes.

57.31

End of Tape 1

## TAPE 2

RL: This is the interview with Gertrude Feitl, and it's Tape 2. Just wanted to recap a little bit of your life while you were still in Vienna, and first of all I was going to ask you about any memories of, you know, synagogues being burned or windows being smashed as happened in Germany. Can you remember anything like that happening?

GF: Yes I remember it. I remember because there was one down in the cellar and you could see in, what's going on and so on, and they were praying and singing, and youngsters, like it is here, youngsters going past, stones thrown in and so on, and they had to finish with it. That was that one, and another one. They tried to do that to everybody, and nobody said they hadn't to do it. They just stand behind you and 'Haaahhhh!' [Laughing] That's it, what I remember. That made me say, coming home, 'I'm going now, I've had enough watching this and it will happen to us, you'd better shut the shop, the business.' And we had to do that. They came in the back way, and cleared all the stuff that we had for sale, and took it with them. We didn't get a penny for it. And that's it that was it for me. I thought, 'No, that's it.' I couldn't take my Mum, because she was— she was— she wouldn't go. So she was the only one who stayed there to look after our— what we hadn't got. But you know she thought it was hers.

RL: What did she do once the shop had closed?

GF: I don't know. Just waiting for something coming better. She was helpless, and the younger children were still— you know, and she couldn't leave the children to take with her, so she said she stayed. For the family, one looking after the other, and all in all it wasn't really so good.

RL: You mentioned also the story of the boy who went to the same school as you that you were friendly with. Can you tell me about that boy and what happened?

GF: What happened? Well he met me at the tram, at the tram, and I stood there a bit like this, reserved, you know, and he says, 'Oh, I can have you any time now, not like you used to be, now come on.' And he was going to push me to fall off the tram, and I jumped off and run back in the house in the third storey up there, I don't know where I was, but he didn't come after me. He went back into the next tram. I didn't see him any more.

RL: So why did he do that?

**Tape 2: 3 minutes 58 seconds**

GF: Just because in the eyes of these sorts of people, they were Jews. And they are not human. You can't understand it. It was so— it had to be like that, because they'd tell them in school and everywhere 'He's a Jew, throw him away.' In that way, that's how it was.

RL: But had this been a friend of yours?

GF: Friend? No, that's— that's— you could see what kind of a friend it was. He didn't get what he wanted, what he thought he can get, so he had to do this. We had to fight in all sorts of ways. I wanted to get out of the— away from here then.

RL: When did you leave? When did you leave Vienna?

GF: When? I can't remember. It must have been in October, November in '28 it was.

RL: '38.

GF: '38.

RL: 1938.

GF: Yes.

RL: I just tried my best to travel, I didn't travel so much before, you know, but what I did it was for me, when I was about 20 I say, 'I want to go on a holiday.' My Mum says, 'I haven't got it.' 'What? I want to go.' In the end she says, 'Go on, you can go, but don't mention anything.' And she gave me the money and I could go on that holiday. And another holiday. I wanted to see Wien, before I left it, in my mind before I left it, left Vienna, you know, and I think that was the reason. A little bit I got to know people, and you have a different way then when you are on your own, when you are young, you know, how to behave more, keep the men away and all sorts of things like that. But I think it was that what happened that time when I went on my own on that long journey. A girl even asked me and I was just kneeling to help her on the train, something that I remember just with this. In the train she says 'Would you have that for me when we get to the end of the train stopping?' 'I give it back to you after, when we start off' 'All right', some things you know, and I said, 'All right', you know, and then when we passed, I came to my mind, well I could have said, 'What gift? That's not for you, that's mine, and she would have taken it off me and I couldn't have done anything.' I realised how silly I was while I was young, and that's what— it was, things like that come to children and it just came to me then, I thought, well you're not too old yet that they can do this and this at you, you know.

**Tape 2: 8 minutes 14 seconds**

RL: Now you mentioned before that you had a boyfriend in Vienna. Can you tell me about his family background?

GF: Oh, you mean the second one?

RL: Yes. His mother, you were saying something about his mother, that she had been brought up as a non-Jewish girl?

GF: Her father, his father was a Jew, and she was of course non, the mother. And they were a— he seemed, I think he was— I didn't know him at all, because it wasn't so, so such a thick [i.e. close] friendship, you know, but we had different things in mind, you know, but it broke up, I didn't want to. She had a good job, and he hadn't. So when it came to it in the end, he was with another girl, came on the same train, but in a different time, also to England. And I met him on that holiday I had. But I told you about that, about that holiday. And he's still in America.

RL: I'm thinking of the boyfriend who you eventually married.

GF: No he's not the one.

RL: No.

