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The Dudley Refugee Committee and the Kindertransport, 1938–1945*

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Little is known about most of the local refugee committees formed in response to the government's announcement of the Kindertransport scheme and the subsequent creation of the Lord Baldwin Fund – there were at least 170 – apart from a few in places such as Manchester, Cambridge, Gloucester, Worthing, and York where records have survived.¹ The Dudley Refugee Committee was one of the first wave of committees. It was formed at a meeting of about twenty people convened by the Mayor of Dudley, Alderman A. Elliott Young, in December 1938.² It was formally constituted on 2 February 1939.³ The mayor was appointed the chairman, Mr. J. Barnsley vice-chairman, William Henry Tilley secretary, and George H. Dutfield treasurer. Among those on the committee were the Archdeacon of Dudley (the Ven. Dr. A. P. Shepherd), David C. Temple, Sybil Frood, Dr. Hans Honigmann, and James and Dorothy K. S. Rogers.⁴

One of the reasons why the Dudley Refugee Committee was among the first wave may have been because one of the founders, Honigmann, was a refugee himself. He had studied zoology and medicine at Heidelberg University and then at Breslau University where he was awarded a

1 Susan Cohen, "Voluntary Refugee Work in Britain, 1933–39: An Overview", *PaRD&S: Zeitschrift der Vereinigung für Jüdische Studien e.V.* 18 (2012): 21–34.

2 *Dudley Herald*, 25 Feb. 1939, 6.

3 Wiener Holocaust Library, London (hereafter, WHL), 27/29/167/253-254, Refugee Children's Movement: Report on the work of the Dudley Refugee Committee, 11 Dec. 1945.

4 *Dudley Herald*, 4 Feb. 1939, 2.

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doctorate in zoology and an M.D.⁵ His son Ernst later recalled that his father had worked tirelessly to help other persecuted Jews find refuge in Britain.⁶ Honigmann was the former Director of Breslau Zoo. He had been dismissed on 31 March 1934 because of the new antisemitic laws in Germany.⁷ His friend Julian Huxley (the brother of the writer Aldous) had worked with the Academic Assistance Council, the predecessor of the Society for the Protection of Science and Learning, to secure Honigmann a research position at London Zoo in 1935, funded by private donations including £200 from Honigmann's friend the City financier Walter H. Laband, and £50 a year from the Academic Assistance Council.⁸ Honigmann was joined by his wife and three sons. In early 1937 he secured the position of Scientific Adviser at the new Dudley Zoo which opened on 18 May of that year.⁹

Hans Honigmann continued to help other victims of Nazi persecution. In December 1938 he applied to the Home Office for permission for his cousin Antonie (Toni) Milch (née Honigmann) and her husband Dr. Werner Milch to join him in Dudley. Werner Milch was a fellow "non-Aryan Christian" incarcerated in a German concentration camp. His only hope of release was to secure a foreign visa to allow him and his wife to emigrate. Honigmann undertook to support and maintain his cousin and Milch.¹⁰ Honigmann's application was supported by another, more distant, relative, the émigré nuclear scientist Professor Rudolf Peierls.¹¹ It was eventually successful and the Milchs took up residence with the Honigmanns in late summer 1939.¹² Later that year Werner

5 University of Oxford, Bodleian Library (hereafter, BOD), Ms. S.P.S.L., HONIGMANN, Professor Hans (1891–1943; hereafter, BOD-HONIGMANN), 502/4, fols. 415–16, Hans Honigmann Curriculum Vitae (c. 1934).

6 Ernst Honigmann, *Together-ness: Episodes from the Life of a Refugee* (Newcastle-upon-Tyne: E. A. J. Honigmann, 2006), 155.

7 BOD-HONIGMANN, 502/4, fols. 415–16, Hans Honigmann Curriculum Vitae (c. 1934).

8 *New York Sun*, 5 April 1933, 37; BOD-HONIGMANN, 502/4, fol. 429, Julian Huxley to C. M. Skepper, 4 Jan. 1935; fol. 474, Walter Adams to Ernest N. Cooper, 30 Dec. 1936.

9 Zoological Society of London Library, Minutes of Council, vol. 30, 173–4 (14 June 1935); 434 (14 March 1937); *Dudley Herald*, 21 May 1937, 9.

10 BOD, Ms. S.P.S.L., Home Office File: W. Milch, 437/3, fol. 523, Hans Honigmann to Home Office, 16 Dec. 1938.

11 BOD, Ms. S.P.S.L., MILCH, Dr. Werner Johannes (1901–1950; hereafter BOD-MILCH), 300/6, fol. 283, Rudolf Peierls to Esther Simpson, 13 Dec. 1938; email from Paul Honigmann, 13 Nov. 2016.

12 The National Archives (TNA), 1939 Register; BOD-MILCH, 300/6, fol. 285, Hans Honigmann to Esther Simpson, 7 Sept. 1939.

Milch secured an appointment as Lektor in German at University College Exeter.¹³

Two of Honigmann's three sons, his eldest son Friedrich (Fred, b. Breslau, 9 August 1926)¹⁴ and his middle son Ernst (Ernst, b. Breslau, 29 November 1927),¹⁵ had been pupils at Dudley Grammar School since 1937. Two of the schoolmasters at Dudley Grammar School were founders of the Dudley Refugee Committee: the "eccentric" headmaster, David C. Temple,¹⁶ and James Rogers, the second master and head of the science department. Furthermore the "charismatic" head of the arts department, James Mainwaring,¹⁷ was actively involved with the work of committee. Temple had been educated at the Glasgow Academy, Shrewsbury School, and Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge.¹⁸ He was committed to "a strong, living tradition of social service".¹⁹ Temple was headmaster of the school from 1934 to 1962.²⁰

The Dudley Refugee Committee established the Mayor of Dudley's Fund for Refugees, a branch of the Lord Baldwin Fund for Refugees. It was agreed at a meeting on 26 January 1939 that the Mayor's Fund would raise £1000 to pay for four years' maintenance and education of five children aged fourteen or older for four years. The children would be given a secondary school education, and the boys would probably later attend Dudley Technical College. At the December 1938 meeting there had been those who had urged that charity began at home, to which the mayor had replied, "So, perhaps it should, but there is no reason why it should remain there." The initial appeal issued by the mayor for donations did not receive a good response. Only about £100 was raised. However, by late February promises of about £700 or £800 had been secured.²¹ Dudley Grammar School was to make a significant contribution to the appeal. Temple made an initial guarantee on behalf of the school of £150, which it was estimated

13 BOD-MILCH, 300/6, fol. 289, Werner Milch to Esther Simpson, 6 Oct. 1939.

14 TNA, HO 334/191/32557, Naturalisation Certificate, Friedrich Johannes Reinhard Honigmann, 27 Sept. 1947.

15 TNA, HO 396/39/58-9, Home Office, Aliens Department, Internees at Liberty in UK, Honigmann, Ernst Anselm Joachim, 15 Feb. 1944.

