

A PLACE TO STAY

BRITISH PASSPORT



**UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN
AND NORTHERN IRELAND**

**MEMORIES OF PENSIONERS
FROM MANY LANDS**

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MEMORIES OF PENSIONERS FROM MANY LANDS

COMPILED BY AGE EXCHANGE THEATRE COMPANY

Edited by Pam Schweitzer Photography by Alex Schweitzer

This book has been researched with pensioners from the West Indies, India, the Far East, Cyprus, Poland and Italy. In their own words, contributors recall their homelands, their arrival in Britain, settling in London and their varied experience here. In all cases, stories appear in the original language as well as English.

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Stories are anonymous, at the request of contributors, but there is a language and gender key, as follows:

It = Italian GJ = Gujerati G = Greek P = Polish T = Turkish

Pj = Punjabi Ch = Chinese H = Hindi M = man W = woman

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For all their help and advice with this project, Age Exchange would like to thank:

Jenny Longford of Thameside Adult Education Institute. Elli Wong and Joseph Li from the Chinese Welfare Project, Limehouse. Raj Bhojraz, Andrea Busette, Urmil Sardana, Rose Savinson, Sabiha Shazaar from Greenwich Council for Racial Equality. Teatro Technis Community Centre. Pansy Jeffries and the Peppercot Lunch Club. Martha Brown and the Calabash Club. Lee Samuel and the Carib Housing Association. Mrs. Lin, Ivy and Ivy Lo from Camden Social Services. Hackney Asian Centre. Turkish Education Group. V. Gohill and British Asian Theatre for loan of musical instruments. Criton Tomazos for translation. Helena Platt for help with artwork and layout. Special thanks to Peg Graham for typing all the material.

INTRODUCTION

We all came for four or five years, but the time went on so fast, we just didn't think, until we end up doing twenty-five, thirty years instead of five. Now we're here to stay. Where people had sold out their little holdings, they didn't have anywhere to go back to. They remained here continually trying to work to see how much they could accumulate to go back and start setting themselves up again. But time run out, y'see. They're still here and without anything accumulated to go back. So it's much better for them to stay where they are. Some are really prepared to stay. Others are compelled to stay and they accept it. "I have to stay — well, I must be satisfied".

I think our policy makers too have just realised what is happening. They too didn't realise that in time it would go on as it goes and that so many people would be here. So of course they are just beginning to take some notice or trying to see what can be done to make these people happy so they can enjoy their old age.

I don't think we exactly want something different. There are little bits of our cultural background we would like to keep as elderly people and enjoy. We would like more of us to be together, so that sometimes, if we go out to the park, we can sit together and talk together of old times. I think that would make us happy. I would like to see what I call clusters. Really you know, I don't want us to be isolated from other elderlies, but if we have two lots of Caribbean homes together, then houses for other elderlies, and then another couple of Caribbean houses further on. My main concern is that we should not be separated from the people of our cultural background. We want some others to be there. We want to speak of old times. We may even sing some of our old songs. We may remember the days that were spent at home, the moonshine nights we sat under a tree or in a big yard and sang together. Our elderly people at home did that too. They were happy. I think the outdoor life helps elderly people to survive and be happy.

As you go along in this environment today, you find elderly people you would like to talk to, but they look as if they've got the world on their shoulders so you're even

afraid to approach them. We really want to be more together, more united, because old age should not have us isolated, old age should not bring us to the point where we are forgotten. Some elderly we don't even know where they are. Perhaps to draw them out of their loneliness we should have people of their own background in touch, making a survey if we have to, visiting house to house and letting them realise we are not coming to push them away into almshouses or places like that, but wanting to make friends with them. I look at it this way; whatever is being done, there should be people of their background to approach them. That is important because I believe they would give such people more confidence.

I think a lot of young people are interested, and I think we could get them involved too, because whatever happens they'd be very good; they're strong, they have the energy to get around.

We all have loneliness, but thinking of old people of the Caribbean, this loneliness is new to them. Old people welcome a visitor, and for that reason, back home we would always remember that Granny Margaret lives next door and it would always be my duty to send my children over to see how she is getting on, and she welcomed them. Here nobody wants to know. Everybody is too busy looking after their own business and the elderly then remain on their own, until it forms a part of their life.

There's barriers between old and young, there's barriers between neighbours and neighbours, there's barriers between old and old. This country is full of barriers. This country is full of people who are in pain and longing. If we break down our own barriers, because we too can be isolated, then maybe we can help somebody else. We are short of places to meet. We want more of such places. Some people will want to be together with people of their own kind; some will prefer to be mixed. People will want to know they are welcome to visit these places. People shut themselves in and decide to stay in. Sometimes it's despondency. We have to have a future of using whatever we've got as long as we are here. Life is worth living. We can be cheerful.

MRS MABEL CARTER

CYPRUS



The reason I came to England was that my Father died and my Mother had to work. In the end I decided that I must go out to work. It wasn't right for my mother to work so hard and earn so little money. My brother was already here so I wrote to him and he had an invitation made out to me to come to England. When I came, I came to work and stay.

I don't know what I expected England to be like because I knew nothing about it. But once here I didn't find it strange at all, I liked it. Now I regard it as my home.

When I first came I stayed with an English family who were very kind. They taught me a few words like "scissors", "thimble", "needle". They knew I was going to start dressmaking. "Yes", "Thank you", they taught me a few words.

My first job was dressmaking. A relative introduced me to the factory. I was a dressmaker, but I didn't know how to use the electric machine. The boss wanted work not chatting.

If the boss ever wanted to tell me anything, he would have to do it through an interpreter.

One day he wanted me to work on a Saturday because he needed the work, so he told another Cypriot woman, who understood English, to tell me. Well she didn't, so of course I didn't know. The following Monday I went to work and he started to shout at me in English. Well, I didn't understand what he was saying, so I started to cry and left. I went to Charlotte Street where there was a grocer whom I knew. I asked him to please come and see what this man wanted and why he was shouting at me. I was frightened you see in case he gave me the sack and,

without the language, where would I find another job?

The man came with me and sorted out what was happening. As it turned out the woman didn't tell me, so I couldn't come to work if I didn't know.

After that little mishap the boss and I got on quite well, because you see I can't work and talk, so I only worked.

During the war I was making government surplus clothes, trousers and jackets. I was sewing a brown piece of paper, triangular in shape, covered in a solution which melted the pads of your finger. It was for the soldiers to put on their cuffs, so that if the Germans dropped the gas it would change colour.

We would make one hundred pieces for two shillings.

They used to have buckets of liquid so we could soak our fingers to try and heal them. I worked there for a long time. We used to earn £1/10 shillings a week.

I remember one year it snowed so much, the snow turned into slush, that was difficult. I used to go to work with a hot water bottle on my stomach.

During the war we used to sleep in the Underground.

After doing this for some time, we decided to go to Wales.

They were dropping bombs, flying bombs. When the planes came the tail of the planes were red, when the tail turned black you knew they were going to drop the bombs. After that they said they were going to drop a silent bomb. That's when I said to my husband "It's time we left this place, for about a year. Then we can see what's going to happen. Otherwise, as we sleep, we could find ourselves dead."

Η αιτία που ήρτα στην Αγγλία ήταν επειδή επέθανε ο τζόρης μου τζαι η μάννα μου έπρεπε να δουλέψει. Στο τέλος αποφάσισα πως πρέπει να βγω έξω να δουλέψω, εν ήταν σωστό να δουλέψει η μάννα μου τόσο σκληρά τζαι να κερτίζει τόσα λλά ριάλια. Ο αφός μου ήταν ήδη άμεσα τζέτσι έγγραφα του τζ'έκαμεν μου μίαν πρόσκληση για νάρτω στην Αγγλία. Άμα ήρτα, ήρτα για να δουλέψω τζαι να μείνω.

Εν ήξερω τι περίμενα να ήταν η Αγγλία, γιατί εν έξερα τίποτε για αυτήν. Μα όταν ήρτα εν την ήβρα καθόλου παράξενη, άρεσέν μου. Τώρα θεωρώ την σκίτι μου, σαν πατρίδα.

Όταν πρωτοήρτα εμείνησα με μίαν Αγγλικήν οικογένειαν, που ήταν πολύ ευγενικοί. Με μάθαν μερικές λέξεις, όπως φαλίδι, δακτυλίστρα, βελόνα - ήξεραν πως θάρκεφα ράφιμον. "Ναι, Ευχαριστώ" - μ'έμαθαν μερικές λέξεις. Η πρώτη μου δουλειά ήταν ράφιμο φουστανιών. Ένας συγγενής μ'επήρε στο φάκτορη, ήμουν ράφτινα φουστανιών, αλλά δεν ήξερα πως να χρησιμοποιήσω την ηλεκτρική μηχανή. Ο μάστρος έθελεν δουλειάν, ότ κουβέντες. Αν έθελεν ο μάστρος να μου πει τίποτε, έπρεπε να το πει μέσον του μεταφραστή.

Μια ημέραν έθελέν με να δουλέψω το Σάββατον, επειδή εχρειάζετον την δουλειάν, έτσι είπεν σε μίαν άλλην Κυπραίαν που έξερεν Εγγλέζικα να μου πει. Λοικόν, εν μου είπεν έτσι εν έξερα. Την δευτέραν επή στην δουλειάν τζ'άρκεφεν να μου φωνάζει στα Εγγλέζικα. Λοικόν, εγώ εν εκατάλαβα ήντα μου ελάλεν, άρκεφα να κλαίω τζ'έφωα. Επή στο Σιάρλοτ Στρήτ που ήταν ένας μπακάλης που έξερα, τον παρακάλεσα νάρτη να δει τι ήθελεν τοτός ο άνθρωπος τζαι γιατί εφώναζεν μου.

Εφοήθηκα, όπως καταλαβαίνεις μήπως με απολύσει τζαι, χωρίς τη γλώσσα, που νάρρω άλλην δουλειάν;

Ο άνθρωπος ήρτεν μαζί μου τζ'εξήγησεν μου τι έγινεν. Όπως έγινεν η γυναίκα δεν μου είπεν, έτσι εν εμπορούσα νάρτω στην δουλειάν αφού δεν ήξερα.

Ύστερα που τον'το μικροπεισόδιον ο μάστρος τζ'εγώ εσυνεννοούμασεν πολύ καλά, επειδή βλέπεις δεν μπορώ να δουλέψω τζαι να μιλώ, έτσι εδόλεφα μόνον. Μέσ'στον πόλεμον έραφα κυβερνητικά ρούχα για περίσσευμα, παντελόνια και σάκκους. Έραφα ένα κομμάτι χερτίν καφετί, σχήμα τρίγωνον, σκεπασμένο με μίαν χημικήν ουσίαν που έλυωνε το δέρμα του δακτυλιού σου. Ήταν για τους στρατιώτες, να βάλλουν στα μανικέττα τους, ώστε αν οι Γερμανοί έριβκαν το γκάτσι ν'αλλάσει το χρώμα.

Εκάμαμεν εκατόν κομμάκια για όκυδ σελίνια.

Εχρησιμοποίησαν σίκλες με υγρόν για να βρέχουμεν τα δαχτύλια μας προσκαθώντας να τα γιάνουμεν, εδόλεφα τζειμέσα πολλύν τζαιρόν - εκαίρναμεν μίαν λέραν τζαι όεκα σελίνια την εφτομάδαν.

Θυμώμαι έναν χρόνον εισιδόνισεν τόσο πολλά που το σιδόνιν εγίνηκεν λάσπη - όσκολη χρονιά. Εσυνήθισα να πησίνω δουλειάν με μίαν θερμοφώραν στην τζοιλιάν μου.

Με την κατάσταση του πολέμου ετζοιμούμασεν μέσα στο άντεργκραουν. Μετά που εμείναμεν τζιαμέ γ'αρκετόν τζαιρόν, αποφάσισαμεν να πάμεν

στην Ουαλλίαν. Εσύρνασιν πόγκες με τ'αεροπλάνα, τζαι που ήρτασιν τ'αεροπλάνα η νουρά τους ήταν κότινη, τζαι μετά που η νουρά του έστρεφεν πίσω εξέραμεν πως ενάρτουσιν να σύρουσιν τες πόγκες. Μετά που μας είπαν ότι ενάρτουσιν να μας ξανακομπαρτίσουν με μίαν πόγκην που εν κάμνει κρότον τότε είπα στον άντρα μου, εντζαιρός που πρέπει να φύουμεν που τουν'τον τόπον για κανένα χρόνο. Τζαι τότε εν να δούμεν ήνταμκού να συμβεί, αλλιώς, σαν τζοιμούμασεν εν να βρεθόμεν σκοτωμένοι.

Επήμαμεν στο Κάρτιφ, κοντά στο λιμάνιν.

Τότε εν που είχα την ιδέα να ανοίξω καθαριστήριο, γιατί όλλοι οι αξιωματικοί τζαι οι στρατιώτες έρχονται δαμά τζαι χρειάζουεν να καθαρίζουν τα ρούχα τους, να τα σιδερώνουμεν τζαι να τους τα μπαλώνουμεν. Μάνι - μάνι εβοήρησεν ο άντρας μου τζ'εγόρασεν μου μίαν μηχανή, έκαμεν μου τζ'έναν τραπέζιν τζ'εγόρασεν μου τζ'ένα σίδερο τζαι τοότε όλλα ήταν σ'ένα ύπόγειο φλάτ. Έβαλεν μίαν ταπέλλαν πόξω που το φλάτ τζαι έτσι αρκέφαμεν δουλειάν. Οι στρατιώτες ερχόντασιν τζαι η δουλειά επήαινεν μια χαρά. Όλλοι οι Κυπριοί που εφάσιν που το Λονδόνιν εσυναντηθήκαμεν στο Κάρτιφ. Εκάμαμεν ένα μικρό καφενέον τζαι εσυναντιούμασιν όλλοι επαίξαμεν όσικούς τζ'ερίμασεν ευκαριστημένοι. Πραγματικά ήμουν εφκαριστημένη στο Κάρτιφ.

Κοντά στο καφενέον μας ήταν τζαι κάτι Έλληνες που την Ελλάδα - εκάμαμεν μίαν συμφωνίαν τζ'έτσι εκάμαμεν ένα πιο μεγάλο καφενέον με μουσική και καφέ, εκερνούσαμεν την ώραν μας θαυμάσια, σαν να ήμασεν στην Κύπρον.



We went to Cardiff, near the harbour.

That's when I had an idea about opening a Dry Cleaners, because all the officers and soldiers came here, and they would need their clothes cleaned, ironed and maybe some alterations. Quickly, my husband went and bought me a sewing machine. He made a table and bought an iron. This was all in a ground floor flat. He put a sign outside and we were ready to start.

The soldiers came and the work was plentiful.

All the Greek Cypriots who left London met up in Cardiff. We made a little cafe where we would all gather, play records and enjoy ourselves. I really enjoyed myself at Cardiff.

Near our Cafe there were some Greeks from Greece; we made an arrangement with them and set up a bigger Cafe with music and coffee. We passed away our time wonderfully just as if we were in Cyprus.

The Captains used to come to us, so I could change their stripes.

I used to ask them "When do you want them back?" They used to reply "Not tomorrow, the day after." I used to write on a ticket, "Must be ready for Wednesday." All sorts of things, I used to do, turn up hems on trousers, turn the collars round and cuffs. My husband used to iron the trousers, also use a liquid to take marks off, with of course the baby next to us in the pram.

I used to be embarrassed to charge a lot. They would ask me "How much?" "Ten shillings? Is that all right?" I would ask. "Oh yes, dear" they replied. My husband would say, "Charge them a bit more if they find it cheap." I couldn't, it was such an easy job, I couldn't charge them more. They used to pay me ten shillings and also drop five shillings in the baby's pram.

My husband and I got on very well, but he met another woman, she won him over, so he went off with her, and left me with the baby. Then I had a lot of problems.

I somehow knew what to do. I am the one who got things going for the divorce on my own with no one to help me.

When you love your husband, and he goes off and leaves you with the baby what are you to do? But somehow with God's help, my child went to school, I worked, he became an educated man and he is in Africa at the moment working.

I make do with what I get.

I went to visit Cyprus and enjoyed it a lot, my Mother was also very pleased but, after about a month I started to get homesick, for England. "My God," my Mother would cry "This is your home, tell me what does England do to you that you want to rush over there?"

I knew that over here I could work, earn money, set myself up and dress in nice clothes, I didn't want to stay in Cyprus.

Life in Cyprus has changed, it's become worse than in England. They used to put England down, but I am afraid they've got worse. Before, a girl would never go out with a boy walking along the street, but now they do, and the Mother sees and doesn't say anything.

