



UKHMF TESTIMONY TRANSCRIPT – EVA WIESENFELD

[Testimony: 1hr 50 mins. Artefacts 8' 15"]

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Every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of this transcript. However, no transcript is an exact translation of the spoken word, and this document is intended only as a guide to the original recording.



10:00:00:00

Eva Wiesenfeld

My name is Eva Wiesenfeld. I was born in Czechoslovakia at 2nd of March '33 and during the war I was in the ghetto in Budapest until I came to England in 1948 with Dr Schonfeld.

[Fade to black and back up]

10:00:20:20

Interviewer

Okay, um, so you said to me just a minute ago that you haven't actually recorded your testimony before.

10:00:26:18

Eva Wiesenfeld

No, I didn't.

10:00:27:09

Interviewer

Tell me why.

10:00:29:06

Eva Wiesenfeld

My children often ask me and, um, said well when are we going to talk about all your experiences? I said okay but let's get together and, er, do it sometime, we just didn't get round to it. Everyone is so busy that, um, we just didn't get round to it. I suppose I did tell them bits and pieces but not, exactly everything. They know certain things, where I was taken and when left the, the country and how Doctor Schonfeld came to get us, but I didn't tell them the whole story.

10:01:05:04

Interviewer

Have there been parts that you've not wanted to tell them because it's been so difficult?

10:01:08:13

Eva Wiesenfeld

No, no.

10:01:10:06

Interviewer

No? It's just simply that you haven't found the time?

10:01:12:14

Eva Wiesenfeld

That's right.

10:01:12:20



Interviewer

And they haven't really asked the right questions maybe?

10:01:16:09

Eva Wiesenfeld

Yes, we didn't get down to it properly and, they always wanted to know, but somehow, we just, we were too busy, and we didn't make time for it, that's it.

10:01:28:03

Interviewer

Um, there are lots of people that I've spoken to that have not spoken about their experiences, simply because, um, they found it so emotional and a number of people have said, but nobody's ever asked, nobody's ever asked what happened.

10:01:43:01

Eva Wiesenfeld

Right, nobody has ever asked me exactly, they ask me little bits and pieces you know, where were you at this time? And what were you doing there? But nobody actually asked me exactly, so that's why we didn't talk about it but.

10:01:59:19

Interviewer

Why do you think that is? It, it can't be that they're not interested, maybe they're worried about the details that you'll give them?

10:02:05:04

Eva Wiesenfeld

I don't think so.

10:02:05:12

Interviewer

Do you think that might be it?

10:02:06:20

Eva Wiesenfeld

No.

10:02:07:16

Interviewer

Okay fine. Alright, so well we are asking you now everything, so thank you very much for talking to me.

10:02:13:02

Eva Wiesenfeld

Okay.

10:02:14:10

Interviewer

Um, let's talk, talk a bit about, cause you have, you've spoken about your story a little



bit at schools, haven't you?

10:02:21:01

Eva Wiesenfeld

I did yes.

10:02:21:15

Interviewer

Tell me why you found that was an important thing to do.

10:02:24:22

Eva Wiesenfeld

Well, I was asked to speak to the children. Um, Doctor Schonfeld's son usually goes because it's his school.

[Cut for sound]

10:02:34:22

Eva Wiesenfeld

Well, I told them that, er, which country I came from, they never heard of Czechoslovakia and, um, I told them we boarded the train and the boat, we left our parents whoever still had parents. I left my mother behind, and my sister and I came and boarded the train with my, lots of other, er, children, I didn't know anyone. Er, some children had aunties or uncles in England, some learnt a bit of English cause some of us were older, some were younger. Of course, I didn't know any English and, um, I didn't know where I'm going, into the unknown. Anyway, I suppose we all cried when we left at, in that train. And, um, it was afterwards very exciting for us, we boarded the boat, we went by boat that we'd never been before. Um, and some children were very young. Er, Doctor Schonfeld wasn't really allowed to bring, er, adults so he made some of the girls who were already 18 and 20, he made them younger. And so, I was also made younger. We had false passports. I was born somewhere else, and I was younger, actually I was looking for this passport and I could not find it, I wanted to bring it to show you. Um, and, um, so the older ones were looking after the younger children who were crying of course. Some lost their parents, they had nobody, um, and they were all stages, each other.

10:04:33:04

Interviewer

We're going to go through all of that in detail in a minute's time.

10:04:36:16

Eva Wiesenfeld

Yes.

10:04:37:00

Interviewer

So, so don't worry about telling me all of those details. So those were some of the things that you spoke to the children about when you gave your testimony,



10:04:42:23

Eva Wiesenfeld

Alright, yes, yes.

10:04:44:04

Interviewer

Um, why do you think it's important for people like you to share their experiences?

10:04:50:12

Eva Wiesenfeld

Well, everyone should know what we went through, what the Jewish people went through in this war. It was traumatic, people were tortured and, and didn't know what happened, um. When I told the children certain things, but you can't tell them horrible things, they were young children. But said this very important for you to remember that we suffered a lot and we came to this country and we were welcomed here and we made a life for ourselves. And when I told them that I left when I was fifteen and I didn't see my mother for 16 years, well that, they just couldn't understand. They wrote to me afterwards that was the main topic, how couldn't you see your mother for 16 years? If I don't see my mother for two days, I'm, you know, they were very impressed. And, um, they didn't know where Czechoslovakia was, never heard of it and, er, then I told them that, um,

10:06:02:24

when we arrived in England we were not allowed to stay in England, the Home Office didn't give us permission, so Doctor Schonfeld had to take us somewhere out of the England, and he took us to Ireland because they didn't need a passport to go. but he had nowhere to put us, he had no money himself, he had to collect all the money, of, for the children and, um, he knew someone in Manchester who was a businessman, a friend of his, says help me, where can I put these children? He said okay, we'll buy a property which he did in Ireland, he bought a castle, a dilapidated one, outside Dublin on beautiful grounds in the countryside. And he took us there and in Dublin there is an association of ladies who helped us get all the furniture and, er, renovate the castle and we stayed there for quite some time. Of course we all wanted to go back to school, we wanted to come back to London, but it wasn't possible until Doctor Schonfeld arranged it for us and the Irish government let us stay only for one year, but in the meantime some of us, some girls went away to America, some went to Israel, some had relatives, but I had nobody, no one to go to. And, um, sometimes Doctor Schonfeld came to visit us in the castle, and we all surrounded him, and we want to go, we want to go to London. And he was a wonderful, wonderful person. He taught us a song; my friend is your friend, and your friend is my friend [*laughs*] and we were all singing that.

10:08:10:03

Interviewer

He sounds like an amazing man. If you don't mind, I'm gonna ask you all about that, um.



10:08:15:02

Eva Wiesenfeld

Afterwards.

10:08:16:07

Interviewer

Yeah, yeah in a bit I, I think I just want to just start, um, either with just a kind of general view of

10:08:23:13

Eva Wiesenfeld

Alright.

10:08:23:18

Interviewer

Of why you feel it's important and whether or not you feel that since your experience, we've learnt any lessons from what you went through.

10:08:35:14

Eva Wiesenfeld

Um, the hate amongst countries and religions and amongst people is so wrong. You don't know why you hate somebody, and do you know why we are hated so much? Um, we have, we don't, we can't have, you don't have reasons in Germany, even just before the war it was very bad, people were, just felt thrown out of their jobs and, er, people who were highly qualified professional, er, people, they were not allowed to have, er, proper jobs and the, of course the whole family suffered and, um, we have to learn how, when children are play in a playground, they don't hate each other, they play together very nicely. So where does it come from this hate? Um, and we have to learn to live together and tolerate each other's, er, religions and, um, behaviour even. And, er, live in peace otherwise such things can develop and, er, you know things happen, um.

10:10:03:04

Interviewer

No that's good, that's perfect.

10:10:03:19

Eva Wiesenfeld

[laughs] Sorry.

10:10:04:13

Interviewer

No, no that's so eloquently put and so perfect, so thank you very much indeed. Let's leave the general view now and just talk about you and your experiences and I'll take you through your story. So, if we can start about your early life and tell me a bit about your family, your, um, sister who's here today, er, and your parents.

10:10:27:15

Eva Wiesenfeld



Yes.

10:10:27:17

Interviewer

I'd love to know about your parents, what kind of house you lived in, what was your community like?

10:10:31:13

Eva Wiesenfeld

Yes well, um, I lived in this little town called Filakovo and there were maybe 100, er, families, Jewish families, um, mainly orthodox and I had wonderful friends, um.

10:10:54:01

When I was six, I started school and, um, it was, um, I was with, er, only a few Jewish children. Of course, we felt different. In school for instance on Saturday there was school, not like here. So, we were not allowed to write, but we still went to school and, er, they tolerated us, we didn't write but we went to school. And, er, there were religious, there was religious instruction where we went out from the class and we had our religious instruction separately on a Sunday morning and, um, my parents worked very hard.

10:11:52:08

Um, my father came from Slovakia and my mother from Hungary. So, we were mainly speaking Hungarian, and, um, my parents had, er, a little restaurant and a bar and they were working very hard and, um, everything was very happy, I was a very happy child. Until about, well my sister was born five years after me in 1938, that's when things really started going bad.

10:12:30:11

They, they took away all the Jewish shops, nobody was allowed to work or own any shops anymore, they closed the shops, and we had no income. Er, so my father travelled every week through Budapest because in a bigger city he could do some kind of work, some, some business. He went away every Monday morning and he came back on Thursday. And that was very difficult for my mother, she was very anxious about what happens to him in, in Budapest because they were looking out for Jews already that time. And, um, she decided that we have to move to Budapest. If he has to be there, if he has to work there, we should move there.

10:13:32:17

And, um, eventually we did, in 1942, and, um, we rented a very nice flat and we were quite happy for a while until things started getting worse. I went to school there, but at that time already we had to wear the yellow star, and I remember wearing the star and, um, I wanted to cover it up with my books, but you were not allowed, you had to show it. Um, I don't remember how long I went to school then, but never, a lot of, um, I mean there were, it was war already and the, the bombs were flying. Many times, we had to go down to the cellar in the middle of the night if the sirens went, we just had to run to the cellar.

