

Estelle born in 1933 lived on Park Ave and Bernard after that moved to Jeanne Mance above Bernard. When I was 9 we moved further down on JM between Fairmount and St. Viateur.

Irving (grandparents both came from Shtetl in Russia). Father came from Hungary in 1929. Irving was born in 1932.

Lived on Jeanne Mance

Father was a tool and dye maker.

Did you know anything about the war?

E. I first became aware of the war when I saw people hanging around a radio, a little radio listening to the news so that would be in 39-40 and then I moved in 42 close to Fairmount. We always had an awareness of the war and the seriousness of it. I knew there was a war on and it was serious. That was it. Was not aware of what was happening to the Jews, absolutely not.

My experience was vastly different than Estelle's. My father was political. This was an important part of his life. This kind of talk was very common around the supper table. I had a huge map in my room pinned up on my wall where my father would follow the progress or retreat of the allies. It was a very immediate experience and I certainly knew as much as other Americans that something was happening to the Jewish population. It really came home to me one day when I was on the street playing with my friends, mostly Jewish but a couple of English kids, some of them brought up in very anti-Semitic surroundings. I remember distinctly saying to me, with a gleeful smile on his face, "you guys better watch out if the Germans win the war, they are going to get you." So, I was conscious of the fact that anti-Semitism was very real and also conscious of the fact that something was going on in Europe that was terrible and that people were getting killed. But as far as a familiar knowledge of concentration camps, gas chambers, probably not. That only came out afterwards. We talked about the Jews being persecuted in our house. My father's family was divided. He had siblings living in Hungary. You couldn't write; you couldn't phone. We knew nothing until a couple of months after the war ended. We got this long distance call, the operator asking to speak to my father. It was a call from the Red Cross that they learned that there is a person who claims to be the brother Nick Smith, (my father) and are we talking to Nick Smith? Then they explained that my father's brother had survived. He was found in a concentration camp., He was liberated, in terrible shape and taken in by the Swedish government. There was jubilation in the family that somebody survived. Several weeks later after that phone call, there was a letter containing my uncle's picture. He was wearing pyjamas and he seemed to be in some kind of garden that could have been attached to the hospital. It looked sort of nice but he looked cadaverous, thin and terrible. Following that, a couple of more months we get another postcard or letter from the Red Cross letting us know he had died. Consumption – tuberculosis.

We knew very little but we did know that my grandfather and my uncle, my father's brother were taken to a concentration camp. (30:55). They also took his wife and son. He survived they all perished.

So yes, to a certain extent we were aware. It was a constant subject.

E. We had no known family in Europe so that there was not this awareness. What did happen and when I think back about it, it was pretty horrible, I don't know what year it was, that my father's family, my father had some very wealthy sisters here, they were notified that some relative had survived. I don't know how they got this notification, maybe through the Red Cross. The family had a little meeting together and said, "What do we do?" They decided to ignore it because they said that these people will just rob you blind. I remember that. I might have been 15 or 16. It was pretty horrific and after that there was no more talk about it. I have no idea who that person was and what happened to then.

First wave came around 1947. 37:35

E. I don't remember a wave. In 47 I was 14 or 15 years old and I can remember some people moving into the neighbourhood. Were we friendly to them? No! I remember next door there was a family, a husband, a woman maybe in her 30s and they had a child. She constantly ran behind this child, carry a bananas saying: אע, אע, אע - Es, Es, Es. Eat. Eat, eat, eat. I can't remember any mothers on the street be welcoming to her. These were strange people. They didn't speak English. They ran after their kids with a banana. They just didn't fit in. I was recently asking Irving if he remembers any people our age, teenagers, coming to our school. Where were these teenagers? Why did we not see them? Basically we saw these mothers with young children born after the war. We soon became aware of young people, maybe older than we were maybe in their 20s and we did not like them. They did not dress the way we did. They had their own style. They wore their coats over their shoulders which we thought was really creepy. They wore their fedoras differently than our fathers or brothers wore their fedoras and we most certainly as teenage females, we would not go out with these guys. First of all they were considerably older than we were but even thinking about older sisters, those of us who had them, you would not go after people unless you had a feeling of desperation that you could not meet someone amongst your own group of people, people who were here. But, most certainly not the DP. What did we call them Irving, it wasn't nice?

