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A NEW VENTURE

The first issue of "AJR Information" is out. One of the primary functions of this monthly publication will be to keep its readers informed about the position of Jewries on the Continent and about the work for their relief and rehabilitation. It will bring into contact the members of the AJR with the immigrants overseas, especially with our kindred organisations, and ventilate all possibilities of immigration for the remnants on the Continent. The problem of refugees in this country will be no less our concern, and legal, economic and social questions and all the factors which add up to their status, will be dealt with extensively. "AJR Information" will report on the activities of the Association, both of its Head Office in London, and of the various branches and groups in the provinces, and thus strengthen the link between the members. Stressing these salient points, it will be of service to the whole Jewish community.

A STEP FORWARD

Two statements recently made by the Home Secretary in Parliament have given new hope to Jewish refugees in this country and to those survivors on the Continent who have close relatives in the United Kingdom. One statement concerns the resumption of naturalisation, giving priority to all those who have made a specific contribution to the country's war and economic effort; the other refers to distressed persons in Europe desirous of joining their relatives in this country.

"In spite of economic difficulties, and within the limits imposed by them," said Mr. Ede, "the utmost should be done to maintain Great Britain's historic tradition of affording asylum to the distressed." A noble statement in a noble spirit!

The A.J.R., which has taken an active interest in the issue will readily advise members and friends on methods of procedure.

SHADOW OVER PALESTINE

The Board of Deputies of British Jews voiced the feelings of Jews in this country when it expressed its regret that in spite of the overwhelming evidence of the tragic situation of the Jewish survivors in Europe, no provision had been made for their immediate admission to the Jewish National Home as of right.

The monthly immigration quota of 1,500 will be a bitter blow to thousands of men, women and children still in the camps on the Continent, who face, insufficiently clad, nourished and housed, the terrible hardships of a winter, and whose primary hope was a speedy immigration into Palestine.

NUREMBERG

Indictment Number 1 of the trial "unique in the jurisprudence of the world" reads: "Of 9,600,000 Jews who lived in the parts of Europe under Nazi domination, it is conservatively estimated that 5,700,000 disappeared, most of them deliberately put to death by a Nazi conspiracy." For the Jews in German, the name of Nuremberg has a bitter ring. It was from there that year

Leo Baeck:

INDIVIDUAL AND COMMUNITY

A community is a combination of individuals. That means it is a combination of men and women with characteristics of their own, and with desires, wishes and tendencies of their own. We may therefore say: A community binds together human beings who are or may be animated by forces directed against the community or at least tending to transgress it. This applies even to the most natural and closest community, the Family.

We can trace this antagonism even further. The richer a community is in strong personalities and clear-cut individuals, the richer will it be in vitality and abundant strength. In such a community we shall find human beings in whom the anti-communal forces are most powerful. Without such forceful personalities a community tends to grow rigid and inflexible and eventually to break asunder. No community can retain its dynamic drive and power of resistance unless it is able to include and absorb these individuals.

It should be borne in mind that there are group individualities just as there are personal individualities. Human beings may be linked together by their affinities or by what they hold in common. Such common factors may have been inherited, or acquired later in life, or pursued as aims, or they may be the outcome of coincidences in time and place. We thus find within the overall community smaller communities with group characteristics of their own—the family circle, the religious sects, the political parties, the professional and trade groups, and others.

These group individualities may be more or less manifest, but here again we shall find just those communities to be the most powerful which include the strongest group individualities with powers that often seem to turn themselves against the very community in which they find themselves.

Each community has therefore imposed upon it the task of guiding and directing the forces at hand. The rights and demands of the individual person

after year, on the Party anniversaries, blatant announcements were made on the wireless, culminating in 1935 in the so-called "Nuremberg Laws." It was from Nuremberg that Streicher contaminated the Reich with his pornographic journal *Der Stuermer*. For all those who have been spared, the days of Nuremberg are indeed days of judgment, and the name of that town, soiled by the lowest perfidy, will be cleansed and raised to an emblem of justice.

or group have to be weighed against the rights and demands of the community in order to achieve a sound integration and fruitful harmony of forces. To direct and guide them means to prevent the individuals from permanently standing against the community, and even in changing circumstances to make them conscious of the fact that their allegiance will be to the community. Having achieved this, the community will have gained in strength, and this strength will again assist the community in overcoming future tensions and difficulties. This problem arises in the family as the smallest as well as in the State as the larger community. At present it arises as the very task of our times towards the greatest community, the community of Mankind. If we fail anywhere to solve it or to come near its solution, we shall be faced

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with a crisis which then may develop into catastrophe. On the other hand, human happiness depends always and everywhere to an essential part on the individual being truly at peace with the community.

This is a general human and historic problem. It may sometimes happen that a problem lies dormant for a long time—only to come back to life one day. The period in history which is known as Modern Times is conspicuous for the reawakening of this our problem.

In the Middle Ages our problem had rested, and this is where the spirit of the Middle Ages differs from that of ancient as well as of modern times. The rights of the individuals were then neither respected nor even recognised as such. The individual took its place in life and work within the rigid frame of corporations and was entirely determined by them. Moreover, the thoughts and beliefs and hopes of the individual were embedded in a powerful community, the Church, on which the individual relied for what it had to think and to believe. There were few exceptions to this, and they were usually suppressed at an early stage.

(To be Continued.)

I have just come from Berlin..

I have just come from Berlin. The last time I saw her, she was a proud and arrogant city, her streets resounding with the steps of marching jack boots. I did not recognise her any more. Her glory has crumbled to dust, her monuments are obliterated, her streets have been razed to the ground and the faces of her people are grey and beaten. But I don't want to tell you all this because you know it already. I don't want to tell you of my searching for people whom I did not find, nor of my going along to houses which did not exist any more. I want to give you a few bare, undisputed facts about the lives of the 5,000 odd Jews in Berlin. Their number might have slightly increased by now with the daily influx of some 20 or 30 refugees from the territory east of the Oder and from former concentration camps.

The life of the Jews in the last few months has been fundamentally changed by giving them status of "Victims of Fascism." It was by no means easy to achieve this status which seems to us so self-evident. "Jews," they were told, "we don't know any Jews. We know only human beings. For us all human beings are equal. We don't want any privileges for Jews. That would only create more prejudice." Mr. E. Nelhans, Chairman of the Berlin Jewish community, and his friends, fought hard against this attitude. On their recognition of "Victims of Fascism" depended whether the emaciated and half-starved Jewish remnant would survive this winter or not.

What does the new status imply? It entitles them to additional rations of potatoes, vegetables and jam and includes also the "Aryan" partners of mixed marriages who, in many cases, had starved themselves in order to get some additional food for their children, their husbands and their wives. The distribution for the Western districts is being made at Pestalozzi Strasse, Charlottenburg. Mr. Ottomar Geschke, Chairman of the Berlin Sozialamt, who used to be reluctant to grant privileges to Jews, is now one of their foremost champions in Berlin. Within the council of "Victims of Fascism," Mr. S. Weltlinger is in charge of Jewish affairs.

Gradually, things seem to move towards restitution which has been accepted on principle by the German local authorities. Some of the real estates and buildings belonging to the Jewish community have already been returned. Col. Frank L. Howley, of the M.G. in the American zone of Berlin, announced that the Berlin Lord Mayor had been requested to issue a list of Jewish property stolen by the Nazis, as well as property of Poles and Russians. This, he declared, was the first step towards the restitution of this property. As far as emigrants are concerned, their property will probably be handed over to the community as a trust to be disposed of or returned at a later date.

Mr. Nelhans says that on the whole the attitude of the German authorities is helpful and that anti-Semitism in its virulent form has disappeared or gone underground. Talking to Germans one gets the impression that many of them accept their present tribulations as a just penalty for the injustice and cruelty done to the Jews. Sometimes one meets people who show a sincere sense of shame and humiliation but, of course, one

does not know how far these emotions are regulated by opportunism. The Jews, reluctant to believe that 12 years of Nazi teachings and practice have left no mark on the German mind, desire to leave the country, most of them wishing to go to Palestine.

The clothing situation is still desperate. Some of the men and women still wear their concentration camp outfits. Mr. Nelhans himself, at the time when I saw him, possessed one suit and no underwear. Even now, after more clothing coupons have been supplied, there is nothing to be bought in

the shops. There is unfortunately no liaison whatsoever between the community, and M.G. Representatives of the community experience the greatest difficulty in being received by M.G. officers, and when they are received, perhaps after hours of waiting and aimless wanderings, from one office to another, it is only to be told that the officer is not competent to deal with the request submitted. Sometimes, the representative of the Jewish community does not even get past the military police guarding the military buildings. (Reported before new influx of Jews from Poland—Ed.)

Narrator

Windows into the World— IMMIGRATION OVERSEAS

The fate and future of the Jewish survivors on the Continent are much on our minds. The primary question is: Will they be able to join their families? Where else can they go? Which countries will offer them asylum? What, as individuals or as members of organisations, can we do to find a new permanent home for them?

For some considerable time past, the A.J.R., being geographically close to the Continent, have been inundated with inquiries both from individuals in this country and from abroad as to getting these survivors out of Germany. A great many difficulties stand in the way of their early departure from the Continent. There is the non-existence of consular services, lack of land transport and insufficient shipping space.

In order to prepare for future developments, the A.J.R. have asked a number of Jewish organisations overseas to report on the present immigration position and, at the same time, to indicate the future immigration policy in their respective countries. As the Palestine position is widely known, the enquete has been restricted to the British Empire and South America.

ARGENTINA

For the time being, it is only possible for children, living in the Argentine, to apply for a visa on behalf of their parents and, vice versa, for parents to apply on behalf of their children. However, we have been advised that new regulations governing the immigration into the Argentine are in preparation.

BOLIVIA

With few exceptions, this country has been closed to Jewish immigration for many years. The Bolivian authorities are preparing new immigration laws, but some time will pass before they are issued. It is doubtful whether the new regulations will favour the immigration of Jews.

BRAZIL

Some time ago a very liberal immigration law was issued by the Government. However, it will take some time until we can judge what the practice will be.

According to the new law, the Brazilian consuls abroad have full authority to grant visas to an alien who wishes to immigrate to Brazil, provided: (1) he can produce a valid passport and a medical certificate confirm-

ing his good state of health; and (2) the annual immigration quota for the nationals of the respective country is not yet exhausted. The quotas are as follows:—Belgium: 113; France: 1,080; Germany: 4,772; Great Britain: 423; Holland: 149. Agricultural workers may immigrate even outside the quota. Agricultural workers, engineers and capitalists will not encounter many difficulties in obtaining a visa; they should discuss their cases with the Consul so as to find out what the requirements are.

Apart from these categories, it is believed that there are possibilities for persons who have relatives in Brazil, in particular if these relatives are either ascendants or descendants. In those cases, the relative in Brazil has to send to the prospective immigrant some sort of affidavit which he has to produce at the consulate so as to prove that his maintenance in Brazil is guaranteed.

CHILE

Whilst during the last five years the immigration of Jews has almost come to a standstill, the admission in certain cases, in particular where children wish to join their parents and vice versa, is now possible. However, the respective provisions do not apply to Jews immigrating from Germany, since the regulations whereby Germans are considered as enemy aliens also apply to Jews, at least as long as they are resident in Germany.

Only recently the Government has submitted to Congress a Bill which is to regulate immigration on a new basis. It is, however, too early to state what the new regulations will be like.

NEW ZEALAND

The official policy of the Government is not to grant immigration permits until the rehabilitation of the returned soldiers has been successfully settled. This was stated by the Prime Minister when he was interviewed regarding the immigration of British subjects. The same policy applies to aliens. In some cases Jewish refugees have made applications for the immigration of their aged parents or other relatives. However, it will not be possible to obtain a great number of permits for Jewish displaced persons in the near future unless arrangements are made by the British Government with the Dominions.

(Next issue: Australia, Canada, etc.)

Welcome to our 75th Anniversary Issue

The Association of Jewish Refugees



The outer pages of your *AJR Journal* look a little different this month as we decided to share with you some of the pages from our first ever issue, published in January 1946. We believe that these pages illustrate better than anything else how far we have all come.

With the end of WW2, a new world was born. The peace agreements that brought the conflict to an end implemented decisions that continue to affect our world today and impact on its future. In 1946 the state of Israel was conceived, albeit not formally confirmed until 1948, the independence of India was designed and Chinese Communists gained a decisive upper hand in their fight for power. It was a pivotal year in modern history in which countries were reborn and created, national and ideological boundaries were redrawn and people across the globe began to rebuild their lives. Plus of course the *AJR Journal* was born.

