

Henriette Hahn
RG-50.030.0966

Henriette Hahn, born Henriette Bick on June 11, 1923 in Munich, Germany, discusses her siblings and parents; her mother's Catholic faith and her father's Jewish faith; her mother's work as a seamstress and her father's as a jeweler; her family's apartment on the outskirts of Munich; how most of her older siblings immigrated to the United States before the war with the help of relatives already living there; her father losing his job in the mid-1930s because he was Jewish; having to move to a different apartment near the Isar River; later losing her own job at a clothing shop because she was half Jewish; taking over the cleaning of the apartment building; watching her father's arrest by the Gestapo; her father's internment at the Stadelheim Prison in Munich before his transport to Dachau; receiving postcards from him; Nazi authorities asking her mother if she wanted to divorce her husband because he was Jewish; learning later that a neighbor had reported her father to the Gestapo; receiving an urn containing her father's ashes after his death at Dachau; having a funeral for her father and burying his ashes; attending public school until being forced to attend a Jewish school; celebrating both Catholic and Jewish holidays growing up; an antisemitic aunt; having to wear a Star of David badge on her clothing; being taken to the police station once; being conscripted to work at a labor camp outside of Munich; working in a fabric factory with other half-Jewish people for about four and a half years; having to attend a roll call at the camp where many people were selected and then deported; seeing prisoners of war; Nazi officials; her mother's additional work in a bakery to provide for the two of them; one of her sisters who lived in Munich and was married to a German man; receiving periodic letters from her siblings in the United States; liberation and the end of the war; seeing American soldiers; working at a clothing shop in Munich after the war's end; immigrating to the United States in 1947 with her mother with the help of her siblings; seeing the Statue of Liberty from their boat as they came into New York; moving in with one of her sisters in Astoria, Queens, New York; starting work at a Bulova watch factory and meeting her husband there; getting married and moving to Woodside, Queens, New York; having four children; visiting Munich three times to visit her sister; and not talking much about her wartime experiences.