

## **RG-50.002.0105**

### **Summary**

Hella Bailen, born in Dusseldorf, Germany, describes her family and childhood; moving to the outskirts of Seville, Spain just after World War I when she was three; her family deciding to move back to Germany after the death of her brother when she was five; living in the Rhineland area and Cologne in many different boarding schools as her family moved often; experiencing antisemitism at school; joining Jewish hiking group Kameraden; moving to Nuremberg around 1928-1931; her father opening a children's bicycle factory; graduating from high school in Nuremberg then attending an art school part time; a Nazi holding a gun to her head in her art school class telling her to drop out; moving to Berlin to be with her parents and attending the Reimann School around 1935-1936; working part time at a lampshade company that was disbanded because it was Jewish run; her family's house being searched for books to burn; hiding Spanish loyalist contacts of her father in their house; deciding at age twenty to leave Germany with the expectation her parents would follow later; leaving for the United States in 1937 not knowing her American uncle telegraphed for her not to come; initially living with family friends as her ill uncle could not take her in; getting a job with Whitman Publishing Company; her parents writing her a postcard dated November 2, 1941 explaining they were unable to take their planned ship voyage to the United States due changing laws but would go to Poland; hearing later from an uncle who survived Terezin (Theresienstadt) concentration camp that he looked for her parents in the camp but heard nothing of what happened to them; the difficulty of not knowing what happened to her parents and the guilt of getting out of Germany; the majority of her family died in Auschwitz; surviving family immigrating all over the world; being unable to speak of what happened, not wanting to speak German, or even to look at photographs for many years.