GF: The one before that. And I met him without knowing that he lived there, on the holiday, and I was so surprised, you know. And I didn't— I thought he was better looking than that. But he was very good-natured, and he took us out and he was— he really was good to us when we— then, after. He said, 'Oh, you know, I can't believe it. And you know my wife, she goes to bridge, and I don't like cards. You want to go out? I show you where everything is.' So that he took us out and she was a Jewish girl, she was a Jewish girl.

RL: Now coming back to your husband and his parents. What was the story about his parents?

GF: In which way? That she was a violin player? What do you call it? Margaret, come on, help.

RL: A musician?

GF: A musician.

RL: What was his father, a musician?

GF: His father, he was.

RL: His father was a musician.

GF: Anything else?

RL: And his mother?

GF: His mother, she was at home. Helping in the home. She....

RL: Did she have to convert to Judaism?

GF: Yes, she– I couldn't get it that she had to go in that bath. You know, I know myself, he never kept to the religion so far, he never went in the dings, and then she has to go to have a bath, a swimming bath. Anyway that was with Granddad.

RL: What happened to his parents, your husband's parents during the war, what happened to them?

**Tape 2: 12 minutes 36 seconds**

GF: Well the father as you know was sent to the concentration camp and was there three years and then came out, come home, his daughter, the sister of Margaret, of–

RL: Of your husband.

GF: Of my husband. It came to me then, it couldn't be. Because– but she was then in Vienna, knew everybody, and the people were very nice who helped her, helped Granddad as well. And he got then a pension from the government; that was when Hitler was gone and until he died.

RL: So your husband's sister, how did she survive the war?

GF: Her– friends of hers helped her for food and so on because they were always friends, and they helped her for the three years.

RL: And she remained in Vienna?

GF: She remained, yes.

RL: And after the war?

GF: She didn't leave Dad on his own. She was in Vienna.

RL: And is she still alive?

GF: No, not any more, she died a good few years ago.

RL: And did she have family?

GF: No, she had no children, because she didn't get married. But she lived with someone. But he couldn't do it because again still government, but because she was out of the— I don't know, I really don't know anything because I wasn't living in Vienna then. Only I know she was underground for— during the war. A lot of people were, they helped them to be underground.

RL: And your husband's mother, what happened to her?

GF: She died. She died, she died before the war, I think so, anyway. Yes, she died before the war.

RL: Now when your husband came over to this country to England, how did he come over, did he have a special job to go to?

GF: The Jewish family stood for him that he will not want anything from the government in England that he will look after my husband. But he gave him a job to help him, you know, to help him to get on for the beginning. And that's how he could come over.

**Tape 2: 16 minutes 5 seconds**

RL: Was your husband in a concentration camp before he came?

GF: Yes, for a year.

RL: Which camp was he in?

GF: I don't know, because I didn't write to him or anything. I hadn't— I didn't know where he was, he just disappeared. And then he sent me once a letter saying, 'Try to get me out of here.' So I tried, I went from one place to the other, asking if they would help him.

RL: Did he ever talk about his experiences in that camp?

GF: No, never.

RL: And then was he interned during the war in England, was he interned?

GF: Interned? Well that is a— They were all interned.

RL: Where was he sent?

GF: He wasn't sent at all, he came from, ah, he came to— I don't know. He was in the same camp in— what was the name, Margaret, where your Daddy was?

RL: Is it on the Isle of Man?

GF: That was for all of them, the Isle of Man. That was when he was already in a camp. He was there. On his own. I wanted to visit him, and I hadn't the money that time, because the policeman was going to allow me to visit, that it just came to me, and I was crying, and he said, 'Look, girl, I can't do any more for you, as to tell you go there and see him off to go to— what was it, what do you call it, in the sea?'

RL: The Isle of Man.

GF: The Isle of Man. And I wanted to do it and I hadn't the money. And I couldn't, I just had to do without, you know. But the policeman was— he looked at me, at first he thought I made a joke, you know, but then he saw it was real, he didn't know what to do himself, you know. He was— he couldn't give me any money to pay for it, you know, he wouldn't allow it for me to go with him. They were only men who went to the dings. I forgot about that altogether. We lived in Liverpool then. I think it was Liverpool.

RL: Did you live in Leicester?

GF: In Leicester we lived, yes.

RL: Was that afterwards?

GF: Afterwards, when he came back? You see they allowed him— they allowed the boys or the younger men, they allowed them to come back, and then they said, 'We can do with you again, you can come', and that went there and back. And I can't remember any more, with this, I can't. I would lie if I said anything. But I know he went to that thing, and I was crying. I had to go back on my own. And then they were made free again, and he came back to Leicester, that was in Leicester. And he got that job again.

RL: What job was he working at at the time?