10:14:36:06



And then, my father was called up to go through to the army I think it was, um, so my mother was terribly, terribly anxious, what we going to do? Um, so he, he went away, and we moved in with an uncle, we moved to another flat with an uncle who also had two children. Hopefully that he will help us a bit, that my mother wouldn't be on her own with the two children.

10:15:11:18

And, the times were very bad that time, they used to get us into the courtyard and take us on long walks, I don't know where, um, at that time it wasn't as bad as later on, when they took us near the Danube and, um, anyway while we were living there, we heard that Raoul Wallenberg was giving out certain papers and that we could go to a safe house, that had designated Swedish, er, beautiful houses on the other side of, er, Budapest in Buda, which is a very smart area. And there were some big houses where he thought he will take us and, um, we would be safe. And this uncle was very resourceful, it was very difficult to get these papers, but he did get it for us.

[Cut for card change]

10:16:20:23

Interviewer

were you a very close family? Were you very warm? And just explain a little bit about the atmosphere in your family and how close you were to your parents.

10:16:27:23

Eva Wiesenfeld

Right, um, we were a very close family. Um, I have, um, I had an uncle there, my mother's brother, living in the same place. And, um, he had a family, and they had a son about two years or three years older, and we were always together. Whenever my mother said, you know, she sent me on an errand, I called him. We went together everywhere. And, um, every Friday night they came to visit us, and it was a lovely atmosphere. The men were singing, and we were playing, and, um, every Friday night they came, and it was a lovely, lovely atmosphere. Um, with my friends, uh, we played, we were happy, we went to each other's houses, um, but, uh, then it was cut short.

10:17:29:09

Interviewer

Thank you very much. Can you tell me a little bit more about your parents and you, your relationship and, and how close you were with your parents?

10:17:37:01

Eva Wiesenfeld

Very, very close. Um, my father was only for the family whatever.

[Cut for direction]

10:17:43:21

Eva Wiesenfeld



When my father came back from, uh, Budapest every Thursday, my mother dressed me up very nicely, and I went to meet my father always. I was so happy. I was so attached to him. I was very happy to see him again. And, uh, I remember him, um, telling my mother all about the news, what was happening. Of course, I didn't understand, uh, but, um, she was very worried about him. And I considered my mother the, the cleverest person in the world. There was no such a thing as saying no to my mother. Very strict. My father wasn't so strict, um, but my mother was, and when she said we had to do, but that was done with love and a lot of care. We had, um, a girl who looked after, when my sister was born I remember we had a, a girl looking after us, took us for a walk with the pram, the baby, I remember that, and, um, I remember when she was born at home, but they wouldn't let me into the room and I wanted to see what was going on [*laughs*].

10:19:11:15

Um, and, um, when I was going to, I never forget such silly things that, um, my mother didn't let me go on an outing. The school went for an outing, but my mother said there's going to be a storm. It's going to rain and there'll be a big storm. Well, I mean, I don't know how other people didn't know that, and that's what happened, and I didn't go, and I thought well that was unbelievable. How did my mother know that? And she, she was, my mother worked very hard, but she wanted the best and the nicest things for us. We had a dressmaker who came to the house, and she made us dresses, and we were dressed, the best dressed kids in the whole town. Um, we had, I had an uncle, um, who lived there, and an aunty. Every Saturday I had to go and show my dresses, you know, and she was very impressed how beautiful. And, um, she was an artist, if she would have been in Paris. She made us beaut, and she sent me dresses for years and years without trying on. For years she sent me dresses.

10:20:31:23

Interviewer

So, you describe a very, very happy, very close, very loving family.

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Eva Wiesenfeld

Very happy, very happy. My mother went to buy material for the dresses to another town, just to get the best, and she's, she was a very, very ambitious person. She wanted us to learn a lot. When I didn't do my homework, she told me "you know what will happen? You will s, uh, sweep the streets because you won't know anything." [*laughs*]. And she made me read, and I remember reading a book and coming into the kitchen to tell her what I read and shew as so happy. I also went to Hebrew classes, and all my friends went on Sunday morning only, but school finished, we only went to school either in the morning or in the afternoon. We went from, I don't know whether it was eight o'clock 'til one o'clock, so in the afternoon we were free. Well, my mother made me go to Hebrew classes every afternoon, and in that room were boys only. The boys were learning much more than the girls. And I was sitting at a different table to the boys. I had to go every afternoon, and then my father came home Thursday evening, this teacher came and told my mother what I learnt, and they were very happy about that [*laughs*].



10:22:14:22

Interviewer

Tell me how close you were with your father, 'cause he was away a lot of the time for work?

10:22:18:16

Eva Wiesenfeld

Very, very close, very close. I admired my father. I loved my father so much. And later on, when we were marched here and there, and I said I wish he would be with me, he would help me. I remember we used to sit in the basement, and it was, the bombs were flying, and we were, we had to sit in the night, and there was a time when my father was there and he was sitting behind me, and he was prom, helping me sit. Our back, backs were together. I remember that. And when he wasn't there, I really missed it so much. I was very, very attached to him. He only lived for his family. And, um, I was supposed to take after him. My sister takes after my mother [*laughs*]. And, um, apparently, I looked like him, and I had his nature. It's just a very, very quiet nature, very refined, very, very refined. There was, there wasn't a loud word ever in the house, and, um, my mother was the more, who, uh, she taught us a lot, and made us do things that we should be doing, and discipline and all that. Of course, my father wasn't there so much, but, um, over the weekend it was wonderful.

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Interviewer

He must've been incredibly proud of you.

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Eva Wiesenfeld

Maybe he was, because I knew a lot because in the Hebrew classes I learnt a lot, much more, my friends only went Sunday morning. But I wasn't, I had to go. Of course, my sister missed out all that because we were not in that place anymore. Afterwards was very bad.

10:24:24:16:05

Interviewer

Your life at that point had been significantly disrupted. So, let's now go back. Thank you very much for filling in that little gap, and it paints a very, um, important picture of your family.

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Eva Wiesenfeld

A very, very close, very close family, yes.

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Interviewer

Ok, so thank you for doing that. So, let's go back now to where we were about your uncle being very resourceful and the houses that were on the other side in, in Buda.

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Eva Wiesenfeld

Oh, Buda, Buda.

10:24:40:17

Interviewer

That's right. So, tell us, what was that about?

10:24:43:18

Eva Wiesenfeld

So, um, while we were living with my uncle, uh, one day we packed up and moved to Buda to one of these houses. Well, they gave us a tiny little room there. We were eight of us, I think, in a tiny room, sleeping next to each other. It wasn't what we expected. We thought it's going to be much nicer. But then we heard terrible news that people were taken out from these houses, marched, I don't know where, and we were very scared. Um, my uncle and, um, my mother decided that whatever will happen to them, the children should be safe. He had two little children. And they heard about an orphanage, and they thought they should put us into this orphanage, 'cause it'll be much safer for us, but it was full, and they didn't take us. Well, that's why I'm still alive, because all those children were taken to the Danube and shot, from that ort, from that orphanage, like lots of other children as well. I don't know whether you've ever been to Budapest, the little shoes along the Danube. You see lots of little shoes. And, um, we marched, they marched us also. I remember a long, long queue, and we were near the river, and I don't know why they didn't shoot us. Somehow or other we went back to where we were. I only found out later on what happened there.

10:26:52:04

Interviewer

Let's talk a little bit more about the orphanage then. So, you were about nine at this time, is that right?

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Eva Wiesenfeld

Ten.

10:26:59:01

Interviewer

Nine or ten, ok.

10:26:59:18

Eva Wiesenfeld

And 11, yes.

10:27:01:00

Interviewer

Um, so you were old enough to remember and understand, I guess, what was going on. Do you remember the discussions with your uncle and your mother about, so at this point where was your father? Was your father gone now?



10:27:12:22

Eva Wiesenfeld

Yes, he was away.

10:27:14:12

Interviewer

But he was working, or he had been,

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Eva Wiesenfeld

No, he was taken away to the labour camp.

10:27:17:19

Interviewer

So, we've, we've missed this bit, so let's talk about your father first, ok? I thought that came later. So let, let's discuss that now, and then we'll go and talk about the orphanage. So, um, can you explain, I know it's very painful, but, but what happened to your dad?

10:27:31:04

Eva Wiesenfeld

Um, all I remember is that he was taken to, I don't, I thought it was the army or something, a labour camp, I think. He was taken away. Once he visited us. He, he was, he came, one night he was knocking at the door. We were all sleeping, and I opened the door to him, and he brought a loaf of bread and balloons. And he was let out for the day or something like that, then he had to go back. And after that we never saw him again. Um, we don't know what happened to him. We never saw him again. And it just, you know, you couldn't think, you couldn't understand where he was. We didn't know where, where could you enquire? There was no, no place where we could enquire what happened to him. Then we heard that his, um, camp was taken on a march which was a death march through different countries. I don't really know that you see? I, I missed that out. I, there's a gap that I really don't know what happened that time. Um, so we were very, very sad without him. You can imagine my mother was frantic. What is she going to do with the two children alone? Anyway, so we, we missed him all this time, but we were, we were marched, every night we were marched somewhere else. We landed in some big hole somewhere, and we were sitting all night. I don't know where, why. No idea.

10:29:32:07

Interviewer

That image of your father coming to the house with bread and balloons is so extraordinary, isn't it?

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Eva Wiesenfeld

It was unbelievable. It was unbelievable. That's when we saw him last.

10:29:43:10

Interviewer



And he obviously had searched so much to find something precious to give to his children.

10:29:46:18

Eva Wiesenfeld

Can you imagine? Balloons. Where did he get balloons from? And bread. That was something you couldn't find easily. So of course, we didn't have, uh, enough food where we were living in this house. And, um, so as I said, it only occurred to me some time ago that we were marched there to the river, but we were let, we, we were sent back.

10:30:19:01 *[Interjected by Eva]*

Interviewer

When you saw your father for the last time did, do you remember thinking that you may not see, when he'd been taken away, he came back to visit you that one night, and when he left was there a farewell? Do you remember what, what happened?

10:30:32:13

Eva Wiesenfeld

No, we never, we never thought we'll, we won't see him again, never. No, we never imagined that.

