

Mr. Fulda reel one. Could we start please by your telling me where you were born and something about your family background, please?

Yes. I was born in Munich in 1922. And I have a sister also, who is 4 and 1/2 years older than I. My parents met in Munich, actually.

They were both there because of the university. And mother studied in Munich. Father, actually, when they met, had already finished his formal education.

Were both of your parents Bavarians?

No, Father came from the Rhineland, from Darmstadt and Mother came from the East, from Breslau, East Germany. Well, Eastern Germany, Breslau is in Silesia, which now is Polish. And so they decided to settle in Munich. Munich is a very nice area to live in, very pleasant.

What did your father do for a living?

Well, my father was a chartered engineer, known in Germany as [GERMAN] engineer. And he was a designer of heating, ventilating, and air conditioning systems, the air conditioning systems, such as they were in the 1920s or before. They were still very primitive compared with air conditioning nowadays. But nevertheless, there were certain areas and buildings and factories that were air conditioned, even in those days. And he was a designer.

And later on, apart from designing, which really comes under the heading of consulting, he also was a contractor. So having designed various systems, he had a firm and men, qualified craftsmen, who could install an installation in accordance with the plans prepared for them.

Were your parents interested in politics?

No, not really. They took a certain interest. But I wouldn't say that they were terribly interested in politics. They obviously knew pretty well what was going on in the world. But you could hardly call that being interested in politics.

They became more interested as time went on because it affected us very much more. I was born in '22, which was just, I think, around about the time of the inflation, top inflation in Germany. And things were economically pretty difficult. But my father managed reasonably well in his business.

Where did you go to school?

I went to school in Munich. I went to a first school, a primary school, and then to a grammar school. And I stayed at the grammar school until 1938, spring 1938.

Do you remember the coming to power of the national socialists?

Oh, yes, I do. Although that was, of course, in 1933. And Munich really was very much a hotbed for Nazism, as you know. I do remember it. I was then 10, just 10.

What specifically do you remember?

Well, I remember that in Munich, a large part of the population at that time was still anti-Nazi, quite a large part of the population. And Munich being the capital of Bavaria, felt very strongly about their flag. And so at the town hall in Munich, usually the blue and white flag, which is the Bavarian flag, was fluttering.

And when the Nazis came to power that was taken down and the swastika was raised. I remember that. But it wasn't there for more than a few hours when down came the swastika, and up went the Bavarian flag. And that went on for a

few days, up and down. So there was a certain amount of resistance at the time.

Was it crowds who took the National Socialist flag down?

That I don't know. I don't know who took it down. But I know it came down once or twice. And I didn't see that myself.

But I did see quite a lot of things going on in the town later on, not in 1933. Because I had a bicycle, and wherever I had to go, Munich not being such a huge city at that time, it was quite easy to cycle. For instance, to school, or I had piano lessons, and I had some fencing instructions. And wherever I had to go, I went on my bicycle.

And what did you see?

In 1938, I suppose, I saw something which not that many people have seen. And that was during the conference between Hitler and Mussolini, Daladier, and Chamberlain, who came to Munich to have their discussions. And I saw it. I didn't realize it.

But I just happened to be on one of those occasions on my bicycle when I saw that these four people walked into a hotel. Name of the hotel was-- I remember that. In fact, I walked past it. It's not a hotel anymore now.

But I walked past it early this year when I happened to be in Munich, Hotel Regina. And that is where they had their conference. And I remember quite distinctly Mr. Chamberlain walking to the conference with his umbrella over his arm.

Were there crowds outside?

There were quite a lot of people, but not a tremendous amount. And I was very, very close, really. I was on the other side of the road opposite the entrance to the hotel.

And I saw them all arrive. I just got off my bicycle and I watched, like quite a lot of other people. I don't think many people knew that perhaps that conference was there at a particular time. Because no, I wouldn't say it was terribly crowded.

Yes, there were people. But it wasn't a mass of people. And that, to me, although I didn't look out for that, to me there didn't seem to be very much in the way of police protection.

