



Gibraltar: Challenge, Change & Continuity

The Friends of Gibraltar Oral History Project (1930 to 1970)

Stagno, Joseph (Ser 223 / IWM 006203R01-04)

Object description

Gibraltarian civilian schoolchild evacuated from Gibraltar to Morocco and GB, 1940-1941; boy seaman trained at HMS Arethusa and HMS St George in GB, 1941-1943; seaman served aboard HMS Belfast in Atlantic and Arctic, 1943-1944

Content description

REEL 1 Recollections of period as child living in Gibraltar, 1927-1940: family origins; education; connections between Gibraltar and GB; effects of Spanish Civil War; degree of knowledge of Second World War, 1939-1940; relations between Spain and Gibraltar from 1939. Recollections of evacuation from Gibraltar to Morocco, 4/1940-5/1940: first evacuations from Gibraltar to Morocco, 2/1940; organisation of evacuation; reaction to first evacuation to Morocco 4/1940; items taken on evacuation; mother's return to Gibraltar, 1944; education in Gibraltar; character of evacuation; memories of day of evacuation, 4/1940. REEL 2 Continues: atmosphere on boat during evacuation; attitude to being classed as refugees; reception in Morocco; character of Marrakesh; billeting in Marrakesh; cooking facilities; return voyage to Gibraltar, 6/1940; attitude of evacuees to return to Gibraltar. Recollections of evacuation from Gibraltar to GB, 1940-1941: character of second evacuation to GB, 7/1940; ships used during evacuation voyage from Gibraltar to Scotland; attitude to going to GB; initial impressions of Glasgow; accommodation and conditions on evacuation ship; morale of evacuees; apprehension during voyage; arrival in Glasgow; introduction to English food; items taken on second evacuation. REEL 3 Continues: move from Glasgow to London; impressions of London, 8/1940; living conditions for evacuees at Royal Palace Hotel; activities in London until start of schooling, 9/1940; education in converted school rooms in Natural History Museum; effects on education of evacuation; lack of contact with British schoolchildren; question of being evacuated to London; character of evacuation centres; mother's work in sick bay; attending church; problems older Gibraltarians had adjusting to life in London. REEL 4 Continues: memories of German Air Force attacks, 1940-1941; lack of contact with father in Gibraltar. Aspects of training as boy seaman at HMS Arethusa and HMS St George in GB, 1941-1943: reasons for enlisting, 6/1942; move to HMS St George on Isle of Man;

contact with Italian internees on Isle of Man. Aspects of operations as seaman aboard HMS Belfast in Atlantic, Arctic and during Normandy landings, 1943-1944: escorting Winston Churchill to US; convoy escort in Arctic; threat of Scharnhorst; conditions during Arctic convoys; contact with Russians; duties off Normandy, 6/1944-8/1944. Question of effects of evacuation from Gibraltar to GB. Question of suitability of evacuating civilians from Gibraltar to GB.

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