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**AJR Refugee Voices Testimony Archive**

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**Interview Transcript Title Page**

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<b>Interviewee Surname:</b>	Evans
<b>Forename:</b>	Eva
<b>Interviewee Sex:</b>	Female
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<b>Interviewee POB:</b>	Berlin, Germany

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**REFUGEE VOICES:  
THE AJR AUDIO-VISUAL TESTIMONY ARCHIVE****INTERVIEW: 127****NAME: EVA EVANS****DATE: 27 JULY 2006****LOCATION: LONDON****INTERVIEWER: SHARON RAPAPORT****TAPE 1****Tape 1: 0 minutes 4 seconds**

SR: I'm interviewing Eva Evans on the 27<sup>th</sup> of July 2006. My name is Sharon Rapaport.

Mrs Evans thank you for taking part in the project. And could you first state your maiden name and the date you were born?

EE: Right. My maiden name is Eva which the Germans pronounce Eva Klopstock, and now I'm Eva Evans. And I was born on the 9<sup>th</sup> of March 1924.

SR: Were you named after someone from your family?

EE: Not the Eva bit, but my second name, Hedwig, which I only use the initial. That is after one of my grandmothers.

SR: And where were you born?

EE: In Berlin in – well, I don't know whether that's part of it – in 24 Kaiserallee. I was born in the flat where my parents lived.

SR: You were born in the flat?

EE: Yes.

SR: Not in a hospital?

EE: No. But I think that it was the custom in those days.

SR: Could you tell me a bit about your family? Do you remember let's say your grandparents?

EE: Well, I don't know much about my grandparents because they all died before I was born. My father was a doctor and my mother, who was a very well educated woman, didn't – obviously in those days didn't work but she was very gifted in languages and so forth. She was quite old when I was born. She was just over 40. And my brother and sister – there was a big age difference of 10 years, 11 years. So I think

this had a great effect on my childhood because I was really brought up like an only child. The only difference was that I was very close to my cousins, because my aunt lost her first husband. They had a son the same age as my brother and sister and then she remarried and the next lot of children were my age. So I was quite lucky in that respect that at home I seemed to be the only one. We went on holiday with my cousins. They were, at that time, a little bit like brothers and sisters. Not quite, but there was quite a close relationship.

**Tape 1: 3 minutes 8 seconds**

SR: I'm going back to your grandparents. Did you hear any stories from your parents about their childhood?

EE: Well, I heard quite a lot of my mother's childhood because...she actually came from Frankfurt. Originally – but I think they always lived in Berlin. But she lost her mother when she was quite young and she spent a lot of her life just with her father and travelled with him and that played a great and important part in her life. But otherwise I haven't heard much about the grandparents. Just that her mother had heart disease and died young.

SR: So where did your father and mother meet actually?

EE: In Berlin. And I think from the time they got married they lived in the Kaiserallee until they left Berlin. Always in the same place.

SR: Can you state your mother's name?

EE: My mother's maiden name was Anni Hermann.

SR: When was she born?

EE: Well...I don't know the exact – I've got the dates written down. In the 1880s. Both of them – both my parents were born in the 1880s.

SR: So how did your parents meet? Did you hear a story about it?

EE: Well, I think they were introduced through friends. My mother – she did write her memoirs. They're not very long but they have the full family – what she knew of the family history. As regards my father, I don't know too much about his family history.

SR: When you say your mother wrote in her memoirs – her family history – you must have read it?

EE: Yes.

SR: What did she write about?

**Tape 1: 5 minutes 4 seconds**

EE: Well, she goes right back to the 17<sup>th</sup> century when the family arrived in Germany – in Southern Germany. And there was a very interesting story how...one of them left his little village and apparently went on foot to Berlin and he started a printing firm and really the family's fortunes came from this printing firm which...this has gone until present times because it was then in East Germany – in East Berlin. The firm existed until, you know, fairly recently and we have relations in the United States who were involved in the firm – partners. And for years they worked on this trying to get some kind of money from East Germany. We used to laugh and not take it seriously at that time because we thought it would never happen. In the end they did, and cheated our part of the family out of this money and this has caused, well, more than a rift because you know occasionally we take up correspondence with them and I bring up the fact of this money and then again all channels shut down. I think that kind of thing happens in all families and I don't give it much thought.

SR: What was the name of the firm?

EE: Hermann. The firm was called H. S. Hermann. I don't know what the H stood for – it's in the memoirs – but the S stood for Samuel. And we've even got more distant relations who survived in Eastern German. Or rather I think one of our relations who lived in this country went back to East Germany when he could and remarried there and had a family. And they've also approached us about this money and said 'Well, we didn't get anything so you're even less likely to get anything.'

SR: What else does she write about? What else does she mention?

### **Tape 1: 7 minutes 13 seconds**

EE: Well, she wrote – the main part of this memoirs was our great-great-great-grandmother in a place called Grossbuchenstadt [?] which is some – a little village and apparently the women of the family went on doing the same thing as this great, great, great grandmother and always said 'Well, I'm doing it because great-grandmother did it.' But I'm afraid this hasn't come down to me. I don't do what they did. I hardly do what my mother did but that was her theory. A very close family relationship. That's what the memoirs are about, at the beginning, and she does mention everybody's name. And well they're very interesting actually to go back to that period.

SR: What sort of woman was your mother...You said that she was very well educated?

EE: Yes she was...She quoted – Goethe and Schiller were constantly on the tip of her tongue. She had a quotation for everything. And... Unfortunately when she was old, well, I say that she had Alzheimer's. My husband does not agree because she didn't behave like Alzheimer patients, because she was very lively but she just lost her mind. Didn't lose her memory. She was still quoting Goethe and Schiller in her 80s. But she got things very confused. I don't know whether this is part of the interview. But it was of great interest to me because she went back in time you know. She would look at me and like my dress and say, 'Who made it?' Because when she was young every clothing was made by dressmakers. You didn't buy everything in

shops as we do now. And there were lots of bits like that in our conversation. That's the only thing I've actually thought about writing because I think it would be of medical interest, how she behaved in her old age. And that's why my husband says she didn't have Alzheimer because she could converse very fluently about all sorts of subjects. And they were quite logical in a way...I mean perhaps not logical to us but going back to her youth they were logical.

SR: Can you give me a lets say an example of her quotations?

EE: Of her what?

SR: Quotations? Her quotes?

**Tape 1: 9 minutes 47 seconds**

EE: Oh, yes. Well, one of the quotes – I'm afraid it's in German but also very important. And that was also very important for me because we didn't have any religion in our home. And she used to say, 'Edel sei der Mensch, hilfreich und gut.' which in English you know helpful and good is easy to translate. Edel is harder. It's more ethical really than anything else. And she said, 'That is my religion.' And I must admit that I've always tried to live with that. Particularly having children who are very religious, we feel and my husband agrees with me there, that the main thing in life is to be, as my mother said, good and helpful and have this ethical feeling which I've held very strongly because it does affect my work to some extent when I'm dealing with students and so on. I'm very conscious that I must do the correct thing for their future life in which I'm involved to some extent. So I think that is the most important thing that I've taken from my mother. Also her...she was... She could be very much down to earth. If I may give you an example. When we arrived in London we lived in a place called Norfolk Court Hotel in Belsize Grove and my parents had partial board. And she used to make lunch in the bedroom, and there would be crumbs on the floor. Because there would be lots of mice. Well, there may still be nowadays but in those days there were even more. And they used to rest after lunch and go to bed. My mother used to smile and say, 'The mice will eat the crumbs and everything will be clean again.' And she said that quite happily and accepted that. This is something I very much admired because...I mean we had – We've actually got mice here occasionally from the garden. Well, hopefully we haven't got crumbs on the floor.

SR: Were you very close to her? Were you especially close to her?

EE: Were we...?

SR: Close to her?

**Tape 1: 12 minutes 2 seconds**

EE: Well, and this is quite a...I don't feel that I was all that close to either of my parents because...perhaps I'll turn to my father now who was very strict and had got very strong ideas morally and every other way. But when I was a child – a young child – I felt very left out because my brother and sister led their own life and I felt in

a sense my parents really were not ready for another young child. I mean my father loved children. He liked nothing better than young children. But in our daily life they didn't really ever play with me. By that time they had their own life. My mother used to help my father with his correspondence and the practice and so forth. I don't think they had any time for me in the way that people now spend time with young children. 'Cause they'd gone through that with my brother and sister and I honestly think that by the time I arrived they were in their 40s and...I think it's also the period –you know nowadays everything is child centred – but at that time it wasn't. And I was left to the maid...I mean I had a very close relationship with our maid who looked after me. She was also very strict but I was quite fond of her and I think of her now. Obviously she's dead now, but she does play some part in my memory. But my parents... I don't mean that they...When I say they didn't have time for me, this was not consciously. I mean they were very, very attached to me, because I was the youngest, and couldn't part from me. And this later led to quite deep quarrels. I don't know whether I should jump now or whether you want to come to this later but when we came to England I went to Camden School for Girls where there was a friend of mine from Berlin. She was there with her sister. And the school was evacuated when the war broke out and my parents wouldn't let me go. And this caused a very deep rift because obviously for me everything was strange. And this friend was very close to me and helped me with my homework and with English and so forth. And I wanted to be evacuated with the school and I was very, very upset that my parents wouldn't allow it. That sort of thing even happened earlier. Even in Germany these cousins were allowed to go on a skiing holiday. I wanted to go. My parents wouldn't let me go. Because by that time my brother and sister had emigrated and they absolutely clung to me and so, as I said, this caused a rift.

**Tape 1: 15 minutes 14 seconds**

SR: What was your father's name?

EE: Felix – Dr Felix Klopstock.

SR: When was he born?

EE: I've got the dates written down. As a matter of fact when the AJR asked me to fill in the form I put all the dates down and I even thought of photocopying it so that I would know it easily in future without having to delve through all the documents that I've got. But all the dates are there.

SR: Did you hear stories about your father's childhood?

EE: No.

SR: Nothing?

EE: Well, all I know is he had 2 brothers and one of them he supported. He was the most successful one of these 3 brothers. And the others...Well, one made his living anyway. The other one was always – I think I read somewhere that he wanted to be an artist – his family wouldn't allow it. I don't know whether it was musician or painter or what. And he was obviously forced into some profession which did not

appeal to him and he never made enough money and according to my mother, my father had to support him throughout his life. Well, I mean I am in touch with the children of his brothers, yes.

SR: You stated that your father was very strict – can you give us a couple of...?

EE: Well, for instance I had to eat up my dinner. Children nowadays are allowed to...the plate is cleared and the food's thrown away. Well, that I still feel is very sinful. But that's also through the war years in this country that you had this idea you must never throw away food. And I can't bear it when my grandchildren treat food just like this. But I give them less to eat so that nothing is thrown away. But I had to eat everything including the fat at the end of the meat. Yes in that sense it was strict. And there were also lots of arguments with my sister because she was very attractive and had lots of boyfriends and there was a sort of background of...I mean he was really a very kindly man but he had...you know – certain ideas.

SR: And the maid – you said that you were very close to your maid. Can you tell me a bit about it?

### **Tape 1: 17 minutes 43 seconds**

EE: Well, our maid...She taught me knitting and mending. And if I didn't do it properly she slapped me on the fingers. But basically I liked her. And what I remember most about her, she, during that time in Germany when you weren't allowed to have maids – I think it was – under 35 – you've probably hear about this. She was no longer called a maid but we still managed to employ her to help to open the doors to the patients and so on. She had a new name. She was no longer a maid... in German it was called a Sprechstundenhelferin or something of that kind. And she once took me to where she lived. I think her partner, boyfriend – whatever – was a prisoner at the time and she lived in a furnished room. And there was a stove on the corridor and I was terribly shocked by the way she lived. I'd never been to a poor person's house. And when we came to England this was quite a usual thing among the refugee population that they lived in furnished rooms and there were stoves in the passages where she used to do her cooking. And I saw this all over again in England and it became normal to me. But...I found this quite an interesting connection, but I saw this when I was very young and was very shocked by it. But I think she was also very fond of me. But on the whole I don't think I made close relationships with anybody. From the time I could read, I was by myself, reading a book. That was my life and my mother used to have tea parties and I'd sit in the corner reading a book. I didn't hear what they said. I was completely absorbed in books and fantasy life. And the other main – the only thing I really enjoyed in my childhood... We had a garden opposite our house there was a whole colony of gardens. In Germany they were called Schrebergärten, and there I met my school friend. She also had a garden there. And we played Red Indians. That was our main occupation – that was the only really pleasurable thing I remember from my childhood – playing Red Indians. And there were these characters from a book by Karl May called Old Shatterhand and Winnetou, and we re-enacted all this. And we had to walk very quietly across the leaves so the enemy wouldn't hear us. And we had wonderful games of that sort. And...that's ... I remember with great enjoyment.



**Tape 1: 20 minutes 34 seconds**

But I think the Nazi era, besides my parents' age, was a shadow over everything in Germany at that time – you know, when the Nazis started. And I think my parents were very affected by it although my father tried to deny the whole thing and if I could move a bit further on...When things got bad and my father was not allowed to work any more, a German doctor was put into our surgery in a bigger part. Our flat was divided. We had to live at the back and this other doctor had the surgery in the front. My father had to come up the back stairs which was such an indignity for him. And he took it all in his stride and he made no preparations to emigrate whatsoever. And that was really, for an intelligent man, extraordinary – that he couldn't see what was coming. Well, lots of people were of course like that. And he said 'Hitler can't last forever. I've got enough money to live on without working. We're well off. I won't work and I'll stay in Germany. And I'm not going to leave.' He only insisted that my brother and sister emigrated – that much sense he did have. But I was little Evchen and I had to stay and he wanted to stay.