First and foremost in this special commemorative issue is a wonderful piece written by our former Consultant Editor **Anthony Grenville**. Tony was at the helm of the *Journal* when we celebrated our 60th, 65th and 70th anniversaries, so we are delighted he agreed to make such a prominent guest appearance in this issue.

Another of our favourite writers, **Victor Ross**, shared his reflections. Victor's name has regularly appeared within these pages since our early days and our current readers hugely enjoy reading his witty and honest columns.

A new contributor, **David Busse**, recalls his curiosity about the copies of *AJR Information* (the *Journal's* original name) on the family coffee table, as his parents overtly said little about their backgrounds.



Baroness Julia Neuberger, Sir David Attenborough, Dame Esther Rantzen and Dr Helen Fry are among the many contributors to this special issue.

Another, very prominent, child of a refugee is **Baroness Julia Neuberger**, who writes about her mother Alice Schwab's love for writing the original *Art Notes* columns. Our current art correspondent **Gloria Tessler** then takes up the tale. These personal insights perfectly complement a formal look back at our past editors and significant contributors.

Not strictly related to our 75th anniversary but equally essential reading is the report on our recent *Kinder refugees: then and now* event. Expertly presented by **Dame Esther Rantzen** and featuring **Sir David Attenborough, Lord Alf Dubs and Sir Erich Reich**, among others, this was a wonderful programme. We urge you to watch in full on the *AJR's* YouTube channel if you can.

Toby Simpson, Director of the Wiener Library, reflects on our 75 year partnership. Plus we take a look at other events and activities that happened in or around January 1946, some of which may well surprise you.

We hope you enjoy reading this very special issue. As the acclaimed historian **Dr Helen Fry** recently wrote to us: "The *AJR Journal* is an important forum for the voices of Jewish ex-refugees and Holocaust survivors. It also provides a special connection between its members and the Second Generation. Its articles and news updates reveal a vibrant and active community that keeps the history and memories of the past alive."

Finally, as well as marking the 75th anniversary of the *Journal*, 2021 is also the 80th anniversary of the *AJR* itself. We will be marking this special anniversary throughout the year - look out for some exciting announcements in next month's issue.

Jo Briggs

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Please note that the views expressed throughout this publication are not necessarily the views of the *AJR*.

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Seventy-five years of the AJ

This month we celebrate a significant anniversary: the 75th year since *AJR Information*, as it was then called, was first published in January 1946. The first month of the first year of peace since 1939 was no doubt an auspicious time for the start of a new venture; but few would have guessed that the fledgling publication, the voice of what was then still a relatively small, insecurely settled and impoverished group of refugees, would be going from strength to confident strength seventy-five years later.

The *Journal* has certainly benefited from being linked with the AJR itself. That organisational backing has allowed it to survive and flourish when publications by the German-speaking refugees from Nazism in other countries have ceased to publish. As Martin Mauthner noted in our November 2020 issue, even *Aufbau*, the prestigious and widely read publication of the refugees in the USA, ‘faded away in 2004’. The American Federation of Jews from Central Europe, the American equivalent to the AJR, had long predeceased *Aufbau*, whereas the AJR has continued to serve its own community down the decades, as has its *Journal*.

That community, principally composed of the Jewish refugees from the German-speaking lands, has proudly maintained its own distinct identity, though it enjoys close relations with British Jewry. As the *Journal* stated in 1956: ‘In times when Jewish periodicals often suffer an early death, 10 years is a long period. Looking for an explanation of this continuity, one reason stands out: the strong sense of solidarity by which the former German Jews have made it possible to build up this paper.’ The *AJR Journal* can now claim to be the longest continuously appearing Jewish publication in Britain, after the *Jewish Chronicle*.

The *Journal* has also benefited from

continuity; the years in office of its three long-serving editors, Werner Rosenstock (1946-82), Richard Grunberger (1988-2005, together with Ronald Channing) and Anthony Grenville (2006-17), together amount to nearly seventy years. Rosenstock was at first assisted by Ernst Lowenthal, who left for Germany later in 1946, and Herbert Freeden, who left for Israel in 1950. Murray Mindlin and Cäsar C. Aronsfeld bridged the gap between Rosenstock and Grunberger. Grenville concentrated on writing his articles, while Howard Spier undertook the task of preparing each edition for publication. Jo Briggs took on the editorship from Spier in 2016, and has created an attractive, more colourful publication. Since Grenville’s retirement at the end of 2017, the role of Consultant Editor has fallen to David Herman, like his predecessor the son of refugees, whose erudite and stylish articles continue to inform and entertain our readers.

Amidst the huge diversity of material covered in the *Journal* over the years, two themes stand out. The first is the relationship between the refugees from Nazism and Britain. From the outset, the *Journal* advocated their integration into British society. This was not so much a pro-British stance as a matter of sheer practicality: the AJR realised early on that the atrocities perpetrated by the Nazis made it impossible for the great majority of the Jewish refugees ever to return to Germany or Austria. In its wartime circulars, the predecessors of the *Journal*, the AJR bitterly opposed proposals that the refugees should be repatriated to their native lands, if necessary against their will.

When that proposal was rejected by Prime Minister Winston Churchill in the House of Commons in May 1945 and the threat of forced repatriation lifted, the AJR moved on to the next phase: the naturalisation of the refugees, which was a precondition of their secure settlement in Britain. The acquisition of British citizenship was a key issue in the *Journal* for several years, until the bulk of the refugees had been naturalised. The formal barriers to the integration of the refugees into British society had now been overcome; but the nature of the relationship between the refugees and the host society – at that

stage still unused to mass immigration – remained to be defined.

By 1956, the *Journal*’s tenth anniversary, it was clear that most refugees – by no means all, of course – took a predominantly positive view of British society and were broadly content to assimilate into it, while preserving their own cultural identity. That tenth anniversary coincided with the tercentenary of the readmission of Jews to England in 1656, over 350 years after they had been expelled by Edward I. A front-page article in the *Journal*, with the title ‘300 Years of Freedom under the Law’, paid tribute to Britain as a haven for the oppressed: ‘In the 300 years since Cromwell, England has been a cherished refuge to all who suffered persecution—to none more so than to Jews.’ The article did not overlook the limitations of British hospitality, such as the legislation, starting with the Aliens Act of 1905, that restricted the admission of immigrants, especially Jews. It also recognised that the Britain where the refugees from Nazism had settled was no longer ‘the power of Victorian splendour’. ‘Yet’, it concluded, ‘the great-hearted traditions were still alive.’

In the following decade, the *Journal* supported the Thank-You Britain Fund, organised by the AJR – on the initiative of our longstanding contributor Victor Ross – to raise money for a project that would benefit the United Kingdom, as a token of the refugees’ gratitude. The project was controversial, reflecting the differing attitudes towards Britain among the refugees, some of whom felt that they had little enough to thank the British for. But by 1965, over 3,000 refugee donors had contributed no less than £96,000 (some £2,000,000 in today’s money). The money was donated to the British Academy, to fund a Research Fellowship that is still being awarded to outstanding scholars.

Left-leaning historians like the late Bill Williams have criticised the AJR for promoting a subservient sense of undeserved loyalty to Britain, for assisting the ‘anglicising and embourgeoisising processes’ that induced the refugees to integrate into the British middle class. But, as anyone

R Journal

familiar with the AJR knows, its membership was largely middle-class, and could hardly be expected to integrate otherwise. In June 1960, Kenneth Ambrose, a regular contributor to the *Journal* who had arrived in Britain in 1936 aged 17, described how he, like many refugees, felt at ease with his middle-class status: 'Twenty-four years after my arrival I am by all appearances one of the British middle class. I live with my family in a small house with a garden. I march off to work in the morning with briefcase and rolled umbrella to catch my train just like my neighbours, and on Sundays I wash my car if necessary, do the minimum of gardening, and enjoy my family and home.'

The January 1956 issue also contains items relevant to the second key theme prominent in the *Journal's* pages: the refugees' pride in the high level of their cultural achievement. In January 1956, the *Journal* carried a piece on the immensely distinguished refugee art historian Nikolaus Pevsner, author of the celebrated series of architectural guides *Buildings of England*; refugee art historians like Pevsner, Ernst Gombrich and those who came to Britain with the Warburg Institute had not so much contributed to British art history as founded it as a proper academic discipline. The issue also carried reports on less well-known figures, like Hans and Elsbeth Juda, whose expertise in the field of textiles had created *The Ambassador: The British Export Journal for Textiles and Fashion*, thereby both promoting the British export trade and raising the level of design in journalism and the textile industry.

What the *Journal* celebrated was arguably not so much the great names among the refugees, from Sigmund Freud downwards, as the far larger number of lesser known people who, in Britain as in Germany and Austria, formed the intellectual and cultural seedbed that had nurtured the famous few. Despite events after 1933, many refugees continued to venerate the German tradition of *Bildung*, education with a moral and cultural dimension, and the heritage of Goethe, Schiller and Beethoven that had been so influential among German and Austrian Jewry. British musical culture, in particular, was immensely enriched by the



1948



1993



2000



2003



2011



2019

refugees, as musicians and as consumers: the Wigmore Hall became a Mecca for refugee audiences. Refugees were strongly drawn to seats of learning: the AJR donated the proceeds of its Thank-You Britain Fund to the British Academy, the musicologist Paul Hirsch gifted his priceless music library to the British Museum at a greatly reduced price, and Claus Moser and John Krebs (the latter the son of the refugee biochemist Hans Krebs) became heads of Oxford colleges.

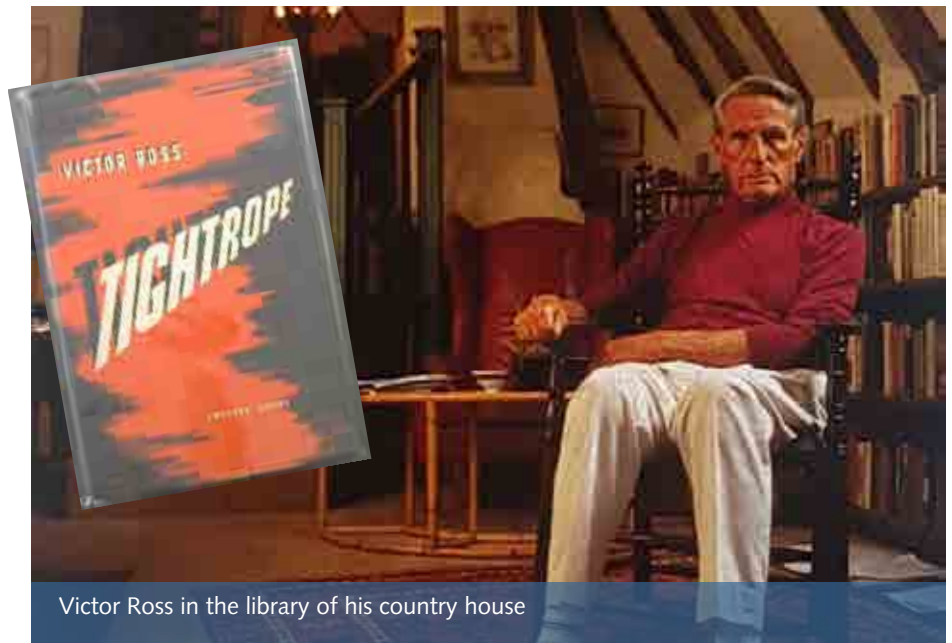
The prominence of bookshops specialising in German-language books, like Libris in Boundary Road, Swiss Cottage, reflected the refugees' passion for literature. An example was the booklover Friedrich Walter, whose abiding love for the German-Jewish culture in which he had been raised found clear expression in an article in the July-August 1959 issue, with the title *Bücher haben ihre Schicksale* (Books have their Fates, from the Latin saying 'Habent sua fata libelli'). Walter relates how in summer 1940 he bought his first book in German in a British bookshop, with a shilling from his meagre Pioneer Corps pay. It detailed the opera visits made by a German-Jewish soldier in World War I, while on leave from four years at the front. It carried an inscription by his mother, in Hebrew and in German, praying for God's blessing and protection for her son; this captured the combination of Jewish observance and German culture so characteristic of that section of German Jewry.

