

## CHARLOTTE BROWN

Summary: Charlotte Geller Brown, born in 1924 in Lackenbach, Austria, lived with her parents, two younger siblings, and her maternal grandparents until the family was forced to move to Vienna after the German occupation of Austria in 1938. Charlotte was sent by her parents on the Kindertransport to England in the summer of 1939 where she lived for almost 8 years, primarily in Leicester, working in an ammunition factory during the war and then in a clothing shop, while waiting for papers to emigrate to the United States. After arriving in Brooklyn in 1947, Charlotte married Murray Brown, a concentration camp survivor from Poland. They raised two sons in the Bronx and in 1978 they moved to Eugene, Oregon where their oldest son lived. In Eugene, as well as she did in New York, Charlotte continues to be active member of the Jewish community. It was in Eugene that Murray began to speak to students about his experiences in the camps. Like Murray, who died 11 years ago, Charlotte wants people to know what happened so it doesn't happen again.

Interview with: Charlotte Geller Brown at her home in Eugene, Oregon

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Interviewer: Marylyn Klein Larsen

Transcriber: Marylyn Klein Larsen

Larsen: I am with Charlotte Brown in her kitchen on we are talking about her life and taking an oral history. Tell me your full name and your birthdate and where you were born and about the area of Austria.

BROWN: My birth name was Charlotte Geller but everyone called me Lotte. Some people still call me Lotte. I was born April 2, 1924 in Lachenbach in Burgenland, Austria. It is near the Austrian Hungarian and before the first World War it belonged to Hungary, that part of the country.

Larsen: How did your family get to Lachenbach?

BROWN: I don't know. My mother's side of the family, they were Austrian. My father was from Poland. How he got to Austria, I don't know.

Larsen: Tell me about your parents.

BROWN: My father's name was David Geller and he was a merchant and my mother's name was Elsa Lederer. She was a homemaker and I had one brother and one sister younger than me. My brother's name was Gottfried. We called him Freddie and my sister's name was Hella.

Larsen: You all lived in one house?

Yes, with my grandparents. My grandparents, on my mother's side, lived downstairs and we lived upstairs. My grandfather's name was Alex, Alexander – Alex is short and I don't remember my grandmother's name. My grandfather was a shoykhet. A shoykhet is the ones who kill the chickens in the Jewish way. That was his profession.

Larsen: Your father was a merchant? He traveled? How far?

BROWN: Mostly with produce. Not all of it but a lot of it came from Hungary because it was warmer there and things grew a lot better. Especially, I remember watermelons. They grew very well there because you need a lot of heat for that. Hungary was not far, maybe an hour and ½. That was in the horse and buggy days.

Larsen: What are your memories of your mom? (Added when edited)

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BROWN: My mom, I remember, she wore a shaytl. That I remember. I guess they all spoiled me. I was the first child and the oldest and I remember I never did a thing. My mother, my grandmother and my mother's sister they didn't need me. They didn't go to work, the women, in those days. They cooked and they baked and they cleaned house. I think I had good parents.

Larsen: Memories of your sister and brother? (Added when edited)

BROWN: See that picture on the top there that's all I have- that's my brother in the square. I found that amongst other pictures. I don't know how. That's the only thing I have. How old could he be? Maybe 10.

Larsen: Can you describe the neighborhood you lived in.

BROWN: It was a very small town and I know we went to a Jewish school and it was so small. I guess we knew everyone in that town, Jewish or non Jewish. I remember those where the days when you went with a pail to the people who had a farm with cows and got your milk. That I remember.

Larsen: The house you lived in?

BROWN: The house I remember was like downstairs lived my grandparents and you had to go out of the house to go upstairs one flight to our house. There was a house outside on the side of the other house. In the corner was like a boiler because they used to boil the clothes and on Succoth they had like the roof would open up on both sides because Succoth you had to eat outside. That was our washroom and our Succah and the woman would used to come in every Monday to help to wash the clothes.

Larsen: Were there other relatives who lived in the neighborhood?

BROWN: My mother had a brother, Emil, who lived in Vienna and my mother's sister, she lived with us until she got married. Her name was Carmela, Later on when she got married she moved out but in the same town.

Larsen: You mentioned a Jewish school. What was your Jewish life like? What was Sabbath like?

BROWN: Everyone was religious. Everyone kept kosher and Saturday was no school and you just stayed home I guess, yes. Every holiday was kept just so. Everything. Especially my grandparents were very religious. Everybody was very busy on Friday night or Friday afternoon to get everything ready for Shabbat. Of course there were no electric lights in those days but I somehow remember the non Jewish used to come in and turn on the stove or whatever you needed if you wanted to heat up something for Saturday food and everyone went to Temple. We must have had a Temple. I don't exactly remember it but I am sure there was something.

Larsen: Was all your education at the Jewish school?

BROWN: That's all. Yes because I was very young when Hitler came in and that finished my schooling

Larsen: Did your brother and sister go to the same school?

BROWN: They all went to the same school. I think it must have been a one room school. I don't remember, but I feel that way.

Larsen: Other memories of the town?

BROWN: I don't have too much memory of the town really. I remember certain things but it was like they never existed somehow. I don't know why but that's how I feel.

Larsen: You said you stopped your schooling? What happened?

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BROWN: When Hitler came in there was no more Jewish school. That was the end of that. Then maybe it was a year, maybe it was not even a year when Hitler decided all the Jews had to go to the big cities so he can have them all together and that's when we had to evacuate and go to Vienna. When he marched into Austria that was 1938.

Larsen: Do you remember the circumstance of leaving Lachenbach? What do you remember

BROWN: Well, I guess we just had to pick up. We had to leave the house and everything the way it was and we moved to relatives in Vienna. I think we moved in with my aunt who was my father's sister, Bertha. Not all of us moved with Bertha because they were five of us. Some I think moved in with Emile, my mother's brother, because there were my grandparents too. Every Jew had to get out of Lackenbach.

Larsen: What do you remember about Emil and Bertha?

BROWN: Emil, he was a watchmaker which he learned in Vienna and he was very well established married at the time already to Margit. Bertha was my father's sister and she had an apartment in Vienna. That's where I first saw a flush toilet, remember, because I feel pretty sure we had an outhouse in Lachenbach.

Larsen: Looking at that period of time I know when we talked before you talked about the anti-Semitism. How did you know about it? Did you grow up feeling the anti-Semitism?

BROWN: There was always anti-Semitism; long before Hitler came there was anti-Semitism all over Europe but everywhere. I guess I heard them talking about it because kids were not so interested in things those days but that we did know. I think a lot of Jews wanted to get out of Poland and I think that's how my father got to Austria because he wanted to get away from the anti-Semitism. When we were kids we didn't feel it so much in a small town but everyone sort of knew it was there.