SR: I'm going back to your parents...Your father was a doctor? Was he a GP?

EE: He was a GP but he specialised in tuberculosis and did a lot of research. He worked in what they called the Kaiser-Wilhelm-Institut once a week and did research on tuberculosis and he wrote papers on tuberculosis. And in those days we used to develop the X-rays in our house. They were always swimming in the bath. And I used to study them myself. And...He was very keen for one of us to become a doctor. Well, my brother didn't want to become a doctor, nor my sister, and I was his last hope. But as soon as I could read, I started reading medical journals which he had and I made myself so ill reading these medical journals that I was put off medicine forever. And I also said I would never become a doctor.

SR: With whom did you have contact from your family?

**Tape 1: 23 minutes 6 seconds**

EE: Yes, well, although we were not religious, I do think that most of our acquaintances – we did have very close relationships with various cousins. There seemed to be hundreds of cousins. And obviously they were all Jewish. That was our social life. This is something I've also tried to explain to the children, how Jewish we felt although we did not follow the Jewish religion. And really the religion started with my sister who married into a fairly religious house and wanted to have a Jewish wedding. My mother absolutely refused to have a synagogue wedding. As you know you can have Jewish weddings anywhere and we had it in our flat. But she would not go to synagogue. The first time I went to synagogue was with my sister and future brother-in-law and before that I'd never been near a synagogue. And there was no circumcision for my brother. And even my father wasn't circumcised so I don't know – It must have gone back a generation or so this lack of religion.

SR: Could you tell me about your brother and sister, their names and your relation...

EE: Yes, my brother was called Fritz Klopstock which when he immigrated to America called himself Fred Klopstock. And my sister – Lily – her name was Lily, second name Sophie also after another grandmother. And she married and became Lily Caro and went to live in Israel.

SR: And what were the relations in the house?

EE: Well, my brother went to America quite early. He was an economist. And he came to England first and he did some research on tea. He was a tea taster at Lipton's – I mean that was well before the war. Then he went to America and he worked at the Federal Reserve. Both my brother and sister are dead now.

SR: But as a child they were much older than you?

EE: Yes.

SR: How many years older?

**Tape 1: 25 minutes 20 seconds**

EE: My sister was 10 years older and my brother 11 years older. At that time I had a closer relationship with my brother. Because he used to play with me; we used to play football in the corridor. And my sister was always busy with her boyfriends. And later on in life I became very, very close to my sister and less close to my brother who didn't behave very well towards the family later on – especially when my mother became ill. He visited her once and of course found her completely crazy and she clung to him to take her out of the nursing home and of course he was so shocked that he never came back to England. He used to travel to the continent on business and of course in earlier days he always came to London for a few days. And after that he never showed his face again. Naturally I resented this very much and since then we had – I won't say a bad relationship but... My sister did everything to help. When we wanted to go on holiday she came over from Israel and spent 2 weeks with my mother. And she really did what she could. And he, as I said, he turned his back on us.

SR: But as a child you were quite close to him?

EE: Yes, very close. And it was terrible for me when my sister got married because she left on her wedding day – she left for Israel on her wedding day – and...it was dreadful for me. I made her bed that night as if she was there, in the middle of doing that I suddenly realised she wouldn't be there any more. Yes I was close to her too but we had lovely games with my brother. And she of course also didn't have that much time for me because of all her boyfriends.

SR: And what sort of household? How was the household?

EE: Well, in Berlin people didn't have houses they had flats, in the centre of Berlin but they were very, very large. We had... in the front of the flat there was the patients' waiting room and the surgery. Then there was my father's sitting room. Then there was the ladies' sitting room, the dining room. Then the back part was the kitchen, a maid's room and the other bedrooms. So it went right round the house you know the

houses have got a courtyard in the middle. And we had a whole side of the house— a front and a side. Plenty of space.

**Tape 1: 28 minutes 6 seconds**

SR: So did you...was there any festival that you did?

EE: Yes, Christmas.

SR: Christmas? That's a good festival. What did you do on Christmas?

EE: Everything...but we had a big Christmas tree. My mother used to say 'We have a Christmas tree for the maids' because we had a cook and a maid. And I think it was quite common among our family and acquaintances to have Christmas trees. So we celebrated birthday and Christmas. We never celebrated any – no Friday nights, no Jewish festivals whatsoever.

SR: Your brother didn't do a Bar Mitzvah?

EE: No. No circumcision and no Bar Mitzvah – nor did my son have either.

SR: And which school did you go to as a child?

EE: Well, in the beginning when I was 6 I went to a small private school. I made a friend there who still lives now in London and we are in contact. And she actually remembers everything about our childhood. And when we left and went on this trip to Berlin my daughter Janet decided to telephone her and since then she's actually written a few pages about our childhood. It reminded me also of all sorts of things which I'd completely forgotten.

SR: Like what kinds of things? What is her name first of all?

EE: Her name is Steffi and her maiden name was Steffi Friedmann.

SR: And the school that you went to together?

EE: Well, that's the school – was run by 2 ladies called Misses Meyer. It was a very small private school close to where we lived and... we were there for 4 years.

SR: So what did she... you were saying that she wrote...?

EE: Well, she wrote about all these shopping...our mothers used to go shopping together and we used to get... She knew the butcher, the baker – not the candlestick maker. And we used to get titbits and she wrote about us going on these shopping trips for our mothers and that's something I do remember that they went shopping together. But I don't remember any details. We also went on the ice rink for instance together which was in the winter. And she wrote about this. Well, it hasn't quite slipped my mind. Now at Somerset House which is quite close to where I work they have ice rink now but that's a new development. I think only the last year this has

started – having ice rinks in this country. And well, that's what we did in the winter. And in the summer we were in our garden.

**Tape 1: 31 minutes 0 second**

SR: And after going to this school?

EE: Yeah well, when I was 10, I had to go...I went to this, it's called, the Cäcilien Schule where my sister was. My sister – this was until she was 18. I was there just for 2 or 3 years. I don't know whether you want to move into that period now.

SR: Were there lots of Jewish students or pupils?

EE: There were – even then there were very few Jewish children there. And then eventually a law came out – this is something that always impresses Janet or my other children as well – My father was what is called a Frontkämpfer – he was in the front in the First World War and he has the Iron Cross First Class. Big thing.

SR: What did he do?

EE: He was a doctor. And...this law came out that only the children of these – I have to say it in German, Frontkämpfer – this Iron Cross First Class, could stay in the school. So...and I think other Jewish children – I don't know whether they had Iron Cross First Class or not – everybody left. I was the only Jewish child left in the school with this Iron Cross. Now if my father had had any sense, which unfortunately he didn't have, he should have taken me out, shouldn't he? But he said 'You'll get a much better education in this school. You are going to stay there.' Well, at that age of course I didn't demur and I was quite happy at the school. I mean I didn't have any bad experiences so I stayed. But I literally – I think I have an idea there was one other girl left besides me. I even remember her name now and she went to America. She didn't stay very much longer because her parents emigrated. But otherwise I was the only Jewish girl left it seems to me. Obviously I don't quite know what went on in other classes, but certainly in my class I was the only one. And this was all due to this Iron Cross First Class.

**Tape 1: 33 minutes 14 seconds**

SR: But before, who were your friends?

EE: Well, I kept my friendships up, although they weren't in my class. I don't remember having very close friends at school. I had these close friends from my private school. Those friendships stayed on. And besides this girl Steffi there's another one called Dorli who also lives in London but quite a long way, in one of the suburbs who's also – we have to say it – at our age still alive, and who I see quite – well, not very frequently because it takes one hour to get there on the tube. But I do visit her once or twice a year. And the girl Steffi, we are on telephone contact all the time. And she lives in Golders Green.

SR: So actually you stayed in contact especially from your old school?

EE: Yes.

SR: You went to a new school...

EE: And I kept in touch with them in this country as well.

SR: And did you feel different being a Jew in a non-Jewish environment?

EE: Well, not...I knew there was a difference. I remember being asked to a birthday party. And the father was in the Air Force in uniform. And of course I hadn't come across that among our acquaintances. Anybody who'd been in the German Army or Air Force and I looked at him with a little bit of surprise. And he must have realised right away that I was Jewish and he looked at me with equal surprise. But that was all that happened. But when the rabbi came to the school for Jewish instruction – to the Cäcilien Schule – and I did take Jewish instruction at the time and learned a bit of Hebrew.

SR: What happened at that time?

EE: Well, that was arranged for the... I suppose originally there must have been quite a few Jewish pupils there. That was arranged by the school that we had instruction – religious instruction by a rabbi. Then of course by the time all the Jewish children had left – that stopped. And then eventually after the Crystal Night I went to a Jewish school.

SR: Just a second. When all the Jewish children had left the school, it must have been a bit strange. Did you come and ask your parents 'What is happening?' Did you know what was happening?

EE: Well, they explained it to me that it was all a question of education. My father said 'This is a school where you will get a good education, and I want you to stay.' And I don't think I demurred or made any comments about it. I just registered that this happened.

### **Tape 1: 35 minutes 59 seconds**

SR: Did the children from your school still go on inviting you to their houses? Their homes?

EE: Well, I don't think I was in such close contact with any children – any non Jewish children in the school – just one or two. No, my social life was still going on with my Jewish friends from the primary school...which was not a Jewish school but it just so happened that I was in touch with Jewish children. Like this Steffi – we saw each other nearly every day and as I said our mothers went shopping and we played together. And this Dorli... We had what in German is called a Kränzchen – again we were 4 or 5 girls we used to have tea parties together. And that just went on regardless although we were not at the same school. I was very close to these children. And so I had enough friends even if they were not at the Cäcilien-Schule.

SR: You stated before that you used to read a lot.

EE: Yes.

SR: When you were a bit older, 10, 11, it went on, or?

EE: Oh yes. Up till now.

SR: Do you remember any special book that as a child...

EE: Well, first of all when I was young – Karl May – I read Remarque who wrote about the war and then I read the Russian classics when I was older you know. I was sort of quite intellectual or thought myself intellectual. I suppose I think that now as well. And I was into quite heavy literature as soon as I could read properly and got a bit older.

SR: Did you go to any youth movement?

EE: No.

SR: So until what age are you going on in this school?

EE: What, the Cäcilien-Schule?

SR: Yes.

EE: Well, I was just...I don't think I had much social life there – and probably because there weren't any Jewish Children there. I think there was probably – probably I must have felt the difference. But it didn't – what's the word – impact on me because I had my other friends and I had my cousins who I also saw very frequently.

SR: So actually all your environment – your social environment – was Jewish...

EE: Yes, absolutely.

SR: But at home you did not practice Judaism as a...?

EE: My daughter in Israel always says 'You are just like Hitler, a racist' – because I keep emphasising that we felt very Jewish and my parents felt very Jewish, we just didn't follow the religion. And that's how I feel now. Well, now it's a little bit different because of this religious environment especially of Janet. And my other daughter – her husband is also – well, he's not quite as religious as my son in law here but pretty religious – and he's getting worse! I'm afraid that's how I look at it – Because he recently lost his parents and since then he's got even more religious than he was when she got married – my – the other daughter in Israel.

**Tape 1: 39 minutes 31 seconds**

SR: And how was it living in Berlin in those times? How was it living in Berlin?

EE: Well, for us it was very comfortable. I must say one of the Jewish things my parents did do – unfortunately the German words come to me now which I never think...like there was a Kulturbund – a Jüdischer Kulturbund – you know a Jewish cultural association and they put on plays and then my parents went to that. That was the only Jewish thing they did – Jewish culture. But they never went to a synagogue – ever, that I can remember. And they started then when my sister got married. Well, she didn't have much time you know during her engagement which was very short. She might have gone to synagogue with her future husband. But what actually happened was – He was studying to be a doctor. At that time – what I don't remember now exactly what year it was – it might have been 1936 or '37. Doctors could emigrate to Israel – it was a last chance. And he rushed through his thesis or whatever he had to do. My father helped him quite a lot with his studies and they had to rush to get to Israel in time where they were accepting doctors. And he passed his exams and they got married all in a great rush and left to go to Israel. That's all in this time-span of acceptance of doctors from Berlin.

SR: How did your parents explain the fact that you needed to leave your school and move to a Jewish school?

**Tape 1: 41 minutes 15 seconds**

EE: Well ...

SR: When was it exactly?

EE: That happened after Crystal Night when even my father saw the light of day. But I think you asked me before did I remember it. I have got terrible memories of this. Because...As I told you I was very close to my cousins. Well, their aunt – their mother, sorry – she wasn't actually my real aunt – she was a cousin once removed of my mother's. She had sent her son to England and she was very worried about the future. Well, her eldest boy from her first marriage who was the same age as my brother and sister, he was slightly...he had a mental illness – this is where I get stuck now on the words – terrible because it all comes back to me in German suddenly. He was either overexcited or depressed and he couldn't work. And...he was a great problem. And in the end my father took him in to help besides this maid which in any case she was busy cleaning and looking after me and the household and so forth. And he was also employed to open the door to the patients because that's about all he could do. At that time he was in a depressive state and he used to sit there and I took it upon myself to try and cure him. I thought I could interest him in different things and used to talk to him and try and cheer him up – but completely unsuccessfully. Anyway my aunt who wanted to emigrate to England – I mean, I think she'd found out that she couldn't take him because of his mental illness. He would not get a permit because of his medical history. And...she went completely around the bend. And on Crystal Night – I don't know whether he disappeared, well, she disappeared as well. And my father was imprisoned on that day and my mother was obviously in a dreadful state. And not only that my father had gone, she heard from – I don't know – someone, either friends or maids that the aunt had disappeared and nobody knew where she'd gone. I mean she was actually wandering around Berlin – a completely lost soul. So there was this terrible – two fears – because the aunt had disappeared and I think we knew that my father had been imprisoned. And there was terrible turmoil.