10:30:38:19

Interviewer

How was your mother at this time? You said she was frantic, but can you remember her, her experience?

10:30:44:02

Eva Wiesenfeld

Well, she was crying, and, uh, she didn't know what's going to happen to us. You know, she was obviously very upset, and we couldn't rely on this uncle. He had his own family. And, um, it was a very, very sad time for us.

10:31:08:19

Interviewer

So, um, you, you, you talk about being marched. You were in this room with eight other people, and what would happen at night? The, you'd be told to leave the building.

10:31:18:01

Eva Wiesenfeld

Yes, the two families, uh, our two families were sleeping in this little room next to each other on the floor. That's what I remember.

10:31:29:12 *[Interjected by Eva]*

Interviewer

And how were you marched? What happened? Someone knocked on the door and you were called downstairs? Or was there a room,



10:31:34:04

Eva Wiesenfeld

They were banging on the door, yes. We, we had to go. The, um, the Hungarian, um, Nazis were very, very crude, and, you know, yes, we just had to go get dressed, and queue up and go. And we didn't know where we're going. And, um, I only found out later on that people who were marched there, and the children specially, they were all shot and, and thrown in the Danube. There were people who were tied together. One was shot, and the others just pulled them down into the water. And, um, we didn't know everything at the time, of course. There was no communication, but we only knew what was happening to us

10:32:32:15

Interviewer

Did you ever see anything like that?

10:32:36:01

Eva Wiesenfeld

No.

10:32:38:03

Interviewer

You just heard about it?

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Eva Wiesenfeld

Mhmm.

10:32:40:07

Interviewer

Which was almost more frightening in a way, wasn't it?

10:32:42:04

Eva Wiesenfeld

Well, I saw afterwards.

10:32:45:05

Interviewer

What do you mean?

10:32:46:18

Eva Wiesenfeld

Well, I, I remembered.

10:32:47:14

Interviewer

Researched it?

10:32:48:10

Eva Wiesenfeld



Yes, later on.

[Cut for card change]

10:32:50:15 *[They talk over each other]*

Interviewer

But obviously, the yellow star was a, I mean you felt terrible having to wear the yellow star and be identified. Tell, tell me what that felt like.

10:32:56:12

Eva Wiesenfeld

Especially when I went to school. When I went to school, I felt terrible and I remember holding my books, ah, not to show it but you were not allowed to hide it. So obviously, felt very different.

10:33:13:04

Interviewer

How did other children react to the yellow star?

10:33:16:23

Eva Wiesenfeld

Oh, they just stared at you. They didn't, ah, make any comment as far as I remember, but, ah, it just felt very different and didn't know what, maybe didn't understand why, um, why do we have to do this? Why are we so different?

10:33:36:14

Interviewer

Um, you were just about to tell me as well about the house that you moved into, ah, and that was identified as well, wasn't it?

10:33:43:00

Eva Wiesenfeld

It was, ah, specially identified, er, as, as a certain house that the Jews could live in. You couldn't live just everywhere because the flat that we lived in before obviously, we had to move out from there because it wasn't, ah, um, the type of house that the, we were allowed to live in.

10:34:06:14

Interviewer

How was the house marked?

10:34:08:17

Eva Wiesenfeld

You know, I don't remember. I have a, I really, I was thinking about that, and I don't remember.

[Cut for direction]

10:34:18:10



Interviewer

the constant rumours and anxiety that you were aware of about people going on marches and people not coming home.

10:34:27:22

Eva Wiesenfeld

Um, of course, my mother didn't want us to hear all that, so we didn't. I don't remember them talking about it too much, I really know more, I found, that I found out afterwards. Yes, later. I found out what happened there exactly. And then it occurred to me we were just there, we was standing there in the big queue of people and children and we were standing near the river, how is it that they let us go back and they didn't shoot us? It just occurred to me, er, much later, I don't know what was happening there before. But all I heard was that, um, the children from the orphanage were taken there.

10:35:20:13

Interviewer

So, would,

10:35:21:02

Eva Wiesenfeld

That's how much, um, a life was worth.

10:35:24:06

Interviewer

We'll talk about the orphanage in a moment, 'cause you wanted to say about the postcard that you received from your father. Do you remember that?

10:35:30:22

Eva Wiesenfeld

I remember the postcard. It was from some labour camp, Mauthausen. I don't remember what was written there, but obviously, it, you know, what I heard, my mother was saying that he was, um, I mean I don't think he would write exactly what was happening there. He didn't want, want us to know that, ah, how hard life was there. Um, but that he was hoping that we are well and the children and, ah, I don't really remember exactly what was written on the postcard. I think we have it somewhere and they couldn't find it.

10:36:21:21

Interviewer

And, and, and that was the last contact that you had with your father?

10:36:24:17

Eva Wiesenfeld

Yeah.

10:36:26:01

Interviewer

And there could have been no doubt for your mother or you or your sister that he



was longing to be with you and longing to have the family connected again.

10:36:33:22

Eva Wiesenfeld [*They talk over each other*]

Of course. Of course. Must have been written there, yes, of course. Because he was, he just lived for the family. What he did for us, everything just for us and the children.

10:36:52:07

Interviewer

And you have no idea how he was killed?

10:36:54:11

Eva Wiesenfeld

No. It's terrible. We don't know where and what, how it, what happened to him, we have no grave, nothing. Yeah. Just very sad. Yeah. So, it, um, terrible memories.

10:37:21:23

Interviewer

Do you remember the moment when you found out that he had been killed or it, just, it all was just part of your history?

10:37:25:16

Eva Wiesenfeld [*They talk over each other*]

No. We don't know. We don't ever, you know, waiting for him to come back. Even after the war we thought, any time he'll show up and he'll come back. I remember we had the festivals, ah, ever, like after the war and I just cried my eyes out, where is he not in the synagogue with all the other men, you know? I was, I was really devastated because I was absolutely loving my father. There was never a, a harsh word. There was never a loud word in our house, even if my mother was upset, he would walk out of the room. He, he wasn't going to, answer or quarrel. He wasn't that type of person. He was very, very refined. And he must have suffered terribly being away from the family and not knowing what will happen to them. He must have suffered really. I remember him writing a postcard every week to his parents, every single week. Because it, travel wasn't, or the, ah, telephone wasn't like it is today and they lived in Slovakia, his parents and, of course, taken away like everyone else.

10:39:07:20

Interviewer

His parents as well?

10:39:09:05

Eva Wiesenfeld

Oh sure. And all my mother's family.

10:39:15:10

Interviewer

How, - is it possible to estimate how many of your larger family you know were taken by the Nazis?



10:39:21:07

Eva Wiesenfeld

Phuh. Loads. Because my mother is one of 12. My aunties, my uncles, we used to go in the summer to see them, and my father, ah, must have had about six brothers and, um, four sisters, I think. Um, and one sister who survived and, um, yeah. You see while we were living in Budapest, we heard about all the deportations from Slovakia, and in Budapest we was, we thought we are still safe because it, you know, they didn't come as far as Budapest but the all the villages and all the other towns where all, all the deportations were taking place. And when I, ah, there was some newspaper I remember seeing that our town and my friends, they were all taken away, I remember their names. My good friend, they were all taken away, at the time. And we were, and then we had people who, er, some families who escaped from Slovakia and came to Budapest and we put them up in our flat, um, they were sleeping all over the place, even in the bath. And, um, yes. But a lot, I had lots of cousins who were, all taken away.

10:41:06:01

Interviewer

Can you estimate how many people?

10:41:08:17

Eva Wiesenfeld

Difficult to say. Ah, there was one cousin, a girl, who lived with us actually, I remember her marching with us together, she survived. Ah, she lived afterwards in Karlsbad. You heard of Karlsbad? But I, I couldn't tell you the numbers because there are grandparents, there are sisters, brothers, cousins, loads, lots of the family has gone, have gone, yeah. So, you know, we felt really that we have no family left.

10:41:52:11

Interviewer

Very hard to be brought up with all that grief surrounding you.

10:41:57:09

Eva Wiesenfeld

Terrible. Yes, yes. Um, because I remember my cousins and my friends who I played with and who I went to school with, and there was nobody there but, you know, yeah. And we couldn't believe our luck at the time that we actually moved to Budapest when we moved in 19, ah, 42 and, um, when I, when he heard of all the deportations taking place from our town and we were not there, how lucky. But then, it was unbelievable that all these people have gone, all my friends and relatives, all gone.

10:42:44:20

Interviewer

You've given a very good sense of your mother's panic that she'd lost her husband, your father, she'd lost her support network around her, and she had two beautiful girls that she needed to protect and with very little resource,



10:43:02:04

Eva Wiesenfeld

Yes.

10:43:02:22

Interviewer

And very little support and it sounds like you were very in touch with her anxiety.

10:43:08:17

Eva Wiesenfeld

Oh, very much so. I understood already, you know, I mean she was looking for food always for us, it was very hard to get. And, um, to see children who are hungry when you can't give them food. And, ah, she was very stressed because she didn't talk to us about all the difficulties really, just what I realised what was going on. And, um, we had, as I told you going back to my dressmaker, when we left our town, my mother had beautiful clothes made for us, that we took with us, you know, I never wore. *[laughs]* I'll never forget that. I had the most beautiful things made and I never wore it, it was all left in our flat. Oh, yeah.

10:44:05:07

Interviewer

So, let's go back again now to where we were about the orphanage and your mother and your uncle thinking that that would be the safest place for you. Do you remember being part of those discussions? Do you remember what that felt like at that age to think that you would be going to an orphanage?

10:44:21:20

Eva Wiesenfeld

I didn't hear much of it. I don't think they would discuss it in front of us. I know they went to enquire, and they wanted to put us in, and they came back that, ah, there's no room, so, of course, they were desperate, they didn't know what to do. So that's why we always went with them whenever they took us on these marches we always went with. They didn't know what's going to happen to us, where they are taking us.

10:44:52:10

Interviewer

How, how did you end up finding out about the orphanage?

10:44:56:01

Eva Wiesenfeld

Only afterwards. Talking to my mother. I'm, I'm very, very upset that I didn't talk to my mother much more about all this.

10:45:05:15

Interviewer

Before she died?