Larsen: In Vienna what did you do? Do you remember the Nazi occupation?

BROWN: Nothing. I don't remember doing anything. I don't remember my parents doing anything. Whether they did or not I don't know but I don't remember anything. I don't know how they made a living or what happened. I remember the Nazi occupation. I remember the marches. That I do remember. They were marching through the street night and day. They were starting to round up Jews already. I mean in some of the countries they did before they came into Austria. They took as many Jews away as they could and that's why my parents tried to send out the children. The other children were much younger than me. I don't know how much younger. They tried to send away the older ones first. I was the oldest.

Larsen: You are talking about the Kindertransport.

BROWN: Right

Larsen: What do you remember about the planning? What were you told? What could you take?

BROWN: I don't remember much about the planning. I remember that everyone had to register and then they started to take as many children as possible and I guess when it was my turn that's when I left. That was in August of 1938. We were told that we were going away to save our life and that your parents and your relatives would follow you but it was not meant to be because what child wants to leave their parents? What child wants to run away? There were so many children you can't imagine from all over.

You couldn't take too much. I remember that. We all could just take a little bit of luggage because they didn't know where to put anything. And then we went I think from Austria. Austria had no port. We went to Germany then to Holland or Belgium I think and from there we took a ship to England. I remember we had to go on the train. I know we came from Belgium to England. That I do remember (on the boat).

Larsen: What was it like at the train station?

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BROWN: It was very heart breaking. It was very heart breaking when we went to the station. The parents put their children into the trains and I guess in a way they knew we wouldn't see them again. With kids you figure something will happen. All kind of ages: younger, older. I know a lot of the children were from Germany, but where we picked them up I don't remember. We all came together somehow.

Larsen: What do you remember about the trip?

BROWN: I don't remember too much on the trip. I know there was no room. There were so many of us you can't imagine. I think over night we went on the ship to England and there we were picked up with big buses or whatever they had and they had nowhere to put us up so they had ready tents in fields and that's where we went. We all had to stay in tents until they found where to put us.

Larsen: Do you have a sense of how long you were there?

BROWN: Until the weather got very bad. I mean it was a challenge to place so many children. There were hundreds and hundreds of us, maybe thousands. In England it rains a lot and we came in August so maybe a couple of months they had to find for us. Exactly where we went from that tent camp I don't know, isn't that strange, but I know they put us wherever they could find a roof over our heads. That's how it was.

Larsen: How many times did you move?

BROWN: Oh, we moved a lot. I remember, it must have been the following summer, we were in Oxford and Cambridge and we occupied the dormitories because that's the only place where they could find something for us.

Larsen: What did you do during that time?

BROWN: There we went fruit picking. That was the time they put us to work picking fruits and hops and things like that. We didn't see the money. The money I guess was for our upkeep or whatever. Hops grow overhead and you take a big bin standing and you have to pull down the hops and pick them off the vines. And when it rains you it burns. You can't imagine. Nobody had gloves. I guess they weren't invented. It was terrible. The fruit picking was awful and the hops picking was also awful. They came for us in the morning and brought us to the fields and then they came and picked us up in the afternoon whenever.

Larsen: You were in the tents and then in dorms and then in different places. Hostels?

BROWN: Yes, youth hostels. Where ever they could find places to put fifteen, twenty, whatever. Really they didn't know what to do with us. What choice did we have? You had to go someplace.

Larsen: Were you with the same people?

BROWN: No, not always. Sometimes yes, sometimes no.

Larsen: Were you offered education or training during this time?

BROWN: Nothing.

Larsen: What about food?

BROWN: Food they gave us food, if you could call it that. Really, I don't think they had enough food because I remember everybody wanted to work in the kitchen because we figured we would get more food. We washed the dishes and scraped out the pots and pans and things.

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Larsen: Did you work in the kitchen?

BROWN: I think everyone wanted to work in the kitchen.

Larsen: Did you have other chores?

BROWN: No there was not much we did otherwise. I mean we helped with whatever they needed where we were but we didn't go to work. I don't think there was any work because in England. I don't know how it is now. If you apply for a job you had to wait several weeks and if no English person wants it then you can have it. Maybe it is not such a bad idea. That's why a lot of us went into domestic service because that was always available.

Larsen: Your first job was in domestic service? What were the responsibilities of a domestic? That was a paid job?

BROWN: That's right that was my first job in England, except for the fruit picking. I went in with an English family in Leicester in the Midlands, with sleeping and I took care of whatever they needed. Slowly, you pick up the language and you get independent. It takes awhile but it can be done. They didn't pay us much but we lived there and we ate there and at least we had a roof over our head. They paid us a little bit. We did what ever they needed. They had two children. I'd take care of the children a little bit and whatever they needed in the house. I don't think we did too hard work. I think they had someone else there.

Larsen: What was the timeframe?

BROWN: Maybe the beginning of 1940 I would say, because the war broke out in '39, a month after we came to England, and then after awhile they needed every available person. You really had no choice whether you were foreign or otherwise you had to either join the forces or go into the ammunition factories and that's where I ended up in one of the ammunition factories.

Larsen: What communication did you have with your family during this time? You had media and knew what was going on? What do you remember?

BROWN: At the very beginning you could write. Of course, before the war you could write, and then, somehow, you could write through the Red Cross. Then after a few months, everything stopped completely. Nothing would go through. You lost really all contact. Nobody had any idea what happened to anyone. Yes, we knew what was going on. We had newspapers and radios in those days. We all felt that no one will survive. We really didn't think. I mean when you hear all those concentration camps and Hitler taking away millions of people in their wagons and everything was destroyed, you could see on the news and the pictures and all this, no, we didn't have much hope.

Larsen: After the domestic service and you went to work in the ammunition factory, you lived in with another family in Leicester? How was that family? There name?

BROWN: They were very nice. They were very nice. They tried to be like parents to me. The husband was in the army but the others in the family they were really nice to me. Their name was Wilson. There was a daughter, who was my age, and I shared a room with her and Mrs. Wilson had twin boys.

They had a small house, very cold in the winter because we couldn't get enough heating supplies and there were only coal fireplaces and we had one fireplace going downstairs which was a combined living room, dining room, everything we did there. At night we put our clothes under the pillow to keep them warm. It was so cold in the winter - unbelievable. You couldn't even take a bath in the house. Those were the years of the bathhouses. You paid a few pennies and you go in and they give you nice seven inches of hot water. That was the rule during the war, but when we rang the bell and said the waters cold they would let in more hot water. There was no such thing as an every day bath. I don't know how we did it.