The two key aspects of the refugee experience in Britain were summed up by Richard Grunberger. He described his role as editor 'as somebody who is trying to bridge the gulf between where the refugees came from and where they have found themselves for the last sixty years. I want them not to lose contact with what they have left behind, because there was a very rich German Jewish cultural life, of which they are the last representatives. On the other hand, I want them to be more acculturated to English life and English culture. I am trying to act as a mediator between the two and as a propagandist for the amalgam of the two cultures.'

Anthony Grenville

A half open door (Growing old with the *AJR Journal*)

First things first: I am here because Britain allowed me to come in. I can tell my story because the *AJR Journal* provides me with readers. Both of us go back a long time. The editor tells me that I made my first appearance in these pages in 1952 (not a misprint), in a review of *Tightrope*, my novel about - guess what - antisemitism in British society, a subject that sits on my shoulder like a malign bird, ready to pounce when it spies a morsel.



Victor Ross in the library of his country house

Gratitude is tempered by the knowledge that we pre-war immigrants, enemy alien corn among the green fields of England, owe our lives to a calculation by the then government that if it wanted to avoid international opprobrium and local fuss, it could not afford to be either too generous or too restrictive. This is the half-open door without a welcome mat. I have been bouncing back and forth between conflicting emotions ever since.

That said, I have not felt under attack, having spent most of my private life among refugees. I have never presented myself (apart from a few juvenile aberrations) as other than a compliant outsider.

A cruel blessing

Far-sighted members of the community recognised the need for representation, for a shield and a network of mutual support. First came help with the search for lost families, the days of desperate hope. Homes had to be found for the children of the Kindertransport, that most cruel of blessings. Reparation and restitution called for guidance through a bureaucratic maze. And all this against a background of welfare work, because the AJR is a charity looking after those in need.

The lighter side was not overlooked. We Jews like a bit of entertainment. Concerts and dances were laid on with helpings of

Torte and whipped cream. Soft welfare is carried on with humour and charm to this day. Delightful young women, sounding no older than my granddaughters, ring to inquire whether I am lonely. One day I had a visit from a rabbi, not to minister to my spiritual needs but to sort out my computer problems.

The Journal

AJR Information was the community's first mouthpiece helping us on our way. It has grown into today's *Journal* recording our history. I turn to the letter pages first. It is where I get an insight into the concerns of the moment. Recent topics have included the yoke of "woke" and the ethics of reclaiming German or Austrian nationality. My eye was caught by a letter from Ruth Rothenberg in the October issue saying that a little bit of racism is an innate part of the human defence mechanism. A new member, Deborah Wrapson, objected to non-Jewish politics intruding in a report by Dorothea Shefer-Vanson criticising John Cummings. This did not stop an old member, Eric Sanders, delivering a last blast at Mrs. Thatcher. Werner Conn asked the best question: what is the future of the *Journal* when the likes of him have gone? A letter of mine proclaiming my roots in German culture made a Mr. Farago vomit.

The Big Thank-you

My work with the AJR on the Thank-You Britain Fund has been well documented

but some of the jollier stories remain to be told. I remember with particular fondness our battles for the soul of the Fund. At one extreme were the solid citizens who wanted to see value for their money, the *Piss Cottage Brigade*, suspected of wanting to erect a gold-plated public convenience opposite the Underground station. Then there were those who argued that the debt had been repaid many times over in contributions to the arts, science and commerce. I threw my weight behind a loftier objective, the creation of fellowships and lectures designed to further British scholarship. Werner Behr, Deputy Chairman of the AJR, Werner Rosenstock, then editor of the *Journal*, and I formed the steering committee. Behr donated a large sum and got the OBE for his charitable work; I think the OBE should have been split, the O going to Rosenstock who did most of the organising; the B to Behr as banker, with the E for me for bringing emotion to the endeavour.

A sliver of continental refugees who arrived here before the war have made a disproportionate impact. They came, they served, they conquered. There is at least one of them near the top of every tree in the establishment. I am content to have made it through the half-open door, knowing my place.

Victor Ross

Keeping a connection (Growing up with the AJR Journal)

I was born in 1946 to two German refugees but knew very little about my identity or past family history. In the early 50s my house was often full of either German or Austrian accents. I would often hear “you know vot darlink - let’s go to have coffee and cake and then go shopping in John Barnes”. I also regularly saw my father reading a little magazine entitled *AJR Information*. It was one of his favourite reads.

In my first two or three years we lived in the area where many continental Jewish refugees lived. My mother, Mina Lowenstein, had arrived in January 1939 aged 19 and worked in Hendon as a domestic help to a Mrs Cohen. My father Günther had arrived in England at roughly the same time and some distant relatives in London had arranged employment for him and also a bedsit in Pimlico.

In June 1940, soon after meeting my Mum and falling in love, my Dad had a knock on his bedsit door. It was a policeman who advised he was to be interned as an enemy alien. He was taken to Brixton Police Station from where the next day he was sent on a train to Liverpool. That was where his nightmare six week journey began on the infamous *Dunera* steamship and ended in Sydney, Australia.

After eighteen months internment he returned to London and two weeks later married my mother in a registry office on 5 December 1941. Roll the clock forward forty years to when, with special consideration, the London Beth Din allowed people like my parents to retake their oaths under a chuppah in Woburn House. So it was in February 1983 I was witness to this amazing occasion.

In around 1950 we moved from West Hampstead (with the help of a family football pools win!) to a show house just off



David Busse aged 4, left, with his brother and parents

Honeypot Lane in Queensbury and I was sent to Glebe primary school. I remember at the end of the school day brief conversations with my schoolmates, to whom I asked “where you going now” and they would respond “to my Nan”. They would then ask me where I was going, to which I replied that I was going home to Mum. All this had deeper meaning of course because I had no idea of what the word Nan meant. It was soon after that I realised I had no grandparents.

Until the age of eight I had very little notion of being Jewish. It was only in 1955 when preparations were being made for my brother’s barmitzvah in Kingsbury that I became aware of my family background. As a youngster my mother would often say “*Komm Kind, sprech’ Deutsch,*” but of course in school, playing pretend war games in the playground you were either a Tommy or a Jerry! So obviously I naïvely had no interest in speaking German. On reflection it was a shame to miss that opportunity. I frequently worked with Germans in my later business life, so an early education in language skills would have been most useful. In fact I became reasonably proficient in what I call social and technical German for my work during the mid-80s.

Very little was discussed about my parents’ family history at that time, but I soon realised there was something different

compared to my school chums’ lives. On Saturday evenings my parents’ continental friends would arrive at my house. “Hello Darlink” they would say to me before settling down to a supper of big frankfurters and sauerkraut followed by a card game – usually Kalooki or Poker. Their friends included Meta and Sigi Kranz, Serena and Eric Weiss, Yoji and Werner Knight, Friedel and Eddie Windsor, Edith and Poldi Gross and others.

Although my parents were rarely involved with any AJR events, my father was an avid *AJR Journal* reader, I guess to be connected with his past. Maybe in the future it will be the children of refugees who will contribute to the AJR columns to foster its continuance?

I am blessed to have three wonderful children and five gorgeous grandchildren who, like many other youngsters, are rather incurious about their family history. As the late Lord Jonathan Sacks once said – “Those who tell the story of their past have already begun to build their children’s future.”

Over the years the *AJR Journal* has helped many members to share their family stories. I am delighted to have the chance to do the same in this special anniversary issue, and will shortly finish writing my own memoirs to pass on to future generations.

David Busse

OUR MOVERS AND SHAPERS

Numerous people have been involved in shaping the *AJR Journal* over the past eight decades and some of these are featured elsewhere in this magazine. Here we showcase just three of the many individuals who helped us to reach this milestone anniversary.



The founder Werner Rosenstock,

EDITOR 1946-1982

There are some people whose lives, work and experiences encapsulate a whole era. Dr. Werner Rosenstock was one of the nine founders of the AJR, having arrived from Germany in 1939, and devoted his entire career to serving the Jewish refugee community. It was he who, in 1946, decided to introduce a monthly paper to hold the membership together and give it a common focus and medium of communication.

Remembered for his unfailing energy and attention to detail, Werner continued to advise the AJR long after he retired and to make regular contributions to its magazine. As his son Michael wrote in our 70th anniversary issue: "*AJR Information* occupied such a large place in my family's life that I came to regard it as a sort of younger brother".

We invited Michael, who now lives in Canada, to submit a comment for this anniversary issue. He replied: "I must say I'm awed by the fact that the paper is 75 years old (the equivalent of three generations) and is still going strong.

This must be a record for a refugee/émigré journal. It's something of an irony, but also a sort of shout of triumph, that the very first issue of *AJR Information* should include what, I believe, is a government statement that refugees from Nazism could apply for naturalisation."



The first re-designer Ronald Channing

EXECUTIVE EDITOR 1994-2004

Ronald Channing joined as assistant editor in December 1994. His last edition as Executive Editor was in December 2004, after which he was appointed Head of Media, Development and Community Relations.

The basic design of the magazine dated back to WW2 with its paper shortages and had changed little over the decades. So the AJR trustees agreed to change the name to *AJR Journal* and adopt a more contemporary style, which remained in place until 2017 when the current full colour design was launched. Richard Grunberger – see right – wrote the front page editorials, comment columns and profiles and Ronald "had the privilege of commissioning, writing or reporting most of the rest. I also added my own photography and made up each edition from galley proofs in the face of computer competition."

In later years Marion Koebner, followed by Howard Spier, worked alongside Ronald to maintain the high standards demanded of the magazine. When art correspondent Alice Schwab retired, they invited Gloria Tessler to continue the *Art Notes* column, and also asked Dorothea Shefer-Vanson to introduce a monthly *Letter from Israel*, both of which remain mainstays of the magazine to this day.



Voice of the AJR Richard Grunberger,

EDITOR 1988-2005

Richard Grunberger was the last refugee to occupy the editor's chair and was an inspired choice to lead the *Journal* into the 21st century. He demonstrated a flamboyance of style and a delight in scholarship that were almost impossible to resist. His fascination with ideas, with historical details, parallels and intricacies, and with arguments and counter-arguments flowed into his prose and gripped his readers by sheer force of intellect.

Having arrived on the first Kindertransport, Richard passed through several camps until he found a home with a Jewish family in Stoke Newington and work in a tailoring business in the East End. From these unpromising beginnings he worked his way up the educational ladder and also became a very successful writer of social history.

At an age when most men contemplate retirement, Richard took over the editorship of our *Journal*. He always set his encyclopaedic knowledge within a clear framework, bringing meaning to the historical experiences of our community. As his successor, Anthony Grenville wrote in his obituary, after Richard died suddenly in March 2005: "That a man so intensely alive to ideas, knowledge and culture has gone forever is hard to comprehend. We will treasure his memory and the power of his pen - we will not look on its like again."

Note from editor: I am sure that all our readers join me in thanking Anthony Grenville and, more latterly, David Herman for carrying on Richard Grunberger's tradition of writing erudite and unfailingly interesting lead articles.

A lady who risked everything

75 years old probably seems very young to **Lotte Brainin**, one of the few remaining Jewish resistance fighters and survivors of the Auschwitz and Ravensbrück concentration camps, who celebrated her 100th birthday in November.



Lotte and Hugo Brainin

A very moving virtual ceremony to mark her centenary birthday was attended by a host of VIPs, including both the current Austrian President Alexander Van der Bellen and the former President Heinz Fischer, the Nobel-prizewinning playwright Elfriede Jelinek, and the Yiddish singer Isabel Frey.

Born Charlotte Sontag on 12 November 1920 in Vienna, Lotte Brainin learned about bitter poverty at an early age, but also the importance of solidarity. Like hundreds of thousands of others, her parents fled the hostilities of Galicia at the beginning of the First World War, travelling via Budapest to Vienna. Lotte joined the Communist Youth Association (KJV), making her a double target for the Nazis after the Anschluss.

Two friends from the KJV helped her to travel by train to Cologne. From Aachen she illegally crossed the border into Belgium and met her brothers Elias and Heinrich in Brussels. Their mother was also able to join them later but when the Wehrmacht marched into Belgium on 10 May 1940 the two brothers fled to southern France.

Lotte connected with a group of Austrian and German communists who worked as part of the TA (Travail Anti-Allemand or Travail Allemand, a section of the French Resistance). Her subterfuge relationship with a member of the Wehrmacht resulted in her arrest in June 1943. After several months in prison under brutal interrogation, she was deported from the Mechelen transit

camp to Auschwitz where she worked for the international resistance group Kampfgruppe Auschwitz. She survived both Auschwitz and the death march to Ravensbrück from where, in the course of the "evacuation", she managed to escape. In July 1945 she returned to Vienna and was a key witness in one of the Ravensbrück trials.

