

Liesl Joseph Loeb-- we also used to love to play duets on the piano together, not necessarily Beethoven and Bach, but little funny ditties that we made up together. We just had a good time together when we saw each other, which was, unfortunately, not that often. And that was the last time I saw him too.

We stayed in Berlin for three days. We didn't go out at all and then left by train to Hamburg-- H-A-M-B-U-R-G-- which was the port from where the St. Louis would sail. My aunt accompanied us to Hamburg. In Hamburg, we stayed in a very nice hotel. But at the door of the dining room was a sign that said, "Jews are not permitted." So we had to go to a restaurant, find a restaurant where we could eat. But they did take our money for renting us rooms in that hotel.

I think we were only in Hamburg for two days. My father bought for my mother and me just a few leather trinkets, I remember, to spend the last money that he had in his pocket because everyone who left Germany was allowed to leave with 10 marks, Deutschemarks. And-- or rather, Reichsmarks-- R-E-I-C-H-S-M-A-R-K-S. And that was equivalent to \$2.50 at the time.

We boarded the ship on Saturday, May 13. I remember that it was a Saturday because they even allowed the Orthodox Jews to board on Fridays, according to Halakhah. And it was a matter to be discussed. And so I remember that it was a Saturday when we boarded. We were not Orthodox.

I don't remember much about the city of Hamburg other than there was the first time where I saw a Black man. You know, a 10-year-old child takes all these things in with so much wonder and finds out new things about the world. And boarding the ship was also like a new adventure. I realized that my parents were very sad to be leaving, not because they were sad to be leaving Nazi Germany, but they were leaving a country where their families had been rooted for hundreds of years, and where the graves of their loved ones were, and where they left behind, still, family.

My father had a sister. And my mother had a sister in Berlin, with her family, as I've already described. My father's sister was a widow. She lived near Frankfurt-- F-R-A-N-K-F-U-R-T. And, as a matter of fact, he had bought tickets for her for the St. Louis, and emigration papers, and had hoped that she would come aboard in Cherbourg together with her two sons, who had been sent to Holland with Kindertransports. And we were hoping that they would come aboard in Cherbourg. But they did not come.

My aunt hadn't sold her house yet and decided she would come on the next ship. Well, the next ship never sailed. And unfortunately, she and her two sons ended up in concentration camp. One son survived. The other and my aunt did not.

Sometimes people made very bad choices and didn't even live to regret them. At any rate, boarding the ship was a whole new world for me. It seemed to be a hotel floating on the water. We had a very nice cabin on the B deck, right across from the purser's cabin. And my parents slept in the lower bunks, and I slept in the upper bunks. Even though this was first class, the staterooms then were not what the state rooms on a cruise ship are today.

The St. Louis was, indeed, a luxury cruise liner, which usually sailed between New York and Havana in season. The season being probably from spring to late fall and perhaps even in the wintertime, since Cuba was a tropical country. But the Germans had scheduled the St. Louis to sail to Havana because they actually had a reason to schedule the ship. That being an espionage mission.

Now, none of us knew that. It wasn't known at all by any of the passengers. And it was only really made public when the book *Voyage of the Damned* came out, which had been well researched by its authors, Max Morgan Witts-- that's W-I-T-T-S-- and Gordon Thomas, two non-Jewish British authors, who decided that the story of the St. Louis could, in a smaller way, detail a Holocaust happening.

In the year before the beginning of World War Two, German spies had managed to come into this country and were looking for military secrets to carry back to Germany and had, indeed, gotten information, in this case about American submarines. Mr. Hoover had managed to expel them from this country. And they had decided to go to Cuba, which was an easy country for people such as spies and international crooks of all sorts to assemble there.

The Cuban government was a very corrupt government. And with a little extra money in their pockets, they didn't look too closely as to who came in and what they were doing there, except, of course, maybe Jewish refugees. And there were secrets to be picked up from Havana. And in those days, not having yet the communication systems that we have today per computers, per satellites and so on, they had to send a man over to pick up plans, plans of submarines. And they decided, if they scheduled this ship, they could let the Jews pay for the journey.

The Jews had to pay not only their passage one way, but round trip just in case a country-- the country that would be the destination would change its mind and close its borders and not accept the people who were on the way, in which case, they would have to be returned and, therefore, the roundtrip fee for their passage. And so that paid for the expense of sending the ship to Havana.

