



Rachel Holder (Lubin)
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Rachel Holders Story (nee Lubin)

I was 3 years old when war broke out in Poland. It was terrible!! I saw the army and even Adolf Hitler knocking houses down and taking people away. The shops were all shut and reopened only one hour a day as people were too frightened to go outside. All the Jews were taken and burned. I did not go to school and my parents were scared that something bad would happen to me. My mother and Father somehow managed to get out and went to Russia, later my sister and I joined them and went on a carriage ridden by horses to Russia. where we were safe.

Five years later when the war had ended, and all returned to Poland but were sad to see that our house had been taken over by English people. But it was our house and we wanted them out.

My mother and Father went to England. When I was 12 my sister and I joined them. We went by boat with all the other Jewish girls and boys, but my parents were not happy about that. My friend helped us to find a home and the Rabbi made sure we got an education. I was sent to Manor House Deaf School, and I started to learn English and Sign Language, but I had a lot to catch up on and now my English is very limited.

I went to work in a wool factory at Baker Street, London spinning wool-making wool balls. Aged 20 I met my husband at the Jewish Deaf Association and married at 21. I have 2 daughters and a son, all hearing but we all communicated well as a family because we taught them sign language. In fact, one of my daughters is married to a teacher that you may know. Rabbi Kampf. I have 17 grandchildren and 11 great grandchildren.

Growing up we went to synagogue regularly, but I couldn't understand what was going on, so my mother translated for me until her death when I was 65. I still go to the same synagogue today. After my husband died which was when I was in my early 70's I started to get eye problems and Moorfields diagnosed me with Usher Syndrome which is deafness combined with a gradual loss of sight. My eyesight is now nil, and I am registered as Deaf/Blind.