

The Higgins Art Gallery & Museum, Bedford

Transcript

RW17_1

Name: Unknown Gender: male

Date of Birth: N/A

Place of Birth: Eritrea

Occupation:

Date of Interview: 21st March 2017

Interviewed by: _____ Length of interview: 13 mins

Transcribed by: Linda Dawes

00 mins

Interview from a young man from Eritrea who would like to record his experiences in Eritrea and his journey to Britain

Hello I'm from Eritrea and I was born in Eritrea and grew up in Eritrea until I left Eritrea today I am going to talk about my journey to England and how is the life in Eritrea and how is the life in England. I was in Eritrea and I was studying in Eritrea and I lived with my family. Family work very hard to live, because of the soldier and the politics problem and that is not normal. When you turn 18 you have to go as a soldier or if you finish school at 11 you are a soldier. When you go as a soldier it is indefinitely. No idea how long you stay there, even they don't back to home very often they don't see their family. We can't see our family very often. I live in the south of Eritrea and it is very hard because if someone your family came from far or another town they ask you who it is and why Eritreans they don't live comfortable they don't have water, electricity everything, they make it stop. Network. w for telephone call it doesn't work.

02mins

When I was studying and they don't when I was studying they couldn't leave me alone they just asked me a lot of things and I was [...] of chicci just they couldn't make me comfortable they tried to hit me and I was young I was only 15 so it was very hard for me unfortunately I left , I decided to leave we left Eritrea with my friend. We left it at night time and it was very dark and it was scared and we slept in the mountain camp and it is very hard we escaped and there is a well down in we just decided whether we live or not because if we decided to go in the daytime its very hard if the soldiers .. they can shoot us its very cruel because a lot of people start now to cross and some of dead by the wild animal and very scared even now of talking about it, even now just reminded about it. Then I finally arrived in Ethiopia without anything happen we are lucky and when they are arriving in Ethiopia and stayed there and they just had little interview with the, they just give out there light little interview and they took us to Ethiopia camp it is for Eritrea refugees and we had been there for 5 months,6 months about. Yes but it was very hard for me because I just lived there my first ever lived without my family.

04mins

That was hard and everything was hard, even the weather was very hot yes unfortunately after a while I decided to leave Ethiopia to Sudan and I left Ethiopia to Sudan with someone's friend because I was young and they just helped me because I didn't know anything was young. When was travelling to Sudan it was very hot and we travelled by bus for somewhere and after that we travelled from the border of Ethiopia to Sudan about 10 or 8 hours walk it was night time. It was very hard we didn't know where we would go mark I didn't know anything where I go I just followed out of what they were. Then we are or we didn't think we didn't have anything for us. We arrived in Sudan and just stayed in Sudan.

Were you actually walking? Were you thirsty?

Yea we were hungry and we need water but we couldn't find it but we had no option we had to go. We could not speak Arabic we couldn't ask them questions, even we didn't speak English even they don't speak English either. I don't know we didn't ask them. Just keep going and they keep us in some water, but it wasn't enough and we arrived in Sudan. In Sudan we had been for 2 months. 2 months something, yes and Sudan it was ok but very hard to people as they don't speak and we don't speak their language and they are just trying to scare you and they swore you somethings and we stayed at home very often

06mins

We couldn't live there well as we couldn't walk out very often and if they caught you they turned their backs on Ethiopia and Eritrea so that was we have decided to leave another one, to Sahara that's very very hot and I don't think the dust How can I think now even when I think it was very hot and I think the dust. I was very young and I just followed them. When I realise know it's very hot and when I see somethings back. Because we stayed there in 12 days and some of these days were We didn't have enough water and a lot of people they came with us they dead, because of lack water and lack food. Even there were accidental deaths, drivers would 120 km per hour they climb and take soil up and then down it they don't care about people. Then we arrive in Libya, but Libya I don't know anything but very hot, because I stayed in one hut they don't give you anything no light . I stayed in one house they just gave you food it's not enough. They just gave you kind of they don't need to divide up. All people stayed in one you don't have a right to move and you don't have right as well to speak them because, you speak them they hit you they seem like we are not like humans.

08mins

Treated like animals?

Yes like animals they hit you often

Yes after some while they send us back to the sea, the Tehran sea. Which was very hot all the people cried when we crossed it, we are dead, we are lucky some big ships rescue us. After that we arrive in Italy and Italy as well we couldn't stay. Then someone help us to go to France and we can cross and we stayed in Calais . Calais and we tried to come to England. After that in England, we arrived in England and we came to Bedford. In Bedford we have, we get a lot of things we didn't expect and I went to School and first I have an interview with the Home office and I get my Permanency Card about for living in England. After that I have been to college studying isal it wasn't good English ,even now it wasn't good, I start English and I start now. Yes I start in September 2014. I did English and maths now and study science

What grade did you get in maths?

Yes I am studying hard, last year like Bedfordshire are helping me to study maths and they pay me for private and I get a grade in maths GCSE

That amazing that's wonderful

And I'm doing this one combined science GCSE. Hopefully I am going to go to University soon

10 mins

But I don't know where.

You have got your own place to live now, haven't you?

Yes I get my own house, flat and everything's a bit settled now. I am so glad to be here. Thank you to everyone I get a lot of help in Bedford but I couldn't mention all of them as I would forget someone. I get a lot of help from a lot of people thank you.

Thank you for doing the interview that's tremendous. One last thing could you just say thank you in Tigrinya for me?

YES (he does) **anyalay caurra lay**

Thank you very much for your time