I was going to say, it doesn't sound as though there was a great deal of security.

Well, if there was, I certainly didn't see very much. But I mean, at that time, I was how old? I was 14. And so obviously I was more interested to see what was going on. And I didn't notice any-- very much security. I did see a few policemen, but nothing very special, nothing very extraordinary. So that was quite an interesting--

I think you were 15, possibly, in 1938.

Well, you see my birthday is in December. So I would have been 15 in December '38. And this was in September.

But you were born in '22.

Yes, you're right. Yes, quite right, quite right. Yes, I can't count. [LAUGHS]

Did the coming to power of the National Socialists have any effect on your schooling?

Well, it was very unpleasant. Because coming from a Jewish background, one had to put up with quite a lot. And there was a lot of anti-Semitism at school.

Had there been anti-Semitism before they took over?

No, no. And there would have been anti-Semitism, presumably. But I didn't really notice it because that was still during my primary school days. And certainly I didn't notice anything. No, I think, so far as I'm concerned, the anti-Semitism that I felt was really after I started at the grammar school when I was 11.

Did you feel that it happened because, as it were, a cork had been taken out of a bottle, or that it was actually pushed and then encouraged by the teachers of the school?

I think my impression was that some teachers had been indoctrinated and others not. There were teachers who didn't follow the Nazi line. In fact, I had one teacher, he taught English. And he was a man who studied in Oxford, he told us. And I'm not quite sure how long he stayed in England.

But he was particularly nice, so far as I was concerned. He tried to help me along. He knew, obviously, what it was all about. And in fact, I visited him after the war. But he was the exception.

Could you distinguish, on the other hand, teachers who were strong supporters of the regime?

Yes, yes, there were several. And remarks were being made by these teachers about the undesirability of having Jews amongst them. And of course, there were a number of the classmates that were hostile, unfriendly. And altogether, it was a very unpleasant-- as time, as years went on, it got progressively worse.

I mean, in 1933, '34, as far as school was concerned, it wasn't nearly as unpleasant as 1935, 1936, and later. It deteriorated all the time. It was a gradual process, as I remember it.

So they were more or less making out that you weren't loyal Germans or something?

No, I don't think that was so much the case. Rather you were a Jew, if you like. And because you're a Jew, you are undesirable. You shouldn't be here at all.

That was more the sort of message. Being a loyal German didn't really come into it. I can't remember that.

Had you felt yourself a loyal German before they came into power?

I would say I felt I was a German. Loyalty or otherwise, for a boy, a teenager, didn't really mean an awful lot. I was just a German. And here we were. And because my religion was different to other people's, I was in some way-- I wouldn't say persecuted, but life was made difficult just because of that.

And of course, the encouragement for that came through these various propaganda means, which were used particularly by people like Goebbels and Streicher. And you could see, particularly Streicher, he had this famous journal, The *Sturmer*, which was displayed in various places in the town. And people could read all about Jews. And it wasn't very flattering. That's an understatement, of course.

Were there, at this time, physical assaults on the Jewish people in Munich?

Not as far as I know. There may have been in exceptional cases. But certainly at that time, it wasn't the case.

No, no, that happened later, after the Kristallnacht in 1938. Then really things deteriorated with a jerk, considerably.

Were you in Munich then?

I was in Munich at the time, yes.

What are your memories of Kristallnacht?

Well, the memories are that I woke up at 2:30 in the morning. And several Gestapo members were at the door and came in. And my father was taken away to Dachau.

Fortunately for me, they didn't take me. So at that time I was still only 15. And I was very lucky.

Was there any violence offered when they came?

No, no, no, it was, so far as I remember, a fairly quiet affair which took perhaps half an hour or so. And he was taken away. And that was about 3 o'clock in the morning.

Was he allowed to take something?

Only what he wore. No, he didn't. He couldn't take anything with him, nothing at all. And of course, we weren't told where he was going. We didn't know.

So you only found out afterwards it was Dachau?