Now I would be happy to go back to Cyprus for a holiday, but to stay, "No".

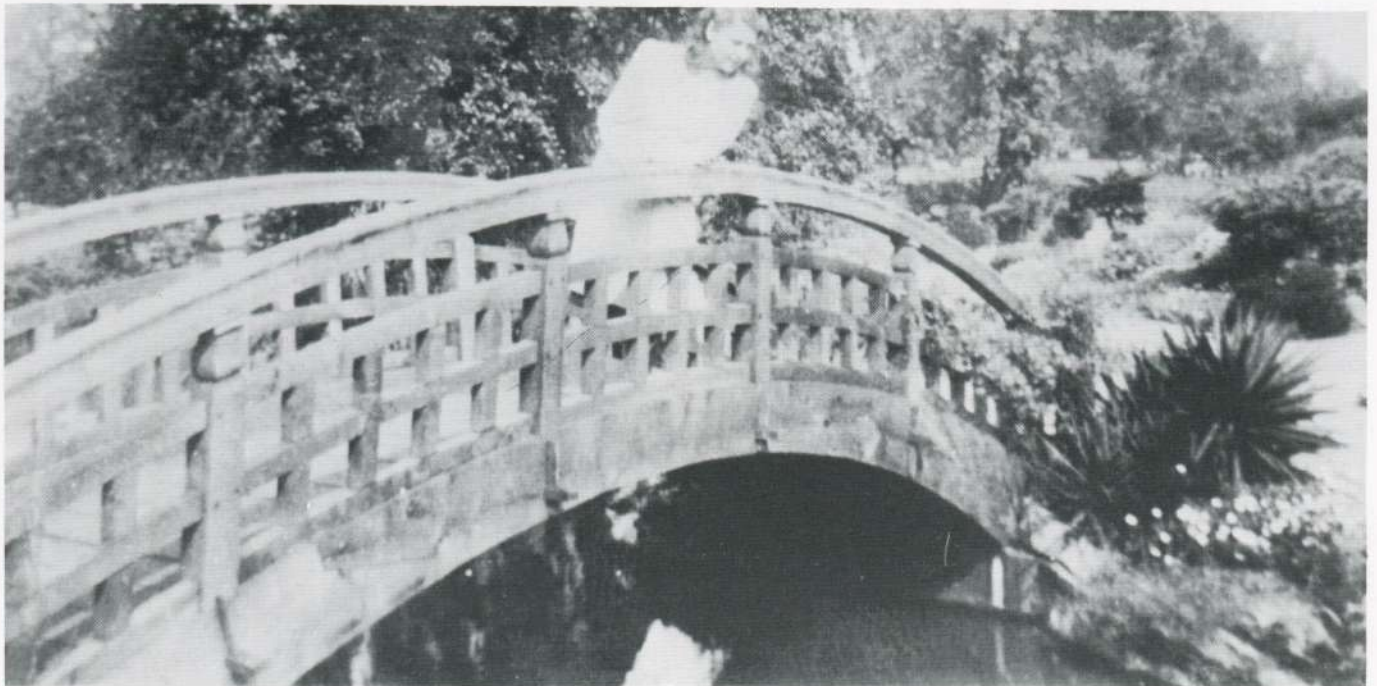
The only thing I want is a telephone, they won't put me in a telephone. I made an application years ago, and still I don't have one.

I live on my own, if something happens to me no one will know, and I could die. The other day when something was wrong with me, if my friend had not come round to see me, something terrible could have happened. I could have died and rotted here and no one would have found me.

They say that I am all right, that I am not ill. Are they waiting for me to become ill, and shouting from my window for help before they do anything? Why shouldn't they help me? I've been in this country for so many years, why, why?

I want to go on holiday, my bones are so stiff.

I miss my son, when Easter or Christmas comes, and I am on my own . . . now if my son was here, I think I would be the luckiest woman. I wouldn't care if I didn't have anything else, so long as I had my son near.



Οι καπετάνιοι ερκοδντασιν σε μας, έτσι τζ'εμείς αλλάσσαμεν τες γραμμές. Ερώτων τους πότε τα θέλουν πίσω, τζαι απαντούσαν μου πίσω "ότ' σήμερα, αύριον". Έγραφα πάνω σ' ένα χαρτί "εν νάνει έτοιμα την Τετάρτην." Έκαμα που ούλλα τα πραματα, εγύριζα τα μαντίτζια, τα ποινάρκα, τα κολλάρα μπροστά τζαι πίσω, τζαι ο άντρας μου εισιόρωννεν τα παντελόνια, τζαι έβαλλεν τζαι έναν υγρόν πάνω για να βκαίνουν οι πογιές, φυσικά τζαι το μωρόν μας ήταν πάντα όπλα μας μέσα στην κούνια του.

Εντρέκομον πολλά να τους τσιερτσιάρω πολλά, αρωτούσαν με "πόσα κάμνει" "δέκα σελίνια" ελάλουν τους, "εν τάξει;" ελάλουν τους, "εν τάξει" ελαλούσαν μου. Ο άντρας μου ελάλεν μου να τους τσιερτσιάρω παραπάνω, γιατί ήμαστεν φτηνοί. Εν ημπορούσαν, ήταν τόσοον εύκολη η δουλειά. Εκληρώνασιν δέκα σελίνια τζ'εβάλλασιν τζαι πέντε σελίνια μέσ' στην αμαξοδν του μωρού.

Μαζί με τον άντραν μου εκερνούσαμεν πολλά καλά, αλλά έσιμειεν με άλλη γενναίκα τζαι έπιασεν τον κου μένα, άφησε με με το μωρό. Τότε είχα πολλά προβλήματα. Παράξενο, μα κατά κάποιο τρόπο ήξερα ήντα που έκρεπε να κάμω. Είμαι η πρώτη κου επήα μόνη μου για διαζόγιον τζαι κανέναν δεν με βοήθησεν.

Αμαν αγαπάς τον άντραν σου τζαι τζείνος πάει με άλλην γενναίκαν τζαι αφήνει σε μ' ένα μωρό, τι πρέπει να κάμεις, μα με την βοήθειαν του θεού το μωρό μου επήεν στο σκολεόν τζ'εγώ εδοδλεφκα, έτσι έγινε μορφωμένος άνθρωπος τζαι επήεν στην Αφρικήν δουλεύει τώρα τζει μέσα.

Επήα να εκισκεφτώ την Κύπρον, άρεσεν μου πολλά, άρεσεν της μάννας



μου τζαι ήταν εφτυχισμένη, αλλά μετά που ένα μήνα άρκεφα να κεθυμά να τυρίσω στην Αγγλία. Θεέ μου η μάννα μου έκλαιεν - "Τούστον εν το σκίτιν σου, εν μου λαλείς είνταμκου σου προσφέρει η Αγγλία τζαι θέλεις να φύεις τόσο γλήγορα;"

Ήξερα ότι στην Αγγλίαν εμπορούσα να δουλέψω, να κερδίσω ριόλια, να δημιουργήσω τον εαυτόν μου, να ντυθώ με όμορφα ρούχα. Δεν ήθελα να μείνω στην Κύπρο. Η ζωή στη Κύπρον άλλαξεν, έγινε σιηρότερη που την Αγγλία. Εβάλλασιν την Αγγλίαν πάντα δεύτερην, μα τζείνος ήταν σιηρότεροι. Πριν, μια κοπέλλα δεν εμπορούσεν να πάει έξω με κάποιον στον όρομον, αλλά τώρα κάμουν το. Η μάννα τους θωρεί τες τζαι εν τους λαλείς τίποτε. Τώρα είμαι πιο εφχαριστημένη να πάω στην Κύπρο για τα χόλιτεϋς μου, αλλά για να μείνω ποτέ. Το μόνο πράμα που θέλω είναι ένα τηλέφωνο, αλλά δεν θέλουν να μου βάλουν. Έκαμα μιαν αίτησιν χρόνια πίσω τζ' ακόμα περιμένω απάντηση.

Ζιώ μονισιή μου - αν συμβεί κάτι κανέναν δεν θα ξέρει τζ'εν να πεθάνω. Θυμούμαι προχτές που μου συνέβηκε κάτι. Εάν η φιλενάδα μου εν έρκετον να με δει, μπορούσε να μου συμβεί πολύ μεγάλο κακό. Εμπορούσα να πεθάνω τζαι να με θάψουν τζαι κανέναν να μην με δει.

Δαλούν μου πως είμαι εν τάξει, πως εν είμαι άρρωστη. Περιμένουσιν να αρρωστήσω, τζαι να φωνάζω που το παραθύριν μου πριν να κάμουςιν τίποτε τούτοι. Γιατί τούτοι εν με βοηθούν. Είμαι σε τούτην χώραν τόσο χρόνια - γιατί, γιατί.

Θέλω να πάω διακοπές, τα κόκαλά μου εν τόσοον σφιχτά.

Επεθύμησα τον γυιόν μου. Όταν τα Χριστογεννα τζαι το Πάσχαον έρκουνται τζαι είμαι μόνη μου, αλλά αν ο γυιός μου ήταν δαμαί, νομίζω θα ήμουν η ευτυχέστερη γυναίκα.

Εν θα μ'ένοιαζεν αν δεν είχα τίποτ' άλλο, όσο τζαιρόν θα είχα τον γυιό μου κοντέ.

I started school at seven years. At twelve years I went to a convent. After a year my Mother couldn't afford the payments so we made an arrangement that I would clean the school and that would do as payment.

But after a while I started to get tired, so I left at the age of fourteen.

I started work with a News Company as a projectionist. I cleaned, painted and did a bit of carpentry. I would start work at 5 a.m. and finish at 1 a.m. As a result I did nothing but work. I worked there until the day before I came to England. I had heard that the Government was looking for some people to go and work in Wales under contract.

We were sixty Greek girls. We left from Limassol in a small boat and made for Italy. As we were pulling away I got very tearful and wanted to go back.

They dropped us off at Italy to wait for the morning train to Calais.

While we were waiting in Italy we had to sleep on our suitcases in the Station.

We got quite thirsty and wanted water. I went up to an Italian and asked for "Neron, neron" and did the sign for drink, he replied "Agwar, agwar". In Greek agwar means to hear. He kept saying "Agwar agwar" I would reply "I can hear, I can hear. It's water we want". We somehow sorted it out.

In Wales I worked on a conveyor belt canning fruit. We were Spanish, Greeks, all races mixed.



The first time I saw snow was in Wales. I woke up in the dormitory, and I couldn't see out of the window, "Who's painted the windows?" Everyone gathered round the windows and one woman in a deep voice said "They should have a bad year, they've painted our windows, and we want air".

Because I had come to England under contract I was obliged to stay with the job until the contract finished. Then I would be sent home. I wanted to stay on. As time went on quite a few girls left, leaving only fourteen of us, so we fourteen decided to leave. There was an English man who owned a caravan who was willing to get us to London. I went straight to my brother's house.

Once I had arrived it wasn't anything as I expected. I was expecting to find educated English people like those I met when I was a child in Cyprus.

I saw a lot of strange things.

The first time I went to Regents Park I saw a man and woman naked, I was shocked, I panicked, I started shouting to my brother, "Come quickly, call the police, look at what they are doing". "Be quiet," my brother said. "This is how things are done now in England". And that's what I've stayed with.

My biggest problem started once I left my brother's house and moved in with a woman I worked with. I didn't know the language or dress making. I worked in various dress factories. By this time I was an illegal immigrant because I had broken the contract in Wales. The police eventually found me and sent me to an immigration office, where I was asked many questions.

"Why did I stay in England and not Canada, America, Australia?" I told her I liked the people and that I had a brother here also. She also asked what work I was doing and what I was doing with the money. I told her that I sent my Mother some and the rest I lived on, and that I had never asked the Government for anything.

She asked me to leave the details with her and that she would do what she could. Within twelve days she sent me a visa allowing me to stay, also work, do anything. The only thing is that if I go to Cyprus and stay over two years my visa will expire. Now I am a legal citizen, but the visa still applies.

I returned to Cyprus just after the War of 1976. Things have changed. Everyone has moved away, I couldn't eat because of all the suffering. It's a tragedy what has happened to Cyprus.

I want to go home but I have to wait and see what's going to happen to my health. I've got used to this place, but to stay forever? No. I miss my relatives.

When you live on your own, you get depressed. I like it when someone visits me, one of my friends, and we go to Oxford Street to have a Pizza. It is lovely. You can go out and enjoy yourself if you have someone with you, but on your own you get very lonely. If I was to leave England, I would miss my friends. I do and I don't want to go back.

Άρκεφα να πηγαίνω σχολείο στα επτά μου χρόνια τζαι στα δώδεκα μου χρόνια επή καλογρηές. Μετά που ένα χρόνο η μάνα μου εν εμπορούσε να πιερώσει τες πληρωμές, έτσι τζ'εγώ έπρεπε να καθαρίζω το σχολείο, τζιαί τοττή ήταν η πληρωμή. Μετά όμως που λλον τζιαιρόν άρκεφα να βαρκοθμαι, έτσι τζι'εγώ έφυα στα δεκατέσσερα μου χρόνια. Άρκεφα δουλειά με μιαν εταιρεία, το Νιούς, σαν το σινεμά. Εκαθάριζα, έβαφα, τζ'έκαμνα τζαι λίγη ξυλουργική. Άρκεφα στες μια η ώρα τζ'ετέλειωνα στες κέντε. Άλλον που δουλειάν τζαι τίποτε άλλον - έμεινα τζιαμαί ως την ημέραν που ήρτα στην Αγγλία. Άκουσα ότι η κυβέρνησις ζητά ανθρώπους να παν να δουλέφουν στη Ουαλλίαν με κοντράτον.

Είμαστε 60 Κυπραίες, εφύαμεν που την Λεμεσόν με μιαν μικρήν βάρκαν για την Ιταλίαν. Μόλις εφύκαμεν, έκλαια τζ'έθελα να επιστρέφω πίσω. Αφήκαν μας στην Ιταλίαν για να περιμένουμε το τραίνο, επάσαμε πάνω που τες βαλίτσες μας, περιμένοντας το τραίνο το πρώτ για το Καλαί, μέσα στον σταθμό. Εδίψούσαμε κολλά τζαι εδέλαμεν νερό. Επή σ'ένα Ιταλό τζαι του είπα "νερό, νερό" τζαι έδειξά του με νοήματα - μου απάντησα "άκουα, άκουα" στα ελληνικά άκουα σημαίνει άκουσε. Στο τέλος τα εκαταφέραμε. Στην Ουαλλία εδούλεφα μέσα σε φωτείες. Είμαστε Σπανιόλοι, Έλληνες, κολλές ράτσες νεκατωμένες. Εξόπνησα μέσα που το δωμάτιο που τζοιμούνται, έτσι δεν εμπορούσα να δω έξω που το παράθυρο. Ποιός εγογιάτισεν τα παράθυρα; Ούλλοι μας εμαζευτήκαμεν γυρόν που τα παράθυρα τζαι μια γυναίκα με χοντρή φωνή μας είπε: "Εν νάχουσιν άσιμηον τζαιρόν, εβάσασιν τα παραθύρκα μας χρειάζουμασεν αέραν". Επειδή ήρτα στην Αγγλίαν με κοντράτον έπρεπεν να μείνω στην δουλειάν μέχρι που να τελειώσι το κοντράτον, αλλιώς θα μας εστέλλαν πίσω. Ήθελα να μείνω στην Αγγλίαν. Με τον



τζαιρόν εφάσιν μερικές, αφήνοντας μας μόνο 14 κοπέλλες, έτσι αποφασίσαμεν τζαι οι δεκατέσσερις να φύουμεν. Ήταν ένας Εγγλέζος που είχεν ένα καραβάνι τζ'επροθυμοποιήθηκεν να μας φέρει στο Δουβλίνο. Επή κατ'ευθείαν στο σπίτι του αδελφού μου.

Μόλις έφτασα τα πράματα δεν ήταν τα ίδια όπως τα επερίμενα. Επερίμενα να δω μορφωμένους Εγγλέζους, τους ίδιους που εσυνάντησα στην Κύπρο όταν ήμουν μτσιά. Είδα κολλά παράξενα πράματα.

Όταν επή για πρώτη φορά στο Χάιντ Πάρκ, είδα τίτσιρους μια γυναίκα τζαι έναν άνθρωπον, εξαφνιάστηκα, εφοθήκηκα, τζαι άρκεφα να φωνάζω του αρφού μου: "Έλα γλήορα τζαι φώναζε της αστυνομίας, μα δε είντα μπου κάμνουςι" "Σιωπή", λαλεί μου ο αρφός μου. "Τούντα πράματα γινήσκονται μέσ'στην Αγγλία" τζ'έτσι εσυνήθισά τα.