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Now you would die if you don't have a shower every day but if you went twice a week was a lot. After work we did that.

Larsen: Before you go to Leicester, where did you have baths ...?

BROWN: You know it's funny thing, I don't remember much about before I came to Leicester. I tried for myself to think where was I then and I don't know. Isn't that strange? I really don't know. I know that in the dormitories were bathtubs. That I know. A funny thing I don't know where I was in between. I know I went to London but I really never lived there. That I remember, but I must have lived somewhere else in between.

Larsen: During this time what was your Jewish life like?

BROWN: Almost non-existent. There wasn't too much of a Jewish life for me. The English people they didn't want to be bothered. I don't really know why but I know they wanted to place us with English people during and holidays and things and then nothing came of it. It just didn't phase out somehow. In the camps they did themselves but once I was on my own – I mean they keep track of you in the beginning - there wasn't too much Jewish life for me at that time.

Larsen: Did people keep their rituals as a group?

BROWN: In the beginning. Afterwards not. I don't think there was a synagogue in Leicester. I'm sure not. I don't remember nothing. I'm sure I would know if it was there.

Larsen: Now you are working in Leicester in the ammunition factory and living with the Wilsons. The War is on. What did you do in the factory?

BROWN: We worked very hard, two weeks night shift, two weeks days, twelve hours days.

Larsen: Who worked in the factory? Mostly women?

BROWN: Well there were men, but most of them, I think, they called them 4-F because they couldn't get into the forces because they really needed every available person that they could get ahold of to go into the forces. English was full of GIs and Canadians.

Larsen: What was your work? (this section is not on the tape)

We worked for the Navy. They made turrets there. I was an engineer. I was one of the people who tested them after they were made to see if they worked, if they were balanced, and to see that no mistakes were made. It was a responsible job

Larsen: What was that like working in the factories?

BROWN: I don't know, somehow we didn't mind. We knew it had to be done and nobody complained. Nobody complained about the rations. There was no clothes, no food but you managed. So you didn't eat meat or eggs because everything went to the forces. Nobody complained. Whatever we had, we had. We had rationing and you got coupon book and you could buy so much. For so many coupons you could buy so much food or so much clothing, like shoes would be, let's say, 3 coupons or a coat which was a big item might take ten coupons so you had to figure out what to spend it on. Of course, there was a lot of black market too.

Larsen: The black market?

We had money. Who cares? We didn't care about saving. We figured tomorrow we might not be here already. You go to sleep, and the house next door could be down to the ground, or you went to work and you couldn't come home because there was no way to go. Everything was down to the ground. So

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you didn't think of tomorrow. You did what you had to. We went to the shelter the first couple months and then you stopped doing that too. I remember carrying a gas mask because they were afraid something would happen. That was forced, but you didn't have to go to a shelter. We stopped the gas masks after awhile also.

Larsen: What was your experience with military /armed forces clubs/social group?

BROWN: The British soldiers weren't in Britain. Most of them were in France. Most of the soldiers we saw were Americans and Canadians. They had a hall, a room, a building, whatever, where they entertained the forces, so everyone went. I guess we went to have a good time, but we really went to help out. You volunteer, you serve or whatever. Everyone ended up there. The American soldiers had everything, you name it and they had it from cigarettes to food. I knew a guy who used to bring sugar to the Mrs. Wilson. She was so happy to see a bag of sugar. They had a PX. I don't know if they got it from the States or whether it came from Britain. The cigarettes I know came from the States because of their name. I smoked in those days.

In time you get used to it. As tough as it was, you get independent and that's how it went. I had a lot of friends. Some were from Europe. A couple of my friends, their parents came away also. They were lucky enough. We had a big social group. We got together in different houses.

Larsen: You mentioned before that you went to London, what was that like?

BROWN: Oh we went just like for a vacation, which was a big treat to stay in a hotel and get breakfast in bed. My friend Sheila and I did that all the time whenever we could. We went for a weekend to London. I worked already in the ammunition factory and it was before she joined the Navy. My friend Sheila, she was English, and she joined the Navy. She came on leave sometimes, and if I could get away, that's what we did. She was half Jewish. Her father was Jewish. Her mother not, but they were also very nice to me. I mean the whole family. I spend a lot of time in their house. We are still friends Sheila and I, after all those years. She lives in LA now.

Larsen: Did you have family In England?

BROWN: My aunt Bertha and her husband Sam, the one that ended up in New York. I didn't see her in England. It was a momentary stop over before the United States would let them in. So I think somehow they got to the states when the war was already on. My uncle Emil with wife, Margit he was in Vienna and he came also to England. Somebody sent him papers and he ended up in an internment camp because foreigners were enemy aliens, but then they let him out and he worked. He was a watchmaker, so he worked on the planes on the instrument panels or something. We didn't live in the same town, but when we went to London sometimes I saw them. They had no children. Bertha had one daughter.

Larsen: Are there things that you want to share or others memories of that war time period?

BROWN: I don't know really. We had a rough time. We worked very hard but, like I said before, nobody minded. Everyone was really patriotic. You didn't really care what you ate. You went into a restaurant you ordered baked beans and toast. That was it. You didn't expect anything else. I remember everyone had to pool their ration books together and Mrs. Wilson bought meat where I lived for Sunday. With so many points you buy a piece of meat. One egg a week and if the yoke would break no one wanted the egg. Would you believe that because everyone was so desperate for that one egg? But we survived. Everyone survived very well. Some times the Wilson's went to church and, of course, after church everyone in England goes to the pub because Sunday dinner is lunchtime. We all met there. At night I used to meet friends in the pub, a girlfriend, anyone and you sit there. I was never a big drinker. I could have one drink a whole night, and you played darts. It was a way of socializing. I bet they still do it.

Larsen: We are at a point where the war is coming to an end. Do you remember that period of time?

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BROWN: Well, I guess everyone was very happy to see that eventually we will win. Everyone was happy when the end of the war came because England lost a lot of people too. They really lost a lot of people. Of course then the liberation was in Europe and then we said well maybe somebody would be left, but nothing. There were some people left but none of my family.

Larsen: Did you ever get information about your family?

BROWN: Somebody at one time said, I don't know exactly where I heard that, that they wanted to escape to Hungary but they were caught on the border and brought back and that was the finish of that. Nobody knew what happened after that.

Larsen: For you after the war, what was the plan?

BROWN: Well, I had papers before I went to England to come to the United States. In those years there was a quota so I couldn't come here to the States. That's when I went to England. When the war was over, my aunt and uncle in the States - I guess the papers were too old then - got new papers and then after awhile I came here. The war was finished in '45 and I came here in March in '47.