Yes, it took quite a while. Rumors spread a few days after that. And we assumed that that is where people were taken. Because practically all Jewish men in Munich were taken to Dachau, practically all. There may have been the odd exception, or perhaps a person wasn't at home. But generally speaking, everybody was taken to Dachau, which is only 10 or 11 miles northwest of Munich.

Did you lose contact with him then, or were you able to--

We didn't hear. We didn't hear anything at all. Until about four weeks after my father was taken to Dachau, when we had a postcard from him saying that he was well and also giving us certain information and instructions as to what we should be doing so far as the business is concerned. But we obviously knew that he wasn't very well. Maybe reasonably well physically, but who could be well?

We knew enough about Dachau even then, even before this happened, to realize that it was a terrible place. Because prior to 1938-- I'm not quite sure when in fact it was-- Dachau was converted to a concentration camp. Because it was an establishment of a kind already before, it was a gunpowder factory during the First World War.

And so I knew there was an establishment there. And I'm guessing, possibly, perhaps during the mid-'30s, it was built as a concentration camp. And certain people in Munich were taken there, but not political prisoners.

There were-- for instance, people who were drunkards were taken there. And they were given a beating. And then, perhaps after a few days or a week, they were released again. I know of one such case.

In fact, one of them was one of our fitters, who liked beer very much. And he unfortunately had too much. And then when he arrived home in the evening, beat up his wife and family. And that happened frequently. And in the end, he was taken to Dachau and given a terrible beating.

So it had been used. But I don't suppose that there were many people there at that time. The great influx occurred even before the Kristallnacht, but not very, very much before the Kristallnacht. Because that was in November 1938.

But I suppose the great influx occurred when the Germans marched into Austria and thousands of Viennese Jews were taken to Dachau then. And that was in March '38. So I would imagine that that really was the time when the numbers increased dramatically. Before that, there were relatively small numbers. Perhaps political opponents, but not Jewish people.

What do you remember about the Jewish community in Munich in the '30s, their kind of social background, how cohesive a group they were, and so on? Have you any memories of that personally?

They were quite a cohesive group, so far as I personally am concerned. I was not brought up in an Orthodox way at all. I wasn't even brought up in a liberal Jewish way. Because it so happened that I didn't have any religious instructions at all at school.

My father was not very religious. And he wasn't even a member, an official member, of the Jewish community in Munich. But we felt, certainly, very much after Hitler came to power, though, that that is where we belonged, to the Jewish community.

What exactly do you mean by an official member of the community?

Well, I suppose if you are a member of, say, the Catholic Church, then you would be, probably, or any other church, you would probably be on a register of some kind. And Father was not a member of the Jewish community in that sense. But I do remember that he saw the rabbi of the liberal synagogue in Munich. And there were several synagogues, one fairly large, liberal one, and a few, two, perhaps, or three, smaller Orthodox synagogues.

But I remember he went to see-- that must have been perhaps in 1933 or '34, soon after Hitler came to power-- and said to the rabbi that whilst he was not really a religious Jew, he felt very much as part of the Jewish community, and could he become a member of the Jewish community, but not wishing to take part in religious services at the synagogue. And that was immediately accepted. And so to all intents and purposes, we were part of the Jewish community. And a lot of our friends were Jews and also observed the religious festivals and so forth, whereas we did not.

So your mother wasn't--

She was Jewish, too. She did occasionally go to the synagogue on very few, rare occasions. But it wasn't a very important part of our background.

Was the cohesiveness of the Jewish community in Munich a help in any way with regard to what was happening in the sense of spreading information, of organizing amongst yourselves to help people get out, and so on? Or would you be too young to know?

I think the community, after Hitler came to power, drew together very much closer. And that was one of the reasons why my father decided that he would want to be quite definitely a proper member of the community. And they helped each other a great deal.

And you see, so far as the children were concerned, the Germans, at the age of 10, had to join the Hitler Youth. That was see the younger members called the Jungvolk. And then when they were 14, they were in the Hitler Youth proper.

Where people like myself, of course, didn't join the Hitler Youth. And so therefore, it was possible to join a Jewish youth club. And I joined such a youth club, and I was very happy there.