So the fact that I had to leave the school was really meaningless. My father then accepted...I don't know whether you want me to go through this full story of what happened on Crystal Night...Whether this is...

**Tape 1: 44 minutes 11 seconds**

SR: I want to go back now just a second to 1933 when the Nazis come into power. Do you remember any change in the atmosphere?

EE: No. Not at that time. I think that came later. I mean there was quite a lot of talk because my mother's brother – my uncle – he had been on a world cruise in the First World War – really takes you back a bit I can tell you. And he was taken prisoner of war in New Zealand together with a lot of German naval officers. And he was much worse than us as regards Jewish religion, I mean we didn't criticise the religion in our house, we just didn't partake of it. But he was – really became quite anti-Semitic in a way and that was through his friendship with these German officers which he kept up. And he had a very sad end because he also was not going to leave Germany. He was going to stay and he had all these high-powered friends. Well, as you can imagine it ended up that he was deported to Riga and shot or whatever happened unless he died on the way. That's how he ended with his confidence in these German officers who had been his life-long friends since the First World War. Well, that's another little story. So we knew about my...you see there was after all, even if my father didn't want to leave, there was a lot of talk about emigration and as I said my brother and sister – he fully supported that they should emigrate. He just said it wasn't for him. But my uncle who was a very rich man – I don't know whether he had money abroad. I mean we actually did, but perhaps he had as well. He point-blank refused to go, and he used to talk about his time in the internment camp in New Zealand with his friends and so forth and nothing was going to move him to leave Germany. And he was very wealthy – he had a car and chauffeur – and lived very well. He also had some German girlfriend we found out later because she even gave my mother the information about his death and what happened to him.

**Tape 1: 46 minutes 40 seconds**

SR: Was your sister or your brother engaged to a youth movement? Why did they actually want to leave Germany?

EE: Well, they...everybody talked about emigration – I suppose not from '33 but from 1935 onwards people talked about emigration. That's how I remember it. I'm not very good on dates. And my father supported. He did see that they wouldn't have a future in Germany.

SR: So once your sister emigrated to Israel, was your father pleased with it?

EE: Yes, oh, yes. I mean he helped my brother-in-law so much he fully supported this. Yes, he wanted her to go. And the same with my brother who'd already been in England for a year and came back for a short while. I don't know...my father...it was just for himself he didn't want to go.

SR: Do you remember anything to do with the boycott of 1933?



EE: No.

SR: No. And what papers did your father and mother use to read? What newspapers?

EE: Well, German, something like...I seem to remember it comes to me 'Berliner Tageblatt' – that's something I've never thought of – like a German daily paper, you know he used to take. But I mean he was quite well informed. Just...you see it also had to do with medicine because you know in England you also had to take another examination to be a doctor. I think in America that was not the case – that the German qualifications were accepted. We were actually going to America, not to England. They must have – I suppose even before Crystal Night – he must have thought...yes he must have because he did start buying new equipment and so on for emigration. So I won't say that he was completely blind to it. No, boycott was mostly shops you see. We were not connected with any people who...who owned shops and so forth. No I never heard talk about that.

**Tape 1: 49 minutes 1 second**

SR: So your father's work until 1936...he didn't suffer from it?

EE: No.

SR: He didn't suffer. And the Olympic Games of 1936. Do you remember something about that?

EE: Yes, a great excitement and my friend actually wrote in those few pages she wrote about our youth that she had tickets to go. And oh yes – one other thing we did was going to the zoo. That I remember now. She has reminded me of that – another thing I'd forgotten. We had memberships or something – tickets for the zoo and she had this as well, and that's when we went by ourselves. This is what she emphasises: in those days little girls could go anywhere by themselves – nobody thought anything of it. We just used to go to the zoo by ourselves – you know go on the tram to get there. And she even went by herself apparently to the Olympic Games because her father managed to get one ticket. I didn't actually attend the games but I was very interested in this Jesse Owen, the runner. I read about his career and so forth. I remember the Olympic Games distinctly but nothing to do with Hitler or what it meant in Germany. It's a very pleasant memory for me, the Olympic Games. I know I've since read that Hitler made it an occasion for Germany to be acceptable to the rest of the world. But obviously that didn't occur to me at the time.

SR: So what was the major crisis that changed the way you live?

EE: Well, everything changed. Well, it must have been even before Crystal Night...because, see, we left the following January '39. So I think my father must after all have made preparations to leave. I can't remember which year the German doctor moved in. I suppose from that moment on my father must have known that he had to leave. But all I remember him saying that he would sit it out. And you know there was once a Hollywood film about that period, and now nobody seems to remember it because since then there have been more important films. But it starts

also, the main personality in it who said ‘Nothing will happen to me because I am so popular in my neighbourhood’. And those were absolutely my father’s words that nothing would happen to him because of his good reputation in the neighbourhood. See it was so different then. We didn’t have a car. My father made all his visits by walking or tram. You can’t imagine it now, how we used to live without a car – especially as a doctor. And in those days you had private visits all the time. Not as it is now, you’ve got to be on your death bed before a doctor will come to the house.

SR: So after the Kristallnacht actually you leave to the Jewish school?

EE: Yes.

SR: What school was it?

**Tape 1: 52 minutes 13 seconds**

EE: Lessler – Lessler-Schule.

SR: How was that...?

EE: I don’t know whether I didn’t go there before because when I think back the timing isn’t right because Crystal Night was in 1938, November ’38 and we left in January ’39. So it must have happened before that even the Iron Cross First Class wasn’t good any more. I think that must have happened before. I don’t know what the event was that brought this on, whether there was some special boycott or whatever...I don’t remember and I’ve never written it down. I was at the Lessler-Schule for about a year.

SR: And did you feel that the academic standard was the same as your former school?

EE: Well, I didn’t take too much notice. My cousins were already there – those 2 cousins I’ve already talked about. They were both there. Well, that boy had left I think. Well, the academic standard was very high at the Cäcilien-Schule. But I don’t...it didn’t impact on me whether it was as good or not as good. I was quite happy there as well.

SR: Were you happy going – moving – to a Jewish environment?

**Tape 1: 53 minutes 26 seconds**

EE: Yes, well, it was not the Jewish environment; it’s that I knew some of the children from before. So the only thing I can say about it is that there was a reunion a few years ago, and they enthused about the school how it had changed them and how much it did for them. Well, I can’t say it did anything for me. I didn’t...Well, all my life I’ve always felt myself slightly apart from everyone. Although I’m a very friendly person and I have lots of friends. But I never have given myself completely to it or to other people.

SR: When you say that can you tell me a bit more about it or give me a bit of explanation?

EE: Well, I think when I said to you I was slightly depressed I would say when I was young. I definitely have got a depressive streak in me. I had that from an early age and I put that down to my parents being rather old and not taking much notice of me. Well, you know maybe also a family characteristic, I don't know. But...I would say I was very quiet. My friend actually said that I was a little mouse. That's what she called me. She thinks that I've made a complete change since then. But as a child I was very quiet and reserved and...This depressive streak I would say is still in me now and I have to fight it occasionally. I can get very depressed even now without any reason. And for that reason I've felt myself slightly apart from people. I've got this slight depressive feeling about people and life in general. But I feel much happier as an adult than I did as a child.

SR: So it was a combination of...?

EE: Well, it's...you know since I was married I've had a much better life than I did before. But see I think that the general atmosphere in Germany was very dark – even in our household. It may be even that this depressive feeling came from that. You know, at heart even my father couldn't see any future. I'm sure that kind of atmosphere was in our household. Especially after my brother and sister left everything became a bit sad and even more sad for me. They really left fairly early. I don't know whether my mother wrote in her memoirs. See, my brother left even before my sister might have even. She left in '37. He must have left in '35 so they were gone you know quite a long time before we left.

**Tape 1: 56 minutes 30 seconds**

SR: How old were you when your brother and sister are leaving?

EE: Well, I must have been about 12 or 13 something like that.

SR: So when you went to the Jewish school did the children talk about what is happening here? What was happening in Berlin?

EE: No I don't remember any of that. We were just busy with our own lives, the teachers and I don't remember much conversation on it. Except that the classes seemed to empty, you know, that more and more people left.

SR: Do you remember any caricatures about the Jews or...? Do you remember any caricatures?

EE: Any what?

SR: Caricatures? How do you say that? Newspaper caricatures?

EE: Oh, I see. Well...what shall I say about that? See, when people now complain about anti-Semitism – I think that anti-Semitism is a fact of life and don't take too much notice of it. And no I don't remember reading much in the papers. I suppose I

ignored it I would say. But...On the whole I looked on it as a part of life and I do now. Anybody starts complaining I say 'Well, don't. Don't bother.'

SR: We're ending tape number one. We'll stop now and we'll go on to the next tape.

EE: Yes, OK.

**Tape 1: 58 minutes 4 seconds**

End of Tape One

**TAPE 2**

**Tape 2: 0 minute 7 seconds**

SR: This is tape number two. I am conducting an interview with [pronouncing the 'eh'] Ehva Evans.

EE: Yes, I wish you would call me Eva Evans.

SR: Eva – sorry.

EE: I always tell people if they speak German they can call me Ehva, otherwise Eva because a lot of English people start calling me Ehva – that annoys me no end.

SR: Ok. So I'll do my best with Eva.

EE: Shall I...?

SR: Yes.

EE: I would just like to refer to one event. We had a march organised by the school. And the girls in the BdM [Bund deutscher Mädchen]– you've probably heard that expression before – they wore little black pants and white shirts. And the whole school marched. Well, there was some doubt at home whether I should march or not. I don't know whose decision it was – the whole class was marching. And I would march. And in a way this was a Nazi march. This was at the time – I mean it wasn't specifically Nazi but there was this sort of atmosphere; the whole school marched. And I don't know what time of year it was. My mother was very worried that I would get cold. I had to wear all sorts of vests and underwear under this uniform. I had to wear black pants with white shirt. This was definitely the BdM uniform. And as I said there was some doubt about me going on the march but in the end it was decided by my parents that I should go because the whole school was going. So I went on this march. This is something that my children have always been shocked to hear, that I went on this march but anyway...but it never did anybody any harm. Now we can go on with whatever.

SR: Did you get to meet let's say, children from the Hitler Youth?

EE: No. No. No, no. It was just us marching – girls.

SR: What was the march?

EE: I don't know what it was for. I don't remember that. I think it was a sort of young people...I think it was just young people but...probably the German BDM was involved in it as well I should think.

SR: So the Kristallnacht, you were saying that your father got imprisoned.

**Tape 2: 2 minutes 25 seconds**

EE: Yes. But – I must tell a little story about my father. The police came to the house and they took him to prison by underground. At the underground station both policemen said that they had to buy cigarettes and left him on his own. Obviously they gave him a chance to escape. But my father didn't take it. He had this...Well, I think I know what was in his mind. First of all he was a real Prussian and a Prussian obeyed. He'd been taken prisoner and he was going to obey. And that was one thought. The second thought was – it was a ruse – that they would go back to the house and take my mother and me perhaps or I think at that time they didn't take children. But they would take my mother – this was his idea. So he determined not to run away. And I think whether this was a conflict for him later on I don't know, but for me, thinking about it now... 'cause he didn't know where to go. That was another thing which would have stopped him from running away. He had no money or anything. Because my friend Steffi – she told me that her father had all this paper and money and also had contacts in Switzerland, and on that day he left the house on Kristallnacht before anybody came to get him. And then he heard or saw in the street that people were taken and he immediately left for Switzerland, and presumably had made arrangements that his wife had money and had everything she needed. And he escaped. But my father – I think there was a certain thing – one was obedience, two was my mother, and number three was that he didn't know where to go and had no money. So he was taken to a concentration camp, just now I can't think what it was called... It will come to me later. And at the same time as I said before, my aunt who was at that stage very mentally unstable ran away. Well, she did return home the next day, so that was...and from that day on, my mother went to the police station every day. I think at that stage my father had thought about emigrating to America – but we didn't have an affidavit so....

**Tape 2: 5 minutes 1 second**

But my mother went and bought tickets to go to America although we had no permit. But my family was well off so there was no problem with finding money to buy tickets to America. And she went to the police station and showed these tickets and said that if my father was released we would leave immediately. At the same time – I have to go back more to family history – my uncle, he was the youngest judge in Germany that was. And in 1933 he gave a judgement against the Nazis in the very beginning and had to leave the country and went to England. His wife was not Jewish and she was still in Berlin and managed to pack up all their belongings. And they emigrated so early when they could take their money and everything they owned to England. And that was a lucky thing that happened to him. In England he studied again and he became very famous in England as well. And he was knighted eventually for...He did some report on the Trades Unions. But my mother phoned

him at that stage and he immediately got things going for us to get a permit for us to go to England. My mother who'd been also very quiet all her life, also buried in her books. She suddenly turned out to be a real fighter. And as I said, every day, every morning she was at the police station trying to get my father out. And she did this for 3 weeks and she showed these tickets. They even... I think she quotes again in German in her memoir about they saying, 'Frau Doktor, Sie haben ein gutes Mundwerk' – that she was so persuasive and she wasn't afraid at all... for somebody you know she was very much ... My father was a very forceful man and she never asserted herself really. Everything went according to him and she never spoke up for herself, but once he was in the camp – Sachsenhausen was the name of the camp, incidentally – she was such a fighter, it was amazing what she did. And she succeeded. He was there for 3 weeks, in the camp. And... He had a gold ring which he couldn't take off. And in Sachsenhausen were also a lot of burglars and so on, and they came to look at this ring.