In 1948 she married Hugo Brainin, who had survived the Nazi period in exile in England, and with whom she still lives. In the 1980s Lotte began speaking as a contemporary witness at numerous events and has visited countless schools throughout Austria. Her stories can now be found on a special website which was designed in honour of her 100th birthday: www.brainin.at

BERTHA LEVERTON

The AJR was deeply saddened to hear of the recent passing of Bertha Leverton MBE, aged 97, in Israel. She forged the relationship between the *Kinder* and the AJR resulting in the Kindertransport Special Interest Group - and was its first chair - that continues today. Poignantly, her passing came on the anniversary of the arrival of the first Kindertransport in 1938.

A full obituary of Bertha, written by her daughter, will appear in our February issue

Supplemental Hardship Fund payments

AJR members who have previously received a payment from the Hardship Fund may now be eligible to apply for supplemental payments from the Claims Conference.

Once approved, it is hoped that an initial payment of €1,200 will be made in the first quarter of 2021 with a second award of the same value in 2022.

The Claims Conference will be

writing directly to Hardship Fund recipients but if for any reason you have not been contacted by 31 December please email Rosemary Peters rosemary@ajr.org.uk or telephone **020 8385 3088** or Melanie Jawett melanie@ajr.org.uk or telephone **020 8385 3072**.

(Please note that the deadline for applications is 31 December 2022 and also that heirs are not eligible to apply).

ART NOTES REVISITED

Our Art Notes column dates back to our early issues, when individual members began regularly submitting reviews of exhibitions they had attended. In 1978 it was decided to introduce a dedicated column, under the authorship of Alice Schwab. Here Alice's daughter, **Baroness Julia Neuberger**, recalls the importance of the *AJR Journal* to her mother, and **Gloria Tessler** – who took over the mantle from Alice in 1989 – reflects on how the column and art exhibitions have changed.

My mother Alice's relationship with the AJR went back to her days working at the United Restitution Organisation's office, when she fell in love with the AJR and everyone there. She had arrived in the UK as a domestic servant in 1937, receiving great kindness from the Dobbs family in Birmingham, for whom she worked. Later, as she was trying to get her brother and parents out of Germany, she encountered my paternal grandmother, Anna Schwab, at the famous Bloomsbury House, thus meeting my father, whom she married in 1942.

Writing *Art Notes* for the *AJR Journal* was the highlight of her month. She always went to many exhibitions, from the famous and widely reviewed to small shows in the English countryside. She adored visiting galleries in Lavenham and Long Melford in Suffolk, for instance, and she would happily travel to Birmingham, Liverpool or Manchester if she thought a show was worth it. As a child, she would often take me to exhibitions, but I fear I was too young to appreciate them. She made it clear that a cultural life was essential for any civilised human being and if I wasn't going to appreciate the art, I had better find some other intellectual and cultural pursuit!

For her, the visual arts were of paramount importance. She had wanted to be an artist in Germany before the war, and we have a few of her own early works. Postwar, she never continued her drawing and painting. Instead, she collected, and she went to exhibitions. She was as likely to come home

with a folio of 50 modern British etchings she had bought as she was to arrive enthusing about a Barnett Freedman show, for instance, or one by Jacob Kramer.

In her later years she organised exhibitions at the Ben Uri art gallery, and believed firmly that refugee Jewish artists deserved greater exposure. She was a great friend to George Him and Abram Games, to Dekk and to Martin Bloch. She loved the Meidners, and she admired hugely the work of Frank Auerbach and Marie-Louise von Motesiczky, along with many others. She befriended curators and collectors, was treated with reverence by staff at both Christie's and Sotheby's, even in very old age, though she never had the money to make big purchases, and she undoubtedly had a keen eye. I wish I had inherited it.

I so admired the work she did, and her boundless enthusiasm. I can still hear my father saying to her, "Liesel, more pictures....! Where are we going to put them?" But I also knew that he would find some room somewhere, and that he took enormous pride in his wife who had lost out on her education, but had taught herself, trained her eye, looked, listened, befriended, recorded, collected, and encouraged others to go and see what she so valued. And that's why her *Art Notes* still give me so much pleasure, all these many years later. *Baroness Julia Neuberger*

It was surely only yesterday when Ronnie Channing asked if I could recommend an



art correspondent. My only connection with the paper were odd political commentaries. What made me, an ingénue in the world of high art, jump to the challenge?

Well, that was 1989 and now we celebrate the *Journal's* 75th birthday, following its intellectual development through Richard Grunberger and Howard Spier, to the skillful hands of current editor Jo Briggs, into a full colour work of art in itself.

The art world itself has changed. Galleries today present not just solo artists, but artistic or current trends. From the *Sensations* exhibition at the Royal Academy, which brought us Tracy Emin's unmade bed – a highly conceptual self-portrait – to Damien Hirst's exposure of a cow's innards, the genre has elevated many practitioners. Other galleries seek political links. Tate Britain's *British Baroque: Power and Illusion* revealed as much about English history as the narcissistic portraits of Charles II or the art of trompe l'oeil. The British Museum's topical *Arctic Culture and Climate* (December 2020) takes us beyond art for art's sake, proving how its practice unconsciously helps survival. *Gloria Tessler*

Annely Juda Fine Art

23 Dering Street
(off New Bond Street)
Tel: 020 7629 7578
Fax: 020 7491 2139

CONTEMPORARY
PAINTING AND SCULPTURE

THE AJR AND THE WIENER

Looking back over 75 years of working in partnership, The Wiener Holocaust Library's Director Dr Toby Simpson reflects on how two great organisations have been bound by a common history, a shared community, and a mutual love of books.

The story of the AJR and the Wiener Library is usually traced back to the 'spadework of the founder members' in London in 1941. The establishment of the AJR was first noted in the Wiener Library's information bulletin the following year. These early connections were celebrated fifty years on in the 1991 Golden Anniversary edition of the *AJR Journal*.

In another sense, however, the story begins in Germany 100 years ago. One of the original AJR Executive's members, Kurt Alexander, who later became the AJR's Treasurer, worked with Alfred Wiener in Berlin between 1919 and 1921. Long before the Library or the AJR existed, both men joined Ludwig Holländer, then Director of the *Centralverein* in fighting the wave of antisemitism that hit Germany after defeat in the First World War. Holländer was so impressed by the energy of the pair that he is said to have remarked wryly: 'Gentlemen, don't work so hard, or antisemitism might come to an end prematurely!'

Their vigour did not diminish, despite the catastrophes that followed. Nobody could have foreseen the Holocaust in 1919. Wiener, however, did possess remarkable foresight about the dangers faced by German Jews. In a pamphlet of that year, he warned what might come to pass. The Library looks forward to publishing this next year along with another of Wiener's early works under the title *The Fatherland and the Jews* (Granta Books, 2021, forthcoming).

In our own time, as intolerance has again broken its leash, we should remember that the original bonds forged between the AJR and 'Dr. Wiener's Library' sprang from an urgent need to organise resistance and



PHOTO: © ADAM SOLLER

find safety. Yet if there had not been more to it than this, these bonds might not have strengthened after 1945. This is where the books come in.

The first reference to the Wiener Library in the *AJR Journal* is an advert from September 1946, shown below. From the beginning, your readers helped Alfred Wiener build the internationally renowned collection now housed at 29 Russell Square. In a subsequent article entitled *Letters become history*, the AJR and the Wiener Library 'joined hands' to ask members to look for 'material which they may have kept in their trunks, in their lofts or in their desks'. It urged them to help, with the words that 'each of [the letters] may give a full picture of our recent past and, at the same time, serve as important material for the future historian'. This is as true today as it was then.

The resulting collections were described by Dr Eva Reichmann in 1955 as 'an arsenal of weapons for the struggle against Nazi-fascist totalitarianism'. These weapons included books as well as documents, which Leo Baeck noted were 'not only shelved [at the Library] but made agencies and instruments'.

Among the many bonds that united the Library and the AJR, Hans and Eva Reichmann's marriage may have been the most important of all. As the Library's Director of Research, her scholarship drew in the testimonies of over 1,000 eyewitnesses, many from AJR members. Meanwhile, Hans's chairmanship of the AJR at a critical juncture helped Jewish refugees in Britain to speak with a united voice, which would prove crucial for the

Library's survival on many occasions.

Both Eva and Hans paid moving tributes, which are well worth reading, to Alfred Wiener in the *AJR Journal*. Eva said of Wiener that 'the two great centres of his life were books and human beings'. Something similar could be said of the gravitational poles of the AJR and the Library. Books represent knowledge, and according to Eva Reichmann, Wiener felt that in a sense 'Judaism is knowledge'. The Library expressed the same love of truth and learning that he found in German-Jewish culture.

The fight against antisemitism, the fight that Ludwig Holländer jestingly hoped might be ended a century ago by Alfred Wiener and Kurt Alexander's work, is far from over. This is despite 75 years of prodigious effort of AJR and Wiener Library members working together, and despite all of the shared achievements celebrated in this issue. In times of darkness, may the principles that we stand for, recorded in the *AJR Journal* in 1960, continue to light the way: "(1) the Jewish cause [is] to be affirmed as part of the greater cause of all free men, since antisemitism [is] recognised as the spearhead of an attack upon all civilisation, and (2) in as much as information [is] essential to action, it must be carefully documented and incontestably authentic".



The Wiener Library advert that appeared in our September 1946 issue

It's hard to believe, but the first edition of *AJR Information* wasn't the biggest news of January 1946. So here we've put together a few other headlines and highlights that will either take you back or make you think about how times have changed.

WHAT HAPPENED

January 1946

The economy



The war had stripped Britain of virtually all its foreign financial resources, and the country had built up "sterling credits" - debts owed to other countries that would have to be paid in foreign currencies - amounting to several billion pounds. Britain's economy was in disarray. Some industries, such as aircraft manufacture, were far larger than was now needed, while others, such as railways and coal mines, were desperately short of new equipment and in bad repair. With nothing to export, Britain had no way to pay for imports or even for food.

International events



The United Nations General Assembly met for the first time. 51 nations were represented at the meeting, which was held in London and immediately followed by the first meeting of the UN Security Council.

The constitution was signed for the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Comprised of six republics (Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Macedonia) Yugoslavia had a land area of 255,400 square kilometers and was the 9th largest country in Europe.



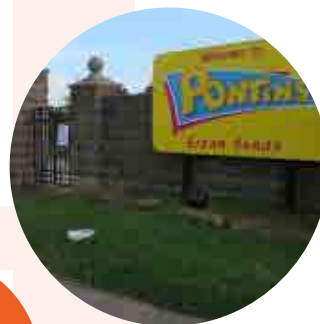
Charles de Gaulle resigned as the President of the French provisional government.

UK milestone



The first international flight took off from London Heathrow to Buenos Aires. Operated by South American Airlines.

Theodore Schurch was hanged at Prison Pentonville. He was a British soldier executed for desertion committed during WW2, and the first person in Britain to be executed for an offence other than murder.



The Atomic Energy Research Establishment was founded.

Married women were allowed to work in the Civil Service for the first time.

Fred Pontin finalised his plans for the Pontin Holiday Camp, at Burnham-on-Crouch.

Births



- 3 January John Paul Jones, bassist with Led Zeppelin
- 6 January Syd Barrett, guitarist and singer with Pink Floyd
- 7 January Mike Wilds, racing driver and pilot
- 19 January Dolly Parton, singer
- 19 January Julian Barnes, novelist
- 25 January Pete Price, Merseyside radio disc jockey



People born later

- George Best
- George W Bush
- Bill Clinton
- Hayley Mills



ELSE NED IN uary 46

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ater in 1946

Liza Minnelli
Susan Sarandon
Steven Spielberg
Donald Trump



Headlines during the year



- 1 March** The Bank of England is nationalised.
- 5 March** Winston Churchill coins the phrase "Iron Curtain" in a speech in Missouri.
- 5 July** The bikini goes on sale after debuting during an outdoor fashion show in Paris.
- 22 July** Jerusalem's King David Hotel, the HQ of the British administrative headquarters for Palestine, is bombed by the Irgun.
- 1 October** Nazi leaders are sentenced at Nuremberg trials.
- 23 October** A camera on board a V-2 rocket takes the first photograph of earth from outer space.