What did they do?

The kind of thing Scouts do, we went out on outings during the weekend. We occasionally-- well, no, not occasionally, I think fairly regularly had get-togethers, perhaps once a week or once a fortnight when we had club evenings.

Can you remember what it was called?

The organization? Yes, it was called, in German, Deutsch Judischer Jugendbund, which is German-Jewish youth club. I think that's probably the best translation I can give you.

And was it just for boys or girls as well?

Boys. I don't remember girls, somehow. I'm not sure. I can't remember girls. But there may have been a group for girls.

But there was also a sports club, a Jewish sports club in Munich. And that certainly was for both, boys and girls, and young adults.

Did you have any desire to be in the Hitler Youth?

Good heavens, no. That's the last place I would want to go.

Was there any Zionist feeling in the Jewish community in Munich at the time, that you recollect?

I don't really recollect that. And probably in the circles that we moved, which were the more liberal circles, there wasn't very much. There were, I knew, one or two boys whose parents were Zionist-orientated and may have been Zionists. But the people that we came in touch with, Jewish people, I would say were not Zionists.

What kind of Jews was Zionism associated with at that time?

Mostly, as I remember it, Orthodox Jews were Zionists. Whereas the liberal Jewish community was not Zionist, by and large, I think. I think that's right.

You haven't also mentioned the name of the school that you attended.

Well, I went to a grammar school. The name of that school was the [? Alte ?] Real gymnasium. Well, I suppose you had, in fact, two schools together, grammar schools.

One was Real gymnasium. The other one was Humanistische Gymnasium. One was more leaning towards science and languages, whereas the other one taught Latin and Greek. And I was in the Real gymnasium.

Did you share your parents' feelings towards religion and politics?

Yes, I did. I did. In fact, so far as religion is concerned, it didn't affect me very much in any way. I had the chance, when I was 13 years old, to become what is known as bar mitzvah, which is the equivalent of confirmation. And my parents put it to me whether I would want to be.

But I couldn't really see any reason why. And so therefore I had a non-religious education. Not that that meant that I didn't know anything about perhaps the Old Testament and so forth. Because my mother was very knowledgeable, and we often had talks about that. But beyond that, I had no formal religious education, really.

Which political party did you support?

Oh, I didn't support any political party. I mean, I was too young, really, to want to support any, or to know what party to support. And after all, there wasn't any other party than the Nazi party after 1933. So that would have been before 1933, when I was 10 or 11.

Which party did your parents vote for --

I don't remember that. I can't be sure.

Had there been any talk in your family before November 1938 of the family leaving [AUDIO OUT]?

Mr. Fulda, reel two.

We did consider leaving Germany, or my father and mother were talking about leaving Germany because things became so very unpleasant, even before the Kristallnacht. The difficulty was where to go. We had very few relations abroad, in fact, only one relation, and a very, very distant one, who lived in the United States. But apart from that, we didn't have any relations or friends that we could contact with a view of making it possible for us to go to another country or for

them to help us in getting to another country.

So although we made, or Father made many inquiries-- I remember he was a member of the VDI, that is the Verein of the Deutsche engineers, the association of German engineers. It still exists today. It's called [GERMAN], or VDI.

And they suggested that he could possibly go to Persia. Because in Persia particularly, there was a need for air conditioning. And apparently they knew of a firm in Tehran that needed a qualified engineer, so that there was a possibility of going to that particular firm. I believe the firm, in fact, was a German firm in Tehran.

But he could have possibly emigrated there and worked as an air conditioning engineer. It didn't materialize. But as far as I remember, that was the only possibility.

And it was really through friends, in the end, that we targeted towards Britain. Because we had some friends of friends, distant friends, who were, of all places, living in Guildford. And the particular person concerned was a-- I have to think of the name-- he was a political refugee. I think that is the correct description, a political refugee from Germany. He was not Jewish.

But I think he was an author or a writer. And I think the man concerned worked for part of his time at the Frankfurt Zeitung pre-1933. And he was obviously saying things in the Frankfurt Zeitung that made him very unpopular with the Nazis. And so therefore he and his wife came to Guildford at that time.