**Tape 2: 20 minutes 35 seconds**

GF: In the shoe trade, in the shoe trade. He was never without a job, he was always somehow. The people who brought him, who helped him come in, didn't need to give him— he always sorted, he's paying his way. Because then the war was on. And where we lived, in Clayton, and he had a really good wage, for when he was on his own, quite a lot, in the factory, it was a— we were flying, aircraft, a big ding, a big firm, and it was all the war. On the first day when the war was finished, he didn't have a job. Only until then.

RL: So he worked for, he did work for the war effort?

GF: Yes.

RL: In this aircraft factory?

GF: Yes.

RL: Right. Was this after he came out of the internment camp?

GF: Oh yes, definitely, because it was here, it was here.

RL: And you were living in Clayton was it?

GF: Then we had that little house in Clayton.

RL: Right. And you were married by then?

GF: We were married.

RL: Did you have any experience of the bombing in the war?

GF: What do you mean?

RL: Bombing, bombs.

GF: Bombs no. You mean that we, no we hadn't. In Clayton there was only once a bomb came down, and that was going to Accrington where that came down, otherwise it never happened.

RL: And in Leicester?

GF: I think that was the reason why we removed from Leicester to Clayton, and he got the other job. I think it was that. But we were lucky. Well, it was a lot of things were luck, what I had. You know, in all that time.

RL: So while he was working in the aircraft factory, what were you doing?

GF: What was I doing? What did I do? He wouldn't let me go, he says, 'I pay more tax, I pay more tax than what you earn', so he says, 'you stop at home and make me a good dinner when I come home, let me sit down.' No he wouldn't let me go.

**Tape 2: 24 minutes 8 seconds**

RL: Did you not continue with your nursing?

GF: No, that was too far away. And I didn't like it any more. I enjoyed that, being by myself, you know, I could go shopping, I could, you know, and then I went buying Wiener things that were only in one shop, you know, on the other side of the town so I went up there, you know, I had a good time. No, I didn't work during the war. But only because, like I said, I let you go to work and then they said you had to pay so much because you have the wage so much. Might as well you have it. I never thought about that, that I didn't work. A couple of years definitely.

RL: Were you in touch with any other refugees?

GF: Very few, Very few, because you can't always everywhere go. During the war you couldn't go everywhere and you had to be at a certain time there and there you know to get to bed and so on. No.

RL: And were you in touch with any other Jewish people?

GF: Yes, from Manchester there were quite a few lot, you know, and I had one cousin which were there and I don't hear anything now of him. Rosenberg. Have you heard anything about this, a Rosenberg, Rosenberger?

RL: What was his first name?

GF: Margaret?

RL: Was that Kurt, was that Kurt?

GF: Kurt, yes.

RL: And he had come to Manchester?

GF: Yes, he lived in Manchester. Got married here.

RL: Did he come just before the war?

GF: Yes, I think so. He got married and he wasn't the good boy any more, he had his wife and he didn't come.

RL: Did you used to see him at all?

GF: I did, a few times, but they were young, much younger than me, you know, and they went out, and then, I don't know, he got a taxi driver, he got a taxi driver at eh....thing in Manchester.

RL: What, he was a taxi driver?

GF: Yes.

RL: Did you go through to Manchester much?

GF: Not so much, not during the war, not during the war.

RL: And after the war?

GF: Well we do go sometimes, but I never see anything of him.

RL: Why would you go through to Manchester, what would you go for?

GF: For the big— you know, shopping, you know looking at fancy clothes and so on, just to look around, Margaret likes that very much.

RL: Coming over to England from Vienna, what was your first impression of the country when you arrived?

**Tape 2: 28 minutes 4 seconds**

GF: You don't— you don't— you know, when you get in that country like I have done, you don't look around, will I like it, do I like it, no. I have to be here, that's it. I took things as they come, I wasn't one of fancy things, you know, saying oh I can't, I don't want that, I can't do that, you know, it's there, I have to be satisfied. And I think that was the reason why I got it, why I got things. People understood that, especially in business, you know. They would think probably, 'Look here, why can she do it and the others are— make a big thing out of it.' So I listened to this and I listened to that, and chose.

RL: Did you find the way of life here different to what you were used to?

GF: In a way, a little bit, yes. The food is different, you know, and people are a little bit, but not a lot, not a lot. The continental people are more sharp, and the English people they are softer. They are 'Really, would you do that?' that's the English person. But the continental: 'Well you can't have it, that's it.' And I have been brought up there as well, so that's how I got like I am.

RL: Any other difference that you remember noticing?

GF: Not any more. In school we— I find now in school with some of the— I found, I must say, that I'm Jewish, only that I just stay in the back and go in my room, I'm a grown person. If you want to be like that, slide down my back, you know that's what I'm thinking. But there is something like that, it hasn't gone altogether. Don't you notice that as well? Yeah.

RL: How about the language? How did you manage to learn the language?