Book marks



- Penguin Classics was launched
- *Thomas the Tank Engine* was published
- Enid Blyton published her first girls' school story, *First Term at Malory Towers*

Inventions



Tupperware
Credit card

Telescope
Waterproof nappy

Cost of living



- The average salary was £265
- The average cost of a house was £1,375
- The average cost of a car was £580

Groceries

- Flour 1.5kg - 3d
- Loaf of bread - 2d
- Sugar 1kg - 4d
- Butter 250g - 4d
- Milk 1pt - 8d



Letters to the Editor

The Editor reserves the right to shorten correspondence submitted for publication and respectfully points out that the views expressed in the letters published are not necessarily the views of the AJR.

75 YEARS OF THE JOURNAL

My mother, Hilda, was a teenager in Vienna in the nineteen twenties. Being Jewish played little part in her life or that of many "assimilated" Austrian Jews - until the Anschluss and Kristallnacht in 1938. Coming to England as a refugee domestic servant in 1939, she eventually found good friends in the community of German, Austrian and Czech Jewish refugees. A staunch Zionist, she was active in WIZO (the Womens International Zionist Organisation) and she and her friends joined the AJR.

Reading the *AJR Journal* became a regular, important part of her life and contributed to her sense of belonging. She died in September 1997, aged 90, two weeks after Princess Diana. I took over her AJR membership and in the years since I have also come to appreciate the scholarship and wisdom of editors/ contributors like Richard Grunberger and Anthony Grenville, as well as the social aspects and the sense of belonging that the *AJR Journal* and its letter pages brings to us survivors and to later generations.

John Farago, Deal, Kent

How could I not celebrate the *AJR Journal's* 75th birthday without writing a letter? However, you're still five years younger than me, and behind me in the queue for vaccination!

I've written you lots of letters since I first began becoming a *bête noir* among your readers almost 30 years ago. To be fair to myself, for the first few years I did have support, particularly from the Austrian born ones. Along with only three or four others, Michael Newman encouraged me to take on the might of the Austrian government in seeking reparation for Austrian Holocaust survivors. This was in the early 90s. The Germans had paid out in the 50s. The Austrians were still claiming that they too had been victims of Hitler. My brief was to bombard you with letters in order to spur on action. The readers responded. We won!

Having by then got used to writing rude letters I decided to carry on attacking anything I didn't like. This created a barrage of letters attacking me. Howard Spier, editor at the time, was delighted. He was filling his letters page with ease. The ruder I was, the happier he became! (Let me add quickly that the current Editor does not share Howard's views but she too occasionally indulges me). However, my aggression in your letters pages did have some sad repercussions. At the AJR annual lunch at the Hilton Hotel a lovely lady came to sit next to me and my wife. We chatted throughout and I really liked her. Then she confessed. "When I saw that I was sitting next to Peter Phillips I nearly decided I wanted to change places. You appear so horrid in the letters pages of the *AJR Journal*. In fact, you're not so bad". That lady was Gaby Glassman, noted psychologist, psychotherapist and AJR Trustee. Thanks, Gaby, and happy birthday *AJR Journal*.
Peter Phillips, Loudwater, Herts.

WHERE WAS YOUR STAMMTISCH?

I remember the *News Chronicle* mentioned by Peter Phillips (November). My wonderful sister and brother-in-law, Lisl and Karl Weiss (my de facto parents) read it every day. It was a liberal paper, I think, with excellent contributors, and was greatly missed when it folded.

Karl and his friends had a *Stammtisch* (their regular table) at the Dorice, where they would meet every lunch time and have heated discussions about which bridge hand had or should have been played. There was also the cabaret club *Das Laterndl* which was in a basement opposite the Cosmo, run by Peter Hertz. I also think there was another club in Eton Avenue; maybe Peter Phillips can recall that?
Victor Garston, London NW11

EU REALITY

Anthony Grenville (December) is worried for the future of the EU project, should it collapse and lead to the former arrangements of competing nation states of Europe, with borders that sovereign

governments can control. The EU has only itself to blame if it should fall apart, for the cavalier attitude to democracy shown by its conduct of referenda in member states, where nations were required to repeat the exercise until they produced an outcome to Brussel's liking.

Then there has been the poor stewardship by the financial institutions of the financial crises, which some experts (Greece's veteran of EU debt negotiations, Yanis Varoufakis, and the former Governor of the Bank of England, Lord Mervyn King) regard to be the result of what happens if institutions dreamed up for an entirely political vision and ambition then are inappropriately set to solve economic problems that they were not designed for. The ECB, for example, is no US Federal Reserve Bank and EU federalism does not work like it would in a united States of America - more's the pity.

But the greatest Brussels mea culpa has to be the terrible decisions made by the project's senior member, Germany, principally, in response to the migrant fallout from Syrian War, however noble its sensibility about confronting Germany's European demons. It has set up political-tectonic stresses throughout the Continent, and the predictable effect on communities, collective security and social cohesion is playing out with awful results like the awakening of populist nationalism in many member states. European Jewry is faced by a mutation of Soviet era antizionism that accounts for a rise of antisemitism, not from the traditional European racist Right but the alliance of Progressive, anti-nation state politics and the migrant Muslim populations of Europe's cities.

For the life of me, I cannot understand anybody who is sentimental about the EU, a thing so fatally bungled and misconceived!

I am far less pessimistic, certainly than Anthony Grenville is, about the ability of future democratic capitalist nation states to find effective ways to trade and face common global threats. The EU project

cannot be Europe's future anymore.
Greg Lubinsky, London NW6

I hesitate to take issue with such an eminent student of our age as Anthony Grenville, but I am afraid David Kernek does have a point. The EU Commission may not be an all-conquering power like earlier empires, but it certainly has empire-building ambitions. Although its talents are limited, it uses twenty-first century methods to work towards its end. It rules Europe by default except on the very few occasions when member states agree and the decisions are not left to the Commission, decisions for which it does not answer to a toothless European Parliament. Now that everybody in Europe seems to have given up the idea of audited accounts it does not even have to bother with those. Comparison of the Commission with the British Civil Service is a little unfair as, after all, the Commission has no ambition to offer service of any sort. I am afraid peace and brotherly love is not entirely the hallmark of the European Union - Poland and Hungary are just the most recent examples of internal squabbling. I do wish the Union would provide the panacea Mr Grenville attributes to it - unfortunately it seems to be going the opposite way.
George Donath, London SW1

Anthony Grenville writes that "at least 51.9% of them" - the British - voted in 2016 to leave the EU. The registered electorate was 46.5 million and the number who voted Leave was 17.4 million - 37.4% of the registered voters, and 51.9% of those who voted.
Martin Mauthner, London SE24

LETTER FROM ISRAEL

In the December issue of the *AJR Journal* the Readers' Letters are, if possible, even more interesting and informative than usual, but Dorothea's *Letter from Israel* tops them all. I do not understand how it is possible that the Ultra-Orthodox section of Israeli society, with its higher birth-rates, can make a living whilst not



Students and staff at Jawne School, Cologne.

working and not paying taxes. That means they have to rely on support from the State, i.e. from the rest of the population, as Dorothea says. I really feel that there needs to be a reassessment.
Werner Conn, Lytham St. Annes.

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

My late husband was born Georg Jakob Rosenfeld in Karlsruhe. He told me that whilst he was in the Aliens' Pioneer Corps (Ilfracombe) they were told to change their names, given seven days' leave and told to return with a new identity.

He started his search for a new name by looking in the telephone directory under "R". He found page after page of Robins and Robinson but felt he could not identify as a Robin. However, he persevered and eventually got to the name of JOSEPH ROSNEY but there was only one entry of this surname. He felt it was unfair that the Robins should have so many entries and Rosney only one, so if he chose ROSNEY it would at least have two, and he made his choice on that basis.
Audrey Rosney, Oxford

SHANGHAI JEWISH MUSEUM

I have just received the eagerly awaited *Journal* for December. What a shock to read that Lilian Black passed away. She will be dearly missed by all who knew her.

I read with interest the letter from Anthony Curtis. I also visited the Shanghai Jewish Museum. It was mainly Austrian Jews who came to Shanghai which was a Freeport during the Holocaust and no visas were required. The Jews lived quite freely and

in peace in an area of Shanghai specifically for Jews, without any luxuries; hardship was the order of the day. Opposite the museum is still an Austrian traditional café which I frequented: no Sacher torte, but nice coffee.
Hanneke Dye, Skipton, N Yorks

AUSTRIAN RECIPES

I read with interest your article (December) about the cookery book *So Kocht man in Wien* by Alice Urbach, showing a picture of Vanilla Kipferln. It is stated that, after 1938 and the annexation of Austria by the Germans, it was no longer allowed to publish books written by Jews. The picture reminded me of the book I wrote at the age of 83, at the request of my grandchildren - *Oma Goodness! Austrian Magic in an English Kitchen*. Among many other dishes which will be familiar to AJR members is a recipe for Vanilla Kipferln! The book is still available from www.jessiefund.org.uk.
Rosl Schatzberger, York

JAWNE SCHOOL, COLOGNE

The article 'A Kristallnacht Tale' with accompanying photograph prompts me to send you some photos taken a number of years previously outside the very same school (above). My husband was a student there and, as he was born in 1913, this picture was taken well before the Hitler era. It was developed on a glass plate which I still have, unlike the photos of a later date. My husband could never get over the fate that befell the headmaster, Dr Erich Klibansky.
Margarete Stern, London NW3

THE POWER OF GOOD

“We all have good intentions. Sometimes they can be warped or suppressed, but sometimes they can be enormously powerful.”

This was Sir David Attenborough's closing message to over 700 AJR members and guests during last month's hugely inspiring online event, *Kinder refugees, hosts and families: Then and Now*.

Sir David told the event presenter, Dame Esther Rantzen, how his own good intentions and drive to save the planet had been inspired by his parents' many examples of helping people, not least their welcoming of two Jewish child refugees into their home during WW2.

Helga and Irene Bejach, who arrived on a Kindertransport from Germany, were taken in by the Attenborough family who were told that the girls were en route to America. When war broke out, just two weeks after their arrival, the senior Attenboroughs told the girls to regard their house as their home for as long as they needed, telling David and his two brothers that “Helga and Irene will be your sisters until the war is over.” The girls spent the next seven years with the Attenborough family, eventually leaving to join an uncle in New York after discovering that their father had perished in Auschwitz in 1944.

The families kept in touch and last year Sir David organised a reunion for the next generations. The entire experience clearly had a profound impact on Sir David, who has spent a lifetime pursuing humanitarian causes. Even today he expresses horror about the “unimaginable things that went on in the concentration camps” and how humans have the capacity to do such evil as well as good.

By coincidence Dame Esther's parents also fostered a boy whose parents were murdered at Auschwitz. She has always held a “very special attitude” to the Kindertransport, telling our audience that this event “...is an opportunity to celebrate two very special sets of parents – those who with huge courage allowed their children to go off into the arms of strangers, and those who welcomed these children with open arms without knowing anything about them.”



She asked Lord Alf Dubs to what extent his campaign to support today's child refugees had been inspired by his own experience.

“When I learned, in 2016, that there were 95,000 child refugees in mainland Europe I felt a tremendous urge to help,” explained Lord Dubs, who still feels that the UK should do more to help these children.

Sir Erich Reich, who chairs the AJR's Kindertransport Special Interest Group, made the audience laugh by claiming that he is “much younger” than Lord Dubs (the two men were four and six years old respectively when they arrived here). He remembers little of the experience except his very loving foster family. “I will always be grateful to the British government for allowing us in. It's because of this that I'm alive, and so are my children and my grandchildren,” he said.

One of those grandchildren also spoke during our event. Ruby Reich, now 18, was so inspired by her Kindertransport heritage that she undertook a batmitzvah project for the charity Safe Passage, which reunites refugee children safely and legally with family members here in the UK. She hopes that other young people will use their platforms to educate as many people as possible about the plight of child refugees.

Also taking part in this remarkable event was Jo Roundell Greene, whose grandfather, the former Labour Prime Minister Clement Attlee, sheltered 10-year old Paul Willer for four months in 1939. Paul, now 92, and Jo had an emotional

meeting in 2018 at a high profile event in Parliament facilitated by the AJR.

Reminiscing with Jo during this latest AJR event, Paul recalled arriving with the Attlees on Easter Sunday and being invited to take a cold bath. He thought it was a strange English custom especially for Easter, not realising that cold baths would be on offer ever day (they considered them beneficial). He also remembers stroking a cat for the first time and being scared when it purred.

