00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:01,130 2 $00:00:01,130 \longrightarrow 00:00:03,014$ Sorry. 00:00:03,014 --> 00:00:04,450 OK. 4 00:00:04,450 --> 00:00:05,266 OK. 00:00:05,266 --> 00:00:06,060 Yeah. 6 00:00:06,060 --> 00:00:07,140 Hang on. 00:00:07,140 --> 00:00:07,860 Yeah. 00:00:07,860 --> 00:00:09,820 I don't see you. $00:00:09,820 \longrightarrow 00:00:10,790$ Oh. 10 $00:00:10,790 \longrightarrow 00:00:11,730$ Oh, now I do. 11 00:00:11,730 --> 00:00:12,960 Now I see you. 12

00:00:12,960 --> 00:00:13,560 OK.

13 00:00:13,560 --> 00:00:14,060 Good.

14

00:00:14,060 --> 00:00:15,520 So here we are.

15

00:00:15,520 --> 00:00:16,960 We're back again.

16

00:00:16,960 --> 00:00:26,400 And remind me how long you were working from about the fall

17

00:00:26,400 --> 00:00:31,650 of 1946 till your release in--

18

00:00:31,650 --> 00:00:32,790 June.

19

00:00:32,790 --> 00:00:34,960 June 1948.

20

00:00:34,960 --> 00:00:35,640 OK.

21 00:00:35,640 --> 00:00:40,770 So that would have been also not quite two years.

22

00:00:40,770 --> 00:00:41,640 Is that correct?

23

00:00:41,640 --> 00:00:42,810 Yeah, that's correct.

24

00:00:42,810 --> 00:00:43,490 Yeah.

1 001

25 00:00:43,490 --> 00:00:44,580 OK.

26

00:00:44,580 --> 00:00:46,800

And did you know that your release

00:00:46,800 --> 00:00:50,790 date would be June 1948, or did it come as a surprise?

28

00:00:50,790 --> 00:00:52,740 Came as a surprise.

29

00:00:52,740 --> 00:00:55,640 But it sort of--

30

00:00:55,640 --> 00:01:02,450 it sort of became more and more likely.

31

00:01:02,450 --> 00:01:06,450 It wasn't a kind of a complete surprise,

32

00:01:06,450 --> 00:01:14,790 because I mean, the scare, the bomb scare in London

33

00:01:14,790 --> 00:01:19,350 for the unexploded bombs obviously

34

00:01:19,350 --> 00:01:25,370 was based on a number of sites that were well known,

35

00:01:25,370 --> 00:01:26,910 or were well known.

36

00:01:26,910 --> 00:01:29,940 And once these sites had been dealt with,

37

00:01:29,940 --> 00:01:33,180 then the more they'd been dealt with,

38

00:01:33,180 --> 00:01:36,120

the less it became an issue anymore,

39 00:01:36,120 --> 00:01:39,390 and the press weren't all that concerned anymore.

40 00:01:39,390 --> 00:01:42,690 And all that sort of thing came together.

41 00:01:42,690 --> 00:01:47,890 Because I mean, the whole--

42 00:01:47,890 --> 00:01:52,710 the whole bomb disposal squad was

43 00:01:52,710 --> 00:02:05,670 being moved to out of London then to the South,

44 00:02:05,670 --> 00:02:08,190 away from the big buildings.

45 00:02:08,190 --> 00:02:12,690 Because there was only a kind of catch

46 00:02:12,690 --> 00:02:17,630 up need anymore for new discoveries, not

47 00:02:17,630 --> 00:02:18,840 the real thing.

48 00:02:18,840 --> 00:02:22,620 And then the prisoners of war had been also

49 00:02:22,620 --> 00:02:24,510 long enough there.

00:02:24,510 --> 00:02:29,940 Most prisoners from elsewhere, German prisoners had come back

51 00:02:29,940 --> 00:02:32,680 or were coming back at that time.

52 00:02:32,680 --> 00:02:40,530 And when you came to that release camp near Hanover

53 00:02:40,530 --> 00:02:48,030 in Germany, you saw crowds or masses of people

54 00:02:48,030 --> 00:02:52,290 coming from all countries, from Russia, as well as from France,

55 00:02:52,290 --> 00:02:54,000 as well as from England.

56 00:02:54,000 --> 00:02:57,650 So it became a miracle, yes.

57 00:02:57,650 --> 00:03:05,630 So while you're still a prisoner in Britain, a POW,

58 00:03:05,630 --> 00:03:10,740 what kind of contact do you have to your various family members?

59 00:03:10,740 --> 00:03:14,780 Whether it's your father, your stepmother, any aunts,

60 00:03:14,780 --> 00:03:18,680 or uncles, or cousin, or sisters, or brother-- 00:03:18,680 --> 00:03:22,100 or stepbrothers, or anything like that?

62 00:03:22,100 --> 00:03:24,110 What kind of contact do you have with them?

63 00:03:24,110 --> 00:03:27,640 Well, only letters, of course.

64 00:03:27,640 --> 00:03:31,610 And you could say--

65 00:03:31,610 --> 00:03:34,340 I mean, with our freedom of course

66 00:03:34,340 --> 00:03:37,460 there was no problem sending private letters.

67 00:03:37,460 --> 00:03:40,650 I mean, we got paid.

68 00:03:40,650 --> 00:03:45,130 I got a pound, a pound a week, was it?

69 00:03:45,130 --> 00:03:46,150 Yeah.

70 00:03:46,150 --> 00:03:53,390 And the rest of the people got 10 shillings a week.

71 00:03:53,390 --> 00:03:59,280 So you get enough money to do that kind of thing.

72 00:03:59,280 --> 00:04:03,910 And the other thing, of course was sending gift parcels 73 00:04:03,910 --> 00:04:05,030 to Germany.

74 00:04:05,030 --> 00:04:09,260 Each prisoner was allowed to send a gift parcel up

75 00:04:09,260 --> 00:04:13,350 to five pounds in weight once a month.

76 00:04:13,350 --> 00:04:17,320 And as the prisoners of war became settled in

77 00:04:17,320 --> 00:04:21,680 and had little aside jobs and the families in Germany

78 00:04:21,680 --> 00:04:24,630 were hard up, and some of these people

79 00:04:24,630 --> 00:04:27,320 were even harder up because they were

80 00:04:27,320 --> 00:04:30,380 being driven from what now--

81 00:04:30,380 --> 00:04:35,900 from the East, from Poland, from Russia, from Yugoslavia,

82 00:04:35,900 --> 00:04:42,313 from Hungary, the Germans back to Germany.

83 00:04:42,313 --> 00:04:43,730 Czechoslovakia, particularly, too.

```
84
00:04:43,730 --> 00:04:46,880
```

85 00:04:46,880 --> 00:04:50,660 So one of the great things for all

86 00:04:50,660 --> 00:04:53,210 of the German prisoner of war to do

87 00:04:53,210 --> 00:05:00,620 was to get as much food parcels or anything, clothes parcels,

88 00:05:00,620 --> 00:05:01,640 too.

89 00:05:01,640 --> 00:05:08,660 And then but the rule was only one per person, per month.

90 00:05:08,660 --> 00:05:13,340 And it was left for us camp leader people to somehow

91 00:05:13,340 --> 00:05:16,960 deal with any excess, to find--

92 00:05:16,960 --> 00:05:24,610 to confuse the British soldiers who were dealing at the post

93 00:05:24,610 --> 00:05:28,520 office with these things, so that people

94 00:05:28,520 --> 00:05:32,645 could get in any extra parcel they

95 00:05:32,645 --> 00:05:35,620 had been able to put together.

96 00:05:35,620 --> 00:05:40,430 But these parcels were never checked or opened by anybody.

97 00:05:40,430 --> 00:05:42,770 I mean, they just went.

98 00:05:42,770 --> 00:05:48,380 That was one of the big issues during the [? camp. ?]

99 00:05:48,380 --> 00:05:54,150 I mean, going to the East End and buy illegal shoes

100 00:05:54,150 --> 00:05:59,790 and all that kind of thing was standard practice.

101 00:05:59,790 --> 00:06:02,050 Buying shoes was illegal?

102 00:06:02,050 --> 00:06:07,164 Well, because clothing was completely rationed in England.

103 00:06:07,164 --> 00:06:08,000 Oh.

104 00:06:08,000 --> 00:06:11,210 And we prisoners of war certainly

105 00:06:11,210 --> 00:06:13,460 didn't have any ration cards of any kind.

106 00:06:13,460 --> 00:06:16,080 00:06:16,080 --> 00:06:16,830 What had happened?

108

00:06:16,830 --> 00:06:21,690 Speaking of all of the areas that Germany had either

109

00:06:21,690 --> 00:06:26,670 taken over or had German populations in the East,

110

00:06:26,670 --> 00:06:29,490 and I believe the Konigsberg region,

111

00:06:29,490 --> 00:06:31,170 Prussia would have been one of them.

112

00:06:31,170 --> 00:06:32,310 Yes.

113

00:06:32,310 --> 00:06:39,480 Also Silesia in Poland, and you mentioned Sudetenland.

114

00:06:39,480 --> 00:06:44,320 That reminded me of your family in Sudetenland.

115

00:06:44,320 --> 00:06:45,630 So what happened with them?

116

00:06:45,630 --> 00:06:48,060 Were they also some of those who--

117

00:06:48,060 --> 00:06:50,100 Were driven out, yes.

118

00:06:50,100 --> 00:06:51,120 Did they?

00:06:51,120 --> 00:06:51,620 Yeah.

120

00:06:51,620 --> 00:06:53,100 Oh, yeah.

121

00:06:53,100 --> 00:06:55,530 So what happened to the family?

122

00:06:55,530 --> 00:06:57,530 Where did they go?

123

00:06:57,530 --> 00:07:10,030 Well, the family, the Kluger family, with whom I'd been,

124

00:07:10,030 --> 00:07:16,240 Ernst Brasser, the guy from Prague

125

00:07:16,240 --> 00:07:27,230 we've talked about, his mother was

126

00:07:27,230 --> 00:07:33,110 belonged to the Gruber family from Lindau in Lake Constance.

127

00:07:33,110 --> 00:07:36,590 And the Grubers built a huge--

128

00:07:36,590 --> 00:07:40,370 grandfather Gruber was one of those traders

129

00:07:40,370 --> 00:07:43,570 who actually for much of his life lived Geneva--

130

00:07:43,570 --> 00:07:52,390 in Genoa in Italy, [?Eastern?] oriental trade.

131 00:07:52,390 --> 00:07:54,100 He became very rich.

132 00:07:54,100 --> 00:07:57,590 And he got this huge area just opposite Lindau

133 00:07:57,590 --> 00:07:59,000 on the mainland.

134 00:07:59,000 --> 00:08:01,580 And Lindau is on an island.

135 00:08:01,580 --> 00:08:06,400 And built a huge castle there, or Schloss.

136 00:08:06,400 --> 00:08:09,080

137 00:08:09,080 --> 00:08:10,240 A big house.

138 00:08:10,240 --> 00:08:16,280 And of course that's where the whole Kluger family ended up.

139 00:08:16,280 --> 00:08:19,730 And Ernst Brasse being the lawyer and clever guy

140 00:08:19,730 --> 00:08:24,290 he was, in the early postwar years

141 00:08:24,290 --> 00:08:29,030 having a good friendship with the new mayor of Lindau,

142 00:08:29,030 --> 00:08:34,880 managed to sell the whole huge park with a swimming

143 00:08:34,880 --> 00:08:39,650 pool and everything, for \$1 million D Mark to the city

144

00:08:39,650 --> 00:08:43,735 of Lindau and get the play--

145

00:08:43,735 --> 00:08:46,087

146

00:08:46,087 --> 00:08:46,920 what do you call it?

147

00:08:46,920 --> 00:08:56,670

148

00:08:56,670 --> 00:08:57,720 What do you call it?

149

00:08:57,720 --> 00:08:58,610 The play for money.

150

00:08:58,610 --> 00:09:01,740

151

00:09:01,740 --> 00:09:02,890 Gambling?

152

00:09:02,890 --> 00:09:03,770 Gambling.

153

00:09:03,770 --> 00:09:07,630 Yeah, he got a gambling club going as well there,

154

00:09:07,630 --> 00:09:10,895 an international, which was also a great success story.

00:09:13,670 --> 00:09:16,100 You know, they fell on their feet.

157

00:09:16,100 --> 00:09:17,360 that definitely.

158

00:09:17,360 --> 00:09:26,970 And my whole family, the kids, [INAUDIBLE]

159

00:09:26,970 --> 00:09:29,820 kids are all now living in that area.

160

 $00:09:29,820 \longrightarrow 00:09:32,450$

161

00:09:32,450 --> 00:09:36,720 They live on that estate, but have their own house, which

162

00:09:36,720 --> 00:09:40,890 is on the city's park now.

163

00:09:40,890 --> 00:09:43,350 The park there.

164

00:09:43,350 --> 00:09:47,130 But let's say all the factories that the Kluger family

165

00:09:47,130 --> 00:09:49,950 owned, the textile factories and things like that,

166

00:09:49,950 --> 00:09:51,700 what happened to those?

167

00:09:51,700 --> 00:09:53,260 Just fell to pieces.

168 00:09:53,260 --> 00:09:57,450 The Czechs didn't couldn't deal with them.

169 00:09:57,450 --> 00:10:02,190 To some extent, they were being obviously victimized.

170 00:10:02,190 --> 00:10:06,030 People would take out some part of it.

171 00:10:06,030 --> 00:10:13,650 I mean, when Rivka and I went on our wedding trip

172 00:10:13,650 --> 00:10:17,040 to Czechoslovakia, on our way I wanted

173 00:10:17,040 --> 00:10:21,490 to show her all the places I'd been, I'd been there.

174 00:10:21,490 --> 00:10:28,270 It was just the Prague Spring, they

175 00:10:28,270 --> 00:10:36,340 called it, when the Czech government had resisted

176 00:10:36,340 --> 00:10:42,730 or voted itself away from Russian dominance, which only

177 00:10:42,730 --> 00:10:45,370 lasted a few months or a year.

178 00:10:45,370 --> 00:10:48,215 But that was happening to be just at the time

179

00:10:48,215 --> 00:10:50,600 when we would be married.

180

00:10:50,600 --> 00:10:55,720

So we went into

Czechoslovakia and--

181

00:10:55,720 --> 00:10:57,580

That's 1968.

182

00:10:57,580 --> 00:11:00,160

1968 is Prague Spring.

183

00:11:00,160 --> 00:11:01,960

'67, "68.

184

00:11:01,960 --> 00:11:03,280

Yeah.

185

00:11:03,280 --> 00:11:07,040

Our wedding was in August 1967.

186

00:11:07,040 --> 00:11:08,740

So you know.

187

00:11:08,740 --> 00:11:10,690

So that was the time.

188

00:11:10,690 --> 00:11:14,050

And we could visit the

areas, but the factories

189

00:11:14,050 --> 00:11:15,640

were just ruins.

190

00:11:15,640 --> 00:11:23,870

I mean, the German side

really seemed to be only--

191 00:11:23,870 --> 00:11:26,080 been vacated obviously by the Germans

192

00:11:26,080 --> 00:11:28,900 who had been driven out.

193

00:11:28,900 --> 00:11:33,580 But the main body of Czech people didn't move in.

194

00:11:33,580 --> 00:11:36,130 It was only people from Slovakia--

195

00:11:36,130 --> 00:11:37,900 [? Gesindel, ?] as they called it--

196

00:11:37,900 --> 00:11:43,710 who had sort of use for, but not really made

197

00:11:43,710 --> 00:11:47,400 anything of these properties.