GF: That's right; I was years quite well, I spoke two languages. It's lately, I can't, I come together, you know, and I don't know what does this mean and what does that. I spoil my language altogether now. For instance, did you not notice, I ask Margaret for something what she should help me. All the words what I knew before, you know, and I wrote letters and everything in English, I forgot, I forgot.

RL: How hard did you find it to learn English?

GF: To learn it? Well, that's hard to say. I had in school— I went for a couple of years and I was pretty good but writing it down, not to speak. You know, because we couldn't all speak, and I didn't learn it so quick, I am not a bit special. But you learn speaking quicker. And then— in then— I had to start writing as well, you know, and the writing wasn't doing so well. Speaking, yes, and if I really didn't speak it so well, there was always somebody helping me out, you know. So I was all right. But now I could kill— I could scream sometimes, I can't tell that word for anything you give me, but I don't know why it should be like that.

RL: Did you go to any English classes in this country?

**Tape 2: 33 minutes 24 seconds**

GF: Not any more, no.

RL: I mean when you first came over?

GF: No, I didn't go. I had to learn it privately. I didn't need to do it, because I was good enough to understand other people, and if I didn't, I said, 'Would you tell me again?' and they would say it and then I would know it, you know, things like that.

RL: Did you stop using German?

GF: Yes, for a long time, and then— now it starts like this.

RL: Even with your husband, did you speak in German to him?

GF: Yes, when we were together at home, we spoke together German, I must say that. It was much quicker to, you didn't make so many faults when you— *Fehler*, you heard me now, it comes— I'm ashamed.

RL: Did you always speak in German to your husband, or did there come a point when you stopped doing that?

GF: When an English person came, of course we spoke then in English. And I can make myself understood in practically everything, you know. But it could be nice, it could be better.

RL: When did you take out naturalisation?

GF: Oh, straight away when we were here. When the war was finished, I sent a letter and I got the dings. Yeah. I'm English, not, I'm British, I'm British. The *Engländer* say, 'We are English but you are British.' That's what they tell us. They seem to say, yes, have you never heard it?

RL: Why do they say that?

GF: Well, British is every— everyone in a country, as long as they have the stamp, they're British. But English, they are something special, they are English people, they are special people. Did you not know that?

RL: So how would you describe yourself?

GF: Myself? I say I'm British, I'm not spoiling it for them.

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

GF: Yes, I'm more lively, more lively. That's definite. But the English are quite lively as well, I don't say anything, I want to have peace.

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

GF: How do you mean?

RL: Do have any sort of— how can I put it? Do you identify in any way with the continent more than with Britain in any area? Maybe, you know, in terms of your background?

GF: At the background, yes, I don't know all the English in when I'm talking. The— hang on, no, I can't say anything. Especially in that school, in that home where I am. You think because they are in that home, they are some more than the others because they are better people. And it's just the same as anybody else, but they feel, they make— I can't explain it. But that's what I feel, but all those, the British ones, they also feel the same, I asked them, I asked one of them. Says 'Are you feeling the same as me, how they are?' 'Of course, don't take any notice.' That was the answer. And I knew it like that.

**Tape 2: 38 minutes 56 seconds**

RL: Now, did you ever take a job at all in this country after, you know, after the war? Did you work at all?

GF: No, I had Margaret, Margaret had a hairdressing shop. She was very young, I started her very young, she was about 17, I started her, bought her everything, and we together run a business in Accrington. All Accrington knew us, and we did very well. Now we were unlucky, they pulled everything down, to have now for a new— you know, for people to live in, the new houses, flats, and we had to take the money what they gave us and start somewhere else. And Margaret said she's very tired of it, she doesn't want to have a business on her own. And then of course I started helping my husband on the market, he sold handbags on the market, that was his post, his business. And that's how it was.

RL: So is that what he went into after the war?

GF: After the war.

RL: And did he stay in that the whole time or did he do other things as well?

GF: No, he worked very well, good business, and then he got ill, with his lung. He was there and this, and always with his lungs it hurts him, and he died.

RL: But he worked in the markets the whole time?

GF: Yes.

RL: Was he involved in the community in any way?

GF: Which community, what do you mean?

RL: I mean locally, was he a member of any club or society?

GF: No, he says, 'Oh I won't leave you on your own.' No, no, he couldn't, he says no. No we had enough with Margaret then. Both of us, when Granddad came visiting us once, he sat there by the fire and I was cooking and getting her ready and this and that, he says 'One thing I know now: who is the boss in the house', meaning me, because I says 'Get ready now, do this, do this' you know, so we are a good home, we are good to each other, and that is more worth than taking *noch* another business and *noch* another business.

RL: Which schools did Margaret go to?

GF: Ordinary school. She kept ailing as well, this were wrong, this were wrong, and then when she got older, she seemed to get better, and now she's a big girl.

RL: And from school she went into the hairdressing business?

