

This is the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum interview with Emma Mogilensky, conducted by Margaret Garrett on November 15, 1996 in Baltimore, Maryland, tape one, side A. Mrs. Mogilensky, what was your name at birth?

Emma Hubert.

And where were you born?

In Cronheim, Bavaria. Cronheim is tiny, little village. Its full name was Cronheim by Gunzenhausen. Now you will have difficulty finding Gunzenhausen on the map. So Cronheim, of course, is just not visible at all.

And what was the date of your birth?

May 22, 1923.

And back to Cronheim, how many people lived in Cronheim?

I believe that there were 54 families living in Cronheim at the time, which makes about 200 inhabitants of the village.

Could you talk about your early life in the village and your family?

There were four of us-- my parents, my brother, and myself. We were a very happy family. We were a very loving family. My father was a traveling salesman around the countryside with samples of soap powders and things like that and went to different farmers, where he got his orders, and came home, religiously, every Friday, so that he would be home to observe the Sabbath.

We lived in a house that had been built by my great-grandfather, and it was a very solid house. We had 70 fruit trees in the back. We had a little fruit orchard in the back, and it was all comfortable and happy.

You said the house was built by your great-grandfather?

Yes.

And had your family lived in that house since then?

Yes, yes, yes. At first, when my father got married, he and my mother lived in another house. But very soon, they moved down to my grandfather's house and that was that.

And you went to school in Cronheim?

Yes. The school had six grades and it had six rows of desks. If you sat in the first row of desks, you were in first grade. In the second, you were in second grade, and so on. And once you had completed the sixth grade, if you wanted to continue on with your education, you had to go elsewhere. As far as the village was concerned, that was the end of your education.

And you went there through the six grades?

I went there through-- just about, just about.

And what kinds of things did you like to do after school and when you weren't in school for fun?

Oh, after school, one of the things we loved to do was go berry picking with our mother in a woods that was just behind the village. And we picked blueberries, and raspberries, and strawberries, and you name it. And she would preserve

them and make pies and everything else. And it was a lovely, family-oriented life.

We were very much involved with the synagogue in our village, and that led to other activities. We had a Hebrew school. It was very interesting how our school was run. Because Cronheim was an almost totally Catholic village, the priest would come in every day to the school to give the children their religious instruction.

During the school time?

During school time. During this hour that he was there, we were released. We went all the way across the street, where our Hebrew teacher lived, and we got our Hebrew education there. So it worked very well.

So it was you and your brother--

And two other Jewish children in the village.

And how did the other children treat you when you were leaving to go to your own class?

Well, up until, really, just before Kristallnacht, fine. We were friendly. They were our best friends. We played with each other. We did all kinds of things together. There was no idea of a difference between us.

So they didn't pick on you because you were going to the Hebrew teacher and taking--

No, not at all, not at all. It was considered a natural thing. We were Jewish, therefore we got Jewish education. They were Catholic, therefore they got Catholic education. In fact, I'll go one step further to give you an idea of the respect between the different faiths in our village. My father would go to the church every year to string all the Christmas lights in the church as decoration. The priest would come to synagogue on Yom Kippur for about an hour or so to show his respect.

So there was no hatred or differentiation or anything between us at all, until it came to the point where our teacher, obviously, had been to some kind of a conference and been instructed to make life for the Jews miserable. He did this-- he was the church organist. And so he had the Catholic children first thing in the morning-- they went to mass every morning. It was tradition in the village. And after mass, he had the kids in church.

They were literally captives until he released them. And he obviously instructed them to be mean to us. And so one day when we came to school thinking of nothing at all, we found that all the other kids had formed two lines in front of the school entrance. And as we walked through the lines, they beat us up.

This is all four of the Jewish children?

Well, I can only speak for my brother and myself. I don't know what happened to the other two. And I guess I've always had a big mouth, so I went to the teacher and I complained that the kids had beaten us up. And he said, well, what did you expect, you dirty Jew? And from that, I surmised that he had told the kids to do this. So literally overnight, we went from best friends to enemies.

Had you had a particular best friend or best friends?

There were two that I was very friendly with-- two girls. And we were thoroughly comfortable with each other until that day. That ended everything.

So you were friends no more after that?

No. We continued to go to school for a little while longer for several more days, and we were beaten up every time we went into and out of the school. And my parents finally said, that's enough. And they sent my brother to the next village that had a small Jewish school. And they sent me to Nuremberg, which is a large town not far from where we lived. And

I had to live there, and there I went to what you would consider high school.