It was very thoughtful of the Nazis to provide such a beautiful ship for us, I would say. As a matter of fact, some passengers had already booked on other ships that had reached Cuba but changed their minds because they had teenage daughters who might want to meet nicer young men on a ship such as the St. Louis and changed their tickets from one ship to another. I have met people who told me these stories of personal experience.

That's just a little sideline. At any rate, it was a beautiful ship. I went all over the place to explore. My mother finally allowed me to wander about, knowing I couldn't get lost, being on the ship. Because she was usually always very concerned as to my whereabouts. And I wrote the elevators up and down. And I saw that there was a gym with all these fun machines. And there was a swimming pool, once the weather got warm.

And they had a place where they showed movies at night. And they had dances. And they had deck games. And there were gift shops. The grownups enjoyed lounging in the sun on deck. And for the children, there was much entertainment. We had over 200 children among the passengers. And there was a program to keep them busy and entertained throughout the day so that the parents could relax and know that the children were also looked after and were having a good time.

Things were made very pleasant for the passengers. And the sadness of the departure soon faded somewhat from people's memory. When the ship had left Hamburg, the band played the usual tune upon departure, which is a German song called "Must I Leave My Little Town Today." And for us it was much more than a frivolous song. On a cruise for us, it was definitely a final goodbye to the homeland, where we were born and raised, and where our families were buried. And especially to the adults, it was a tearjerker to be sure.

I, myself, remember seeing my aunt standing on the docks and waving to us. And in my 10-year-old heart, I knew, I felt, I may never see her again. But as the weather got warmer, as I mentioned before, things got a lot brighter, and people-- spirits became more positive. And they were looking forward to reaching their destination, which meant freedom, freedom to be out of Germany, to be out of the hellhole it had become.

The captain, however, had heard some rumors that there might be trouble upon reaching Havana, Cuba, that it was possible that the Cuban government would not allow the passengers to disembark because the ship that had left before us had been turned away. And so he decided to call together a few men from among the passengers because he felt he might have to communicate some bad news to the passengers.

The captain was a very sensitive and very intelligent, a highly intelligent man. Years later, we heard about him and that he was really a Renaissance man, who loved classical music. He played the cello. He wrote poetry and was quite the opposite of what one might have imagined a German captain of a ship to be in 1939. He was not a Nazi, it turned out. And he was determined to take his passengers to their destination because that was his job.

So he called together a few of the men from among the passengers to act as a liaison between himself and the passengers. Probably he realized that a man in a German uniform at this time in history, when so much had happened in Germany and when the people on board had suffered so much already, that a man in such a uniform might be intimidating and not really trustworthy. And he figured that a group of passengers would be a good way to communicate with the passengers.

At first, there were five gentlemen who were called to the captain's quarters. Later on they added two more gentlemen, to this committee. Most of the men were lawyers. And there was a doctor amongst them and also a businessman. There were-- no, actually there were two doctors on the committee and two businessmen. And the rest were lawyers, summing up, when the committee was complete, seven people.

My father was chosen by these men to be the chairman of this committee. And so a period of time began when I didn't see very much of my father, especially not during the day. And many times it was late at night until he came to the cabin, even though he ate with us every day. But as we came closer and closer to Havana, the more often he seemed to be in the captain's quarters.

News had been wired to the ship that there may be trouble landing the passengers. And telegrams began to be sent out to Jewish organizations in New York and to people of importance throughout the world. That meant that telegrams were sent to President Roosevelt and to his wife, Eleanor Roosevelt, and to Prime Minister Chamberlain of England and to the mayor of St. Louis, of St. Louis in Missouri, because kind of fishing for help because of the name.

We reached Havana after two weeks. And the ship did not pull into port. The authorities came on board, uniformed shore-- shore patrol and all kinds of Cuban officers. And the ship threw anchor about a mile outside of the harbor. We children would ask these men, who let us play with their hats and who smiled at us, when can we get off? And the answer was always *manana*, a word that I've never quite forgotten in Spanish. It means tomorrow.

