



Eugene's Story, Chapter 8

A little bit briefly what happened to me after the war. About 8 days after liberation about 10 of us decided the gates are open, we're gonna walk to Bergen into the village. We didn't get very far, a jeep pulled up, there were 4 officers came out. By the way my friend spoke very very good English, perfect. I didn't know a word, I'm doing a little bit better but I manage. But he spoke very good English and this officer asked him where we came from originally so we told him from Hungary and introduced ourselves. He wanted to know where we were going and we said we going to go into the village see if we can find anything. And he said don't bother going, go back in, because the British and the Russian prisoner of war already been there and it's not even a German living in the place, there's nothing there, it's all been ransacked, taken away. He said now the number 2 camp it's not infected fully with typhus yet but within the next 2 days the fit, that is people who are not affected by typhus yet are gonna be moved out into Bergen and then taken to Celle to a very large displaced camp hospital. He says I'm gonna keep an eye on you. Which he did, and it turned out to be his name was Captain Basil Ellenbogen from Liverpool. He was a doctor who worked in the Royal Hospital in Liverpool. He was a great chap and he lived up to it. He came to see us in Bergen then he told us where we gonna go in Celle and we were taken in army lorries, ambulances, and he kept coming to see us. He says you'll be here a couple of months and we'll get you on the right level and I seen my commanding officer and you can come as an interpreter – to my friend. He said well if Jenö can't come I'm not going. He said of course he can come, if anybody else wants to come they are welcome to come. But anyway we got better, well not better but we started to certainly change our outlook on life, and he did come for us and he took us back to his unit in Bergen and then very quickly we got moved from there and we became part of the British army, of the regiment who, one of the regiments liberated Bergen Belsen. But you see that day when we walked through that gate and we wanted to go into Belsen, only then did it hit me that here I am just over 17, homeless, penniless, a stateless person, an orphan, in a land of the enemy who destroyed my family and myself and millions of others. And I was absolutely naked. I never knew, never even thought to think what's gonna happen to me. The only thing I knew that I lost everybody. It only hit me then what occurred to my family the last 12 months. And through it I became what I am – suffering

give me the strength and the discipline to make a life for myself with some very good people who helped me.

I became an interpreter with the Army and I moved with the units where they went. And eventually in 1947 the regiment they came back to Britain and I went to the headquarters of the British Army training centre in Sennelager and I stayed there. Then in, 12 of November 1948 there were some young, five young women arrived from England about a week before and they were gonna be stationed in Sennelager, I was actually on the gate when car pulled up and I saw the girls and I must confess I was a terrible socialiser, I was a really very quiet, I was very very quiet, I was a very poor mixer, I just lived within my past, that's what I did. But anyway, I noticed Annie, who I mean she looked beautiful she really did and I thought oh I must get to know this girl. Of course I used to get my food in the sergeants' mess and I had some very good friends and this sergeant who I worked with at times he said some very nice girls arrived, I said yeah one in particular. He said which one is it? he said come on we're gonna go for a drink. So we went in the camp itself, introduced myself and I got to know Annie. And we became friends, very good friends, and the year went by, matter of fact I had my 21st birthday in 1946, yeah 46, no sorry in 1949, beg your pardon 1949, and she put a little party on with her friends and some of mine, you know just nice, sandwiches and a drink and I got to know her and I just really fell in love with her, simple as that. She says well I'm gonna leave, I'm going back to England she says. And when you make your mind up then you come and stay with us.

So following October, that's in 1949, I left Germany I arrived in Britain on the 20th. Travelled up north where she came from in Northumberland and on the 12th of November on the day where we met 12 months later we got married. We got married, we got 4 children, 2 boys, 2 girls.