198

00:11:47,400 --> 00:11:50,670 Well, the difficulty also was in the postwar years

199

00:11:50,670 --> 00:11:53,380 that there was no private ownership.

200

00:11:53,380 --> 00:11:55,750 So they couldn't become--

201

00:11:55,750 --> 00:11:58,620 they couldn't take the factory over, own it, run it,

202

00:11:58,620 --> 00:12:00,080

do whatever.

203

00:12:00,080 --> 00:12:01,050

Exactly, exactly.

204

00:12:01,050 --> 00:12:03,930 And the communist government had plenty of other things

205

00:12:03,930 --> 00:12:05,370 to worry about.

206

00:12:05,370 --> 00:12:13,170 I mean, in particular dominated by Russian people.

207

00:12:13,170 --> 00:12:16,140 You know, I think it was just a complete failure

208

00:12:16,140 --> 00:12:21,820 to take advantage of the situation, yeah.

209

00:12:21,820 --> 00:12:28,200 So the Kluger relatives all move towards Lindau

210

00:12:28,200 --> 00:12:35,790 and take advantage of Ernst Brasse's connections and family

211

00:12:35,790 --> 00:12:40,380 wealth and so on, and find new lives there.

212

00:12:40,380 --> 00:12:41,710 Is that mostly--

213

00:12:41,710 --> 00:12:42,870

I make that--

214

00:12:42,870 --> 00:12:44,970 That is exactly what happened.

215

00:12:44,970 --> 00:12:46,860 And it was astonishing.

216

00:12:46,860 --> 00:12:54,270 I mean, Ernst Brasse knows the [INAUDIBLE] who was a factory

217

00:12:54,270 --> 00:12:57,810 owner where my two younger sisters--

218

00:12:57,810 --> 00:13:01,200 my two sisters were during the war years.

219

00:13:01,200 --> 00:13:02,980 I mean, he was also kicked out.

220

00:13:02,980 --> 00:13:09,090 But all he'd ever done was to run a factory business

221

00:13:09,090 --> 00:13:12,000 in Czechoslovakia.

222

00:13:12,000 --> 00:13:17,610 But before long, he was a bank branch bank manager in Austria.

223

00:13:17,610 --> 00:13:20,510 And survived.

224

00:13:20,510 --> 00:13:22,230 OK.

225

00:13:22,230 --> 00:13:26,100 So did any of your family also end up in Britain

00:13:26,100 --> 00:13:29,700 during the time you were a POW there?

227

00:13:29,700 --> 00:13:31,320 Not while I was a POW.

228

00:13:31,320 --> 00:13:37,560 But my brother and my cousin followed on when I--

229

00:13:37,560 --> 00:13:39,860 you know, after I'd settled in Britain.

230

00:13:39,860 --> 00:13:43,930 [INAUDIBLE] after 1949.

231

00:13:43,930 --> 00:13:45,030 OK.

232

00:13:45,030 --> 00:13:50,730 I have a note here that you meet your Aunt Bertha at some point.

233

00:13:50,730 --> 00:13:51,325 Yes.

234

00:13:51,325 --> 00:13:54,120 I was thinking of talking about it now.

235

00:13:54,120 --> 00:13:57,780 I mean, that was again, something.

236

00:13:57,780 --> 00:14:02,430 She'd written all these books as I told you.

237

 $00:14:02,430 \longrightarrow 00:14:05,000$

00:14:05,000 --> 00:14:08,640 You know, she was-hundreds of books

239

00:14:08,640 --> 00:14:10,680 she published during her lifetime,

240

00:14:10,680 --> 00:14:12,630 in the interwar years.

241

00:14:12,630 --> 00:14:18,000 And came to [PLACE NAME] and stayed with us

242

00:14:18,000 --> 00:14:21,510 during the summer, dictating a new novel

243

00:14:21,510 --> 00:14:24,780 to some secretary she brought with her.

244

00:14:24,780 --> 00:14:30,060 And of course, one of the secretary then married

245

00:14:30,060 --> 00:14:32,985 Uncle uh--

246

00:14:32,985 --> 00:14:36,940

247

00:14:36,940 --> 00:14:37,440 him.

248

00:14:37,440 --> 00:14:42,190

249

00:14:42,190 --> 00:14:42,930

Uncle Heinrich.

00:14:47,970 --> 00:14:50,500 And so how--

252

00:14:50,500 --> 00:14:56,070 Uncle Heinrich, remind me again of his relation to you?

253

00:14:56,070 --> 00:14:57,420

He is--

254

00:14:57,420 --> 00:15:00,170

He married this American secretary

255

00:15:00,170 --> 00:15:04,570 that Aunt Bertha brought with her in her later years.

256

00:15:04,570 --> 00:15:09,420 And he was sent during--

257

00:15:09,420 --> 00:15:12,160 when Austria became part of Germany,

258

00:15:12,160 --> 00:15:17,590 being an inventor himself, technically highly advanced

259

00:15:17,590 --> 00:15:23,530 inventor, and he was developing small [?weapons?]

260

00:15:23,530 --> 00:15:25,970 for the German army.

261

00:15:25,970 --> 00:15:30,790

And after the

collapse of Germany,

00:15:30,790 --> 00:15:36,250 the Americans shipped him a lot with other German scientists

263

00:15:36,250 --> 00:15:39,050 back to the States, particularly in his case,

264

00:15:39,050 --> 00:15:42,820 with his American wife, he settled down in America

265

00:15:42,820 --> 00:15:44,410 for the rest of his life.

266

00:15:44,410 --> 00:15:49,270 And our family got relief parcels

267

00:15:49,270 --> 00:15:54,570 during the worst years from them in regular sequence.

268

00:15:54,570 --> 00:15:58,490 So it all worked out somehow.

269

00:15:58,490 --> 00:16:02,200 And Aunt Bertha was now divorced from him, yes?

270

00:16:02,200 --> 00:16:02,700 No.

271

00:16:02,700 --> 00:16:04,480 She wasn't married to him at all.

272

00:16:04,480 --> 00:16:05,080 Oh, I see.

273

 $00:16:05,080 \longrightarrow 00:16:07,300$

I misunderstood.

274

00:16:07,300 --> 00:16:10,227 I thought she had been married-so how was she related--

275

00:16:10,227 --> 00:16:10,727

No.

276

00:16:10,727 --> 00:16:11,602

It was the secretary.

277

00:16:11,602 --> 00:16:13,620

The secretary married him.

278

00:16:13,620 --> 00:16:14,240

OK.

279

00:16:14,240 --> 00:16:14,740

Yeah.

280

00:16:14,740 --> 00:16:16,670

The secretary marries him.

281

00:16:16,670 --> 00:16:17,170

No.

282

00:16:17,170 --> 00:16:22,990

Aunt Bertha Ruck was

married to another writer.

283

00:16:22,990 --> 00:16:25,390

But she didn't take

his name because she

284

 $00:16:25,390 \longrightarrow 00:16:27,740$

was famous in her own right.

285

00:16:27,740 --> 00:16:33,650

As she said, her

husband was who wrote

00:16:33,650 --> 00:16:38,440 worthwhile, important novels, where as she was

287

00:16:38,440 --> 00:16:40,620 writing all kind of--

288

00:16:40,620 --> 00:16:44,230

289

00:16:44,230 --> 00:16:46,720 But [INAUDIBLE].

290

00:16:46,720 --> 00:16:48,940 How do I spell her last name, Ruck?

291

00:16:48,940 --> 00:16:50,760 How do I spell that?

292

00:16:50,760 --> 00:16:53,050 R-U-C-K.

293

00:16:53,050 --> 00:16:53,980 OK.

294

00:16:53,980 --> 00:16:56,250 She was a real Welsh woman.

295

00:16:56,250 --> 00:16:57,600 OK.

296

00:16:57,600 --> 00:17:00,950 Black, black, black hair.

297

00:17:00,950 --> 00:17:08,319 But I wrote her a card when we sort of settled down in Fulham.

298

00:17:08,319 --> 00:17:14,859 And to her pre-war address in PLACE NAME] and in Wales.

299

00:17:14,859 --> 00:17:18,010

And I promptly got a card back saying,

300

 $00:17:18,010 \longrightarrow 00:17:23,890$

I'll be in London on the 7th of June.

301

 $00:17:23,890 \longrightarrow 00:17:25,349$

Meet me at the--

302

00:17:25,349 --> 00:17:26,319

I can't think.

303

00:17:26,319 --> 00:17:32,850

A little cafe or a big cafe in Piccadilly.

304

 $00:17:32,850 \longrightarrow 00:17:39,230$

So I went to my commanding

officer and said,

305

00:17:39,230 --> 00:17:46,200

would he give me a pass out to go on a Wednesday afternoon

306

00:17:46,200 --> 00:17:48,030

to Piccadilly?

307

00:17:48,030 --> 00:17:51,960

And he said, it's a pleasure.

308

00:17:51,960 --> 00:17:55,973

So I went out with my

[INAUDIBLE] prisoner

309

00:17:55,973 --> 00:17:59,820

of war uniform with this pass.

310

00:17:59,820 --> 00:18:04,320

And of course, I felt a little bit awkward coming

311

00:18:04,320 --> 00:18:08,030 to this posh restaurant cafe.

312

00:18:08,030 --> 00:18:14,630 And well, I thought if I entered as a prisoner of war,

313

00:18:14,630 --> 00:18:16,980 they might kick me out straight away.

314

00:18:16,980 --> 00:18:19,590 But I went in.

315

00:18:19,590 --> 00:18:22,410 And I sort of looked around.

316

00:18:22,410 --> 00:18:26,695 And I could see her right at the other end of the restaurant.

317

00:18:26,695 --> 00:18:28,810 And she could see me.

318

00:18:28,810 --> 00:18:32,760 And she just jumped up, came along and embraced me.

319

00:18:32,760 --> 00:18:35,940

320

00:18:35,940 --> 00:18:43,120 And the rest of the restaurant obviously looked on amused.

321

00:18:43,120 --> 00:18:44,710 But you know, that was that.

322

00:18:44,710 --> 00:18:45,910

That was the end of it.

323

00:18:45,910 --> 00:18:51,060

So I joined her and her guests there.

324

00:18:51,060 --> 00:18:54,420 Then we went on afterwards

to Hampstead to one

325

00:18:54,420 --> 00:18:57,330

of the other people

[INAUDIBLE] friends.

326

 $00:18:57,330 \longrightarrow 00:19:01,440$

And had a nice evening

and afternoon and evening.

327

00:19:01,440 --> 00:19:04,230

And I went back to my

prisoner of war camp.

328

00:19:04,230 --> 00:19:10,440

And then of course, I met

every time she came up to town.

329

00:19:10,440 --> 00:19:12,150

We met.

330

00:19:12,150 --> 00:19:14,160

She had two sons.

331

00:19:14,160 --> 00:19:16,530

Those two sons--

332

00:19:16,530 --> 00:19:17,460

I mean, she had--

333

00:19:17,460 --> 00:19:22,680

she was a bit of a

unusual type of woman.

00:19:22,680 --> 00:19:31,770 Her two sons were licensed air pilots

335

00:19:31,770 --> 00:19:34,935 before they were allowed to sit for their driving license.

336

00:19:34,935 --> 00:19:42,650

337

00:19:42,650 --> 00:19:46,720 And another thing she did--

338

00:19:46,720 --> 00:19:49,360 throughout the year, she would always

339

00:19:49,360 --> 00:19:53,810 have a dive into the sea, regardless of winter, summer.

340

00:19:53,810 --> 00:19:56,910

341

00:19:56,910 --> 00:20:00,580 Remind me again how was she related to your family.

342

00:20:00,580 --> 00:20:02,490 This is the connection that--

343

00:20:02,490 --> 00:20:04,120 Only because she came--

344

00:20:04,120 --> 00:20:06,080 thanks to my mother.

345

00:20:06,080 --> 00:20:07,510 She came as a paying guest.

346

00:20:07,510 --> 00:20:12,166

347 00:20:12,166 --> 00:20:12,666 OK.

348 00:20:12,666 --> 00:20:15,510

349 00:20:15,510 --> 00:20:17,790 Well, I have very quickly-- this is

350 00:20:17,790 --> 00:20:21,450 one of the reasons I wanted to know her last name.

351 00:20:21,450 --> 00:20:26,460 I've just looked her up and Wikipedia has an entry for her.

352 00:20:26,460 --> 00:20:32,310 And let me see if the entry that they have

353 00:20:32,310 --> 00:20:34,570 matches what you knew about her.

354 00:20:34,570 --> 00:20:36,050 Her name was--

355 00:20:36,050 --> 00:20:39,590 I've got a Wikipedia entry too.

356 00:20:39,590 --> 00:20:42,180 [INAUDIBLE] the same.

357 00:20:42,180 --> 00:20:44,310 It probably is.

358 00:20:44,310 --> 00:20:49,150 Amy Roberta Ruck, Mrs. Oliver Onions was born in 1878-- 359 00:20:49,150 --> 00:20:50,460 [INAUDIBLE]

360 00:20:50,460 --> 00:20:53,160 And died in 1978.

361 00:20:53,160 --> 00:20:55,800 So as 100 years old.

362 00:20:55,800 --> 00:20:57,040 Yeah.

363 00:20:57,040 --> 00:21:01,320 And she was born in Murree, Punjab, British India.

364 00:21:01,320 --> 00:21:02,455 Of one of eight children.

365 00:21:02,455 --> 00:21:03,570 [INAUDIBLE]

366 00:21:03,570 --> 00:21:07,230 And she married a fellow novelist, George Oliver Onions

367 00:21:07,230 --> 00:21:10,162 and had two sons, Arthur and William.

368 00:21:10,162 --> 00:21:10,662 Yeah.

369 00:21:10,662 --> 00:21:12,050 I met them both.

370 00:21:12,050 --> 00:21:14,790 OK.

371 00:21:14,790 --> 00:21:16,380 So that's interesting.

372

00:21:16,380 --> 00:21:19,790 And then it talks a little bit about her writing career.

373

00:21:19,790 --> 00:21:20,820 Yeah.

374

00:21:20,820 --> 00:21:21,750 And so on.

375

00:21:21,750 --> 00:21:23,920 She was widowed in 1971.

376

00:21:23,920 --> 00:21:27,030 So this was your Aunt Bertha who had been one

377

00:21:27,030 --> 00:21:28,980 of your mother's paying guests.

378

00:21:28,980 --> 00:21:29,520 I see.

379

00:21:29,520 --> 00:21:30,020 Yes.

380

00:21:30,020 --> 00:21:35,280 And then of course, she wasn't just my mother's paying guest.

381

00:21:35,280 --> 00:21:37,500 She became a family friend.

382

00:21:37,500 --> 00:21:43,050 And until we left Austria, she would come every year

383

00:21:43,050 --> 00:21:47,180 to write her next book, and to have a social life with us.

384 00:21:47,180 --> 00:21:47,730 You know.

385 00:21:47,730 --> 00:21:54,240 And of course, my dad and [?Telle?] were fluent in verbal

386 00:21:54,240 --> 00:21:56,010 English anyway.

387 00:21:56,010 --> 00:21:57,150 OK.

388 00:21:57,150 --> 00:21:59,850 So they could talk quite easily.

389 00:21:59,850 --> 00:22:02,830

390 00:22:02,830 --> 00:22:05,970 I had read in some of my notes that,

391 00:22:05,970 --> 00:22:12,000 was there a relative who wanted to ask your help for helping

392 00:22:12,000 --> 00:22:16,650 either [?Bertel?] or someone else leave prison,

393 00:22:16,650 --> 00:22:18,480 or leave a POW camp?