16 Interview with Fred Austin and Graham Dean, 27 Feb. 2019.

17 *The Dudleian* 37, no. 3 (1940): 91; 42, no. 1 (1944): 2, 11-12; email from Fred Honigmann, 3 April 2014.

18 Hugh Watson and D. C. Temple, *Dudley Grammar School: A Chronicle of Four Centuries (1562-1962)* (Dudley: Grammar School, 1962), 40.

19 D. C. Temple, "The Public School in the Slums", *Journal of Education and Social World* 61, no. 1 (1929): 36, 38.

20 *The Times*, 21 Oct. 1966, 2.

21 *Dudley Herald*, 25 Feb. 1939, 6; WHL, 27/29/167/253-254.

would keep one boy at the school from the age of fifteen to the age of eighteen at a cost of £50 per year, including full board and school fees. By July 1940 the boys and their parents had raised £128 10s and thus the school was close to meeting the sum guaranteed by the headmaster.²²

Dudley Grammar School's playing fields adjoined those of the Dudley Girl's High School²³ where Honigmann's youngest son, Paul (b. Breslau, 13 September 1933),²⁴ attended the school's kindergarten, where he recalls the "teachers were kind, and excellent."²⁵ The headmistress of the Girl's High School, Sybil Frod, was a founder of the Dudley Refugee Committee. Paul Honigmann was introduced to Frod on his first day at school.²⁶ She served as the committee's secretary in succession to Tilley and wrote its final report in December 1945. Frod had been appointed headmistress of Dudley Girls' High School in 1914 after a distinguished career at Cambridge University. She held this post until her retirement in 1941. Frod was responsible for the expansion of the High School from a small unit into one of prominence in the area.²⁷ She believed children had rights. Each form elected its president. The girls made their own rules. There was a school council – the pupils and teachers each had one vote, which meant the teachers could be outvoted. But the pupils were too sensible to do so. One of the Kinder who attended the High School later recalled that Frod was "communistic". Indeed, every summer Frod spent her holiday with a family in the Soviet Union. Her friendship with the Soviet diplomat Maxim Litvinov and his family allowed her to travel much more extensively in the Soviet Union than most Western visitors. She was a member of the Russia Today Society, categorized by the historian Martin Kitchen as a communist organization. Like Temple, Frod was committed to social service.²⁸

Before the Second World War most children in Britain left school at the

22 *The Dudleian* 37, no. 3 (1940): 96.

23 Paul Honigmann Memoir (unpublished draft ms., c. 2014), ch. 2, 13, private archive.

24 TNA, HO 334/232/3219, Naturalisation Certificate, Andreas Peter Paul Honigmann, 3 Nov. 1947.

25 Email from Paul Honigmann, 26 March 2014; Paul Honigmann Memoir, ch. 2, 9.

26 Paul Honigmann Memoir, ch. 2, 13.

27 *Who's Who in Worcestershire* (Hereford: Wilson & Phillips, 1935), 58; Education Department, Reports from University Colleges (London, 1899), 225; *Dudley Herald*, 8 May 1954, 5.

28 Visual History Archive, USC Shoah Foundation, Interview 32124, Liesl Silverstone, 16 July 1997; http://sfi.usc.edu/search_the_archive (accessed 4 April 2014); *Tamworth Herald*, 12 June 1943, 3; 26 June 1943, 5; D. Greer, "1940–1950", *The Cornflower* 49 (1960): 10; Martin Kitchen, *A World in Flames* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2013), 213.

age of fourteen.²⁹ The Movement for the Care of Children from Germany lacked the funds to pay for the education of children above the school-leaving age and instead directed the Kinder aged fourteen and older into training for working-class jobs. The Dudley Committee in contrast encouraged the Kinder it sponsored to aspire to higher education and the middle-class professions.

The first Kind arrived in Dudley on 30 January 1939 from the Dovercourt refugee camp in Essex. Kurt Gerhard Richard Flossmann (18 September 1924–11 October 1976), a Protestant of Jewish descent from Berlin, was the fourteen-year old son of Erich Anton Georg Flossmann, a commercial traveller, and Irma Flossmann. His father had died in 1937 but his mother was still alive. He was accommodated in “Lingwood”, the Grammar School’s boarding house, under the supervision of the housemaster, Dr. Mainwaring, and his wife. Flossman had learned English in a Berlin secondary school until Jews were no longer allowed to attend state schools, and had not quite lost the language. He entered Form V Lower Science. As a highly intelligent boy, he quickly relearned English under the skilful tuition of his classmates and was taught the mysteries of scouting and football. He was also to win awards for swimming. Flossmann was befriended by Dr. Honigmann’s son Fred and was frequently a guest at their family home, the first-floor flat at Castle Hill House.³⁰ Fred Honigmann recalls that all three of the boys sponsored by the Dudley Committee were frequent guests. Flossmann was slightly more reserved than the other two. However, Fred Honigmann cannot recollect whether the popularity of his family or the free access the garden back gate of his home gave to the zoological gardens was the bigger attraction.³¹

Flossmann left the grammar school in July 1941 after achieving a school certificate to take up an engineering apprenticeship with Louis Marx & Company, Ltd., the Dudley subsidiary of an American multinational toy manufacturer.³² Although the Dudley Refugee Committee would have paid for his further education at the Dudley Technical College, it appears that he preferred to pay his own way. In 1942 he secured a position with the Shropshire, Worcestershire, and Staffordshire Electric Power Company.

29 *The Guardian*, 22 April 2014, 32.