And what was that like for you living in Nuremberg? What year was that you went to Nuremberg?

That was 1938.

'38. And so what was that like for you at the beginning being in Nuremberg, a strange city, a young girl?

We lived-- I lived-- and I say we because my cousin ended up living there also, and we were both named Emma. We lived in a pension for Jewish young ladies. And I stress the word ladies because this pension was run by two elderly spinsters who could not accept what was happening in Germany at all.

They saw to it that every day when we came home from school, we spent a half hour walking around in the living room with a book on our head to teach us proper carriage, because a proper young lady has to walk correct. And at the dinner table, we were seated at the table with a book under each arm to teach us to keep our elbows in. And if one of those books dropped on the floor, you left the table. It didn't matter how hungry you were, you left the table. So it was run very strictly by these two ladies in a way that today is almost incredible.

And at the time, how did you take that atmosphere?

I had no choice. I was able to talk to my parents on the phone. I was able to correspond with them, but I had no choice. This is where I was supposed to be and that was that. I mean, we were taught this right from the start. You do what your parents tell you to do. The concept of talking back to your parents or disagreeing with them was absolutely foreign to us.

If you had a choice, would you have preferred not to be there given the circumstances?

It was an interesting experience. The school was different because all the children were Jewish. So it was funny. During break, when we had breaks in the morning and in the afternoon, we would never discuss picnics, or parties, or going somewhere, going on vacation or anything like that, nor did we talk about boys, and the boys, I don't think, talked about girls. We talked about where to go, whether to go to England, or to America, or to Australia, or where should we go. And none of us had any idea what that meant.

What was your understanding of what was happening at the time?

I understood that there was this political movement in Germany that hated Jews and that they were doing their darndest to get rid of us. At first, that was the concept, that they wanted to get rid of us, to get us to leave Germany.

Now my father had served in the First World War. He had, in fact, earned the Iron Cross. And he could not understand that anything like that could happen to him and to his family. And I also believed that it was something that would eventually blow over and everything would be OK.

And my father kept saying, it is a madness that will cease. It is a madness that has got to stop. It cannot go on like this and felt that he could not and should not leave Germany. On the other hand, he often said, how am I to support a family of four in a country where I cannot speak the language?

Was his business affected by this?

Up to a point, no. And then he was-- and then it was. Although, the farmers-- most of the farmers didn't know he was Jewish. And he obviously didn't advertise that fact. And the yellow star didn't have to be worn until much later. But I really don't know that. My parents never talked about this kind of thing with us, so I don't know.

But you did know that your father was very unbelieving, almost, about it.

Yes. Well, we talked about it at dinner time, I mean.

So they did talk about it some?

Oh sure, absolutely.

And did your mother talk about it also?

Yes, we talked as a family around the dinner table.

So at school, the girls were talking about going to a different place, a different country.

Once I was in the Jewish school, yes. But then I wasn't living at home, so I didn't hear what my father was saying then. And then came Kristallnacht-- November 9, 1938-- and the house where I was-- well, I have to backtrack a little bit. I had a phone call from a lady, who was a friend of my mother's, to say that her husband had a heart attack in Nuremberg and had been rushed to the hospital, and could I please come and stay with them for a while so that I can babysit in the evening while she went to visit her husband in the hospital.

Nuremberg was the residence and headquarters of Julius Streicher, the German propagandist whose drawings and caricatures were world famous or infamous, whichever way you want to call it. And my mother gave me permission, and I moved into their house. And then came Kristallnacht, and the Nazis broke into the house and demanded the man of the house.

Broke into the house-- you mean you were all inside and they just--

We were asleep at night.

And they just pushed the door down?

They smashed the door in. And they demanded the man of the house. And his wife said, he's ill, he's in the hospital. And they said, you lie, he's hiding from us, but we will find him. And with the fixed bayonets on their guns, they went through the children's bedrooms.

And we managed to snatch the children out of their beds moments before the bayonets went through the bedclothes and the mattresses. And even the baby in the crib, we managed to get out before they put their bayonets through the crib mattress. And of course, he was hiding under the mattress in the crib. Where else?

So obviously, they didn't find him. They had hatchets with which they smashed the furniture. And whatever was smashable, they smashed. Whatever was-- what they couldn't smash, they bent or broke in some way. It was a nightmare that just wouldn't stop. And finally they said, this is what's happening to all the Jew families in Germany. And with that, they left.

