

The House In England Where Asaf Auerbach And The Children Saved By Mrs. Strasserova Lived



This is the house in England where we lived. To be more accurate, we lived on the left side of the duplex, there was no one living on the right side right at that time.

My brother and I were among the children whose departure for England was arranged by Nicholas Winton. But he and his role in it all were unknown to me until the 1990s. For me the person who had organized it all was Mrs. Hanna Strasserova. She was a friend of my parents', they knew each other from the kibbutz times, her family had also returned to Europe.

Mrs. Strasserova managed to find us accommodations in this facility that today are called SOS Children's Villages. The axis of the property formed a tree-lined avenue, on each side stood five duplexes, in each house lived a so-called Mother, who took care of roughly ten children of mixed sex, mixed age, which really did create these families. At that time they perhaps didn't have many orphans or something, one of the duplexes was empty, and so the city decided to donate it for refugee children. We didn't pay any rent, we simply got it to use. Then all that was necessary was to continue collecting money, so there'd be something to feed us from.

Though the village, as it were, where we lived was surrounded by a fence and there was a gate, I don't remember it ever being closed or someone ever being on guard there. Our house was number 20, which was the highest number, thus there were probably ten duplex houses, besides them there was also a small house by the gate, where the home's director lived, and a gymnasium. And a large playground and garden.

The house had seven rooms. On the ground floor there was a large kitchen, a living room for the mother and a living room for the children, on the mezzanine this little room where the help lived, if

there was any, on the top floor a bedroom for the mother and two bedrooms for the children, larger and smaller. We boys slept in one room and the girls in the other. But as the number of children changed depending on who was acting as our parents and how many children they had, at one time we even occupied one room in the second part of the duplex, which was after all empty during our entire stay in England.

In 2002 I was in England again to have a look. That children's village where we lived no longer functions as such. I don't know why, whether they don't have enough orphans? The houses are privately owned. Ours actually had a For Sale sign, so I could have bought it. But what would I do with it?