Το μεγαλύτερο πρόβλημα άρχισε όταν έφυα που το σπίτι του αρφού μου τζαι εμετακόμισα με μιά γυναίκα που εδουλεύκαμε μαζί.

Εν ήξερα την γλώσσα ή να ράφκω. Εδούλεφα σε κολλά φάκτορς. Τούντη στιγμήν ήμουν μια παράνομη, γιατί έσπασα το κοντράτο μου στην Ουαλλία. Η αστυνομία τελικά με ανακάλυψε τζ'εστείλαμεν στο Ίμικρέισιον όπου εκάμαν μου μερικές ερωτήσεις. Γιατί εμείνισκα στην Αγγλίαν τζι δι στον Καναδάν, Αμερικην, Αυστραλίαν. Είπα της "αρέσκουν μου τα πλάσματα τζ'έχω τζαι τον αρφόν μου δαμέσα." Ερώτησε με ν'αφήσω όλες τες λεπτομέρειες μαζί της τζαι θα προσκαθήσει να κάμει ότι μπορεί. Μέσα σε 12 μέρες έστειλεν μου την βίζαν, να μπορώ να μείνω, να δουλέφκω, να κάμνω ότι θέλω. Το μόνο πράμα είναι ότι αν πάω στην Κύπρο τζαι μείνω παραπάνω που όκιο χρόνια, η βίζα μου εν να τελειώσει. Τώρα είμαι νόμιμα, αλλά η βίζα μου χρειάζεται ενανέωση. Επή στην Κύπρο πριν το πόλεμο το 1974. Τα πράματα αλλάξασιν, ο καθένας έφυεν, δεν μπορούσα να φάω που την στενοχώρια μου. Είναι μια τραγωδία το ότι συνέβηκε στην Κύπρο.

Ήθελα να πάω στην Κύπρο, αλλά έθελα να δω την υγιειν μου πρώτα. Εσυνήθισα τοττον τον τόπον, αλλά για να μείνω πάντα, δι. Επεθύμησα τους συγγενείς μου.

Όταν μεινίσκεις μόνη σου, στενοχωρηέσαι. Αρέσκει μου όταν κάποιος με επισκέφτεται, ένας φίλος μου, τζαι πάμεν στο Όξφορντ Στρήτ για να φάμε μια πίτσα. Εν όμορφα. Μπορείς να πας έξω τζαι ν'απολαύσις τον εαυτόν σου, αλλά μόνη σου αισθάνεσαι τέλεια μόνη. Αν φύω που την Αγγλία εν να πεθυμήσω τους φίλους μου, ναί, γιαιυτό εδ θέλω να πάω πίσω.

G W

My Mother died when I was three years old, my Father was a shepherd in Cyprus. I went to school when I was seven years old and left when I was ten years old.

I started work with my Father looking after the animals. He didn't have any aspirations for me because it was the done thing to go and help with the job your parents are doing.

I came here, after I married, with my husband. He had visited England twice before.

I thought England would be different. What I really liked were the parks where the children played.

The first year we arrived it was very cold. We weren't used to the cold. We lived in one room, we used to light the paraffin heater and huddle round it.

I never used to go out because my youngest was only three years old and my husband didn't want me to give her to a minder, so I could go out to work. As a result I never went out.

The first house we lived in was in Bermondsey. There was a Cypriot man who was renting a house. He couldn't afford the £200 deposit so my husband decided to share the house with him. We paid £100 each and we took over one of the flats. The rent was £3 a week, I don't know if that included the rates. My husband dealt with these matters. We moved into the house in October. The following March I became ill, I went into hospital, I lost a baby. There was something wrong with me, pain, I had another operation.

Meanwhile, the house was up for demolition and the owners were looking for the official tenants so they could give them a flat. They wouldn't give us a flat because we were only sub-letting the house. So my husband had to start looking for somewhere else to live.

My Uncle found us somewhere to live in Harrow Road.

My youngest daughter was going to school now, and

I was tired of being home so I found work in a dress factory.

My husband decided he wanted to go to Australia, so in 1968 we got all our papers ready. In the meantime, he heard about a shop being sold, so he had to make up his mind whether to go to Australia or buy the shop. In 1970 we bought the shop.

We had to work hard and save every penny. Between 1962-1970 my husband used to go to Cyprus every two years on his own and take gifts. As a result, we never had any money. Somehow we got a mortgage, and the rest we borrowed from relatives.

Between 1962-1970 I used to save money secretly and I used to put money away for the girls, in the Post Office.

My first job was finishing in a dress factory with Greek people. I had a go on the over-locker, but I wasn't experienced so I only lasted a month on the over-locker.

Then I went to a factory where they sewed bags, I worked for about 2 weeks there. I didn't know how to use the machines, so they sacked me. I then did some under-pressing with some Jewish people who were sewing wedding gowns. I worked there for about 3 months.

The way I learned to use the sewing machines was through a relative. One day a relative came round to invite me to her wedding. She asked me what work I was doing.

"Well this and that", I replied. "I am under-pressing during the day, but want to learn how to use the sewing machine." "I'll take you with me to my work, you can sit beside me and I'll teach you", she said, and so it was.

Oh, when I first came to England I found the language very difficult. I was working with Greek people most of the time, so there was no real need for me to learn English.

It's only been in the last ten years that I managed to learn any English I was working in a factory with English and Indian women, so I had to pick up the words and try and make some sense out of them in order to communicate.



Η μάνα μου επέθανε όταν ήμουν τριών χρονών, ο τζέρης μου ήταν βοσκός στην Κόκρον. Επτά σχολείον που ήμουν επτά χρονών τζι έβηκα που ήμουν δέκα χρονών. Άρκεφα δουλειάν με τον τζέρην μου, βόσκοντας τα ζώα. Εν ήσιεν τίποτε φιλοδοξίες για μέναν, επειόής έτσι ήταν που εκάμναν - να βοηθούν τα παιδικιά τους γονηούς τους στην δουλειάν τους.

Έρτα δαμέσα μετά που παντρεθήκα με τον άντραν μου. Τζιείνος είσιεν ξανάρτει δκυό φορές στην Αγγλιαν.

Ενόμιζα πως η Αγγλία εννάτον διαφορετική. Τζιείνον που μου άρκεκεν πράγματις ήταν τα πάρκα που επαίζαν τα μωρά.

Τον πρώτον χρόνον που ήρταμεν ήταν πολλόν κρύον. Εν ήμαστεν συνηθισμένοι στο κρύον. Εκατοικοθάσαμεν σ'ένα δωμάτιον, αφταίνναμεν την σόπαν του πετρελαίου τζ'εκαθομάστιν γυρόν της.

Ποττέ μου εν έφακιννα έξω, επειόή το μιτσόττερον μωρόν μου ήταν τριών χρονών τζ'ο άντρας μου εν έθελεν να την αφήννομεν σε παραμάναν για να παίννω να δουλεύω. Για τούτον εν έφακιννα ποττέ μου έξω.

Το πρώτον μας σπίτιν ήταν στο Μπέρμονστη. Ο νοικοτζέρης ήταν Κυκράιος. Εν είσιεν να βάλει τεπόζιτον οικιακόσιες λίρες, τζι έτσι ο άντρας μου αποφάσιεν να μοιραστεί το σπίτιν μαζίν του - εκληρώσαμεν εκατόν λίρες ο καθένας τζι επήραμεν ένα που τα διαμερίσματα. Το νοίκιν ήταν τρεις λίρες την εφτομάδαν, αλλά εν ηξέρω αν ήταν μαζόν με τα ρέητς. Ο άντρας μου εκανόνιζεν τούτες τες υποθέσεις.

Εμείναμεν τζειμέσα περίπου ενηά μήνες - εμετακομίσαμεν μεσ'στο σπίτιν τον Οχτώβρην. Τον άλλον Μάρτην αρρώστησα, έμπηκα στο νοσοκομείον, έχασα έναν μωρόν. Είχα πόνον, κάτι είχα πάθει, έκαμα ακόμα μιάν εγγείρησην. Εν το μεταξύ αποφάσιαν να γκρεμίσουν το σπίτιν τζαί οι νοικοτζέρηδες εγυρεύκαν τους νόμιμους νοικιαστές για να τους δώσουν διαμέρισμα. Εμάς εν μας εδιόσσαν φλάτ, επειόής εκάμναμεν σαμπλέτιν το σπίτιν. Έτσι ο άντρας μου άρκεφεν να παρατηρή νάβρει κάπου αλλού να μεινίσκουμεν. Ο θεός μου ήβρεν μας ένα σπίτιν στο Χάρροου Ρθουντ. Η νεώττερη κόρη μου επήαινεν στο σχολείον τωρά τζ'εγιώ εβαρέθηκα να μεινίσκω σπίτιν τζ'ήβρα δουλειάν σ'ένα φάκτορη φουστανιάν. Ο άντρας μου αποφάσιεν που έθελεν να πάει στην Αυστραλιαν. Έτσι το 1968 ετοιμάσαμεν ούλλα τα χαρκιά μας. Εν το μεταξύ εμάθαμεν πως εκουλιέτουν ένα μαχαζίν τζ'έτσι έπρεπεν ν'αποφασίσει ή να πάει στην Αυστραλιαν ή να γορέσει το μαχαζίν. Το 1970 εγοράσαμεν το μαχαζίν.

Έπρεπεν να εργαστούμεν σκληρά τζαί να φυλάδουμεν κάθε πένναν. Που το 1962 ως το 1970 ο άντρας μου εσυνήθιζεν να παίννει στην Κόκρον κάθε δκυό χρόνια, μόνος του, τζαί να παίρνει δώρα. Γι' αυτόν ποττέ μας εν είχαμεν ριάλια. Επί τέλους επήραμεν μιαν υποθήκην τζ'εδανειστήκαμεν τα υπόλοιπα που συγγενείς.

Μεταξό του 1962 τζαί 1970 είχα κάτι ριάλια κρυφά τζ'έβαλα στη μπάντα για τες κοπελλούδες στο Ταχυδρομείο.

Η πρώτη μου δουλειά ήταν φίνισια σ'ένα φάκτορη με Κυκράιους. Έπρεπεν να μάχουμαι πώνω στην οβερλόκα, αλλά εν είχα κείραν, έτσι εκράτησα για ένα μήνα μόνο. Έστερα επήα σ'ένα φάκτορη

που εράφκαν τσέντες.

Εδούλεφα τζιαχαμέ δκυό εφτομάδες. Εν ήξερα να δουλέφω τες μηχανές τζ'έτσι εδοκίωζαν με. Τότε έκαμα τζαί λίον σιδέρωμαν στους ποόδγυρους σ'ένα φάκτορη τους Εβραίους που εράφκασιν φουστάνια για γέμους.

Εδούλεφα τζιαχαμέ για τρεις μήνες. Ο τρόπος που έμαθα τζαί εδούλεφα τες μηχανές ήταν που τους συγγενείς. Μιαν ημέραν ένας που τους συγγενείς μου ήρτεν τζι ερώτησεν με να πάω στους γάμους του. Ερώτησεν με ήντα δουλειάν κάμνω. "Έτο, τζιείνο τούτον" είκα του. "Το κρωίν σιδερώων ποόδογδρους, αλλά θέλω να μάθω να δουλέφω την μηχανήν".

"Εν να σε πάρω μαζό μου στην δουλειάν μου. Να κάθεσαι δίπλα μου τζ'εν να σου δείξω," είκεν μου, "τζ'έτσι τζ'εγίνηκεν.

Α, όταν για πρώτην φοράν ήρτα στην Αγγλιαν, ήβρα την γλώσσα πολλά δύσκολην. Εδούλεφα με Κυκράιους τον παραπώνω τζαιρόν, έτσι εν είχα τζαί την ανάγκην να μάθω Εγγλέζικα. Μόνο τα τελευταία δέκα χρόνια που εκατάφερα να μάθω τα Εγγλέζικα. Εδούλεφα σ'ένα φάκτορη μ'Εγγλέζους τζαί Ιντιανούδες, έτσι έπιαν τζι εγώ τες λέξεις τζ'επροσπαθούσα να βκάλω νόημα που τούντες λέξεις τζ'εχρησιμοποούσαν τες για να συνηνοούμαι.

GW



T M

I came here in 1948. In Cyprus I was a policeman and I went to the American Academy so I knew how to speak English. I came with my brother Mustafa but my wife stayed behind at first. We had a cousin who lived in Berwick Street in Soho.

In those days you had to come by invitation, so our cousins sent us an official invitation vouching for us. We had no trouble getting into England. As long as you had an invitation you were all right. It was after the war but there was still rationing. When you had visitors, obviously the household got more coupons. We didn't eat bacon, so we used to save our coupons and get more butter and other meats. Only liver, and kidneys, and I think mincemeat, wasn't rationed. All other meats were.

As I said, I could speak English so I had no difficulty in talking to other people, and soon I found a job, I did a bit of carpentry in Cyprus so I worked as a carpenter for a time, I used to get six pounds a week. Then I did lots of different jobs in the factories. It didn't bother me, to do something like manual work. I was educated, but when you come to this country you have to do what you can find. I couldn't be a policeman here. So I had to do something else.

We eventually opened a shop called Ankara, on Essex Road, where Kervan Hotel is now. It was winter and heating was very difficult. It took us a long time to register with the Council for coal. The coalman wouldn't deliver any coal if you weren't registered. The fireplaces were very big and we tried burning bits of wood but the whole thing used to flare up and die down very quickly, so we used to go to bed early. Not having a television there was very little else to do. Anyway, it was the best place to keep warm.

Working in the shop was more difficult in those days. We had to do door-to-door deliveries; people used to ring us up and ask us to deliver. Only sometimes they'd go out, and I would be left with the groceries. As it was part of the service I couldn't charge them for the petrol.

My wife and I always spoke English in the shop. It was always "Pass the whatever it was Sir or Madam" "Please and thank you!" There was no Cypriot food here in those days, most of the food was what we could buy here. Later on, when my wife learned to drive, she sometimes drove to Turkey and Cyprus and brought back some cheese and other bits and pieces, to sell at the shop.

Lots of things happened which, looking back, are funny.

Where we lived, all the houses looked the same. A friend I knew from Cyprus lived near us. Although he knew approximately the address of his place he used to leave his milk bottles outside the door as markers, so that when he came back he could find the house without difficulty. One day he left as usual to go to work with the milk bottles outside but when he came back he couldn't see the house with any milk bottles. The poor man, he couldn't find his house and was wandering around the street. Fortunately, he saw another friend who showed him to his house.

Another memory I have is during the coronation of the Queen in 1952. We didn't have a television, so we agreed to go to a relative in Bermondsey to watch it on their television. When we walked into the room where the television was, the room was full of mirrors. He placed mirrors in all angles facing the TV so he could watch it from anywhere in the room. I've just remembered that, I just looked at the mirror and saw the television.

There wasn't many of us in those days but, what there was formed a club.

We have been quite contented here, our children have grown up and lead their own lives here. We are now retired and are fortunate enough to divide our time between here and Cyprus.



T W

My daughter developed a lump on her back from an early age so when we could afford it my husband and my daughter came to England, to have my daughter see a specialist. This was in 1960. In Cyprus we lived in a small village near Karpaz which is, if you look at the map of Cyprus, the finger part.

He was a shepherd, and while he was away I looked after the sheep.

We were poor really, we sold the flock and he and my daughter left for England. I and the rest of the children came two years later. He worked and sent us money for the ticket. We left from Limassol and travelled to Italy and then to France. It was May or June but we still felt cold. We had to share the bunks in the boat and the train. On the ferry across the Channel, they wouldn't let us into the boat. We had to stay out on the deck for hours until we came to Dover. My son was eleven months and I had to hug him and cover him all the way. I thought we wouldn't make the journey.

The biggest problem we ever had in this country has been housing. We lived in one room and rented accommodation for nine years.

My husband lived in Stoke Newington and we all had to live in this one room in a house owned by a Turk, who had another eight families living in the same house. We had to queue up for everything from the toilet to cooking on the same cooker. Five of us in one room, I'll never forget that. We had a small house in Cyprus but at least we had the fields to walk or run about in. We slowly started to work, machining.

Eventually we saved enough money to buy a house and my daughter went to see an Estate Agent just a few doors from us. He saw us living in one room and thought we had no money. When my daughter asked him to show us some houses he wouldn't, he said he didn't want us to waste his time. As God is my witness he refused to help us buy a house, he thought we were too poor to pay for one.