394 00:22:18,480 --> 00:22:20,550 Does that ring a bell at all?

395 00:22:20,550 --> 00:22:23,544 While you yourself are a prisoner of war. 396 00:22:23,544 --> 00:22:32,470 No, I think the thing that you probably

397 00:22:32,470 --> 00:22:42,620 mention is my Uncle Georg who was imprisoned

398 00:22:42,620 --> 00:22:47,120 by Austria both before the war-before this [? last war, ?]

399 00:22:47,120 --> 00:22:49,550 and certainly after the wars as well.

400 00:22:49,550 --> 00:22:52,760

401 00:22:52,760 --> 00:23:02,710 And I can't-- my memory.

402 00:23:02,710 --> 00:23:07,520 I was I think around about the mid 50s.

403 00:23:07,520 --> 00:23:10,010 I was asked--

404 00:23:10,010 --> 00:23:13,430 I was walking along Piccadilly.

405 00:23:13,430 --> 00:23:16,940 And a gentleman approached me and said,

406 00:23:16,940 --> 00:23:20,290 was I Helmut Schweitzer.

407 00:23:20,290 --> 00:23:22,970 And he said, I'm coming from [INAUDIBLE] 408 00:23:22,970 --> 00:23:25,010 who is the great film producer?

409 00:23:25,010 --> 00:23:28,310

410 00:23:28,310 --> 00:23:31,150 Whose name as usually, escapes me.

411 00:23:31,150 --> 00:23:39,320 I can't-- who produced all these wonderful pictures of movies.

412 00:23:39,320 --> 00:23:45,780 He was the first movie producers of these mass enormous movies.

413 00:23:45,780 --> 00:23:53,620 And then he obviously went on to the United States in the end.

414 00:23:53,620 --> 00:23:57,520 And at that time he was in England and producing

415 00:23:57,520 --> 00:24:01,120 his movies in England, which was at that time

416 00:24:01,120 --> 00:24:10,510 in those post-war years, was as good as the American film

417 00:24:10,510 --> 00:24:12,240 producing areas.

418 00:24:12,240 --> 00:24:18,940 And anyway, he said he had a passport for Uncle Georg to-- 00:24:18,940 --> 00:24:21,280 a British passport for him.

420

00:24:21,280 --> 00:24:26,380 Would I take it to him and give it to him in Liechtenstein,

421

00:24:26,380 --> 00:24:30,310 [INAUDIBLE]

422

00:24:30,310 --> 00:24:36,790 And I sort of attempted to do it.

423

00:24:36,790 --> 00:24:38,800 Then I decided, no, I can't do it.

424

00:24:38,800 --> 00:24:43,600 Because I would have been totally responsible for him

425

00:24:43,600 --> 00:24:45,690 if anything.

426

00:24:45,690 --> 00:24:50,010 You know, it was obviously a false passport.

427

00:24:50,010 --> 00:24:55,381 And so I said, no, that's not [INAUDIBLE]..

428

00:24:55,381 --> 00:25:00,410 And so Uncle Georg himself never mentioned anything to me,

429

00:25:00,410 --> 00:25:03,410 nor did my dad.

430

00:25:03,410 --> 00:25:06,320 Whether it was a fake thing or not, I don't know.

431 00:25:06,320 --> 00:25:07,040 OK.

432 00:25:07,040 --> 00:25:08,960 So if I understand this correctly,

433 00:25:08,960 --> 00:25:10,850 this is long after your release.

434 00:25:10,850 --> 00:25:13,235 This is when you're living in Britain.

435 00:25:13,235 --> 00:25:16,430 [INAUDIBLE] a father of two children

436 00:25:16,430 --> 00:25:19,560 working for the John Lewis Partnership.

437 00:25:19,560 --> 00:25:23,690 And Uncle Georg obviously, having

438 00:25:23,690 --> 00:25:30,900 been released from prison, that contact with his old friend

439 00:25:30,900 --> 00:25:33,120 or colleague or whatever he was--

440 00:25:33,120 --> 00:25:35,100 I don't know what Uncle Georg was

441 00:25:35,100 --> 00:25:39,210 doing in the '20s in Austria.

00:25:39,210 --> 00:25:42,160 I mean, he was always a bit of a mystery.

443 00:25:42,160 --> 00:25:42,690 [INAUDIBLE]

444 00:25:42,690 --> 00:25:44,370 1920s?

445 00:25:44,370 --> 00:25:48,120 Are you saying 1920s, 1930s or 1940s in Austria?

446 00:25:48,120 --> 00:25:49,110 No, no.

447 00:25:49,110 --> 00:25:56,820 [INAUDIBLE] 1920s, early '30s, because what's his name

448 00:25:56,820 --> 00:26:01,920 went to the United States around about 1930.

449 00:26:01,920 --> 00:26:05,280 This producer, this Hungarian.

450 00:26:05,280 --> 00:26:11,310

451 00:26:11,310 --> 00:26:13,044 World famous.

452 00:26:13,044 --> 00:26:14,130 [? I can't seem to-- ?]

453 00:26:14,130 --> 00:26:15,010 OK.

454 00:26:15,010 --> 00:26:18,070 But at any rate, Uncle

Georg is released

455

00:26:18,070 --> 00:26:19,990 after the war from prison.

456

00:26:19,990 --> 00:26:22,420 From because of

whatever Nazi activities

457

00:26:22,420 --> 00:26:24,050 he had been involved in.

458

00:26:24,050 --> 00:26:28,640 But he was also

in prison in 1936,

459

00:26:28,640 --> 00:26:30,160 when [PERSONAL NAME] was killed.

460

00:26:30,160 --> 00:26:34,460

461

00:26:34,460 --> 00:26:38,900 You know, he was part of a Nazi movement.

462

00:26:38,900 --> 00:26:48,000 And obviously, it was a Nazi guy who shot [PERSONAL NAME]..

463

00:26:48,000 --> 00:26:49,440

So he was involved.

464

00:26:49,440 --> 00:26:53,240

But the family

sort of stood aside

465

00:26:53,240 --> 00:26:54,600

and he never talked about it.

466

 $00:26:54,600 \longrightarrow 00:26:57,690$

467 00:26:57,690 --> 00:27:01,050 But to bring this to that moment,

468 00:27:01,050 --> 00:27:04,140 it is that after the war, he's released.

469 00:27:04,140 --> 00:27:05,705 He's living in Liechtenstein.

470 00:27:05,705 --> 00:27:07,080 You don't necessarily [INAUDIBLE]

471 00:27:07,080 --> 00:27:07,695 No, he's not.

472 00:27:07,695 --> 00:27:09,540 He's not living in Liechtenstein.

473 00:27:09,540 --> 00:27:12,080 I think Liechtenstein was simply picked [INAUDIBLE]

474 00:27:12,080 --> 00:27:13,550 that it wasn't Austria.

475 00:27:13,550 --> 00:27:14,730 And it wasn't England.

476 00:27:14,730 --> 00:27:17,810 You know, it was somewhere else.

477 00:27:17,810 --> 00:27:21,370 And this man, out of the blue, approaches you.

478 00:27:21,370 --> 00:27:21,870 Yes. 479 00:27:21,870 --> 00:27:26,640 Asks who you were, and then wants to hand a passport to you

480 00:27:26,640 --> 00:27:28,240 to give to your Uncle Georg.

481 00:27:28,240 --> 00:27:28,740 Yes.

482 00:27:28,740 --> 00:27:33,300 And you ostensibly meet Uncle Georg in Liechtenstein.

483 00:27:33,300 --> 00:27:35,220 And you think, well, maybe I'll do it.

484 00:27:35,220 --> 00:27:38,640 And then you decide you won't.

485 00:27:38,640 --> 00:27:43,020 And that the passport is most likely a false passport.

486 00:27:43,020 --> 00:27:43,520 Yeah.

487 00:27:43,520 --> 00:27:45,420 That's correct?

488 00:27:45,420 --> 00:27:47,970 That's what-- I mean, the guy never said that.

489 00:27:47,970 --> 00:27:51,140

490 00:27:51,140 --> 00:27:56,040 But I couldn't imagine that it could be a genuine passport. 491 00:27:56,040 --> 00:27:59,730

492 00:27:59,730 --> 00:28:01,710 So I took this out of the sequence

493 00:28:01,710 --> 00:28:03,870 by remembering this thing.

494 00:28:03,870 --> 00:28:07,890 I took it out of the chronology we were talking about.

495 00:28:07,890 --> 00:28:08,610 Yeah.

496 00:28:08,610 --> 00:28:18,030 Let's go back to one part of what you were saying.

497 00:28:18,030 --> 00:28:19,800 And that was your education.

498 00:28:19,800 --> 00:28:23,340 Did you finish a certain course at the LSE?

499 00:28:23,340 --> 00:28:24,660 Did you get a certificate?

500 00:28:24,660 --> 00:28:25,545 Did you get a degree?

501 00:28:25,545 --> 00:28:26,230 Yeah.

502 00:28:26,230 --> 00:28:27,390 What happened?

503

00:28:27,390 --> 00:28:30,450 [INAUDIBLE] that is of course, after I

504

00:28:30,450 --> 00:28:35,060 came back, after my release.

505

00:28:35,060 --> 00:28:37,850 When I was married to Sheila.

506

00:28:37,850 --> 00:28:44,650 And I got my Ph.D in economics from the LSE.

507

00:28:44,650 --> 00:28:48,250 My first degree.

508

00:28:48,250 --> 00:28:52,270 So let's go back to when you are released.

509

00:28:52,270 --> 00:28:53,400 You are released.

510

00:28:53,400 --> 00:28:56,110 There is fewer and fewer bombs that

511

00:28:56,110 --> 00:29:00,780 need to have teams to help diffuse them in London.

512

00:29:00,780 --> 00:29:02,530 They're moving out of town.

513

00:29:02,530 --> 00:29:06,850 And in June, 1948, is it--

514

00:29:06,850 --> 00:29:12,010 that you are released from your prisoner of war status.

00:29:12,010 --> 00:29:13,690 Yeah.

516

00:29:13,690 --> 00:29:14,770

What happens then?

517

00:29:14,770 --> 00:29:18,330

518

00:29:18,330 --> 00:29:22,130

Well, I mean, I had my by then--

519

 $00:29:22,130 \longrightarrow 00:29:23,840$

my admission to

the London School

520

00:29:23,840 --> 00:29:30,424

of Economics for the

Michaelmas terms, 1949--

521

00:29:30,424 --> 00:29:32,850

no, '48.

522

00:29:32,850 --> 00:29:35,940

Michaelmas terms '48.

523

00:29:35,940 --> 00:29:41,450

So I reckoned I'd be

released to Germany,

524

 $00:29:41,450 \longrightarrow 00:29:45,830$

meet up with the whole family

again, and then come back

525

00:29:45,830 --> 00:29:47,120

in October--

526

00:29:47,120 --> 00:29:50,080

527

 $00:29:50,080 \longrightarrow 00:29:54,710$

beginning of October, Michaelmas

term, and start my study

528 00:29:54,710 --> 00:29:57,030 and marry Sheila.

529

00:29:57,030 --> 00:30:01,430 That sounded-- that was quite sort of straightforward.

530 00:30:01,430 --> 00:30:05,960 But of course, I had then the problem,

531 00:30:05,960 --> 00:30:11,750 being a released German prisoner of war from England,

532 00:30:11,750 --> 00:30:14,750 wanting to emigrate as an Austrian citizen

533 00:30:14,750 --> 00:30:24,950 from occupied American part of Germany, which the Americans

534 00:30:24,950 --> 00:30:28,025 just failed to do, to accept.

535 00:30:28,025 --> 00:30:31,820

536 00:30:31,820 --> 00:30:32,320 Then--

537 00:30:32,320 --> 00:30:35,200

538 00:30:35,200 --> 00:30:37,010 Were you repatriated to Germany?

539 00:30:37,010 --> 00:30:38,300 Did you have to leave Britain? 540 00:30:38,300 --> 00:30:38,842 Yes, oh, yes.

541

00:30:38,842 --> 00:30:41,540 I was [INAUDIBLE].

542

00:30:41,540 --> 00:30:45,560 I was the first group of ex-prisoners of war

543

00:30:45,560 --> 00:30:52,500 who were paid out in the new German currency, the D-Mark,

544

00:30:52,500 --> 00:30:56,080 That was quite an achievement.

545

00:30:56,080 --> 00:30:56,835 By the British?

546

00:30:56,835 --> 00:30:59,070 Because that was-- yeah.

547

00:30:59,070 --> 00:31:01,320 That was money that was worth something.

548

00:31:01,320 --> 00:31:07,530 Whereas the old German money was already dead completely.

549

00:31:07,530 --> 00:31:09,420 OK.

550

00:31:09,420 --> 00:31:11,250 I need to have clarification here.

551

00:31:11,250 --> 00:31:15,840 While you are a prisoner, you are paid one pound a week?

552 00:31:15,840 --> 00:31:19,380 Once you get released, do you get further moneys?

553 00:31:19,380 --> 00:31:21,060 Ves

554 00:31:21,060 --> 00:31:27,630 Again, something like the pay was one pound

555 00:31:27,630 --> 00:31:33,780 in our pocket, and one pound to be paid on release

556 00:31:33,780 --> 00:31:35,250 from prisoner of war.

557 00:31:35,250 --> 00:31:39,820 So you know, I got two pounds a week.

558 00:31:39,820 --> 00:31:42,240 I got the payout there.

559 00:31:42,240 --> 00:31:46,290 But the question really was, if I'd been paid out,

560 00:31:46,290 --> 00:31:50,150 if I'd been a week earlier, it was really strictly

561 00:31:50,150 --> 00:31:51,480 as close as that.

562 00:31:51,480 --> 00:32:01,700 I would have been paid out in the old German money, which

563 00:32:01,700 --> 00:32:04,180 was not worth much.

564

00:32:04,180 --> 00:32:10,420 So being I'm coming now back home with D-Marks to my family

565

00:32:10,420 --> 00:32:14,840 was quite a triumph.

566

00:32:14,840 --> 00:32:18,410 So you leave.

567

00:32:18,410 --> 00:32:23,600 You're released from Fulham where your camp is.

568

00:32:23,600 --> 00:32:24,450

569

00:32:24,450 --> 00:32:26,910 [INAUDIBLE] we were in Richmond Park then.

570

00:32:26,910 --> 00:32:31,750 In between, we were in Richmond Park.

571

00:32:31,750 --> 00:32:35,420 I've sort of mentioned it indirectly, but not fully.

572

00:32:35,420 --> 00:32:41,650 I mean, the height of our time was in Richmond Park, actually.

573

00:32:41,650 --> 00:32:46,600

574

00:32:46,600 --> 00:32:49,900

How long were you in Richmond park?

00:32:49,900 --> 00:32:51,340 About a year.

576 00:32:51,340 --> 00:32:52,990 OK.

577 00:32:52,990 --> 00:32:57,490 I mean, when bomb disposal became so successful,

578 00:32:57,490 --> 00:33:02,180 with doubling the man power, and the bombs were coming out,

579 00:33:02,180 --> 00:33:05,410 and the press was full of these stories--

580 00:33:05,410 --> 00:33:07,990

581 00:33:07,990 --> 00:33:09,850 [INAUDIBLE] of us really sort of--

582 00:33:09,850 --> 00:33:14,230

583 00:33:14,230 --> 00:33:22,450 there was a [INAUDIBLE] army camp in Richmond Park.