10:45:08:16

Eva Wiesenfeld



Yes. I didn't because must have been painful. I didn't want to bring up such memories. I, I, you know, there were a lot of things I would have loved to know what was really going on and the politics, things, the names of people, yeah, even the Hungarian government and, ah, the police were terrible. Er, it was in '44 when I, when the Nazis came into Budapest. Until then we were just hanging around, waiting for something, waiting to be taken away just like the others were.

10:45:54:20

Interviewer

And you felt that sense of danger?

10:45:57:08

Eva Wiesenfeld

Oh, of course, all the time. Cause we knew we were in danger, in great danger. But you see, from these houses afterwards, they made the ghetto after that. Ah, they named a few streets that were going to be blocked and, um, the made the ghetto for us, to gather us together, we shall be in one place, and the trains ready for us to be taken away to Auschwitz. So, we were taken to the ghetto, but we were in the ghetto for some months, I think about nine months.

10:46:44:06

Interviewer

Can you remember that very well?

10:46:45:17

Eva Wiesenfeld

Sure.

10:46:46:16

Interviewer

What can you tell me about it?

10:46:49:06

Eva Wiesenfeld

Well, there was a big gate where there were guards, you couldn't go in or out. We were still together with my uncle, and the little children. I had no food. The worst thing that I remember, and my sister remembers too, there was a courtyard in this block where we lived, in the corner there was a pile of bodies. And I, ah, today, are just in front of my eyes all the time, and my sister also remembers. And something she was just, she told me the other day that she said, she doesn't know why these people had lipstick on, she said, but it was blood. Um, oh, that was awful. And they didn't leave us in peace even in the ghetto. They came in the middle of the night, demanded money, demanded jewellery. I never forget when they asked my mother for jewellery and she said she didn't have, they slapped her. I'll never forget that.

10:48:17:06

And, um, we were all there crying, you can imagine. And, um, my uncle was, I don't know what they did to him because they demanded money from him, but, ah,



anyway, and then they left us alone, we didn't have any. Um, and that's what was going on in the ghetto and

10:48:45:20

we had no food. This uncle had a factory previously, and he had somehow, he got in touch with one of his old employees who smuggled in some food for us. I don't know, he must have bribed the, the guards at the door, at the gate and he brought us some food. And, um, our mother, sister actually remembers that somehow, we had some kind of soup, and we drank the water from it first, before there was actual food, we were so hungry. So, yes. I remember some kind of piece, my mother was cooking something and, ah, there just wasn't no bread, so. My uncle had little children and it was terrible.

10:49:48:16

Interviewer

When you said, um, the picture of the bodies is in front of your eyes, is that still now?

10:49:53:20

Eva Wiesenfeld

Yes.

10:49:55:07

Interviewer

How often do you think about it?

10:49:57:11

Eva Wiesenfeld

I don't think about it but it's there somehow in my subconscious, it was, it's there. I see it exactly how it was.

10:50:07:17

Interviewer

Can you describe it?

10:50:09:16

Eva Wiesenfeld

There were a few bodies piled on top of each other, why they didn't cover them I don't know. I don't know how long they were there or, Yeah, so. That was a terrible time in the ghetto and there was bombing, and the Russians, were, they were fighting with the Germans, and the Russians were trying to take over Budapest. So, there was a lot of fighting and shooting that we heard all the time.

10:50:46:23 *[They talk over each other]*

Interviewer

Terrifying for a young child. I mean terrifying for anybody but,

10:50:49:03

Eva Wiesenfeld

Very terrifying. We were terrified.



10:50:51:13

Interviewer

Terrifying for a young child.

10:50:52:13

Eva Wiesenfeld

We were terrified. There were no answers why or what or what's happening. So, um, that was a very hard time in the ghetto.

[Cut for direction]

10:51:04:12

Interviewer

Um, I was going to just ask you, um, now again, just, just about that moment with your mother, um, because that sounds like reading your story was one of the most traumatic things that ever happened to you because there was your mother doing everything for you and to see her maltreated in that way.

10:51:22:19

Eva Wiesenfeld

Distressed and, ah, yes, the mistreating.

10:51:26:01

Interviewer

So, can you tell me that story again from your perspective, so you were 11 years old, and you were fast asleep.

10:51:32:12

Eva Wiesenfeld

Yes, we were woken up with a banging on the door and she'd open the door. We didn't know what's happening there, my uncle had opened the door. And this, um, um, [Nilesh], ah, the Nazis, they came in and they demanded, we were frightened, terribly frightened what they going to do us, to us. Are they going to shoot? They could have done. Um, of course, my mother was pleading 'cause we had little children they should leave us alone. And, um, I said, er, they demanded money and I know they demanded jewellery from my mother. I don't know how it is that she actually kept her wedding ring because I know that afterwards she sold it for flour. So, I don't know how or where she kept that ring. And, um, well, they didn't shoot us, I mean it's just one of those things a life wasn't worth anything. Um, yes, I mean this orphanage thing, I mean, you know, it, how is it, why did I survive? What about those little children? Why not us? What, you know?

10:53:00:10

Interviewer

But when your mother didn't give them anything that night, what happened to her?

10:53:06:12

Eva Wiesenfeld



Well, eventually they left, they then left us and, you know, we were expecting the next lot to come.

10:53:15:19

Interviewer

But did they, did they slap her? What, what did they?

10:53:17:16

Eva Wiesenfeld [*They talk over each other*]

They, they slapped her because she said she had no jewellery. That's in my, you know, I've seen it and that was the most terrible thing, to see that. But, you know, there are people who saw worse than that, ah, the mothers were shot in front of them, and they were tortured, so, you know. People went through much worse than we did, just because we were in Budapest.

10:53:53:05

Interviewer [*They talk over each other*]

Every story is so different, isn't it? I mean you, you're, you're -,

10:53:57:07

Eva Wiesenfeld

Yes. Everybody's different.

10:53:58:19

Interviewer

you're right, some people did see, you know, and experienced some even more dreadful things but that doesn't mean to say that your story isn't horrendous.

10:54:08:13

Eva Wiesenfeld

I always said that, ah, fortunately I wasn't in the camps, so I haven't got a story, you had much worse stories than mine.

10:54:17:23

Interviewer

It's a different story, it's not worse or better it's just a different story. So, let's talk about, um, eventually the Russians broke through, didn't they? Do you remember that?

10:54:28:23

Eva Wiesenfeld

So, um, eventually, um, when the Russians broke, broke through, yes, that's when the, the gates were opened. The ghetto was opened, and we could leave.

10:54:46:18

Interviewer

Do you remember that day?

10:54:47:19



Eva Wiesenfeld

Oh, it was, we had nothing. We absolutely had a little bundle maybe. We walked out, er, hungry, but in the, in the spring the snow was melting, we saw dead horses on the street. I mean it was just, just after the war immediately. We walked out from there and somehow, we met up with my other uncle who we used to, er, live at, who, who lived in the same place, er, we were always together with that family, they survived in Budapest in hiding, they were hiding as Christians. And somehow, they found, we found each other and one of the, my cousins, he brought us flour and that's how my mother, we went back to our old flat thinking maybe they would let us in there, we had nowhere to go. So, we actually did go back there. Um, they gave us a tiny room, there, there was a stove, and my mother baked a *challah*, [*laughs*] you know, this white bread. She sold her wedding ring for flour. And then this family together, they decided we have to leave Budapest because we heard that one of my uncles came back without his family, just by himself. He was back in our hometown, and he had food. So, my mother said, well, we have to go there, she had nowhere else to go, we had no money or anything else. So, we started walking out of Budapest, there was no transport.

10:57:06:00

We had, I remember wearing, I don't know if they were pyjamas or something, the long trousers and they got, got all wet because the snow was melting and we were walking, my mother, my aunty and the cousin, we were all walking out of Budapest where, I mean this town was about at the time I think six hours by train. And, um, but we had to get back to our old town because that's where my uncle was, and we had somewhere to stay, and he had food. So, we walked and walked and walked until night was falling and my mother said, what are we going to do? We might get into some wood and get lost and what are we going to do with the children? And, ah, there were lots of, ah, Army lorries going past with soldiers, and, um, my mother thought we have to stop one of them, they should take us somewhere. Of course, the ladies were very scared of the soldiers, and they didn't want to stop until my mother took our hands, stood in the middle of the road and begged them to take us, to pick us up, I remember that. So, they picked us up and, put us down somewhere, I think at some rail station, ah, the sitting, waiting for some train. I don't know how they knew where to go; I didn't know how my mother knew where [*laughs*] to go. And there were trains, you know, the continent, that time, there were trains and I hear when you go from one coach to the other it's closed, but they were open, they were like, you remember the open buses, the, no, it was open. And there was a little platform where you could stand and they got onto a train and we were all standing on that platform, er, it was all full I imagine or maybe, maybe we had no tickets, [*laughs*] I don't know. And it took us to some other station where we got out.

10:59:28:01

And from there somehow or other, I never forget the, the minute we went back into my town, it was on a lorry, my mother must have got a lorry of some kind, and we was standing on this lorry and we drove into our town. It was something very emotional. The next day when I realised none of my friends were there, they were gone. And one of the boys, a Hungarian boy who I went to school with, when he saw me, said, "Oh, you came back." That's what he asked me, "Oh, you came back." Yeah. Cause everyone else was gone. We were good friends before. Yes, so, um,



that was the welcome we had, but, you know, my mother knew all the, um, the people who used to work, ah, in the town where there's a very big factory in our town producing, ah, enamel saucepans and, er, all kinds of kitchenware, and there were a lot of people who, work there, and, ah, my mother had a shop before and all knew her and, of course, everybody brought us food, everybody brought everything for us. I mean they knew my family from before. I remember there was a sack of walnuts and of, um, er, all kinds of things, so my mother started cooking.