In the meantime, I went to work in the dress shop. I still stayed with the Wilsons. I stayed with them until I left to come to the States and I worked in the dress shop. That I remember. It was on corner. Funny how you remember some things and some things you don't remember. The owner was very nice. She was a Jewish woman also a mixed marriage. Funny, like Sheila, my friend's parents. She took in refugee people to help work for her. I remember she had a woman who did the hats and millinery. In those days hats were stylish and she worked there. She gave to whoever she could. She gave us jobs.

I remember she had a refrigerator which was a big deal in those days, because where I lived, of course, you went for an ounce of butter, you shopped more or less every day for what you needed. Anything that had to be kept cold went down in the cellar, which was earth not cement, and the milk, I remember, we kept near the door so it could stay cold because there was no where to keep things, but, somehow or rather, nothing spoiled. I don't know what they did. Of course there was no washing machine either. A dishwasher I'd never seen or never heard of even. We washed all our clothes by hand in the sink. You forget things. I didn't even remember that. But the dress shop person had a refrigerator. That was great. Of course, I didn't have a refrigerator he gave us an icebox. I don't know if you even remember that. The iceman came with a block of ice. You put it in there and underneath you had a big dish to catch the water. Not much to put away. Then Murray said, "We both go to work. This is a pain in the neck. Let's go and buy a refrigerator" and I remember we went. For a hundred dollars we got a good refrigerator and we bought it on time. The only thing I ever bought on time was that refrigerator and the bank was hounding us for years to buy more stuff because we paid out so much every month until we paid off that refrigerator. My aunt whose house we rented from, they had a beautiful refrigerator, but me she gave an icebox.

Larsen: Did you ever have a desire to go back to England?

BROWN: I never had a desire to go to Europe, but always I've had a desire to go back to England, but I never did. My son, the younger one, he went to England once on his way to Israel.

Larsen: What was the trip like leaving England?

BROWN: We left from Scotland on a freighter because there was no transportation. There were no ships like now. I guess they were turned into warships. My friend Sheila came with me to Scotland. I was seasick for the ten days it took us to come across and I was seasick the whole ten days. Oh God, you want to die. You are better off dead than being seasick. There was such good food on the boat and you couldn't eat. Especially after England, where we didn't go hungry, but you had to eat what you could get. Some were ok but I couldn't after England that had nothing.



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Coming here I figured I'd have family, not be on my own. It wasn't such great family. What can you do? I came and that was it, I guess. I stayed with my Uncle Phillip Geller, my father's brother, and his wife Goldie. They had two children younger than me: a boy and girl, Ralph and Shirley. Uncle Phillip came here I don't know when – many, many years before. I think my father had papers to come to America. I don't know who gave him the papers but he didn't want to leave Austria, so my uncle came on my father's papers. Never seen him before, because I think he was here before I was born. I think he was older than my father.

Larsen: Did they meet you at the boat?

BROWN: Meet me, yes. It so happened I came into Brooklyn, somehow or other. Brooklyn has a lot of water and they met me at the boat. I thought I would come to my Aunt Bertha but she figured I would be better with my Aunt and Uncle because they had young children and who knows? And so my Aunt and Uncle brought me to their house and that's where I ended up until I got married.

Larsen: How would you describe that experience? Did you work while you lived with them?

BROWN: I don't know, it wasn't a very good beginning really. Somehow or rather, I don't exactly know why, but I didn't feel very happy there to start with and I don't know. They discouraged me from taking jobs.

I didn't work in the beginning and then my uncle had a deli and when it got busy in the summer, because I came in March, I started to work for him in his restaurant until the following Fall. It was really only busy in the summer when he needed help. I still stayed with my Aunt and Uncle. Then I went to work, by myself, for my cousin, well it was sort of a cousin, who had a dress factory, but I didn't like it there and then I left. I went to work in Woolworth's which was near the house.

Larsen: Where was the house? The neighborhood?

BROWN: They lived on West First Street in Brooklyn, which was near Coney Island. You could walk across to the beach. Now it became Trump Village. Donald Trump bought all this property around there. You can't recognize it. The neighborhood, I think, it was a lot of Jewish. I think some Italians but mainly Jewish, from what I remember. God, everything was cheap in those days, but then again, a person didn't earn that much so I guess it evens itself out.

I stayed there and then I met my husband, Murray. Apartments and everything was very hard to get those days and then my uncle he rented us out a room, a very tiny apartment, one room and a tiny kitchen. We had a little round table that stood half way in the room and half way in the kitchen. One of us sat on one side and one of us sat on the other side. We had an icebox. This was when we got married.

Larsen: Tell me about your husband and how you met him. Your home and family?

BROWN: I met my husband Murray Brown in a night school. His given name was really Mendel Braun. He wasn't long here. Murray was a concentration camp survivor and he went to school to learn English. I don't know, I just went. They said I should improve my accent. I don't know if you can ever improve your accent, but that's how I went and that's how I met him. I met him September, October of '47, and we married in April '48. I didn't know him long. My Aunt Goldie gave us a wedding in her house and she made my gown and then they rented us out that one room I was talking about.

Then we had a child, Sidney Walter born 2/17/49, and it was really tight. We looked for something else and we found that apartment in the Bronx on a 4th floor walkup. Don't ask. It was so hot. We moved in August. The people who lived in this apartment before had moved into a bigger apartment in the same house and they lent us their fan because it was so hot. It was terrible and the apartment was full of roaches. I don't know where we went for a day or two - but we had to call in an exterminator to get rid of all the roaches. Finally we got rid of the roaches.

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Kenneth Gary was born 9/1/53. First with the crib it was ok but then we had to buy a pull out couch and I think we gave the children the bedroom until we moved to the 4 rooms. Eventually while we were in that apartment, a bigger apartment in the same house, a four room, got empty, so we changed apartments and moved into the four rooms. We had two bedrooms then and a living room and a kitchen. Also on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor walkup, which wasn't easy with 2 kids.

Then the neighborhood started to go. When the neighborhood started to go, we moved further up, where it was better already, into 4 rooms, which were good. It was on the 1st floor but then they could walk already. When they were smaller I had to carry them up and down. We had a very good super. He was Romania. Those were the days of the dumb waiter. I used to go shopping and when he was around he used to put my groceries on the dumb waiter and I carried the babies. Every night the super would ring the bell and on each floor you would put your garbage on the dumb waiter and he would pull it down and if you wanted your neighbor across from you, all you had to do was open the dumb waiter door and she'll be on the other side. But that stopped after awhile. Then they didn't collect garbage anymore. You had to bring it down. I remember a boy next door who was already grown. If I met him he always carried the kids downstairs for me. Henry was his name.