584 00:33:22,450 --> 00:33:26,970 You know, much better than the [INAUDIBLE] and Fulham.

585 00:33:26,970 --> 00:33:30,230 And so we moved to that camp.

586 00:33:30,230 --> 00:33:34,860 And I was actually, at the time, on the--

```
587
00:33:34,860 --> 00:33:40,090
```

588 00:33:40,090 --> 00:33:51,210 I had a special course [INAUDIBLE] foreign office was

589 00:33:51,210 --> 00:33:52,830 running--

590 00:33:52,830 --> 00:33:54,390 Wilton Park.

591 00:33:54,390 --> 00:34:01,110 And that was about a month--

592 00:34:01,110 --> 00:34:05,880 six weeks course, Wilton Park, when the move took place.

593 00:34:05,880 --> 00:34:13,889 When I came back from that course, the young officer,

594 00:34:13,889 --> 00:34:17,790 a British officer, who was looking after prisoners of war,

595 00:34:17,790 --> 00:34:21,199 introduced me to the new camp leader.

596 00:34:21,199 --> 00:34:23,080 And who was that?

597 00:34:23,080 --> 00:34:25,730 It was one of the guys--

598 00:34:25,730 --> 00:34:35,760 I mean, one of the German guys who was, in fact, a Sergeant. 599

00:34:35,760 --> 00:34:37,260

But he was a--

600

00:34:37,260 --> 00:34:40,900

they had a homosexual relationship.

601 00:34:40,900 --> 00:34:49,320

And so [INAUDIBLE] when

after he [? introduced, ?]

602

00:34:49,320 --> 00:34:53,199

in the evening,

I collected where

603

00:34:53,199 --> 00:34:57,840

is a whole group of people.

604

 $00:34:57,840 \longrightarrow 00:35:02,040$

And we sort of cornered them.

605

 $00:35:02,040 \longrightarrow 00:35:07,170$

And we said, well, can you

sort of explain the situation?

606

00:35:07,170 --> 00:35:11,730

And the German guy immediately

said, no, no, no, no.

607

00:35:11,730 --> 00:35:13,500

That's just a joke.

608

00:35:13,500 --> 00:35:14,560

Don't worry about it.

609

00:35:14,560 --> 00:35:15,060

You know.

610

00:35:15,060 --> 00:35:19,510

00:35:19,510 --> 00:35:21,220 Because the last thing they wanted

612 00:35:21,220 --> 00:35:27,040 to happen was that the then commanding officer would

613 00:35:27,040 --> 00:35:31,270 hear about it and make a big issue of it, which he may have,

614 00:35:31,270 --> 00:35:33,580 or would have probably done.

615 00:35:33,580 --> 00:35:39,405 And so I was in charge again.

616 00:35:39,405 --> 00:35:41,470 It was just one of those episodes.

617 00:35:41,470 --> 00:35:44,980

618 00:35:44,980 --> 00:35:49,690 But during that time, I had a very good outside--

619 00:35:49,690 --> 00:35:56,640 I mean, particularly in Richmond Park--

620 00:35:56,640 --> 00:36:02,330 to sing [INAUDIBLE] a lot of the prisoners was to sing.

621 00:36:02,330 --> 00:36:06,550 They could get good jobs from the better

622 00:36:06,550 --> 00:36:12,010 families outside Richmond Park. 623 00:36:12,010 --> 00:36:15,520 And coming back from Wilton Park,

624 00:36:15,520 --> 00:36:18,950 felt I was sort of behind the times a bit.

625 00:36:18,950 --> 00:36:22,180 And there was one request that came

626 00:36:22,180 --> 00:36:25,660 through for a gardener for an address

627 00:36:25,660 --> 00:36:33,240 just outside the gate of our gate in Richmond Park.

628 00:36:33,240 --> 00:36:35,780 And a family, [PERSONAL NAME].

629 00:36:35,780 --> 00:36:41,670 And so I went to them, Mrs. [PERSONAL NAME]

630 00:36:41,670 --> 00:36:44,350 a very nice German woman.

631 00:36:44,350 --> 00:36:47,000

632 00:36:47,000 --> 00:36:50,290 And she said, [? yeah, ?] fine.

633 00:36:50,290 --> 00:36:51,230 You know, you're in.

634 00:36:51,230 --> 00:36:55,020 635 00:36:55,020 --> 00:36:58,260 They were also escapees from Germany.

636 00:36:58,260 --> 00:37:00,800 They weren't Jewish, I think.

637 00:37:00,800 --> 00:37:06,870 They had two sons at some London [INAUDIBLE]..

638 00:37:06,870 --> 00:37:09,160 They were obviously well-off people.

639 00:37:09,160 --> 00:37:14,080 I mean, their garden was right at the wall of the park.

640 00:37:14,080 --> 00:37:17,620

641 00:37:17,620 --> 00:37:20,180 And the husband was--

642 00:37:20,180 --> 00:37:23,280 I thought he was a drunkard.

643 00:37:23,280 --> 00:37:27,860 He was never-- he only occasionally came out

644 00:37:27,860 --> 00:37:35,540 in a grumpy sort of way from his office.

645 00:37:35,540 --> 00:37:39,870 But only since we've come back to England--

646 00:37:39,870 --> 00:37:43,120 now, unfortunately, I've lost the source again.

647

00:37:43,120 --> 00:37:53,410 I've learned when Hitler came to power first, he had a kind of--

648

 $00:37:53,410 \longrightarrow 00:37:56,350$

649

00:37:56,350 --> 00:38:03,820 he did get rid of his main leadership of people in 1934,

650

00:38:03,820 --> 00:38:07,030 to have them murdered.

651

00:38:07,030 --> 00:38:12,500 And this guy-- there was a guy, [PERSONAL NAME]

652

00:38:12,500 --> 00:38:17,390 who was an associate of one of these murdered people.

653

00:38:17,390 --> 00:38:20,290 I don't know whether this particular [PERSONAL NAME]

654

00:38:20,290 --> 00:38:21,290 was that guy.

655

00:38:21,290 --> 00:38:27,830 But he could well have been, from age and from his attitude.

656

00:38:27,830 --> 00:38:33,150 It was just mere possible coincidence.

657

00:38:33,150 --> 00:38:42,090 I know when I proudly told the family that I'd been accepted

658 00:38:42,090 --> 00:38:47,070 as a scholar for the London School of Economics,

659 00:38:47,070 --> 00:38:50,310 he sort of jumped at me and said, what?

660 00:38:50,310 --> 00:38:53,640 That socialist rubbish place?

661 00:38:53,640 --> 00:38:57,480 You know-- and good luck to you if you really

662 00:38:57,480 --> 00:38:59,270 want to [INAUDIBLE].

663 00:38:59,270 --> 00:39:06,820

664 00:39:06,820 --> 00:39:10,540 Are you referring to the SA Brownshirts

665 00:39:10,540 --> 00:39:14,370 that were in competition with the SS.

666 00:39:14,370 --> 00:39:15,220 [INAUDIBLE]

667 00:39:15,220 --> 00:39:16,480 And do you think--

668 00:39:16,480 --> 00:39:18,040 [INAUDIBLE] with the Wehrmacht.

669 00:39:18,040 --> 00:39:23,540 I mean-- the Brownshirts wanted to become the new Wehrmacht. 670 00:39:23,540 --> 00:39:25,800 The German army.

671 00:39:25,800 --> 00:39:30,670 And Hitler was forced to make a clear choice, which he

672 00:39:30,670 --> 00:39:33,040 had great difficulty in doing.

673 00:39:33,040 --> 00:39:34,960 But in the end, it meant that his

674 00:39:34,960 --> 00:39:40,810 own [INAUDIBLE] his own fellows had to be killed off.

675 00:39:40,810 --> 00:39:42,250 OK.

676 00:39:42,250 --> 00:39:48,350 And you're saying that you suspect that this family was

677 00:39:48,350 --> 00:39:50,900 associated with some of them.

678 00:39:50,900 --> 00:39:52,790 Well, because there was this--

679 00:39:52,790 --> 00:39:58,160 I mean, [PERSONAL NAME] most unusual kind of name, isn't it?

680 00:39:58,160 --> 00:40:00,830 Yes, it is.

681 00:40:00,830 --> 00:40:01,760 Yeah. 682 00:40:01,760 --> 00:40:05,420 What was significant to you about working with them

683 00:40:05,420 --> 00:40:09,710 outside in the--

684 00:40:09,710 --> 00:40:17,000 was this one of the few outside contacts you had with people

685 00:40:17,000 --> 00:40:21,430 who lived in Britain, or in the area [INAUDIBLE] neighborhood?

686 00:40:21,430 --> 00:40:22,100 Yeah.

687 00:40:22,100 --> 00:40:30,050 You know, I had a very good relationship with his wife.

688 00:40:30,050 --> 00:40:32,330 I mean, she accepted me as a gardener.

689 00:40:32,330 --> 00:40:35,240 But you know, it became more.

690 00:40:35,240 --> 00:40:38,700 I was just the sort of house guest who turned up.

691 00:40:38,700 --> 00:40:46,820 And I mean, she was, I think, a lonely woman.

692 00:40:46,820 --> 00:40:52,610 Because of the peculiar husband [INAUDIBLE] and the boys

693 00:40:52,610 --> 00:40:56,750 were going to local schools.

694 00:40:56,750 --> 00:41:00,220 So they were there in the evenings.

695 00:41:00,220 --> 00:41:03,170 And one of them, the younger one,

696 00:41:03,170 --> 00:41:07,480 was playing Beethoven's sixth symphony every evening.

697 00:41:07,480 --> 00:41:11,000 And I suddenly thought, that's really lovely.

698 00:41:11,000 --> 00:41:12,950 I ought to do something about it.

699 00:41:12,950 --> 00:41:16,610 Why can't I go to the Albert Hall to concert?

700 00:41:16,610 --> 00:41:21,500 So I became a frequent concert goer

701 00:41:21,500 --> 00:41:24,470 to the Albert Hall, which wasn't all that far away

702 00:41:24,470 --> 00:41:27,910 from Richmond Park.

703 00:41:27,910 --> 00:41:30,850 How did you meet Sheila?

704 00:41:30,850 --> 00:41:34,990 Well, through the International Friendship League. 705 00:41:34,990 --> 00:41:36,460 That was [INAUDIBLE].

706 00:41:36,460 --> 00:41:37,360 And that of course--

707 00:41:37,360 --> 00:41:45,130

708 00:41:45,130 --> 00:41:48,020 that was-- [INAUDIBLE] is it now--

709 00:41:48,020 --> 00:41:48,775 how did it start?

710 00:41:48,775 --> 00:41:53,110

711 00:41:53,110 --> 00:41:56,580 I don't know how the original contact came.

712 00:41:56,580 --> 00:42:04,660 But there was a movement which really

713 00:42:04,660 --> 00:42:11,680 was the successor of a pre-war peace movement, the Oxford

714 00:42:11,680 --> 00:42:17,290 group, it was also called.

715 00:42:17,290 --> 00:42:26,910 And it was this Swiss sort of revolutionary

716 00:42:26,910 --> 00:42:30,798 who was preaching peace. 717

00:42:30,798 --> 00:42:33,600 You go to your opponent and you honestly

718

00:42:33,600 --> 00:42:35,580 say what your problem is.

719

00:42:35,580 --> 00:42:37,230 And he will say his problem.

720

00:42:37,230 --> 00:42:40,290 And you sort it out face to face.

721

00:42:40,290 --> 00:42:44,130 That was his basic mission.

722

00:42:44,130 --> 00:42:48,540 And what I didn't know until fairly recently

723

00:42:48,540 --> 00:42:52,110 is how big that movement had been before the war,

724

725

00:42:52,110 --> 00:42:55,470 before the last war.

00:42:55,470 --> 00:43:00,150 He had thousands and thousands of [?mass?] meeting people

726

00:43:00,150 --> 00:43:06,540 gathering, particularly in Holland and Scandinavia,

727

00:43:06,540 --> 00:43:07,320 Switzerland.

728

00:43:07,320 --> 00:43:10,110 Because originally, he

came from Switzerland.

729 00:43:10,110 --> 00:43:13,990 But he grew up in the United States.

730 00:43:13,990 --> 00:43:18,910 And it was a very big movement for peace.

731 00:43:18,910 --> 00:43:22,260 Nevermind the politics.

732 00:43:22,260 --> 00:43:23,580 Just peace.

733 00:43:23,580 --> 00:43:27,120 You know, by talking and making peace.

734 00:43:27,120 --> 00:43:35,460 And there was a Fulham group, which I joined.

735 00:43:35,460 --> 00:43:41,200 You know, basically young professional people.

736 00:43:41,200 --> 00:43:50,440 And Sheila's mom was the secretary of that group.

737 00:43:50,440 --> 00:43:52,740 So I became a regular.

738 00:43:52,740 --> 00:43:55,620 You know, they were particularly with me,

739 00:43:55,620 --> 00:43:59,760 trying to keep public relations from our camp

740

00:43:59,760 --> 00:44:02,550 to the outer world.

741

00:44:02,550 --> 00:44:10,710 There were certain sort of places like this Fulham

742

00:44:10,710 --> 00:44:12,840 [INAUDIBLE] group.

743

00:44:12,840 --> 00:44:15,135 And then there was [INAUDIBLE].

744

00:44:15,135 --> 00:44:22,490

745

00:44:22,490 --> 00:44:23,150 Anyway.

746

00:44:23,150 --> 00:44:27,860 There was another military--

747

00:44:27,860 --> 00:44:30,890 British army-- what do you call it?

748

00:44:30,890 --> 00:44:33,940

749

00:44:33,940 --> 00:44:36,310 Reservists-- no, not reservists.

750

00:44:36,310 --> 00:44:37,140 Pensioners.

751

00:44:37,140 --> 00:44:41,950 British army pensioners organization, which also had us

752

00:44:41,950 --> 00:44:46,040 as guests very often.

753

00:44:46,040 --> 00:44:47,420 So I've felt the obligation--

754

00:44:47,420 --> 00:44:48,580 Veterans?

755

00:44:48,580 --> 00:44:51,586 Do you mean like British army veterans?

756

00:44:51,586 --> 00:44:52,320 Veterans, yeah.

757

00:44:52,320 --> 00:44:52,820 Yeah.

758

00:44:52,820 --> 00:44:55,160

759

00:44:55,160 --> 00:44:55,760 That's right.

760

00:44:55,760 --> 00:44:56,840 So the Fulham group--

761

00:44:56,840 --> 00:44:59,590

762

00:44:59,590 --> 00:45:00,470 there was that group.

763

00:45:00,470 --> 00:45:05,600 And I felt it was a matter of honor that one of us,

764

00:45:05,600 --> 00:45:08,570 at least, would turn up to their weekly meetings.

765

00:45:08,570 --> 00:45:11,900

And it was the same

with the [INAUDIBLE]

766 00:45:11,900 --> 00:45:15,670 group, which was much more lively, anyway

767 00:45:15,670 --> 00:45:21,350 than the army veterans side.

768 00:45:21,350 --> 00:45:26,720 So these were my regular weekly kind of dates that I had.

769 00:45:26,720 --> 00:45:33,950 And then when my--

770 00:45:33,950 --> 00:45:40,500

771 00:45:40,500 --> 00:45:43,980 [INAUDIBLE]

772 00:45:43,980 --> 00:45:45,160 Yeah.

773 00:45:45,160 --> 00:45:49,320 In March 1948, my 22nd birthday came.

774 00:45:49,320 --> 00:45:50,730 They gave me a birthday party.