11:01:19:13

And we lived in, um, an uncle's house which was empty because none of them came back, a whole family with four, children growing up. Ah, I think two of the, their sons they died from dysentery because they started eating, after starving you can't eat so easily, they died there after the war. And when people heard we were back some of the, the families who lived there before, all without their families, some of the men started coming back, so that all our house was an open house. My mother cooked for everybody, they all came in, to us. Then a couple got married even, my mother made the wedding which was, ah, potatoes and I don't know *[laughs]* what else. Yeah. So that was just after the war. And this other aunty, they also came back. Um, they also settled in their old house, opened the shop, they had three sons and a daughter, who survived in Budapest in hiding. And, um, *[clears throat]* so, somehow, they tried to make a living. My mother was, it was under the Russians then, you see, um, Hungary, ah, get, Hun, er, Czechoslovakia became Hun, Hungarian in 1938 and after the war it was back to Czechoslovakia again. I didn't know a word of Slovak and I went to school, I didn't, you know, I learnt quite quickly but I, I didn't know any, I had to learn everything by heart.

11:03:28:00

Interviewer

We're going to talk about, um, your escape in a moment and how you came here, but before I ask you about that can I just, I mean it, it's, it's obvious, but do you find remembering very painful?

11:03:44:14

Eva Wiesenfeld

Um, it was more painful years and years ago. I don't know why, my memory's going. *[laughs]*

11:03:53:24

Interviewer

Or maybe you've come to terms with a little bit more since then. Did you, you used to find it very, very painful?

11:03:56:20

Eva Wiesenfeld

It's not as painful as it was somehow. Time has, mellowed it. Not as painful.

11:04:09:14

Interviewer

Before, how did it feel?



11:04:12:05

Eva Wiesenfeld

Yeah, it was, it was, um, very traumatic what we went through. And, um, I found a letter from my mother, ah, this is afterwards really. Yeah, that's for afterwards but, um, yeah, it was, um, we felt that we'd been through hell. We knew we'd been through hell and how is it that we survived? And by -, the Almighty wanted us to live.

11:04:52:00

Interviewer

What was the letter from your mother?

11:04:54:02

Eva Wiesenfeld

Hmm?

11:04:54:15

Interviewer

What was the letter from your mother?

11:04:55:18

Eva Wiesenfeld

Yeah, but that's afterwards, after I left.

11:04:57:23

Interviewer

Okay. So, we'll talk about that in a minute. Yes, you had. You'd, you'd visited hell.

11:05:03:10

Eva Wiesenfeld

Yes. I knew that we were through a terrible time and without my father, I couldn't understand how are we going to, to live without my father. Whenever there was, you know, just wanted him to walk through the door. And there were other men who came back, an uncle, a neighbour, a friend, mostly without their families. So, my mother was the one who looked after everyone. Um, but we knew we'd been through hell, that's definite, yeah. Ah, that we are here at the time, you know, we were there, don't know why, how did we survive in Budapest? Ah, we don't, we'd been through hell there so here we are. And, um, I was very sorry for my mother. It was, I already knew that it was so hard for her, she had to make a living, and losing her husband, very, very painful, I knew that. Yeah, tough. Very tough. And it become, my mother became so tough 'cause she, had to stand on her own feet, she had to learn how to cope.

11:06:34:14

Interviewer

You said earlier that you wished you asked her more questions before she died.

11:06:40:04

Eva Wiesenfeld



Yeah, exactly what happened in Budapest at the time, about the politics and the parents. Maybe she knew more about my father when he was away, ah,

11:06:53:19

Interviewer

Why didn't you ask her?

11:06:55:01

Eva Wiesenfeld

I don't know. I don't know why we never talked about it. Maybe I thought that it's too painful for her. We didn't, we didn't, ah, I don't think we talked much about the war. We should have done, everybody said that now. *[pause]* Yeah. And I don't really know many people who were there at the time with us, so I, um, yeah, I don't know very much. All I know is that this family, this uncle, and aunty who, um, lived in the same place before, um, they were hiding. My aunty was very rel-, very religious, they stayed in a basement, as Hungarians not as Jews but she had to light her candles Friday night. It was so risky, but she did. And, um, they had a daughter, grown up, and she was, ah, she wore, um, a cross and she learned, um, the prayer, Our Father in Heaven *[sic]*, in case they ask her, um, she looked very Jewish. I don't know how they mistake, how they could *[laughs]* mistake her, but they did catch her once, thinking she's Jewish. She had an, um, her older brother happened to be around and they, he said, "Just leave her alone", you know, somehow and that's, er, the youngest son was caught as well, taken into a police station and they wanted to know he was Jewish. He screamed the house down and they let him out.

[Cut for direction]

11:09:28:01

Interviewer

Um, let's, let's talk now about how your life changed because you found yourself on a train. You told me a little bit about it, but let's start again. Imagine that I don't know anything about how it came to be that you were on a train and, and how you came to meet Mr. Schonfeld?

11:09:47:07

Eva Wiesenfeld

Oh, Doctor Schonfeld.

11:09:48:05

Interviewer

Doctor Schonfeld.

11:09:49:21

Eva Wiesenfeld

Um, oh well, then that's when we went back when we were already settled,

11:09:54:11

Interviewer

Yes.



11:09:55:04

Eva Wiesenfeld

in Filakovo.

11:09:55:24

Interviewer

Hmm, hmm. You've gone back.

11:09:58:02

Eva Wiesenfeld

Um, I went to school. I was very happy in school, I loved school. And, ah, my mother, I had an uncle who came back, he was in Presburg, you know, Slovakia, and he worked in the Aguda Offices, you know, it's a Jewish organisation, he worked there after the war. And he heard about Doctor Schonfeld collecting children around Eastern Europe and, I mean he did that even, before the war and during the war. Do you know about him? Oh, you do. And I mean our transport was the last one after the war and it wasn't because of the Nazis but because of the Russians. It wasn't,

11:10:56:17

Interviewer

How did you, how did you come to be on that last train?

11:11:01:04

Eva Wiesenfeld

How did I come?

11:11:01:23

Interviewer

How did you get on that last train?

11:11:03:01

Eva Wiesenfeld

Oh right. So, this uncle put us both, my sister and me on the list for Doctor Schonfeld that he should take us to England, because my uncle felt it was his grandfather's brother, he was, felt a bit responsible for us. And, ah, there was no community, no Jewish community left, everybody was gone. And, ah, he took us. He told my mother that it would be a good idea if I leave and my mother thought well, maybe I'll come back, you know, education, lovely people, children go abroad, ah, to study, very nice, um, I will go, er, she would let me go and, um, I'll come back. So, she wouldn't let my sister because she was too young, very young, she wouldn't let her come. And, ah, one day we found ourselves in Prague, everybody gathered in Prague, 120 children, some of the girls were older, and we met Doctor Schonfeld and my mother saw him, he was very imposing figure, in uniform. And she said, "I can trust him with you." Yeah. But but my mother went through, my sister will tell you, after I left, she thought, what's going to be, I was a very quiet child. I never said, "Boo" to anyone. She thought I'm going somewhere, who knows where, I will starve because I would never ask for anything.



[Cut for card change]

11:12:58:02

Interviewer

Do you remember the day that you went?

11:13:00:09

Eva Wiesenfeld

Yes, ah, very much so, We were going on to this train, all of us children, And the waving to our mothers or whoever was there, some had no parents, some had some relatives, some friends, And leaving my mother there, That was tough, And I didn't know where I'm going, I didn't know anyone, Some of the children had brothers to go with or someone, I heard then some had uncles in England, I had no one, And um, well, it was decided that I'm going and maybe I'll come back, of course I'll come back, Go back to school and study, So I left my mother waving, they're all waving *[laughs]* And it was a tough journey, I think we went to Ostend, We board at this boat that's where we've got the pictures from, I board at this ship, never been on a boat before, Some of us were sick an, And, but we were well looked after, B, because there were bigger girls and grown up girls: eighteen, twenty. They were teachers mainly, before and the -, they looked after us.

11:14:31:03

Interviewer

So, you were 16,

11:14:33:06

Eva Wiesenfeld

I was 15 when I left.

11:14:34:21

Interviewer

Yeah, but the, your p-, sorry, you're right, you are obviously you're right *[laughs]* You were 15 but you, I thought there was, Er, Something about your passport that...

11:14:43:11

Eva Wiesenfeld

Yes, of course,

11:14:44:16

Interviewer

You had to have a false *[clears throat]* passport because you were slightly too old,

11:14:43:03

Eva Wiesenfeld

Dr Schonfeld didn't allow adults into the country only children, But he wanted to bring some of these, Ah, older girls as well, So we were all made younger, Even I was made, I was still okay but I was made younger, And I had a false passport, I don't know how he got, everybody had the false passport, I was born somewhere else



and, I don't even remembered where I when I was born, And um, after, when I settled in England afterwards, I went to a police station, I want to change my name and everything, so, yah, Dr Schonfeld's children? Of course, no problem.

11:15:35:00 *[Interjected by Eva]*

Interviewer

Tell me about saying goodbye to your mother because it's, as I've said before, it's very clear that you were incredibly close to her, and that you were in touch with all the pain and the trauma that she that she'd been through,

11:15:45:22

Eva Wiesenfeld

Yes,

11:15:46:06

Interviewer

So, that must have been, in, a very very sad departure?

11:15:48:10

Eva Wiesenfeld

Very hard, very hard, Never been separated, even during the war, we were always together, And we suffered together, And my mother was alone, No father, That, I was, *[sighs]* I was upset going but I was sorry for her as well, But I didn't realise how much she suffered afterwards, My sister remembers, She had nightmares, cause you know the old trains, the, the engines, with the locomotives, you know? She had nightmares of stopping that locomotive going, she had nightmares about that, she didn't want it to go. And er, no communication, wasn't like it is today,

11:16:47:08

Interviewer

Do you remember what you took with you?

11:16:49:12

Eva Wiesenfeld

Well I took some very nice clothes, And er, very little food, I think we must have been told not to take food and such, I took my, um, exercise books with me from school, And things I was collecting, for I had a hobby, Um, And um, Not a lot, we couldn't take very much with us, There we were told we would get everything there, when we arrive, But I had some beautiful clothes that was really admired *[laughs]* afterwards.

11:17:28:01

Interviewer

Do you have anything still, in your possession from your past life?

11:17:32:09

Eva Wiesenfeld

[laughs] Clothes yes,



11:17:33:23

Interviewer

You've kept the clothes?