**Tape 2: 7 minutes 39 seconds**

They loved to approach him and see the gold ring, which the Nazis didn't take off either. I suppose they could have hacked it off or something. And he also had a great theory which he taught me: in any crowd you should always be in the middle, you should never be in front; you should never be at the end. The same if you go on a tube train or a railway train, not near the end or the back because that's where the accidents happen. You should always travel in the middle. That was one of his theories. And in the camp both his brothers were taken – in the same camp. I think it was also my brother-in-law's father. And I think one of his brothers died in the camp. The other one was killed later. And he had various patients in the camp with stomach cancer and I don't know what else. They never could...were always on a strict diet – in the camp they thrived on whatever food they were given. And he was quite... he used to talk about that quite a lot. They did heavy work but he was... although when he came out he did lose his strength. But on the whole he...he always said I'm a – came out again with these words – 'I was a Frontkämpfer and I know how to behave in a camp like that. I know how look after myself.' So after 3 weeks my mother succeeded in getting him out.

SR: Did you experience...were you at home when the Germans came into your house– to take him?

EE: Yes.

SR: Do you remember how you felt as a child?

EE: I felt it more later on in England when he was taken to an interment camp. That was much worse.

SR: Because?

EE: That was really terrible. At that time you see first of all I was younger. Also you heard it here all these horror stories all the time and you weren't really surprised at what happened. Also I remember I was very concerned for my aunt and my cousin who was still with her... And of course her older son. And they eventually perished in

Theresienstadt. My cousin came out. She was also... through these relations in England. She came on a children's transport and they took her in – the man who was a famous judge. So that was very frightening the whole period as I remember, but as I said my mother [...] this change of character which we never knew any of us that she had it in her, you know.

**Tape 2: 10 minutes 30 seconds**

SR: At this stage did she talk to you about the future? Did she tell you that you're going to leave?

EE: Yes. Oh yes, we started you know evaluation and jewellery and so forth – our belongings. And my father had bought all this new medical equipment. All this went into freight, to the port in Hamburg – I mean it was all bombed we never got any of it. We only came to England with our hand luggage. Everything was lost.

SR: So at what date did you leave to England?

EE: Well, in January...we couldn't quite get to England yet with permits and things. But my parents had very good friends who were living in the Netherlands in Amsterdam. And it was decided that when my father came out of the camp, my parents were very frightened that they might come for him again and that the best thing was to leave as soon as we possibly could. And as you know, lots of money had to be paid and arrangements being made for the freights and so on. Everything was done as fast as possible. And then we stayed in the Netherlands for a few weeks, maybe 2 or 3 weeks until we were ready to go to England.

SR: When your father came back from the camp, do you remember him coming home?

EE: Yes. Well, his health was definitely undermined since that. The other thing was that he'd taken some English lessons beforehand. He forgot every word of English after the camp. That had gone completely from his mind. He started having to learn again when we came to England.

SR: And what did he tell you about the experiences in the camp?

EE: Well, he only said how well he could adjust to it because he'd been in the World War. He knew how to behave – how not to be noticed except for this gold ring which made such a sensation in the camp. No he never talked about anything else that happened except stones and carrying heavy loads, and people dying – his patients dying – or some of them doing very well on whatever food they were given. No he talked about it in a very pleasant way. He never complained. He just was very proud that he could cope with any situation because he'd been in the war.

**Tape 2: 13 minutes 13 seconds**

SR: And how...can you describe the days before your departure?

EE: Well, that was terrible. We left our flat – that was the other thing – in the last few days we spent with my uncle. And I came – Well, I say I came out in a rash. I had a terrible itch all down my back but there was nothing to see. My father examined me right, left and centre. There was nothing – no blisters no nothing. But I itched! It was completely psychological. I couldn't sleep at my uncle's house where it was a very comfortable – house – flat – you know. And I had this terrible itch which was just as I said psychological obviously. There was nothing to show for it. And I did feel terrible during those days – really awful. Then in the Netherlands I calmed down a bit with our...because I knew these friends of my parents quite well, and we seemed to have quite a pleasant time in Amsterdam.

SR: Did you take anything special from your house, from your room?

EE: No.

SR: Nothing...?

EE: Oh yes. The only thing, yes, and I've still got that now. When my friend Steffi and I played Red Indians we had what was called totems you know, little animals and they were our totems. And my totem – yes – I have got that now still. I'm not quite sure where it is at the moment but I know I brought it with me.

SR: So you took...?

EE: A little animal.

SR: Do you remember saying goodbye to your friends – to your Jewish friends?

EE: No, there was no time for that. We didn't actually see each other much. There was all the worry about my aunt and my father arranged for – he had 2 patients, sort of maiden ladies and he arranged for them to look after her every day or even stay there and keep an eye on her. And then he paid these 2 people to do that after we left. And my cousin once accused me that my father here in England didn't do enough for her mother but really, what could he do? She couldn't get a permit to leave, and... or perhaps she wouldn't leave because she wouldn't leave the son behind either – that she stayed or she would not leave without him. Although he was grown up at that time. But anyway I was very upset that she accused me because I don't think my father did any wrong. He wouldn't have done any wrong – he was not that sort of person. If he could have helped her he would have done.

### **Tape 2: 16 minutes 0 second**

SR: Do you remember the day that you left – left Berlin? Did you think that your...?

EE: I just remember the train. What I remember is that when the police came at the frontier, my mother's coat – you know you have stones or pebbles sewn into the seams so that it hangs – because they thought it was jewellery. And it wasn't, it was pebbles. What actually happened – some of...we did take...I think she had a permit to take her jewellery in a box or something, in a sealed box, because she did take... I



have got some quite valuable pieces of my mother's – which I just bring out for weddings. I can't wear them normally. So she did take her jewellery in some way but it wasn't hidden because I can tell you they would have found it if it would have been hidden. She must have had a permit to take it – or given it to someone else to take. That I don't remember. That's the only valuable thing she brought out with her, was her jewellery – And probably not all of it – just the best pieces.

SR: Were you happy leaving Berlin? Were you happy to leave – to go?

EE: I was terribly upset all round I would say. I felt really ill which showed itself in this itching which I can. I just remember it as being terribly unhappy. But I was also I think, thinking about leaving my friends, because Steffi meanwhile had gone to Switzerland. My cousin – I mean the boy was over in England but – the girl was still in with her mother. And I remember it was terrible when we went to say goodbye my cousin was still there and her mother was completely crazy, saying 'I don't want to look at your eyes or my eyes.' I don't know, she behaved in a very unstable way – very frightening for a child and I think my cousin never got over that, that she had to be... because it was some time before the children's' transport was arranged that she left her mother. I mean she had really had a very bad time. In fact she is also dead now. She died. So did her brother, but... They died in their 70s – I mean not young. They lived their life.

**Tape 2: 18 minutes 27 seconds**

SR: So you leave and you go with your parents to their friends in the Netherlands.

EE: Yes.

SR: How long were you there?

EE: Well, maybe 2 weeks or perhaps only 1 week. They of course...I don't know what happened with them but I should think they were deported and they stayed in the Netherlands. I don't think they ever left and they had a very sad end but my parents didn't talk too much about it. But we felt guilty...I felt guilty about my cousin I think, being left behind with that crazy mother. But I can't say anything specific about it. I just felt really terrible about leaving.

SR: And the Dutch – did the Dutch people look to you...Was it different in Holland? Was it...?

EE: Well, it was normal life in Holland. Everything was completely normal. What I remember most was having cornflakes for breakfast you know our ordinary...which we didn't know in Germany. Now in England it became a very important part of breakfast having cornflakes, and I always my first cornflakes in Holland. And then I have a very bad memory about arriving in England. We arrived at Harwich and we had what was supposed to be a medical examination. And there was supposed to be a doctor – not what I thought was a doctor. Some horrible man came and listened and he looked dirty, not clean like a doctor should and he listened to my chest. I think that's about all he did and that was the medical examination. I said 'What a place, you know, to arrive dead tired in Harwich and have this horrible man listening to my chest

and claiming to be a doctor. That's not what I thought of doctors.' – Of an image of a doctor. I thought all doctors had to be like my father. I think that a little bit now I do always avoid going to the doctor because I feel every doctor should be like my father.

**Tape 2: 20 minutes 41 seconds**

SR: So what did you know about England before you came here?

EE: Well, we admired England. England in those days had a very high reputation in Germany. What I remember in school and so on the French were always looked down upon and England was admired. But that was I think the general feeling in Germany. I think they're getting back to it now after the World Cup that so many English people have been in Germany and enjoyed themselves. And I don't know...

SR: So you didn't know a lot about England before?

EE: No.

SR: Did you know English?

EE: Well, we had it at school but I didn't know a lot of English, no. I mean just enough to get by. But then my friend helped me. She lived very near. We lived in Belsize Grove. She lived in Belsize Park Gardens and she took me in hand.

SR: So tell me, you arrive in England. Where do you arrive?

EE: Harwich.

SR: Harwich. And then you live there or...?

EE: No, no. We went straight to London.

SR: To London...because of the uncle?

EE: Yes, at that time they lived in London and you see where we are different from other refugees – part of our family, my mother's family originally emigrated – that was in the 19<sup>th</sup> century – to America. One of them came back. Unfortunately some of them came back to Germany because they didn't like it in America. They made a lot of money there and they didn't like the food. That was the grandmother's story – she didn't like the food so she came back to Germany. But one of these relations went to London. And he was a bachelor. And he left all his money to our family – also to this poor aunt who never got out. And...somehow she had declared or ... that was another reason they found out she couldn't leave. Because they found out she had money. We also had this money in England which is different from the average refugee, so...I don't know how much it was, but enough for us to live on when we arrived in England. And a lot of refugees came with just their 10 Mark or their 10 whatever it was. So we had money here, and we had this uncle. So we went to live in something called Norfolk Court Hotel in Belsize Grove which is now – became a Swiss hostel afterwards, but I don't know I think now it's probably a block of flats. And we lived

there and I mean my father at that time wasn't able to work and we didn't earn any money but we had enough money to live on.

**Tape 2: 23 minutes 27 seconds**

SR: So what did your father do in this time?

EE: Well, he started...he was always reading medical books. And there was some association for the protection of learning. There was some charitable place – I mean not that he got money there but he had facilities to read books and medical books and so forth. He just went on thinking about tuberculosis and cures for it and occupied himself with this research. And I went to Camden School for Girls. We had other relations – Fuchs – also a doctor. I don't know he must have emigrated much earlier. So we stayed with them for a visit actually for a sort of holiday. We stayed with them in Folkestone the day that the war broke out.

SR: What were your impressions of England or London when you just came? – Just arrived?

EE: Well, I don't remember giving it much thought. All I cared about was going to school. We stayed in this Norfolk Court Hotel and there were people there who knew both German and English. And I was always very good writing essays. I mean when I was young I wanted to become a journalist or a writer. And my first few essays I wrote in German and they translated it for me in the hotel – people we met there. But I do feel that I've lost the fluency of writing. That I was old enough then to write very well in German and to be admired at school for my essays and I was very proud of my essays. And I feel when I came to England that I lost all that. It was a very important part of my life. Also I was very interested in poetry as well as an interest in English poetry stayed for some years. But now I feel very anti-poetical for some reason. I think it has all to do with language that I felt I lost the ability to write really well and originally, as I'd been able to do in German. When I was at university I was very impressed by the staff who studied German rather than English but I wouldn't do that. I said 'I'm not interested in the German language any more.'

**Tape 2: 26 minutes 5 seconds**

SR: I'm going back to the school. So when you arrived in Camden Girls' School how did the girls treat you?

EE: Well, I think I knew enough English to understand what the girls said, but I think I very much dependent on my friend.

SR: Who was your friend?

EE: The friend who was already at the school.

SR: Who was she? From where did you know her?

EE: Well, from the Lessler-Schule in Berlin I knew her and her sister.

SR: OK.

EE: Unfortunately she died last year. She was one of my very good friends too. I mean not as good as this Steffi but we were... when she got older she became a bit... I didn't always approve of her. But never mind. At that time she was my mentor so to speak. She sat next to me at school; explained everything to me which I didn't understand. She was very good. I saw her every day then. Steffi was still I think in Switzerland at that time. She came to England later.

SR: You said that when you went to school you knew already English. When did you study English – you studied a bit at school?

EE: At school. Both at the Cäcilien-Schule and at the Lessler-Schule we had English lessons.

SR: So that was enough for being able to cope here?

EE: Yes, enough. I could follow, but I couldn't write essays in English. But I could follow the programme otherwise.

SR: And did you feel different being German or...?

EE: Well, maybe there were other refugee children in the class. No I was so dependent on my friend and I think we probably did homework together and I felt quite happy. We used to go on outings with her family – with her mother. They were very keen to...we used to go to Rickmansworth every weekend. We used to collect mushrooms, the sort of thing that we did on holiday in Germany. She had a very energetic mother and we went on these expeditions all the time and life was quite good, I felt, when I came to England.

SR: Life was good for you?

EE: Yes.

SR: And how was the area. How did... this area?

**Tape 2: 28 minutes 28 seconds**

EE: Yeah well, we've always...we lived here first and come back to it you know, after many years. Yes we felt very familiar with this particular area. Although at that time we lived more near Belsize Park. We used the Northern Line. Well, I've seen a lot of changes of course. Like this house – this was a bomb site. And on Haverstock Hill, that's completely changed. That was all old houses and everything has been rebuilt – blocks of flats now. Well, this is obvious now...One forgets how many bomb sites there were in this area.