Larsen: When you say the neighborhood was going down, what do you mean?

BROWN: Well in those days a lot of Puerto Ricans moved in and they used to throw their garbage out the window. It was really bad. It got so you were afraid to go out of the house and whatnot, and then people wanted to move out. Finally we got another apartment from the same landlord. He owned the house we were in and he owned the house we moved into. In New York neighborhoods went really quick. One day it was good and the next day it really went down in the dumps.

Larsen: What did Murray do for a living?

BROWN: Murray worked in the textile industry, a wholesale place. The factories were in Massachusetts and the dry goods came to New York and they supplied factories with whatever they needed to make clothes with it. His place was downtown in Manhattan. Before that, before I knew Murray, he had a lot of other jobs, whatever he could get and find here. I know he used to tell about the provisions they made kosher salami and frankfurters from. You would bring 3 lbs of outdated meat you couldn't sell to the butcher and you'd get back 1 lb of provisions to make the frankfurters and salami. You would never catch him eating one, I can tell you that. He didn't eat frankfurters. When I knew him he already worked in the dry goods place. He worked there until we came to Eugene. It closed up a year or two ahead of that but that was his job.

Larsen: What family did you have in the New York area that you were having contact with?

BROWN: By then, my cousin Donia Herodek, who I didn't know in Europe, my father's sister's daughter, had moved to New York. She lived in Brooklyn but I saw her a lot. And we went to see my Aunt Bertha and her husband Sam. With my Uncle Phillip and Aunt Goldie, we weren't on such good relations until a little later on. When Sid had his bar mitzvah we made up and dissolved out differences.

That's the only family we really had, but I made a lot of friends in the Bronx. I lived in a big apartment house and everybody knew each other. You had to go shopping or something, you threw your kid into their house, or they brought their kids to your house, and they went to school together and everything. You know if one couldn't take them the other one would - one pick them up and bring them home. It was nice there because really you knew almost the whole neighborhood. Relatives, like I said, I didn't have too many.

Larsen: Talk about Donia's story. Did you get together with Donia? How did you know about her?

BROWN: She and her sister Hella, a man, Otto Herodek, they knew saved her and her sister from Hitler. He hid them away someplace all through the war. At the end of the war, Donia's sister stayed in Europe and Donia married this man Otto and then, sometime after that, they came to the States. Donia was

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married before and she had a little boy. Her husband also was killed in the camps, but some Christian family said they would take the boy and said they would keep him as their own and then give him back to her after the war. But after the war she couldn't find the family. She couldn't find her son or nothing. And after she married Otto, who hid her from Hitler, then they had a little girl and that's when they came to New York The little girl, Rose, was about six then.

A lot of times, yes, we got together. I don't remember how it came about. Either she knew someone was here in America, maybe my Aunt Bertha. When eventually they got papers to come to the States, that's when I got to know her, but exactly how I found out about her I don't know. She was born in Poland. I didn't know her. My father was Donia's uncle.

I have contact with my cousin, Donia. My cousin is still alive in a nursing home and she doesn't know from much. She's 92, no 94. She's 12 years older than me. I'm in touch with her daughter Rose, who is my second cousin. (Donia died in February 2007 in Florida.)

Larsen: Murray was in concentration camps. What camps? Who was his sponsor?

BROWN: Murray was in Theresienstadt. He was in Bergen Belsen. I think he was in Auschwitz also. It all started in the Warsaw ghetto and then from there they took him to camps. He had an uncle (second name Kopp) here at that time. Really his uncle's wife sponsored him. His uncle was a physician, a lung and heart specialist. She was a nice person, nicer than the uncle. After she died - she died of cancer - Murray used to go for him and bring him to the house for food and everything and when he died he left all his money to charity. He had a lot of money. Can you believe that? That's the kind of guy he was. That was Murray's mother's brother.

Larsen: Did Murray have other relatives in New York?

BROWN: Murray had a cousin Adele Lanz. She lives in New York. Her father was Murray's cousin. They went to France - the whole family. The children were born there and they lived in a small town in France. Nobody knew they were Jewish. When the father died they had to take him to another town to bury him because nobody knew in that town he was Jewish. That's how they lived through the war. That's what saved them. They somehow lived. The man she married was a cook on the Israeli ship, somehow or rather, and he traveled back and forth to France. That's how she met him and she married him and then they moved to New York. He passed away Winter of 2006.. We saw them quite a bit after they came to New York. The boys were more or less the same age. They lived in Brooklyn and we lived in the Bronx.

Larsen: What was your Jewish life like in the Bronx?

BROWN: The same like in Brooklyn. A lot of neighbors were Jewish. The kids went to Hebrew school. The school was on one side. I pick them up here and you take them to Hebrew school across the way. It was very easy. Not like they do now in New York. We had a Jewish life. We kept all the holidays and everything. Myself I was never so religious. I never kept kosher. In Europe everybody is kosher. My friend in LA she still keeps kosher, she tells me. I said you couldn't live in Eugene and eat meat.

Larsen: Were you active in the synagogue?

BROWN: Yes, here or there. In New York every second street has a sort of a synagogue. You know, it doesn't have a building in itself. We went to the Burnside Jewish Center. It was a house. Of course almost everything was Orthodox, the men sit here, the women sit somewhere else. That's where my children had bar mitzvahs. It wasn't that hard.

Larsen: You and Murray, what did you enjoy doing?

BROWN: Well, with Murray, we did everything together. He was that kind. I mean he didn't hold on to me you know, but when it came to doing things we did it together, yes. He always helped me around the

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house and things like that. He was better with the kids than me. I was afraid when they were born - I'm going to hold this baby - it is going to break in half on me - I was afraid. No, he was good with with the kids and he would cook and everything.

Larsen: How was setting up housekeeping?

BROWN: Well, I guess we just fell into it. It was new to me because really at home and in England I didn't do anything but I guess you learn as you go along. I think I am a self-taught cook. My cousin taught me a little bit as far as baking was concerned, not so much with cooking. I don't know, I guess, I learned by trial and error.

Larsen: What memories do you want to share about raising the boys?

BROWN: Well, they went to school. Everything was near the house, except for high school They both went to Bronx High School of Science. When we lived on Harrison Ave you had to take a bus or a train. That's when Sid went and then when Kenny got older we had moved by then and the school was much closer. You could walk to Bronx High School of Science then. That was the school in those days. I don't know how it is now but it was a very prestigious school. Everybody couldn't get into that. You had to pass a special test.

Larsen: Did you go to work?