30 *The Dudleian* 36, no. 2 (1939): 58; *Dudley Herald*, 4 Feb. 1939, 2; *The Dudleian* 39, no. 1 (1941): 16; email from Paul Honigmann, 26 March 2014; TNA, 1939 Register.

31 Email from Fred Honigmann, 3 April 2014.

32 *London Gazette*, 5 April 1935, 2355; *The Dudleian* 39, no. 1 (1941): 40, 21; *New York Times*, 6 Feb. 1982, 1: 16.

Four years later he was awarded a higher national certificate in mechanical engineering.³³

The second Kind, Fritz Kreisel (b. Graz, Austria, 12 January 1925), the fourteen-year old son of Heinrich Kreisel, a Galician Jewish snailmonger, and Berta Kreisel, arrived in Dudley on 13 March 1939. Fritz's parents were among a group of Jews who were allowed by the German government to emigrate from the German Reich to Palestine in late summer 1940. They were subsequently detained by the British off the coast of Cyprus. Then they were briefly interned at the Atlit Detention Camp near Haifa, Palestine, before being deported to Mauritius in December 1940, where they were incarcerated for the remainder of the war. The Kreisels were returned to Palestine in August 1945. The prolonged detention in Mauritius probably contributed to Berta Kreisel's premature death aged forty-nine in Jerusalem in December 1950, and probably Heinrich (Zvi) Kreisel's death some time earlier too.³⁴ Fritz had arrived in Britain at Harwich on 12 January with his brother Georg and had initially been accommodated at the Dovercourt refugee camp. Like Flossmann, Kreisel was also accommodated at "Lingwood". He spoke quite good English and was placed in Form V Lower Arts. The Mayor's Refugee Committee took responsibility for his maintenance and education for the next four years.³⁵ Fritz Kreisel completed his education in July 1941, achieving a school certificate, and became a salesman with Hills & Steele, a popular bazaar store in Wolverhampton. He subsequently entered the employ of Stone's Radio, a national chain store, also in Wolverhampton.³⁶

Georg Kreisel (b. Graz, 15 September 1923, d. Salzburg, 1 March 2015) arrived in Dudley on 1 April 1939 from Dovercourt, which had closed at the end of March so that it could revert to its normal function as a summer holiday camp.³⁷ Like his brother Fritz and Flossmann, he was

33 *The Dudleian* 44, no. 1 (1946): 32.

34 *Adressenbuch der Landeshauptstadt Graz* (Graz: Verlag Styria, 1938), 827; Genevieve Pitot, *The Mauritian Shekel: The Story of the Jewish Detainees in Mauritius, 1940–1945* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2000); United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Library, *The Palestine Police Force, Particulars of an Illegal Immigrant*, 791 and 792, 5 Dec. 1940, Berta Kreisel and Hersh Wolf Kreisel; Atlit Detention Camp Museum Database, Bertha and Zvi Kraisel, <http://en.maapilim.org.il/ShowMaapil/55317> and [55318](http://en.maapilim.org.il/ShowMaapil/55318) (accessed 14 June 2019); TNA, *Index of Wills and Administrations for England and Wales (1951)*, 95.

35 *The Dudleian* 36, no. 2 (1939): 58; 43, no. 2 (1946): 40; World Jewish Relief Archive (hereafter, WJRA), London, Fritz Kreisel File.

36 *The Dudleian* 39, no. 1 (1941): 40, 21; WJRA, Fritz Kreisel File.

37 *The Dudleian* 36, no. 3 (1939): 89; WJRA, Georg Kreisel File.

accommodated in “Lingwood”. Both the Kreisel brothers settled quickly in Dudley. Georg entered Form V Upper Arts. He had been excluded from his former school in Graz after the Anschluss because he was a Jew and had transferred to a Jewish school in Vienna. Georg wrote an article for the Grammar School magazine, *The Dudleian*, about his experiences on 10 November 1938, the day after *Kristallnacht*. He had been arrested outside his school in Vienna by the SA (Sturmabteilung – Storm Troopers) and taken to their barracks with other captives where he was held for hours in a darkened room. He was then transferred with the other captives to the SS (Schutzstaffel) barracks. Georg witnessed horrific beatings and slayings by the “SS (Black Guards)”, “Herr Himmler’s youths”, not once but several times during his incarceration. Out of the three thousand men and boys who had been detained, Georg Kreisel was among just three who were subsequently released. The remainder were sent in vans to Dachau, Oranienburg, and Sachsenhausen concentration camps. He observed: “Behind me the gates of a hell closed, and horror-stricken, I sought my way home.”³⁸

In late October 1939, after the outbreak of the war, the British government began interning enemy aliens who were considered a threat to national security. Local tribunals were established across the country. Georg Kreisel was one of the first refugees to be assessed by the Herefordshire and Worcestershire District Tribunal. They decided to exempt him from internment.³⁹ Had Dudley Grammar School not provided evidence on his behalf, Kreisel might have become one of a number of unfortunate Kindertransport boys who were interned.

The fourth Kind, thirteen-year old Eva Leonie Austerlitz (b. Breslau, 25 June 1926), arrived in September 1939. In Frod’s report of the final meeting of the committee in December 1945 she says that Austerlitz had arrived in Dudley “after travelling from Breslau via Holland to Bangkok and from there to Palestine and finally to England.”⁴⁰ This was in fact a series of journeys over a period of several months. Austerlitz had been born in Breslau, the capital of the German province of Lower Silesia, the daughter of a medical practitioner, Dr. Kurt Austerlitz, and a designer, Edith Hildegard Austerlitz (née Schatzky). Her father had died in 1929. She

38 Georg Kreisel, “The Tenth of November: A Recollection”, *The Dudleian* 36, no. 3 (1939): 101–3; 43, no. 2 (1946): 40; email from Fred Honigmann, 3 April 2014.