775 00:45:50,730 --> 00:45:53,690

776 00:45:53,690 --> 00:45:59,460 I was coming to them, wanting to say, to proudly say,

777 00:45:59,460 --> 00:46:02,730 I've got a place at the London School of Economics. 778 00:46:02,730 --> 00:46:12,420 And instead I was there and [INAUDIBLE] and organized

779 00:46:12,420 --> 00:46:13,740 this--

780 00:46:13,740 --> 00:46:16,830 instead of a meeting, a birthday party for me.

781 00:46:16,830 --> 00:46:19,180 And she brought her daughter along as well.

782 00:46:19,180 --> 00:46:20,120 Sheila.

783 00:46:20,120 --> 00:46:24,090 And the rest is history.

784 00:46:24,090 --> 00:46:28,200 Well, you know, it sounds like your prisoner

785 00:46:28,200 --> 00:46:32,440 of war years in London provided you

786 00:46:32,440 --> 00:46:36,910 an opportunity to really start integrating

787 00:46:36,910 --> 00:46:38,470 into British society.

788 00:46:38,470 --> 00:46:39,060 Absolutely.

789 00:46:39,060 --> 00:46:44,200 One way, another way, a third way, a fourth way.

790

00:46:44,200 --> 00:46:48,190 So that by the time you are officially released,

791

00:46:48,190 --> 00:46:51,160 you have roots already established.

792

00:46:51,160 --> 00:46:52,630 The beginning of roots.

793

00:46:52,630 --> 00:46:54,800 Yes.

794

00:46:54,800 --> 00:46:57,500 So you-- Yeah?

795

00:46:57,500 --> 00:47:02,360 My early youth with [? Bertel Ruck ?]

796

00:47:02,360 --> 00:47:11,620 and [INAUDIBLE] and a very British-minded grandmother

797

00:47:11,620 --> 00:47:13,900 and aunt--

798

00:47:13,900 --> 00:47:20,470 I mean, the English reputation was

799

00:47:20,470 --> 00:47:26,230 already great in every way in our home in Austria.

800

00:47:26,230 --> 00:47:29,220 And even Hitler, when we were in Germany,

801

00:47:29,220 --> 00:47:33,560 always spoke with great respect about England,

802 00:47:33,560 --> 00:47:38,270 much more so than about any other country.

803 00:47:38,270 --> 00:47:43,520 So in anyway, [? I was ?] preconditioned.

804 00:47:43,520 --> 00:47:45,170 [INAUDIBLE]

805 00:47:45,170 --> 00:47:48,770 So technically, that is, then when you are released,

806 00:47:48,770 --> 00:47:54,290 and you do have to return to Germany as opposed

807 00:47:54,290 --> 00:48:01,750 to when you told your Belgian captors--

808 00:48:01,750 --> 00:48:05,350 that is, your British captors in Belgium, that no, you don't

809 00:48:05,350 --> 00:48:06,850 want-- you're not Austrian.

810 00:48:06,850 --> 00:48:08,170 You're German.

811 00:48:08,170 --> 00:48:11,440 In fact is, you have Austrian citizenship

812 00:48:11,440 --> 00:48:13,750 in the American zone in Germany. 813

00:48:13,750 --> 00:48:15,620

Is that correct?

814

00:48:15,620 --> 00:48:17,140

Well, no.

815

00:48:17.140 --> 00:48:21.790

I should have meant when Austria

became a state, [INAUDIBLE]

816

00:48:21,790 --> 00:48:27,490

obviously it started

an embassy in London.

817

00:48:27,490 --> 00:48:35,830

And I was a freely

moving prisoner of war.

818

 $00:48:35,830 \longrightarrow 00:48:43,210$

I went along to this newly created Austrian embassy.

819

00:48:43,210 --> 00:48:47,920

And I said, look, I'm

really an Austrian.

820

00:48:47,920 --> 00:48:49,030

Can I have a passport?

821

 $00:48:49,030 \longrightarrow 00:48:51,070$

Because Germany

couldn't give me--

822

00:48:51,070 --> 00:48:53,110

wouldn't be able to

give me a passport.

823

00:48:53,110 --> 00:48:56,020

Because it was

completely occupied.

824

00:48:56,020 --> 00:49:02,320 So they said, well, all we need is a [INAUDIBLE]

825 00:49:02,320 --> 00:49:10,300 your local town, city, if they can give you

826 00:49:10,300 --> 00:49:17,880 a certificate that you've been born in this place,

827 00:49:17,880 --> 00:49:21,020 you can have your passport.

828 00:49:21,020 --> 00:49:24,260 So I went to--

829 00:49:24,260 --> 00:49:30,870 I wrote a letter to the mayor of [PLACE NAME] and said,

830 00:49:30,870 --> 00:49:34,150 I'm Helmut Schweitzer.

831 00:49:34,150 --> 00:49:35,350 And no phones in Austria.

832 00:49:35,350 --> 00:49:41,685

833 00:49:41,685 --> 00:49:44,870 And at the moment in London.

834 00:49:44,870 --> 00:49:47,120 Can I have a [INAUDIBLE].

835 00:49:47,120 --> 00:49:49,070 And by return of post?

836 00:49:49,070 --> 00:49:52,310 They said, [INAUDIBLE]

and [INAUDIBLE]..

837

00:49:52,310 --> 00:49:56,960 So I got my Austrian passport.

838

00:49:56,960 --> 00:50:01,370 Even as I went as a German prisoner of war to [? ship ?]

839

00:50:01,370 --> 00:50:04,078 back to Germany.

840

00:50:04,078 --> 00:50:06,960 [INAUDIBLE] English person [INAUDIBLE]

841

00:50:06,960 --> 00:50:10,370 but of course, the English occupation people

842

00:50:10,370 --> 00:50:15,860 couldn't quite add up how this German prisoner of war,

843

00:50:15,860 --> 00:50:22,220 released, now suddenly comes up as an Austrian citizen wanting

844

00:50:22,220 --> 00:50:23,480 to go to England.

845

00:50:23,480 --> 00:50:25,746 I mean, that just didn't add up.

846

00:50:25,746 --> 00:50:32,470 And that's [INAUDIBLE] who was working for the Americans then

847

00:50:32,470 --> 00:50:33,350

came--

848

00:50:33,350 --> 00:50:36,920

[INAUDIBLE] got hold of her and said,

849

00:50:36,920 --> 00:50:39,520 you must try and get that organized.

850

00:50:39,520 --> 00:50:40,240 And she did.

851

00:50:40,240 --> 00:50:42,010 It took a few months.

852

00:50:42,010 --> 00:50:46,900 And I did [INAUDIBLE] I obviously missed the Michaelmas

853

00:50:46,900 --> 00:50:49,020 term completely.

854

00:50:49,020 --> 00:50:53,830 I only could get across with all the papers

855

00:50:53,830 --> 00:50:58,180 in early January, 1949.

856

00:50:58,180 --> 00:51:01,660 So did you ever live in Germany again?

857

00:51:01,660 --> 00:51:05,260 Well, I lived for six months or so.

858

00:51:05,260 --> 00:51:12,406 I even had a place at Mainz University.

859

00:51:12,406 --> 00:51:18,000

I studied at Mainz

University for one term.

00:51:18,000 --> 00:51:19,642 What were you studying?

861

00:51:19,642 --> 00:51:20,600 What were you studying?

862

00:51:20,600 --> 00:51:21,410 Economics.

863

 $00:51:21,410 \longrightarrow 00:51:25,590$

864

00:51:25,590 --> 00:51:28,470 But after that, after you returned to Britain,

865

00:51:28,470 --> 00:51:31,350 do you ever live in Germany again after that?

866

00:51:31,350 --> 00:51:32,745 Yeah.

867

00:51:32,745 --> 00:51:42,270 [INAUDIBLE] in 1971.

868

00:51:42,270 --> 00:51:50,760 I worked for the American company ITT conglomerate,

869

00:51:50,760 --> 00:51:55,930 covering the German speaking country as an inspector,

870

00:51:55,930 --> 00:52:00,050 living first in Frankfurt and then

871

00:52:00,050 --> 00:52:04,620

near Stuttgart for about four, five years

00:52:04,620 --> 00:52:08,300 before we went to South Africa.

873

00:52:08,300 --> 00:52:09,040

874

00:52:09,040 --> 00:52:10,780 So when you're saying Pam, you're

875

00:52:10,780 --> 00:52:14,050 referring to your second wife, who is also known as Rivka?

876

00:52:14,050 --> 00:52:15,160 Rivka, yes.

877

00:52:15,160 --> 00:52:20,150 I mean, Pam is shall we say, a birth name.

878

00:52:20,150 --> 00:52:25,160 Rivka is only a kind of Jewish addition

879

00:52:25,160 --> 00:52:27,880 when we married as Jews.

880

00:52:27,880 --> 00:52:28,810 OK.

881

00:52:28,810 --> 00:52:31,010 OK.

882

00:52:31,010 --> 00:52:40,050 So I would say, if we can, do you have enough energy

883

00:52:40,050 --> 00:52:42,180 to keep on going today?

00:52:42,180 --> 00:52:42,720 Yes, we can.

885

 $00:52:42,720 \longrightarrow 00:52:44,300$

Or-- yeah?

886

00:52:44,300 --> 00:52:50,280 Because this is the next topic that I would like to cover.

887

00:52:50,280 --> 00:52:55,290 Because it really is one of the more unusual parts

888

00:52:55,290 --> 00:53:03,570 of your story is how you connect with Judaism,

889

00:53:03,570 --> 00:53:07,290 and the process that happens.

890

00:53:07,290 --> 00:53:09,990 And I guess the development that happens

891

00:53:09,990 --> 00:53:16,620 that kind of bring you and Pam to want to convert to Judaism,

892

00:53:16,620 --> 00:53:18,840 and to actually do so.

893

00:53:18,840 --> 00:53:21,170 Can we talk about that a little bit?

894

00:53:21,170 --> 00:53:21,670 Yes.

895

00:53:21,670 --> 00:53:25,140

00:53:25,140 --> 00:53:29,490 It's totally amazing, really, the way it happened.

897

00:53:29,490 --> 00:53:39,420 Looking back on it, it looks to me both to Rivka, if you like,

898

00:53:39,420 --> 00:53:43,140 as if it was kind of inevitable.

899

00:53:43,140 --> 00:53:45,030 Although we didn't really--

900

00:53:45,030 --> 00:53:46,910 we weren't really conscious of it.

901

00:53:46,910 --> 00:53:51,570 But somehow, everything, at every turn,

902

00:53:51,570 --> 00:53:53,950 things happened the way that they happened.

903

00:53:53,950 --> 00:53:56,390 And we were just--

904

00:53:56,390 --> 00:54:00,540 we were facing the choice to say yes or no.

905

00:54:00,540 --> 00:54:08,660 So when did the first turn occur that kind of starts you

906

00:54:08,660 --> 00:54:12,060 on this path in this direction?

907

00:54:12,060 --> 00:54:15,560 I'll just say briefly, when you go back to England,

908 00:54:15,560 --> 00:54:18,830 you marry Sheila.

909

00:54:18,830 --> 00:54:20,263 And you have some children.

910

00:54:20,263 --> 00:54:20,930 Is that correct?

911

00:54:20,930 --> 00:54:21,430 Yes.

912

00:54:21,430 --> 00:54:23,990 We had three children, yes.

913

00:54:23,990 --> 00:54:26,900 And that at some point the marriage does not work.

914

00:54:26,900 --> 00:54:28,560 And you divorce.

915

00:54:28,560 --> 00:54:29,140 That's right.

916

00:54:29,140 --> 00:54:29,700 Correct?

917

00:54:29,700 --> 00:54:30,200 Yeah.

918

00:54:30,200 --> 00:54:31,580 That's right.

919

00:54:31,580 --> 00:54:34,790 But it was, if you like, a friendly divorce.

920

00:54:34,790 --> 00:54:39,170

I mean, she just liked

the driving teacher who

921

00:54:39,170 --> 00:54:41,180 taught her to drive the car.

922

00:54:41,180 --> 00:54:43,820

923

00:54:43,820 --> 00:54:46,460 And eventually she joined him.

924

00:54:46,460 --> 00:54:48,260 But it didn't work out.

925

00:54:48,260 --> 00:54:50,910 She wanted to come back.

926

00:54:50,910 --> 00:54:52,630 But then I said no.

927

 $00:54:52,630 \longrightarrow 00:54:55,650$

928

00:54:55,650 --> 00:54:58,940 So for about four years, I managed

929

00:54:58,940 --> 00:55:00,540 with the two older children.

930

00:55:00,540 --> 00:55:03,020 She took the youngest child with her.

931

00:55:03,020 --> 00:55:08,450 But again, the driving teacher wasn't living all that

932

00:55:08,450 --> 00:55:09,670 far away.

00:55:09,670 --> 00:55:15,380 So for the weekend, I could always pick her up

934

00:55:15,380 --> 00:55:17,620 and she used to stay with us.

935

00:55:17,620 --> 00:55:22,010 And particularly her marriage never

936

00:55:22,010 --> 00:55:24,480 really worked out properly.

937

00:55:24,480 --> 00:55:30,260 So Katherine was more and more with us for quite a while

938

00:55:30,260 --> 00:55:34,700 until we moved away from [? Cookham ?] when I was then

939

00:55:34,700 --> 00:55:39,090 already married to Pam.

940

00:55:39,090 --> 00:55:40,230 OK.

941

00:55:40,230 --> 00:55:43,260 So you married Pam in 1967.

942

00:55:43,260 --> 00:55:44,790 Yes.

943

00:55:44,790 --> 00:55:49,260 And you did say that you live for five or six

944

00:55:49,260 --> 00:55:52,140 years in Germany and then go to South Africa.

00:55:52,140 --> 00:55:57,030 And it is in South Africa where this development happens,

946 00:55:57,030 --> 00:56:01,850 or had there been prior steps beforehand?

947 00:56:01,850 --> 00:56:08,540 Well, in South Africa, it gradually--

948 00:56:08,540 --> 00:56:16,460 I mean, Pam grew up in a very difficult, divorced parents

949 00:56:16,460 --> 00:56:20,830 kind of circumstances in the East End of London.

950 00:56:20,830 --> 00:56:25,810 And she had an unsuccessful marriage there.

951 00:56:25,810 --> 00:56:30,790

952 00:56:30,790 --> 00:56:33,720 Her husband was in fact put into prison

953 00:56:33,720 --> 00:56:40,350 because of [INAUDIBLE] he was in a butchery, the family

954 00:56:40,350 --> 00:56:41,370 butchery.

955 00:56:41,370 --> 00:56:46,470 And they were selling some meat illegally.

956 00:56:46,470 --> 00:56:48,910 And of course, when he came up, the boy

957 00:56:48,910 --> 00:56:53,220 had to go admit guilt so the parents weren't

958 00:56:53,220 --> 00:56:57,270 involved type of thing.

959 00:56:57,270 --> 00:57:03,910 And she had to battle on, on her own.

960 00:57:03,910 --> 00:57:04,990 Quite hard times.

961 00:57:04,990 --> 00:57:10,690 Anyway-- and it was only Jewish people who really helped her

962 00:57:10,690 --> 00:57:12,140 in those days.

963 00:57:12,140 --> 00:57:18,350 And so she always had a wish to become Jewish.

964 00:57:18,350 --> 00:57:25,610 When she went to a rabbi and talked about becoming Jewish,

965 00:57:25,610 --> 00:57:29,310 he said, you must read these books, and that book.

966 00:57:29,310 --> 00:57:33,100 But Pam wasn't kind of a book reader.