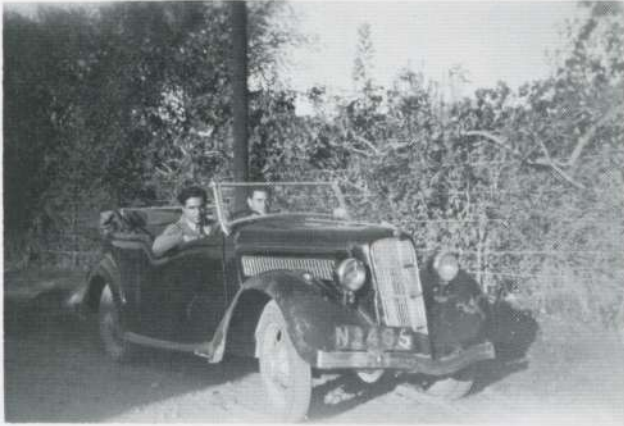
My life in this country has been all right. I've looked after my children, I didn't go out much. Now I look after my grandchildren while my daughters work. One of the rooms in the house we turned into a workroom and my daughters machine in there. My husband died two years ago from cancer of the bladder. He suffered for nine months. It was a relief and a mercy when he died. While we were looking after him we all died within every day seeing him suffering in pain.

I will live with my daughters as long as they'll have me. I don't have many needs, Cok Sukur (Thank God).

"KRALİÇENİN TAÇ GIYISINI AYNADAN İZLEDİK"

Buraya 1948'de geldim, Kıbrıstayken polistim, eğitimimi Amerikan akademisinde gördüğüm için İngilizce biliyordum. Erkek kardeşimle birlikte önce biz geldik daha sonrada esimi getirttim. Soho'da Berwick caddesinde yaşayan bir yeğenimle kalırdık. O günlerde bir davetiye ile gelebiliyordunuz İngiltereye çalışmak için. Davetiye bize yeğenim yola misafiri. Girişimde hiçbir sorun olmadı. Hemen savaş sonrasına rastlayan gelişimde bazı temel yiyecek maddeleri kuponla satılıyordu, eğer evsahibinin misafiri varsa daha fazla kuponlara ihtiyacı vardı yiyecek maddelerini sağlamak için, Daha önce söylediğim gibi İngilizce biliyordum bu necenle iş bulmam zor olmadı, zaten o zamanlar iş çok bodu. Kıbrısta biraz marangozluk yapmıştım, bu deneyiminden faydalanarak bir marangozun yanında çalıştım, bir süre için. Haftada altı pound alırdım, daha sonra birçok iş yaptım. Aslında bakılırsa eğitilmiş bir kişi olarak bu türlü işleri yapmak beni pek rahatsız etmiyordu, şartlar ne bulursanız onu yapmaya zorluyordu bir bakıma insanı. Bir süre sonra Ankara isminde bir dükkan açtım. şimdi Kervan otelin olduğu yerde. Kıstı ve ısınmak bir sorundu, Belediye ile kömür almak için kaydolmamız oldukça zaman almıştı, eğer kayıtlı değilseniz kömür taşıyanların evinize kömür ulaştırması mümkün değildi şömineler çok büyüktü,tahta yakmayı deniyorduk daha ucuzdu çünkü,kasa-ları kırp yakıyorduk fakat tahtalar cabuk yanıyordu, ve çok ısıtıyordu. Bu nedenle erken yatıyorduk, televizyonumuz yoktu aslında yapacak pek fazla birşey yoktu. O günlerde dükkanda çalışmak çok zordu, kapıdan kapıya servisyapmamız gerekiyordu, müsteriler siparişlerini telefonla veriyorlardı, bizde işi geliştirmek için benzin parası dahi hesaba katmadan servisi sürdürüyorduk. Eşim ve ben dükkanda hep İngilizce konuşuyorduk. "Bey yada bayan, şunu ver lütfen ve teşekkür ederim gibi ." sözleri daimi kulanırdık. O günlerde Kıbrıs yiyecekleri Londrada bulunmuyordu, daha sonraları eşimde ehliyet almasıyla, Kıbrısa yada Türkiyeye yaptığımız seyahatleri dönüştürdük getirdiğimiz yiyecekleri dükkanda satmaya başladık.Geriye dönüp baktığımda olup biten birçok komik şeyler anımsıyorum. Kıbrıstan yeni gelen bir arkadaş evenin adresini bilm esine rağmen evini bulmakta güçlük çekiyordu evlerinin birbirlerine çok benzemesi nedeniyle. Süt şişelerini kullanıyordu evi belirlemek için. Bir gün eve beri geldiğinde, daha doğrusu evenin olduğu sokağa geri geldiğinde kapının önünde braktığı şişileri göremeyince, zavallı adam bir türlü evini bulamamıştı, neyseki ordan gecen birbaşka arkadaş imdadına yetişmişti ve ona evini göstermişti.

Birbaşka anımda, kraliçenin taç giyimesiyle ilgili.Söylediğim gibi televizyonumuz yoktu, Bermondsey 'de oturan bir akrabamın evine o önemli töreni seyretmek için sözleşmiştik. İçeri girdiğimizde odanın duvarları aynalarla çevrili olduğunu gördük, odanın neresine otursanız oturun televizyondaki görüntünün yansıması mutlaka bir aynadan gözüküyordu,televizyonun arkasından oturmana rağmen o gece kraliçenin taç giyimesini aynadan seyretmişimdir. O zamanlar çok Kıbrıslı yoktu kakat buna rağmen bir klübümüz vardı, kendimizi burda rahat hissediyoruz, çocuklarımız burda doğup, burda büyüdü. Şimdi emekli olduk, dünyalıyıımızı Kıbrıstada burdada bize yetecek kadar çok şükür olsun.



KIBRISLI TORK KADIN

Erken yaşlarında sırtında beliren kamburun tedavisi için kocam ve kızım İngiltereye geldiler,1960 yıllarında. Kıbrısta küçük bir köyde yaşıyorduk, Karpaz yakınlarında. Eğer haritaya bakarsanız parmağa benzeyen uzantısında köyümüz bu sevimli Akdeniz adasınının. Kocam koyun çobanıydı, O gittikten sonra koyunları ben güttüm. Gerçekten fakirdik, davarlarımızı sattık, kızım ve kocam İngiltereye gitmesi için. Ben ve geri kalan diğer çocuklarımız iki yıl sonra geldik Kocam çalışarak kazandığı paradan biriktirdiklerini bize bilet almamız için gönderdi. Leymosundan yola çıktık, önce İtalyaya sonrada Fransay uğr adık. Mayıs yada Hazirandı fakat hala soğuktu. Vapurdaki, trendeki kabinleri paylaşarak durumundaydık. Arabalı vapurla Mans'ı geçerken bizi vapurun iç kısmına almadılar, güvertede açıkta seyahat ettik Dover'a gelinceye kadar. Oğlum O zaman henüz onbir aylıktı, kucağımda battaniyelerle sarıp sarmalayıp taşıdım yol boyunca. Bu yolculuk hiçbitmeyecekmiş gibi geldi. Bu Dlkedeki en büyük sorunumuz "Ev" idi. Dokuz yıl boyunca bir oda içinde yaşadık. Geldimizde kocam Stoke Newingtonda bir oda da kalıyordu, bu nedenle bizde O odaya yerleştik. Ev bir Türküdü ve aynı evde dört aile daha yaşıyordu.Tuvaletten mutfağın kullanımına kadar her şey için kuyruğa girmemiz gerekiyordu. Hiç unutumum, besimde aynı odadaydık. Kıbrıstaki evimde küçüktü ama en azdan yürüyecek, kosacak arazim vardı. Yavaş yavaş çalışmaya başladık makinayarda. Zamanla bir ev alabilecek kadar para biriktirdik, kızım,bir kaç kapı yanımdaki emlakçıye gitti. Emlakçı bizim yaşadığımız yeri görünce yeterli paramız olmadığını düşünmüş olacaktı,kızım,bize birkaç ev göstermesini istediğinde bizimle ilgilenmedi bile. Bu Dlkedeki yaşamım iyi geçti, çok fazla gezmedim, dışarıya çıkmadım büyüttüm. Şimdide torunlarıma bakıyorum kızlarım işlerken. Evin bir odasını ilişik yaptık, kızlarım orda çalışıyorlar. Kocam sidik kesesi kanserinden iki yıl önce vefat etti,dokuz ay çekti zavallı. Ölüm ona bir kurtulustu. Şimdi kızlarımla birlikte yaşıyorum, onlar beni terketmedikçe beraber yaşayacağız inşallah. Çok şükür çok fazla birşeye ihtiyacım yok.

In Cyprus we lived in a village called Karli Dag (Mount Snow). When I was one, my father died. My grandparents took me in while my Mother moved to the city of Nicosia to live. I lived with my grandparents till I was ten. Then my Mother came and took me with her to Nicosia. I lived with her until I was married at the age of twenty-seven.

From the beginning I have had a lot of problems with my marriage, for both personal and economic reasons. We decided to break up. He asked me what I planned to do, I told him I wouldn't stay in Cyprus. I said I would either go to Turkey or England. He thought about it for 10 days and then said to me that he didn't want a divorce. We decided to stay together and to save up to come to England. We saved what we could and then went to see a man called Behzat. He told us that he would fix our Passports and we needn't worry about anything. He had men who worked for him in England and they would meet us at the train station, when we got to England and find us somewhere to live and work. We believed him.

We left Cyprus by boat to Italy and then by train to France and from there by ferry to England. We arrived in London. At the train station we waited and waited and waited. Everybody left. There was only us and another man left standing at the train station. We couldn't speak English. We could do nothing. Eventually someone came to pick the other man up. My husband heard them speak Turkish so he went up to ask for help from this man.

There was only one thing he could do for us and that was to take us to the Turkish Club at the West End. He was sure these compatriots could help us to find somewhere to stay.

The taxi dropped us off at the Turkish Club. We went in and he introduced us and asked the men there to help us find somewhere to stay. We told them of our circumstances and how we had been cheated and lied to. They didn't help us one little bit and they were supposed to be Muslims and Turks too.

We sat there. What could we do? Nothing!

When the man, who took us to the Turkish Club got home, God knows he must have thought about us, and instead of going to work that night, he came back to the club to see what had happened to us.

He asked us if anybody at the club had helped us and how much money we had on us in English currency. We said that no one had helped us and that my husband only had a pound in English money. He then asked if we knew anyone at all in London. My husband said he had an address of a couple of old friends of his. The man called another taxi and took us to the address.

The landlord of the house, another Turkish Cypriot, opened the door. The man told him about us and that our friends lived at this address. The landlord said he would go and tell them. My husband's so-called friends said that they didn't know anyone of that name.

My husband said, "How could they not know me? We've been friends for years. They even wrote and asked me to look them up when I arrived here . . . and now they say they don't know me?"

The landlord felt sorry for us, he said he could perhaps help us, but he really didn't have any room. He said he would have to ask the other tenants, who were mainly young Turkish Cypriots, if they could double up and vacate one room for us. They did and the landlord showed us to the room.

They say people differ and it's true. The next day we

slept till about ten. I was very cold that night. It was the middle of October.

We got up, dressed and sat around afraid to go out of the room in case the landlord asked us to leave.

At about eleven o'clock there was a knock on the door. My husband went and opened the door. There stood his two friends who had previously denied they knew him. My husband asked what had happened to them last night. They said that they thought the landlord was lying to them, playing a trick. "Could it be, because you were afraid that we might come face to face you decided to come and see us. Was it to save yourselves any embarrassment?" my husband asked. They said "We just didn't believe the landlord. Now we've come to take you out."

They took us to Aldgate Market. We walked to the bus stop. The bus came and I tried to get on it. Before I could sit down, it moved. I nearly went flat on to my face I felt so embarrassed.

Worse was to come. We went to the Underground, I was scared stiff of the escalators. I'd never seen one before, I thought it was going to chew my foot up. Eventually I got used to it. We walked round the market. It was pretty cold and I wasn't feeling well and on top of everything we hadn't eaten. My husband said he was starving. His friends sent me back home to cook while the men went to a Turkish cafe at the Angel. There my husband asked if anyone knew of a place we could stay for that night. Nobody did. Finally, one man said he did have a room but it was in a very bad state. There was no covering on the floors and the bed mattress had its springs sticking out of it.

The man took us to this room which became our new home. It was one room and we had to share a toilet, bathroom and the kitchen with four other families.





KIBRISLI TÜRK AİLE

Kıbrısta, Karlı dağ diye bilinen bir köyde yaşadık. Ben bir yaşındayken babam öldü,annemin yaşamını sürdüreceği Lefkoşaya taşınmasıyla beni dedemler yanına, aldı. On yaşına kadar dedemlerle yaşadım. Daha sonra annem beni yanına Lefkoşaya aldı. Yirmiyedi yaşına, yani evleninceye kadar annemle birlikte yaşadım. Evliliğimin başından beri eşimle birçok sorunlarımız oldu. Bu işi bitirmeye karar verdik. Bana herhangi bir planım olup olmadığını sordu, Kıbrısta kalmaya niyetim olmadığını Türkiye'ye yada İngiltere'ye gitmek istediğimi söyledim. On gün kadar benden zaman istedi, daha ayrıntılı düşünmek için. Verdiği karar "Boşunmaktır" tekrar birlikte olmaya karar verdik. Birliktirdiğimiz parayla Behzat isminde bir adama gittik. Pasaport isimizi halledeceğini, merak etmememizi, kendisi için çalışan adamları olduğunu tren istasyonunda bizi karşılayacaklarını ve bizi bir eve yerleştireceklerini söyledi. Bizde ona inandık. Kıbrıstan gemiyle ayrıldık, İtalyaya oradan Fransaya, Fransadan da arabalı vapurla İngiltere'ye geldik. Londra'ya geldimizde, tren istasyonunda bizi karşılayacak onları görebilmek ümidiyle bekledik, bekledik, bekledik. Herkes gitmişti, istasyonda biz ve bir başka adamdan başka ayakta bekleyen başka kimse kalmadı. Biraz sonra o adamı almak için birileri geldi. Kocam aralarında konuştuklarının Türkçe olduğunu duymuştü, yanlarına gidip yardım istedi. Bizim için yapabileceği yalnız birtek şey vardı, bizi West End'de bir Türk kulübüne götürmek. Ordaki Türk hemşerilerin, kalacak bir yer bulmak için bize yardım edeceklerine emindi. Taksi, bizi Türk klübünün önünde bıraktı, içeri girdik,bizi diğerleriyle tanıştırdı ve ordakilere bize kalacak bir yer bulmakta yardım etmelerini istedi. Onlara durumumuzu, nasıl kandırıldığımızı anlattık. Bize biraz olsun dahi yardım etmediler. Dinkardeşi ve Soydaş olacaktı güya. Orada oturduk kaldık, ne yapabiliydik, Hiçbişey! Bizi Türk klübüne getiren adam evine gitmişti. Allah bilir bizi düşünmüş olacak'ki işe gideceğine klübe geri geldi ve ne olup bittiğini, kimsenin bize yardım edip etmediğini sordu. "Kimsenin bize yardım etmediğini"söyledik. Londrada tanıştığımız kimse olup olmadığını sordu. Eşimin eski arkadaşlarından birkaçının adresini verdik,adam bir taksi çağırıldı ve bu adreslere doğru yola çıktık.