And through some connections, we were able to get in touch with him. And he, in the end, organized our traveling to England.

When was this?

Well, that was in 1939. I left in January 1939. And my parents followed in April '39.

Whereas my sister already arrived in the Guildford area in, I think, it was September or October 1938. But she didn't come from Munich at the time. She came from Prague. And the reason she came from Prague is that she was studying art in Prague, because she couldn't study in Germany. That was not possible for Jews to study at university at that time.

So my father had sent her to Prague. And she made friends there, also English friends whom she had met a year before during In 1937-- I'm just trying to remember-- would that have been the Silver Jubilee? I think so.

And she met one or two girls there. And they suggested she should come over to England. So when things got a bit uncomfortable in Czechoslovakia in 1938, she was able to emigrate directly from there to England. And she settled in Godalming, which is about five miles from Guildford.

So how long was your father held in Dachau?

Well, he was in Dachau just over five weeks.

And what condition was he in when he came out?

Terrible, he had lost 40 pounds in weight. And he had a very nasty infection.

And it was really a miracle that his life was saved, because the doctor in Munich who normally looked after him refused to see him-- that was after he came from out of the concentration camp-- because he was a Jew. So we were able to get a doctor, a Jewish doctor. And this particular doctor was very much up-to-date in that she had the forerunner of penicillin, which was a sulfur preparation.

And that sulfur preparation saved his life. It was a few days when it was touch and go. But in the end, he made it. So he had a very, very traumatic time in Dachau.

What kind of an infection, pneumonia?

No, it was an infection in his nose. You could hardly see his face because his nose was so enormously big. And conditions in Dachau, of course, were dreadful.

Can you tell me about your own migration from Munich to Britain?

Well, eventually, the various papers had been sorted out. I had a passport, a German passport, which I needed to leave Germany. And a family was found in Guildford who were prepared to guarantee my stay in this country, which meant that they had to put on the table 50 pounds. That was the figure at the time.

And the condition was that I would not work in this country. In fact, the idea was that they would look after me, and I wouldn't become a financial burden in any shape or form. That was in 1938. It changed later.

But I stayed with that family for a few weeks. And I then, in spring 1939, was sent to Letchworth in Hertfordshire to stay at a home which was run by the Quakers. This family kept me in Guildford for six weeks and looked after me.

But I think the husband was rather disappointed. He knew, obviously, that I was not allowed to work. But he would have liked me to become an employee in his sawmill. And that was not possible. And so arrangements were made then for me to live elsewhere. And I then went to Letchworth in Hertfordshire.

Just before we take it any further, had you migrated from Germany just as an individual or in a group?

I migrated as an individual. I was just 16. I just had my 16th birthday. And so I did not come via the so-called Kindertransport.

I traveled on my own. And I was very pleased. I could do it. I was a rather adventurous type of boy.

And during the time also, whilst my father was in concentration camp, I was a lot out and about on my bicycle. Because I was afraid that I would be caught by the Gestapo and then perhaps taken to Dachau. Because there was no guarantee. Nobody knew what would happen.

And so I was always on the move. I wasn't at home too much. I did sleep most nights at home, probably all nights. But one particular time I was away when we felt that we were being followed.

So in a way, I considered that. Looking back, I considered that time to be, for me, personally, to be a bit of an adventure. And somehow I had a feeling that I wasn't going to be caught. [LAUGHS] I was going to survive, and I was going to fight my way through this in one way or another.

Really, I suppose I grew up during those few weeks. And I remember very well when Father was taken away that night. Mother was very, very upset.

I sort of took over the role of my father. And that really welded the relationship between mother and myself even closer. And somehow or other, of course, I encouraged her and said to her that things will work out all right. Not that I particularly believed it myself, but on the other hand, I thought that was the only way to carry on. Because how else can you overcome a situation like that?

When you actually made the journey, did the authorities place any obstacles in your way?