967 00:57:33,100 --> 00:57:36,400 She wanted something handy, real. 968 00:57:36,400 --> 00:57:40,920 So it was something that never came to pass.

969

00:57:40,920 --> 00:57:52,770 But when we were back then in South Africa with the situation

970

00:57:52,770 --> 00:57:58,770 that we were very much involved in the Jewish community

971

00:57:58,770 --> 00:58:00,740 not the religious community so much,

972

00:58:00,740 --> 00:58:05,160 but she was working for Jewish businesses in the clothing

973

00:58:05,160 --> 00:58:06,240 industry.

974

00:58:06,240 --> 00:58:08,520 I was working for PG Glass, which

975

00:58:08,520 --> 00:58:18,960 was one of the original Jewish big companies in Johannesburg.

976

00:58:18,960 --> 00:58:23,160 And we had Jewish neighbors.

977

00:58:23,160 --> 00:58:26,670 So the whole thing came up again.

978

00:58:26,670 --> 00:58:32,550 And of course, the orthodox synagogue

00:58:32,550 --> 00:58:35,470 was just around the corner from our house where we lived.

980

00:58:35,470 --> 00:58:39,640

981

00:58:39,640 --> 00:58:48,890 But what was the moment where you're saying, I belong here.

982

00:58:48,890 --> 00:58:52,560 This is where I feel at home.

983

00:58:52,560 --> 00:58:55,240 I don't think we knew that we belonged there.

984

00:58:55,240 --> 00:58:59,380 We only realized that when we actually joined.

985

00:58:59,380 --> 00:59:08,470 But I mean, as far as I'm concerned, it was--

986

00:59:08,470 --> 00:59:11,900 I found out, for instance, that my birthday--

987

00:59:11,900 --> 00:59:15,670

988

00:59:15,670 --> 00:59:20,830 in fact, I realized that on my 22nd birthday

989

00:59:20,830 --> 00:59:26,540 in London, that was also the day when Israel became

990

00:59:26,540 --> 00:59:31,870

its own free state, which impressed me tremendously

991 00:59:31,870 --> 00:59:32,820 at the time.

992 00:59:32,820 --> 00:59:42,290 Purely as a brave new

state, a Jewish state.

993

00:59:42,290 --> 01:00:05,730 And when we were in Germany, me working for ITT,

994 01:00:05,730 --> 01:00:09,600 Pam had decided that

Pam had decided that her children would all

995 01:00:09,600 --> 01:00:12,540 be born in England.

996 01:00:12,540 --> 01:00:26,430 And she [?Gretel?] the first girl was born in a hospital

997 01:00:26,430 --> 01:00:29,140 just around from where we lived.

998 01:00:29,140 --> 01:00:36,630 And she'd made friends with the nurse there.

999 01:00:36,630 --> 01:00:43,200 And so she went back to have our son [? Karl ?] from Germany,

1000 01:00:43,200 --> 01:00:44,850 to be born there.

1001 01:00:44,850 --> 01:00:51,750 And then she persuaded the nurse Mary to join us in Stuttgart

01:00:51,750 --> 01:00:53,980 and look after the two babies.

1003

01:00:53,980 --> 01:00:58,860 And as kind of assistant.

1004

01:00:58,860 --> 01:01:04,140 Because Pam never wanted to be a home kind of mother.

1005

01:01:04,140 --> 01:01:06,210 She always wanted to be a working mother.

1006

01:01:06,210 --> 01:01:08,850

1007

01:01:08,850 --> 01:01:16,010 And then one evening there in Markgronigen we were talking.

1008

01:01:16,010 --> 01:01:21,307 And Mary said, you know, I'm a--

1009

01:01:21,307 --> 01:01:22,140 what do you call it?

1010

01:01:22,140 --> 01:01:27,070

1011

01:01:27,070 --> 01:01:28,080 What's the word again?

1012

01:01:28,080 --> 01:01:31,660

1013

01:01:31,660 --> 01:01:37,341 Somebody who is psychic.

1014

01:01:37,341 --> 01:01:38,920

A medium?

1015 01:01:38,920 --> 01:01:40,460 A medium.

1016 01:01:40,460 --> 01:01:44,070 I'm definitely a medium.

1017 01:01:44,070 --> 01:01:49,570 So we said, look, let's have a session then.

1018 01:01:49,570 --> 01:01:51,360 So we had a session.

1019 01:01:51,360 --> 01:01:59,990 And almost at once, who comes, who appears to her [INAUDIBLE]

1020 01:01:59,990 --> 01:02:02,580 she [? obviously ?] [? explains ?] my mother,

1021 01:02:02,580 --> 01:02:03,420 my dead mother.

1022 01:02:03,420 --> 01:02:04,500 My late mother.

1023 01:02:04,500 --> 01:02:05,010 Who was--

1024 01:02:05,010 --> 01:02:08,660

1025 01:02:08,660 --> 01:02:11,320 I know you mentioned this earlier.

1026 01:02:11,320 --> 01:02:12,380 Yeah.

01:02:12,380 --> 01:02:15,820 Way back in the very first part of our interview.

1028 01:02:15,820 --> 01:02:17,030 Veeb

1029 01:02:17,030 --> 01:02:21,030 Did Mary know anything of your biography?

1030 01:02:21,030 --> 01:02:22,520 Nothing at all.

1031 01:02:22,520 --> 01:02:25,450 I mean, we never talked about it.

1032 01:02:25,450 --> 01:02:28,190 And what did my mother talk about?

1033 01:02:28,190 --> 01:02:29,980 Johannesburg.

1034 01:02:29,980 --> 01:02:31,960 Johannesburg.

1035 01:02:31,960 --> 01:02:35,350 And I got more and more worked up about it.

1036 01:02:35,350 --> 01:02:38,460 Because that's the last place we wanted to get to.

1037 01:02:38,460 --> 01:02:41,450 With all the upheaval in South Africa.

1038 01:02:41,450 --> 01:02:42,610 What on Earth?

01:02:42.610 --> 01:02:47.250 You know, when I hear this voice coming up [INAUDIBLE]..

1040

 $01:02:47,250 \longrightarrow 01:02:51,870$

1041

 $01:02:51,870 \longrightarrow 01:02:57,850$ So eventually, I said, Mary, let's stop it.

1042

01:02:57,850 --> 01:03:09,120 So had a kind of [INAUDIBLE] Ouija board [INAUDIBLE] OK.

1043

 $01:03:09,120 \longrightarrow 01:03:11,210$ [INAUDIBLE]

1044

 $01:03:11,210 \longrightarrow 01:03:11,730$ Yeah.

1045

 $01:03:11,730 \longrightarrow 01:03:21,180$ So you know, at

the time, I thought

1046

 $01:03:21,180 \longrightarrow 01:03:25,660$ it was just one of those impossible kind of things.

1047

01:03:25,660 --> 01:03:31,630 Maybe Mary two years later, we were in Johannesburg.

1048

01:03:31,630 --> 01:03:34,850

1049

01:03:34,850 --> 01:03:36,390 And how did that happen?

1050

01:03:36,390 --> 01:03:38,630

Had somebody offered you a position there?

1051 01:03:38,630 --> 01:03:41,360 Did you apply for a position there?

1052 01:03:41,360 --> 01:03:42,290 No, no.

1053 01:03:42,290 --> 01:03:51,360 I mean, my great job at ITT became--

1054 01:03:51,360 --> 01:03:56,090 ITT became more and more impossible internationally.

1055 01:03:56,090 --> 01:03:58,510 They just overreached themselves.

1056 01:03:58,510 --> 01:04:02,720 Always working on takeovers, always

1057 01:04:02,720 --> 01:04:06,050 squeezing all the takeovers out of money.

1058 01:04:06,050 --> 01:04:12,780 And then of course, there was an economic,

1059 01:04:12,780 --> 01:04:17,270 what do you call it-- a crisis, when oil prices shot up.

1060 01:04:17,270 --> 01:04:20,170

1061 01:04:20,170 --> 01:04:25,630 And there was kind of financial breakdown.

01:04:25,630 --> 01:04:31,630 And of course, the ITT shares were then falling along

1063

01:04:31,630 --> 01:04:33,380 with all the other shares.

1064

01:04:33,380 --> 01:04:40,550 And ITT, when they took over other businesses,

1065

01:04:40,550 --> 01:04:43,950 they used to give people shares.

1066

01:04:43,950 --> 01:04:45,800 And they wouldn't pay cash.

1067

01:04:45,800 --> 01:04:47,400 But they would give them shares.

1068

01:04:47,400 --> 01:04:49,010 ITT shares.

1069

01:04:49,010 --> 01:04:52,640 And of course, as long as the ITT shares

1070

01:04:52,640 --> 01:04:54,860 were rising at the stock exchanges,

1071

01:04:54,860 --> 01:04:57,680 people didn't mind to have a condition

1072

01:04:57,680 --> 01:05:01,190 that for the first five years, they weren't

1073

01:05:01,190 --> 01:05:04,310 allowed to sell the shares.

1074 01:05:04,310 --> 01:05:11,840 But with the financial disaster then, of course,

1075 01:05:11,840 --> 01:05:13,490 that didn't apply anymore.

1076 01:05:13,490 --> 01:05:15,590 Nobody wanted the ITT shares.

1077 01:05:15,590 --> 01:05:18,930 Because they were losing value all the time.

1078 01:05:18,930 --> 01:05:23,600 And that was the beginning of the end of ITT

1079 01:05:23,600 --> 01:05:25,360 within a short time.

1080 01:05:25,360 --> 01:05:26,720 OK.

1081 01:05:26,720 --> 01:05:28,360 It hadn't all happened yet.

1082 01:05:28,360 --> 01:05:34,520 It was only beginning to happen when

1083 01:05:34,520 --> 01:05:36,950 towards the end of my time in Germany.

1084 01:05:36,950 --> 01:05:41,280 But we had arranged--

1085 01:05:41,280 --> 01:05:44,990 01:05:44,990 --> 01:05:53,090 my younger sister married into a German family in Namibia.

1087 01:05:53,090 --> 01:06:01,130 They were conversely the biggest, most richest family

1088 01:06:01,130 --> 01:06:02,420 in Namibia.

1089 01:06:02,420 --> 01:06:06,380 They had the only department store it Windhoek.

1090 01:06:06,380 --> 01:06:12,640 And I was, of course, had been until I joined ITT,

1091 01:06:12,640 --> 01:06:17,270 with the John Lewis Partnership as a senior manager.

1092 01:06:17,270 --> 01:06:22,130 And the son who was running that particular part

1093 01:06:22,130 --> 01:06:26,640 of the [INAUDIBLE] in Namibia.

1094 01:06:26,640 --> 01:06:31,450 He came on buying trips, always stopping off with us in England

1095 01:06:31,450 --> 01:06:34,010 and later in Germany.

1096 01:06:34,010 --> 01:06:36,620 He kept saying, no, why don't you come?

1097 01:06:36,620 --> 01:06:37,550 Take a holiday. 1098 01:06:37,550 --> 01:06:42,985 And then you can consult me on our shop in Windhoek.

1099 01:06:42,985 --> 01:06:45,780

1100 01:06:45,780 --> 01:06:50,150 And so this thing had gone on.

1101 01:06:50,150 --> 01:06:59,380 And then in 1974, or '72--

1102 01:06:59,380 --> 01:07:00,420 three.

1103 01:07:00,420 --> 01:07:02,060 '74, I think.

1104 01:07:02,060 --> 01:07:04,270 1974.

1105 01:07:04,270 --> 01:07:10,840 Just when things with ITT went not from bad to worse,

1106 01:07:10,840 --> 01:07:14,500 but began to be a possible disaster.

1107 01:07:14,500 --> 01:07:18,910

1108 01:07:18,910 --> 01:07:27,470 I had made it possible to get a job [INAUDIBLE] ITT [INAUDIBLE]

1109 01:07:27,470 --> 01:07:30,760 in South Africa.

01:07:33,700 --> 01:07:40,410 And so the idea was that Mary would take our two

1112

01:07:40,410 --> 01:07:43,940 babies to her mom in England.

1113

01:07:43,940 --> 01:07:49,500 And Pam and I would go to Johannesburg

1114

01:07:49,500 --> 01:07:54,480 and deal with this ITT issue.

1115

01:07:54,480 --> 01:08:01,860 And then we would take a three month holiday in Namibia

1116

01:08:01,860 --> 01:08:08,860 with my younger sister, and of course, her cousin--

1117

01:08:08,860 --> 01:08:16,290 her husband's brother to look after at the shop.

1118

01:08:16,290 --> 01:08:20,700 So all that then sort of materialized.

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01:08:20,700 --> 01:08:23,180 And one thing led to another.

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01:08:23,180 --> 01:08:27,779 And we got hooked for South Africa.

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01:08:27,779 --> 01:08:31,939 The family, the

[PERSONAL NAME] family

1122 01:08:31,939 --> 01:08:35,680 had not only that department store

1123

01:08:35,680 --> 01:08:41,040 in Windhoek they had also a very large part of the central area

1124

01:08:41,040 --> 01:08:46,319 of the city, which they were wanting

1125

01:08:46,319 --> 01:08:48,729 to develop in a big way.

1126

01:08:48,729 --> 01:08:55,189 And the guy from Johannesburg, who was developing [INAUDIBLE]

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01:08:55,189 --> 01:08:58,090 kind of business--

1128

01:08:58,090 --> 01:09:03,800 he was making a shopping center with a big hotel.

1129

01:09:03,800 --> 01:09:06,290 And so I got involved with him.

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01:09:06,290 --> 01:09:10,910 And he said, why don't you join me in my property development?

1131

01:09:10,910 --> 01:09:12,880 It's going great.

1132

01:09:12,880 --> 01:09:15,830 [INAUDIBLE] building big hotels and shopping centers

1133

01:09:15,830 --> 01:09:17,189

all over the place.

1134 01:09:17,189 --> 01:09:20,960 And it was a complete novelty in Southern Africa.

1135 01:09:20,960 --> 01:09:25,490 So I jumped the gun and joined him.

1136 01:09:25,490 --> 01:09:30,100 So that's how we got then to Johannesburg.

1137 01:09:30,100 --> 01:09:33,200 And he was very helpful to find for us

1138 01:09:33,200 --> 01:09:41,240 a nice big house, [? good ?] swimming pool in Johannesburg.

1139 01:09:41,240 --> 01:09:48,439 But then they did that financial crisis starting with the oil

1140 01:09:48,439 --> 01:09:52,100 prices become so high, hit also South Africa.

1141 01:09:52,100 --> 01:09:57,290 So all the financial backing for his developments

1142 01:09:57,290 --> 01:10:02,540 was stopped by the big banks and insurance companies.

1143 01:10:02,540 --> 01:10:07,690 So I suddenly found myself unemployed.

1144 01:10:07,690 --> 01:10:10,380 With a big house there.

1145

01:10:10,380 --> 01:10:16,980 And Pam found immediately a job in the clothing industry

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01:10:16,980 --> 01:10:18,780 in Johannesburg.

1147

01:10:18,780 --> 01:10:24,350 And that's how I joined PG Glass, which eventually became

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01:10:24,350 --> 01:10:28,180 Glass South Africa, a very successful family,

1149

01:10:28,180 --> 01:10:31,830 Jewish family company.

1150

01:10:31,830 --> 01:10:34,950 And we got more and more involved

1151

01:10:34,950 --> 01:10:38,140 in the Jewish side, both ways.