Kıbrıslı bir türk olan evin sahibi kapıyı açtı. Bizi orya getiren kişi durumumuzdan bahsetti ve o adreste tanıştıklarımız olduğunu söyledi. Ev sahibi içerdekilere bizden bahsedince onlardan bu isimde kimseyi tanımadıkları yanıtı geldi. Eşim, "Nasıl olur,beni tanımazlar. Biz yıllardan beri arkadaşız, bana yazıp, buraya geldiğim kendileriyle görüşmemi istediler. Şimdi de bana beni tanımadıklarının söylüyorlar"dedi. Ev sahibi bize acıdı, bize yardımcı olabileceğini söyledi,ama hiç boş odası yoktu. Diğer kiracılara,(Kıbrıslı Türk olanlara) sorup bizim için bir şey ayarlayabileceğini söyledi. Kiracılar bir odayı boşalttılar ve ev sahibi bize odamızı gösterdi. İnsanlar farklıdır derler. Doğrumuş. Ertesi gün, sabah on'a kadar uyuduk, geceleyin çok üşümüştüm, Ekim ortasıydı, uyandık, giyindik biraz oturduk, ne yapacağımızı bilmiyorduk, ev sahibi bizi dışarı atması diye kapıdan dışarıya çıkmayı korkardık. Birazdan kapı çalındı. Kapıyı eşim açtığında karşımızda eşimin arkadaşlarını gördük,bu durum karşısında şaşırıktık, kocam "Dün alışam nerdeydiniz?" diye sordu. Onlarda evsahibinin yalan söylediğini zannettiklerini söyledi. Eşim,"yoksa bizi rasgele görmekten ve utanacağınız içinmi bizi şimdi görmeye geldiniz" diye sözlere devam etti. "Yok canım ne münasebet, biz dediğimiz gibi ev sahibinin bizimle şaka ettiğini sandık" olarak kocama cevap verdiler.Kocamda uzatmadı. Daha sonra hep birlikte Aldgate Market'a gittik. Otobüse bindik, binerken otobüs hareket etti, dengemi kaybettim az kalsın yüz üstü yere vuruyordum, çok utanmıştım, daha sonra sıra undergrounda hareket eden basamaklara binmeye geldi, alışkın olmadığım için onlardan çok korkmuştum. Yavaş yavaş arkadaşlar alıştırıldılar beni, ve geleceğimiz yere geldik sonunda. Karnımız acıkmıştı, arkadaşlarımızın eşleriyle ben onların evine gittim. Kocam da onların beyleri Angel'daki bir Türk kahvesine götürdüler. Kocam bu kahvede bundan sonrası için kalacak bir yer bulmak ümidiyle herkese sorup derimizi anlatmıştı, aralarından biri çok kötü şartlarda bir odasının olduğunu, yastıkları bozuk bir yataktan başka bir şey olmadığını söylemiş, bu çaresizlikler içinde yerde yatmak sorun değildi aslında bizim için o günlerde. Yeni odamıza yerleştikten sonra yeni evsahibimiz bize iş buldu ve çalışmaya başladık. Çalışmak, iş zorgelemiyordu. Dil başlıbaşına bir problemdi. Kaç geceyi bu yüzden ağlayarak geçirdim.Ev sahibimin kızkardeşi çok iyi ve yardımsever biriydi bana iste dilden çok yardımda bulundu ama o olamıyınca onun başka bir arkadaşı vardı o kocama sempatisi vardı ve benden hoşlanmazdı.

Bir gün çalıştığım yerde, yönetici olan kadın beldi omuzumu okşayarak birseyler söyledi, tabiki ben İngilizce bilmediğim için birsey anlamamışım, biraz önce bahsettiğim kocama eğilin olan bu kadına sordum ne dediğini yöneticinin, o da benim işime son verildiğini orda bana artık iş olmadığını söyledi. Özüntüyle eve döndüm, bu hakimei gören evsahibi"Ne oldu sana " diye sordu,durumu anlattım, çok şaşırıldı halbuki birkaç gün önce yönetici ile konuşmuş ve benden olumlu bahsetmişlerdi, ne olup bittiğini ortaya çıkaracağına söz verdi. Bir hafta sonra bana gelip durumu anlattı aslında onlar hiçte öyle değilmiş, meğerse yönetici kadın benden çok memnun olduğunu çok iyi çalıştığımı söylüyormuş, olay yalnız bir yanlış anlamdan öteye gitmeyen basit bir şeymiş yani. Neyse bu arada ben eşimin çalıştığı yerde iş bulmuştum, ben beş pound, eşimse altı pound kazanıyorduk, o zamanlar haftalıklar böyleydi. En büyük sorun dil ve soğuk tu benim için; bazı zamanlar olduki Kıbrısa geri dönmek için neler vermezdim diye düşündüm hep. 1956'da, Kıbrısa tatile bittim biraz olsun kendime gelmek için. Geri döndümde evsahibiyle olan ilişkimizin eskisi gibi olmadığını farkettim, eski camlar bardak olmuştü, taşız olaya sebep olan sorun, mutfağdaki gaz sayacının kullanalar tarafından kurcanlanarak bozulması ve bundan sorumlu tutulmanın biz olmasıydı.Bir mutfağı sektize aile kullandı. İlk çocuğum için hamile kalmamla evsahibi başka çıkılmaz,bir kişi oluvermişti, kaç aylık hamile olduğumu, doğuma ne kadar kaldığımı her fırsatta soruyordu, niyeti apaçık ortadaydı,bizi evden atmak istiyordu, bunu anlamak güç olmadı ve bizde ev aramaya başladık fakat cocuklu aileler için kiralık ev bulmak büyük bir sorundu bu ülkede, olaylar böyle belişirken kocamın arkadaşlarından birisi ona ev satın almamızı tavsiye etmiş, onunda aklı bu işe yatmıştı. Dokuzyüz pound'a uzun süreli kiralık bir ev bulduk, biriktirdiğimiz ikiyüz pound depozit olarak gitti, evi satan kişi bu arada bize aylık taksitleri zamanında tamamlarsak geri kalan iki yüz poundluk farkıda ekleyip evi temelden bize satabileceğini söyledi, Allah yüzümüzü kara çıkarmadı, taksitlerimizi ve diğer ikiyüz poundu ödedik ve bir ev sahibi olduk.

This man found me work in the same week, in a dress factory as a machinist. Eventually he found my husband work too.

The work wasn't difficult, but not understanding English was. I've spent lots of sleepless nights crying because of the language barrier.

This particular time I had some of the women at the factory translate for me. My landlord's sister was very helpful, but she had a friend who wasn't so helpful. She took a shine to my husband and started to dislike me. Before that week was out, the manageress came and tapped me on the shoulder and said something. I asked this woman, who disliked me "What did she say?" She replied, "The woman said that there is no work for you. She wants you to stop working." I was angry "If that's what she wants, then I'll stop" I said, and left.

When the landlord saw me at home, and not at work, he asked me what had happened, I told him. He said he was only talking to the owner the other day, and he was very pleased with my work. He promised to find out what had happened. A week later he told me that the manageress was saying what good work I was doing, not that there was no work. He said "The woman who translated for you says she misunderstood the manageress. They'd like you to go back". By that time I had found work where my husband was working in another dress factory, so I didn't go back. I was getting five pounds and my husband was getting six pounds. The wages were like that in those days.

The biggest problem for me was always the language and the cold. There were times when I wished I could go back to Cyprus, but going back was like admitting failure

of myself and my marriage. I did go back 1956 for a holiday and to get myself together again.

When I came back our relationship with our landlord was never the same. We used to have disagreements over the use of the kitchen.

He used to get twelve shillings in total from the four families to cover the gas bill. Of course, some used to use too much and others too little. It always worked out that the damn thing used to finish half way through my meal and I used to be the one who had to ask him to put more money in the meter, and he didn't like that.

It was difficult to keep the kitchen clean because people used to take advantage and it used to end up that no one used to do it, expecting someone else to do the cleaning for them. It was at this time that I became pregnant and the landlord became more and more difficult and inquisitive. He used to ask my husband how many weeks I was and when the child was due. It became clear to us why he was asking. He wanted to evict us when the child was born. We asked around to find another place but all our friends said that it was the rule in this country that lots of places didn't have tenants with children. So we had no alternative but to find another solution to our problem. One day my husband's friend suggested we bought a place. He took us to an Estate Agent and we found a place for nine hundred pounds leasehold.

We saved two hundred pounds and that went on the deposit. The man told us that if we can complete payments in time, he can then offer us the Freehold for another two hundred pounds on top. This we did and eventually bought the Freehold.

T W



ITALY

I came from a very big family; we were in all five brothers and three sisters; I was the one before the last. We came from a small village not far from Piacenza in the northern part of Italy, and my parents were farmers. We had to work really hard and were very poor, but on the other hand we used to know everybody in the village and lead a very communal sort of life. Somehow, in the midst of so many problems, there seemed to be room for everybody. Anyway, two of my sisters emigrated to London and opened a workman's cafe for the workers in Covent Garden Market. In 1962, they were left alone and without any help, and I had to come here to help them. I wasn't sure at the beginning that I would remain in England. Slowly I started realizing it, rather than deciding it, while I was also getting more accustomed to England.

As soon as I came to London I went to live with my two sisters, and I always lived with them, until they died, I never married, and now I am left alone. I never had any problems with my papers, because having to help my sisters in the cafe, I got a working permit very easily. So the beginning was difficult, but in no way terrible. I learned English little by little, by myself, using a book and talking every day to the people in the café. At the beginning I was sick with nostalgia, and in a way I feel like that even now, but I think it is the same for everybody, and that it is not possible to leave one's own country and get completely accustomed to somewhere else.

When I arrived, my sisters used to open the cafe at half-past seven in the morning, but, being a man, I was able to start earlier, so I opened at half past five and worked non-stop until seven in the evening. At nine o'clock I would be ready for bed. Luckily the house where I used to live, and where I still am, was very close, but

Vengo da una famiglia assai numerosa; eravamo in tutto 5 fratelli e 3 sorelle: io ero il penultimo. Siamo di un piccolo paese della provincia di Piacenza (nord Italia) e i miei genitori erano agricoltori. Si lavorava molto duro e c'era molta povertà, ma in paese ci si conosceva tutti e si faceva vita comunitaria - Bene o male, in mezzo a tante difficoltà, c'era posto per tutti - Comunque, due delle mie sorelle erano emigrate a Londra ed avevano aperto un caffè nel mercato di Covent Garden; nel 1962 erano rimaste sole, ed ho dovuto venire ad aiutarle. Sulle prime, non ero sicuro che sarei restato: la decisione è venuta lentamente, col passare del tempo, per abitudine. Appena arrivato sono andato a stare con le mie sorelle; e sono sempre vissuto con loro, fino a che non sono morte; non mi sono mai sposato, e adesso sono solo. Non ho avuto nessuna difficoltà con i miei documenti, perché aiutando le mie sorelle nel caffè ho subito avuto un permesso di lavoro; e i primi tempi, per quanto difficili, non sono stati drammatici.

Ho imparato l'inglese a poco a poco, da solo, usando un libro e con il contatto quotidiano con i clienti nel caffè. All'inizio avevo moltissima nostalgia per l'Italia, e in fondo ce l'ho anche adesso, ma credo che questo sia lo stesso per tutti, e che non sia possibile lasciare il proprio paese senza mai dimenticarsene completamente.

Quando sono arrivato le mie sorelle aprivano il caffè alle 7 e della mattina; essendo uomo, potevo cominciare più presto, ed aprivo ogni giorno alle 5 e, fino alle sette di sera. Alla morte ero steso morto, pronto per andare a dormire - Per fortuna la casa dove

working so hard I didn't have time for anything, and all my life was spent in the cafe. With many of my clients I had established an almost brotherly relationship, seeing each other every day and working in such close contact.

It is true that it was a very heavy job, but now that I am retired and my sisters are dead, I miss it dreadfully. Now I find it very hard to fill my days, I read the paper for a while. Then I go out, I sit in the park, look at the other elders and think, I am like them now. Yes, if I could I would really like to change. In Italy, in a small village, everybody is very close to each other, even if they belong to different generations. We have a stronger feeling not only for family, but for our friends too! Here they send children away from home at seven years of age. How can they grow attached to their parents, or establish strong friendships? On the other hand, I must say I have been very content here.

The first thing that really impressed me about England was the sight of people queuing, queuing for everything! And how tidy it all was! Now I have grown accustomed to all this, and I think it could never exist in Italy; I have not been there now for seventeen years, and I miss it dreadfully: though if I have to say what exactly I do miss, I could not answer. I have no idea how I would find it now, and if it is at all changed. It must be, mustn't it? My nephews are very nice to me, thank God. They write to me and sometimes they even come up here to see me; I feel really at ease with them, I think we are very much alike.

If I have to be really honest, I must admit that if I had known what my life was eventually going to be like over here, no, I don't think I would have come. But unfortunately for me it was never a matter of choice, but simply a must: I had my sisters and I had to help them.

vivo - e ancora vivo - era molto vicina. Lavorando così tanto non ho mai avuto molto tempo per niente al di fuori del caffè: ma con molti dei clienti si era stabilito un contatto fraterno, vedendosi e lavorando insieme giorno dopo giorno. Era un lavoro faticoso, ma adesso che sono in pensione, e che le mie sorelle sono morte, mi manca moltissimo. Adesso è molto difficile riempire le mie giornate; leggo un poco, poi esco, e mi vado a sedere in un parco, guardo gli altri vecchi e penso: - sono diventato come loro. - Sì, vorrei veramente poter cambiare la mia vita adesso; in Italia in un paese, c'è un grande contatto anche tra differenti generazioni: c'è un senso non solo della famiglia, ma degli amici molto più forte! Qui si mandano i bambini via dalla famiglia a 7 anni: come possono diventare affezionati ai genitori, o avere dei forti sentimenti di amicizia? Però in Inghilterra mi sono trovato bene.

La prima cosa che mi ha colpito ed a cui adesso mi sono abituato sono le file, e il senso dell'ordine: questo in Italia non esisteva mai. Ho mancato dall'Italia da 17 anni, e non ho idea di come la troverei adesso: mi manca molto, ma se dovessi dire cosa mi manca esattamente, non saprei rispondere. I miei nipoti mi vogliono bene, mi scrivono e qualche volta vengono a trovarmi; con loro mi sento a mio agio, ci somigliamo molto.

Se devo dire la verità, se avessi saputo come sarebbe stata la mia vita no, non credo proprio che sarei venuto: ma purtroppo per me non era una questione di scelta, ma di dovere: lì erano le sorelle e lì doveva aiutarle.

THE FAR EAST

I was born in Hong Kong in 1922. I was the only child in the family. I grew up in the New Territories. I was married in 1940. In 41, Japan invaded Hong Kong. At that time my father worked in Canada but he did not send any money home. There was nothing to eat, not even sweet potatoes, and my mother was starved to death. The Japanese very much liked lettuce, so I and my husband often collected the vegetables in the field and carried them to Fanling to the Japanese in exchange for army tokens. The belt linking the bamboo stick and the basket was so worn out by the load that it eventually broke. We lived beside the road then.

In 1941 a lot of people escaped from the mainland to Hong Kong. They had nothing to eat, not even water to drink. My father-in-law was a Christian. That year the rice crop pool he belonged to had made a profit of a few hundred catties of crops. So he made some congee, set up a stall beside the road and gave the congee to the refugees.

Peace came in 1946. I was really happy. In 1948, my eldest son was born. My husband was a van driver in Hong Kong then. Life was difficult so he applied to come to Britain in 1960, because he had a lot of relatives here. He came by ship, the journey taking more than a month. He told me the sea was rough during the journey. Many people were so sick that they could not eat anything. Just before he left for England, I gave birth to my youngest son.

In 1970, I and my youngest son also applied to come to Britain. The day when I arrived, my husband came to meet me. It was Spring then but snow was falling heavily. It was very cold. I had no English and three days after I arrived, I found a job in a restaurant named Nan Wah Lau, where my husband once worked. There were very few Chinese here during that time and it was difficult to find someone to talk to. My husband made a living by picking bean sprouts for others on his arrival. Later he became a chef in a restaurant. He was in an even more difficult situation than I was when I first arrived. I was very glad for our family reunion but the job was really tiring. I worked till midnight everyday. But I never regretted it. I had my work and I could make a living. That's enough.

When I first arrived, I rented a room at Stoke Newington, where the whole family lived together. Later

we felt the room too small for us. Through a friend's help we rented a flat in Angel whose landlord was a British. I got to know the friend who helped us find the flat when I worked at Nan Wah Lau.

I didn't have any English. I was totally in the dark, but I managed to carry on. My youngest son entered a primary school on arrival. He was very afraid of the blacks around the neighbourhood so he always went to Nan Wah Lau for me after school (Nan Wah Lau was near Piccadilly, now it is called May Dao) and waited for me to go home together after work. Once when we were on our way home, we were stopped and asked by a policeman why I took a child to the street so late at night. I wished to tell him my son was afraid of blacks, that he wished to have me by his side, that I was taking him home to sleep. But I had no knowledge of English, I could only mutter "solly, solly" (sorry, sorry).

My husband was in bad health. He often had to stay in hospital. Because of this, I had to work to make ends meet. After I arrived in England for a week, he had again gone to a hospital. Life then was really difficult.

In 1975, my husband died and we were evicted from our flat. I lost my husband, and I had no English. Suddenly I felt life was very miserable. Before that, though my work was hard, I had never felt that miserable. I had to prepare my husband's funeral. An Englishman talked about cremation or what. I didn't understand a word of his. I only kept nodding. He told me to select a coffin for my husband and I picked one at £500. He told me it needed not be too expensive and picked a £300 one for me instead.