BROWN: I didn't go to work until Kenny was 12. Then I went to work in a department store. I was dying to get out of the house. I said I have to go do something. I remember we were away in the country and someone took the newspaper and said to me "you always wanted to go to work here at Alexander. Here they are asking for workers, send in the application from the newspaper." There were stores all over New Jersey, Connecticut and New York and every August they opened a new store. I filled the card in and sent it out. By the time I came home there was a card saying come for an interview. I go downtown to Manhattan on Lexington and 59<sup>th</sup>. There was another Alexander store two blocks from me but I wanted to work in downtown Manhattan in a new store. You never seen such a line- it was clear around blocks and blocks. I said I must be crazy. I go to the door and I said, "I have this card for an interview. Do I have to stay on line?" He said "No, go right in." and that's how I started to work I worked there until I moved here. Now they dissolved the store. I don't know what happened- a few years ago already. I liked it. I loved the idea of getting out of the house. Of course the traveling with the subway is not so great but I liked the store because it was new and everyone started together. I could have transferred to the store near the house but I didn't want to work there. Bloomingdale's was across the street.

Larsen: Was that ok with your family?

BROWN: No, Murray didn't like I went out to work. He said, "Stay home. You pay away the money in taxes". I remember, twice a year they took inventory and they closed the store at 3 and you had to work until the inventory was finished. I said to Murray, especially in the winter in February, "Meet me by the subway." and he said, "If your afraid to come home, don't go." That's what he used to say to me because mine was the last stop already. I had people to start out with but not to go home with but he came anyway. Yeah, I liked the idea. I said I was home long enough.

In the department store I was a cashier. Not like here. The cashier only takes money. Here a sales girl helps you and then goes to the counter. They had a salesgirl and then there was a line maybe with 5 or 6 cash registers and you brought your merchandise to the cashier. That one who owned that store started with a little pushcart, Jewish. His name was Alexander Farkus. The stores were named Alexander and they say he was wonderful to work for. That was in the olden days you know. Like they say about Fred Meyers here. They say when he had the stores they were nice to work for. He would eat with the help and everything. Once the children take over its not the same. I worked there until '78 a couple of weeks before I came to Eugene.

Larsen: You mentioned going to the country in the summer?

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BROWN: Every summer we went to the country. I didn't like to stay a whole summer. Mostly we went for a month to the bungalows in the Catskills to get away from the heat in New York, and all the husbands of the women and children, they came out on the weekend. It was nice but one month was enough for me. Lots of people went for two months, for the whole season, but we traveled. When my husband had vacation we didn't go to the bungalow. We traveled to the New England states, went to Canada, Niagara Falls and places like this and then we went away for a month to the country. We did it for a good many years. I don't know how many exactly but quite a bit until the kids got bigger I guess and didn't want to go anymore. That's what happened. Everybody else was there, your neighbor, your friends, or you met new people and they had children so everyone was occupied.

Larsen: As you look back on parenting and having teenagers are there memories you want to share?

BROWN: Well, when my younger one was in high school the other one already was in City College, because when I went to work Kenny was already 12. You know I had good kids. I liked my job and my husband was very supportive to help me. He didn't like so much that I went to work but I only worked part time until I came to Eugene in '78, about 13 years. A couple years after I moved here the store closed up. Everyone was so surprised because it was a big corporation.

Larsen: For you and Murray, both coming from Europe and getting married, how do you think that impacted your marriage.

BROWN: I don't know. I mean he came from Europe. I came from England. We really started with nothing because he was an early immigrant. He came in '46, which was soon after the war finished and he took any job he could get at that time, but that was before I knew him. I came from England when I knew the language already, so I wasn't too bad. I could only take a small amount of money from England. It was not allowed to take money out of England. Somehow we got together. I don't know. It just worked. I met him I think in October maybe, and we married the following April. Real quick.

Larsen: Did you speak German to each other?

BROWN: No, no. Murray didn't really speak too much German because Murray was Polish and I didn't know Polish but he knew a little bit of English, a few words in German and that's how we spoke because I, at that time, knew a little bit more German. He learned some of it. We didn't really have a common language. We didn't teach the kids another language. That was too bad because if you don't speak it in the house it is hard.

Larsen: Other things you want to share about your marriage?

BROWN: He was a very good husband that I have to say. When I was sick he took care of me. He cooked and he took care of the children. I was a few times in the hospital. In those days they wouldn't let children in. He used to bring them so I could look out the window and I could see the children. But he always liked a small town. He never liked New York, but, somehow or rather, we never moved. He had a job. The kids went to school so we stayed where we were until one day we came to Eugene to visit my older son, Sid was living here at the time and Murray liked it right away. He said that's a nice small town to retire in. I wasn't so crazy about it in the beginning, but we went back to New York and a couple of years later we moved to Eugene. I left my whole apartment with my son, Kenneth, in New York. At the time it didn't make sense that he should buy new stuff and I should buy new stuff here. It was cheaper that way and more convenient. This is how we arrived in Eugene and it took me a couple of years to get used to the town here. My husband loved it right away because he loved the outdoors and he liked gardens and all these things and me it took a little longer.

Larsen: You bought a house in Eugene?

BROWN: We bought the house before we moved here. We came on vacation to Eugene. My oldest son, Sid was living here and, at that time, he had to get out of where he was living. We really bought the house

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by accident. We didn't really intend to, but, somehow, my husband said if you don't like it in Eugene, we will move back to New York. That's not so easy. It's easier said than done. We put \$100 earnest money down on the house. Can you believe it? My son, Sidney, lived in the house until we moved here.

We came to Eugene first on this vacation, and then went to San Francisco, but I had such misgivings about buying the house in Eugene I wasn't very happy in San Francisco, because I didn't know if we made the right decision. Now I see we did, but at that time, not. That was 28 years ago.

First of all I think I was home sick. I didn't work here which was a mistake because you meet people when you work and then I didn't like the idea of leaving my younger son, Kenneth. He wasn't married then or nothing, but he said go, you'll have a better life there than here and in time I got used to it. I started to make friends and it wasn't so lonely then. Even though I had my husband, I'm a people person. After I got to know people I was a little happier here and I saw my son was ok in New York and he came out sometimes here and we went back only once a year to see him.

It was very hard here to break in. I think it's a lot better now to break in, especially in the Jewish community. Later on - what had nothing to do with the Temple - we made our own senior group and we met once a month in a meeting room at the bank that was down town that let us use it for free. It was very nice. Peter DeFazio came once. I remember, Jerry Rust, he came. I don't know what happened to him. Howard Fine, a very famous eye doctor now, he came and showed us slides of cataract surgery. We tried to get interesting people to come and speak and show films and things. Now that I think of that, it wasn't bad. We had a big group maybe 30-40 people.

Larsen: Did the group have a name? Were all the members from the Jewish community?

