

Interviewee:	<u>SCHWARCZ</u> , Steffi	Date:	June 5, 1989
Interviewer:	Eva Abraham		
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SUMMARY

Steffi Schwarcz, née Birnbaum, was born March 17, 1928 in Berlin, Germany. She was sent to England on March 15, 1939 as part of the *Kindertransport*, with her younger sister and 11 other children. This group was sponsored by Dr. Schlesinger, an English Jew. She briefly mentions her early life, *Kristallnacht*, and the general atmosphere in Berlin.

Steffi describes leaving her parents and the journey to England. The children were put up in a hostel in Shepherd's Hill, Highgate. In September 1939, the children were evacuated and dispersed. Steffi and her sister were sent to the home of a young Christian couple in Cuffley, Middlesex. She contrasts the respectful attitude of the foster parents with the pressure to convert put on the Jewish children by the headmistress of the Kingsley Boarding School in Cornwall, run by the Church of England, where the sisters were sent in January 1940, by the Jewish Refugee Committee. A local woman intervened on behalf of Jewish children in boarding schools. She enabled them to remain Jewish, observe the Jewish holidays in her home, and to get a Jewish education. Steffi mentions that Jewish girls older than 16 were sent to the Isle of Man as enemy aliens. Steffi discusses in detail the long-term emotional effects of the Nazi era and the stay in English boarding schools on herself and her sister. She now lives in Israel with her husband and daughter.

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SUBJECT HEADINGS

World War II- 1939-1945 Jewish personal narratives

World War II- 1939-1945 Berlin, Germany

World War II- 1939-1945 England

Kristallnacht

Kindertransport