At that time, there was an Englishman who was kind and eager to help me. But I didn't understand English and could only mutter "I don't know" to whatever he said to me. He helped me to apply for widow's allowance. Then I didn't even know what a cheque was. I thought they were useless bits of paper and just threw them away. He tried to explain to me that these were money, but I didn't understand a word. Now I know what a cheque is. Things would be easier then if I had someone to translate for me. That period was really difficult. My eldest son worked far away in Holland. My youngest son knew nothing at all. I had to decide everything. However I was satisfied merely to be able to raise my son through all these hardships.

Ch W





我是一九二二年在香港出生的。我是獨女，在
 香港長大。我於一九四〇年結婚。四一年日本入侵
 香港，當時我父親在加拿大工作，沒有錢進
 的船。戰爭全食物短缺，連薯也沒有，我
 母親就在那時候給我吃了。日本人很喜歡
 吃生菜，我和丈夫就到四裡去收菜，挑到粉
 麵賣給日本人換取軍票，我挑的帶也挑到
 新了。我和我的丈夫住在馬路邊，這
 大陸是難來香港。我的公公是信
 和的，他的殺會又剛在這一斗賺了好幾百担
 的，於是我們就弄了些糖水，擺在馬路邊派
 給走難的人。

四六斗和平，我真是好歡喜。四八斗，我的大
 兒子就出生了。我的丈夫本來是個小巴司機，因為
 生活艱難，他又有親戚在美國，於是他在六〇斗
 就申請來英。他是乘船來的，密個多月才到達。
 他告訴我風浪很大，很多人暈浪，不能吃東西。
 在他離開香港之前，我最小的兒子則出世。

七〇斗我和小兒子申請來英。我抵達的那
 天，我丈夫來接我。那時該是六月吧，但天下大
 雪，冷得很。來了三天，就在南華樓找到一份
 工作，我丈夫以前曾在那裡工作。我一英英文也
 因為不懂，這裡的中國人又少，要找個人
 談話也困難，情況很淒涼。我丈夫告訴我
 他初來時情況比我更差，他第一份工是幫人
 摘草莓的，後來才轉到一間餐廳做廚師。一
 家人能團聚一起，我覺得很快樂。工作雖些
 辛苦，每天要到午初才收工，不過我是一英也
 到後悔。我有工作，有飯食，已是足夠了。

初到來到，我在 Stoke Newington 租到一間
 房，一家人就住在一起。後來我覺得房間太細
 了，就由朋友介紹我在 Angel 租了一個 flat (單位)。
 那位屋主是英國人，介紹我那朋友則是在
 南華樓工作時認識的。

我丈夫初過世時，有一位英國先生很熱心幫
 忙我，但我也不懂英文，他說什麼我都答 "I don't
 know"，是他替我申請 "寡婦金" 的。我那時
 連支票是什麼也不知道，當是廢紙一掉掉了。他
 對我說支票是錢來的，我也不明白，現在我知
 道支票的用途了。如果那時有人替我翻譯
 就好了。那時日子真是難過，我的大兒子還
 在何崗工作，小兒子又不懂事，什麼也是由我
 一個人來決定。不過，能苟且活我的兒子已經
 滿足了。

我一英英文也不懂，朦朦混混的，卻就
 是這樣生活下來。我的小孩子到英之後就進學
 校讀小學，他很怕家裡附近的黑人放了學
 就來南華樓找我，(南華樓在 Piccadilly 附近，
 即現在的美都)，待我晚上收工和他一起回
 家。有一次，我收工和兒子一起回家，遇到
 一個警察，他問我為什麼這麼晚還帶着一個
 小孩在街上走。我想告訴他我的兒子怕黑人，
 要跟我靠近，我現在帶他回家睡覺。但我
 一英英文也不懂得說，只能說 "sorry, sorry"。

我的丈夫身體不好，常常要入醫院。因為他
 身體有病，我為工作幫補家用。我來英一個
 星期，他就入了醫院，那時生活真是難過。

七三斗我丈夫去世，我們居住的房间又被
 屋主逼遷。我沒有丈夫，又不懂英文，一下子
 真的覺得生活好淒涼。以前那些工作辛苦，
 也從沒有覺得這樣淒涼。

我要為我丈夫辦理身後事，那位英國先生
 對我解釋葬禮的方式，我一英也聽不懂，只是
 點頭。他叫我替我的丈夫選一副棺材，我選
 了一副五百鎊的，那位英國先生說不用太
 貴了，就改替我選了一副三百鎊的。

Ch W

Q: How did you feel when you first arrived in Britain?

A: I did not feel very sad then. But I found difficulties in adjusting myself to life over here. I felt very lonely and empty.

Q: Were your children in close contact with you then?

A: Yes, by the time I came to Britain, my whole family was over here. I really rejoiced in this family re-union.

Q: So why did you say you felt lonely and empty?

Q: Can you tell me something about your life in your home country?

A: Our house was in a street in a small rural town. I lived in a small rural town, not in a village. People living in the villages usually worked on lands and they lived in huts. I was a hawker then.

Q: Did you ever think of returning to your country?

A: I still got an elder brother in Mainland China. Everybody would like to go back but it needs money to do so.



A: Language was a problem for me. Although my family was in Britain, some of us lived far apart. It was only in occasional family gatherings that we saw each other. I felt very happy when the whole family was spending the time together. But I had no English and I could not communicate with the British. Shopping was not too great a problem for me, though. I just picked what I liked, put them into the basket and paid on my way out. You didn't need an interpreter. But as I could not read the labels on the packets, there were times when I dared not try something new. I could not be sure if they were edible.

Q: Did you find other difficulties in life in Britain apart from the language problem?

A: The food here is different. The tomato soup here is crimson and has a creamy surface. When the soup boils, the tomatoes sink to the bottom of the pot. It may have something to do with the different growing methods we use. We fertilize our crops with nightsoil. The British can't stand the bad smell and discard it. They use chemicals instead. So the vegetables they grow are not as good tasting as ours. We don't eat foods that are out of season. We only eat what is fresh from the market and we don't freeze our food. The food here is very different.

Q: Do you find it difficult to communicate with your grandchildren?

A: They grow up here in Britain and therefore know little Chinese. They cannot express themselves well in Chinese nor can they write in Chinese.

Ch M

Q: What was your impression of Britain when you first arrived?

A: I felt very much out of place and I missed my home country very much.

Q: Then why did you leave your home country?

A: I was a carpenter then. I worked very hard but the pay was bad. Life was very hard in China.

Q: What made you decide to stay in Britain?

A: It's easier to make a living here and the living conditions are better. At first I found it difficult to adjust myself to life over here. But after a while I became used to it. Britain is a free country and I enjoy freedom here. A pound's effort is a pound's worth. If you work hard enough, you can enjoy life. To me this is a kind of freedom.

Q 你初來英國的時候感覺怎樣？(問邱太太)
A 我剛來的時候並不覺得太悲傷，但我不能適應英國的生活環境，覺得很空虛，寂寞。

Q 你的孩子和你親近嗎？
A 我們整個家庭老幼大小都在英國，我們一家人團聚一起，實在很高興。

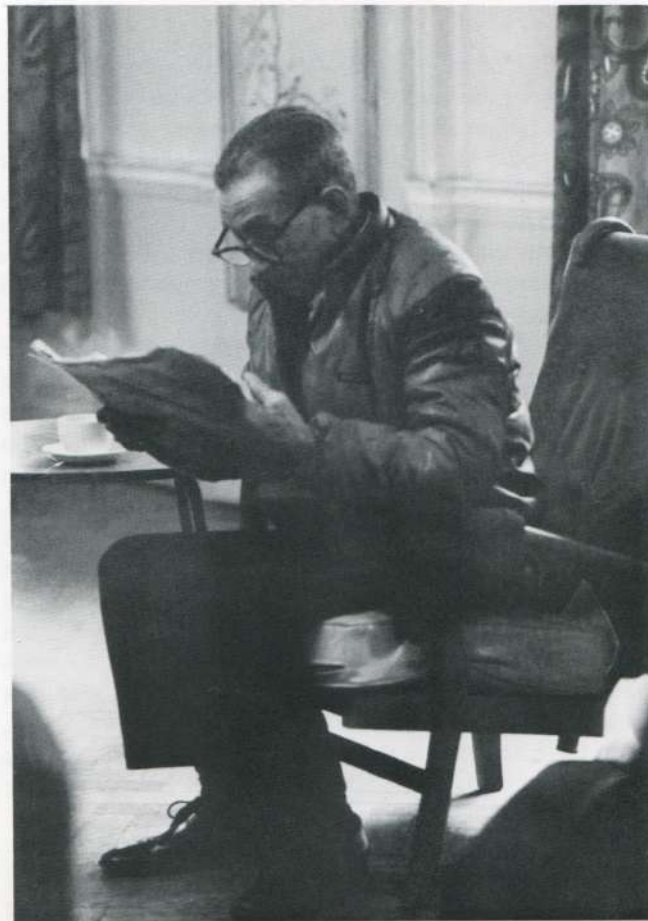
Q 那你為什麼還覺得寂寞空虛呢？
A 主要的原由是語言不通。雖然我們一家人都在英國，但大家各處一方，相距很遠，要待有喜慶事才得相見。親人能共聚的時候，我是很喜興的。但在外面遇到英國人，我們是語言不通。購買東西倒是問題不大，去 shopping，非一對眼睛，把喜歡的東西 basket，出去時付錢，不必著翻譯。但因為我不懂英文，不懂得看食品包裝上的說明，看不懂的就不敢試，誰知道是不是給人吃的呢？

Q 除了語言問題，還有什麼地方你是覺得不習慣的？
A 這樣的食物也不同。蕃茄湯是鮮紅色的，有一層油油，蕃茄菜了會下沉。可能是大家的種植方法不同吧。我們是用糞便來施肥的。在英國他們不用這個，他們嫌臭，用科學原料來取代，種出來的東西就不及我們的好吃。我們冷天不吃熱天種的菜，熱天不吃冷天種的菜，我們愛吃新鮮的東西，絕不把食物留。在這裡很多食物都不同。

Q 你可以告訴我你從前在鄉間的生活嗎？
A 我們的房子是在小鄉鎮的街道中。我住在小鄉鎮，不是鄉間。住在鄉間的人大多耕種的，他們住的是茅屋。我以前是一個小販。

Q 那你有沒有想過要回去呢？
A 全家中只有我哥哥一個還留在大陸。誰不想回去呢！但這是一個經濟問題。

Q 你的孫女和你有沒有隔膜呢？
A 他們在這裡長大，不大懂說中文。他們不懂得一句說話應該怎樣說，也不會寫。



Q (問邱先生) 你初來的時候對英國的印象是怎樣的？

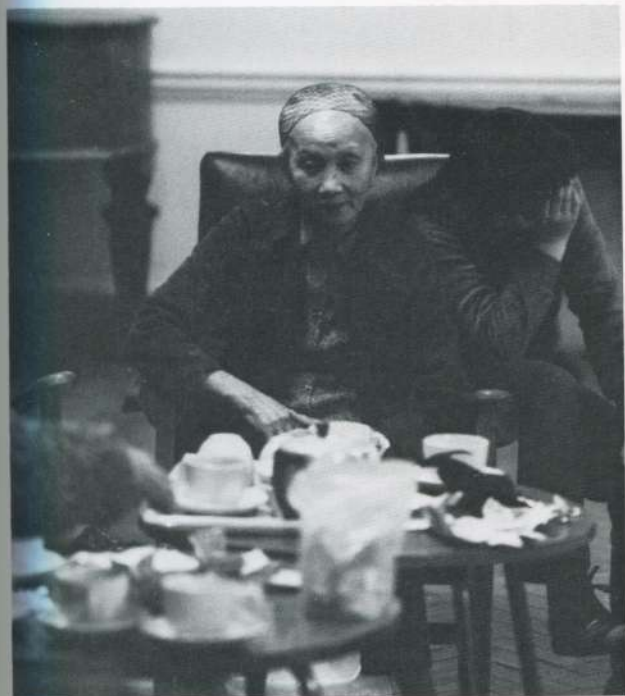
A 我初來時很不習慣，很思念我的家鄉。

Q 是什麼原因令你離開自己的家鄉呢？

A 我以前在中國是一個木匠，工作很苦，但待遇不好。那時的生活真是苦。

Q 那你為什麼決定留在英國？

A 這裡賺錢容易，生活環境好。最初是不習慣，但過了一段時間，也慢慢習慣了。英國是一個自由國家，生活很自由。在這裡我賺得一塊錢，可以拿到一塊錢。只要多工作，就可以多拿錢。這也是一種自由啊。



I first came to England when my father passed away. In Singapore we had a business as a tailor's shop, but when my father passed away, my brother and I sold it. Then I worked in a solicitor's office, helping my brother who was a chief clerk. After a while, I got fed up and said, "I'd like to go to sea and see the world." It was just at the beginning of the war and I was twenty-six years old. From 11th November 1939 I signed on as a steward on a Shell petrol tanker and came to England.

I arrived in London on Christmas Eve, and I had never known such cold weather. We did not have nearly enough clothes. We were shivering coming ashore. They took us to a boarding house. There were lots of seamen's hotels for Chinese in London; one in Pennyfields and one in West India Dock Gate I remember, but they have all gone now. We had a meal and we stayed there in Pennyfields. There used to be a Chinese restaurant nearby, and Shell had a contract with them for seamen's meals. Every day we ate there twice, in the morning and afternoon. Even if there were no ships, you had to report in, in case you were needed. We had signed on for three years and the agreement was that I would be repatriated to Singapore. When I left, my little boy was two years old and a girl was just born. I brought summer clothes and winter clothes; just one suitcase.

On 3rd January, I joined an oil tanker in Southampton. We sailed to Trinidad and then back to Liverpool where we were paid off as the ship went into dry dock. I stayed in Liverpool for a while and they put me in charge of translation for Chinese seamen. I was doing the paperwork for 4,000 Chinese seamen. When any ship came in and they required sailors for the engine room or catering department, I had to organise the men for them. I knew where the sailors were staying, so I'd go to their boarding houses and tell them to report to the office and see the doctor. If they were not considered fit enough, I'd find someone else. I travelled a lot at that time, taking the whole crew sometimes, as they couldn't speak a word of English. Shell paid all the expenses.

Up to 1944, Shell had paid half my wages, and sent half to Singapore. But then my wife and two children passed away during a Japanese bombing raid on Singapore. After the war, most of the Chinese seamen returned home, but I did not. Singapore is a British colony and I was a British subject. I brought by birth certificate with me. The other sailors were not from Singapore, but from China and they had to be repatriated.

I found a new wife in Liverpool and was married at St. Anne's Church on 24th June, 1944. After I got married again, I was in touch with my family in Singapore, but at the end of 1948 we lost touch. I lost their address and they apparently stopped writing to me. Up to that point, my brother had written once or twice a month asking how I was keeping. One day I found the explanation. My second wife had feared that, as they had suffered from the bombing, my family in Singapore must keep asking for money, so she tore up their letters without letting me know. For the next thirty-eight years I had no contact with my family. Later I found out that my brother had been searching for me and my niece had come to England and could not find me. They thought maybe I had been killed in the bombing.