39 TNA, HO 306/49/538-9, Home Office, Aliens Department, Internees at Liberty in UK, Kreisel, Georg, 24 July 1943.

40 WHL, 27/29/167/253–254.

later recorded that she had attended an elementary school for four years followed by three years at secondary school in Breslau.⁴¹ Austerlitz and her mother probably left Germany during the first half of 1939. They may have intended to seek refuge in Shanghai but instead found themselves in Bangkok. But there was little or no prospect of employment for her mother and the other Jewish refugees who were also stranded in the Thai capital. The Bangkok Jewish community actively encouraged these refugees to proceed to Shanghai. However, Austerlitz's mother was able to arrange their escape to Palestine by marrying Dr. Kurt Jacobowitz, a refugee medical practitioner from Breslau who had acquired Palestinian citizenship. The marriage was short-lived and later that year Eva and her mother moved to Britain.

So Austerlitz was not in fact a Kindertransportee although she became the responsibility of the Movement for the Care of Children from Germany after she arrived in Britain, because her mother lacked the resources to provide for her. Her mother found work as a window-display designer at a Cambridge department store.⁴² After initially living with James and Dorothy Rogers, she was hosted by John and Emily Baxendale at their home in Dudley, who had a daughter of the same age as Eva, named Sylvia, at the school.⁴³ She then moved to live with Arthur Colley, a seedsman, and his wife, Gladys, in Kingswinford, a village to the west of Dudley. The Colleys, like the Baxendales, had a daughter, June, of the same age as Austerlitz at the school.⁴⁴ Austerlitz spent five years at the High School and achieved academic success. She gained her school certificate in 1942 and higher school certificate in 1944.⁴⁵ After leaving school she remained with the Colleys and found work at the Royal Cripples Hospital, Northfield, Birmingham. The work was not to her liking and she left at the end of a month. Austerlitz subsequently joined her mother in Cambridge where she found work as an assistant in the School of Chemistry at the university.⁴⁶ Given that the Colleys' home was still her home address the

41 Edinburgh University Archives, INI/ADS/STA/14, First Matriculation Book 1946–1947, 81, vol. 1, A to L, Matriculation No. 715, Eva-Leonie Austerlitz.

42 Emails from Prof. Simon MacDonald, 8 and 9 April 2014; TNA, HO 334/323/4309, Naturalisation Certificate, Edith Hildegard Jacobowitz, 30 May 1949; *Singapore Free Press and Mercantile Advertiser*, 20 May 1939, 7; *Breslauer Adressbuch 1935* (Breslau: Verlag August Scherl, 1935), 1-278; *Palestine Gazette*, 18 March 1943, 234.

43 *Register of Electors 1939* (Dudley: Parliamentary Borough of Dudley, 1939), 145.

44 TNA, HO 396/3/536-7, Home Office, Aliens Department, Internees at Liberty in UK, Austerlitz, Eva Leonie, 24 July 1943; TNA, 1939 Register.

45 *The Cornflower* 32 (1943): 35; 33 (1945): 39.

46 WHL, 27/29/167/253–254.

following year, when she enrolled as a student at Edinburgh University, it appears that Cambridge was also not to her liking.⁴⁷

The fifth Kind selected by Temple failed to arrive in Dudley. So in October 1939 Anita Mandl was given her place. Mandl (b. Prague, 17 May 1926)⁴⁸ was the daughter of Dr. Gottfried Mandl (9 August 1886–11 March 1942, Prague)⁴⁹ and Hana (Ascher) Mandl. A *Gedenkblatt* commemoration form submitted by Anita's brother, Georg, to Yad Vashem in 1995 records that their mother was murdered in Auschwitz in March 1944.⁵⁰ Anita's grandfather had acquired the small mechanical pulp and board mill *Papierfabrik und Holzschleiferei Merckelsgrün* in Mercklin near Karlsbad (modern-day Karlovy Vary) in 1920 and placed her father in charge after his return from serving with the Austrian Army in the First World War. Her father was intent on an academic career. However, the dishonesty of the mill manager put an end to his dreams and he transformed the mill into a successful business. After the annexation of the Sudetenland in 1938 the business was confiscated by the German government⁵¹ and the Mandl family found refuge in Prague. Mandl and her brother Georg were saved by Sir Nicolas Winton.⁵² Mandl's £50 re-emigration bank guarantee was provided by Anne M. Stevens, of Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire. A home was offered to her by John and Emily Baxendale but Mandl found it more convenient to live with her guardian's younger sister, Dorothy Rogers. Rogers and her husband James had two daughters, both attending the Dudley Girls' High School. (In her stead, Eva Austerlitz went to live with the Baxendales.) So the Rogerses were Mandl's hosts during her three happy years at Dudley Girls' High School. Her education was paid for by the committee and Stevens paid for her maintenance.⁵³

A sixth Kind, Liesl Fischmann (16 June 1927–15 December 2013,

47 First Matriculation Book 1946–1947, Eva-Leonie Austerlitz.

48 Winton's List, p. 15, <http://www.nicholaswinton.com/WintonsList/list.htm> (accessed 14 June 2019).

49 Billion Graves: Emil Ascher, <http://billiongraves.com/pages/record/EmilAscher/1885694> (accessed 14 June 2019).

50 The Central Database of Shoah Victims' Names, [http://db.yadvashem.org/names/nameDetails.html?itemId=1186060&language=en#!prettyPhoto\[gallery2\]/o/](http://db.yadvashem.org/names/nameDetails.html?itemId=1186060&language=en#!prettyPhoto[gallery2]/o/) (accessed 14 June 2019).

51 G. T. Mandl, *Three Hundred Years in Paper* (High Wycombe: Paper Trade Press, 1985), "G.T. Mandl Holdings Ltd", 26; Peter F. Tschudin, "Georg Thomas Mandl zum Gedenken", *International Paper History* 7, no. 1 (1997): 1.

52 Winton's List, p. 15; *The Times*, 10 Feb. 1997, 23; *The Independent*, 7 Feb. 1997, 14; *The Times*, 30 April 1997, 24.

53 Winton's List, p. 15; letter from Dr. Anita Mandl, 24 Feb. 2014; WHL, 27/29/167/253-254; *The Dudleian* 50, no. 3 (1953): 60–61.