SR: And with whom did your parents associate especially? With refugees, or with...?

EE: Yes, with refugees. No, that's what I always said. We always mixed with refugees and Jewish people.

SR: Did you become more observant when you came to England?

EE: No. Not at all, yeah – the only thing – well, you have to go back... You see when evacuation started my parents wouldn't let me go with the school and since then I had a rather bad relationship with them. So we went to...first to Torquay. First we stayed in a hotel, later on in a furnished house. I went to Torquay Grammar School and it so happened that I was the oldest Jewish girl there. I'm sure my son-in-law laughs his head off because I used to take Jewish prayers. Because there was no one else to do it and I took it you know the headmistress asked me to take Jewish prayers as the oldest Jewish girl. I did. I did this by reciting Psalms or making the other people recite them and that was my Jewish prayers. I mean I didn't say much about Holy Days because I knew nothing about them. But I relied on Psalms.

SR: So still here your parents didn't go to synagogue or something like that?

EE: No, nothing.

SR: And where were you on the breaking of World War II? Where were you – physically that day?

EE: Physically, in Folkestone – on that day.

SR: On holiday?

EE: Yes.

SR: Ok and what do you remember?

**Tape 2: 30 minutes 53 seconds**

EE: Well, I remember we all had gas masks and the sirens went the minute... We were at the beach at the time. And I thought about getting the gas masks, but nobody else was going for their gas mask and I didn't know what to do. Then I decided, well, if nobody else is carrying their gas mask I don't need to go – I was going back to the house to collect it. And in the end I didn't and I was very worried about it at the time. But then after a short time – you know – it was just a false alarm. But this is what happened the day war broke out. At Folkestone anyway they sounded the alarms and so I managed there without my gas mask. And then we went back to London and my parents decided we couldn't stay in London. I mean that was once evacuation started.

SR: So you came back – just a second – you came back – after holiday you came back to London?

EE: Yes.

SR: How was London in that period?

EE: Just ordinary. I mean at that time I don't know when the air raids started – that must have been later. I don't know whether the school was evacuated at the time but as soon as the school was to be evacuated, my parents said 'We're leaving. We're going to the West Country.' and we went first to Torquay and... I was about to take School Certificate which was then like O-Levels now. And then Torquay became – the story of this is that Torquay became protected area so aliens couldn't be there any more. But before then something quite significant happened and that was my 16<sup>th</sup> birthday. Because they sent – all round England – they sent people to find aliens. And when I became 16 I somehow got registered. And I had a summons to Exeter. There was a Tribunal it was called to examine all people who had...that was before internment, but I think it was because I was 16 and this was in one of the courts in Exeter. There was one other Jewish girl there and she was at a boarding school in Devon and she came with one of her teachers. I don't know what happened to her. And I entered this courtroom. My parents came with me – they were not allowed to accompany me. And there were these lawyers visiting there and they seemed to think that anybody who had to be seen by this tribunal was a spy. And that's why they had been summoned to appear.

**Tape 2: 33 minutes 40 seconds**

So they looked at me and as I said I was 16 years old – and they treated me as a potential spy and all sort of sharp questions followed. And I answered them as best I could and I thought 'My god,' you know, 'What's going to happen here? Do they want to carry me off to prison?' And one of the – I think my uncle had provided a reference. And one of these lawyers was reading something and he said 'Just a minute.' And there was a reference to my uncle who had been one of his professors at university and he just said 'You can let her go. She's all right.' – and in the middle of this very fierce questioning I was dismissed. It was a very strange experience I can tell you. But anyway...So the next thing that happened, I went back to school and with my studies. And then Torquay became protected areas. All aliens had to leave. And I was doing the Cambridge School Certificate. So where was the nearest place where they did Cambridge School Certificate? It turned out to be Ilfracombe which is in north Devon. So off we went to north Devon again staying in a hotel. And after a very few days – a very short time – my father was interned in Ilfracombe. And again the police came and he went, and...

SR: So that was very trying?

**Tape 2: 35 minutes 17 seconds**

EE: I was very – I mean in Germany one wasn't surprised. But we didn't expect to be interned in England. I think they called it 'friendly enemy aliens' or something stupid. And that's a rather funny story. We were in this hotel. There were some people – Jewish refugees from London – and when this internment started the mother rang up her son in London and said 'Please come, so that you're interned with your father.' So the son took the next train to Ilfracombe and went straight to the police to be interned. And they said 'We've finished interning yesterday.' And this son, I don't know what happened to him actually, he was never interned and he escaped the interment in London because of the journey. And in the case of my husband if I can bring that in now, when he heard about internment, he was under 18. He went straight to the police

or to the army or wherever to volunteer for the army. And he was accepted, although he was slightly under-age. And when the police came to the house to get his father he said 'My son is in the British Army'. So that was all right. He was not interned. And my husband went straight into the Pioneer Corps. So then I was left with my mother in Ilfracombe and went to school there. Well, they did Cambridge School Certificate but unfortunately they did completely different periods. So what I had learned in Torquay like in history for instance, was no good to me at all. But the teachers were terribly kind. They used to take me for walks – the history teacher on Saturday afternoon or Sunday. And they taught me, you know, within a very short period of time they taught me all I had to know to take the different period. Also in English you know, different books and when I think the fuss our children make nowadays about their O-levels. I mean I went to... I did O-Levels. I went to 3 different schools – Camden School, Torquay Grammar School, and Ilfracombe Grammar School – within one year and I still did my O-Levels.

**Tape 2: 37 minutes 31 seconds**

SR: Did you experience war chauvinism?

EE: Pardon?

SR: Did you experience war chauvinism?

EE: Oh, what? About England? Yes, but he joined into this fully. I mean England being a great country and so on. Is that what you mean?

SR: Did you feel problematic coming from Germany – being a German in the time of the war?

EE: No – not at all – We were terribly pro-English. That's why I was so shocked for my father to be interned. No we were very pro-English. We couldn't understand what was going on.

SR: Did the other children state something to do with you being German or your ancestors being German...?

EE: No, we were...I was always accepted. I only remember one incident where...in Ilfracombe an English woman said something, 'What are you people doing here?', which was horrible. That was my only bad experience. And when we eventually got to Barrow-in-Furness – I mean there was such ignorance there that you cannot imagine. I'd just like to stay in Ilfracombe for a moment because eventually the Pioneer Corps came to Ilfracombe. I didn't meet my husband then. He was also there – more or less the same time. I used to go out with people from the Pioneer Corps and this being, you might have heard of Helen Fry – has written a book about the Pioneer Corps. I don't know whether you have come across it. But we are mentioned in this book, both my husband and I. My husband in the Pioneer Corps and for me there was a strange experience which has gone on to present time. Well, I don't want to dwell on it too long...Eventually Ilfracombe became protected area and my mother and I were supposed to leave. But just at that time I had appendicitis and I was operated in Barnstaple, at the hospital, so we were allowed to stay. And there was

one woman there – pregnant – who had her baby in Ilfracombe. She was also allowed to stay. Like the Cäcilien-Schule, everybody left. All the refugees who were there left and there was just my mother and me and this other lady and her baby. And of course she had no help or relations. Her husband was interned. And I used to take out this baby for walks.

**Tape 2: 40 minutes 3 seconds**

And this Helen Fry when she wrote this book about the Pioneer Corps in Ilfracombe. It's called 'Jews in North Devon' – she dug up this family and she had already interviewed me and knew my maiden name. And she found a photo... this lady this mother of the baby had a photograph of me with my name on it. I had no idea that she had this because this must have been in 1940 or something. And she's got this photograph of me with Eva Klopstock written underneath. And...It's in the book actually. And I met this baby. She's a lecturer at Birkbeck College. And strangely enough when I left university I applied for a job at the British Museum in the British Library rather and so did she. But she actually got the job because she actually had a degree in English. I've met her. She's actually been to our house and I've tried to keep up our relationship. I mean now the age difference doesn't seem to be so bad. But this was really an amazing thing about this photograph suddenly reappearing after all these years and as I said she put it into the book.

SR: So as a child – as a teenager you had to move quite a few times from place to place.

EE: Yes.

SR: How did you experience that – the moving part?

EE: Well, the schooling was to me terrible to have to leave Torquay because I wanted to do well and it was – I mean I managed to do well and pass all right. But it was terrible for me because I was very keen to pass the examination. So this was my period in Ilfracombe.

SR: And socially?

EE: Nothing much. I didn't have any friends there at all. And then...Now my mother was at it to try and get my father released from internment camp. He was actually sent on to Huyton – which firstly he was in Salisbury Plain, then Huyton, and then eventually I don't know how he was released – not before then mind you my cousin – another cousin – who was at that time called Klopstock – was sent to Canada and my mother got the note that he'd been but it wasn't my father it was this cousin, so she went through another terrible shock – but it didn't last too long. And from there we went to Oxford. Again because my father could do his research there on this tuberculosis and had facilities provided by this kind of charity for the Protection of Learning I think it was called. And we lived in Oxford.

**Tape 2: 43 minutes 14 seconds**

SR: What year are we talking about?



EE: Hm?

SR: What year are we talking about – your going to Oxford?

EE: I suppose it must have been 1941 perhaps. I'd also – yeah in Oxford – I'd got my school certificate and we were still hoping to go to America. And I learned shorthand typing – that was the next thing. And I actually got a job as shorthand typist in Oxford. And I saw all these students – I very much wanted to go to University. And it's...No I'd never really tried to think back on these days. Anyway I decided I wanted to study languages. I had to learn Latin. And that's something that I missed out because in Germany you start Latin at a later stage than in England. So I never had learned Latin, so the next thing was I had to learn Latin. Well, my cousins were in school. I don't know if you've heard about it in your interviews – Stootley Rough – which was a refugee school in Haslemere – a sort of refugee boarding school. And there it could be arranged, although I was really too old to go there because I'd already been out in the world earning money. My parents arranged for me to go to Stootley Rough because my cousins were there – both of them. Because our famous judge by that time had a house in Haslemere and he'd arranged when my cousin came out with the children's transport for her to go to school there. And I think her brother was there as well, I'm not quite sure. She was certainly there. So they arranged for me to go to the school mainly to learn Latin because there seemed to be no other way that I could catch up. And I had private lessons in Latin. I was terribly unhappy there because I'd already been working earning money, and I was suddenly put into a boarding school...The first thing they did there was cut off my hair, and I let them do it which I felt was a great weakness of mine. I mean shortened it – didn't cut it all off. But I was suddenly treated again as a little girl. Anyway I learned my Latin and meanwhile my father – doctors were then allowed to work in England even with German examinations because there was a shortage of doctors in the war. And he, after making about 150 or more applications, he got a job in Barrow-in-Furness. So then we moved to Barrow-in-Furness.

**Tape 2: 45 minutes 51 seconds**

SR: In the boarding school the children came from what...?

EE: Oh, all from Germany.

SR: Only from Germany.

EE: All refugee children.

SR: Not from Austria and other places?

EE: Oh Austria, yes, yes, from Austria as well. Because we've got a neighbour here, along the road in Hawtrey Road who was at school there. He's much younger than us. I think he came here...there was a charity which helped to pay fees you know for refugees who couldn't, who had parents who had to work and no one to look after the children. I mean there were a lot of non-paying children there. They all had to do the housework and cooking and help with everything.

SR: Can you describe a day at the school? Can you describe a day at the school?

EE: What...cried, did you say?

SR: Describe – can you describe – can you tell me about a day in the school?

EE: Well, I hated it because I was too grown up for it. But yes the children – the older girls – well, girls or boys – some of them did land work and they looked after the garden. Some of them weren't even taught any more, they were kept on because they had no parents and nowhere to go. The other children had proper lessons but I don't think it was of a terribly high standard. I'm not sure. Yeah, literature and art and so on – that played quite an important part because there were 2 headmistresses. And they were very cultured people and the...

SR: What were their names?

**Tape 2: 47 minutes 19 seconds**

EE: One was called Levins I think. I don't remember much. And... I mean for me it was – so it appeared at the time – the only way to learn Latin, but I must have had other lessons as well.

SR: Do you remember any rivals between the Germans and the Austrians...?

EE: No.

SR: Or Jewish religious and less religious?

EE: Well there must have been. I think the Jewish religion, there must have been but not a lot because I don't remember any special...I think they were quite irreligious as far as I remember. But I know various people now who went to the school there. It was a place where if you had any money you sent your children there or charity or some Jewish organisation paid the fees. But everybody had to help and work. It was a bit like a commune.

SR: So what sort of children got into that school?

EE: Well, like my cousin from children's transport. I don't...and this neighbour here, he's really about 15 years younger than us and his parents sent him there. He became a solicitor in the end so perhaps the education – he must have also been to university – so perhaps the education wasn't so bad. But they were all refugee children. They all had some kind of history like this.

SR: Do you remember listening to the BBC at that time?

EE: Well, I was never interested in politics myself. I suppose some children did but I've never...and even now I'm not into politics. Not much anyway. Yeah, I'm very anti certain people but...whereas obviously my husband is more interested in politics.

SR: So how long were you at that boarding school?

EE: Well, I was there I think nearly a year. Not such a long time.

SR: And your mother and father?

EE: Well, she – at that time they were still in Oxford and then he got this job in Barrow-in-Furness which is now Cumbria. And we moved up there. And strangely enough in my present work I had an email the other day from one of the people I work with in Bruges and she said ‘I have to go to Cumbria to my father’s funeral.’ So I just decided to tell her that I used to live in Cumbria and she was amazed and she wanted to know all about it. And she lived near Barrow-in-Furness and said ‘I’m really touched by your stories and I’m sure your father treated my aunts and uncles.’ And it meant so much to her because she’s stuck in Bruges, married to a Belgian, and to meet somebody from Barrow-in-Furness is quite unusual. She’s been in London since then and we’ve had lunch together. We’re in touch, with our work. So this was rather strange. So this was, you see there’s Ilfracombe, Oxford and then Barrow-in-Furness.