接見及訪問康先生

一九八四年四月

當我父親去世之後我才來英國的。在新加坡時，我家有一間裁縫店，當父親去世後我和哥哥把這店賣去。後來我哥哥在一律師樓當秘書之職，我便在那處和他一起工作。有一天，我感覺到煩悶，便說：

「我要往航海去」

當時第二次世界大戰剛開始，我說：

「我要往航海去，我要去看看這個世界」當時我是二十六歲。我加入了亞世亞石油公司，在一運油船作一主侍應之職位。那時正是一九三九年十一月十一日我註冊參加工作便開行來英國。

我初到英國時，覺得天氣非常寒冷，因在東南亞地方是溫和的。上岸後，當其他人員帶我們往海員招待所時，邊行邊打冷震和發抖因沒穿有暖衣服之故。在倫敦，那時有很多招待華僑之海員招待所。但

現在這些海員招待所都消失了。回想當時，在PENNYFIELD有一間招待所，在WEST INDIA DOCK GATE也有一間呢！我還記得上岸後便在PENNYFIELD這招待所住和吃晚飯。在這招待所之不遠轉角處便是一所古老之酒舖，再遠兩英碼便是一中國餐館，那便是目前的警局。這餐館與亞世亞石油公司打了合同，專為華僑海員供食用。每天我們到那處吃兩餐，早一餐，晚一餐。就算沒有船等候我們，我們也要往那處報到，以防有船來和需要我們上船工作。

在一月三日我參加了一運油船工作，是在SOUTHAMPTON下船的。當時合同是三年，三年後便要離職回新加坡，我要看這世界便決定下海。當我離開我的家，我的小孩子是二歲大和小女兒剛出世。我帶了些冬天及夏天衣物便離家。在SOUTHAMPTON那處才買一些鞋子。當時一英鎊可買三雙鞋子是KAY'S牌鞋子。每當離船上岸時，海員是自己要找尋地方居住，公司附薪金是每星期六鎊五十便士。

Book No. 9219

DISCHARGE SLIPS

NAME IN CHINESE CHARACTERS

江亞佳

NAME IN PHONETICS

KUNG AH KHAI
9219



由 Southampton 航行到 TRINIDAD, 由 TRINIDAD 航行回來英國之利物甫。下船後, 船入船塢修理, 公司發薪金給我們。當時我在利物甫住了一個星期。上岸之後公司叫我作海員翻譯一職位。在辦工室工作兩個月之後, 便被派到 GLASGOW, GREENOCK 工作。在大戰前和大戰時都常有護航艦隊, 我要和代理商一起工作。當水手到步時他們之合同便完結, 上岸辦入境手續。由一九四零年至一九四二年我在 GREENOCK 和亞世亞石油公司工作, 後來便派往利物甫工作, 主辦四百個中國海員之事務。工作包括做文件, 接排海員往船之機房工作或船之餐構作等事務。在辦工室工作之職員都是英國人。我們有分公司的, 若有海員想往總公司, 我便帶他們去見「監督」。在這辦工室之樓上是有幾位海員宿舍。有時「監督」打電話來給我, 說:

「康先生, 我需要一些機房水手, 一些餐構水手, 因為兩天內, 便有船到, 快！」

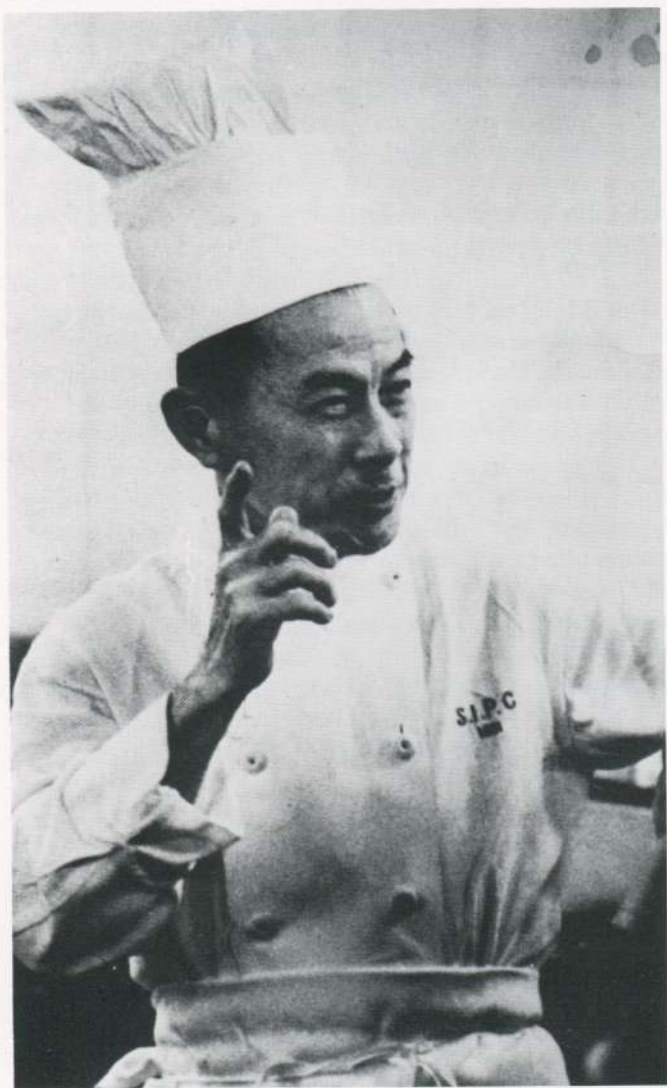
放下電話之後, 便立刻接排一切。往海員宿舍找尋適當人選。吩咐他們往辦工室報到和視看醫生, 接受身體檢查。若任何海員身體健康不合格, 便要另找其他之海員。

回想當年, 一九四二年, 在利物甫工作時, 時常帶一些中國海員東奔西跑, 因他們不能講英語之故。當然公司是附我的車費等費用的。

一九四四年, 日軍攻打新加坡, 我的太太和兩孩子都被炸死。後來我在利物甫再結婚, 記得在 ST. ANNE'S 教堂舉行婚禮, 那天是一九四四年六月二十四。到了那時期, 公司尚寄我一半之薪金往新加坡的!

第二次世界大戰結束後, 中國海員都回國去, 但我是由新加坡來的, 便是英國籍公民, 當時有出世紙做證明。其他海員不是英國籍, 便要返回中國。那時期, 很多中國人由中國往新加坡, 由新加坡才上船航海的。





This is how we resumed contact. After I had worked for Shell for 35 years, I retired and took over a restaurant to occupy my time. I had been working in the kitchens of the London Shell Centre, often cooking Chinese food for the directors there. The Sanitary Inspector came to my restaurant and said I had to repaint everything. I said I couldn't do all this by myself, cooking as well, but he said I must or he would not renew my licence. A seaman I knew said he would get someone to come and paint it. One of the men he sent along was my sister's husband's brother. He had been asking everywhere but he could not find me. At last he said, "Do you know this name?" I said, "Yes, it is my sister." He said, "She wants to know how you are", and went quickly to phone my niece and her husband, who were living here in London with their two children. My niece came straightaway to see me, and together we telephoned her mother, my sister, and I was in touch with her again after so long. She wanted me to go out to Singapore with her daughter who was going soon. She said, "We looked everywhere for you, but we could not find you. Are you coming out to Singapore?" I did not go then and shortly afterwards I heard from my niece that my sister had passed away and would have liked to see me.

在利物浦再婚之後，我時常也希望與我在新加坡之哥哥和姐姐通信，但他們很少來信。後來我發現原來我的妻子常把新加坡寄來之信掉下，因她恐怕我的親人會問我取錢之故！一天，我得知原來我的哥哥想聯絡我，因為他的女兒常來倫敦找我但找不到！他們都以為我可能用戰亂被炸死了呢。

在一九七零年，我便退休離開了亞世里石油公司，我開了一間餐館。一天，衛生人員來看我的餐館，他們告訴我，我必需把餐館重新油漆。但我告訴他我沒有時間，因我要煮餐。但他們說若不油漆便不再發牌照！我認識一位海員，他說他會去找人與我裝修，後來，來幫助我的人之中有一個原來是我姐夫的兄弟，他也曾找了我很久，但找不到呢！你真巧不巧。他對我說：

「你認識這個名字嗎？」

「我當然認識啦，這是我姐姐之名。」我答他。

他說：

「她想知道你現在怎樣，我們找你很久了！」我姐夫之兄弟立刻打電話去給我之姪女和姪女之丈夫，原來他們都在倫敦居住。我姪女之丈夫是一位醫生，他們已有兩孩子，一男一女呢！當天，我姪女立刻來見我。我姪女問我：

「叔叔，你想回新加坡嗎？」

「我不想。」我回答她。

她說她會打長途電話給我姐姐告訴此事！三十八年後，我再和我的姐姐聯絡！在電話中我姐問：

「我們找得你很苦呢！你想回新加坡嗎？倘若想來的話，便和我的女兒及她丈夫一起回來好了，因他們將快來新加坡呢。」

我決定不返回故鄉了，當我的姪女們回了新加坡不久便寫了一信給我，通知我，我的姐

姐去世了，很可惜她不能夠見我最後之一面。

我的姪女再問我：

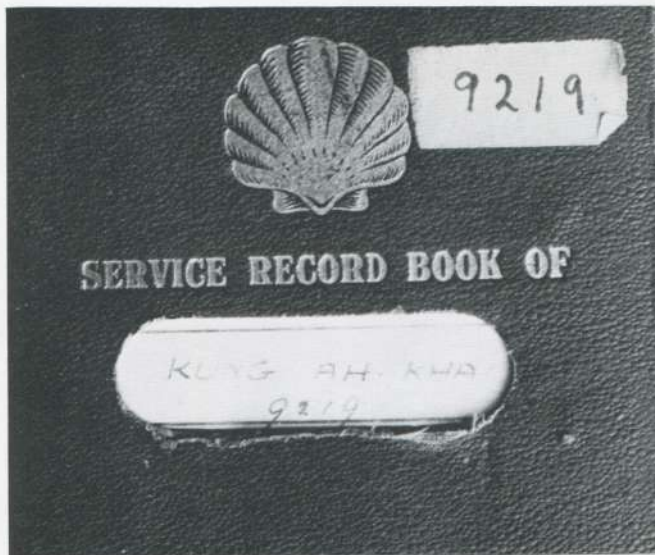
「你將來會改變主意嗎？請回來看看我們一家吧」
最後，在一九七七我決定回鄉看看我故鄉家人。去了新加坡之後也往馬來西亞一行，找到了我兒婿。到達新加坡時覺得一切都改變了。我像一個生面人一樣。全部的店子也变了，路也变了，街名也改了！我姪女一家人叫我在他們之家定居，但那時我覺得我住慣了英國，又不喜歡東南亞之熱的氣候。在新加坡時華氏85°至95°，非常炎熱呢！當你在說了身之後不久便要立刻再洗身，因流汗太多之故！我的太太是受不了那樣熱之天氣的，因此我們不在新加坡定居呢！

回想當年，我在亞世亞石油公司做了三十五年工作然後退休，用了這餐館來有些精神寄托。記得以前也在亞世亞做過廚子一職位的。



DESCRIPTION SIGNALEMENT		* Wife Femm	
Profession	CHEF		
Place and date of birth	SINGAPORE		
Year of date of entrance	1.6.1942		
Country of Residence	ENGLAND		
Place of Residence			
Height	5ft 2 in		
Colour of eyes	BROWN		
Colour of hair	BLACK		
Special particularities			
*CHILDREN ENFANTS			
Name Nom	Date of birth	Date of entrance	Sex Sexe
K. Kung			

Cancelled (PHOTO)



RECORD OF SERVICE on Board the		RECORD OF SERVICE on Board the	
S.		S.	
Rating	EXAMINED & FOUND PHYSICALLY FIT	Rating	No. 9219 KUNG AH KWA
Date and Place of Engagement	5 JUN 1944	Date and Place of Engagement	being a contract signed rating has resigned
Date and Place of Discharge	10 MAY 1945	Date and Place of Discharge	under the contract commenced on 10 July 1945
General Conduct		General Conduct	
Ability		Ability	
Signature Master		Signature Master	

大戰結束後，我由利物南被轉到倫敦之總公司工作。當時他們知道我留作主侍應一職，便與我找一份有海峽之工作。那時在LEADENHALL街工作至一九六一年，然後亞世亞公司中心便興起來，增加屋宇。我們把所有廚房合成一個。記得當時，每天中午餐餐供給六七百個人吃，那是西餐，但有些監督及主管等高級職員皆去過東南亞之地方，喜歡吃中國餐，當我在那處工作時，他們便有捨餐吃！

我的朋友大多數是在餐館工作之廣東人。我曾經回過新加坡三次，一九七七、七八年中國新年，也回過一次，在英國沒有中國新年呢！我喜歡看大戲，當我年少時，常看別人做戲，那時是京戲呢。大約十六年前，中國派來一戲班，很多英人也喜歡去看。

我在這裏的生活也很好，我的太太照顧我得週到，若我想去外面走走，便去！



At last, in 1977, I made up my mind to go over and see the family. It had all changed. It was just like being a stranger. All the houses where I had been before as a child had all changed. It was all new flats, new roads and even new names. They did ask me to stay, but I have been here in Britain such a long time that I am used to the climate, and over there it is very very warm. Sometimes it is 95° which is why my wife would not like to go. She is English, my third wife, and she cannot stand the heat. I am happy to live here, and she looks after me very well. I met my wife in the restaurant in 1976 and we were married in 1977.

In old Chinatown most English and Chinese people know me very well, because I have watched them grow up. When they see me on the street they say hello. They call me Jimmy. Other Chinese people of my age don't mix with English people. My own generation, I only know about six or seven people now. A lot of them have passed away. When I came to London there were many more, but some of them went back and some passed away.

We have got a Chinese club now where the old people are always invited to go for Chinese New Year or any big Chinese occasions to have tea and cakes and a big dinner. And this year they have started carrying the dragon through the streets in old Chinatown. If the younger people ask me about the old customs I will talk about it.

Now I don't work any more, as I like to go out. I have my free bus pass and I like to look around everywhere. I like to travel, see the shops and so on. My best time is June, July and August. I go out, come back to eat and then go out again. If they are busy in the cafe, I sometimes help them out. They have been good friends to me in the past.

I still see my niece and nephew; they often come to see me. Their generation, when they come to London to work, they like to go home after one or two years to see their family. When they come to England and their children are born here, they speak both languages. In school they are taught English and at home they talk Chinese. That is very important and how it should be. They are learning Mandarin in a Chinese class too, so they know their own culture.

我目前的太太是我的第三位太太，在一九七六年與她在餐館第一次見面，在一九七七年便結婚。在葛蘭人街很多華僑及英人都認識我，我有倒很多人由少至大呢！他們在街見到我，都知我打招呼，他們都叫我 Jimmy。其他很多中國華僑和我年紀差不多的，都不喜歡與西人多交際。很多華僑，老的，年青的，都喜歡賭錢。倘若想找他們，往賭場便找倒他們。我不喜歡賭錢的。和我年紀一樣大的，在這區的老華僑有六七十人，其他的都去世了。記得，我初到倫敦時是一九四八年五月，當時有四至五十個華僑是和我年紀差不多。後來，有些回鄉，有些死去了。我們這裏附近有一個會所，新年時便請我們到那處慶祝，飲茶等等。舊年尚有舞獅子助興呢！否則在 GERRARD 唐人街才有慶祝的。若果年青的人問及我中國之舊習俗，我也會談一談的。我相信最老之華僑是一個九十一歲之老人在老人院居住。他沒有家人，說很少英語。

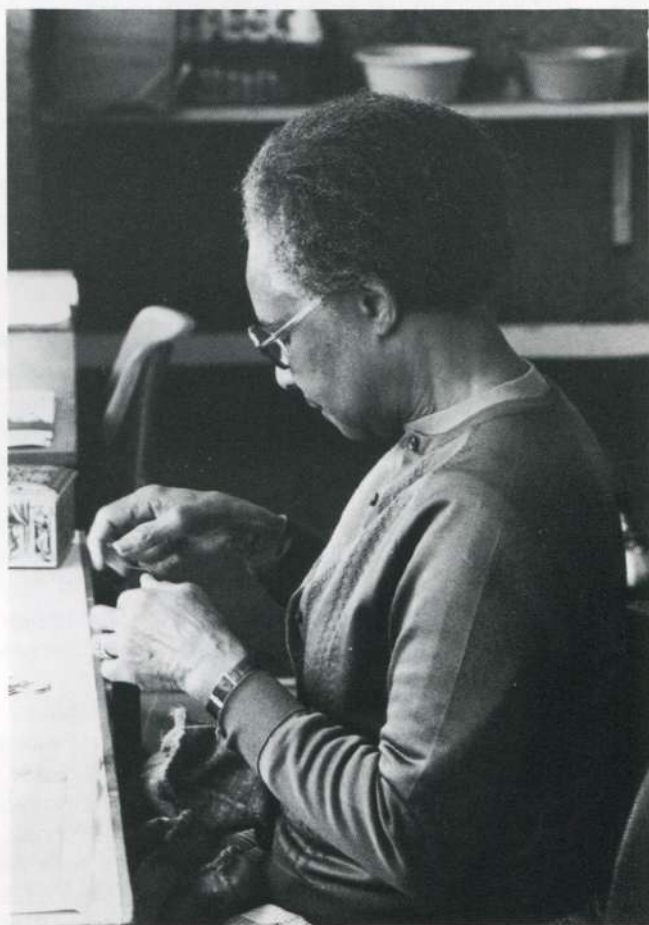
另外一位老人我認識名叫 Billy 叔，他能說英語，他在一九一四年第一次世界大戰便來了英國。

退休之後，我用三件鐘表作本錢買了一餐館，我的一生也很快樂。目前我沒有工作我喜歡出外走走。我有巴士証，時常外出。六、七、八月天氣很好。若果那所外賣店不夠人用，我便去幫他們之忙，以前我在那裏工作一年，後來因病入院，便不再工作。我以前在外賣店之櫃檯後收銀的！外賣店之人對我很好。我現在常見我的姪女和兒媳們，我的一個姪女與一會計師結了婚，另一個在寫字樓工作。他們常來探訪我。

現在年青的一代來倫敦工作，一兩年後便回家探親或渡假。當他們在這裏有了兒女，兒女能說英語及廣東話。在學校說英語，在家說唐話。能說兩種語言是很有用和重要的。將來年青之一群會認識大家，一同快樂地在英國生活下去的。

——完——

THE CARIBBEAN



My grandmother was the manager for the white people's guest house. I lived with her from when I was eight. The lodgers at the guest house used to take me to school and bring me back. I was the only child there. Then, at a certain age, my grandmother resigned and went home. I got married and I started a business. I opened and ran a bar and grocery while my husband was working on the estate.