11:17:35:01

Eva Wiesenfeld

Ya know, the children make fun of me, But these clothes were made for me, beautiful silks and the way they are made, they still fit me, And they came back into fashion, That's the biggest laugh, that, you know, I put on a d, "Oh you bought something new?" Yes, it was new, I mean, I don't know how many years ago, they were beautifully made and somehow it expanded -, still fit me. *[laughs]* So, I love my old clothes, they keep telling me I must get rid of them. I've got wardrobes full of cl, old clothes but they're beautiful, I just can't get rid of them.

11:18:16:01

Interviewer

I know it's a connection to your past life as well, isn't it?

11:18:18:23

Eva Wiesenfeld

Yes. My mother always had, you know, she had great taste that she wanted us to look beautiful. Yep.

11:18:29:09

Interviewer

What happened next, when you arrived in England?

11:18:33:12

Eva Wiesenfeld

Right, so, we arrived somewhere, where was it? Somewhere in Liverpool, maybe, And, um, we were given something to eat, that, never eaten before, Thought, that I can't eat that it's not possible, *[laughs]* I never even saw cornflakes because I'd never s, never had cornflakes. I just wasn't, Ya know now, you know, diet, And kind of fish, that uh, ya know, Um, Anyway, We arrived into London, And we were taken to a house, which was a hostel for girls, The boys were in another building and we were taking, taken to this house and b, it was just before the festival of Passover, The day before, And there was Dr Schonfeld brother, Who greeted us and he gave us this, the, the whole thing, that which we call the Seder of um, That we have on Passover, and you'd all get that, It was very strange for me, very strange and nobody, that was a festival without my family,

11:20:01:12

But we were not allowed to stay in England. Dr Schonfeld didn't get permission to stay, that we should stay in England, and um, he had to think what to do with us.

11:20:16:07

Any case, he was asked, "Where you going to put these children tonight? For 120 people, He, I mean, he was resourceful you have no idea what he did for children, I



told the officials that came from the Home Office, that asked to, to see, "What you going to do with these people?" [E-oh] He had, he's a principal of his own school, which is for the, um, established. The Jewish Schools Movement. He said, "Look, I've got two schools, I'm going to empty the classrooms and I'll put in beds". So, they came with the official to see how many children they can put into these rooms, they measured it all up. The children, they didn't know what's going on. They measured up for each person, how much spacing they will need, their word is not quite enough. He said, "Right, well, I've got a house, not far from there. I'll take you to my house, I'll show you, I'll empty it, and oh, my mother lives there and I'll send her on holiday, and we'll put up the children there". "So, where are you going to sleep?" "Oh, there's an attic with bric-a-brac uh, in the attic, I'll sleep there".

11:21:38:03

So, this official had, he cried, cause, never seen such a man. With so much purpose, with so much energy, to do, to save lives. That's all he wanted, Said, "I can't leave the rest of the children there, they'll be killed." A, they just admired him, They gave him everything, I mean, the, he had a, a great struggle with the Home Office, all the time because they're only, there was only a certain amount, they, they allowed to come into the country, But he always won, He was charming and resourceful and he just had to get his way. There was no such a thing of saying, "No" to Dr Schonfeld, And, during the war he went all over Eastern Europe, and he went into orphanages to look for children. And there was a place where he went, the Mother Superior said, "There are no children here, no Jewish children", But he went into the classroom, looked around and very nice, quietly, he said a, a prayer that all children are taught when they are babies, ya know, And he said this prayer and the children came to him, All the Jewish children came to him, So he could take them away, Ah, he did the amazing things, they were not allowed, they fired after his car, But he took their wrong car, He was amazing.

11:23:18:11

Interviewer

Did you ever have a chance to say thank you to him?

11:23:20:13

Eva Wiesenfeld

Oh yes, Ah, we had um, the birthday party for him, When he was ill, unfortunately he had no money at all, We had to collect money for his nursing, Cause money, he'd never made for himself, he never wanted honour, he never wanted money, never wanted thanks, Ah, it's amazing, perhaps he was the, h, a hero, And um, Where were we? [laughs]

11:23:51:11

Interviewer

No, we were just talking about him, that's fine. You've, you've had a, you had your chance to say thank you to him.

11:23:56:18

Eva Wiesenfeld

Oh yes, yes, I mean, he came to our weddings, his children got married,



11:24:02:22

Interviewer

Well, because that's the next bit because you very soon met somebody very, very, special, Your husband,

11:24:07:09

Eva Wiesenfeld

So, you know, we saw him, and he remembered, for years and years afterwards, he remembered everybody's name. He could [pon-pint] pinpoint you know, you, ah, helped, you, d'you know, He knew everybody's name. We invited him of course and he said the, the prayers, when we got married.

11:24:27:03

Interviewer

So, tell me about meeting your husband, you were married for a very long time, weren't you?

11:24:31:23

Eva Wiesenfeld

[sighs] Yes, that was another trauma that he had to go through. [laughs] And um, where where did we leave off?

11:24:43:03

Interviewer

Well, we've d, we were talking about Mr., Dr Schonfeld, why, do you want to talk about meeting your husband now, you said, "it's traumatic"?

11:24:49:08

Eva Wiesenfeld

What were we talking about before?

11:24:52:22

Interviewer

Um, about him, um, getting money together and measuring up all the rooms and making sure and him, he was living in an attic,

11:24:58:18

Eva Wiesenfeld

But then, when we came, our, our transport was the last one. So, he wasn't around, and he got in touch with this friend from Manchester, Mr. Levy, Says, "He must help me to put these children somewhere". So, he had an idea, and he bought this castle for us, it had to be renovated, it was dilapidated, He got people, I don't know how, he got money together. And there were workmen, doing things. And the, there's an Association in Dublin of Jewish, organisation, And they got furniture for us, And um, We had teachers coming in to teach us, But we were all unhappy, we wanted to go to London, to school, I know, But um, [coughs] So eventually, it's um, We were only allowed to stay a year, in any case in, in Dublin, But it was the beautiful countryside,



The boys play, played football with the local children from the village, Anyway, eventually, we came back to London, well, I did and we stayed in a hostel, And ah, I couldn't go, so I didn't know much English yet, So, um, we were learning, um, in this um, they established a kind of school, Ah, in this building where we lived and we also learned it's a Seminary, with, J, for Jewish studies, If you want to be teachers, we were studying there, And um, we had very, very special people that came in to teach us, [pause]

11:26:58:22

Um, I w-, wanted to go to Pitmans. You know Pitman Secretarial? I went for an interview but had no money. I had to pay for it. I couldn't go. I'm still sorry about, er, that. [laughs] Ah, "Yes, you're very good, yes, yes", She asked me about, um, Ah, certain words and, and, "Could I spell, So, yes you're a good candidate, you must come", I had no money, so I couldn't go, No, I was then 17, 16,17.

11:27:41:03

Um, there was a family in the area, who wanted an au pair, and er, I thought, well, you know, I can't stay in this hostel very much longer, didn't like it. I had a friend and the two of us thought we should go and get a room together somewhere. I don't know how I thought I'm going to pay for it, but we thought, we'll move out from the hostel, When, in the meantime, I went to live with this family. It was a very orthodox family, I went to live with, they were wonderful people, very nice. There were children, I went to the same, I attended the seminary, And I didn't have, didn't have to do much work. They were very, very nice to me, and one day the gentleman there, he tells me," Maybe, you know, you want to get married?" I said, "Me? I'm 17." Ah, [sighs] I, I had no intention of getting married, anyway, "My mother is not here",

11:28:58:14

Um, Anyway, um, He had a friend, who met my husband, who'd just came back from Israel. He was there for a year in the Army and he came back to England, Ah, he originally came -, Dr Schonfeld brought him to England from Poland, He was in Siberia during the war, Where he lost his family, He walked barefoot in the snow, And lived on garlic and um, watermelon, Yah, Um, Anyway, er, he met him, oh, they're, they were from the same town in Poland and he had nobody, living in a room somewhere, "I'll take you to a family and there's a young girl there," And, um, So, we went out. We had nowhere to, to be or to if, if it didn't, ya know, you didn't know where to go, it was in the winter, and um, we didn't want to stay in the house all the time so, we had to go out. We went to pictures or just walked about I suppose. We went to his, his room. He lived in a shocking place,

11:30:26:13

Anyway, um, we were going to get married, I said, "But how? My family's not here. My mother, I have to tell her". So, um, we've corresponded of course, with my mother, all the time, writing letters. And at the time, there wasn't even a telephone in the whole house, so we had to phone the Post Office, then she came to the Post Office, And I said, "I want to get married,"

11:30:58:23

Oh, that was, that was the end of the world for her, "What do you mean? You went



two, two years after, you, you left at 15, not saying a word to anybody and you want to get married. To whom?" That's what she said you know, "Love is blind", she wrote to me [laughs] They said it was, "Love at first sight", it seems because we decided in three weeks that we want to get married, But I was underage, In England, you couldn't get married under 21, at the time, So what are we going to do? Well, I need permission from my mother, which she didn't want to give, So, what am I going to do? I never said, "No", to my mother in my life. How could you know, she said, "How, what you mean, I've got all your trousseau here, the most beautiful stuff for you, when you get married and I've got er, people here, ya know, how can you get married? Who is it and what," I mean, now this, can you imagine your daughter getting married to someone you don't know? Um, So, I was crying my eyes out. I didn't know what to do. I had an old friend I went to, and I said, "What should I do, it's just," I said, " Well I go back, I have to go back, to my mother." But this family wouldn't let me, it was ridiculous, "How can you go back, it's Russia, it's um, you'll never get out from there again." Ah, it was a terrible time for me, terrible decision to make, to get married without my mother, I mean and nobody, I didn't know anyone who would be at my wedding. Maybe some friends, you know, ah, anyway, this gentleman had the great idea, my mother doesn't give permission, we have to get married without permission. And we had to go, the synagogue, w, we're, we met, we got married at, wasn't a registered ah, synagogue, so we had to go to the town hall first, to get married, So, the son to mother where I lived, he took a bottle of whisky and he bribed, [laughs] he bribed two porters to be our witnesses. And we g, we were married. [laughs] They said, "Now you may kiss," [laughs] That was very funny.

11:33:48:21

Interviewer

You were married for 57 years after that.

11:33:52:08

Eva Wiesenfeld

Wonderful years. Yeah, and then we had um, A Jewish wedding, where Dr Schonfeld came, He gave us a present, a menorah, and he knew my name, he knew my husband's name, "Yeah, I remember you".