GF: Yes. She I sent her to a private school, hairdressing, because she wanted to be soon—she didn't want to go to ordinary school any more, and she was about, oh, not longer than a year she were, and she was really good, and she still is. Private, anything, she's really good in hairdressing, only she says it's hard work. So she hasn't got it any more.

RL: So does she not have a—?

GF: She's big, but there's something wrong with her, with her nerves.

RL: Does she not have a shop any more?

GF: No, no.

RL: And who did she marry?

GF: Who did she marry? Margaret, come here, come here. Who did you marry?

RL: Peter is it?

[Margaret: Yeah]

**Tape 2: 44 minutes 10 seconds**

RL: Peter Gibson? What does he do for a living?

GF: He's on the sick list. Margaret?

RL: She can't really answer because she's not got a microphone, so I can only ask you I'm afraid.

GF: No, no, they're both not well, they're both not well.

RL: What did he used to do?

GF: He used to be— Margaret, you know what to say to that. Margaret?

[Margaret: Site Services, site services manager.]

GF: What? I can't hear you, Margaret.

RL: She said site services manager.

GF: Site serv—

RL: Never mind, it's all right, it's ok. What was his background?

GF: His background?

RL: Peter's.

GF: His father, what did he have? A lighting business and he has two brothers who run it, along with his dad.

RL: Where was he from? Where is he from?

GF: From here, from Accrington.

RL: From Accrington.

GF: They are a nice family, not Jewish.

RL: And did you belong to anything yourself? Did you have any hobbies or pastimes?

GF: Not so many. What for instance? Cleaning? [Laughs]

[Margaret: Bridge?]

GF: Bridge? Ah yes, I did go, but not any more now, I don't go any more. Bridge, I liked bridge. Hard game. I go to church to play whist drive. That's what you meant.

RL: Right. And did you join any refugee organisation? Did you belong to the AJR?

GF: What is that?

RL: The Association of Jewish Refugees.

GF: Yes, yes.

RL: How did you become a member of that? How did you find out about them?

GF: How was it, Margaret? Last year?

RL: What, just last year?

GF: Yes last year we went to see some— what did we see? In St. Anne's, we got to know all the people there, they have a club there. And they asked us if we want to join, and we joined.

RL: Had you heard about them before that?

GF: No. Did we? We didn't hear anything before.

RL: Had you any contact with any refugee organisations before that?

GF: No, no. We were the only one in the town. We go now and then, we don't go so often now because it is quite a way, and I can't— I can't drive, so I depend on Margaret and Peter and so, you have to please everybody then.

RL: So where do you live now? Where is it that you live now?

GF: In that home in the park. When you go down the main road, there are two parks. The second one, when you go in, you see one big house, and that's it.

RL: And how long have you been there?

GF: Is it three years? Three years.

RL: Have you ever been back to Vienna?

**Tape 2: 48 minutes 40 seconds**

GF: Oh yes, when they were alive, when they were— the people, his sister, my husband's sister and his father, they were both there with the sister.

RL: And how did you feel on your first visit back?

GF: Lousy. Because I— every when I walked, every man, every woman, 'Yes, you are another good Nazi'. I don't want to have anything to do with it. You know, I felt the things still in me, and here I am the same. I just can't get shot of it.

RL: What do you mean that here you're the same? In what way the same here?

GF: Well, when they say when they are not nasty to me you know because I am Jewish. I think, I run out, I go in my room and I don't want to hear it. I think it's everywhere the same. People tried hard, don't they?

RL: How often would you go back to Vienna?

GF: How often?

RL: How often did you go back?

GF: Oh did I, Oh, I don't know, I don't know. I would say six, seven times and then they died, and we didn't go any more.

RL: Did you meet people that you know before the war when you went back?

GF: Actually not. Actually not. The people were dying away, you know. No I, I had a friend, a school friend, and she, I was still friendly with her, you know and she was not Jewish, and we met them, but that's very few, very few. And a butcher, he was talking to me, and he said 'Hi how is it then you don't come back' and, you know, and there are some nicer people, you know, not all like I explained. But...

RL: Did you get any restitution?

GF: What is restitution?

RL: Any compensation for what happened?

GF: Yes I did, to a certain extent, but not a lot, not a lot. Because I get a pension, after my husband, I get a pension. And I had office work in Vienna and had also a very little, not a

lot, but I got some money. I don't know how much it were. And I still have that. So I didn't get anything otherwise.

RL: How do you feel towards Germany?

GF: I never go, I never go to Germany. If I do, if I did— at the time, I travelled through, but I never stopped in, in— They are sharp spoken, very sharp spoken, the Germans. And I don't like that.

**Tape 2: 53 minutes 2 seconds**

RL: How did you find out what had happened to your family? How and when did you find out, you know, what had happened to your mother and your father and your brother?