And at first, we just-- the lady and I looked at each other, and we realized that we were still alive. Until then, we weren't at all sure we were going to survive this. And we tried to comfort the children, who, of course, were very upset. And we tried to make it-- pat them down for the rest of the night in whatever fashion we could.

But I kept thinking what they had said as they left, and I was wondering what had happened to my family. But they had pulled the telephone wire out of the wall, so I wasn't able to call home until the next morning. And I had to find a public telephone and I called home. And my brother answered the phone. And he said that, yes, they had broken into our house also and done all sorts of damage, but they also arrested my father and apparently had sent him to Gunzenhausen, which was the nearest larger place, and held him there for several days, and then sent him to Dachau.

And my mother came on the phone and begged me to come home. But that wasn't so easy anymore, then, either because now Jewish people had to have permission to travel, and I had to go and get a permit. And finally, several days later, I got my permit and I went to the station to catch the train home.

And in fact, as I was buying the ticket someone said to me, are you well? And I looked and I saw it was a non-Jewish gentleman, a friend of my father's, who's still there to talk to me. And I very quickly in an undertone told him about my father's arrest and having been sent to Dachau. And he said, you see this door over there? Go through this door and tell them and they will release him. And I thanked him, bought my ticket, and went over there.

What did he think you should tell them?

That my father had been arrested and that he had served in World War I and that had earned the Iron Cross. And I went to the door over there, as he put it, and there's a little sign on the door. It said SS Headquarters. And I didn't know whether I should go in, and perhaps never come out again. And I weighed this in my mind against my father's life. And my father's life won, I turned the knob and I went in.

And I can see that room to this day. On one side, there was a row of filing cabinets. And on the other side, there was a row of chairs. And in the center, there was a big desk, behind which sat an SS man in full SS uniform.

Was that the first time you had seen--

No, I'd seen them before. But I sort of-- I mean when I saw the sign SS Headquarters, I knew what I would find inside. And he sort of looked me up and down and asked for my name, and I gave it to him. Address, and I gave it to him. And I told him why I was there.

And he sort of looked me up and down and said, get out. And I don't think I've ever gotten out of any room as fast as I did that one. But once I was outside, I was wondering whether I had actually helped my father or condemned my whole family, because now they had our name and address. But I had a train to catch, and I literally had to force my legs to go to the platform where the train was coming.

When I got home, I found that my mother was having a nervous breakdown. And there was, of course, no medical attention for her. There was no doctor in the village. The nearest doctor lived in Gunzenhausen. And all we had in the village was, twice a week, we had a visit from a nurse-- a visiting nurse-- who would come to the village to see if any of the farmers had gotten hurt or had an accident and would help them with first aid.

How did you know she was having a nervous breakdown?

She wasn't herself. She kept crying all the time. It was quite obvious that something was seriously wrong with her. I didn't put a label on it at the time, but I subsequently learned what it was.

I told my brother what I had done in Nuremberg at the train station. And I wondered whether we should tell our mother what I had done, and finally decided that I had to tell her. And the three of us sat down together and I did. And she couldn't sleep by herself in the room, so I went and I slept in my father's bed. It gave her, I guess, a small measure of comfort.

And then a few days later, or whatever it was-- I don't remember exactly-- we had a telephone call from the burgermeister, the mayor of Cronheim, asking my mother to present herself with the proof that my father had indeed served in the German army and had won the Iron Cross. And she was to present herself along. And my brother and I were very nervous about letting her go by herself, but they had been specific about it. So we let her go by herself.

And she came home, and she was feeling better. Hope is a tremendous medication. And then for weeks, we didn't hear anything at all. And one night, there was a knocking at the front door. And I went to the window to look out, but it was dark. And I called out and I said, who is there? And the answer was, daddy.

And I'm not sure anymore whether it was I or my brother, one of us raced downstairs, opened the front door, and there, indeed, stood my father. He had been in Dachau for four weeks and I didn't recognize him. He had changed so in four weeks. It is indescribable.

It was cold, so there was only one place where we could all be together and warm. And so we all crawled into my mother's bed and we talked and talked and talked. And I think we talked for most of the night. And my father would not talk about himself, he would only talk about us-- his concern for us and especially for my mother.

And I guess, finally, we either went to sleep or got up in the morning. I don't remember. But I do remember that it had always been his habit to go into his little study, which was off our living room, to say his morning prayers. But always, he had gone in there, left the door wide open, so that anybody and everybody could see what he was doing in there. This is the first time that I remember him closing and locking the door.