11:34:11:20

Interviewer

So, you didn't see your mother then, a, for many more years, in total, it was like, 16 years you didn't see her, is that?

11:34:18:10

Eva Wiesenfeld

I didn't see her for 16 years,

11:34:21:17

Interviewer

Why?

11:34:23:08

Eva Wiesenfeld



Well, she couldn't come out. It was under Russia; they wouldn't let anyone out. She couldn't come out. For no reason at all, to, it's, if, um, for anything, so they wouldn't let her come out, And I couldn't go back I wasn't naturalised yet. It was very, um, um, Risky for me to go back, they could have kept me there. I brought my naturalisation papers here. *[laughs]* Cause once they, f-, they refused us.

11:34:54:20

Interviewer

Exactly, we, we'll look at those in a minute but you and your husband at that point had had very different experiences during the war, but you'd had a lot of shared grief, so you were able to support each other in the early years of marriage,

11:35:07:07

Eva Wiesenfeld

Oh, yes, yeah, we were very happy him, I mean he lost his family, His parents but his siblings survived in Siberia, and slowly they all came out of Poland, after the war.

11:35:26:00

Interviewer

You went on to have your own family?

11:35:28:19

Eva Wiesenfeld

Yes.

11:35:29:14

Interviewer

And now grandchildren?

11:35:31:10

Eva Wiesenfeld

And great grands,

11:35:32:09

Interviewer

And great grandchildren

11:35:33:21

Eva Wiesenfeld

Yes, ya know, when I had my first little girl, we lived in a flat, we didn't have much money My husband said, " How we going to," He asked me, "How we going to live earning four pounds a week?" Which was in the fifties, it was still very little. So, he, he remembered for years that I said, "Well, we'll spend three and I will save one". *[laughs]* He remembered that. And we did save. I wasn't a spender. I knew I couldn't spend so, yah and um, we lived very happily. He was working, I tried to work a bit and when my little baby was born, it was shocking, no one to help me. As, as someone remembers, I said, "I don't know w-", I said in hospital, "What am I going to



do with this child when I get home?" I mean, you have your mother's instinct [*laughs*] but um, Yeah, I had nobody, And I remember that, back home, my mother looked after families and they all came for advice to her, and she helped everybody and they came for a meal, And um, Ah, I had nowhere to go.

11:37:00:06

So, I just had to fend for myself, Yeah, you just learn to cope. And my husband worked so hard, he was never at home, even in the evenings, he had very, very late hours. He worked so hard. But ya know, we were still happy, I didn't have anything, it was fine for me. My mother wrote and I wrote because I wrote everything about the baby of course.

[cut for direction]

And I wrote to her then, the baby's crawling now, that's getting great now she's crawling. So, she wrote to me, "I'm sure you have a carpet, so that she can," Ah, I never answered on that, cause I had lino and no carpet. I never answered on anything that was bad. And I had a tonsil, I, operation, I never wrote to her, nothing like that. She shouldn't worry, and um, I had two children by the time she's, the first time and she came to see us. It was amazing, she said, "One daughter putting me on the plane [*laughs*] and my other daughter fetched me". It was two hours from Prague, can you imagine after all those years? Yah, so we had the red carpet out, she stayed a few weeks and we never stopped talking, And, um, she said, "Ah, really, London is really beautiful". We took her to the West End and the Christmas lights were on, she said, "Oh it's lovely to live here," [*laughs*] she said. Cause she loved everything nice.

11:38:49:17

Interviewer

She sounded like an amazing woman your mother, I think I would've loved her, [*laughs*]

11:38:52:17

Eva Wiesenfeld

She's, oh, she's amazing, oh she loves everything beautiful, yes, and you know in Czechoslovakia you had these flats, where you didn't have a bedroom, cause there wasn't enough space, you made the lounge into a put-you-up and people slept there as well. And when she came, we didn't have um, we had two bedrooms, one for the children and one for us. And then we had the little sitting room, she said, and she said, "You have to throw out your beds and make a s, a proper sitting room, a nice sitting room, ya know, throw out your beds". I thought, "My goodness, my beds, I have throw out and I have to listen to my mother, [*laughs*] I haven't got money to buy new beds". Ah, but she didn't beds, she wanted a modern, nice room, where you can sleep and, A, and anyway, I didn't throw them out. [*laughs*]

11:39:54:06

Interviewer

And, as I said, you-, it's been clear how connected you've been to your mother -

11:39:57:23

Eva Wiesenfeld



Very much.

11:39:58:20

Interviewer

- through your whole life, but it was only when you had your own children, that you could have possibly understood how much she loved you,

11:40:05:03

Eva Wiesenfeld

How much she suffered.

11:40:07:01

Interviewer

How much she suffered, but how much she loved you too.

11:40:08:17

Eva Wiesenfeld

Yes, yes. She sent me things all the time. Whatever was possible to send because you were very restricted there. And we were writing, and my sister said, "Every letter I sent her she not only kept the letters, but she kept the envelopes".

11:40:30:05

Interviewer

I'm sure,

11:40:31:04

Eva Wiesenfeld [*They talk over each other*]

She couldn't part with it,

11:40:31:04

Interviewer

Any contact with you at all,

11:40:33:11

Eva Wiesenfeld

And now when I was rummaging through for photos, I found some letters from her.

11:40:38:14

Interviewer

How does it feel to read them again?

11:40:40:12

Eva Wiesenfeld

I couldn't, "When are you coming?" Yah, that's how it was, [*pause*] Yah, when you have children of course, you realise, Yah, and send pictures and everything but when she first came, it was wonderful. We went to the airport, and we took flowers,

11:41:20:04

Interviewer



Amazing, she must have been so proud to see how you'd started life,

11:41:23:10

Eva Wiesenfeld

And, and, um, and she had to go back, cause she was working, it was a miracle they let her out for a visit, Because they thought that going to the West, gold everything is gold and just about everyone's got a lot of money and the, the pavements are paved with gold. So, they said to her, "Well, it's, it's a wonderful day you're not going to come back, are you?" Ya know, your family has such a s, my family is very poor, they have no car, they have no, Ya know. Anyway, she went back, and then I started going back, once we got naturalised, after a time. You see, we didn't get naturalisation because my husband was in the Israeli Army, during the British Mandate, so they wouldn't give us naturalisation.

11:42:18:09

Interviewer

Mm, now that we've been through the majority of your story. How do you feel having spoken to me about everything?

11:42:29:24

Eva Wiesenfeld

Um, it's good to talk about it and we have to talk about it, we have to talk about um, I mean, I tell my grandchildren sometimes, "Look how young I was when I got married and I had no, I had nothing. I was still happy". Now they want everything, of course. Ah, I had no support, I didn't have my family with me, I had the children, I had no, no help, no support, And er, I was so young, And here you are at 18 and you're so worried when you get married, what, you know how and what? Ya know, they can't understand, they can't even digest it. How it's possible.

11:43:25:22

Interviewer

What, why do you think it's important for people like you to, to share your story, not just with me but with your grandchildren, your great grandchildren and, and the generations that will come.

11:43:36:05

Eva Wiesenfeld

Well, they should know, um, what happened to our, To the Jewish people and why we were persecuted. We don't know why, even today we don't know why there is so, m, so much antisemitism. Nobody can put their finger on it, um, and they should, they need a lot of grounding, um to know they are Jewish, and they should keep to their tradition, because that's what we struggled also to keep to our religion. And have faith because without faith, it would have been even more difficult to survive.

11:44:18:23

Interviewer

How do you feel towards the perpetrators, towards the Nazis, towards the people that destroyed your family?



11:44:26:02

Eva Wiesenfeld

I don't say, like some people can say that they forgive them, I can't, I can't, they were cruel, to torture, People even who they knew, they were friends before and they could put them in the ovens, How, how is it possible to forgive such people? Absolutely, In, inhuman to torture and to kill people and children, For what? So, they should know that, to live in peace with other people, with all kinds of people, and make peace whenever there is um, A war or whatever, try, you hope the governments will come to their senses and not make war. That people should even suffer, more and again, we don't want the same things, happen again, although things are going on in the world, At the m,

11:45:34:12

Interviewer

Do you feel that any lessons have been learned from the period of history that you've just explained?

11:45:39:14

Eva Wiesenfeld

I think so. It should, should have been learned, um, yes because we, we don't know why we are persecuted, we don't know why, and we should only learn to live in peace with people. Cause there are other people with different ideas, different opinions but you still have to live together, And um,

11:46:08:04

Interviewer

You have already answered actually but I'll just give you what, another, another chance, if you like, You, have an opportunity now to speak to your family in generations to come,

11:46:20:19

Eva Wiesenfeld

Yes. That's a wonderful idea.

11:46:23:22

Interviewer

It's amazing,

11:46:24:23

Eva Wiesenfeld

It's a great idea,

11:46:26:10

Interviewer

But do you have a particular message that you would like to, to share? You, you, you've kind of just said it.

11:46:32:18

Eva Wiesenfeld



Yes.

11:46:33:01

Interviewer

It's about living in peace and harmony and, I understand that you find forgiveness very difficult.

11:46:39:03

Eva Wiesenfeld

An, and to, to learn, what can happen if you hate somebody, and when you, when you really have to go through difficult times, you just have to, you have different ah, Ideas, of course. But you have to learn that other people also have their ideas and live together and, and compromise.

11:47:04:12

Interviewer

How much of the story that you've told me and I'm sure that you have many, many memories still, that we haven't even touched on, but how much of your story and your life experience have you shared with your family?

11:47:17:05

Eva Wiesenfeld

Bits and pieces, you know. I tell them about, a, how I got married of course, H, how it was, that I didn't have anyone with me, no family, And um, If they ask me, I tell them, But um, I said that you have to ask me, otherwise I don't know what you want to know, exactly.

11:47:45:05

Interviewer

But you've, you've said in this interview, that you wish you'd asked your mother more?

11:47:49:24

Eva Wiesenfeld

Yes.