London), also came under the purview of the committee from late summer 1940, although she is not mentioned in Froom's final report. Fischmann had also been saved by Winton – on the last train out of Prague. She had been born in the north Bohemian city of Teplice-Sanov (Teplitz-Schönau) in Czechoslovakia, the daughter of Willy and Friedl Fischmann. Her father owned ten per cent of Glasfabriken Fischmann Sohne A.G., the largest Czech glassworks for window panes and bottles, with factories in Teplice-Sanov and Prague. The business had belonged to the Fischmann family for several generations. Her £50 re-emigration guarantee was provided by Rabbi Harold Reinhard of the West London Synagogue. The Worthing Refugee Committee, of which her maternal aunt, Anny Dub, was the office secretary, obtained a free place for Fischmann at a boarding school until it was evacuated to Cornwall. Dub also tried unsuccessfully to secure the entry to Britain of Liesl's brother, Heinz, aged seventeen, as a trainee.

In August 1940 Fischmann went to spend her summer holidays in Upper Gornal, near Dudley, with her aunt who had since married another Czech refugee, the mechanical engineer Hans (Jan) Richard Dewidels. Fischmann's aunt was eager to keep her niece with her pending her evacuation to Canada, where a cousin agreed to pay for her maintenance including education. In the meantime she secured a place for Fischmann at Dudley Girl's High School. The West London Synagogue's Hospitality Committee agreed to pay the fees and also helped clothe her. Froom paid for Fischmann's school books. The evacuation to Canada did not take place because the designated ship was torpedoed. Fischmann later recalled that the Dudley Girl's High School was a "happy place" where she was accepted. She met Anita Mandl there and became a lifelong friend. Fischmann was motivated to do well at school to impress her parents.⁵⁴ She later recalled that looking back, the "eccentric" Froom's empowerment of her and her fellow pupils was a big influence on her later career as a therapist – "the notion that people can be respected and empowered instead of told what

54 Winton's List, p. 6; University of Southampton, Hartley Library, Special Collections, MS140, A2049/96/4; Archives of West London Synagogue, Refugee Children: Dorothy Thornycroft to Elsa Goldschmidt, 13 June 1939; Anny Dub to Rachel Lemkin, 25 June 1939; Anny Dewidels to Elsa Goldschmidt, 6 Aug. and 4 Nov. 1940; Liesl Fischmann-ova Memo, Jan. 1941; A. Spiegel to Anny Dewidels, 17 Sept. 1941; Brigid Proctor, obituary, "Liesl Silverstone", <http://www.therapytoday.net/article/show/4132/> (accessed 14 June 2019); Carrie Supple, *From Prejudice to Genocide: Learning about the Holocaust* (Stoke-on-Trent: Trentham Books, 1993), 124–5; TNA, FO 369/3454, Claim for Confiscation of Fischmann Glassworks in Czechoslovakia, 1946; Visual History Archive, Interview 32124, Liesl Silverstone.

to do all the time.”⁵⁵ Frood’s successor as headmistress, Mary B. Ambrose, encouraged Fischmann to continue to further and higher education.⁵⁶

The Dudley Refugee Committee had a long-term beneficial impact on the lives of the refugees it assisted, as will be shown below. It is thus an especial tragedy that Dr. Hans Honigmann, the committee’s prime mover, did not share this good fortune. Shortly after the outbreak of the Second World War he lost his position at Dudley Zoo (and the tied flat). Visitor numbers at the zoo had collapsed and it was closed for the duration of the war. So Honigmann was required to find alternative employment during the war. In January 1940 he secured a position as a science teacher at Blundell’s School in Tiverton, Devon, declining an offer of a less well-paid position at Birmingham University.⁵⁷

Initially, the move to Tiverton appeared to have been a success. Dr. Honigmann seemed set for a successful career as a schoolmaster for at least the duration of the war. The Headmaster of Blundell’s, the “unconventional” Rev. Neville Vincent Gorton,⁵⁸ reported: “Dr. Honigmann . . . is a tremendous success – I could not wish for a nicer person in every way. He is a remarkably good teacher, even though he has not done this sort of job before. The boys have an immense liking for him, and he is just doing very well with us”.⁵⁹ Unfortunately, Tiverton was designated as a protected area in June 1940. Dr. Honigmann and his family were required to leave the area without notice. He found refuge with his relative, Rudolf Peierls, and his Russian wife Olga in Edgbaston, Birmingham. Their children had been evacuated for the duration of the war, so they had room to accommodate the Honigmanns.⁶⁰ Later that month Honigmann was interned because he was an unemployed alien. The *Blundellian* reported in July that “It is the unfortunate duty of this magazine to bid farewell to departed preceptors and pupils. It is even more

55 Visual History Archive, Interview 32124, Liesl Silverstone.

56 Archives of West London Synagogue, Anny Dewidels to Elsa Goldschmidt, 12 June 1944.

57 BOD-HONIGMANN, 502/4, fol. 399, Report from Julian Huxley, 18 Sept. 1939; fol. 531, Hans Honigmann to Esther Simpson, 14 Sept. 1939; 503/1, fol. 3, Honigmann to Simpson, 12 Jan. 1940; fol. 5, Simpson to H. Munro Fox, Birmingham University, 13 Jan. 1940; *The Dudleian* 37, no. 2 (1940): 88.

58 *The Times*, 1 Dec. 1955, 14; 6 Dec. 1955, 11; *Church Times*, 2 Dec. 1955, 8.

59 BOD-HONIGMANN, 503/1, fol. 10, the Rev. N. V. Gorton to Nancy Searle, 11 June 1940.

60 Paul Honigmann Memoir, 3/10; S. Lee, “Sir Rudolf Ernest Peierls”, *Biographical Memoirs of Fellows of the Royal Society* 53 (2007), 265–84.

unfortunate when these do not leave us for the opening of a fresh career, but for the barbed wire of an internment camp. . . . Herr Honigmann has earned the gratitude of man for his brains and labour; he is not a German but a biologist".⁶¹ Honigmann's two oldest sons were taken in by Blundell's as boarders, replacing two refugee boys who had been interned like Honigmann. They remained at Blundell's until December 1940.⁶²

Honigmann was apparently regarded as a low security risk. The second of the two camps Honigmann spent time in, Press Heath in Shropshire,⁶³ had primitive conditions (the inmates were accommodated in tents).⁶⁴ This exacerbated a pre-existing heart condition. His wife worked desperately to secure her husband's release. Honigmann had a heart attack in early August and was transferred to the Emergency Military Hospital in Wrexham. He was finally released from internment in early September. The offer of a position at Birmingham University from the previous year had been withdrawn. In October 1940 he was offered a low-level position by Glasgow University.⁶⁵ Life proved to be challenging in Glasgow even though Grace Temple, the Dudley Grammar School headmaster's mother, allowed the Honigmann family to use an apartment she owned in the city. Honigmann's heart condition deteriorated. In August 1941 a concerned Temple offered Honigmann a more congenial position at Dudley Grammar School. Unfortunately, he was unable to teach chemistry up to higher certificate standard. Honigmann remained in Glasgow where he died on 17 November 1943.⁶⁶ During the last few months of his life he had drawn out plans on behalf of the Glasgow Zoological Society for an ultra-modern new zoo for Glasgow with novel features including twin ponds

61 *The Blundellian* n.s. 1, no. 22 (1944): 1.

