



<p>Project: Pennylands Camp 22 - WW2 POW Camp. Respondent: Elizabeth Parol. Year of Birth: 1928. Age: 89. Connection to project: Married a Polish soldier. Date of Interview: 31st May 2017. Interviewer: Kay McMeekin. Recording Agreement: Yes. Information & Content: Yes. Photographic Images: Yes (Number of: 5). Length of Interview: 14:19. Location of Interview: Auchinleck, Ayrshire. Recording Equipment: Zoom H4n Pro.</p>		
Time (from: mins/secs)	Time Coded Full Transcript	Transcribed Extract (from- to: mins/secs)
0:00	Introduction, welcome and information about respondent.	0:00-0:34
	Q1. What is your connection to Pennylands Camp?	
	A1. I was married to a Polish soldier. He was a policeman, an MP	0:39-0:48
	Q2. Can you tell me about your early life?	
	A2. There was eleven of us; 6 boys and 5 girls or the opposite way about. But the next-door neighbour was Polish and when I started walking and it was just like the entrance there it would be three doors my gran's, Mrs Skinner and my mum. My mum was in a single end and I just went in there for it was a good feeding house and it was all Polish stuff. She couldn't speak English, she couldn't, and she started to speak to me in Polish and the result was I learnt to speak Polish and then we moved to this old avenue, these houses here, and my granny had the first house but then my grandpa, I called them gran and grandpa.	0:51-1:48
	Q3. This is the Stariskis?	
	A3. Yes. I used to call her Ticky. But when I got older I says, "No, I'm no shouting Ticky." I was embarrassed and I says "oh Gran" and it was Gran and Papa. Johnny Stariski was the real grand wean, his family. I lived there. I worked in Catrine Mill which I hated. After two years, I left it and went into the shop. The shop keeper had sent for me. And I went into the shop and worked. And I worked there, there was a potato famine. There were no potatoes. They only left so many potatoes so	1:50-4:42

	<p>we got off early out of the shop because of that so I went to the dancing. I was at the dancing. And, I was at the dancing, I was kind of shy, not like my younger sister that was jiving in the middle of the floor. I was sitting and he came over and asked me to dance. He was a military policeman. I used to see him coming in and just standing and looking all round about him to see who was in and who would cause trouble. For he knew everyone. He came over and asked me to. So, I went up to dance with him and I said this is terrible, I'll have to speak. I said, I always said to him,</p> <p>"I wished I hadn't opened my mouth for I couldn't get rid of ye after that!" And I said to him,</p> <p>"Are you enjoying the dance?" He said,</p> <p>"Ja nie rozumiete," I don't understand you. And I says, oh what do I say to this? I don't want him to know I can speak Polish. Anyway, oh no, that's ignorance so I said,</p> <p>"Ja rozumie" I can understand, and that was it. These two words. That was it. So, he walked me up the road and I took him into the house to gran and grandpa. So, they made him awful welcome.</p> <p>"The door's open for you." And he used to come out and in, out and in. A year went by. And then he did ask me out to the pictures. I always remember it. And that was it. We went with one another. We got married and I had Wanda.</p>	
	<p>Q4. You were young when you got married?</p>	
	<p>A4. Nineteen. That was it. We didn't live here, we lived with gran and papa. And then after that I got this house here. I'm the first tenant in this full street. The first tenant in this street so I am. He worked for the Electric Board, and that was the job he had, he drove the big crane. He was there till it closed down. And we were back and forward to Poland, And I met all his family. What a lovely family they are.</p>	<p>4:44-5:18</p>
	<p>Q5. What part of Poland did he come from?</p>	
	<p>A5. Warsaw, Trałki. It was a village with the glass factory in it. It wasn't a big village. The Polish soldiers are buried down in the cemetery and I watched one day, I always put flowers always, because I knew two or three of them had died. One of the Polish boys, his name is Zygfryd Nowak, and he come to, my grandpa brought him in, my grandpa aye brought in a lot of strays, and they sat and had a beer and talking Polish and that, and he went down to the Pennylands camp and shot himself. For he'd nothing to go home to. For he was out, where he lived, it was outside toilets away down the garden and he could see out of the top of the door, had a space like that, and he watched the Germans bringing his mother and father and brothers out the back and they shot them. So, he had nothing to go back to.</p>	<p>5:19-6:35</p>