GF: Oh, through the Red Cross. My Mum, I didn't know she was alive and they said that they phoned me. 'Are you the Gertrude Glattau?' I said, 'Yes, why, what do you want?' And they said 'Well, I have your mother here. Would you not like to have her with you?' I says, 'Where was—' I was speechless. You know what they did? They put her on travelling on her own, set her down and said, 'Your Mum knows— your daughter knows where you are getting out and the man, the driver of the vehicle will tell you where to get out.' She didn't understand it, but when he came and said 'That's your place, your station' I was already on the— they rang me up, I ran to the car, and there she was. For me it was absolutely like an angel coming back, you know. And I said, 'I thought you were dead.' Anyway she lived then with me for about *drei*, three, three years, no, not so long, two years, and then she said, 'I'm going to London, and I'm going to earn some money.' I said, 'You will not, you don't speak the language.' 'Oh, they will tell me, they will help me.' Well, she wanted to go so she went, and she did, she went through Red Cross, you know. And Red Cross liked her it seemed to me. They gave her a job, a doctor from *Frankreich*, from France, were very ill, she had cancer. And she wanted someone to look after her in her flat. And she took my Mum. And my Mum said yes, she's taking it, and that lady made a thing in writing, 'And I leave everything I have here, furniture whatever there is here, is all for my Mum.' I was like taking out of the things, can you understand that? I said 'Mine?,' I couldn't believe it. So I went in, I says, 'Are you sure you mean it?' She says, 'Yes, I mean it and you look after her.' And you know she lived about another six years like that, the lady - the doctor she was - the doctor lady, she died of course about six or seven months— and everything that was here was hers, my Mum's. It wasn't a big flat or anything, because she - that lady - hadn't too much either because she was Jewish as well, you know, so I think it was marvellous, that.

RL: And did your Mum remain in London then?

GF: Yes.

RL: And did she die in London?

GF: Yes, yes. Yes, she did. She had, you know— she had that ‘I will do everything’, very much like me. I’m very much like her.

RL: Have you ever visited Israel?

**Tape 2: 57 minutes 49 seconds**

GF: No, no, I tried and it was— I went to— what is that island, one of the islands...

RL: Cyprus?

GF: Cyprus, yes. I went there, and I thought I’ll go, you know, and then I got frightened, I really got frightened, because they say they were throwing stones and this and that and I thought, ‘Oh no, I’m not going, it’s a holiday, I don’t want to go.’ In any case, they were all Catholics there, and so many, anyway, when I was looking at it.

RL: How do you feel about Israel? How do you feel towards Israel?

GF: Oh, all right, they do right when they want it, but I think they did— they are killing again. Why it should happen, I don’t know.

RL: Do you think your experiences have affected you in any way, I mean psychologically? Do you think you have been affected in any way?

GF: In any way? Well I think I grew up being, you know, feeling it. But, we have to live like that, so that there’s nothing to say much. I’m born Jewish and I will die Jewish. That’s what I said, it was a small - what do you call it - where they are praying?

RL: I think we’ll just, we’ll stop here, because the tape’s about to end, and we’ll continue in a minute.

**Tape 2: 60 minutes 5 seconds**

End of Tape 2

**TAPE 3**

RL: This is the interview with Gertrude Feitl and it’s tape three. Just at the end of the last tape you said that you were born a Jew and you’ll die a Jew. What does being Jewish actually mean to you?

GF: Very little. It is because my parents were, my Mum, mostly my Mum. I wasn’t so in love with my father. So it’s a feeling— once, anyway, with me it is like that. You are born like that, your parents are like that, it isn’t right having something else in your mind. And that’s how I want to die. Probably I’m silly, I’m silly talking, you know, but that’s how I am. As a schoolgirl I thought that. ‘Teacher said, ‘why don’t you go and be a—’ and she

said, 'something with the church. You would be welcomed nicely.' And I said 'But I can't make myself different.' But it is so, some people they probably do not think about it at all. But, no, I can't do that. But a religion, there's a God and God will do— God help, be good to us and we will be behaving *dementsprechend, das ist Deutsch*, so don't you think the same, do you not?

RL: So what did you say in German?

GF: [Pointing upwards] He knows, he knows.

RL: Do you feel that your experiences have affected you in any way psychologically? do you think they had an effect on you?

GF: It seems to me. Because others say, well, I am not Jewish, I am not a Catholic, I am not this, I am not that. And they are behaving very rough. But I don't want to be like that. Behave like a normal person, and behave like a good person, and that's what I have in mind, and I hope he'll help me with it.

RL: Do you think that, you know, psychologically it affected the way you brought up your daughter?

GF: I think so, I think so.

RL: In what way?

