



Val's Story, Chapter 6

Liberation came on the 1st of May 1945 and we were liberated by the American armed forces. Out of the 35,000 Jewish citizens of Kaunas only 2000 were still alive and even then quite a number of them died despite all the efforts by American doctors to save them. They were just too far gone, you couldn't do anything with them. They couldn't digest the food any more and they died.

Now I was liberated. I was euphoric, I was free after 4 years of imprisonment but my liberation joy did not last long and it turned into a deep depression. You see I realised the facts. Information was coming in and I realised that I lost my family, I lost my community and I even lost my country. It was again occupied by the communist forces. Now I lapsed into a deep depression. I was a physical and moral wreck. I was hospitalised, for half a year I was in hospital and it was there in that hospital that I met my future wife. Ibi described how we met and I must say that things changed. From then on it was therapeutic, it was therapeutic meeting. We exchanged our views, we exchanged our memories, we realised that we were imprisoned in the same camp for nearly a year. Of course we didn't know each other and we decided that together we can face the future and start a new life and we embarked for England, we got married and we embarked for England in October 1948 and we quickly became British citizens, started a new life and we started a family.

I was training to be an architect. In fact I wanted to be a pilot. I was learning to fly gliders and I was building model aeroplanes, I was full of avionics but it didn't work out, I enrolled to study architecture and that's where I had to interrupt my university education when the Germans marched in. I still managed to continue when the communists were there but anyway they would have taken us away.

46.52 In this country we were only allowed to be a miner, a textile worker or a domestic worker so we were consigned to a textile job in Yorkshire and that was our job. [PHOTO: ginsburg10002.tif] 47.10

49.44 We lost everything. But we built everything up again from scratch and we managed to do it in quite a reasonably short time. We got our own house,

we got a mortgage and we worked hard, both of us, all the time and I got a pretty good job in textiles. I became a manager which was a good position.
[PHOTO: Ginsburg10043.tif] 50.14

47.19 I must tell you that we were pleasantly surprised. We were used to a civil service which was not every obliging, not very civil and we were amazed how kind everybody was to us, how helpful the police was, how helpful the fellow workers were [PHOTO: Ginsburg10040.tif]. But conditions were different then, there was full employment and we were a novelty. There weren't a lot of foreigners, there were some but they were all white Europeans and I was very shocked when conditions changed and attitudes of tolerance changed. 48.17