11:47:51:17

Interviewer

D'you think having this conversation now and this whole experience now, will encourage you to, to try and help your,

11:47:59:02

Eva Wiesenfeld

I think they should ask me more, I even said to my sister, she doesn't remember so much, she was so much younger, You didn't ask me exactly what happened to me, when I boarded the train, But then, everybody was, you see, I mean, thinking, I suppose I, I told my mother where I was going and what was happening, Ah, but um, nobody actually said, "Well let's sit down and talk about it", cause everyone is too busy with their own lives.



11:48:34:00

Interviewer

I'm sure that there, there's an element of that but I think there must also be the anxiety that you maybe don't want to talk about it, it's so common isn't it that,

11:48:41:04

Eva Wiesenfeld

It is,

11:48:41:04

Interviewer

That people who've been through trauma, don't want to share, it happened in my family as well, I found out very little from my father about his family but, but I didn't ask either because,

11:48:51:23

Eva Wiesenfeld

You didn't?

11:48:52:00

Interviewer [*Interjected by Eva*]

I just felt like, I shouldn't. But it's very important to share your history and your story.

11:48:57:24

Eva Wiesenfeld

Well, most people didn't talk about it for many, many years, it's only after about 50 years that all the books started coming out, that people wrote their experiences. I encourage them all to read these books, well, you know, different experiences that people had, And ah, about Dr Schonfeld of course,

[Cut for direction]

11:49:23:17

Interviewer

Can I just say to you, that, you started off this interview, saying that you felt that you weren't, you may n, may not say the right things or that you were worried about talking, And my experience of talking to you has been amazing, you speak with so much clarity with so much eloquence,

11:49:40:12

Eva Wiesenfeld

Yes, but you helped,

11:49:41:07

Interviewer

And your memory is so -,



11:49:42:00

Eva Wiesenfeld

You helped,

11:49:42:11

Interviewer

Well thank you but, but you should talk more because you speak so beautifully about it, even though it's painful, And it's,

11:49:49:12

Eva Wiesenfeld

You helped me,

11:49:49:26

Interviewer

Important for people,

11:49:50:11 [*Interjected by Interviewer*]

Eva Wiesenfeld

You helped a lot, by asking. And asking the questions. Because just to say everything in one go like I did to Natalie, ah, it was just one story going on, ya know.

11:50:04:07

Interviewer

It's um, Yeah, it's, it's hard for everybody and but for all of us, it's a great privilege and an honour for us to meet people like you,

11:50:11:21

Eva Wiesenfeld

Ah, thank you,

11:50:12:24

Interviewer

Who've been through so much sadness and hard, hardship in life and have come out still,

11:50:17:23

Eva Wiesenfeld

But you must get depressed about everybody's stories,

11:50:19:22

Interviewer

It's sad sometimes, of course it is, of course,

11:50:23:01

Eva Wiesenfeld

And people break down,



11:50:23:10

Interviewer

But we've all got to learn,

11:50:24:04

Eva Wiesenfeld

I'm sure,

11:50:24:16

Interviewer

Yes, it's very hard watching men cry, *[laughs]* Women cry a lot but watching, sometimes some of the men who cry it's just heartbreaking,

11:50:33:07

Eva Wiesenfeld

And I feel very fortunate that um, I wasn't in the camps,

END OF INTERVIEW

ARTEFACTS

ARTEFACT 1: scan of photo of 3 girls

12:46:29:10

Well, it's a very old picture because I don't know how old I was, three or four it looks like. I'm wearing a beautiful outfit. It is an Austrian national dress, I think. Um, and there are my cousins in front of a house. I don't remember it being taken.

ARTEFACT 2: scan of photo of Eva and five school friends

12:46:51:11

Now this is from a school outing when we went. [...] I don't know where we went. But it's a school outing. [...] Um, I must have been um, 11, I think it's an after the war picture. [...] Yes um, we went back to our town, where we lived before, and I went to school, and after some time I think I must have left soon after. Because I went straight from school. Um, and I was about uh, how old was I, fifteen when I left. So, this is a bit before that.

ARTEFACT 3: scan of pages of an exercise book from her schooldays

12:49:08:14

Um yes this is my exercise book [...] it's from my old school - in Czechoslovakia [...] and I loved learning, so I brought it with me, and it's all about literature and poems. And I used to love that. Yeah, I teach my grandchildren poems. Yeah well, it's Slovak so I can't say it to you. And we had to bind our exercise books before we went back to school, we had to buy navy blue paper, and this piece to put on, and everybody had the same. We just had – do you remember that? Yes, we had to have the same so before school everyone would go shopping for this sort of thing I remember. [...] Well, it was one of my precious things yes, um I think I was collecting postcards and I had a big album with postcards that people sent me, from holiday. Something that's not done anymore.



ARTEFACT 4: scan of sketch of Clonyn Castle, Eire, 1948

12:51:42:02

was one of my friends who stayed in the castle, and she was very artistic, and she drew it, so I had a copy. She's an old lady now, I don't think she can draw anymore so it's very nice to have. [...] We were quite happy, but we were -, I wanted to go back to school badly - because I was picked out from school to go to England, and I thought I am going straight back to school. But in the meantime, they didn't allow us to live in England so, we had to go to Ireland, and we were taught by various people, came into the castle to teach us. So yeah, otherwise we had fun.

ARTEFACT 5: scan of a letter from her mother

12:53:34:03

Eva Wiesenfeld o/o/v

that's my mummy got my letter that she was waiting for, and, uh, I would like to know what you're doing about your passport, and I even asked Aggie that she should enquire what we could do that we could meet up. And how much she's missing me and she's waiting for me to come. And it's been such a long time, and I'm having some lovely clothes made for me -for you. That I'll be sending to you.

Eva Wiesenfeld iv

And things like that and um, like I told you about the children, she asked me, if the baby was crawling, if I had a carpet and I couldn't afford a carpet, so we had vinyl. I was so happy, it never occurred to me that I must have a carpet. And she's writing about getting her naturalisation papers. Because first time got refused.

ARTEFACT 6: scan of photo of Eva's granddaughter

12:57:56:15

Eva Wiesenfeld o/o/v

this young lady is my granddaughter, and all the little ones are her children and my great-grandchildren. And, er, this was a celebration for, um, Ariella. She was twelve and we make a p-, a big party at twelve. For boys, we do it at thirteen and for girls, at twelve. So, we got together and, um, we had this beautiful picture. [...] Yeah, I've got all the pictures out, and, er, one of them broke the back of this, but, um, yeah, I love them all to come, and they all come to me, and we have a feast, and we have a birthday party for the little ones always. So, it's very nice that they come. It's a lot of work but, you know, if you want to see them, you have to let them come. [...]

Eva Wiesenfeld iv

When I had the children, I had, we couldn't show them off to anyone. And I dressed them up nicely and, um, she even sent the clothes for them. But she never saw them in their clothes. And, um, this is a lovely family, beautiful family, and they are very good to me and, um, they love coming and I like to see them very much. They are very special. Every child is very special. They are also so clever of course. All, all grand, grandmothers say that [*laughs*] all these kids are so clever. So, somebody said, "So where are all the silly people come from if all the grandchildren are so clever?" [*laughs*] But, er, these are really,

Eva Wiesenfeld o/o/v

Yeah. She won a prize, er, with a poem that I taught her. She speaks very well.



ARTEFACT 7: scan of a photograph of immigrants? on board ship

No commentary

ARTEFACT 8: scan of a second photograph of immigrants? on board ship

No commentary

ARTEFACT 9: scan of a photocopy of immigrants? on board ship. Similar to artefact 8

No commentary

ARTEFACT 10: scan of a second photocopy of immigrants? on board ship. Similar to artefacts 8 & 9

No commentary

ARTEFACT 11: scan of a photograph of immigrants ? on board ship

No commentary

ARTEFACT 12: scan of another photocopy of immigrants ? on board ship

No commentary

ARTEFACT 13: scan of a photograph of immigrants ? Gangplank on right.

No commentary

ARTEFACT 14: scan of a photograph of immigrants ? disembarking

No commentary

ARTEFACT 15: scan of a photograph of synagogue ambulances in the hold of a ship

No commentary

ARTEFACT 16: scan of a photograph of Clonyn Castle, Eire

No commentary

ARTEFACT 17: scan of a photograph of four girls reading letters

No commentary

ARTEFACT 18: scan of a photograph of Rabbi Schonfeld

No commentary

ARTEFACT 19: scan of a photograph of the blessing of a synagogue ambulance [?] Rabbi Schonfeld officiating

No commentary

ARTEFACT 20: scan of a second photograph of the blessing of a synagogue ambulance [?] Rabbi Schonfeld officiating

No commentary



ARTEFACT 21: scan of a photograph of Rabbi Solomon Schonfeld congratulating a player

No commentary

ARTEFACT 22: scan of a photograph of two girls and three boys watching a girl reading a letter

No commentary

ARTEFACT 23: scan of a photograph of Eva [?] and three friends

No commentary

ARTEFACT 24: scan of a photograph of Eva [?] and six friends

No commentary

ARTEFACT 25: scan of a photograph of Eva [?] and four friends

No commentary

ARTEFACT 26: scan of a photograph of two girls by a lake

No commentary

ARTEFACT 27: scan of a document dated 29 October 1958 refusing C Wiesenfeld a Certificate of Naturalisation.

No commentary

ARTEFACT 28: scan of a letter acknowledging that Mrs. E. Wiesenfeld has been granted British citizenship

No commentary

ARTEFACT 29 & 30: scan of Certificate of Naturalisation [front and back]

No commentary

ARTEFACT 31: scan of photograph of Eva Wiesenfeld

No commentary

ARTEFACT 32: scan of photograph of Eva Wiesenfeld in a coat

No commentary

ARTEFACT 33: scan of photograph of Eva Wiesenfeld [?] sitting on rocks

No commentary

ARTEFACT 34: scan of photograph of Eva Wiesenfeld & her husband on their wedding day

No commentary

ARTEFACT 35: scan of photograph of Eva kissing a baby outside a block of flats

No commentary



ARTEFACT 36: scan of photograph of Eva kissing a baby outside a block of flats [slightly different angle]

No commentary

ARTEFACT 37: scan of village with a castle towering over it

No commentary

ARTEFACT 38: scan of a woman in a black spotted dress

No commentary

ARTEFACT 39: scan of her daughter [?] on her wedding day.

No commentary