Dame Esther's final guest was Marigold Bentley of Quaker Peace & Social Witness who explained the background and origins of the incredible contribution made by the Quakers to the Kindertransport movement, putting it down to the “tremendous humanitarian urge”.

A recording of the full programme can be seen on the AJR's dedicated YouTube channel, www.youtube.com/c/TheAssociationofJewishRefugees

AUDIENCE FEEDBACK

I have seldom felt so well-fed. You did wonders to get Alf Dubs, Esther Rantzen and David Attenborough all at the same time. It was fantastic.
Ruth Barnett

We - the second and third generations - will be always grateful for the honour of this first-hand contact with the important events of the past. Due to the opportunities you are creating, these characters and stories will always be living history to carry forwards in our hearts.
Jackie & Ruth Danson

LETTER FROM ISRAEL

BY DOROTHEA SHEFER-VANSON



A YEAR TO REMEMBER



1946, the year that the *AJR Journal* was founded, was also the year in which the world started to recover

from the effects of the war. Alongside efforts to rebuild devastated Europe, the baby boom, defined as the surge in the birth rate between 1946 and 1964, emerged, creating a cohort of youngsters requiring education, housing and food, thereby serving to boost production, agriculture and social welfare worldwide.

In Israel, which was then still under the British Mandate and defined as Palestine, displaced persons, concentration-camp survivors and refugees sought shelter in the country destined to become the Jewish homeland, encountering resistance from the local Arab population. Opinions among the Jewish population were divided, with Ben Gurion, Weitzmann, Sharett and other labour leaders advocating finding an accommodation with the Arabs and the authorities while right-wing organisations, led by Begin, demanded more forceful action.

1946 was also the year in which the Irgun (Begin's right-wing organisation)

detonated explosives in the basement of the King David Hotel, causing extensive damage and loss of life. Despite the warnings that purportedly were given, the Mandate offices on the top floor of the building, were not evacuated, so that 91 people were killed and 45 injured, mostly civilians. The attack was condemned by the Jewish National Council, but understandably aroused the ire of the British authorities. It may also have helped to trigger the British relinquishment of the Mandate two years later.

In that same year a number of kibbutzim were founded throughout the country.

By a strange coincidence, just recently, while searching for documents connected with my parents, I came across a letter dated March 1946. The closely-typed page still in its envelope, had been sent to my parents from Guatemala by a former friend and neighbour of my mother's family in Sprottau, Silesia, then Germany but today in Poland. In the letter (which is in German but which I have managed to translate and send to my sisters and cousins) the writer brings the recipients up to date about various members of what had once been a small but tightly-knit Jewish community.

Thus, the writer and his family had found refuge in Guatemala. My mother was in London, her sisters were in Palestine and California, her brother in Virginia. Other friends had reached São Paulo and Buenos Aires, while several members of the Jewish community had reached

Shanghai; a separate page is included in the envelope with their names and accounts of how they were managing to make a living.

But for me, the most telling and saddening few lines were those that referred to my grandparents, Max and Paula Hirsch. In his letter Max Lissauer writes: "It is a shame that the Hirsches were unable to survive, although the knowledge that all their children were able to escape must have given them some comfort. But Max Hirsch had prepared his departure in his usual methodical way, and it breaks my heart that at the last moment it didn't work out. All the members of the community relied on him, and he was always a friend and counsellor."

I can imagine how much pain this must have given my mother and her siblings, and, like many among us, I mourn the loss of so many precious lives to this day.

For better and for worse, 1946 was the year the world began to recover from its wounds, but the extent to which it has been successful in this depends on one's individual outlook. There's no denying that the world is in a better state today than it was then, and what Israel has achieved in the seventy-three years of its existence is nothing short of miraculous. However, whereas we must be able to draw a line under the events of the past and move on, our duty to ourselves and our offspring must always be to keep alive the memory of what we have lost.

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REVIEWS

HOW TO BE A REFUGEE: ONE FAMILY'S STORY OF EXILE AND BELONGING

by Simon May
Picador 2021

There is a fascinating group of books published in recent years in which children from the second generation tell the story of how their parents and grandparents came to escape from Nazi-occupied Europe, and their experience of exile and the Holocaust. In nearly all of these books, the parents fled from Europe or had relatives who failed to escape and were killed in the camps.

What is extraordinary about Simon May's gripping family memoir is that it doesn't fit either category. Instead he tells the story of his mother and her two sisters, Jews who grew up on Fasanenstrasse, one of west Berlin's most beautiful streets, who all survived by denying their Jewishness completely. They didn't just conceal their Jewishness from the outside world. They did something even stranger. They denied their Jewishness to themselves. So much so that Simon's mother brought him up as a Catholic. Years later, Simon, now a philosopher at King's College London, has gone in search of his family's story of identity and belonging. How did they survive the Nazi years and at what cost to themselves and their loved ones? This superbly researched book becomes a quest for the real story of his family's past.

His mother, Marianne, and her sisters, Ilse and Ursel (Ursula) grew up in an assimilated Jewish home in Berlin, immersed in German culture. His grandfather, Ernst, was a distinguished lawyer. After dinner, he and his wife, Emmy, would read German classics to each other or she would go to the piano and sing *Lieder*. Great musicians – Carl Flesch, Fritz Kreisler, Gregor Piatigorsky – would play at their apartment. Everything exuded affluence, security and well-being.

There was something else. In 1910 Simon's grandfather converted. "He came to see himself," writes May, "to

his marrow, as a Prussian, a Protestant, and a patriot." Until 17 April 1933 when his clerk called him an "East Asian monkey" and threw him down the stairs. Being baptised did not protect him from Nazi antisemitism. A few months later Ernst collapsed and died of a heart attack. His whole world had fallen apart.

His three daughters, Simon's mother and her sisters, all became fervent Catholics. His mother Marianne, now twenty, moved to London in 1934, following her violin teacher Max Rostal. From 1934-38 she divided her time between London and Berlin and, when that became impossible, settled in London as a Czech musician with a changed name, Maria Lidka, and married a German-Jewish refugee, Simon's father.

It is no understatement to say that Marianne's story is the least dramatic of the three sisters. Her sister Ilse lived in Berlin through the twelve years of the Third Reich. Now a Catholic, she became engaged to a leading conductor, composer and Nazi. But with a friend, Christabel Bielenberg, she also helped run a secret network in Berlin that hid Jews throughout the war. As the war went on Ilse's life became ever more complicated, hiding from Red Army soldiers who wanted to rape her and running a business selling false Nazi flags to GIs.

Marianne's other sister Ursel managed to reinvent herself as an Aryan and married into the German aristocracy, becoming the Reichsgräfin von Plettenberg-Lenhausen, a world away from her Jewish family in west Berlin.

There are other characters and further twists and turns, each as complicated and compelling as the next. *How to be a Refugee* could be called *How to be a German Aryan* because it follows the extraordinary stories of Ilse and Ursel through the war years, hiding in plain sight. How did they do it? May has one curious answer. They had the power of their own denial. Instead of emigrating or going into hiding as German Jews they completely reinvented themselves and what is really fascinating, they internalised their new identities as if it was the most natural thing in the world.

This is a fascinating family story but May is at his best when he writes about his

own experience of loss and displacement. "By my eleventh year," he writes, "or perhaps long before, I felt as much of an exile as my parents – or rather I felt *more* of an exile than they did, because at least they had lived in their homeland before their displacement, whereas I had been born displaced, a German who had never lived in Germany..." The death of his German Jewish refugee father when Simon was only six and the strangeness of his mother and her sisters left him curiously lost, a Jew who had been brought up a Catholic, the son of German parents who couldn't himself speak any German, he grew up betwixt-and-between. He is as much the subject of this book as his mother and her sisters. It is a beautifully told story of a second-generation refugee trying to come to terms with his family's German past.
David Herman

REFUGEES FROM NAZI-OCCUPIED EUROPE IN BRITISH OVERSEAS TERRITORIES

Edited by Sven Steinberg and Anthony Grenville. *The Yearbook of the Research Centre for German and Austrian Exile Studies*. Brill Rodopi, Leiden, 2020.

'Forgotten Destinations?' is how it's put in the introduction. The dominant narrative is that the refugees from Germany and Austria got to France, Spain, Scandinavia, the United Kingdom, the United States of America and then some to other places. This book is a reminder of some of those other places. Of the twelve chapters, three are on New Zealand, two on Canada, and one each on South Africa, Singapore, Kenya, Australia, Shanghai, India and Palestine, which was then, of course, under British mandate rule.

Britain admitted about 70,000 refugees but felt insecure about them, fearing that they might have allowed in some fascist saboteurs. The convenient partial solution was to dump some of them on the colonies, so from July 1940 approximately 7,000 refugees were deported, mainly to Canada, Australia and New Zealand. This clearly didn't suit the colonies themselves. The refugees who were not wanted in the countries they fled from often discovered that they were also not wanted in the countries they were sent

to. Canada is described as 'one of the least welcoming nations for refugees', who 'were stigmatised both as Germans (and thus considered 'enemies') and as Jews'. The internment camps had severe discipline, barbed wire everywhere, machine guns on display, and harassment of Jews by Nazis and Fascists living in the same camps. In New Zealand refugees were once again feared as a potential 'fifth column' and so placed under severe restrictions. Among other absurd consequences, refugee doctors were unable to work even in the remoter areas where there had been no resident doctor for several years. A fairly similar situation occurred in Australia partially because foreign qualifications were not recognised.

In Britain's African colonial territories the racial situation required some complex adjustments. From the Africans' perspective the refugees were white Europeans and so in the same category as the colonial rulers. The latter, however, often did not regard them as such. This was particularly evident in South Africa where sections of the white population were sympathetic to Nazism.

There are sixteen contributors to this volume so, perhaps unsurprisingly, the data on the numbers of refugees doesn't always align but the overall situation remains clear. In one sense the refugees might be described as the lucky ones, for they avoided the Nazi death camps and so survived. However their lives were utterly devastated both personally and economically. The actual lucky ones are those of us of later generations.
Michael Levin

LOOKING FOR?

CZECH JEWS AND JUDAICA

Dr. David Lawson is leading a new project on behalf of the Czech Memorial Scrolls Trust to develop a comprehensive list of English books by, or about, Czech Jews and Judaica. Please email him with details of the Title, Author, Publisher and ISBN number if possible.

Dr.david.lawson@memorialscrollstrust.org

FRANK & LILY STEWART/ SCHOENBERGER

Ruth Ramsay is researching the life of Friedrich Fridolin Schoenberger, born Vienna 1917. He escaped Dachau and was then interned before joining the British Army Pioneer Corps. He met his wife Lily Pauline Schalmian (a domestic in Weybridge) at the Austrian Refugee Club, Swiss Cottage. They lived in High Wycombe or Guildford and in 1947 he was naturalised as Frank Stewart. Ruth is particularly keen to learn about their routes to the UK, and believes the Quakers may have assisted them.

ruthramsay60@gmail.com

LEO & BLANKA SQUARENINA

John Morris became friendly with Leo and Blanka Squarenina in the 1970s (now both deceased) who lived at 46 Brondesbury Villas, Kilburn, North London. If you knew them, he would love to hear from you.

johnmorrisauthor@gmail.com
+353 89 252 7224

HEINRICH HULSEN

Australian researcher, Dr Michael Macklin, seeks information on Heinrich Hulsén, born 1896, who arrived in the UK prior to WW2 with wife Lotte; she died in December 1978. Heinrich was exempt from internment in 1941, remarried a Gwyneth Richardson in 1961, and died in 1970.

michaelmacklin@me.com

CLUB 1943

Historian Niko Rollmann is researching the history of the 'Club 1943'. Please contact him if you were a member and/ or have old programmes, photos or other relevant documents

niko.rollmann@gmx.de

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OBITUARIES

LILIAN BLACK OBE

Born: 15 February 1951, Leeds

Died: 29 October 2020, Leeds



Lilian Black OBE, Chair of the Yorkshire-based Holocaust Survivors' Friendship Association (HSFA), which established the Holocaust Exhibition and Learning Centre (HELC) at the University of Huddersfield, has passed away aged 69. She was instrumental in envisioning what is the first Holocaust centre of its kind in the north of England and was widely regarded as one of the leading global Holocaust educators.