**Tape 2: 50 minutes 32 seconds**

SR: So what were your impressions of Cumbria when you came there?

EE: Well, the first thing that happened to us there was that we had tea in a restaurant, or café, and there were a few Jewish residents in Barrow-in-Furness. And they immediately realised we were Jewish and they swooped down on us and especially on my father and said ‘Will you come to synagogue – or shul they call it here – to make a minyan?’ And my father said ‘No, I’m sorry. I can’t and I won’t.’ And they were very disappointed because they never had enough men in the synagogue. But we got very, very friendly with this Jewish family; especially I did with one of the women.

SR: So how did they understand that you were Jewish?

EE: By our looks.

SR: Your looks?

EE: Or they heard us talking German – I don’t know what happened. They recognised us in this café. They were also having tea there. And we immediately started a social relationship with them and got very friendly. And I could tell you such stories about this family. You see one of the daughters had polio as a baby and she was very handicapped and walking with sticks. And another relation – it doesn’t really belong into this but I have to tell you about it – he was a tailor and he imported a tailor who’d survived extermination camp from Auschwitz or somewhere. And this man had lost his wife and son, and he used to go around with a photograph of the corpses of his wife and son and show it to everybody. It was very frightening. And he came to live there. He was really mentally affected by all this. But he saw this friend of mine with her crutches and sticks and he said he would marry her. And everybody thought he was absolutely crazy, because nobody would have married her. So she

accepted him. So not only did they get married but she also had a baby which was a major affair in her state of health. She had to stay in hospital. This baby is now a very well known professor at the University of Wales, Cardiff. So this – you know – such a strange story.

**Tape 2: 53 minutes 7 seconds**

SR: So in this stage are your parents in contact...Were your – did your parents still have relationships that stayed in Germany – family relations that stayed in Germany?

EE: No everybody was killed. We had no one left. And we didn't obviously all through the war years we couldn't be in contact with my brother and sister. I mean I suppose there was – yes there were these air letters, that's right, that we used to send. But we didn't see them for all those years. And we all had different nationalities. There's always a little story I tell people, because my father was naturalised first because of his work. My mother and I were still German. My sister was what was called 'Protectorate' or Palestinian Protectorate or whatever it was called then. And my brother was American. Well, that's just by the way. Anyhow...it goes on. You know I really – My story goes on too long, I feel. When we were in Barrow a speech was made that this strange Doctor Klopstock had arrived. And you know what has the world come to, what has the war come to that we've even got a German doctor here? Something to that effect was said. But everybody loved him, especially his patients. I mean in Barrow he had an even better reputation than in Germany because he treated everybody like a private patient. In his clinic he was an assistant medical officer of health and the nurses got a bit fed up because he took so long with each patient, which they weren't used to. But the patients of Barrow just went crazy about him. They had never had such medical attention as they got from my father. And he was really loved. He also did maternity services and...So he always said that to end his life you know, with such love from his patients – that was such a boon for him. And as to myself, we're getting too long – I was then called up and I went to the fire service which is something that I never mention to anybody now. Because the people I work with are all very – well not all that young – but ...compared to me. And so I never speak about the war ever to them. 'Cause if they remember the war they just remember that they couldn't get new shoes or new clothes or they couldn't get eggs and butter. That's all they remember. And that I was actually in the fire service I've never admitted to anyone – to my colleagues.

**Tape 2: 56 minutes 1 second**

SR: So could you tell me, did you go there voluntarily?

EE: No. I was first called up to do war work, and I worked for a very short time in the shipyard, which was very uninteresting. I don't know how I got to the fire service – whether this was offered to me... I think so. And I was sent to work in Preston. We come up against now this protected area because obviously Barrow is on the seaside and the whole seaside of England was protected area. And then I was stationed in Preston in the fire service. But I still had German nationality and I was not supposed to visit my parents in Barrow because I was going into protected area. But somehow because I was in the fire service I eventually got permission to come home and visit

them. But you know this protected area, this actually followed us around the country. You know from South Devon to North Devon to Lancashire as it was then.

SR: And in the army did you feel good? Did you feel well, socially?

EE: Well, I felt there was a wide gulf between me and everybody. But I accepted that. How could I fit in with these people in the fire service?

SR: What do you mean?

EE: I mean it was ridiculous. But I got on all right.

SR: Academically, or...did you say that...?

EE: There were... the work was very boring. I used to have to work out the amount of petrol to be used by the fire engines and the average. And every weekend I used to hitchhike to see the country. And I took risks – I would never allow my daughters to do what I did in those days. Stand in the road and hitchhike and lorries. I didn't go into private cars. I decided it would be safer to be in lorries. Every weekend I went, well not very far but into the country to look at the country side and different places and...I was quite happy doing that. I had a pocket knife always to defend myself. But nothing ever happened to me.

SR: So you didn't contact socially with your friends in the...?

EE: No, we had dances – I didn't go to them. We used to help at the entrance maybe to take tickets. I wouldn't join into it. Once or twice I think we went – We once went to the RAF for a dance and I went to that. No, I felt myself such a gulf that I didn't even try to be intimate with anybody.

SR: We're getting now to the end of Tape number Two. We'll stop now and we'll go on in the next tape.

EE: Are you sure you want to go on?

**Tape 2: 58 minutes 56 seconds**

End Tape Two

**TAPE 3**

**Tape 3: 0 minute 6 seconds**

SR: I'm continuing the interview with Eva Evans. This is the third tape and we were talking about her service in the National Fire Service.

EE: Well, we were stationed just outside Preston. Some people I think were in the regular fire service. Others were called up and perhaps not fit enough for the Army or Air Force so they were put into the Fire Service. And as I said I had absolutely no friends there, no social contacts. But I wasn't really unhappy. I did my work and I read my books and occasionally I could go and visit my parents in Barrow. I still had a close relationship with the – she was called Brenda – who was fairly handicapped and by that time I think she'd had her baby and was very happy. And although she

was of course older than I was she was a good friend and we used to converse. And my parents in Barrow, they were friendly with the other doctors – non-Jewish people. Eventually – that must have been...I think the war must have been ended by then because they imported German scientists who had been doing research in Germany and they were in the shipyard and industry in Barrow-in-Furness were also engaged in research. And this group of Germans arrived and they lived quite near us. A house was taken over for them and they all had young children and they were treated by my father. This was another very strange thing. They arrived in England and who treats them but a Jewish doctor? Well naturally they spoke German to each other and also my father spoke German to them and a very good relationship was built up. And by that time my father was not in very good health and one of these Germans used to come and dig our garden...What's the word for it? To do something for Jewish people you know...He was happy to do it for us. He came every week to do some gardening. And we even had these people around to tea because my father got to know them quite well between treating their children.

**Tape 3: 2 minutes 56 seconds**

And so these were the German inhabitants in Barrow-in-Furness and I just think from their point of view it must have been very strange. And I'll always remember one woman said, 'How are you settled here? How are you getting on?' And she said 'There is nothing like the Heimat.' I felt very bad when I heard those words. It's all right to talk about the Heimat but I used to think of Germany as my Heimat, you know – once upon a time – and was a bit upset over this. Also they sent food parcels back to Germany and among them they had about 20 children at least, you know they were really all large families. And then eventually somebody complained at the post office that they could send parcels for the adults and relations in Germany but they couldn't send things, you know, parcels with their babies' names on them. That created some kind of storm in Barrow that they overdid it with sending food parcels home. Although I don't think they were hurting anybody even if there were shortages at that time. But this is just another strange war episode which I don't think has happened to anybody. And I'm sure you haven't heard about that kind of thing before. These Germans, otherwise they seemed to be quite happy to be in England. I don't think they would have been forced to come. I mean they must have had an offer which they accepted. I often wonder what happened to the children because the older ones of course went to school in Barrow. But I have no idea what happened to these families. The firm was called Vickers Armstrong, incidentally, who imported these people. To come back to the Fire Service. Well, it left me pretty cold the whole thing. But I still wanted to go to university. Of course all this had been interrupted with one thing and another. When I was eventually released from the Fire Service – I don't know how I did that – I had private lessons in Barrow from the Grammar school teachers both in – I think mostly in Latin and some in French or maths. I don't know. And I then took A-Levels independently, and then through my A-Levels eventually I managed to get to University. And I went to live in London and I went to University College.

**Tape 3: 5 minutes 37 seconds**

SR: You lived with your parents when you finished...?

EE: Yes, when I finished the Fire Service I went back to live in Barrow-in-Furness.

SR: For how many years?

EE: Well, that wasn't all that long because I left to live in London. But my parents stayed on in Barrow until my father died. I don't know quite what year – yeah, he died.

SR: How was their life there?

EE: Well, they felt – as I said my father was terribly happy with his work in Barrow. And the appreciation of his patients and obviously my mother was happy. They led a good life there. They at first shared a house with an English family. Eventually they had the house to themselves. They went for lovely walks. The country is very nice. I went for cycle rides when I was there all through the Lake District. And various...my cousins came to stay and other relations from London came to stay. It was a good life for them.

SR: Do you remember the first time that you talked to your brother and sister after the years that you didn't speak to them because of the war?

EE: Well, I remember even when we still lived in Germany we once met my sister. That was before the war – in Switzerland. And we decided to take the risk to take her back with us to Germany. That was well before the war and, well, I was very happy to see her. My brother – he was then in the American army doing – he also came to Barrow once. He was an Army officer doing, you know, questioning people in Germany – a kind of intelligence work he did. And my brother-in-law then was also in the British Army in Italy – you know everybody did their war service. We were just happy to meet again that's all – I can't remember any details about this.

### **Tape 3: 7 minutes 47 seconds**

SR: So you're going to university. What did you study in university?

EE: Well, the...I studied modern languages. Because I had nobody to advise me, and there was at that time an Honours degree and a general degree. And I was under the impression that a general degree...I didn't know what the difference was really. Unfortunately it came out later. A general degree you did 3 subjects. I thought this was more interesting. I chose English, German, and French. I thought this was a very happy combination. If you studied English you just did English. If you did German you had a subsidiary subject or one and a half – one language and then another language. Well, nobody – not even those teachers who taught me in Barrow from the Grammar school, they never prepared me for this. So I put in 'general degree' and I soon found out that this had been a big mistake. You couldn't at that time get anywhere with a general degree. Then I decided to do the general degree in 2 years. You could stay at university 3 years. And I wanted to take the degree in English but I couldn't do it in 1 year because there was no subsidiary subject. It would have taken 2 years. By that time all the soldiers came back and wanted to go to university. They said I wasn't brilliant enough to be given another year to do English. Had I taken

German I could have done it in 1 year. I would have had an honours degree because part of my general degree would have been a subsidiary and it wouldn't have been as much work as an English degree. So I refused to do German, and English they wouldn't let me do so in the end I left University just with a general degree and that third year when I did English didn't count for anything.

**Tape 3: 9 minutes 42 seconds**

SR: Who were your friends? Who did you socialise with at university?

EE: At university then, I made new friends – they were non-Jewish and they're still my friends now. And we are quite close.

SR: Did you have any contacts with refugees?

EE: Yes, I suppose so, but I seem to have spent most of my time with these girls. Also on holidays we went together youth-hostelling and so forth. And I didn't really meet any suitable boys at that time. And also at university I must say again that I felt isolated in the sense that I was 3 years older than everybody. And my friends – my university friends are all 3 years younger than I am. Because they went straight from school – There was no year off in those days.

SR: So what did you do when you finished university?

EE: Well, I was...I had a good time. I was studying and I only found out later that it was all a big mistake with my degree...

SR: No, when you finished your degree, how did you go on?

EE: Well, my father advised me to take up librarianship. But I decided I think rightly that it was too boring for me. I went into the rare book trade. That was what I did after university.

SR: The rare...sorry?

EE: The rare book trade. I enjoyed that very much. I worked with rare books for a firm called Dawson's. They did rare scientific and medical books. And my work was collating, selling, and I loved being in the bookshop. It was the right atmosphere for me. And I was very happy doing this work. And it suited me perfectly. It also taught me a lot. At the moment my president always – I've got several letters from him where he congratulates me on the attention to detail. And that's what I learnt there. It was collating ancient books to watch everything and to go over each page and that gave me the sense of detail. And then I joined the tennis club here in London and that's where I eventually met my husband...At the tennis club.

**Tape 3: 12 minutes 14 seconds**

SR: Were you content in these years? Were you content in these years after university?



EE: Yes. I was content. I was quite happy but I would say that I've always had throughout my life that sense of isolation. And see again now I work with people with whom I cannot have a social relationship, and that's in a way rather sad because everybody invites their friends round. But...all right in the Fire Service the gulf was culturally – they came from a completely different world. I couldn't possibly be friends with them. Now, it is partly age – that everybody is much younger. And they are also professional people who are very busy and really their social relationship is among their professions. They're either – the people I work with are – either university lecturers or lawyers. And I don't feel up to that. Not only that, they're of course much younger. I do feel now in my life a terrible lack of social relationships which I only have with my old refugee friends. I mean if I give a dinner party, they are mostly Jewish people except for these few university friends who are not Jewish. But I don't have a social relationship with the people I work with.

SR: But in those years after university you especially relate to your non-Jewish friends? Did I understand you?

EE: Well, they are the same as my Jewish friends – feel exactly the same.

SR: Did you go out to all the Jewish – the refugee places like the Dorice and the Cosmo, and all these places?