BROWN: We didn't have a name. It was just the senior group. Anyone who wanted to come could but it had nothing to do with the Temple. People didn't know where to go. That's where one sent the other. They came to meet other people. My friend Jean - I just showed you the mirror she gave me - I met her there. I met Gloria there.

Larsen: Did you join Temple Beth Israel right when you came? Who was the rabbi?

BROWN: Not right away, maybe after we were here a year, but like I said, it was hard to make friends until I made the first move. If you invite someone then they invite you back. Then as I got to know more people, I was a little happier here. Myron Kinberg was the Rabbi then. He was here a few years and then he left and went to New York and Yitzhak came in. He was nice guy Myron, right?

Larsen: Regarding the Jewish community, are there other memories you have?

BROWN: I was a volunteer for everything that was going. I worked in the gift shop. They had the bagel stand at the fair grounds when the Fair was here. I worked there. My husband also. They used to make a blintz brunch once a year. I helped to make blintzes. That's where I met Bertha Moreno What else did I do? For years and years I'm working with the newsletter. I can't remember how many years already, almost since I came here. I'm still with it. Now I'm too old and I don't do as much but I still go for the newsletter.

We went to services. A couple of times we went to the seder when I first came here then I stopped doing that. We were quite active in the Temple. Later on I made quite a few friends which was nice. Some of them died already.

Larsen: Did you travel when you came to Eugene?

BROWN: Not right away. We liked it so much here. Well, my husband especially. In the summer we didn't go anywhere. Later on we took a little trip. We went to British Columbia, to Seattle. We took a cruise to Alaska. That was 1990 I think it was. There was a couple we used to travel with, George and Thea Cahn. They used to like to travel so they had company and we had company with them. We went to British

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Columbia and some other places. To Alaska we went with another couple, because George and Thea had already been here.

Larsen: After awhile, Murray started talking in the community about his concentration camp experiences. How was that for him? Did you go?

BROWN: There were not many survivors in Eugene then, so a lot of people came to ask him to speak at the University of Oregon, or the University in Corvallis, or they took him to high schools every year to talk about his experience in the camps. At the beginning it was very hard. He really didn't want to do it. It brought back too many memories but then he realized that it should be more out in the open and people should know about it so he went. Most of the time I went, yes.

Larsen: Had you and Murray talked about your stories with your children?

BROWN: Some, yes. Not everything. It came out slowly, a little at a time but now they know. A long time ago they knew already.

Larsen: We have some newspaper articles here about Murray and his experience in the camps.

BROWN: He was very frequently on the news, in the newspapers and whenever they needed a story on the holocaust survivors they came to him.

Larsen: You also were interviewed about the Kindertransport?

BROWN: Just because of him at the beginning. I wasn't so much in the news like him because he was a concentration camp survivor. He was in the same camp with Eli Wiesel. Eli Wiesel came here once and they met but they didn't know each other before.

Larsen: What about your sons now?

BROWN: Sid still lives outside of Eugene, in the country, in Veneta. He's a big help to me with whatever I need. He has a few acres and a big dog. He grew a big garden last year and is going to do more this year with the garden, he says. Sid is a cake decorator for the Fred Meyer bakery. He has worked there 15 or 16 years. He started at the Excelsior in Eugene baking bread. They were making the long French breads. Jill Katz was doing that and then Sid took over for her. He was also the pastry chef at the Eugene Hilton.

Kenny moved from the Bronx to Brooklyn, He is a very ambitious person, my Kenneth, and he works very hard and he's married now. He's married 16 years already this coming December and they have three children. That's the only thing that pulls me to New York. I would like to be little more in my grandchildren's life, but I try to go twice a year and he comes out every once in awhile, so I do see them. Not enough, maybe, but better than nothing. My daughter-in-law's name is Adrienne. The oldest girl is Emily. She's 12. Andrew is 11 and Katie is 9. Kenneth is the editor and chief of a local newspaper that puts out maybe 12 weeklies in different burroughs all over Brooklyn, Manhattan, Staten Island, Long Island, or whatever, and he's also a professional photographer. He works very hard..

Larsen: When you go to Brooklyn now are there people you still visit with?

BRWON: There is hardly anybody left. My husband's cousin, Adele Lanz is there. We talk on the phone. I didn't see her the last couple times I was in New York because her husband Sam was really ill. Sam passed away 6 months ago or more. I have the husband, Norman Mendelson, of my cousin Shirley. Shirley passed away a couple years ago. They always came to visit me when I came to Brooklyn. Norman still comes down when I'm in New York and I call him sometimes. Shirley's brother Ralph just died a couple months ago. Norman called me. I can't remember how many years I didn't see Ralph. He didn't keep contact with the family.

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That's it. There's no one left no more. At the beginning I used to go visit my friends and everything or we'd meet downtown somewhere but now I don't see many people.

Larsen: Did you go to Israel?

BROWN: To Israel we were still in New York. In '73 we went to Israel. My son Kenneth went before us and when he came back he said you have to go. The store where I worked they had a travel agent department and I went in and I booked a tour and this is how we went to Israel. It was very nice. It really grabs you. Of course it changed a lot since then and when we went it changed a lot from what it was. Yes, that was nice.

Larsen: Do you have contact with other people who were part of the Kinder transport? You mentioned a person in Los Angeles from Lachenbach?

BROWN: In England I knew a few people but then some or rather you all lost touch. In the beginning you write and things. Then it seems everyone moved somewhere else and then we all lost touch.

A man from the Holocaust Registry in New York, he contacted me because someone who lives in LA wanted to know if there were any survivors from my hometown, Lachenbach. The man didn't want to give her my number or name so he asked me first. I said yes, sure. So five minutes later the phone rang and her name is Rosie Gerstein. She called me and now we are good friends over the telephone. I don't know if we'll ever meet but we do call each other every two weeks, which is really nice. She remembers a lot. I think she remembers more than I do because she came away with her parents and brother, sister, what ever, and they must have talked about it. They went to Israel where they wouldn't let them in when the boat arrived. But the underground took them out and that's how they survived, because the boat was sent back. Years and years later, she told me, they came to LA. I don't remember her. She remembers me. I don't know. She knew where we lived. She just remembered me. Somehow, I don't know. Maybe I wanted to block out a lot of what was. It's nice. We talk about everything.

Larsen: You also kept communication with some people in England?

BROWN: Yes, for quite a long time with the family where I lived, the Wilsons, but then the mother died and the daughter died. They both died of cancer. Can you believe that? Then slowly everything dies out. Sheila is English and lives in LA now and we're still friends after so many years. Last I saw her was when we were in Palm Springs and she drove down from LA which is quite awhile now. Maybe 20 years. Maybe more even, because my husband is dead 11 years. In 96 he died.