I remember our entry into the harbor of Havana. It was early in the morning, and the houses along the shoreline all were in pastel colors. And they were outlined sort of by palm trees and the beach in front of that. It was a beautiful sight, a magic land to me. I had only seen pictures of palm trees. And here was a whole city with lovely little houses and a golden-domed capitol, which looked very much like the capitol in Washington, DC, except that the dome was golden. And it seemed like a magic land.

Plus, the weather was balmy. It was warm. I've always loved warm weather. And it was just such a lovely sight. And I was so happy that we would be staying in this place for a while at least. But it was not to be. People had lined up their luggage on deck. All the luggage had been brought up, and tables had been set up to process disembarkation. And a few people seemed to start leaving the ship, when everything stopped. And from then on, the whole situation seemed to change.

When we were not making any progress in leaving the ship after a while, little boats started to surround the St. Louis. Being in the harbor, the ship was in somewhat shallow waters and projected to quite a height out of the water. And the little boats, which came out with people who were looking for their relatives, seemed to be far down below us. I remember it that way. But sometimes heights and depths, to a child, are much exaggerated. But that's how I remember it, this big ship with little boats surrounding it day after day.

You see, there were many relatives and family members who had come to Havana to meet their loved ones who were on the St. Louis. My cousins, who were on board the ship, had their father already in the United States. He had preceded them in his immigration, and he had come down to Havana from New York to meet his family. And he came out on this little boat and-- as did so many others. And people would be lining the deck and also the portholes in their cabins. And somebody would shout, could you please find so-and-so? I'm the father. I'm the husband. I'm the uncle. I'm a friend. I'm a cousin.

And people would be called that somebody is looking for them. And there was all this shouting going on. And I know that my cousins saw their father and could only shout some words to him. But they couldn't touch him or hold his hand or give him a hug. And it seemed very sad to me that they were in that kind of a predicament, as were so many other passengers. This scene was to be going on day after day as long as we were sitting there in the harbor, until it got dark every night.

They came out early, and they were there until late in the evening. It was a very disconcerting scene. I don't think that the publicity of what was going on was too favorable toward Cuba. And after a week, the Cuban government requested that the ship leave the harbor. They said that the conferences and the communication would go on, but that the ship had

to leave the harbor.

In the meantime, the captain had told the spy that, if the passengers can't leave the ship, you can't leave the ship either to do whatever you have to do in Havana. And the spy told the captain, if you don't allow me to leave the ship, you must know we have your family in Germany. And you better think about the consequences. So, the captain had to let the spy leave the ship to complete his mission. The captain himself donned civilian clothes, as is shown by photographs, and went into Havana to try and confer with the powers that be to allow the passengers to leave.

Eventually, a declaration came forth saying that, if there were funds enough to pay \$500 per head for each passenger, the Cuban government would consider allowing the passengers to come on land. And they would probably put the passengers into a confined area on the Isle of Pines. How wonderful that would have been. It is something we can only conjecture. It never did happen in the first place.

Somebody had come down from New York, from one of the Jewish organizations, and had the money with him. But he wanted to bargain with President BrÄ°nning, who had declared the immigration permits as illegal. And he thought he would try and reduce the price a little bit. In the meantime, President BrÄ°nning had set a deadline for these communications and declared, the deadline is over. I'm not going to accept any kind of money. The ship has to leave.

That was the final word from the Cuban government. And the captain only requested one more day so he could load provisions because, after all, he only had enough provisions to make this trip one way. And he was permitted to do that.

The day that the St. Louis sailed out of the harbor was probably the saddest day for the passengers that they spent on the ship. Slowly the motor started to rev up. And with the accompaniment of the shore patrols and cars upon cars lining the oceanfront boulevard that accompanied us until they could go no further, tooting their horns, and the people in the boats shouting after us encouragements and hasta la vista, which I think means we'll hope to see you again, the ship left Havana, out to high seas.

And I can imagine how desperate the people on board really were. We had already had an attempted suicide while we were still in the harbor. A man, who was so despondent after his experiences in a concentration camp and on the prospect of not being able to leave the ship, had jumped overboard and had cut his wrists. And a German sailor jumped after him and rescued him. And he was taken to a hospital in Havana.

His wife and daughter, who were on board, were not allowed to join him there. And after his wounds were healed, his physical well-being was restored, he was sent back to England, where, meanwhile, his daughter and his wife had landed. So imagine, the man jumps overboard and tries to-- he cuts his wrist, and his wife and his daughter are not permitted to accompany him to the hospital. They don't know how he will be treated there. And it's just one more example of what people had to suffer.