And he began to pray, first in thanksgiving to the Almighty for his having been released, and then begging God to help the other inmates of Dachau to be released also. And the prayers came from so deep inside of him that my brother and I couldn't stand to listen to him. We'd left the house.

Gradually, his story came out that the things that he had seen and had seen done to other people, whether to himself or not, he wouldn't say, but it was rather obvious that it had been. And that he had been starved. I could see that by the way his clothes hung on him.

And he said that at night he would crawl from tent to tent to tell the inmates not to commit suicide, because many of them did so. And he would read a song to them, or anything to try and convince them not to do this, because he said they were doing the Nazi's work for him. Whether he ever-- he knew full well what would happen to him if he were caught. Whether he left any of his food with them, I don't know. But that was my father.

Well, let's stop here and turn around the tape.

OK.

Tape one, side B, Emma Mogilensky. After your father came home, what happened next?

My father had been home only a few days, and he had come home with terrible frostbite on his hands. Apparently they had been given-- well, obviously, they had been given only cotton pajamas to wear in Dachau. And Dachau is just outside of Munich at the foot of the Alps. And we are talking about December, it was bitter cold. And they had to stand in formation for hours, and he got frostbite on his hands. I have my suspicions how else he got frostbite on his hands, but I have no proof of that. Anyway--

What are your suspicions that you don't have proof of?

That he had been punished for some minor infraction and hung on one of these contraptions that they had there by his hands and that his hands had been exposed to the weather, and that that's why. But as I said, I have no proof of that.

He had been home only a few days, and we were nursing his hands, when a young policeman came to the door. Now this young man was a boy from the village, and the only pocket money he had ever earned was from my mother because she had him weed her flower garden. And he came and he told us that the deed to our house was no good, and would we kindly find accommodations elsewhere.

Well, I told you, my great-grandfather had built the house. And all of a sudden, the deed was no good? Obviously, what the village was trying to do was make itself judenrein, which means clean of Jews. And we had some difficulty finding where to go. Most of our relatives had left Germany.

And then finally, we found a cousin in Augsburg, who still had a house, and they were willing to give us one room. And so we sold whatever furnishings we could and gave away the rest. And by the end of 1938, starting 1939, we moved to Augsburg to this one room.

In that one room, there was one single bed. My parents slept at the head of that bed, and my brother and I slept at the

foot. And I don't know whether it was in my innocence or what, but it never occurred to me what it meant for my parents never to have a moment's privacy. And we lived in Augsburg in this one room.

How did you feel your cousins were treating you?

They were very sympathetic and they were very sorry for us. But they, in their way, needed to get on with their own lives.

Did you eat together?

At first, yes. And then we got a little kitchen and my mother and I did the cooking there and the cleaning there. And that's where we lived-- that plus that one bedroom.

I mean, you got a little kitchen in another house?

Yes, and we had to walk from one house to the other.

Was the kitchen just for your family?

Yes.

But you and your mother did work for the family in exchange for--

No, no. What arrangements were between our two families, I do not know. And then one day, my parents got a letter. I am not sure where from. But the letter said that there was a children's transport leaving from Munich and that one of their children could be put on that train to take them out of Germany.

The train, we were told, would go to England. And we had 48 hours to decide, and my parents had two children. How do you decide which child to save and which child to continue to put into danger? Because I was already going on 14 and the cutoff date was 15 for children's transport, my parents decided that I should be the one to go.

Because it might be your last chance?

Because it might be my last chance. They didn't know whether there were other trains or what, but I had the very strict orders and directions from my parents that I was to do everything possible once I got to England to try and get my brother out also. And we were allowed to take one suitcase and a little paper bag, in which I had two sandwiches and an apple for the journey, for the trip.

Did you know how long the trip would be?

No. And my parents took me to the station. And they blessed me and they put me on the train. And I still didn't realize what that could have meant until I was actually on the train, looked out the window, and saw my parents standing there absolutely frozen.

You said that your parents blessed you. Did they say anything else to you?

Oh, 1,000 times that they loved me and they knew that everything would be fine, and that we would be together soon, and all the usual things that you say that may or may never come true. It was only when I was on the train looking out the window that it hit me very forcefully that I might never see them again. But it was too late to do anything about it then. The doors to the compartments were closed and the train began to move.

Where did you-- you knew that you were going to England, but did you have any idea at all about what was going to happen in England?

I knew nothing. I didn't even know where England was, except on a map.

So nobody told you any more than that you were going to England?

