

## **RG-50.060.0061**

### **Summary**

Gertie (Gertrud) Blau, born in Lvov, Poland, telling the story of how the family moved to Vienna, Austria when she was ten; her parents being very religious; her father Max Lauer having a jewelry store; her mother Tobi, siblings Charles, Lina and Isaac; meeting her husband Fred when she was 18, getting married a year later; her sister Lina emigrating to Israel in 1937; witnessing the celebrations on the street after the German takeover; her parents being arrested and released; Polish nationals, like her parents, being declared stateless and given six weeks to leave, but having Austrian nationality through her husband; her oldest brother Charles and his future wife fleeing across the border to Switzerland; seeing the synagogue vandalized on Kristallnacht and her father's broken expression when the prayer books and prayer shawls were thrown out from the third floor and burnt on the court yard; being forced to clean the street with a toothbrush and bleach, remembering how hands and eyes burned; having to paint two Js on the window of her parents grocery store; her parents crossing the border to Switzerland illegally; going to Bregenz, Austria, by the border to Switzerland and getting a visa from the Swiss consul; the Swiss consul helping the family to get some jewelry across the border; her youngest brother going to Palestine on Exodus with the help of Jiddisches Jugendgemeinde; having to renew her passport in Vienna; the passport office only issuing 25 passports a day and a thousand people standing in line all night; Germans on horses riding through the line to create chaos and fights, trampling people; after five nights getting the visa and going to Zurich; waiting in Switzerland for a visa to the US; her brother in law, a pharmacist, writing letters to pharmacists all over the US, asking for sponsoring and an affidavit; three pharmacists responding, arranging affidavits for herself and her husband Fred, her parents and her brother in law; her husbands parents also obtaining a US visa; having to go back to Vienna again to pick up the US visa and being afraid on the train because of the Nazi soldiers; in april 1939, going to Italy and taking a boat to New York; their sponsor, the pharmacist Morton Friedman from Chicago, meeting them in New York; settling in Brooklyn; having a son Elliot, a daughter Hanna Glauberman and four grandchildren; moving to Phoenix in 1970 to retire close to their children; volunteering for Hadassah and her synagogue Beth El.