Many people saw this event. It was after lunch. And many people were taking a siesta on deck. And it was an extremely upsetting event. You can imagine. On top of that, the German sailor who rescued this man was written up by the Gestapo on board. You must know that wherever there was a German presence, whether it be on board a ship or in a foreign embassy or many places all over Germany, Gestapo was always present. Gestapo being the secret police.

And on board the St. Louis, the Gestapo posed as the firemen of the crew. And they were present and kept tabs on everyone and had regular indoctrination sessions for the crew, to keep them in line, to make sure there was no fraternization between sailors and passengers.

Slowly we approached the shores of Miami Beach. And as we passed by, we could clearly see the luxurious hotels, which lined the oceanfront-- the oceanfront boulevard, which turns out to be Collins Avenue. I remember it, as a child, seeing these beautiful high structures. And in 1989, when the St. Louis survivors had a reunion in Miami exactly on the 50th anniversary of our passing Miami Beach on the St. Louis, we were taken out in a private yacht to exactly the place where the St. Louis had passed. And it corroborated my memory as to being able to see all the details of this beautiful avenue, with its beckoning luxury that we could see as the ship slowly passed by.

At that time, on the St. Louis, the captain had thought that, perhaps, approaching Miami Beach at night he might be able to land the passengers. But the congress sent down military planes. And the shore patrol on-- in the waters close to Miami made sure that the ship kept moving. This was an added insult to the people on the ship, to send military planes. It was unbelievable. After all, the majority of the passengers on board only wanted to wait for their turn on the quota system to come into the United States.

They had all the prerequisites, the proper papers and visas and affidavits and guarantors. What was the harm of taking in 900-some people, which included 200-some children in this country that was so large and had so much potential, to give a safe haven to these poor souls on board. In retrospect, it's something I don't understand at all.

Tape two, tape two, Liesl Loeb. Now, the really busy time began for the gentlemen of the committee. Day and night they were called to the captain's quarters. Day and night telegrams went out. Day, And after day, encouraging messages were posted outside of the elevators throughout the ship, encouraging people and telling them that they are in contact with this or that country, this or that organization, especially with the Jewish-- American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, whose offices in Paris were also in contact with us. When telegrams arrived that were encouraging, they were posted also on these bulletin boards.

Much of this material is now in Washington, DC, at the Holocaust museum because my father had many of the original material that was the communication means with the passengers in those dark days that we were on high seas going nowhere. The captain tried to stay in the Western hemisphere just in case some good news might come through that could take us quickly back to Havana or perhaps into one of the other Central or South American countries, with whom there was also communications. The cry for help was publicized in all the press of the world, but there was no answer from anyone for the time being.

And eventually, the St. Louis was ordered to return to Europe. It had to resume its cruise schedule between New York and Havana. And as much as the Hamburg America Line was trying to be helpful, after all, I suppose, business is business, and the ship had to return. And we couldn't endlessly stay on the water without any end in sight. I know one of the wires, as we approached Europe, requested the Joint office in Paris to try and find another ship to take over the passengers in case the St. Louis had to resume its cruise schedule and to delay having to return to Germany. Not only that, there was a small piece of paper that I found among my father's documents. It was written in-- scribbled in pencil on a torn off piece of paper. And in German it said, when the ship reaches Hamburg, there will be over 100 empty cabins. It was a desperate and threatening and-- and unbelievably terrorizing message.

There were some young teenagers, or I would say, perhaps, late male teenagers, who were hatching a plot to take over the ship to commit a mutiny. And luckily, the committee found out about it and discouraged these young people from taking such steps. It would have been unthinkable. Also, patrols were formed to look in on cabins, to make sure that nobody was going to attempt any desperate acts. And the committee people were visible practically all the waking hours of the passengers, assuring them and encouraging them, even though they themselves sometimes didn't know why they're doing this because there was nothing to be encouraged about.

We had been on board since May 13. On June 13, a telegram arrived on board. That telegram also is now in Washington DC. It came from England. And it said that four countries-- England, Holland, Belgium, and France-- would be willing to take one quarter each of the passengers. When the news was ascertained that it was really so, immediately the passengers were asked to assemble. And the happy news was announced to them, both by the captain himself and also the committee.