The daughter of Holocaust survivor Eugene Black, who was a prisoner at Auschwitz Birkenau, and a slave labourer at Mittelbau Dora before being liberated from Bergen-Belsen, Lilian's work in raising public awareness of the consequences of hate is widely recognised. She was a passionate advocate for survivor welfare, based on her insight into her father's experiences and the impact it had on his and his family's lives.

Trude Silman, Holocaust survivor and Life President of the HSFA, said they had lost a "wonderful friend" and "inspirational" chair.

"She will be greatly missed, not only for her strong leadership of the HSFA and her heartfelt support for the survivors but for her tremendous dynamism in developing the Holocaust Learning and Exhibition Centre," she said. "Speaking on behalf of the members of the HSFA, we hope that the Centre becomes a thriving place of learning and remembrance, to make a fitting legacy for Lilian".

Lilian was born in Oldham and her early life was characterised by frequent moves and changes of school as her father progressed in his career with Marks & Spencer. She studied French and German at Newcastle University, then took a job as an interpreter with British forces based in Osnabrück. Back in the UK Lilian became a Civil Servant for eighteen years, before becoming the Director of Education for the Training and Enterprise Council and leading the Education Business Partnership for Business Link. Before leaving to establish her own successful business in strategic business development and fundraising, Lilian was Vice Principal at Calderdale College.

Lilian's involvement with HSFA started when she accompanied her father to meetings for him to socialise with other survivor members. After a visit to Buchenwald and Bergen Belsen, Eugene began to speak about his experiences to schools and organisations on behalf of the Association. Lilian supported him during these many engagements and it was a natural progression that she would become Chair of the Association in 2011. She had a great understanding of the challenges faced by the second generation, and her awareness of the passage of time led her to initiate training volunteers to speak on behalf of survivors when they were no longer able to do so. Lilian's great strength was in building strong and lasting partnerships with other organisations, both in the UK and abroad, including the Arolsen Archives, and at Bergen Belsen and Buchenwald concentration camps. Her visit to Srebrenica with the then Director of the Centre, Emma King, to commemorate the victims of the massacre with the charity Remembering Srebrenica demonstrated her commitment to bringing diverse communities together to create a more secure future for all.

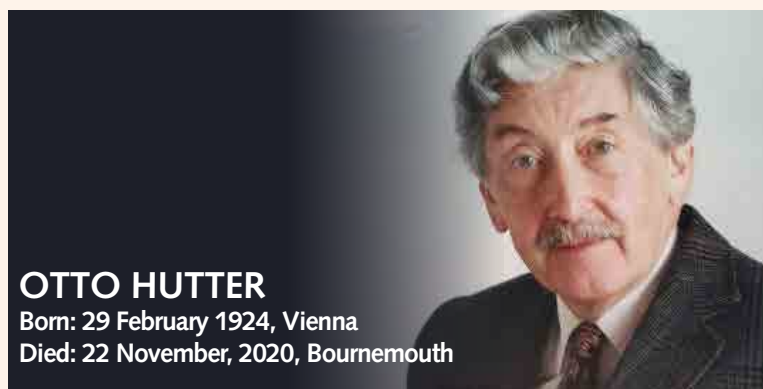
Following her death, new Chair Ben Barkow commented: "She inspired those around her and drew them to her cause of honouring the victims of the Holocaust and working to ensure the voices of survivors challenge our prejudices and indifference".

Lilian's knowledge of the wishes of the Association's survivor members to establish a permanent legacy, and of the vital nature of their work, led her to approach the University of Huddersfield in 2015 to develop the Holocaust Exhibition and Learning Centre. It was Lilian's drive, vision and commitment that led to successful fundraising through the Heritage Lottery Fund, together with Trust and private donors in order to launch the Centre in 2018.

Professor Bob Cryan, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Huddersfield wrote: "Lilian worked tirelessly to turn the idea into reality. The Centre which is now based here is a tribute to her determination, and outstanding ability to form networks".

Lilian was a great champion of, and advocate for, people who had been adversely affected by intolerance, inequalities and discrimination. There are many who have cause to be grateful for her persistence, as well as her insistence on fairness for all and impatience with a system that often fails our most vulnerable. She will be remembered for her energy, her commitment and her great love of family, both her own and the wider survivor family. Lilian was named an OBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours List for her services to Holocaust education, before succumbing to the effects of Covid 19 shortly afterwards. She is survived by her husband Francis Griffiths and two brothers, who greatly mourn her untimely passing.

Alessandro Bucci, Co-Director, HELC



Otto Hutter had a happy childhood in Vienna with his parents, Isaac and Elisabeth.

He attended a Jewish *Gymnasium* until the Nazis marched into Vienna soon after his Barmitzvah. At the instigation of a school friend he registered for the Kindertransport; reluctantly his parents agreed that this was the right option for him, though they themselves had no possibility to leave. He was fostered by the Blaxill family in Colchester and attended the Bishop Stortford School.

After school he worked at the Burroughs Wellcome Laboratories where he met Yvonne; they were married for 70 years.

He continued his studies at wartime evening classes at the former Chelsea Polytechnic where he studied physiology, as well as chemistry, at Birkbeck College. When the war ended, he took the BSc honours Physiology course at University College London and remained at University College where he obtained his PhD on a Sharpey Fellowship; he was then appointed as a lecturer.

In 1953 Otto was accepted onto a research fellowship at the John Hopkins Institute in Baltimore. His work addressed the permeation of potassium in muscle cells and progressed into making recordings using microelectrodes inserted into the pacemaker cells of the tortoise and frog heart. These recordings

have become iconic images included in all good physiology textbooks. They contributed to the understanding of the intrinsic rhythmicity of heart muscle and helped provide the knowledge necessary for the development of today's artificial pacemakers.

Otto transferred to the Medical Research Institute in Mill Hill in 1961 and in 1971 he was appointed Regius Professor of Physiology at Glasgow University. He also lectured on nerve and muscle, circulation and temperature regulation and served on the editorial board of the *Journal of Physiology*, on the Committee of the Physiological Society and the Council of International Union of Physiological Sciences. As chairman of this International union, he promoted the advancement of physiology education in developing countries.

Otto and Yvonne had four children and the great enjoyment of the family was to holiday on the Isle of Bute where Otto and Yvonne created a magnificent garden at the back of their holiday flat overlooking the sea. Otto retired at the age of 75 and he and Yvonne moved to Bournemouth; in retirement Otto became involved with Holocaust education, giving lectures and attending reunions.

Yvonne died in 2018 and since then Otto fulfilled one of his life ambitions – to become an Israeli citizen. He remained active and alert until a week before he died.
Jonathan Hutter



Born as Gerta Sidonova in Trnava, Slovakia in 1926, Gerta enjoyed her early years with her loving family.

But everything changed following the Nazi invasion of Czechoslovakia. Between 1939 and 1945 Gerta took on several identities and crossed the border between Slovakia and Hungary several times in order to stay alive. In 1944 Gerta was reunited with her childhood friend Rudi Vrba (one of the authors of the *Auschwitz Protocols*), who had recently escaped from Auschwitz. Rudi described his escape from Auschwitz and told the truth of what was happening there. This knowledge, she believed, was a key factor in one of the most difficult decisions she ever made. In 1944, encouraged by her mother, Gerta jumped out of a window, following their arrest by the Gestapo.

After the war, Gerta was excited about her new life in Communist Czechoslovakia. In 1947, she and Rudi were married. They had two daughters, but their relationship broke down and they divorced in 1956. In 1957, Gerta met Sidney Hilton, a British scientist with whom she fell in love. In 1958, she escaped from Czechoslovakia with her two daughters, so she could join Sidney in the UK. They married in 1959 and had two children. In 1972 they separated and later divorced.

Gerta studied medicine at Charles's University in Prague, but found her passion when working as a scientist in the lab of Ernest Gutmann, exploring the function of nerves and muscles. Gerta worked at several universities, taking up her final position at UCL, in 1976, where she was awarded a professorship of developmental neuroscience. Gerta was always motivated to inspire young scientists, especially women, who were under-represented.

As a grandmother, Gerta realised the importance of sharing her experiences of the Holocaust with younger generations, in the hope that this knowledge would help guide their paths and choices as they moved into adulthood. She wrote two autobiographies and gave many talks.

Gerta is survived by two children, six grandchildren and one great grandchild.
Caroline Hilton

ZOOMS AHEAD

Details of all meetings and the links to join will appear in the e-newsletter each Monday.

Tuesday 5 January @ 2.00pm	Rami Sherman – Life on Kibbutz Maagan Michal siddur https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88263867614
Wednesday 6 January @ 2.00pm	Rabbi Jeff Berger – Famous artworks of biblical stories, part 2 https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87432000018
Thursday 7 January @ 4.00pm	Les Spitz – Travels before lockdown https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89735107571
Tuesday 12 January @ 2.00pm	Michael Kushner – Spies, lies and double cross agents https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81156907227
Wednesday 13 January @ 2.00pm	Jacob Nowakowski– A contemporary look at Polish Jewish History https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86492030652 passcode 972142
Wednesday 13 January @ 3.00pm	AJR Book Club discussion https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8580455194
Thursday 14 January @ 4.00pm	Elkan Levy – Pre-Expulsion of the Jews https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/89374619597
Monday 18 January @ 2.00pm	Jo Briggs - 75 years of the <i>AJR Journal</i> https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/83677492288
Tuesday 19 January @ 2.00pm	Rosie Axion – Chiltern Music Therapy https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/83323775554
Wednesday 20 January @ 2.00pm	David Barnett – London's first hotels https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/89014786552
Thursday 21 January @ 2.00pm	The Heritage Fund and Jewish cemeteries
Tuesday 26 January @ 2.00pm	AJR HMD event
Thursday 28 January	Jesse Adler – Stylish Science: from nylon to biosynthetics https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/89668018240

NATIONAL HMD CEREMONY 27 January AT 7pm

This year's National Holocaust Memorial Day ceremony will be like no other. To keep everyone safe, the HMD Trust, for the first time in the history of HMD, is organising a fully virtual ceremony, which will be streamed online from 7 – 8pm on 27 January 2021.

To join the event you need to sign up in advance on: hmdt.geteventaccess.com/registration Please feel free to share this link widely, to have as many people as possible watching the national ceremony.



EVER RIGHTEOUS

An agreement for the Righteous Gentiles Fund has been signed between the Claims Conference and the German government.

The term Righteous Gentiles, or Righteous Among the Nations, refers to those people who saved Jews during the Shoah. In 1963 the Claims Conference created the first programme to support Righteous Gentiles in need and this new agreement guarantees ongoing payments

to these heroes. A spokesperson for the German government said "In this way, Germany can express its appreciation for the rescuers who, with their selfless and courageous behaviour in times of greatest moral darkness, carried the light of humanity."

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THE ASSOCIATION AT WORK

WORLD COUNCIL OF JEWS FROM GERMANY

RABBI DR. BAECK PRESIDENT

When it became evident that many problems of Jews from Germany must be solved on an international basis, the organisations of Jewish refugees and immigrants in the various countries decided on a closer co-operation.

At the beginning of 1945 the three leading refugee organisations in Great Britain, the United States and Palestine formed the "Council for the Protection of Rights and Interests of Jews from Germany," and in the course of the year organisations in other countries joined the Council.

During the stay in this country of two representatives of the Irgun Oley Merkaz Europa, Palestine, agreement was reached to establish a permanent Executive in London. All who took part in the negotiations were of the opinion that there was only one man qualified to head the former leader of German Jewry and the most outstanding personality in our midst. Dr. Baeck has kindly accepted the presidency. The founder organisations in Great Britain, America and Palestine have each nominated two personalities residing in London to represent them on the Executive of the Council. Mr. S. Adler-Rudel and Mr. W. Breslauer were appointed for America, Mr. K. Battsck for Palestine (a second representative to be nominated later), Mr. A. Schoyer and Mr. K. Alexander for Great Britain. The Secretariat of the Council is that of the Association of Jewish Refugees in Great Britain.

The Council at present consists of the following organisations:

American Federation of Jews from Central Europe, New York.

German Jewish Representative Committee (affiliated with the World Jewish Congress), New York.

Irgun Oley Merkaz Europa, Tel Aviv.

Association of Jewish Refugees in Great Britain, London.

Comité des Réfugiés Juifs, Paris.

Comité Israélite des Réfugiés, Brussels.

Association of New Citizens, Sydney.

Asociacion Democrática de Refugiados Hebreos, Habana.

Comite Uruguayo Pro Israelitas de Europa, Montevideo.

Comite Representativo dos Interesses dos Judeus Alemães no Brasil, Rio de Janeiro.