1152

01:10:38,140 --> 01:10:46,400 And then Pam had a partner for a time who was the leader of a--

1153

01:10:46,400 --> 01:10:51,155

1154

01:10:51,155 --> 01:10:53,680 one of those half--

1155

01:10:53,680 --> 01:10:55,520 what do you call it?

1156

01:10:55,520 --> 01:10:59,910 Not seriously-- not

This is a verbatim transcript of spoken word generated with 3Play Media. It is not the primary source, and it may contain errors in spelling or accuracy.

orthodox Jewish.

1157 01:10:59,910 --> 01:11:03,350 [INAUDIBLE] orthodox Jewish synagogue.

1158

01:11:03,350 --> 01:11:08,830 You mean like conservative, or reform, or something like that?

1159

01:11:08,830 --> 01:11:09,590 Yes

1160

01:11:09,590 --> 01:11:15,440 Something that where men and women sat side by side.

1161

01:11:15,440 --> 01:11:19,410 And it was more like a club.

1162

01:11:19,410 --> 01:11:24,170 And [INAUDIBLE] felt that was--

1163

01:11:24,170 --> 01:11:27,360 that wasn't the genuine thing.

1164

01:11:27,360 --> 01:11:34,650 And as I mentioned before, we had the shul synagogue

1165

01:11:34,650 --> 01:11:37,740 directly down the road from us.

1166

01:11:37,740 --> 01:11:42,930 And suddenly, one day, Pam noticed in the--

1167

01:11:42,930 --> 01:11:44,430 [INAUDIBLE] something on the radio.

1168

01:11:44,430 --> 01:11:48,000

And it was in [? The Star, ?] in the newspaper,

1169

01:11:48,000 --> 01:11:54,060 about the synagogue opening free telephone access

1170

01:11:54,060 --> 01:11:58,150 for anybody in trouble at any time of the day--

1171

01:11:58,150 --> 01:12:02,910 professional psychological person

1172

01:12:02,910 --> 01:12:04,950 attending to the problem.

1173

01:12:04,950 --> 01:12:10,630 And she phoned up that number.

1174

01:12:10,630 --> 01:12:14,100 And to just to congratulate them on what a wonderful thing they

1175

01:12:14,100 --> 01:12:22,020 were doing, which was answered by the [INAUDIBLE] of the shul.

1176

01:12:22,020 --> 01:12:24,030 They had a very good talk.

1177

01:12:24,030 --> 01:12:29,690 And she said, you know, we've been looking for a way.

1178

01:12:29,690 --> 01:12:32,460 Oh, she said, you must talk to my husband.

1179

01:12:32,460 --> 01:12:35,400 I will arrange it.

01:12:35,400 --> 01:12:37,860 And that's how we--

1181

01:12:37,860 --> 01:12:42,605 And he was a very

straightforward rabbi.

1182

01:12:42,605 --> 01:12:45,420

1183

01:12:45,420 --> 01:12:50,640 Didn't beat around the bush, and said, oh, you think you--

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01:12:50,640 --> 01:12:52,360 this is your choice.

1185

01:12:52,360 --> 01:12:54,970 But if you do choose--

1186

01:12:54,970 --> 01:13:00,060 if you make the choice, it will be tough for you.

1187

01:13:00,060 --> 01:13:03,330 The children will have to go to a yeshiva college.

1188

01:13:03,330 --> 01:13:06,810 Take them out of your existing schools.

1189

01:13:06,810 --> 01:13:12,940 And you have to come to shul every Friday, Shabbos.

1190

01:13:12,940 --> 01:13:15,470

1191

01:13:15,470 --> 01:13:21,230

And in no time at all, we were in.

01:13:21,230 --> 01:13:28,640 And we were met as friends, not as sort of foreign intruders

1193

01:13:28,640 --> 01:13:30,280 or anything like that.

1194

01:13:30,280 --> 01:13:36,470 We made friends for life almost straightaway in that shul.

1195

01:13:36,470 --> 01:13:39,460

1196

01:13:39,460 --> 01:13:43,630 What drew you there?

1197

01:13:43,630 --> 01:13:45,840 I mean, you were born Catholic.

1198

01:13:45,840 --> 01:13:49,360 You're not particularly from a practicing family, but not

1199

01:13:49,360 --> 01:13:51,790 an anti-religious family.

1200

01:13:51,790 --> 01:13:55,810 Had you-- had anything appealed to you

1201

01:13:55,810 --> 01:13:59,830 earlier in the tradition you were born into?

1202

01:13:59,830 --> 01:14:02,320 Or did you have any religious feeling?

1203

01:14:02,320 --> 01:14:06,790 Or was it a religious

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impulse, a need

1204

01:14:06,790 --> 01:14:10,300 for having a faith community, that brought you

1205

01:14:10,300 --> 01:14:12,910 to that congregation?

1206

01:14:12,910 --> 01:14:16,630 Can you explain a little bit about how

1207

01:14:16,630 --> 01:14:20,810 it is that it spoke to you?

1208

01:14:20,810 --> 01:14:22,670 In every possible way.

1209

01:14:22,670 --> 01:14:27,230 I mean, our neighbors and the people

1210

01:14:27,230 --> 01:14:29,970 in businesses which we knew--

1211

01:14:29,970 --> 01:14:32,150 not all of them were religious Jews,

1212

01:14:32,150 --> 01:14:34,670 but they were all very nice people.

1213

01:14:34,670 --> 01:14:37,480 The kind of people you feel you trust.

1214

01:14:37,480 --> 01:14:38,450 Trustworthy.

1215

01:14:38,450 --> 01:14:43,910

And then I had already this kind of love

1216

01:14:43,910 --> 01:14:46,760 for Israel, the way that they'd risen out

1217

01:14:46,760 --> 01:14:49,070 of nowhere after the war.

1218

01:14:49,070 --> 01:14:56,230 And coupled with my own birthday by coincidence, maybe.

1219

01:14:56,230 --> 01:15:00,260 And we actually--

1220

01:15:00,260 --> 01:15:06,890 Rivka and I-- we were then [INAUDIBLE] in 1972,

1221

01:15:06,890 --> 01:15:08,300 in Germany.

1222

01:15:08,300 --> 01:15:13,220 Germany had no--

1223

01:15:13,220 --> 01:15:18,560 German tourists weren't accepted in Israel until 1972.

1224

01:15:18,560 --> 01:15:25,090 Suddenly there was an offer for two weeks

1225

01:15:25,090 --> 01:15:26,540 travel through Israel.

1226

01:15:26,540 --> 01:15:28,350 So we applied.

1227

01:15:28,350 --> 01:15:30,100

Mary took the babies.

1228

01:15:30,100 --> 01:15:35,540 And again, we had an extraordinary lovely time

1229

01:15:35,540 --> 01:15:39,000 in Israel with this German group.

1230

01:15:39,000 --> 01:15:42,684

1231

01:15:42,684 --> 01:15:47,980 And everything sort of added to the next all the time.

1232

01:15:47,980 --> 01:15:50,960

1233

01:15:50,960 --> 01:15:54,710 It became almost obvious that we would--

1234

01:15:54,710 --> 01:15:57,830

1235

01:15:57,830 --> 01:16:04,170 when we went to that not serious kind of shul that was,

1236

01:16:04,170 --> 01:16:06,520 shall we say, put us off.

1237

01:16:06,520 --> 01:16:12,940 But we always felt that orthodox sounded rather formidable.

1238

01:16:12,940 --> 01:16:19,510 But when Pam talked to rabbis in there, and the rabbi

01:16:19,510 --> 01:16:23,770 himself, making it all a kind of straightforward issue,

1240

01:16:23,770 --> 01:16:30,280 just make your mind and mean it, type of attitude, we were in.

1241

01:16:30,280 --> 01:16:32,790 And we were accepted everywhere.

1242

01:16:32,790 --> 01:16:37,150 And Pam was immediately in with the Women's [? Guild. ?] And I

1243

01:16:37,150 --> 01:16:41,880 got involved with the [?guarding of the?] shul [?so I

1244

01:16:41,880 --> 01:16:43,690 had to do guard duties?].

1245

01:16:43,690 --> 01:16:45,910 But we were among [INAUDIBLE] people.

1246

01:16:45,910 --> 01:16:48,860

1247

01:16:48,860 --> 01:16:52,030 We were friends with almost automatically.

1248

01:16:52,030 --> 01:16:55,460 So the extra hardship was, of course,

1249

01:16:55,460 --> 01:17:00,480 to keep to learn, and learn, and learn, never stop learning.

1250

01:17:00,480 --> 01:17:03,280

01:17:03,280 --> 01:17:07,330

The fact of keeping

Shabbos, what a difference

1252

01:17:07,330 --> 01:17:08,710

it made to our lives.

1253

01:17:08,710 --> 01:17:10,080

Can't believe.

1254

01:17:10,080 --> 01:17:12,370

You know, before

that, the weekend

1255

01:17:12,370 --> 01:17:16,770

was just one rush, rush, rush.

1256

01:17:16,770 --> 01:17:19,250

And of course the week as well.

1257

01:17:19,250 --> 01:17:21,910

And now suddenly, you

had a complete break.

1258

01:17:21,910 --> 01:17:23,020

You sat back.

1259

01:17:23,020 --> 01:17:25,840

You went to shul always

with nice people.

1260

01:17:25,840 --> 01:17:29,290

1261

01:17:29,290 --> 01:17:30,230

Hello?

1262

01:17:30,230 --> 01:17:31,150

Yeah.

01:17:31,150 --> 01:17:31,720 I'm here.

1264

01:17:31,720 --> 01:17:33,920 I'm here.

1265

01:17:33,920 --> 01:17:35,440 Can you hear me?

1266

01:17:35,440 --> 01:17:36,270 I can hear you.

1267

01:17:36,270 --> 01:17:36,770 OK.

1268

01:17:36,770 --> 01:17:39,520 Except I can't see you.

1269

01:17:39,520 --> 01:17:42,790 Can you see me now?

1270

01:17:42,790 --> 01:17:44,710 Can you see me now?

1271

01:17:44,710 --> 01:17:46,460 No.

1272

01:17:46,460 --> 01:17:47,410 I don't know.

1273

01:17:47,410 --> 01:17:50,020 Is there anything I can do?

1274

01:17:50,020 --> 01:17:52,590

1275

01:17:52,590 --> 01:17:55,260 Well, it's interesting, because at my end,

1276

01:17:55,260 --> 01:17:58,290

now when I'm speaking, I've turned the video off.

1277

01:17:58,290 --> 01:18:03,360 But I had turned it on before.

1278

01:18:03,360 --> 01:18:10,790 And we're coming, I think, close to the end of our interview.

1279

01:18:10,790 --> 01:18:13,800 But I wanted to ask a few more questions.

1280

01:18:13,800 --> 01:18:18,500 And let's see if we can keep on going this way.

1281

01:18:18,500 --> 01:18:20,160 OK.

1282

01:18:20,160 --> 01:18:26,400 And the question is is that did your life in Germany--

1283

01:18:26,400 --> 01:18:30,810 did your biography, did the fact that you belonged

1284

01:18:30,810 --> 01:18:34,560 to the Waffen SS of all things, did

1285

01:18:34,560 --> 01:18:39,500 that ever make a difference?

1286

01:18:39,500 --> 01:18:42,180 I mean, did anyone raise any eyebrows

1287

01:18:42,180 --> 01:18:43,460 when you joined the community?

1288

01:18:43,460 --> 01:18:46,620 Did you ever share your biography to the same degree

1289

01:18:46,620 --> 01:18:48,030 that we have right now?

1290

01:18:48,030 --> 01:18:49,221 Yes.

1291

01:18:49,221 --> 01:18:52,830 It's like in every good household or family,

1292

01:18:52,830 --> 01:18:56,520 the last thing that people were going to ask

1293

01:18:56,520 --> 01:19:00,330 is any awkward questions about my past.

1294

01:19:00,330 --> 01:19:05,790 Not even the chief rabbi, or any of the rabbis,

1295

01:19:05,790 --> 01:19:12,305 would actually probe me on that kind of detail.

1296

01:19:12,305 --> 01:19:15,080

1297

01:19:15,080 --> 01:19:19,310 And I was obviously also not--

1298

01:19:19,310 --> 01:19:22,920 I didn't want to flaunt my Waffen SS thing.

1299

01:19:22,920 --> 01:19:28,320 It was a problem that I

solved, I think, in my way,

1300

01:19:28,320 --> 01:19:29,730 quite successfully.

1301

01:19:29,730 --> 01:19:33,230 But you know, it wasn't something

1302

01:19:33,230 --> 01:19:38,190 I could sell as a good deed or something like that.

1303

01:19:38,190 --> 01:19:40,710 Was it?

1304

01:19:40,710 --> 01:19:41,210 No.

1305

01:19:41,210 --> 01:19:43,210 I mean, that's one of the reasons I bring it up.

1306

01:19:43,210 --> 01:19:44,820 Is because it's ironic.

1307

01:19:44,820 --> 01:19:45,320 It's very--

1308

01:19:45,320 --> 01:19:46,530 [INAUDIBLE]

1309

01:19:46,530 --> 01:19:50,450 The fact that I could lead my Waffen SS group away

1310

01:19:50,450 --> 01:19:53,330 from fighting and killing the Russians,

1311

01:19:53,330 --> 01:19:57,360 or the Russians killing

them, and so on.

1312 01:19:57,360 --> 01:19:59,720 You know, I felt proud I was able to do

1313

01:19:59,720 --> 01:20:02,430 that in the circumstances.

1314 01:20:02,430 --> 01:20:04,550 And I certainly had always intended

1315 01:20:04,550 --> 01:20:09,350 to stop killing wherever I could.

1316 01:20:09,350 --> 01:20:13,730 But you know, it's a kind of tricky, tricky thing

1317 01:20:13,730 --> 01:20:14,910 to talk about.

1318 01:20:14,910 --> 01:20:15,410 Isn't it?

1319 01:20:15,410 --> 01:20:18,240

1320 01:20:18,240 --> 01:20:19,380 Well, of course.

1321 01:20:19,380 --> 01:20:20,470 Of course.

1322 01:20:20,470 --> 01:20:22,245 So this is why I wonder.

1323 01:20:22,245 --> 01:20:24,750 1324

01:20:24,750 --> 01:20:30,330 I was accepted, not only by the people there.

1325

01:20:30,330 --> 01:20:33,510 I was accepted by two chief rabbis, or three, actually.

1326

01:20:33,510 --> 01:20:36,990

1327

01:20:36,990 --> 01:20:38,940 We were accepted in a family.

1328

01:20:38,940 --> 01:20:40,050 No questions asked.

1329

01:20:40,050 --> 01:20:42,060 No awkward questions asked.

1330

01:20:42,060 --> 01:20:46,170 And the fact that we were positive and helped [INAUDIBLE]

1331

01:20:46,170 --> 01:20:50,115 making our contribution at the shul, that's all that counted.

1332

01:20:50,115 --> 01:20:53,420

1333

01:20:53,420 --> 01:21:02,150 Did this turn in your life make you re-evaluate the events

1334

01:21:02,150 --> 01:21:03,890 of your earlier life--

1335

01:21:03,890 --> 01:21:06,110 the events of your growing up?

1336

01:21:06,110 --> 01:21:12,170 And did you know more or explore more as

1337 01:21:12,170 --> 01:21:16,310 to what Germany had done, and what German Jews'

1338 01:21:16,310 --> 01:21:18,380 experience had been?

1339 01:21:18,380 --> 01:21:22,340 Or had that already happened before you take the step

1340 01:21:22,340 --> 01:21:27,180 to actually convert to Judaism?