That's correct. In order to sort of prepare us, if you will, for the eventuality of going to an English speaking country, we started to get some English lessons from-- private lessons from a lady, A Jewish lady in Germany in Augsburg. But it didn't help in the least. Anyway--

But there had been this thought, even before the children's transport, that maybe you would be going to an English speaking country?

Right. The possibilities were America, where some of my aunts and uncles had gone, or Australia, or England. I mean, we didn't know. But we figured that we may very well end up in some English speaking country. And it's a funny thing, I didn't even realize that my parents were not taking those lessons-- only my brother and I.

But your parents had arranged that-- the lessons for you?

Yes, yes.

And you have no idea where the letter came from about the children's transport or whether your parents had done anything to get a letter like that?

I do not know. I know that there was an organization which was almost worldwide, but which had its roots in what was then Palestine, and that money had been collected from all over the world. Because every time that a train was placed at the disposal of the-- I don't know-- Jewish community of Germany, or whatever it was, some charitable organization, a Nazi official had to be bribed to put that train there and to supply the train with an engineer and a stoker.

And I just-- I don't know how it all happened. I really don't know. Anyway, as the train was beginning to move, the door to the compartment, in which I was, was pulled open. A little wicker basket was pushed in. The door closed and the train began to gather speed.

Now this was a compartment for six or eight people?

No, it's more than that. It was more like the kind of open carriage that you see today in the trains. And we were all looking at that basket. And I saw that all the children were looking at me. And it hit me that I was the oldest in the compartment, and they expected me to go and open the lid and see what was in there.

I have to tell you that all my life I have been petrified of snakes. And I was convinced that basket was full of snakes. And that as soon as I would open the lid, they would all crawl out. And it took me a while to make my way to that basket, but I did open the lid. And in the basket, sound asleep, were two infants.

And we just looked at them. And I asked the other children to come and take a look at these babies. And they-- by coming and looking at the babies, it, I guess, broke the ice, because nobody had been talking to anybody. None of us knew each other. We were all strangers.

And what was the age range?

The age range was anything-- all the way up from the infants, to toddlers, to me.

So there were toddlers on the train?

There were toddlers. I think that-- well, toddlers, I don't know. They must have been two or three years old. I don't know what you'd call them.



But no adults to help with the toddlers?

No adults, not a single adult. And we began to discuss how to take care of the babies-- how we would feed them, how we would diaper them.

Now this was you and the other girls, or the boys also?

The boys also. We were all talking together. We sort of were in a group, and this was a group problem. And we tried to solve it as a group. In fact, one of the things we did was collect handkerchiefs from the boys because they had bigger handkerchiefs than the girls had. And we thought that we might have to use the handkerchiefs as diapers.

And we closed the lid to the basket and we tried to settle down to sleep. I led the children in the Shema, in the prayer of faith that you say last thing before you go to sleep.

Had you previously said that every night before you went to sleep?

Oh yes, oh yes, and every morning. And it wasn't too long before the babies began to cry and woke us up. They were hungry, and they needed to be fed, and they needed to be changed.

And I opened the basket and I picked up one, and somebody else picked up another. I think it was a boy, I don't remember. And we saw in the basket two bottles of milk and two clean diapers. And we started, almost jokingly, asking who knew how to feed a baby and who knew how to diaper one. And I fed one. And another-- I guess it was the boy who picked them up. I don't remember.

Had you fed a baby before?

No. I don't remember feeding my brother, and I certainly hadn't fed one since.

And there were no volunteers from children who had babies at home that they had helped with?

No, they just assumed that I would take care of things. And I guess instinct sort of took over and I fed one. And then we diapered them. And that's when we saw that they were two little girls, obviously twins. But there was no identification of any kind in the basket. We had no idea who these babies were.

How old do you think they were?

They must have been about three months old. And I have often since thought what it must have cost that mother to put that basket on the train. She probably walked up and down that platform for heaven knows how long trying to decide in the last minute whether she should put that basket on the train or not. And of course, the basket endangered us because the babies were not supposed to be on the manifest. They were not on the manifest. We knew that.

So you think the--

We think--

--the parents just shoved them on illegally, or without going through any procedure.

I think so, but we have no way of knowing that, of course. But we guessed that they were there without permission.

Smuggled on.

Right, a last moment decision. And we were wondering what would happen to the babies and what would happen to us at the border. Would the train be allowed to cross the border, or would it be turned around and sent back to Germany?