GF: Because I didn't even realise that she feels she is a Jewish girl. I didn't force her to it; well, I can see different now, it must have been hard, hard how I was talking to her, how I brought her up. That's a good question, this. I'm almost sure she wears a thing [gestures to round neck], didn't used to do when she were little, and she had another one that was not like that [whispering], you understand what I mean? So you were right. It is— everybody's different. But that's what I find.

**Tape 3: 4 minutes 26 seconds**

RL: Did you ever speak to your daughter about your experiences? Did you ever tell her about your past?

GF: Sometimes, very rare, very rare, but we know it already. When I say anything, she knows everything. And opposite is the same, without thinking we fall in it.

RL: Did she used to ask you things about your past?

GF: Doesn't need to, there is no past. In which way?

RL: You know, about Vienna and what had happened to you and your family, does she show an interest in that?

GF: Oh yes, oh yes, she does. That's a different question to what I meant.

RL: Has she been back to Vienna with you?

GF: Yes. We used to go, instead of holidays, to Austria every year, and had we had about 4 weeks every time and then we came back. It was a holiday, because his father were there, his sister were there, and I had relations like— then I knew she was still alive, you know, and they have no children, so I had Margaret with me and she was happy to have— to be able to play with her and so, you know— And then all at once they didn't do it any more, that's why I— but she died recently.

RL: And who was that?

GF: My cousin. The picture what she showed you. Glattau. Corner café in Ottakring. Ottakringerstrasse.

RL: Was that Gretel?

GF: Gretel, Gretel.

RL: And she was what, Margaret's cousin? She was your cousin?

GF: My cousin.

RL: And what was her story? What was her background?

GF: Her background? Mother was— yes now, her mother was the auntie from me, her mother was— Margaret, come and help me, don't sit like that. She wasn't Jewish, she was Catholic and here from, from— I can't tell you because it doesn't come back. But I don't know if she's still alive, because she used to write to me and I wrote back and I didn't get any letters any more.

RL: Did she marry?

**Tape 3: 8 minutes 6 seconds**

GF: Yes.

RL: And did she have children?

GF: Well the daughter is my cousin.

RL: And did the daughter marry?

GF: No. She was going out with so and so, and it never came to anything really. And the son was here, he was married and he had a good job and everything, he was a bank manager in Wien, in Wien. I can't say much, because they lived in Vienna all the years even so as well, nothing ever happened, you know.

RL: Did you ever come across people from Vienna that you knew in this country?

GF: Yes. Trude, my friends. Yes, and then there's a group, we have played cards together, Bauer, and my friend, what is she called?

RL: The one that you met, or Edith?

GF: Katz, Katz. Edith. They are both dead, they are both dead now.

RL: How did you meet Edith?

GF: There. There in— I went down in one of the parts— well I saw her across the road shopping, and I said 'Edith!' and she just turned and, 'What? You are here? When did you come?' And we both run. And she had a little son then with her, that little boy, and she said 'Look you have a new *Tante*'. 'Oh!' And the boy expected straight away a toffee, looked up at me, 'Where is it?' And I didn't have it, I said, 'Wait a minute, I'll buy it for him', he went straight with me. He wanted a toffee, so I got him a toffee and then I had a chat with her, she says, 'I live here, come and visit me' and then we have a nice chat and then we started playing cards together. There were five or six or more, about 10 people every week. In everybody's house once a week. And so we all had groups and played and laughed and so on. Neighbours, where I am living now, where I used to live now, the last one, they said, 'How many have you got there?' You know, they all came from Manchester and I made up sandwiches and so on and we had a good evening. And then they started to die, one after the other.

RL: So were they all refugees?

GF: All refugees, all from around Vienna. Yes, Bauer, he was a German, but a German Jew. That was the— the church, no, not the church, what is it in Jewish?

RL: Synagogue.

### **Tape 3: 12 minutes 4 seconds**

GF: The synagogue. Well, very near, so sometimes when it was necessary we went all in the synagogue, stays for so long, and come in here, and it was one and two o'clock in the morning before we got home. It was very nice, but they are all dying off, I am the last, and Margaret is the— I mean Margaret is the younger. It seems we are left to the last.

RL: How did you get in touch with all of these people? How did you find out about them?

GF: Well, Katz was the first one to offer it, because I think, I think it were Katz and Edith, they were helping in the synagogue, like a helper, to keep it clean and so on, you know, and at the same time we went - and when he finished with that - to give him a nice song, and then we went, and we had a good time there. But it was very nice.

RL: How did you first meet up with them? How did you first find out where they were?

GF: Well, because I saw in a warehouse, I saw her in the warehouse, looking, and I saw the child with her.

RL: Through Edith?

GF: Through Edith, yes, through Edith. And I bet the others— well one of them is still alive, but I didn't see him when we came to the— a fortnight ago Margaret took me, we two went up to Manchester to see the— what is he called now? I think it was Bauer.

RL: Or is it Selby?

GF: Selby.

RL: Mr. Selby.