62 Blundell's Archive, Minutes of Meetings of the Governors of Blundell's School 1939–1953, 26 July, 18 Oct., 6 Dec. 1940.

63 Paul Honigmann Memoir, 3/18.

64 A Report on Visits to Internment Camps for Aliens (16–23 July 1940) by Rabbi Dr. Solomon Schonfeld, <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Holocaust/chief Rabbi.html> (accessed 14 June 2019).

65 University of Glasgow Archive, C1/1/48, p. 78, Court Minutes 25 Sept. 1941, Appointments; 8 Oct. 1942, C1/1/50, p. 6.

66 BOD-HONIGMANN, 503/1, fol. 13, Hans Honigmann to Esther Simpson, 19 June 1940; fol. 17, Ursula Honigmann to Simpson, 28 June 1940; fol. 24, Ursula Honigmann to Simpson, 19 July 1940; fol. 26, Ursula Honigmann to Simpson, 9 Aug. 1940; fol. 44, Ursula Honigmann to Simpson, 10 Sept. 1940; fol. 52, Simpson to A. E. Duncan-Jones, 17 Oct. 1940; fol. 54, Hans Honigmann to Simpson, 28 Oct. 1940; fols. 94–5, Hans Honigmann to Simpson, 1 Sept. 1941; O. Lowenstein, "Obituary: Dr. H. D. S. Honigmann", *Nature* 153, no. 1 (1944): 74; email from Paul Honigmann, 13 Nov. 2016.

for sea lions and bar-less cages for polar bears, hippopotami, and elephants.⁶⁷

The children supported by the Dudley Refugee Committee were more fortunate. Many of the local committees failed to comprehend that the older children might have aspirations which were beyond the social status of their hosts. In 1938 only 9,311 people in the United Kingdom were awarded university first degrees, of which seventy-five per cent were male.⁶⁸ So it is noteworthy that of the six Kinder assisted by the Dudley Refugee Committee, at least five went on to study at university, as will be shown shortly. Furthermore, all three of Honigmann's sons later went to university and one went on to achieve a doctorate in English literature – so the Dudley Refugee Committee also played a small part in their later success: Ernst Honigmann studied at Glasgow University, achieving a masters in English in 1948, then a B.Litt. from Oxford in 1950, followed by a doctorate from Glasgow in 1966. Fred Honigmann studied at St. Andrews, achieving a special masters degree in political science and history in 1950, a first class masters honours degree in political science and history in 1951, and a diploma in education in 1952. He then became a schoolmaster. Later he obtained a B.Ed. from Edinburgh University and became a lecturer at a college of education for the remainder of his professional life; Paul Honigmann secured an LL.B. from the University of London in 1960.⁶⁹

It soon became clear to the Dudley Grammar School teachers that Georg Kreisel was a mathematics genius. He achieved his school certificate in 1939, higher school certificate in 1941, and was awarded the school's Sixth Form Mathematics and Physics Prizes in November 1941. It was also noted that he was distinguished in three subjects in the higher school certificate examination, applied mechanics, pure mathematics, and physics.⁷⁰ Georg Kreisel was elected in December 1941 to an Open Major Scholarship in Mathematics at Trinity College, Cambridge. He went into residence in January 1942.⁷¹ His maintenance at Cambridge was beyond the resources of the Dudley committee so his housemaster, Mainwaring, who had taken

67 *The Scotsman*, 31 Oct. 1942, 3; 2 Feb. 1943, 3.

68 Paul Bolton, *Education: Historical Statistics* (London: House of Commons Library, 2012), 20.

69 Ernst Honigmann Biography <http://www.internationalstory.gla.ac.uk/person/?id=WH24343> (accessed 14 June 2019); *Dundee Courier and Advertiser*, 15 June 1950, 4; 18 June 1951, 4; 16 June 1952, 4; *The Solicitors and Barristers Directory and Diary 1985: Vol. 2* (London: Waterlow, 1985), 430; email from Paul Honigman, 26 March 2014.

70 *The Dudleian* 39, no. 1 (1941): 21–2; 39, no. 2 (1942): 46.

71 *Ibid.*, 39, no. 2 (1942): 41.

a great interest in him since his arrival in England, sought the assistance of Lord Baldwin. Mainwaring's initiative resulted in a stipend of £150 a year while Kreisel was at Cambridge. This made him self-supporting because he was able to spend his holidays with his former housemaster.⁷² By the summer of 1942 Kreisel achieved a first class in the first-year examination in mathematics.⁷³ He also became a notable Trinity prizeman.⁷⁴ In July 1943 the *Dudleian* reported: "Overshadowing all former successes gained by Old Boys at Cambridge is the achievement of Georg Kreisel, Mathematical Scholar of Trinity College, who has achieved a brilliant University career by being placed very high in the list of Wranglers of his year. As a result of his performance in the Mathematical Tripos, Part II., Kreisel has just been awarded a Senior Scholarship for post-graduate work."⁷⁵

During the academic year 1942–43 Kreisel was advised to do some kind of national service. He decided to volunteer for porter's work at Addenbrooke's Hospital. This was not considered sufficient and he was told to consider joining the workforce from June 1943. Margareta Burkill of the Cambridge Refugee Committee agreed to try to secure him an Admiralty job where he could use his mathematics. However, Burkill was required to seek the assistance of Mainwaring to persuade Kreisel "to comply more with conventions", to create a better impression when he was interviewed by the Recruiting Board.⁷⁶ Kreisel eventually secured an Admiralty research post. On 18 December 1943 he became a Temporary Experimental Officer at the secret Admiralty research facility H.M.S. Vernon, based at Leigh Park House, West Leigh, near Havant on the south coast of England, where he worked alongside Francis Crick (of later DNA fame), who became a good friend.⁷⁷ After a few months at West Leigh, Kreisel was transferred to the Department of Miscellaneous Weapons housed at Fanum House near Leicester Square. He chose to ignore the unwritten dress code by attending official trials wearing an old pair of grey flannel trousers and an open-necked sky blue shirt; he was apparently oblivious of the critical stares of the uniformed officers. Kreisel made an

72 TNA, ED 10/278, Memorandum by Sir John Clapham, Chairman of the Cambridge Refugee Committee, 18 Nov. 1943.

73 *The Dudleian* 39, no. 3 (1942): 108.