EE: Well, we've never been coffee-house people. I mean now, my husband goes every day to Costa, but by himself you know. Well, let's say when my children were still at school I did make lots of friends you know mothers and fathers. We had quite good social relationships at that time with the parents like Janet has now. But they didn't last. That's while they were in school we had a lot of friends. There was never any...because I loved to give dinner parties, there was never any shortage of knowing who to invite. Now it's not only that a lot of our friends have died but there's also...I mean that's why I emphasise that I cannot have a social relationship with the people I work with. I mean we might have lunch together and so on but not to invite to the house.

SR: And where did you meet your husband?

**Tape 3: 15 minutes 12 seconds**

EE: In the tennis club up there on Haverstock Hill. I think there's still a tennis club there now.

SR: Chandos?

EE: Pardon?

SR: Chandos Tennis Club, no?

EE: Either it was called something else then. You know below Belsize Park. Oh yes, I think there is one now below Belsize Park. It's lower down, between Park Hill Road and Upper Park Road; there were some grounds there where there was a tennis

club. That's where we met. My sister also met her husband at a tennis club, just out of interest.

SR: So what kind of man was your husband when he was young?

EE: Oh, the same as he is now.

SR: What do you mean by that?

EE: Well, he is not...is not the sociable type. I mean I am quite sociable but he is more turned on himself. And he has a great interest in sport which I haven't at all. And fortunately now that he can't do a lot he's very happy just watching sport on television. Well, he is now; he's been my househusband for a long time. He does the shopping and cooking and lets me get on with my work. In fact that's why I still work and he's very keen for me to go on working so that he can keep his job of cooking and shopping – during the week. I cook at the weekend but during the week he does the cooking.

SR: So when you were young what attracted you to him? What did you like especially about him...when you met him?

EE: Well... very congenial! I mean it was really amazing. He is not at all religious. I mean, I've at least got patience for religion now. And I'm willing to go along with it. He finds that quite hard. I mean not directly to our children but at home he will moan 'Oh it's Saturday. You can't telephone them and you can't do this, that and the other.' I mean he is willing when the grandchildren come – we don't put sausage or anything on the table. And he is willing to go that far, but he hasn't got much sympathy for religion.

SR: From what kind of background did your husband come from?

### **Tape 3: 17 minutes 42 seconds**

EE: Well, he comes from Austria. The trouble is he's downstairs. He may hear me so I have to be a bit careful! He didn't go to university but he studied evening classes for electrical engineering. No, we are very different in many ways. In some ways we are absolutely the same. He doesn't read. When he was younger he read quite a bit. I mean his favourites were the Russian classics – he used to read that. And as regards the theatre, I'm very keen on that. Well, now it's a bit more difficult with my hearing. But for instance they've got wonderful hearing aids, I could hear everything. Not in all theatres can I hear everything so I find it a bit hard. He likes classical plays, and he gets easily bored with modern plays. And I usually go on my own. And he goes to football. He's an Arsenal supporter. He goes to football practically every Saturday together with our son. And I try and go to matinees. Nowadays I don't go quite as often because of my hearing. Before, I went to see any old thing when the reviews appealed to me. Now I have to be – it depends a bit on the theatre whether it's worth my while going. But that's only the last couple of years. Before that I heard well enough everywhere. And so...

SR: Was there something of the refugee that both of you experienced being refugees that connected you?

**Tape 3: 19 minutes 31 seconds**

EE: Well, in friendships you see my husband was in the Pioneer Corps. His closest friends who have unfortunately died, they were all refugees. And that's where his friendships were from the Pioneer Corps. And obviously the Pioneer Corps was all refugees. One or two were people who came to England very early and were English but that's very much the minorities. His main friends come from Austria and Germany. And some of them married out, you know married English people, their wives were English and we've always had a very good relationship with everybody. And they were our social life.

SR: Can you tell me let's say about your wedding day – where you got married? When did you get married?

EE: Yes, we got married in the registry office, and at the time I lived here in the area off Finchley Road – one of those roads going down. And we had a reception there. And our – both our fathers were dead and our mothers were both alive. And I would say that most of our friends were refugees who came to the wedding. And I've got various refugee relations from my cousins, you know, their partners and so forth. Yeah, we lived... We don't go to any refugee except for belonging to the AJR – we didn't go to any functions. When my husband retired he did join – what's it called – the English Jewish...where everybody belongs to? I can't think what it's called. But he only stayed for the year because every body knew each other there for years and he felt very much out of it.

SR: How many children do you have?

EE: Three. Two girls and a boy.

SR: Where do they live?

EE: One daughter and one son live in London and one daughter lives in Israel.

SR: What was your philosophy when you brought them up?

**Tape 3: 21 minutes 54 seconds**

EE: Well, I didn't give them any religion, that's for sure. And even my son, he's got into it a little bit through his sister, through Janet. But he says 'We never had a Friday night.' I mean that's what he likes at Janet's house when she has people in for Friday night she often invites them and he enjoys that. 'You never gave us that.' Well. That's how it is. I mean I would like to be religious but of course it's too late now. Because the social life they have at that shul I think is very nice. Nice for Janet and I would like to might like to...might like to meet people there but I know I wouldn't fit in. And I just can't...sometimes when Simon my son-in-law sings I like to hear Jewish singing. I really like synagogue singing and I've been once or twice on the High Holydays. But I can't really join into that. I think when you are old of course

you have to perhaps take more notice of these things but I can't get into that now. It would be all false.

SR: When you look back on your career, what are you especially proud of?

EE: Ha! My MBE! But not because of career. But I think it is a great thing for a refugee to get an MBE. I really do.

SR: What is an MBE?

EE: Member of the British Empire.

SR: OK.

EE: I was showing the photograph. You could see me there with the Queen on that photograph. Yes that...I did get that for my career. I got the MBE for 'Services to European Studies' and 2 of the people I worked with, well not only they put me forward. I had a lot of support as well from judges. Because I worked as well for something called Association for Contemporary European Studies and also for UK Association for European Law. And so I believe – I had support from judges at the European Court and other academics. And I was put – And at that time, you know academics – it was not so long ago, but most people get an MBE for charitable work not for academic work. They always say I started them off because one or two people I work with have since got honours for academic work but it was quite unusual. But I look at that from a refugee point of view because that's what you're asking me and there are a few refugees who've got honours like this but not that many. I do think it was very special for me to get it. And I didn't expect it at all. I mean it was a complete surprise. I never even thought of it.

### **Tape 3: 25 minutes 2 seconds**

SR: Are there other things career wise that you're especially proud of?

EE: In my work?

SR: Yes. In your career and what you did.

EE: Well...I suppose there are. I mean something happened quite recently because I...see, nobody knows...they know I'm old but they don't know how old – not exactly. Once I had a very unhappy experience in my work which is now about 4 years ago. I said 'I'm going to resign.' But I didn't because there was a conference in Dublin I wanted to attend. I said, well I'll wait. It was 6 months you know so I stayed on and by that time I got used to it again. And I was asked whether I'd like to stay on and agreed and last autumn I resigned again. And I really took it quite seriously. Not that I wanted, I just felt that at my age I should resign. And they talked about a successor. Just at that time one of the judges from the European Court of Justice who'd originally brought me to King's College where I have an office, came back. And we were doing a conference for him. And I told him 'I'm leaving.' And he said 'Well, you're not leaving until you've organised that conference.' And I said, 'Well, I've just resigned.' and he said 'Well, it doesn't matter. I'm seeing the President

tonight. I will tell him you're staying.' And it was a sort of *fait accompli*. So that was just now on the 30<sup>th</sup> of June a major conference which I organised. And yes, then again I was very proud that this man whom when I first met him he was a professor at King's College and then I think 17 years he'd been at the European Court of Justice as a judge. I mean this is one of the quite highest... Well obviously I'm also very friendly with some of the House of Lords judges. I mean I know all the best people in that respect. Yes, and that has made me very proud that he absolutely insisted that I must stay to organise this conference.

**Tape 3: 27 minutes 22 seconds**

SR: How did the fact that you had to start from the beginning a couple of times, affect your life? Actually leaving Germany. In England you went to a couple of places. How do you think it affected your life?

EE: As regards leaving Germany I think it's only a question of language that I never after that my earliest hope of being a writer – that finished. I never felt that I could write in English the way I could have done in German. But then I put that aside. No I've been happy to have all these different experiences. And I just want to come to my other job because I've got 2 part-time jobs. The other job is organising the intake for the College of Europe in Bruges where they get scholarships from the Department for Education. See, I've always had this hankering for the academic life. And with this wretched general degree with which I'd hoped to get into university, to be a university teacher, that obviously was out unless I seriously thought about studying – going on studying. [Phone interruption]

EE: Yes, I'm, so to speak, a failed – not a failed academic, because I never started being an academic. In my job for the College of Europe I don't make the decisions myself of who goes and who doesn't go. But I do all the preparatory work and I talk to the students and I'm present at the interviews. And we have a board of academics that make the decisions. And that makes me feel a little bit like an academic when we choose the students. Although they're not my decisions at all. And fortunately my hearing doesn't affect this because even when I heard I – you know I was impressed by the students, but I didn't hear what stupid things they said. I heard it but I didn't know how stupid it was. So I've never had to... fortunately my hearing problem doesn't affect this. Yes this work this makes me pleased that I'm on the side-lines of academic work and so I am with the lawyers as well. So this is very satisfying but originally I wanted to be an academic – first a writer but I soon gave up that idea. Then when I was university I would have like to be an academic. Well, I couldn't be with this... I had the wrong kind of degree and also perhaps I'm not that academic myself after all. It's quite possible that I wouldn't have that devotion because I like a bit of activity. And this I get with the students at the conferences. Teaching has never appealed – or school-teacher. I could of course become a school-teacher and I hated the idea.

**Tape 3: 30 minutes 24 seconds**

SR: What are the psychological effects of being a refugee for you?

EE: Well, I think it's part of my life. It's had a very deep effect but it's a fact of life on the other hand. There are lots of other refugees and I don't think it's so special, you know. Yes, I do feel we're not like settled people. I mean we have some very good Swiss friends and they have all their family around them and we haven't. I mean we have lost – although my immediate family survived like my brother and sister and my cousins – I think perhaps the same as my husband. He's got relations in America but the ones we have are very far apart and that marks a difference between settled society in that sense. You've lost your... a lot of relations and what relations you have are living in different countries. I think that describes the refugee situation. But then that's part of our life. I don't see anything special in it now. I just know that we're different from other people who've lived in their society all their lives.

SR: And did your personal biography give you the ambition to succeed?

EE: No, I don't think I've ever been very ambitious. I've always wanted to do work that I enjoyed and which... And I've always had enough money not to have to earn extra for luxuries because we had money in the family. And I haven't felt that ambition that some, especially Jewish people, have of being a lawyer or a doctor and what ambition I see in Janet's circle for their children, that they've all got to be in high-earning jobs and so on. I never had that for myself. I always said, 'Better to enjoy what you do,' and I've had a very happy working life. My rare book trade I loved. My work now I love. I find it very hard to give it up. And I mean none of this has been well paid – that's not brought me any fortune. But I've been in the happy position of not needing a fortune, of not being... I mean we're not luxurious here, I consider, and I don't like expensive hotels or cruises or anything like that. I've always been very satisfied. In that respect I haven't been driven to get better jobs and earn more money.

### **Tape 3: 33 minutes 23 seconds**

SR: Do you feel you're assimilated in the British society?

EE: Stimulated?

SR: Assimilated.

EE: Well, I find in London I don't make enough use of it. We've got art exhibitions, theatre... I do feel when I read books about the period that a lot of it has passed me by. When we read reminiscences of writers – There's been such an exciting time here in the 60s and 70s I never noticed, you know because we've been perhaps rather restricted. I think the refugee society is a little bit restricted but I mean we've always been family orientated so I don't think that matters – I mean for me family has always meant a lot. And we are very fortunate in our family with our children and grandchildren. We are all very close.

SR: What are your relationships with you grandchildren?

EE: Well, the ones... Janet's children very good and my daughter in Israel is a little bit jealous because I... obviously I'm fond of her children but I'm not so close to them as I only see them once or twice a year and they speak Hebrew to each other. I mean

somebody – one of my sister's friends – advised me to learn Hebrew. I do miss a lot because they...they speak English not very well but they understand everything. But I take out my daughter's children when they are in London and they talk to each other in Hebrew. I don't know what's going on. And for that reason I can't get that close to them. And my daughter in Israel is actually quite jealous.

SR: Is there something in the upbringing of your children that you feel you're different with your grandchildren?

EE: Yes, I feel like all grandmothers that grandchildren are terribly spoiled. In fact both. My other daughter is not very well off but the children are still pretty spoiled, you know she wants them to have everything. We brought our children up differently. Certainly I was brought up differently – you know – more restraint.

SR: You went...how many times did you go back to Germany?

**Tape 3: 35 minutes 48 seconds**

EE: Twice.

SR: Twice. The first time, what year was it?

EE: Well the first time we went on invitation by the Senate. It was very...well it had one big effect because I met my cousin again, another cousin from Germany who went by children's transport to France. We had some contact while my mother was still alive some years ago and then lost all contact. And she turned out to be in the same hotel as ours. She never married so we recognised the name Klopstock and she was there. She has a daughter although she wasn't married. And that was a great thing for us to meet. I never knew her very well in Germany because they lived...the daughter of my father's brother. I didn't know her very well because she did not live in Berlin. And we are now...We've visited her in Paris and she has visited us here. I am very happy to have got this relationship with her although we never knew each other much as children. That was one of the results of this trip to Germany otherwise we never would have got together.