And you can imagine that the slow realization that, after all, they didn't have to go back to Germany, came upon the passengers. In retrospect, what could have been, if we had returned to Germany? Nobody had a home anymore. Nobody had money anymore. Nobody had any means of living anymore. The relatives that were still behind barely had enough to get along on their own because they had no means of making a living anymore either. And so the solution would have been to put us into a concentration camp. That would have been our-- the solution to our problem and our fate.

However, the captain had confided to the committee that, if nothing else came forth, he would take the ship off the coast of England. He would set it on fire in a way that would not endanger the passengers, and it would force the British to

take the passengers in.

However, it didn't ever have to come to that "Thank goodness." The telegram with the good news of our redemption arrived. And so then plans had to be made-- how to divide up the passengers into each of these four countries. Some people had relatives in any of these countries. Some people may have had bank accounts there or some other reasons of going to the continent. That is to say to Holland, France, or Belgium. But the majority of people wanted to go to England. However, it wasn't possible to grant these requests.

England, after all, was somewhat separated from the continent by a body of water and one felt a little safer being as far away from Germany as possible. The committee set up tables on deck, and everything was properly organized. People were asked to give certain information as to relatives in certain countries and addresses of these relatives and other information. And all this information was taken down. The ship arrived in Antwerp on June 17, 1939. I remember the date so distinctly because June 17, it was my birthday, my 11th birthday.

The passengers had been aboard that ship for 40 days. And this was the day of our rescue. Mr. Morris Troper, who was the chairman of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee with headquarters in Paris, had been responsible for our rescue. It was through his efforts that, finally, these four countries agreed to take in the passengers of the St. Louis. And on that day, he was expected to come aboard in Antwerp, where the ship landed on June 17, together with his secretary and with his wife and an entourage of people.

All the children on board had been gathered together on deck, then formed the semicircle when Mr. Troper came on board. And because it was my birthday, and because of the hard work that my father had performed, I was allowed to greet Mr. Troper in the name of all through the town. And my father wrote this little speech for me, , which in essence said that we were sorry that we couldn't greet him with flowers because our flower shop had long been depleted of its merchandise after being underway for 40 days.

It was a small little speech, but Mr. Troper took it much to heart and, the next day, sent me a bunch of beautiful red roses. That was my first gift of flowers from a gentleman, I suppose. Pictures were taken of the girl with the flowers. And in the hardcover book of Voyage of the Damned, it is included in that book.

In retrospect, I have to say that I am eternally grateful to the JDC for its efforts on behalf of the St. Louis passengers as well as for its efforts still going on throughout the world for people who are politically persecuted and who need help, who need to be rescued, who need to be fed, who need to be nurtured. I think it's the most wonderful organization. It deserves everyone's support.

To get back to June 17 and Antwerp, eventually people began to disembark. And here is a humorous note. On board there had been a very heavy, obese lady, who unfortunately had broken her leg and was in a cast. And they had difficulty getting around.

The children, being children, had nicknamed her "Big Bertha" and were now quite curious to see how she would get off the ship. Perhaps they would have to take her off with a crane. And everyone was watching to see what would happen. After all, in even the saddest situations, children do have a way of getting through things with their own sense of humor, so to speak.

The people going to France and to Holland were taken per land to their destinations. People were also put up in camps until homes could be found for them or families could be found who would take them in because, after all, an influx of a sudden group of several hundred people had to be put up somewhere. And many of these countries were not set up to simply put them into hotels.

The people who went to England, however, were first put up into hotels until homes could be found for them. My family and I-- my father, mother, and myself-- were bound for England, and we were transferred together with all the other passengers going to England onto a small German merchant ship, the SS Rakotis. It was spelled R-A-K-O-T-I-S. And it took another few days for us to reach Southampton.

During this little trip on the Rakotis, my father and I were taking a walk on deck. And I noticed these heavy rolls of what looked like carpeting rolled up in brown paper. It's the best way I can describe it. And I said to my father, what do you think is in these big rolls? And my father said, child, those are cannon. And he was absolutely right. Hitler was ready at a moment's notice to go to war, and this little merchant ship, together with probably the entire German merchant fleet, was ready to arm itself at a moment's notice.

