

**Hermine Schmidt**  
**RG-50.028.0087**

**Summary**

Hermine Schmidt, born in 1925 in the free city of Danzig (today: Gdańsk, Poland), discusses her parents; her sisters; growing up in Danzig; her mother's Bible studies; her parents' first contact with Jehovah's Witnesses in 1919 and converting in 1920; Danzig after Hitler's rise to power; her parents instructing her and her sisters to not say "Heil Hitler" or salute; her difficulties at school and the other children's treatment; hearing about arrests of Jehovah's Witnesses in Danzig and in Germany; her parents emphasizing Bible study and keeping faith; fearing the Gestapo; she and her family experiencing persecution; her parents' occasional work as couriers for distributing Jehovah's Witnesses publications; meeting her future husband, also a Jehovah's Witness; her and her parents' arrest by the Gestapo in 1943; her imprisonment in a small cell at Gestapo headquarters for a week; being interrogated and pressed for names of other Jehovah's Witnesses; the beatings her husband endured during interrogations; being transported to Stutthof; forming close relationships with some of the other Jehovah's Witnesses prisoners; being assigned to heavy work details because of her young age; Soviet soldiers' arrival at Stutthof after she had left via transport; the different types of prisoners and the conditions in Stutthof; gay prisoners in the men's section of the camp; the writer Hermann Hesse; her parents' wartime experiences; being transported by boat to Germany near the war's end, but arriving in Klintholm Havn, Denmark in May 1945; being released into the care of the Red Cross; the teachings of the Bible; having to wear a purple triangle badge in Stutthof; being offered the chance to leave Stutthof if she signed a document renouncing her faith, but refusing to do so; the behavior of guards in Stutthof; poetry she wrote after the war; and her husband's wartime experiences.

Family photographs and descriptions follow the interview.