One could take 10 marks with one leaving Germany, a suitcase with clothing. And my father gave me 10 marks because that was the official amount one could take out of Germany. But because it's a long journey from Munich to Britain, or England at the time, it took a long time, he thought I ought to have a little more so that I could buy myself some refreshments on the train.



And so he gave me two or three marks more. I can't remember exactly the amount. It wasn't a lot. But it was enough to buy refreshments. Well, being a boy of my age, I blew the refreshments. And I thought I'm going to have two or three marks more with me.

Well, it's all very well. We traveled overnight from Munich to Cologne. And when we came to the Dutch border, the problem really started. Because the customs officers, who really looked like SS officers because they were in jackboots but they acted as customs officers, came through the train and asked various questions, certainly looked at the passports and then asked how much money people had.

Because on that train were other people. I was in a compartment with a couple, an elderly couple. And they were also leaving Munich at the same time. And apart from them there were, perhaps, 20 other people on that train leaving Germany at the time.

I didn't know them. But obviously we chatted on the journey. And I remember when Father and Mother took me to the train station, they spoke to the people. And I think asked them just to keep an eye on me as far as possible.

But when we came to the border, the Dutch border at [PLACE NAME] which is northwest of Cologne, these officials, which I think were Gestapo officials rather than customs officers, asked how much money people had. And I didn't dare say I only had 10 marks. So I said I had whatever it was, 12 or 13 marks. Whereupon immediately they said, that's illegal. Come with us.

So I had to leave the train. And on the platform. There was a table where two other officials sat. And they were questioning me, why I had more money, and didn't I know that this was not allowed, it was strictly forbidden to take more than 10 marks.

And I just explained why I had more money with me. And they obviously didn't take very much notice. And time went on. And the whistle went. And obviously, the train was on the point of leaving.

And I then quickly picked up my passport, which was lying on the table between me and the officials. And I put the two or three marks extra that I had into a box, a money box. On this money box it stated that it was for the German winter relief work. I put it in.

I didn't ask any questions. I grabbed my passport. And I jumped on a moving train, just started to move. Didn't turn round or back, and I was on the train. And it was one of the last coaches.

But there were still German officials on the train checking. They had to leave the train at the Dutch station at Venlo, which is just a few miles down the line. They didn't quite reach the place where I was standing. I didn't walk back to my compartment because that was nearer the middle of the train. I stopped where I was, in the corridor where I had alighted.

And so after we've got to Venlo, I saw these Nazi officials leave the train. And that was the end of that. And a big hooray went up as far as I was concerned. I was absolutely tremendously relieved. So what happened after that really didn't matter as far as I was concerned.

And then we arrived in the Dutch port, Vlissingen, in Holland and crossed over to Harwich. This was in mid-January. It was a very rough crossing.

Now I interrupted your narrative with you having gone to Letchworth, I think, to the Quakers?

That's right. That's right. The Quakers had a house in Letchworth which they made available to mainly German and Austrian refugees. And there were 12 people living in that particular house they had.

And there was a couple who were the house parents, I suppose you can describe them as, who saw to it that everything

went smoothly. And the wife of the house father saw to the shopping. And other members did various jobs and chores.

I had a very happy time in Letchworth. I stayed about two months, from March to June. And I found the Quakers, who we met quite a lot, extremely helpful and extremely friendly. And I established a very good relationship with them.

In fact, a few years ago, 50 years after the event, I decided to visit Letchworth. And I met some of the people who I hadn't been in contact with at all during that time.

Do you remember any of their names?

Yes, yes, I do. Yes, I remember their name.

Can you say any of them?

Yes, there was a Mrs. Clapham, who was, I suppose, the organizer of this particular home. And there were others, too, but I can't remember their names.

What impression had Britain first made on you when you arrived?

Well, I was, first of all, delighted to be here. And the impression I had was a very, very favorable and very positive one. I felt very much at home. It didn't take me very long to feel at home. I wasn't homesick at all, quite the contrary. True, I missed my parents.

But it wasn't quite so bad for me because I had a sister, an older sister with whom I could get in touch. And of course, I did. I certainly never had any homesickness of any kind.