We arrived in Southampton and took a train from there to London, where we were received by the committee that was going to look after us while we were staying in England. St. Louis passengers were considered guests in England. They were not permitted to work. And they were supported with a meager sustenance from the Jewish organization housed in the Bloomsbury House of London.

This, on the one hand, allowed people to learn the language, to relax, to finally resume a life of more normalcy. And also, it seemed like St. Louis people got together socially in London very often and shared their common experiences and made plans when the time came to emigrate from England, and just enjoyed each other's company. They had so much to talk about, so much to share from the past few months.

Everybody was in the same situation. Nobody had any money. Everybody was being supported. And when the get-togethers occurred, most everybody had to bring his own cup and his own saucer and his own little cake plate. Some yesterday cake was bought, and coffee was made, and everybody was happy to be in a safe place in spite of everything.

So everybody was poor. So what? In the wintertime, when it got cold and you had to put money into the little heater that was in the room, instead of doing that, my parents often went to the free library and spent time there. It was warm there, and they could be comfortable for a few hours of the day.

To get back to our first days in England, we went to York in the northern part of England. And we accepted the hospitality of the Roundtree family, a truly Quaker family with the highest principals of Quakerdom being practiced. We lived in a beautiful Villa. Food was plentiful. Our hosts were most generous and hospitable. And it seemed like life was pretty good, considering what we had experienced.

But soon my father felt that, living in York, we were too far removed from where things were happening, which was in London. My father was anxious to get out of Europe as soon as possible. And he wanted to be near the headquarters of the committee that would further our emigration out of Europe. And so at the end of August, we moved back to London. And we moved in, first, into a rather religious Jewish neighborhood, Stamford Hill.

The end of August was also the time when the politics in Europe were coming to a very threatening situation. As a matter of fact, on September 1, the Germans invaded Poland and all the schoolchildren in London were summoned to the playgrounds of their schools. I had been enrolled in a neighborhood school, the Jewish Secondary School of London. It was a very Orthodox Jewish day school because this was the neighborhood where lots of Orthodox people lived. Not only that, apparently a lot of Jewish refugees were living in this neighborhood as well, so that many of the children who came to the playground on that day spoke German.

Some of them didn't know how to speak any English. I had already learned quite a bit. And everybody gathered on the playgrounds. We were issued gas masks in little boxes that we had to wear around our necks. And we were shown how to put on these gas masks. We had also been told to bring lunch along, to pack a lunch, and perhaps a little bit more, and clothing for 24 hours.

This went on for three days. On the 3rd of September, England declared war on the Axis, Germany and, I suppose, also Italy. And things became more earnest. The schoolchildren who gathered on the playgrounds on that day were taken to train stations and bus stations and were dispersed to the countryside outside of London. The authorities wanted to make sure that the children would be safe. They didn't know what to expect when war broke out. And they wanted to assure the safety of the children.

Our school ended up in Bedfordshire in three villages. We were kind of separated by age. There were three villages. The central village was the one which housed the kosher canteen, where we would eat our main meals. The village was

called Clifton. And the people who took in the evacuees were subsidized by the English government. I was very fortunate to be billeted with a family by the name of Whittington, Mr. And Mrs. Whittington. They were in their 70s. And I think, in retrospect, they were very brave to take in two foreign children who might not know the language too well. And they had no knowledge of what type of children we were.

I mentioned two children. As a matter of fact, a little boy aged eight-- his name was Eddie Shul-- was my companion at the Whittington's. His parents and my parents had rooms in the same house in Stamford Hill. And so we kind of teamed up together when we got off the buses and it was time for us to be housed with people. And I think he was happy that he knew me and that he was with somebody that was familiar to him.

Mr. Whittington was the village shoemaker. And after a while, I was his helper in carrying out the finished shoes. Mr. Whittington had bought me a bicycle. And that helped me in my job. And for each pair of shoes that I carried out, he paid me two pennies, or tuppence. So I made a little allowance for myself along the way.

Eddie and I were both very happy with the Whittingtons. They were almost like our grandparents. They were very sweet old people. And we loved being there and living in their little house with them.