1341 01:21:27,180 --> 01:21:31,900 Well, I mean, I--

1342 01:21:31,900 --> 01:21:38,380 certainly, it had its effect on me.

1343 01:21:38,380 --> 01:21:41,050 But it wasn't part of my daily life.

1344 01:21:41,050 --> 01:21:44,360 It was something that I would read about.

1345 01:21:44,360 --> 01:21:52,090 I bought the books that were written and read them.

1346 01:21:52,090 --> 01:21:55,870

1347 01:21:55,870 --> 01:22:03,550 [? Even in ?] that South African community, where there were-- 1348 01:22:03,550 --> 01:22:14,360 I met a number of survivors from death camps.

1349 01:22:14,360 --> 01:22:19,240 And the strange thing was, with all of them,

1350 01:22:19,240 --> 01:22:21,760 I had especially good relationships,

1351 01:22:21,760 --> 01:22:28,050 without any explanation, if you like.

1352 01:22:28,050 --> 01:22:31,860

1353 01:22:31,860 --> 01:22:33,030 It was quite amazing.

1354 01:22:33,030 --> 01:22:43,170

1355 01:22:43,170 --> 01:22:51,050 I am wondering-- did you tell your family back in Germany?

1356 01:22:51,050 --> 01:22:57,100 And was there any reaction on, let's

1357 01:22:57,100 --> 01:23:00,400 say, I mean, your family is not just German, but German

1358 01:23:00,400 --> 01:23:02,810 Austrian [INAUDIBLE] you know.

1359 01:23:02,810 --> 01:23:06,400 And did you ever share this development with them?

1360 01:23:06,400 --> 01:23:11,430 And that you and Pam convert and that your names now

1361 01:23:11,430 --> 01:23:12,565 are Itzhak and Rivka?

1362 01:23:12,565 --> 01:23:15,410

1363 01:23:15,410 --> 01:23:17,000 Well--

1364 01:23:17,000 --> 01:23:19,930 How did they react, in other words?

1365 01:23:19,930 --> 01:23:23,510 They reacted positive, because we

1366 01:23:23,510 --> 01:23:29,600 have had always good relationships with my family.

1367 01:23:29,600 --> 01:23:35,930 They sort of said, well, you know, great, but [INAUDIBLE]

1368 01:23:35,930 --> 01:23:38,240 our friends when they met them.

1369 01:23:38,240 --> 01:23:47,150 But they weren't automatically following our footsteps,

1370 01:23:47,150 --> 01:23:50,010 if you like.

1371

01:23:50,010 --> 01:23:54,130 I mean, the most difficult thing was always

1372 01:23:54,130 --> 01:23:58,600 the question of food and meals, and that kind of thing.

1373 01:23:58,600 --> 01:24:04,850 Which sort of has its moments of problems, [INAUDIBLE]..

1374 01:24:04,850 --> 01:24:07,360 You know, when they invite you, can they

1375 01:24:07,360 --> 01:24:08,910 be up to kosher standard.

1376 01:24:08,910 --> 01:24:11,420

1377 01:24:11,420 --> 01:24:14,600 Those were kind of the internal problems

1378 01:24:14,600 --> 01:24:20,410 that sometimes made the relations difficult. Still do.

1379 01:24:20,410 --> 01:24:25,070

1380 01:24:25,070 --> 01:24:26,900 But [INAUDIBLE].

1381 01:24:26,900 --> 01:24:27,400 OK.

1382 01:24:27,400 --> 01:24:31,680 01:24:31,680 --> 01:24:34,440 Did conversion to Judaism mean that you

1384 01:24:34,440 --> 01:24:37,510 became a religious person?

1385 01:24:37,510 --> 01:24:40,320 And now I'm looking not at the traditions and the rituals,

1386 01:24:40,320 --> 01:24:42,520 but the faith aspect.

1387 01:24:42,520 --> 01:24:43,730 Yeah.

1388 01:24:43,730 --> 01:24:45,270 We both did.

1389 01:24:45,270 --> 01:24:48,800 And the fact that--

1390 01:24:48,800 --> 01:24:54,110 I mean, Rivka and I are quite different personalities.

1391 01:24:54,110 --> 01:24:57,840 I think that's why our marriage is so strong.

1392 01:24:57,840 --> 01:25:05,960 Because she makes up where I'm not so strong and vise versa.

1393 01:25:05,960 --> 01:25:10,460 And it certainly gave us a tremendous uplift.

1394 01:25:10,460 --> 01:25:22,800 So as far as meeting my parents, we were sort of-- 1395 01:25:22,800 --> 01:25:27,500 they found us better people to deal with.

1396 01:25:27,500 --> 01:25:31,965 More friendly, more helpful, [INAUDIBLE]..

1397 01:25:31,965 --> 01:25:34,860

1398 01:25:34,860 --> 01:25:38,230 The relationships-all our relationships

1399 01:25:38,230 --> 01:25:40,860 improved, whether they were religious or not.

1400 01:25:40,860 --> 01:25:44,940

1401 01:25:44,940 --> 01:25:46,650 That's quite something.

1402 01:25:46,650 --> 01:25:47,520 It is amazing.

1403 01:25:47,520 --> 01:25:54,310

1404 01:25:54,310 --> 01:26:00,140 I'm pausing now because in some ways, I'm at a loss for--

1405 01:26:00,140 --> 01:26:02,280 I mean, I have more questions.

1406 01:26:02,280 --> 01:26:06,965 But yours is such an unusual story. 1407 01:26:06,965 --> 01:26:08,450 Maybe.

1408 01:26:08,450 --> 01:26:10,980 Maybe we can talk again.

1409 01:26:10,980 --> 01:26:17,130 There are probably definitely more

1410 01:26:17,130 --> 01:26:19,920 stories to be talked about, or more

1411 01:26:19,920 --> 01:26:24,830 lives to be explored if you like.

1412 01:26:24,830 --> 01:26:28,280 I mean, certainly for us, what I've

1413 01:26:28,280 --> 01:26:32,740 said to you is just a few words, which certainly

1414 01:26:32,740 --> 01:26:36,150 doesn't cover the whole range.

1415 01:26:36,150 --> 01:26:36,850 OK.

1416 01:26:36,850 --> 01:26:39,280 Then I would suggest that maybe we look

1417 01:26:39,280 --> 01:26:41,620 at this in the following way.

1418 01:26:41,620 --> 01:26:46,300 That for the purposes of our interview, 1419 01:26:46,300 --> 01:26:49,720 our official interview, what we talked about

1420 01:26:49,720 --> 01:26:53,470 over the past several days-- and I

1421 01:26:53,470 --> 01:26:58,120 think it's been four or five days, for the past two weeks,

1422 01:26:58,120 --> 01:27:00,250 is we consider it a whole.

1423 01:27:00,250 --> 01:27:05,050 That we consider this an entire interview.

1424 01:27:05,050 --> 01:27:11,260 And if we speak in the future, then as an accretion to it.

1425 01:27:11,260 --> 01:27:15,880 That is, if there are questions that I think of,

1426 01:27:15,880 --> 01:27:17,500 and I will get in touch with you.

1427 01:27:17,500 --> 01:27:21,430 If there are things that you think we talked about so much,

1428 01:27:21,430 --> 01:27:23,770 but we didn't talk about this, and this

1429 01:27:23,770 --> 01:27:26,500 is an important aspect of the story, 1430 01:27:26,500 --> 01:27:28,270 then you get in touch with me.

1431 01:27:28,270 --> 01:27:33,142 And we set up sort of like a follow up time.

1432 01:27:33,142 --> 01:27:34,540 Yeah.

1433 01:27:34,540 --> 01:27:38,350 And then we can address those things.

1434 01:27:38,350 --> 01:27:44,790 But for right now, I would say, do you agree that--

1435 01:27:44,790 --> 01:27:49,600 let's say we've kind of come from one end

1436 01:27:49,600 --> 01:27:56,080 to another, and full circle, when we talk about your life

1437 01:27:56,080 --> 01:28:00,010 and your growing up years.

1438 01:28:00,010 --> 01:28:05,650 The Holocaust, and you finding a spiritual home

1439 01:28:05,650 --> 01:28:07,950 in Orthodox Judaism.

1440 01:28:07,950 --> 01:28:08,770 Yeah.

1441 01:28:08,770 --> 01:28:12,620 Would you agree that we've kind of covered at least the bases?

1442

01:28:12,620 --> 01:28:13,120 Yes.

1443

01:28:13,120 --> 01:28:17,770 I would say that is roughly so, yes.

1444

01:28:17,770 --> 01:28:19,810 But obviously, there's a lot more

1445

01:28:19,810 --> 01:28:23,560 that can be said on every page, if you like.

1446

01:28:23,560 --> 01:28:24,190 Yeah.

1447

01:28:24,190 --> 01:28:25,970 Yeah, true.

1448

01:28:25,970 --> 01:28:29,710 So then let's do it this way.

1449

01:28:29,710 --> 01:28:32,720 I will conclude this interview.

1450

01:28:32,720 --> 01:28:35,980 And there's a few words that I say at the end to do that.

1451

01:28:35,980 --> 01:28:38,980 And we keep in touch.

1452

01:28:38,980 --> 01:28:43,600 And as I say, if there are more questions that I will have,

1453

01:28:43,600 --> 01:28:50,140 if there are more aspects, or

events, or thoughts that you

1454 01:28:50,140 --> 01:28:53,350 have, we write them down.

1455 01:28:53,350 --> 01:28:55,900 And then we make another appointment.

1456 01:28:55,900 --> 01:28:57,620 How does that sound?

1457 01:28:57,620 --> 01:28:59,310 Very good, yeah.

1458 01:28:59,310 --> 01:29:01,010 OK.

1459 01:29:01,010 --> 01:29:03,220 But tell me, what are you actually going

1460 01:29:03,220 --> 01:29:06,350 to do with what you've got now?

1461 01:29:06,350 --> 01:29:06,850 OK.

1462 01:29:06,850 --> 01:29:11,230 With what we've got now is that--

1463 01:29:11,230 --> 01:29:13,610 and I'll say this while I'm still recording

1464 01:29:13,610 --> 01:29:15,730 so it would be obvious.

1465 01:29:15,730 --> 01:29:21,640 Is that this interview will be pulled together 1466 01:29:21,640 --> 01:29:24,910 to become one after all of the several days

1467 01:29:24,910 --> 01:29:26,620 that we have talked.

1468 01:29:26,620 --> 01:29:30,880 And it will be a part of the United States Holocaust

1469 01:29:30,880 --> 01:29:33,320 Memorial Museum archives.

1470 01:29:33,320 --> 01:29:38,740 And our policy now is to put all interviews online

1471 01:29:38,740 --> 01:29:41,930 so that people could hear them, see them.

1472 01:29:41,930 --> 01:29:44,290 Your children could.

1473 01:29:44,290 --> 01:29:47,590 Friends and relatives could from wherever they are.

1474 01:29:47,590 --> 01:29:50,480 And it would be through our website.

1475 01:29:50,480 --> 01:29:56,080 So that is what, when we sent out a release form to you

1476 01:29:56,080 --> 01:29:58,090 and you sent it back, and you signed it,

1477

01:29:58,090 --> 01:30:00,560 that is basically what was done.

1478

01:30:00,560 --> 01:30:06,430 Now if you have any reservations about this interview being

1479 01:30:06,430 --> 01:30:11,770 shown online, then you must tell me.

1480

01:30:11,770 --> 01:30:17,080 And we would explore what those reservations are, and then make

1481

01:30:17,080 --> 01:30:19,190 some adjustments.

1482

01:30:19,190 --> 01:30:21,960 But generally, this is how it is handled.

1483

01:30:21,960 --> 01:30:26,470 And in addition to that, after it goes online,

1484

01:30:26,470 --> 01:30:29,900 we find a way of getting you a copy of it.

1485

01:30:29,900 --> 01:30:33,880 So that would either be sent electronically,

1486

01:30:33,880 --> 01:30:36,950 or on a flash drive, on a DVD.

1487

01:30:36,950 --> 01:30:40,765 And that will most likely happen when we get back to the office.

1488

01:30:40,765 --> 01:30:41,265

Yeah.

1489 01:30:41,265 --> 01:30:45,090

1490 01:30:45,090 --> 01:30:48,520 So does this sound acceptable to you?

1491 01:30:48,520 --> 01:30:52,750 Well, it's perfectly acceptable.

1492 01:30:52,750 --> 01:30:54,730 I've got no problem.

1493 01:30:54,730 --> 01:30:55,720 OK.

1494 01:30:55,720 --> 01:30:56,320 OK.

1495 01:30:56,320 --> 01:30:57,490 Thank you.

1496 01:30:57,490 --> 01:30:58,450 Thank you.

1497 01:30:58,450 --> 01:31:01,120 And thank you then for all the days

1498 01:31:01,120 --> 01:31:06,130 that you have sat and shared your story with me,

1499 01:31:06,130 --> 01:31:12,610 your thoughts, your impressions, all of our technical glitches

1500 01:31:12,610 --> 01:31:18,250 that we have overcome in the end. 1501 01:31:18,250 --> 01:31:20,420 Before I say my concluding words,

1502 01:31:20,420 --> 01:31:22,660 is there any final thought that you

1503 01:31:22,660 --> 01:31:24,760 would like to share with everybody who will

1504 01:31:24,760 --> 01:31:27,010 be listening to this interview?

1505 01:31:27,010 --> 01:31:29,700

1506 01:31:29,700 --> 01:31:35,130 I'm very, very grateful for you for having interviewed

1507 01:31:35,130 --> 01:31:38,430 me so sympathetically.

1508 01:31:38,430 --> 01:31:45,570 And I apologize for my old age forgetfulness so many times.

1509 01:31:45,570 --> 01:31:50,160 But as far as I'm concerned, this interview

1510 01:31:50,160 --> 01:31:55,890 was a very nice, meaningful experience for me.

1511 01:31:55,890 --> 01:31:56,940 Thank you.

1512 01:31:56,940 --> 01:31:58,290 Well, thank you too. 1513 01:31:58,290 --> 01:31:59,760 Thank you too.

1514 01:31:59,760 --> 01:32:04,080 And I will say then that this concludes the United States

1515 01:32:04,080 --> 01:32:08,430 Holocaust Memorial Museum interview with Mr. Helmut--

1516 01:32:08,430 --> 01:32:15,730 now Yitzhaq von Schweitzer on June 30, 2020.

1517 01:32:15,730 --> 01:32:17,970 And thank you again.

1518 01:32:17,970 --> 01:32:21,040 Thank you very, very much.

1519 01:32:21,040 --> 01:32:21,770 OK.

1520 01:32:21,770 --> 01:32:22,790 Thank you.

1521 01:32:22,790 --> 01:32:23,820 OK.

1522 01:32:23,820 --> 01:32:32,620 So now I am going to--

1523 01:32:32,620 --> 01:32:33,670 hang on just a second.

1524 01:32:33,670 --> 01:32:37,201

1525 01:32:37,201 --> 01:32:39,510 Can I come and say goodbye to her?

1526 01:32:39,510 --> 01:32:40,240 Yes, yes.

1527 01:32:40,240 --> 01:32:41,200 Yes, absolutely.

1528 01:32:41,200 --> 01:32:43,180 Wait a second though.

1529 01:32:43,180 --> 01:32:45,040 I want to stop the recording.

1530 01:32:45,040 --> 01:32:48,100 And I am finding it difficult to do so.

1531 01:32:48,100 --> 01:32:49,630 Hang on a minute.

1532 01:32:49,630 --> 01:32:51,600 There we are.