74 *Ibid.*, 40, no. 1 (1942): 39.

75 *Ibid.*, 40, no. 3 (1943): 116.

76 WJRA, Georg Kreisel File.

77 *The Dudleian*, 41, no. 2 (1944): 67; *The Navy List for July 1945*: Vol. III (London: The Admiralty, 1945), 2167, 2307.

important contribution to the success of D Day by calculating the effect of waves on the floating (Mulberry) harbours being designed for the Normandy landing.⁷⁸ By the end of the war he had achieved the temporary rank of lieutenant in the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve. Kreisel returned to Trinity, Cambridge, in late 1946 to resume his studies. He was awarded a masters in 1947 and a doctorate in 1962. In 1966 he was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society of London. Kreisel became one of the most accomplished mathematicians of his generation, ending his career at Stanford University in California. He retired in 1985 and in his final years returned to his native Austria and died in Salzburg in 2015.⁷⁹

Like Georg Kreisel, Anita Mandl was academically gifted. She was awarded stars in all her school certificate subjects in 1943 – a star signified “very good”.⁸⁰ Mandl wanted to become financially independent. A science teacher at the Girl’s High School, Joyce Llewellyn, secured her a place to read science at Birkbeck College, London. (Llewellyn had retired from teaching following her marriage but had rejoined the profession after the outbreak of the war.) Mandl moved to London and registered as an “evening” and later weekend student at Birkbeck. She funded her studies (a bachelors and later first class honours in zoology) by working as the secretary to the managing director of British Valve and Electrical Accessories, Ltd., an electrical goods manufacturer located in Islington. Llewellyn’s husband, Dr. Frederick Llewellyn, was on the academic staff of Birkbeck and taught chemistry.⁸¹ Mandl continued with her education at Birkbeck, gaining her first degree in 1946 followed by a first class honours degree in zoology in 1947. She worked as a research assistant in endocrinology at the Royal London Hospital’s Medical Unit in Whitechapel during 1946–47. Mandl was then appointed an assistant lecturer in the anatomy department at Birmingham University in 1948 and by 1963 had progressed to the position of Reader. She was also awarded a Ph.D. in 1951 and D.Sc. in 1960. For more than a decade she also attended evening classes in sculpture at the Birmingham College of Art. In 1965 she

78 Francis Crick, “Georg Kreisel: A Few Personal Recollections”, in *Kreiseliana: About and Around Georg Kreisel*, ed. Piergiorgio Odifreddi (Wellesley, MA: A. K. Peters, 1996), 25–7; *Liverpool Echo*, 19 Nov. 1956, 4; Gerald Pawle, *The Wheezers and Dodgers: The Inside Story of Clandestine Weapons Research in World War II* (Barnsley: Seaforth, 2009), 191–2.

79 *The Dudleian*, 43, no. 2 (1946): 40; 44, no. 1 (1946): 33; Odifreddi, *Kreiseliana*, “Vita”, xiii.

80 “Northern Universities’ Joint Board Examination”, *The Cornflower*, 32 (1943): 35.

81 Letter from Anita Mandl, 24 Feb. 2014; 5 April 2014; *The Times*, 17 Nov. 1988, 18.

retired from her university career, moved to Devon, and began another successful career as a sculptor.⁸²

Eva Austerlitz, Kurt Flossmann, and Liesl Fischmann also entered higher education but, unlike Georg Kreisel and Anita Mandl, only after the war was over. Austerlitz enrolled as a student in the department of social study at Edinburgh University and was awarded a certificate in July 1948. While at university she fell in love with a fellow student, Simon G. G. MacDonald. By the time of their marriage in October that year, he was a lecturer in physics at Dundee University College. Austerlitz became a homemaker and subsequently the mother of two children. She died from cancer at Ninewells Hospital, Dundee, on 13 October 1999.⁸³

Flossmann left Dudley in 1949 to take up an appointment as a junior mains engineer at the Bermondsey Council Electricity Department.⁸⁴ He achieved an external general degree in physics and mathematics from the University of London in 1952.⁸⁵ In 1956 he married Sheila Roberts, his Dudley sweetheart, at Dudley Baptist Church.⁸⁶ They had three children. He died in October 1976 at the relatively young age of fifty-two from an intracranial haemorrhage.⁸⁷

Liesl Fischmann moved with her aunt and uncle to Leeds in the summer of 1944 after achieving her school certificate. The Dudley High School headmistress helped her secure a place at Leeds Girls' High School, where she was awarded her higher school certificate the following summer. Fischmann then studied at Leeds University where she was awarded a diploma in social organization and public administration in 1947. However, instead of becoming a social worker she returned to Czechoslovakia to join her mother, who had survived Auschwitz, unlike her father and brother. Fischmann worked for the World Jewish Congress in Prague. After the communist coup d'état in 1948 Fischmann returned with her mother to England. She met her future husband in London, the wholesale grocer Jack Silverstone, through the World Jewish Congress,

82 *The Times*, 3 Jan. 1963, 11; 16 Nov. 1995, 22; letter from Mandl, 24 Feb. 2014; http://www.briansinfield.com/50_anita-mandl.htm (accessed 14 June 2019).

83 *First Matriculation Book 1946–1947*, Eva-Leonie Austerlitz; *Edinburgh University Calendar, 1948–1949* (Edinburgh: The University, 1948), 606; *Dundee Courier and Advertiser*, 23 Oct. 1948, 3; 15 Oct. 1999, 2; email from Prof. Simon MacDonald, 8 April 2014.

