

RG-50.462.0506

Summary

Note: The interview is out of order on the recording. The first part of the interview is from 00:54:02 to 01:41:11. The remainder of the interview is from 00:00:00 to 00:42:58. The recording is silent from 00:42:58 to 00:54:02.

Lilly Schaechter – Born in Vienna, Austria in 1932. Younger of two daughters. Father from Bukovina, Romania, was an accountant, then an independent salesman. Mother was from Galicia. The parents met in Vienna where Lilly's mother attended the Vienna Academy of Music. They lived in the 6th district in Vienna; father's parents lived in the Jewish section of Vienna, 2nd district.

Before the War – Comfortable home life. After Kristallnacht, her parents decided to send both girls on Kindertransports to England in March 1939. They intended to go to England, but wanted the girls to go before them. Lilly's sister, Ruth, was 6 years older, and went on a transport two weeks before Lilly went. Lilly remembers the trip through Holland, then on a boat to get to England. Her guardians were Tony and Rose, a childless couple who were Orthodox Jews. They lived in North London with a grandmother and two unmarried siblings. Her sister did not live with them. Lilly went to school there. She corresponded with her parents through the Red Cross.

During the War – Lilly was evacuated to East Anglia in 1940 and was there for 2 years (estimated time). Her sister was with her for about 6 months, then went back to London. The family she lived with was Christian and wealthy and wanted to adopt Lilly, but her parents said no. Rose and Tony visited her monthly. Lilly went back to London but was then evacuated to a small hamlet near Cardiff in Wales. The family (Andersons) there had to let her go because their daughter's house had been bombed and she needed to move in with her parents. Rose arranged for Lilly to go to a Habonim Hostel in Wales led by Rabbi Chaim Perl. She had to leave the hostel because it was making room for child survivors from concentration camps. In 1944, Ruth and Lilly were able to reconnect with their parents who were in Italy after it had been liberated by the 8th Army. Her father had served as an interpreter for the army. Capt. Rappaport, the Jewish chaplain there, located Lilly and her sister. From 1944 to 1946, Lilly lived with her sister and her friend in London.

After the War – In 1946, Lilly's sister took her to Italy to reunite with their parents. This was a difficult time. Lilly mentions that she was quite disturbed by the events in her life. She barely knew her parents and it was difficult to communicate since her mother didn't speak English and Lilly did not remember German. She stayed with her parents in southern Italy for one and a half years. They all went to England in February, 1948, but her father didn't feel comfortable there, so in December, 1948, using fictitious work permits, they made Aliyah to Israel. Lilly did not finish school since she had to work. She helped Hemda Ben-Yehuda write a book about her husband, Eliezer Ben-Yehuda. She then worked as a clerk/secretary at the Hadassah Hospital for 32 years.