Larsen: You've been a widow 11 years? Do you want to talk about his illness?

BROWN: Yes, I could talk about it. Once it started we didn't know what he had. The doctor said he had Alzheimer's and we wouldn't believe it. We went to every doctor he could think of. My doctor let me go. He said your family wouldn't be happy without more information. We took him to the University Hospital, to the Health and Science in Portland. There was a big specialist there, who came from New Jersey, but he said there is nothing they can do. He said Murray has Alzheimer's. What could we do? It was very bad. It was a very tough time for me and for him. I kept him at home. Then after a couple of years, he fell outside and broke his hip so he was three months in the nursing home. After that I said enough of the nursing home. It was so horrible. I brought him home and I had help, but it was hard on me. I brought him home the end of March and he passed away in November. But he suffered so much it was terrible. He didn't deserve that because everything from the concentration camp came back to him. He didn't remember what was yesterday to last week but he did remember the concentration camps.

Larsen: You were there for him.

BROWN: I was there for him. Everyone said I don't know how you do it, but Sid and I said there no way we're going to put him anywhere because it would have been horrible for him. He would have thought he was again in the concentration camp. There's nothing nobody could do no matter where we went, and at



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the end he just stopped eating and drinking. He used to say to Sid and I, when we were separate "if I don't eat or drink I'll die." He said it to each one separate, never together.

Larsen: Sid was there with you?

BROWN: Sid was there and Kenneth came many times from New York. Oh God, I used to say to him your going to kill yourself. He'd come for the weekend, Thursday or Friday. He'd go back Sunday and a week or two later he'll be back again. He used to stay with Murray all night, holding his hand. We had a hospital bed in the house. Yes, the kids were very supportive. They really helped.

Larsen: And they still do.

BROWN: They are very good children. I have to say Sid is helpful and Kenny also in New York. He calls me to see how I am.

Larsen: Now we are in your kitchen and its almost 11 years later, how are you doing?

BROWN: Ten year till he passed away. It's almost the anniversary (November 16.) I miss him to this day. I really do but what can you do? You get used to it. I think I'm doing ok. The beginning was tough as bad as it was with him, because he was so sick. He couldn't stand because the hip it never healed for him. You could hold him. He could stand and walk but he couldn't really balance himself and I had to help him with everything but I guess I was younger and I didn't mind. I didn't even think of anything. That's the way it was and I did it. It's an awful sickness, I'm telling you. Whatever you have is bad but its very hard to watch. But I think he's watching over me. I often say to Kenny and Sid, Dad is watching over you.

Larsen: Do you believe there is something after? What would it be like?

BROWN: Maybe I want to believe it. I don't know. Sometimes I do and sometimes not, but my son Kenneth believes there's something after. A lot of people do. I don't know, maybe I think I want it to be. I'm not sure if I believe or not. Then when you think back, what's a whole life? There must be something afterward. I know, a spirit, somehow or rather. When Murray died Shirley, from the Temple, called and she said open the door and let the spirit out. I remember that. I don't know, but I think the Jewish people believe there is something after. The Catholics do. The Catholics believe too they are going to live somewhere after life. Let's hope so. It would be nice if there was a life after. I don't know what it would be like. We would all be angels. We hope. That's one thing no one knows. We dream sometimes. What is that? And you see people you knew.

Larsen: Do you remember your dreams?

BROWN: Yes. My dreams are very vivid. I dream in color and I wake up. I remember the whole thing. I have a dream which comes to me very often that I go into a very familiar place and I come out and everything is strange. I don't know where I am and I don't know how to get out of there and who ever I ask can't help me. It's strange and I keep getting this dream over and over. It's strange somehow but that's the ways it gets. I see buildings and places and I know it's like going into my own house and coming out and everything changed. I don't know why I have those dreams. I dream the same thing over and over. I don't know what it means.

Larsen: On your refrigerator is the picture of your brother all dressed up.

BROWN: That's all I have from the whole family. Nothing else. He was younger than me. Maybe he was ten at the time or nine. I don't know. Good looking boy. It doesn't look like then. It looks like, you know, a modern picture. I have nothing, my mother, my father, nothing. You asked me if I had pictures. I must have other pictures. I will have to pull out someday and show you, but not from my family. I have nothing I don't know. Whether I had a lot when I came to England, I don't know but we moved around so much that things get lost I guess. But did I have pictures?

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Larsen: As we are winding up the interview and remembering your family, are there others things that you want to share or you want to make sure people know about?

BROWN: People say it can't happen again but I feel it could happen again very easily if people aren't put down as soon as something happens. It can happen again. People should know what was so it shouldn't happen again. But you never know that there are always people who are looking to do something. There's still plenty of anti-semitism in the world and I think it could happen. I hope not.

Larsen: I hope not too. Your story is important.

BROWN: What a terrible time that was when Hitler came in and how far he went. No one could stop him somehow. He went from one country into another and I tell you what. If he would have known England had nothing. They were so short of ammunition and things. It was just with a stroke of luck that they beat them. When Hitler tried to invade England they said they had nothing. It was just a bit of luck some or rather. They didn't know. They thought that England was very prepared which wasn't so.

Larsen: Do you read about the holocaust? I know you shared a book title with me about the Kinder transport.

BROWN: No, maybe if I come across an article, but I don't take out books. No I don't want to read about it. It is enough what I remember. I read a couple, but I am not looking for them, lets put it that way. If they come across I read them and that book (The Children of Willesdey Lane) you read that I read, was really well written because it is almost my story except that she was a pianist. She came to England, also from Europe.

Larsen: Before we close out interview in your kitchen Charlotte, I wanted to mention your wonderful plants.

Brown: Yes, I love houseplants. In New York I had houseplants too and I like them. I grow orchids. I'll show you one later. I don't know how it grew so beautiful and I love houseplants. I can't throw them out. I have too many already. I have no room. Every room is full of plants. I'm lucky with them. Everybody says I have a green thumb. All those you are looking at are orchids. They are not in bloom now. All the flowers fell off, but I have one in there that is still blooming.

Larsen: Also, you like to walk everyday and you had an outside garden.

BROWN: Yes, I walk. I try to get my exercise. My husband grew a beautiful garden. There was so much vegetables and fruit we didn't know what to do with it. He was good at it. He loved it. I'm not good on the outside. I do my houseplants but I'm not good at the outside gardening. Now I don't grow anything. I rely on my friends and neighbors.

Larsen: We will close now. If we want to add some things we can when we read it and I really appreciate this opportunity and thank you.

Brown: Your welcome and I liked the time spending with you.