84 "Appointments, Etc.", *The Dudleian*, 44, no. 3 (1947): 83.

85 *Ibid.*, 50, no. 1 (1952): 31.

86 "Marriages", *ibid.*, 53, no. 3 (1956): 90.

87 General Register Office England, Death Certificate for Kurt Richard Flossman, 12 Oct. 1976.

and married him the following year. She divorced him in 1971 and subsequently took a three-year counselling skills course at South West London College. Brigid Proctor later recalled Fischmann “was angry that she was not considered qualified enough to become an art therapist. She also disliked the authoritative manner in which psychodynamic art therapists interpreted their clients’ artwork.” As a result she developed a new person-centred art therapy course of which she was the founder tutor.⁸⁸

It is not known whether Fritz Kreisel (later Fred Edwards) went on to higher education after the war. Like Flossmann and Mandl, he appears to have decided to pay his own way. An Inland Revenue civil servant, Herbert Edwards, and his wife Dorothy, the parents of his best friend at the grammar school, John D. B. Edwards (known as J.D.B.), invited Fritz Kreisel to live in their home. Kreisel made many attempts to join the armed forces and in autumn 1943 was finally successful. Like many Kinder, he adopted an English alias, Fred Edwards, taking the surname of J.D.B.⁸⁹ After a few weeks of training in Scotland he became a private in the Worcestershire Regiment and was stationed near Dudley. He then fought in north-west Europe. By December 1945 he was serving with the British Army of Occupation in Germany attached to the Intelligence Corps.⁹⁰ Fred Edwards later returned to Britain. In September 1947, the month he was naturalized, he was stationed at a German POW camp at Goathurst, near Bridgwater in Somerset,⁹¹ where he was probably an interpreter. He appears to have remained in the armed forces until at least late 1949. The electoral register compiled for November of that year shows that both Fred and J.D.B. were registered to vote at the latter’s parents’ home in Netherton, Dudley.⁹² It is not known what happened to Fred Edwards after 1949.

The Dudley Refugee Committee failed to achieve its objective of raising £1,000. However, the £857 raised came close to the objective. Dudley Grammar School headed the list of donations with £113. A further sum of

88 Proctor, obituary, “Liesl Silverstone”; *Supple, From Prejudice to Genocide*, 124–5; Visual History Archive, Interview 32124, Liesl Silverstone; Archives of West London Synagogue, Anny Dewidels to Elsa Goldschmidt, 12 June 1944; *ibid.*, 11 April 1945; Liesl Fischmann to Elsa Goldschmidt, 3 July 1947; Memo, 28 Nov. [1947].

89 *The Dudleian* 39, no. 1 (1941): 40; 42, no. 3 (1945): 98.

90 WHL, 27/29/167/253–254; *The Dudleian* 41, no. 2 (1944): 67; “School Notes”, *ibid.*, 43, no. 2 (1946): 40.

91 TNA, HO 334/189/31983, Naturalisation Certificate: Fred Edwards, 18 Sept. 1947.

92 *Register of Electors 1950* (Dudley: Parliamentary Borough of Dudley, 1949), 124.

£26 resulted from two whist drives organized by the Parents' Committee.⁹³ The Dudley committee is unusual because it continued to oversee the progress of the five Kinder until December 1945. This is in contrast to the Wolverhampton Guardian Committee for Child Refugees which was disbanded in the summer of 1941,⁹⁴ and the Gloucester Association for Aiding Refugees which appears to have ceased being responsible for the welfare of its ten Kinder after late 1943.⁹⁵

The experience of the Dudley Kinder was unrepresentative of the Kindertransport children as a whole, as Georg Kreisel observed in 2014.⁹⁶ It could be argued that what made the Dudley committee atypical was the dominant role played by grammar school teachers. But the involvement of grammar school teachers is not a sufficient explanation. The Headmistress of Wolverhampton High School for Girls, Dorothy Eva de Zouche, established a Refugees Fund, which sponsored four refugee girls including two hosted by a local vicar.⁹⁷ However, unlike in the case of Dudley High School, the girls do not appear to have been encouraged to aspire to higher education. Instead the school appears to have supported the "practical technical training" favoured by the Home Office-sponsored Coordinating Committee for Refugees.⁹⁸ One of the Wolverhampton Kinder, Gisela Spanglett, also later recalled that her hosts in Wolverhampton lacked a cosmopolitan outlook.⁹⁹ In contrast, the Dudley grammar school teachers had a cosmopolitan outlook which was unusual in a mid-twentieth-century Midland town. For example, Fred Honigmann recalls Irene G. Grafton, a teacher at Dudley Grammar School in her mid-50s,¹⁰⁰ affectionately known as "Granny", who took small groups of "her boys" on cultural visits to Birmingham to places such

93 *The Dudleian* 43, no. 2 (1946), 40.

94 The committee held its last meeting on 15 July 1941; Wolverhampton City Archive, DX-97/1, Wolverhampton Guardian Committee for Child Refugees Minute Book, April 1939 to July 1941: Meeting, 15 July 1941.

95 Gloucestershire Archives, D7501/1/1, Gloucester Association for Aiding Refugees, Committee Minutes 1939–41, General Meeting, 2 Dec. 1941; D7501/3/11, Hon. Secretary's papers, 1941–43; *Gloucester Citizen*, 23 May 1942, 4.

96 Georg Kreisel recorded in email from Paul Weingartner, 18 Aug. 2014.

97 D. M. Butcher, "W.H.S. Refugees Fund", *Wolverhampton High School of Girls Magazine*, 46 (1939): 7–8.

98 *Wolverhampton Express & Star*, 25 March 1939, 9.

99 Imperial War Museums (IWM), London, 14763, Reel 4 of 4, Gisela Eisner (Oral History), October 1994, <http://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/80014365> (accessed 14 July 2014).

100 *The Dudleian* 45, no. 3 (1948): 62; 197 (1974): 9; TNA, 1939 Register.

as the art galleries and concert halls at her own expense to broaden their educational experiences.¹⁰¹

101 Email from Fred Honigmann, 3 April 2014.