	Q6. This happened in Poland?	
	<p>A6. Yes, he had nothing to go back to, that's why he shot himself. He was the first one buried in Auchinleck. And that's why I started. That Zygfryd, because I knew him. He came to the house and had his supper and that and then he went away. He did, he left the house and killed himself, shot himself. He'd nothing to go back to. They were all going back home. Oh, I mean, I really knew all the Poles that was married here. Two of them in that, down there, they met my husband. My husband says,</p> <p>"Where have you been?' Two older gentlemen, older than what Kazik was. And they said,</p> <p>"Oh, we were away a walk for mushrooms."</p> <p>"Let me see them." My man knew every mushroom and he says,</p> <p>"Throw them away, they're no' mushrooms, they're poison."</p> <p>But they wouldn't listen to him. They took them to the camp, fried them, ate them and the two of them died, and that was the other two that was in the grave. And then there were another big fella and he used to dance the lassie Simpson, he was a great jiver. He took an appendix and it burst. All who I knew they were all lovely men, ken that's dead. The biggest majority they all had a good life, married and a family. Kazik was the secretary of the Polish Combatants.</p> <p>(Note: Zygfryd Nowak died 22nd May 1945 at Pennylands Camp of gunshot wound to the heart. RCE Suicide. In October 1947 Feliks Mirek and Rajmund Zielinski died in Ballochmyle Hospital of mushroom poisoning. Both are buried in Cardonald Cemetery, not Auchinleck).</p>	6:36-8:06
	Q7. Did he take on British nationality?	
	A7. Yes. He was 14 when he left home. He was lifted.	8:09-8:14
	Q8. Did he get conscripted into the war?	
	A8. He was working for his brother-in-law and coming out of the work the Germans just nabbed him and sent him to Germany to work, him and his cousin escaped from Germany and went over the Alps into Switzerland. And he was interned in Switzerland because they had no papers. So, they escaped from Switzerland into France. And he joined the Polish Army. He was only a young boy at the time. Then he was a military policeman.	8:16-8:52
	Q9. What were they doing at the camp? Were they guarding the Germans or was it something else?	
	A9. No, it was the Polish boys.	8:55-8:58

	Q10. What were the Polish troops there for?	
	A10. This was a place where the train come. They all were sent to back Poland.	9:01-9:07
	Q11. A transit camp?	
	<p>A11. A transit camp here, that was all that was. At the beginning when I was young, out of our work at dinnertime, came home for something to eat then back over to Catrine. Somebody said,</p> <p>“That’s the train in. All the fellas are going away.” And we all ran up to the station to say cheerio to them. And it was really all the Glasgow boys that was there and the Canadians all the different, and that was them going away to the war. The RSF were standing and everyone sung We’ll meet again, the Vera Lynn song and we were all standing like this greeting. Do you know, I knew them all they were good dancers.</p> <p>“Keep us a dance! Tell the lassies.”</p> <p>“ Aye, we’ll keep you a dance.” And the train, if you’d seen the size of that train. It was every, Canadians, Americans, all different, English fellas. Well, there were an Auchinleck boy there and Agnes was at the station breaking her heart because that was her boyfriend. Billy Garden’s daddy. He was my choirmaster in the church. And then the Poles came in. The first Poles was the Polish boys that came into the camp but they were elderly men, all older, but oh the manners they had. They bowed when they finished dancing and took the lassie back to the seat. But they weren’t the same; these were all young ones, that came in after that, Kazik’s thingmy. For he had said, I was outside the shop window brushing the pavement and doing the windows, and he said he’s supposed to have said to his friend, he was walking down the side of all the soldiers. He was the policeman, watching every one of them.</p> <p>“See that Italian lassie? I’m coming up the night to ask her out.” Oh, I had jet black hair like my brothers.</p>	9:08-11:12
	Q12. Tell me about your wedding.	
	A12. Oh, that was, two soldiers were out, and they were arguing with a Polish fellow in the anteroom, like the toilets, the men’s toilets and I was in the hall, so was Kazik. They argued and this one shot them. So, the two of them landed in the hospital and the bride had to go on the Sunday to see the casualties! I couldn’t stop laughing. I was like the Queen. I was going to see, that’s what happened there. It was in the Barony Hall. That was the hall for the church. That was the Barony Hall I had my wedding. We walked out. It was Kinnon Cooperative from Kilmarnock. It was them that was purveying. They went away with everything. I paid way over £100 for that.	11:14-12:46

	That was a lot of money in those days. I paid, well I didn't, my grandpa did. But that was all paid. I walked up the road, the bride. I never seen a street like it. I think the folk all came from Cumnock and all over to see the bride walking up the road. And I was affronted. A crowd came and came in the house and had their tea. Because everything was taken away. Kinnon, the cooperative took everything away that I had paid for.	
	Q13. Why did they take it away before you were finished?	
	A13. We weren't even started!	12:48-12:51
	Q14. Because of the shooting?	
	A14. Yes!	
	Q15. Tell me about your dress.	
	A15. Wait, I'll show you. [fetches wedding photo] You've got to remember we had coupons at that time.	12:55-13:02
	Q16. How did the local men feel about all these handsome soldiers taking their girls? Was there any resentment?	
	A16. No no. The fellas I knew came over and danced and they loved the Drops of Brandy and the Poles didn't know the Drops of Brandy. No, they got on all right with people. They all liked the first Poles that was in. But I don't know about the second but I never saw any fights.	13:08-13:29
	Q17. Did you have a honeymoon	
	A17. My grandpa did it. He ordered a taxi and we all went away up by New Cumnock, was it Lanarkshire or somewhere we went to? And we ended up and it was a parade, a Catholic parade. Carfin, so they were Catholics. On the Sunday, we ended up there at Carfin. And then we came through Muirkirk home in the taxi it must have cost my grandpa a fortune, and we went in there and had a meal and the men had a beer. And then back to Auchinleck. But it wasn't long after that after I had the weans that we went to Poland and that.	13:11-14:15
	Closing statement and end of interview.	14:19
 <p>Supported by The National Lottery® through the Heritage Lottery Fund</p> <p>Le taic bhon Chrannchur Nàiseanta tro Mhaoin-Dualchais a' Chrannchuir</p>		