But we also realized that in that feeding, they had each drunk more than half a bottle of milk. And we knew that there would be more feedings before we would get at least to Holland. And so we filled the bottles with water. And so now we had a mixture of milk and water.

But because ours was a children's train and there was a lot of troop movement going on in preparation for the war-- there was no doubt that Germany was preparing for war-- our train was forever shunted aside. And it took much longer for our train to get to the Dutch border than it was supposed to take, by which time, the babies were only getting water and we had long since eaten whatever food we had brought with us. And we were all starving, we were all hungry.

And finally, we saw a sign that said 3 kilometers to the Dutch border. And we put the babies back in the basket and we closed the lid. But there was very little room in that basket for two babies. And they were bloated, and they were starving, and they cried a great deal. But for the time being, they were sort of napping, so we left them alone.

And the train stopped and in came a German soldier with his bayonet fitted on his rifle. And he had a list of names. And he went through that list of names and counted us and counted the names on that list, and then counted the number of suitcases that were in the compartment. But of course, there was that extra basket.

And he asked, whose is that basket? And I said, it's mine. And he began to yell at me and he said, you know you're only supposed to have one suitcase. And as he was yelling, it woke up the babies. And they started to cry, both of them. And he took his bayonet. And with his bayonet, he opened the clasp to the basket. We had no idea what he was going to do with that bayonet. And he lifted up the lid and he saw the two infants in there.

He didn't say a word, and he turned around and he walked out of the train. But as he was turning around, I noticed that he was wearing a very shiny, brand new wedding ring. But we didn't know whether he would report finding the babies, or whether he would let the train go past.

The train began to move. And there was a coupling and uncoupling of the engine and a new engine was put on, and we continued on our way to Holland. Obviously, he did not report what he had found.

We crossed the Dutch border. And the first station after the Dutch border, the train stopped and the doors opened and in poured a whole lot of Dutch farm women with baskets on their arms distributing bread and butter and milk. And we were fed, and it was like a blessing. And they held the babies, and they cooed and cuddled with them and they fed them too.

And we had, in a corner sitting, a boy who hadn't moved since we left Munich. He was frozen. He was in shock. And no matter what any of us did, we couldn't get him to move. He wouldn't go to the bathroom. There was a toilet on the train. He wouldn't go. He wouldn't eat. He wouldn't drink. He wouldn't do anything. He wouldn't talk.

And one of the Dutch women just sat down next to him, picked him up, put him in her lap, and began to talk to him and put her arms around him, and just talked and talked and talked to him. And she took his hand and she took him to the bathroom, and he went. I could never understand how she knew what to do for him, or what she said to him. I will never know.

But it was also interesting that those farm women only spoke Dutch and we only spoke German, but there was no communications barrier between us at all. Actions told us what was the right thing to do. They fed us, obviously, we said thank you. They hugged us, we hugged them back. It was natural.

Finally, all the Dutch women left, except the one who was with the baby, with the little boy. She sat and she continued to talk to him and to comfort him. And she fed him and she gave him milk to drink, and he ate and he drank. And she stayed on the train with us. And I was wondering how she was going to get back home or back to her family. And thinking of her family, I started to think of my own family. And that was really the first time that I allowed myself to think of my own family.

It's also the first time you didn't have so much responsibility.

Right. And it was really like a weight had been lifted off my shoulders. And I began to cry. But they were tears-- they were cleansing tears. They were somehow tears of feeling that maybe things would be OK.

When we got to Hoek van Holland, the boat was still there waiting for us. Another transport had come from Berlin from the northern part of Germany. And the children had been waiting for us. The boat had been waiting for us, apparently, for a couple of days because our transport had taken so long.

How long had your transport taken?

I no longer am quite sure, but I know that it was at least two days longer than it was supposed to.

So three days?

Probably three days. I'm not quite sure anymore. And at Hoek van Holland, there were lots of Jewish ladies there who were looking after us, who were making sure that we were all there, that everything was OK, that we were all fine. And everything was fine. They told us all to go on the boat, except the two babies.

The two babies turned out to be a problem. They hadn't been expected, and they weren't sure whether there would be a family in England who would be willing to take them. And they were talking about putting the babies into an orphanage temporarily. And I wouldn't hear of it. I absolutely would not hear of it.

There were almost 500 children on the train. And I said, if people in England are willing to take in 500 children, they will take in two more. And they wired to England and everything was straightened out. Everything was fine. The babies were allowed to be put on the train-- on the boat. And I would not take my eyes off that basket all the way to England.

Let's stop here and turn over the tape.