The estate was a huge place, a massive place where all the rum and the sugar is being made. We lived in the small town which served the estate. People came from different parishes all over Jamaica to work there, and they were my customers, especially on Friday nights.

When the owner of the estate died, it passed on to his two sons. One had a brain like a calabash cup and he couldn't manage, so he had to get a book-keeper for this, a manager for that, and he goes away all the time, all over the place on holidays. So the management, these great men with plenty of education, were grabbing everything. Everything just melts out, and the business just run down like that. Everybody stop working, say a hundred people not working this month, and within another month they are laying off a couple of hundred more. The tractor department, where my husband worked, closed down as well.

He thought, "Well, I can work with heavy machinery. I can get work in England with heavy machinery." He was a good mechanic. He could scrap down a tractor in pieces. I've seen him. I've stayed all night with him, see him scrap it and put it up on the ground there without any book, because he couldn't read the book, and that's how he was. But when he came over here, he had to go to a factory and work for £8, which was not even enough to buy food.



I couldn't convince him not to come. I didn't want to come at all. I had my feet on the ground. But my mother called me down and say "You have to go. You have to make sacrifices, sell the business, and go over to join him." In those days, you obey your parents, don't mind how old you are. My dear blood nearly come out of my eye. It's only blood that didn't come out of my eye.

When I came, he was very sad he didn't have a proper house to put me into. The landlady had said we couldn't walk through the front door, we had to go through the back, and no-one could visit there. He bought a right big basin, and said, "It's in here you have to wash, cos they are not going to let you use the bathroom." I wanted so



badly to go home, but my mother said, "Stay where you are. You're not coming home. That's where you belong." So I carry on from there. I just pick myself up and carry on.

The first job I find was sixteen miles out of Leeds where we were living. I am not afraid of talking to anybody, so I just say to the bus conductor, "Where are you going? What kind of jobs are going there?" He tell me there's a coat factory near the airport, so I just whip on. When I got to this factory, the manager came and I tell him I want to earn. I tell him I have no references, never worked in a factory before, but I will take any job he's got. "Suppose I give you a try", he said, "what time could you start?" I said, "Now. I've got an apron in my bag, another pair of shoes and sandwiches. I came with the intention of working." He couldn't believe it. So I started.

The next day he called over a woman. He said to me, "This is Marion. She's understanding, she's one of the best. You don't have to go to college to be an intelligent woman and she is. Sit with her and eat with her." And if you go to my room now, you see Marion's daughter's photo and all the family. And I move with that family on and on. I've been to Scarborough for weekends with them; all over with them. After she left the factory, she came to visit me every Saturday. When I eventually got my house, she showed me where all the wholesale places were, so I can get curtains and china and bedding.

There was a time when I took a job at the hospital. It was not a set job. Anywhere they had a bank-up of muck, they sent me there. I was so fed up. I had to stop. I couldn't take any more. Then Marion says to me, "You don't have to look for any jobs. I'll take you somewhere." She takes me to the Town Hall and I register for four children. I am interested in small children. They sleep with me Monday to Friday, and go home Friday evening to Sunday evening. Also I took two students as lodgers. I went to America, taking two children to their mother. The second time I went out there, I wanted to stay, but my husband wrote to me saying, "No dice. I am not coming to America. I told you before you leave. And I am not allowing Jane to come either." Jane is my daughter and she had joined us in England when she was twelve, and she also wrote to me in America saying "Please come back Mum." And when I got their letters I had to come back.

We got on all right, my husband and me. We used to go to a show or go to the pictures. We didn't have a car, but we'd take the bus and we'd just tour, stopping to have a meal somewhere. He is dead now, and I am living near my daughter in London.

M

I was brought up in Guyana with my mother and grandmother. My mother had to go to work. My grandmother looked after me. My grandmother was a good cook — She could take nothing and make something out of it.

My favourite meal was metagee. The main vegetables, you put plantains, cassava, sweet potatoes — you have to be careful to add the potatoes when it is nearly finished.

You put the plantains at the bottom. Then you grate coconut and squeeze the milk through a linen cloth over the vegetables. When the plantains at the bottom begin to burn you mix your duff and add it. If you have it, you can put dried fish or meat in to steam. Oh we children used to fight for the bottom of the pot!



Evening — dusk used to be the best, the favourite time — After you had dinner. In New Amsterdam all the houses were built on stilts. We had a little porch and we had a gallery. My grandmother used to sing with us "Jesus bids us shine" and "Lead kindly light". We had one of those old gramophones. We used to sing, with the beatles chu-chuing in the background and the people next door — children screaming, dogs barking or somebody swearing at somebody.

And in the mornings, early mornings, cocks crowing, freshness at 5 o'clock in the morning, cocks crowing, hens clucking — in the yard we had pigeon peas, ochres, boulange mangoes, star-apples, custard apples, sapodilla — and papaya. We used every bit of the papaya — the green leaf, we used to wrap a papaya leaf around meat to soften it. I tell you, you wrap a papaya leaf round your leg and in ten minutes it start to decay — the leaf has that strength. I didn't believe it. I tried it on once and you see it straight away. Many plants have strong powers.

My grandmother died 34 years ago. Where we lived, in New Amsterdam, there were lots of Americans and Canadians, the big companies. It was a small place but so many churches! Sunday morning when the bells start ringing you can hear them from one end of town to another. You don't hear that now. Then there would be such activity you would rush to church.

It was an advantage being brought up in Guyana as far as living in England was concerned. There was some common ground because Guyana was a British colony and some of the old habits die hard. We used to have to learn a lot about Britain in school: British history, geography, etc. So when I went to Manchester I did not feel a stranger. There were a few who were very suspicious, but after they got to know you, they accepted you.

I began to feel different after I came down to London. It was then I started feeling this way. I don't know the cause. Sometimes I really feel as if I don't belong here any more. I came to Britain because I wanted to see a new country, get some experience, restart life all over again. Other countries didn't attract me. No, I could contribute here because it was a British country and I was British. I still am.



I've been back to **Guyana** four times in twenty-four years. If Guyana was the way it was when I left it in 1960, I would have gone back, you know, taken my time. But not now. Everything has deteriorated as I see it. It's everything, everything, the running of the country, the problems, the economy; to me everything is gone. Many people there feel people like us are darned lucky to be out of it all, y'know, and that is true.

I like to mix — I like to know people. I wouldn't like to stay only in my community. It's no use being a multiracial person and just be in a ghetto. I would be most unhappy if it was my people alone. I have all sorts of friends.

So the dread I have has to do with separateness, and some of those geriatric wards. I've been there to see some old people. — They are there because they've got the age — they look so woebegone — and being a bachelor with no relatives — I can imagine myself like that — that's why I worry.

You see this luncheon place? On the other side of the road is the real thing run by the government. Black people are not welcome. Even white people don't go there. I have a friend who says she doesn't go there. It's too cliquy and they gossip. When I think of these things I start to feel a lot of things. A lot of Caribbean people feel they are outsiders — but they have to come out of their shells more, become more like themselves. Some are tired of overcoming difficulties — tired of trying — tired of hanging on to hope. Well I try to keep my body as healthy as possible, and if it breaks down I hope to die.

I love Hyde Park on a lovely summer's day. I usually sit under a tree because I like to be near the sun. I sit under a nice shady tree reading a book, watching the other people passing by or the kids y'know playing with a ball, people with their kids — because that is a pleasant sight. I walk all the way. It's nice, especially if the day is sunny.

My father was from Barbados and my mother and her family are from Lodge Village in Guyana. My Grandfather came from India. My Grandfather was Indian. My family was all mixed as most Guyanese are, you hardly find a pure black. All mixtures Indian, Chinese, Portuguese, Cubans, blacks, they all mix.

We never knew any prejudice. We all lived side by side.

I grew up with Indians. They are very clean. They used to eat out of brass pans and drink water out of brass cups. They used to get the ashes from the fire and scrub these brass cups and pots. They used to get them very clean. We got along quite well. We got along so nice with Indian people. You never gave it a thought that they were Indian people and you were black. Of course a lot of me family are Indians.

In my time you had to pay for secondary education. My mother was the kind of person, she will educate the boys but not the girls. That was wrong. I had to come out of school and learn to sew. Parents would say that we girls have to learn to cook and sew, because we can then be dressmaker or something. I loved teaching. I wanted to be a teacher. So many women left school to do service and domestic work.

At home I done a bit of everything. My brother had a business that he started at home selling perfume, then when he open the business I went and worked for him. Not for long, because I don't stay in one place for too long. I did most of the work with the customers in the shop.

Then I done a bit of domestic work and after that the last place that I worked was with me brother and that was before I come here. During the War I was with the A.T.S. for eight years in the food section as an orderly there. Oh I done some shorthand and typing.



I came here 21st October 1961.

Finding somewhere to live was very hard. When you see the little mice running all over the little room.

Back home everybody got their own house, so when I heard about a flat, I thought it would have so many rooms. So when I come here and find a husband and wife and children in this one room and you call this a flat, I was disappointed.

I had that experience of living in one room and that room was like a box 8ft x 6ft. I had to do everything in that

room. I fell off the bed more times than I can care to remember. I remember cooking a meal one day in that same room and I put the meal on a table and the whole table collapsed. I cried.

The picture I had of England in my mind's eye when I left my home in Georgetown in Guyana. I was so disappointed I couldn't believe. I said to myself is this the place they call England? I was disappointed.

When some people came here and saw the conditions they went crazy. I know a lot of educated people I saw on the buses, because they couldn't get into the Civil Service. I saw fella I knew from back home. He was a guard on the train, educated man, Junior and Senior Cambridge which is very high, and he was at the back of the train. His education was the same as here because all the papers and exams came from here, Cambridge.

When I came here and I notice this sort of prejudice, I couldn't believe it because you never have time to notice things like that in your country.

It's just here you know.

I then got a job with London Transport 14th December 1961. I spent 20 years and 4 months with the Tube. I retired two years ago. I didn't come to this place to stay that long anyway. I have no regrets mind you, because I have learnt so much with the every-day people who come through your barrier. You talk to them and I tell you something. A white person would come through and talk to you, a black collector, more than they would talk to a white one, because the black man is always listening. He has always got a listening ear. He would listen to somebody's troubles. I am a good listener. But white people don't bother me, I don't feel uncomfortable with them.

Guyana is different now. I went home 11 years ago and it's not the British Guiana I used to know. I mean all the beauty has gone out of it.

I planned to go home after retirement a few years ago.

I kept ringing up me family and they say "You better stay where you are, the conditions here are terrible". Now you know if you have got a British Passport you got to have a visa to go home. You can't go home without it to Guyana now.

England is not a home for us, it's a different sort of thing here anyway, because here if you want to go and see somebody, probably they are at work. And even if that person wasn't at work, they are not working, you have to get on the phone and ring them and tell them that you are coming. Back home it's not like that, you jump on a bike, we ride a lot of bikes back home. You can always go to this person's house, here you've got to plan make appointment and things like that.

What I miss most from my youth in Guyana is the way of life. I miss the freedom. I knew a lot of people back home, nice people you know, when you want something done you just up there and tell them so, so, so.

Why I stay here? Well you saw more opportunity really here. I can be a woman here. I can get a house. I can save money. The conditions were financially different to home. Well this country, there is more work for you.

Also I had two daughters back home. One of them marry an English man there and they came to live in England and the younger one she got married to a Guyana boy and they also came over here. So the kids are here, so I am stuck.

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During the war, I worked back home in Jamaica for the Red Cross and the A.T.S. Many people came to Jamaica as refugees during the war. Jamaica is just a little hill, and ships came and hid underneath you know, and we workers had to go on the ships during the night and take off the wounded and sometimes the dead.



After the war, we were invited into this country by the Government. Enoch Powell was one of them that sanctioned for the West Indians to come to help clean up this country after the war. Well, I was at home in Jamaica doing nothing at the time, so I decided to come, expecting a decent job and to be treated as an equal. That's what I believed, but when I came here and see the picture, it was a different, different thing altogether. What do I get? I go to Mile End Hospital and get a job there, and I was placed on the corridor with a bucket, a scrubbing brush and a mat to kneel on. I never do that type of work in all my life. I cried night and I cried day. Coming into this country was the hardest work I have ever done.

I remember when I went to Mile End Hospital, a little old woman, a nice little woman, she take me, she look at my hand, and she couldn't understand. She said, "How is it that the middle of your hand is white and your skin is black?" She feels my hair and I just sit and let her do that, and I said to myself, "poor thing". I would not say that she was ignorant. When you don't know a thing, you just don't know, because they never learn anything in school about black people. Of course I knew about white people because I have them in my country, trying to get all that was in that country to bring it into this country.

When I was younger, I regretted coming here because the life I was living home I could not live here, but I am a woman that trusts in God and I fight my way out from when I came in 1956 up to now. I am all right now, thank God. I have nothing, but I am happy because I feel peace within myself.

What I see here and I can't come to it is this. Back home, a grandmother looked after the grandchildren and lived in the house. So then, if the grandmother took sick, the family is there to look after her. We don't have to send our grandmothers to homes. Grandchildren grow up to respect the grandmother, and anything that happens, those children are there to help. You see they support one another. This is still going on in Jamaica in the country, but not in the city. In the villages, say twelve or fourteen houses, everyone combines together, you are a family. If I need and you can help me, that's how we work it. We help one another. Grandmother plays a vital role as protector of that family. Grandfathers have their own role to play too, but grandmother, she is the greatest.

There is nothing like that here in England. I think they should not build all these old people's homes. Give the people a home that all the family can live together and die together. How nice it is for an old person in her bed with her grandchildren around her, and she die in peace with her grandchildren around her.



In Jamaica and in any other country where the white people are, we live together. There weren't colour question there. There were people that were in classes according to their financial standard, rich black person, rich white person or whatever, not colour. A person was just a person, in spite of what colour they are. And now, when we come here, we thought it would be the same. But that is where the barrier comes in. It's not us, because we let them in, but they won't let us in.

What could bring a change? Not a thing, not a thing as I see it. We have tried everything. Not a thing. They would have to open up. Then there would be a solution. What would make them open up? Well we don't know. We try conversation, offering a hand, it don't work, Conscience? We try all sort of different things. Imagine the days we go to the home, and they are there but they don't open the doors because they see your black face.

We are the ones who try, since we are used to that way of living there. We didn't want to form any barriers between them and us so we try to get in as much as we

can, but they give a smile here and they thinking something else there, so we couldn't get in.

Minister came to us. We were going to sing one day at a special service and our song was not called. The people was so much waiting for this song and at the end of the service, people came to us and said, "Why you didn't sing?", and we say until thence we don't know, because it was in the programme. So we find out from the Minister and he said our kind of music does not fit in so we couldn't get to sing. And from thence and on the groups of us that used to sing, that's finished. So we can't sing there, we have to sing on our balcony.

Do we care? No, we say "you stop us from singing there, we sing somewhere else" — but yes, we still care. There is a something, because we feel that because we are a person we shouldn't be treated in that way, and it does leave a feeling there and though we say, "Well, don't bother me. I don't mind about them." But there is still a something that's left there.





In the West Indies I would say they love dominoes and cricket. I don't know how it started. I used to make the dominoes as a sport. I used wire, cut the wood, heat up the wire and make the holes in the wood. Nobody taught me to play the game. I just stand up and watch and learn. Over here you don't slam the dominoes that much, because not everybody likes the noise that it makes. In the West Indies when you play you knock it loud. When you make noise, that's the way you get the sweetness of the game. When you play the game quiet it's not the same. You have to concentrate on the game because when you play you don't like to lose. You watch what your partner play, you get to know what he has. You play what he play and he play what you play. So you have to really concentrate on the game. This is a beautiful game. People come and sit and watch.