Some other organisations have expressed their wish to join the Council; their decision is expected in the near future.

The Council will deal with all problems which concern the Jews from Germany as a whole. Among them the restitution problem will occupy the first place and a number of steps have already been taken in this respect. The member organisations will continuously be kept informed about the work of the Council.

AJR CONCERT

The audience of the by now almost traditional A.J.R. Concert filled the Phoenix Theatre to capacity on November 18th. Dr. F. Berend again conducted his "International Chamber Orchestra," an ever-improving body of players—most of them like their fine leader Norbert Brainin, Jewish refugees

—who have by now reached a high standard of proficiency. After a delightful rendering of Handel's Concerto Grosso No. 4, the cleverly selected works by Mozart, Liszt and Schubert were equally well interpreted. Mrs. Sabine Meyen-Jessel sang two Mozart arias. Her warm soprano lent itself especially to the second one, from "Il Re Pastore." To listen to Franz Osborn was, as always, a real unimpaired joy; the great pianist played Beethoven's "Moonlight Sonata" and made one discover new beauties in this well-known work. After the interval he was the soloist in Liszt's "Malediction" for piano and string instruments, the first performance in this country of the vivacious work, again interpreted to perfection by Osborn.

Mr. K. Alexander, in a short address, stressed the special character of these concerts and put forward a strong appeal for the active interest of the members and friends of the Association.

AJR WELCOME EX-SERVICEMEN

The Association of Jewish Refugees, since their inception in 1941, have regarded it as one of their foremost duties to keep contact with refugees serving with H.M. Forces and to give them guidance, help, and advice whenever needed and wherever possible. In this way refugee soldiers have never lost sight of Jewish affairs generally and of the Jewish refugee community as a whole. In return, they have taken an active part in the work of the AJR. From the beginning, serving soldiers and fathers of serving soldiers have been members of our Board, and there has hardly been any Board meeting without a proper discussion of the problems and the specific situation of the refugees in the Forces.

Now that demobilisation is progressing, the AJR are putting their existing facilities at the disposal of those returning to civilian life: to commerce, to industry, to the professions. Many are newcomers to "Civvy Street," and it would be foolish to deny that there are certain difficulties and obstacles to overcome.

The AJR, having gained sufficient experience through their consulting hours and in making use of the expert knowledge of a number of advisers, will therefore gladly extend their services to those who either re-enter civilian life or have to make their first acquaintance with conditions which are entirely different from those of a soldier. Besides our daily Consulting Hours (10 a.m.-1 p.m.; 3-6 p.m.; Sunday, 10 a.m.-1 p.m.), these will be chiefly our Economic and Career's Advice Hours (Tuesday, 6 p.m., or by appointment) to deal with the special problems of the demobilised soldier. In addition, our Legal Advice Hours (Wednesday 5-6.30 p.m.; Sunday 10 a.m.-1 p.m.) will in many cases prove helpful. In the provinces, our representatives are ready to give advice either direct or to obtain the necessary information from our London Head Office.

West Riding. Refugees—especially those returning from H.M. Forces or leaving war work—who find difficulties in getting suitable employment through the ordinary channels may communicate by letter for advice to Mr. H. Altman, c/o Kangoltex Ltd., 8, Duke Street, Bradford, or one of the officers of the local groups.

Censorship Work in Germany.—Persons who are interested in joining the Civil Censorship Division of the United States Army can obtain all necessary information from: Headquarters, Civil Censorship Division, U.K. Branch, United States Forces, European Theatre, John L. Lewis Building, Old Cavendish Street, London, W.1. Telephone: REGent 8484, Ext. 119.

Solidarity

A friend of the AJR, who has been a British national for forty years, but had lived in Germany and immigrated to this country only in 1939, sent the following letter to the AJR:—

"You have hitherto been kind enough to enclose my name in the list of friends of your Association. I am writing to ask you to take my name off this list and to include it in that of your members. This is not only a token of my appreciation of the work of your Association. I think that now that refugees are about to be naturalized it should not happen that those who are fortunate enough to attain British nationality should for this reason cease to be members of the Association. Even if all members were to become British subjects the solidarity with those less fortunate refugees on the Continent would provide work for the Association for at least another generation and all who have been living on the Continent and are now sheltered in this country should not cease to do their utmost to sustain those left behind.

"It is for this reason that I wish to belong to your Association and herewith apply for membership."

AJR HEAD OFFICE ANNOUNCE:

The publication of "AJR INFORMATION" involves some changes in our administrative work for which we hope to obtain the understanding and help of all our friends.

1. **MEMBERSHIP FEE.**—Whilst up to now individual reminders regarding contributions were sent out together with our Circulars, it is not possible to enclose such notifications to this News Bulletin. Every reminder would therefore cause additional cost for postage and material. Will our members please pay their contributions when due without a special reminder.

2. **CHANGE OF ADDRESS.**—In order to ensure that "AJR INFORMATION" reaches you without delay, would you please advise us immediately of any change of address. In case the address stated on the cover of this paper is incorrect, please inform us at once. Members registered with us under their business address should, if possible, also give us their private address.

3. **AJR ANNOUNCEMENTS.**—Special attention is drawn to our column "AJR Meetings," announcing gatherings in London and in the Provinces. As a rule, from now on, no further individual invitations will be sent out.

4. **ADVERTISEMENTS.**—We are sure that our members and friends will gladly avail themselves of the advertising facilities offered by "AJR Information" such as:—Family Events (Births, Engagements, Marriages, Jubilees, Deaths); Situations (vacant and required); Accommodation (vacant and wanted); Inquiries regarding the whereabouts of relatives and friends on the Continent as well as in this country and overseas; Commercial Advertisements, etc.

Further particulars may be obtained from the AJR Head Office. The advertisements should be submitted by the 15th of each month.

Continued from page 5

British and the other a non-British ex-serviceman, the former will be given preference. They are, moreover, barred from taking up a career in the Civil Service and, from what one learns, they find it difficult to obtain permission to set up independent business or to work as "Free Lance"—artists, musicians, etc. They hope that the day may not be far when discrimination will disappear and, in addition to the laurels they earned while serving for the Crown, refugee soldiers will be received as citizens of a country for which they fought. **MILES.**

ACTIVITIES

In London and in the Provinces.

Whilst a considerable proportion of our members are living in London, permanent contacts have also been established with the Provinces and, wherever possible, local groups have been formed or keymen been appointed. The A.J.R. is now represented at: Bath, Bedford, Birmingham, Bishop Auckland, Blackburn, Bradford, Cambridge, Cheltenham, Cirencester, Epsom, Farnham, Glasgow, Guildford, Harrogate, Leeds, Leicester, Letchworth, Liverpool, Manchester, Newcastle-on-Tyne, Northampton, Nottingham, Oxford, Reading, Sheffield, Shrewsbury, Stoke-on-Trent. Delegates from these centres attend our quarterly Board Meetings held in London.

At local meetings reports on refugee problems and the work of the A.J.R. are given. In addition, many groups are carrying out other activities; they arrange lectures, concerts and social gatherings. At some places a regular club life has started.

In London, where members and friends receive information and advice on their problems at our Head Office, several overcrowded meetings took place during recent months. In addition to these meetings for all members in Greater London, local gatherings are held in various districts such as Golders Green, Richmond, Ealing, Stamford Hill, Wembley and Croydon. Whilst, so far, invitations to these meetings have been sent out only to members in the district, announcements will, from now on, be published in these columns.

SOCIAL SERVICE DEPARTMENT.

Accommodation.

We are often in a position to advise on questions regarding accommodation. Any information on vacant rooms and flats, both furnished and unfurnished, is welcome.

Reading material for Refugees in H.M. Forces.

Please let us have more magazines, illustrated papers, and periodicals ("Aufbau," "Jewish Chronicle," "Zionist Review," etc.). In this respect, your help is particularly appreciated.

A.J.R. MEETINGS IN JANUARY

Saturday, Jan. 5, Nottingham. International Centre, Victoria Street: Dr. WERNER ROSENSTOCK: "Work for Refugees."

Sunday, Jan. 6, Cambridge. Synagogue Hall, 4 p.m. LOUIS W. BONDY: "The Foreigner in England."

Sunday, Jan. 13, Glasgow. Club premises: 11, Abbotsford Place, Glasgow C. 5. 6 p.m. Skat Tournament.

Wednesday, Jan. 16, Oxford. Church Hall, 55, Philipp and James, Leckford Road, off Woodstock Road, North Oxford (Bus No. 4), 7 p.m.; Rabbi Dr. J. MAYBAUM, series of lectures "Die Neueste Geschichte des Judentums."

Sunday, Jan. 20, Glasgow. 5 p.m. Mr. N. Korn will report on his visit to Holland. (Club premises.)

Saturday, Jan. 26, Glasgow. 7 p.m. Jewish Institute. Dance. Tickets 3/6, obtainable at club premises (not at the door).

SITUATIONS WANTED

Experienced Dental Nurse Receptionist wants position. References available. Box 301.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

REPARATIONS FOR GERMAN AND STATELESS JEWS DEMANDED.

A request that a certain percentage of the reparations exacted from Germany should be set aside for the partial compensation of damages suffered by German, stateless and non-repatriable Jews under the Nazi regime has been presented to Mr. James F. Byrnes, Secretary of State, by the American Jewish Committee.

In a letter signed by Mr. Jacob Blaustein, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the A.J.C., it was suggested that the claims of Axis nationals, stateless or non-repatriable persons who have been expropriated on the grounds of racial discrimination should be represented by a United Nations' Trusteeship on Indemnification and that German and stateless Jews should have a right to claim compensation from this Trusteeship, just as other sufferers can present their claims to their own Governments.

AUSTRIA'S INDUSTRIES STILL IN NAZI HANDS

Seventy per cent of the food stores in Austria and at least 80 per cent of the clothing industry is still in the hands of former Nazis, according to Mr. Aaron Ehrlich, President of the Jewish Chamber of Commerce in Vienna.

Mr. Ehrlich said that Jewish survivors of the concentration camps are still unable to establish any industry or engage in trade because they are being denied licences by the various associations. He also pointed out that Nazis are occupying luxurious apartments, while Jews and other repatriated deportees and former camp victims are unable to secure accommodation.

Chancellor Dr. Karl Renner promised that Nazis will be eliminated from leading positions in industry and trade.

LIECHTENSTEIN — ASYLUM FOR JEWISH REFUGEES

The small land of Liechtenstein, cramped between Austria and Switzerland, has since 1933 admitted 120 Jewish refugees. "Jews," it is pointed out in a recent letter to the Editor of the Manchester Guardian, "owe a special gratitude to the Principality of Liechtenstein, which in relation to her smallness gave sanctuary to more Jews than any other country in the world, with the exception of Palestine." Liechtenstein has a total population of 12,000 people.

ASSETS IN SWITZERLAND

Members and friends who have assets in Switzerland (banking accounts, life insurances, securities, etc.), which have been blocked by the Swiss Government as German property may communicate with the A.J.R. Head Office in London and state full particulars of their respective cases.

Missing Relatives

Marthe Herzog nee Greiner (appr. 1897 Budapest) deported from 5, Orgona Utca, Budapest to Camp Stuthof near Danzig. Enquirer: A. W. Heller, 205, Oakwood Lane, Leeds 8.

Theodor Schaechter (appr. 1910 Vienna), former barrister. Last known address: 12, Lanark Road, London, W.9. Enquirer: Ernest J. Kirby, Sydney, c/o A.J.R., 8, Fairfax Mansions, London, N.W.3.

POSTAL COMMUNICATIONS WITH THE CONTINENT.

Registered and unregistered letters, printed and commercial papers and telegrams to all countries of Europe, except Albania, Austria and Germany.

Air mail services to all Europe except Albania, Austria and Germany. Postage rates: letters, 5d. for the first ounce and 3d. for each succeeding ounce; postcards, 2½d.

Parcels up to 22lb. in weight to Belgium, Cyprus, Denmark, Faroe Islands, Finland, France (including Andorra, Corsica and Monaco) Gibraltar, Iceland, Luxemburg, Malta, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Spain (inc. the Balearic Islands), Sweden, Switzerland and Turkey. Gift parcels of worn clothing to all countries with which postal communications exist without a Board of Trade License, if the total value of the parcel does not exceed £5.

Far East: Air Mail letters to Shanghai and the rest of China (excluding Manchuria), 1s. 6d. per ¼ ounce; also Air Letters, 6d.

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