Ir. Unfortunately, this is what makes the world go round and round and we Jews are not free of it. The immigrants who came across were referred to as "mockys," and if not mockys they were called, maybe slightly more polite, they were called greeners. Of course not knowing anything, the inference was a green, unripe fruit.

E. Mocky means they were different. They didn't speak English and if they did, they eventually spoke with terrible accents. They interacted with their children different than the way way our parents interacted with us. They dressed differently. They were different.

Ir. My first impression. I think I was confused. Confused in the sense that as I said, my father was political and we talked constantly about the war and what was happening and what would the world look like afterwards as at some point we knew we were going to win. When I first encountered these people I was confuse. I felt that we had an obligation to the,. That they had suffered terribly, yet, amongst my friends, Jewish families and Jewish kids, there was a decided hostility towards them and I guess I was effected by them too. I guess I too used the same words,

probably not greeners but most certainly mocky. I have a distinct memory of what happened outside the YMHA on Mount Royal. There was a terrible fight between these young immigrants, DPs, Displaced Persons and good Jewish Canadian kids, 17, 18, 19 years of age. There were fist fights outside the YMHA. One reason was, they didn't want these people dating out Jewish girls. Now, I was younger, I was like 14 and not exactly in the dating age yet, but I was aware of the animosity that existed. When I look back at it, it was just terrible.

How did we feel about them and why? And it was only many years later when the subject started coming up once again and we really discovered what the holocaust was about. We were grown up. It struck me that the reason why we disliked these new immigrants is that we were second and third generation. We all spoke Yiddish fluently, sometimes with a Yiddish drawl, perhaps. (40:24) We were assimilating. Suddenly, there is this wave of people who don't speak English and who are somewhat different. I think that many of us were frightened of this, that they were dragging us back to an earlier stage. We were becoming assimilated and were actually becoming lawyers and doctors and what have you. These people running around with terrible accents. It was a drag. It would affect us in some manner.

I think it is important for us to talk about this but I do not like doing it. It brings back too many terrible memories. The lack of sympathy, the contempt for a group of people who endured God know what, and of course, one other thing, which has become well known today, when DPs attempted to explain what they experienced, a lot of the reaction here was, if you survived you must have done something terrible. That is suggested as being one of the reasons why a lot of immigrants chose not to talk about it. They did not find understanding, they didn't find sympathy. They stopped talking about it. How can you talk to someone about the loss of your family, when they respond, "If you survived, you did something terrible. You must have been a *kapo*."

E. I don't even know when and at what age I became conscious of the holocaust. I don't remember the details. I just remember they were different and did not reflect good on us.

z. Embraces Holocaust as a collective identity. (45

Ir. The Holocaust became a reality for me when I was an undergraduate at Sir George Williams). I graduated from High School in 1949, I took a year off and started Sir George in 1950

Ir. I do not remember any survivors at High School.

Ir. 47:45. My parents got a call from the Baron de Hirsh. I do not know why or how. They told me that they were going to invite a young Hungarian Jew who came from Europe to live with us. They did. I think he was two or three years older than me. It didn't really work out well. I guess there was a sense of sibling rivalry. The relationship I had with my parent he resented, he wasn't part of it.. He became rather successful and became a business man.

E. The reality of the Holocaust came to me through literature, not with contact with people.

Ir. People began to embrace the Holocaust. Certainly after the creation of the state but not immediately. It took a number of years. It did not become what it is today. Right or wrong I support it. 1.12 Views of his father on the state of Israel.