The village was quite small. Our house was right opposite the church. And our classes in Clifton were held in the large hall of the church, the social hall of the church. It was a very big hall, as I remember it. And to heat it, there was a very small coal-burning stove. I had volunteered to start the coals going each morning because I was living so close by to the church. And I would be up and over there about 7 o'clock in the morning and start up the coal burning in the oven, in the stove.

There was another reason why I was anxious to volunteer for that, because watching the fire, I could sit near the stove and be warm, at least during the assembly time before classes began, and get a little bit warmed up at the beginning of the day. We had arrived in Clifton in September. But as the season progressed, it proved to be a very severe winter. And sometimes the snow was up to my waist. And being a very small, a small person to begin with, it was difficult to negotiate even the trip between the Whittington house and the church across the street.

But life settled in, and I became accustomed to a whole new way of life, a whole new lifestyle. The school, being Orthodox Jewish, the kashrut laws, the laws of keeping kosher were strictly enforced. And we were permitted to eat with our landlord only breakfast and high tea and supper. We were not allowed to eat any meat. Our main meals were served in our kosher canteen. And the system was run a little bit like systems were run in the army. Students had to take turns in serving, in preparing meals, in KP-- kitchen police-- peeling potatoes and vegetables, and helping with the preparation of the food.

Everyone had a turn, and everyone did it very cheerfully. Nobody complained. We were just glad to be able to get a warm meal every day. And even if it wasn't always to our liking, being hungry, we ate. In addition to sitting and eating together, a meal every day, the highlight of the week was always the Sabbath, the Shabbat.

On Fridays, the main meal was served in the evenings. And dinner was enhanced with much singing of songs, both on Friday nights and on Saturday mornings after services. Services were conducted by students and teachers. I became very well versed in the prayers in Hebrew, in the grace after meal, which I memorized after a while. And I loved all the songs that we sang all the time.

Everyone was in high spirits, and observing the Sabbath strictly became a routine that one just got used to. You didn't ride your bike. You didn't ride at all on the Sabbath. You walked wherever you had to go. And your methods of playing were also restricted to certain things that were not done on Saturdays and certain things that you could do on Saturdays. But it became just part of our lifestyle. And I became completely used to it to a point that, when I visited my parents during my evacuation-- I visited them twice, on Hanukkah and on Passover-- I did not eat meat in my mother's house.

On the other hand, my parents, after all, didn't have too much food to share. And in retrospect, I'm glad that I didn't eat meat so that they could have a little bit more of the meager food supplies that they could afford to buy. As a for instance, my mother would buy two ounces of salami for the whole week, for instance, very little butter, and generally

they were on very much of a restricted diet. In retrospect, we children had plenty of food and were well taken care of and looked after.

I made friends with other children at the school, some friendships which have lasted to this day-- one friendship actually. And it was an experience that, even though I was separated from my parents again, as I had been when I lived in Bonn, and I was living with strange people, I was treated well. And it was an experience that I wouldn't have wanted to miss in a way. It certainly added something to my life, an experience that perhaps matured me in a way and taught me the values of friendship and loyalty and being able to cope with any situation that comes up. And to this day I'm grateful for that because, as most people have experienced, one does have to adapt to many different situations that come in in a lifetime.

--not feel much of the war in that year that I spent in Clifton with the school. Nor was there much war activity in London. Certainly one saw a few young men in the streets. And if one did, they were mostly in uniform. Once, I remember that an air raid siren went off while we were asleep. I woke up, and I said to Eddie, let's put on our gas masks just in case. We didn't have a shelter to go to or anything. We didn't really know what to do. So we put on our gas masks and went back to sleep. And when Mrs. Whittington came to wake us up in the morning, she shrieked when she saw us because it seemed like little monsters from Mars were lying in the beds when she came to wake us up. It's another episode that brings forth a smile when I think about it.

In the meantime, there was an occurrence at Dunkirk that changed the whole war situation. There was a time when the Ascot races began. And apparently, most of the officers in the British military came home to attend the Ascot races. And Hitler had decided that this might be the right time to invade England.

But at the last minute, he changed his mind. However, at Dunkirk there was severe bombings from German military planes. There were no officers available to give the orders. And it was generally a big defeat, that battle. And after Dunkirk, things changed. For one thing, all the German and Austrian Jewish male refugees from the age of 14 on up were rounded up and interned. It was said that amongst the refugees there were German spies posing as refugees.