SR: Did you go to Berlin to your house on the first time you went to Germany?

EE: Yes, I went but it wasn't there even then [...] Well, the first visit it was winter. The weather wasn't very good. My husband had a terrible cold. I didn't have many feelings about Berlin really. When we went this time we went with a very congenial group. They're really nice people in the group from the AJR. And we also had a very good guide. We saw different things. It was not at all a repetition.

SR: What made you go on the second trip to Berlin with your daughter?

EE: Well, we went to the Wannsee Centre where the extermination of Jews was planned. For me it was of special interest because I used to go swimming on the other side, but you could see it from the house, where we went swimming. So I quite enjoyed that. I spent some time outside looking at it and not listening to them because the rest after all we know all about this. Another Jewish site which I very much hadn't

seen before, this was also in that area where the trains left for the camps and for Theresienstadt and so forth. And there's a very beautiful memorial there. Although the places are and the year or number of people who were deported. I found that very moving. I hadn't seen that on my first visit.

**Tape 3: 38 minutes 43 seconds**

SR: Going with your daughter – because you went with Janet didn't you – going you're your daughter back to where you were born must have been a very moving experience.

EE: Well, I would say interesting. I didn't find any of it moving. Honestly not. I'm not that type of person. I was very happy for Janet because you know she is such wonderful company it doesn't matter where you go with Janet, you enjoy yourself. That's my opinion, and not just mine, because she has got so many friends. She's so popular. Everybody loves her. Yes, I like to show her these places but it's not moving. None of it. I mean I'm moved by these Jewish memorials obviously, because my aunt for instance – I know she was deported from there and I think about her. And the other Jewish memorials – yes I have a great interest in Jewish memorials. But that is not a personal...it's moving because it happened but it doesn't affect me in a personal way like you talk about the house or the school. But the house has been rebuilt. The school...

SR: Did you go in?

**Tape 3: 40 minutes 0 second**

EE: What the school or...?

SR: The house.

EE: No, it's a block of flats now; it's got no relationship with me. And the school – we spent some time looking for it. I did visit a German professor who I met due to my book-work. I wrote to him. This was I thought quite brave. Because he said if you ever come to Berlin you know, look me up. And I only met him once and he was very hospitable and helped us with transport. He actually took us to the school at night. I couldn't see anything. And we had a job finding it because there was no notice on it. It was the school, I did recognise the house but – yes I was glad to show it to Janet but – it doesn't move me. Really not.

SR: How did your daughter feel?

EE: Well, she felt very deeply. She said, 'Let's go in.' I said 'Why should we go in? It's ridiculous.' I think that it was half-term or something. I had no desire to go in. I'm just sorry now that on the photograph we only have the entrance and not the whole building. I would have been more interesting to have the whole building. And this professor I know, his daughter went to that school. He told me that already in London. And he took us there at night but in daytime it all looked different. But I'm glad that Janet is so interested in everything – yes that gives me pleasure. But none of it moves me.



SR: Nothing there moves you?

EE: So if I went to Ilfracombe or to Barrow now, you know, I don't know that I'd feel all that different than going to Berlin. I enjoyed, it although I must say the first visit I didn't enjoy all that much, but the second visit I also found much more interesting. Also the...the Holocaust Memorial – those stones – I found that fascinating.

SR: Did, let's say the streets themselves...The streets themselves?

EE: You know that's...Everything is so different. I took photographs also of my friend's house – Steffi – she lived in the same street a bit further up and there was a café downstairs. And that café is still there. That's about all. And the gardens, well they were already built over before we left. The street itself was quite elegant when we lived there. It's now a bit of a motorway. It's still a very good street but it's divided up in two lanes with a sort of grass bit in the middle. The whole thing – there's nothing there really which was there when I was there. And I didn't go to the Lessler School because it's too far out and I don't think I would have felt much. I wouldn't have recognised any of it. I wouldn't know – wouldn't have found it unless somebody had given directions.

### **Tape 3: 43 minutes 5 seconds**

SR: So where would you say is your Heimat?

EE: My what?

SR: Your Heimat?

EE: Heimat. Heimat. Yes I would still say it's in Berlin, but it's Berlin in a house which is not there any more because I can remember it exactly and I think I've also got some photographs. My brother and sister both went back and took some photographs of the house and the front part, the balcony has been bombed away. But the house is still there. I don't know – somewhere I've got a photograph of it. If it had been the way it looked before I might have had some feeling. But no, in a way I would say that we haven't got a Heimat. Because what feelings we had about it has been ruined. And actually the time before we went...We always went to the Grunewald with my father for walks – every Sunday we went. And a girl – girl – about 80 years old now – woman I should say, lived there. And she is a friend of the younger sister of my friend who took me to Camden. And I made contact with her last time and we went for a walk there. Also with my German...because we've got some German friends as well. They also took me to the Grunewald but it never looked the same. Not the places obviously where my father took me. I couldn't recognise any of it. I mean what I recognised most now was the Wannsee. Also I saw the Halensee which was a place where we went swimming. I wouldn't say that any of it moves me. I'm pleased to see it yes, but it doesn't give me any inner feeling. It's dead now as far as I'm concerned.

SR: It's dead from when you left Germany?

EE: Yes. Maybe what I've been telling you all about that I feel isolated or not moved and not into religion because there's something dead in me from that time on. I can't be emotionally involved in it.

SR: With it, with the country or with yourself, your childhood and everything? When you say you can't be emotionally involved, is it with everything to do with Berlin, or is it more with your childhood and experiences?

**Tape 3: 45 minutes 24 seconds**

EE: No. I would say in general, and I think it comes from my childhood. I think there was some...it might have been the Nazi atmosphere that affected my parents – that's quite possible, that there is some kind of darkness in my childhood and I've never got over that. But this is...no I don't want to record that so I will tell you about this afterwards. It's one more... Or perhaps I don't even mind. You know I had a psychoanalysis at one stage in my life – I somehow haven't got round to this. And I told my friend actually – she always said I was a little mouse when I was young – that I changed through my analysis. And I think I have personally. But it hasn't helped me emotionally you know. It sorted me out in some other ways or made it clearer to me. And I think I can talk so freely to you. Perhaps everybody does, I don't know. But I think it's partly through analysis that I'm so used to coming up with my thoughts that it presents no problem to me to be interviewed.

SR: And when you reflect back do you feel yourself British? Do you feel yourself Jewish? Do you feel yourself German? A combination of one or two?

EE: No I would say I feel myself Jewish. I don't feel British at all. I don't think I am British. I feel myself very different from my British friends – English friends. I would basically say that – my daughter says that 'You are a racist' – I feel very Jewish indeed without religion.

SR: How?

EE: That's something I try and explain although my sons-in-law don't understand it at all because they're English Jewish. They don't understand how you can feel so Jewish and not... Even my father, because my brother married out. He was so shocked and upset about it. And if my children had married out I would have been equally upset.

SR: You would?

EE: Definitely. I suppose I would have had to accept it like other people accept it, though some people take it very hard. I would have taken it just as hard as any religious person but fortunately it didn't happen. And even my son, when he was engaged. He was engaged to a Jewish refugee girl. So he's never run that danger. So at the end of this I can tell you that I feel very Jewish indeed. I don't need any religion to go with it.

SR: What do you think you brought with you from Germany – From your home, or from your household?

EE: Well, I had a very good Prussian training. That's why I'm so good, if I say so myself, at my job. Because I got that from my father you know – orderliness. People have written to me – the association was in a terrible mess until I took over and put everything straight. And that's the 2 associations I'm working for. And yes, it has been my Prussian heritage, I always say. English people think I'm completely nutty, you know, when I say 'My father was Prussian Jew'... you know, whether it's a Prussian Jew or Prussian. They don't understand that at all. But I'm very much like that myself.

**Tape 3: 48 minutes 42 seconds**

SR: And this Prussian upbringing – How did it affect you in your private life?

EE: What?

SR: This Prussian upbringing you were telling...How did it affect you in your private life?

EE: Well it's been a very good thing. I'm all for Prussian...ideas.

SR: Did you pass it on to your children?

EE: Hard working... My mother always, even in German she said 'Arbeit und Pflicht' –Work and duty – like the Germans or like the Germans were, because I hear they're not like that nowadays. You know, hard working, and...what's Pflicht in English? I'm not quite sure...Things you have to do, you do them whether you like them or not. I mean I've always tried to do the right thing. I was often very upset with both my mothers – my own mother because of her illness and my mother-in-law because of her expectations. But I always did what had to be done whether I liked it or not. That's what I mean. You have certain duties and you fulfil them whether you like them or not. That's a very good thing to be brought up that way.

SR: Are your grandchildren like that?

**Tape 3: 50 minutes 0 second**

EE: Well, they've got religion. One hopes that their religion will do it for them. I'm not so sure.

SR: And what do you feel that England as a country provided you with?

EE: Well, culture mainly. You know I loved English literature and the theatre – the whole atmosphere. I've always been very happy with it. And at university, what I was taught. And even now what I see at university, which is specifically English I think.

SR: How would your life have been do you think if you would have stayed in Germany?

EE: Yeah well, I would have said that professionally I would have had a much better future and a much happier future. I mean there are certain things that I like. The climate...I do grumble about the climate here. It drives me crazy. It really does, the terrible weather all the time.

SR: More than in Germany?

EE: No, here in England. All right at the moment we have a heat wave but the weather really irritates me. And I think Berlin has got the best climate of any capital city, I would say. Yes, I'm sure of that, because it's hot in summer and cold in winter. You look at any another city, they are either too hot or too cold.

SR: So do you feel you got the same chances in life like English people got?

EE: Well, if I didn't it was my own fault. Yes. With my education and university I could have done. And some people have done, I know that. So that was my own fault that I didn't get as far. Actually I was never sufficiently ambitious. I always liked to do a job like the book trade for instance. I loved it at the time. And I've loved all my jobs, I've been very lucky there but I wouldn't say they've been great in what I might have done. Especially when I see what some of the academics are like I think 'My god, I could do that better.'

SR: And did you come to terms with your past?

EE: Oh yes.

SR: Yes. Do you discuss the past with your family?

EE: Yeah, but one of the reasons I don't ever think about it is because of this certain darkness that lies over it. That's why, well now I don't have to write my memoirs after all this. That's why I refuse. The really personal things I don't think are fit for interviews or for books. Not you know – other people's books you read very intimate things which I wouldn't be able to divulge.

### **Tape 3: 52 minutes 52 seconds**

SR: Is there anyone special you would like to talk about that we didn't mention?

EE: No.

SR: No. and is there any message you would like to give for people that in another couple of years will see this?

EE: No.

SR: No. OK, so would you like to give any message to your family or to say something about the meaning of life?

EE: No, it would sound...It wouldn't fit in with what has gone before. I can't say anything sentimental. You know this...you know for instance my love for my children and my grandchildren you know which I feel very strongly – yeah all right I've said that now. And that's...I care...I suppose I care for nothing else – care for my children and obviously my husband, my children and my grandchildren. Otherwise I have a great love of nature which I hadn't mentioned during the interview. I love going on the mountains in Austria for instance. That is very basic to me. I dread the time when I wouldn't be able to go there and walk up to the – up to the mountains. And it really liberates me to go on holiday. And I've also had that to a certain extent in Spain, where I've been several times, and I have a great love of nature and the holidays mean so much to me. But that's spoiled the note on the grandchildren, hasn't it, to say that? But I just felt that was something about my personality which I hadn't mentioned throughout the interview. Perhaps you would now like to look at these few photographs?

**Tape 3: 55 minutes 2 seconds**

SR: Yes we'll stop the interview now. I thank you very much for taking part in the project and the next tape, tape number four, we will do the photos and we'll talk about them. Ok? Thank you Eva.

End of spoken interview Tape Three

**Photographs**

**Tape 3: 55 minutes 25 seconds**

SR: Would you like to tell me who are in this picture? What were their names?

EE: These are my mother's parents.

SR: What were their names?

EE: Well, it says on the back. I don't know.

SR: Do you know where it was taken?

EE: Yes, it must have been taken in Berlin.

SR: Around what year? OK...thank you.

EE: This is my mother and her brother.

SR: What was the brother's name?

EE: Albert. She was called Annie.

SR: And when was it taken? How old was your mother here?

EE: Well, I don't know.

EE: This is Annie Klopstock and Eva Klopstock.

SR: How old were you in this picture? Around?

**Tape 3: 56 minutes 34 seconds**

EE: I don't know.

SR: Could you tell us who's in this picture?

EE: Yes, this is Lilly Klopstock, Eva Klopstock and Fritz Klopstock.

SR: Could you please tell us who's in this picture?

EE: Yes, this is Doctor Felix Klopstock, Annie Klopstock and Eva Klopstock.

SR: Thank you. Could you please tell us who's in this picture?

EE: That is Eva Klopstock, age 14.

SR: What year?

EE: 1938.

EE: This is Eva Evans in the Fire Service during the war.

EE: This is Robert Evans, formerly Robert Eisenstein, in the army during the Second World War.

SR: Could you tell us about his picture?

EE: This is Robert and Eva Evans on their wedding day with their mothers.

SR: What year was it? What was the date?

EE: I don't know. Not...you should have warned me before.

SR: Where was it?

EE: In London.

SR: Thank you.

EE: This picture was taken in Israel. There's Margo Mitchell together with her children Noah and Daniel. And then, Simon and Janet Loux, with Joshua, Annie and Saul.

EE: This was taken on the day Eva Evans received the MBE and shows her daughter Janet, her husband Robert and her son Leonard.

**Tape 3: 58 minutes 55 seconds**

End of photographs

**End of Tape Three**