

**RG-50.031.0087**

**Summary**

**Edith Babich** (nee Simon) b. Cloppenburg; oldest of 4/parents, (father, a cattle/horse dealer); Kristallnacht; father arrested and taken to a camp; sisters transferred to England; 5/17/1939, St. Louis ship booked to Cuba-onboard, Edith, Elsa (youngest sister), mother, father (had been reunited with family); "parties every night" - one for kids, one for parents; more memories of Kristallnacht, synagogue's window smashed, in flames, Nazis forcing entry into home, demanding silver; life on the St. Louis, including onboard Jewish holiday celebration, arrival to Havana, Cuba refuses port, passengers promised that they "would not be sent to Germany", arrived Belgium, put on small boat to Holland (4-5 wks quarantined), Edith wrote to England requesting entry, parents put Edith on train, English couple met Edith at train (couple had taken in another Jewish refugee as well); Edith obtains papers, immigrates to Jacksonville, FL, moves to Illinois, attended beauty school; 1945, sister obtained visa to come to America, 1944 met husband in Hartford, IL/USO dance; husband went overseas, lived with Edith's sister, returns to Edith; St. Louis memories, "met nice friends, had real good time...one I stayed in touch ever since"; shared "terrible" feelings when shipped was told to turn around, "People were depressed & shocked that government said documents were not sufficient-man attempted suicide, cut wrist & jumped overboard"; interviewer says she had heard story they "planned to get passengers off and set ship on fire"; stories of two passengers that were able to get off ship; youngest sister stayed in Holland (aunt & cousin also in Holland), all taken to Westerbork concentration camp, then to Siberia-through Red Cross, Edith learns they had been taken to gas chambers; his thoughts on America also refusing port to the St. Louis; mother telegramming (back/forth) two other daughters in England, expressing concern; Eleanor Roosevelt's St. Louis efforts; Edith's family's relief that ship would at least return to Holland; arrival to Antwerp, crossing canal to Holland; Edith's reason for sharing story, "important that people remember (Holocaust) - should never happen again."; St. Louis-no parties held on trip back to Holland, ship required return trip payment; description seeing "all the little boats surrounding ship, they came every day, yelling 'Manana!'" hopeful they could get refugees off ship; Holocaust "should be studied so future generations know that it should never happen again."; happiness having brought two sisters to America; thoughts on Roosevelt not having eased immigration and thoughts on America's immigration policy.