GF: Mr. Selby. One of them we knew. And they were waiting for us. And they said, 'Oh, it's very nice here' and this and that and then Margaret says, 'There's nobody of our people.' Margaret? What is it you want?

RL: So is he the only one still alive?

GF: Yes.

RL: Besides yourself.

GF: Yes, besides me.

RL: Right, right. Do you have any grandchildren?

GF: No, no, we haven't. Half an hour and I would be— I would be dead with little ones.

RL: Is there anything else you want to add? Is there anything else you want to say?

GF: Not at the moment, you know. If I remember anything, I shall make a note and next time I see you I can tell you then. But I don't think there is so much now.

RL: Is there any message you would like to give?

GF: To whom?

RL: To your daughter, to the world in general?

GF: I did that before, when I spoke, yes, I've done that, I've done my duty. We found all the little bits, didn't we, in there? Did you find anything in there, in that book?

RL: We'll look at the photographs in a minute. So, just thank you very much, thank you.

GF: Yes, a pleasure.

**Tape 3: 16 minutes 17 seconds**

End of interview.

**Tape 3: 16 minutes 21 seconds**

**Photographs**

[Black and white photograph, woman, boy and girl]

RL: So, if you tell us who is in this photograph.

GF: That there is Fredo, Trude and Mama.

RL: And what is the surname?

GF: The surname is Glattau.

RL: And approximately when was it taken?

GF: About 1920.

RL: And where?

GF: In Vienna.

**Tape 3: 16 minutes 52 seconds**

[Black and white photograph, group of people]

GF: Yes. Well that is a very nice picture. On the left hand side is my father and next to him is my mother and in the middle I am sitting on the top. Is that right for you?

RL: And where and when was it taken?

GF: Where was it taken? I tell you. In Vienna and round about the *zwanzigsten*, the *zwanzigsten*—

RL: Nineteen...

GF: Twenty.

RL: 1920.

**Tape 3: 17 minutes 44 seconds**

[Black and white photograph, two children, a boy and a girl]

GF: The date I don't know. 1918 or 1919.

RL: 1918. And the place?

GF: The place was Vienna.

RL: And who is it?

GF: This is Fred...Alfred and Trude.

RL: Surname?

GF: Glattau.

**Tape 3: 18 minutes 16 seconds**

[Document with red print]

GF: What have I to say?

RL: What is it?

GF: What is it? I think it is a Heimatschein. A Heimatschein for Gertrude Feitl.

RL: And the date?

GF: Neunzehnhundert...

RL: I think it's 1933.

GF: 1933.

RL: And the place?

GF: Place? Vienna.

**Tape 3: 18 minutes 56 seconds**

[Passport, with large red 'J' stamped on it]

GF: Oh, I'm not born then.

[Voice from background: 'Course you were, you were born in 1916]

RL: So what is this?

GF: It is a passport. Well I'm born in '16 here.

RL: This is the front page.

GF: See? And there is a 'J', a Jew. I was stamped with it.

RL: And when was this issued?

GF: 1933.

RL: And the place?

GF: Vienna.

**Tape 3: 19 minutes 39 seconds**

GF: We are started? This is my passport. My picture, Gertrude Feitl.

RL: Taken in?

GF: Taken in Vienna. What else? 1933. Right?

RL: And we're going to turn to another page of the passport, showing your entry into England. When did you enter into England? October 1938. 21<sup>st</sup>.

GF: October, I said it in the beginning. Can I speak? October 1938. This is the visa for entry into England on the October 1938.

**Tape 3: 21 minutes 15 seconds**

[Postcard]

[Voice from background: Do you know what you're saying?]

GF: No

[Voice from background: No, she doesn't know what she's saying here].

GF: That is a postcard sent to my Mum, to my Mother, from Theresienstadt. To Theresienstadt.

RL: Where was your mother?

GF: In Theresienstadt.

RL: And when was this sent?

GF: In December 1994. '44.

RL: 1944.

**Tape 3: 22 minutes 7 seconds**

[Photograph]

GF: Well that's— how does it start? That is myself and my husband, and my little girl.

RL: When was it taken?

GF: When was it taken? 1947.

RL: And where was it taken?

GF: Where was it taken? Oh yes, I'm telling you, in Accrington. And you know, everybody knows us.

**Tape 3: 22 minutes 40 seconds**

[Colour photograph of a couple]

GF: Oh, that's Margaret and me, that's my daughter and husband. What comes now? Come on, Margaret.

RL: And what's your daughter's name?

GF: Margaret.

RL: And her husband's name?

GF: Gibson.

RL: And where was it taken?

GF: In Accrington.

RL: And when was it taken?

GF: 1995.

RL: 1995.

GF: I'll bet it is wrong.

**Tape 3: 23 minutes 27 seconds**

[End of interview]