

The Board of Deputies of British Jews
1 Torriano Mews
Kentish Town
London NW5 2RZ

19th June 2018

For the attention of Marie van der Zyl, Deputies President

Dear Marie,

In the interview you gave with Simon Rucker for the JC (18 May 2018) it mentions the interesting fact that your mother's father had been on the Kindertransport. My father-in-law Rabbi Werner van der Zyl, your husband's grandfather, was one of those who accompanied a Kindertransport group. All the adults who accompanied the groups were usually obliged to return to Germany as the British government only permitted temporary entry for these people, but he had important work to do. Rabbinic leadership was needed at the Kitchener Camp in Richborough which provided refuge for around 4,500 men from Europe and Rabbi van der Zyl had been assigned to this key position before his arrival in Britain.

Darrell, who enjoyed many good times with his grandparents, has much to tell his daughters about the fascinating history of the van der Zyl family, of which they can be justifiably proud. Knowing about the past will help them to relate and be connected with their own stories and background. Hopefully they have been shown the photos of their father with his grandparents at his bar-mitzvah celebrations, jointly with his sister Kerry.

In the same JC interview it says you "read law at John Moores University in Liverpool ...". But that isn't correct, is it? On the Gordon Dadds website it states: "After graduating with a law degree from what is now Liverpool John Moores University ...". It may be relatively harmless, but it is a misleading representation of your *alma mater*. It would be no more bizarre to say: "After graduating with a law degree from what was *formerly* Liverpool Mechanics' School of Arts ..." (LJMU is named after John Moores and was previously called Liverpool Mechanics' School of Arts and later Liverpool Polytechnic before gaining university status in 1992, thus becoming Liverpool John Moores University.)

If, as you aver, you are proud of the institution from which you obtained your law degree, why are you coy about naming it? What's wrong with the simple statement: "After graduating with a law degree from Liverpool Polytechnic ..."? Your mother-in-law is not shy of declaring that she obtained her law degree from Middlesex Polytechnic - before she went on to study for and pass the bar finals which made her a barrister.

Incidentally, Darrell was at the University of Liverpool in 1980, albeit for one year only, and I remember driving him up there with Nikki to ensure he was safely and comfortably installed in his campus digs. Happy memories.

Yours sincerely,

George Rooker
Historian