Was there anything you didn't like about Britain, or anything which disappointed you?

Not that I can think of, not at that time, not before the war. No, no, I thoroughly enjoyed life here. I learned English as fast as I could, particularly in Letchworth, where there were one or two Quakers who made it their business to teach English. And I remember having lessons once or twice a week.

Had you spoken any English before you came?

I had a certain amount of school English. And perhaps two or three months before I left Munich, I had some private tuition from an English lady, a Scot, in fact, in Munich. But apart from that, I didn't know very much English. But I didn't find it very difficult to pick it up.

And after leaving Letchworth, which was in June 1939, I went back to the Guildford area and started work on a farm. So six months earlier, I did not have a permit to work. Somehow or other, in June 1939, I did have permission to work on a farm. Not just in any kind of occupation, but I was a farm laborer. And that is what I did.

Had you made contact with the Jewish community in Britain?

Not at all. I suppose the reason for that is that very few were in Guildford, very few people. If I had been perhaps living in London, that might have been different. But I didn't have any. I wasn't in any touch or communication.

And what happened to you when war was declared?

By the time war was declared, I just had finished farm work. Or shortly afterwards, a few weeks after war was declared, I left the farm near Guildford. And I was able to have an apprenticeship. It wasn't a real apprenticeship, in that it was a legal contract.

But it was a kind of apprenticeship in an ironmonger. And the ironmonger business had a workshop attached to it which

dealt with mainly repair work, but also new installations of heating, hot water supply, cold water services, and so forth. And in fact, it was my father who was able to arrange that for me because he was one of those people who made friends very easily. And when he came to Guildford in April '39, he was given a tremendous amount of support, first of all, by the person who guaranteed his coming over, and Mother's for that matter, but also friends of that particular lady who helped enormously with trying to somehow get him some work or to do something to make life easier.

And so he came in contact with quite a lot of people in Guildford at the time. And one of them was the director of that ironmonger business, quite a well known iron monger business at the time in Guildford. And it was arranged that I should start work in that workshop. This was about, I guess, end of September or October 1939.

What was your reaction when you heard of the outbreak of war with Germany?

Well, at that time I was still working on the farm. And I was in Dix, a few miles away from the farm, living with a family who were terribly, terribly shocked and upset when war was declared. I remember the day extremely well.

So they hadn't expected it?

I wouldn't say that they hadn't expected it. But they were hoping desperately that it wouldn't happen. The landlord himself had been in the First World War, and he was injured. He was an invalid. And he had two sons and a daughter and, obviously, they must have been very worried of the prospect of yet another war.

My own feeling was, in a way, strange as it may seem perhaps, thank goodness, at long last, Hitler can be dealt with. Because I felt all along, already in Munich, that there was only one way of stopping him and that would be by force. And I couldn't think of anybody else but the British and the French being able to stop him.

And during those years of appeasement, this sort of stage didn't somehow draw any closer. There were always, somehow, obstacles in the way, or so it seemed, whereby the Allies wouldn't want to bring the matter to a head on. It was always delayed. And of course it was the appeasement policy, mainly, of the British, but presumably also to a lesser extent by the French.

And I felt that Czechoslovakia had been badly let down. And here we were now, on the 1st or 3rd of September 1939, and at long last, things were going to happen. How and what, of course, I had no idea. I just felt instinctively that at long last he's going to be stopped. And so it was in a way, for me personally, some kind of relief.

So you felt that Hitler would be defeated?

I did. I did. I also thought it would take an awful long time to do so, for that to happen. But I felt that he would be defeated in the end. I felt quite strongly so. I can't really give you any reason, I suppose, why. But that was my feeling.

How did things develop from then until the time you were interned?

Well, I was working at this ironmonger's. And I was very happy there. It was nice to be together with some other apprentices my age.

And what was not so good, after the winter of 1939, 1940, were the news then of the invasions, first of Denmark and Norway, and then later, the low countries in France. Because unfortunately in those days, there were nothing but reverses so far as the Allies were concerned.