

**Emma Mogliensky**

**File 1 of 3**

**August 15, 1996**

**RG-50.106\*0053.01.03**

### **Abstract**

This part discusses Emma's life from birth until she reached the Netherlands on the Kinder transport. Emma was born as Emma Hubert on May 22, 1923 in Kronheim, Germany. Along with her brother, she was raised in a family home built by her great-grandfather. She had a happy family life and enjoyed berry picking with her mother. Emma attended a one-room schoolhouse for grades one through six and she and the other Jewish children crossed the street for religious training with the Rabbi. Her peaceful life ended around Kristallnacht when the school children were permitted to beat the Jewish children with permission by the teacher. Emma was sent to school in Nuremberg and lived in a pension for young women. When her father was sent to Dachau, Emma was requested to return home. She asked the SS to release her father since he earned the Iron Cross in World War I and they did so. Her family was forced out of their home and moved into one room of a cousin's house in Augsburg. Emma was placed on the Kinder transport to England where, as the eldest at 14, she had to take responsibility over the compartment. This part ends where Emma is greeted at the Dutch harbor by Jewish women and is placed on a boat.

Upon arriving in England, Emma is placed with a family and she is able to send for her brother who is placed with another family. She experiences a difficult adjustment to her new country as no one speaks German and she does not speak English. Soon World War II starts and most of her family evacuates and Emma is placed with another family. She corresponds with her parents until '43 when her letter returns indicating "address unknown." At 16 Emma works for an accountant and volunteers as a fire watcher. When she was 17 and 1/2, she became a cook in the British Army. After the war, she received free college tuition and married an American in the US. Subsequently they have three children and seven grandchildren. After her husband passes away, she visited Germany with two of her children where they meet the suspicious new owner of her house and have an emotional experience at Emma's grandparents' gravesite.

This third part discusses Emma's visit to Germany with her children and contact with England since living in the United States.

### **Summary**

00:00 Emma Moliensky was born Emma Hubert in Kronheim (?) or Kronheim ban Gudenhauser (?) on May 22, 1923. There were 54 families in her town totaling about 200 inhabitants. Her family of four consisted of her parents, her brother and herself. She

felt they were a happy loving family. Her father was a traveling salesman of soap powders. He got orders from farmers and always came home on Friday in time to observe the Sabbath. They lived in a solid house built by her great-grandfather. They had an orchard of 70 fruit trees in the back. Their life was comfortable. They always lived in the house except her parents lived elsewhere when they first got married. Her school in Kronheim had six rows of desks, one row for each grade from one to six. One had to go elsewhere for additional schooling. She would go berry picking in the forest with her mother for blueberries, raspberries, and strawberries which they preserved to make pies. The family was involved in the town synagogue and other activities there including Hebrew School. The Catholic priest from the village came to her school daily to give religious instruction and the Jewish children crossed the street to the Rabbi for their religious instruction. She attended with her brother and the other two Jewish children from the school.

05:00 Until 1938, the school children were friendly and did not pick on the Jewish children. There was respect between the faiths. Her father would string up the Christmas lights and the priest would attend synagogue on Yom Kippur as a sign of respect. Suddenly, the teachers returned from a conference where they must have been instructed to make life miserable for the Jewish children. The Catholic children attended mass in the morning where they were probably instructed to be mean to the Jewish children. One day when Emma and her brother came to school, they saw two lines were already formed. They walked through them and were beaten up. They complained to the teacher who replied, "What do you expect, dirty Jew?" Overnight, the children changed from being friendly to being mean. From then on, they were beaten every morning and afternoon. This resulted in her brother being sent to school in the next town and she was sent to high school in Nuremberg in 1938. Emma along with her Cousin Emma lived in a pension for Jewish young ladies run by two elderly spinsters who could not accept the current situation.

10:00 After school, they were required to spend a half hour walking around the living room with a book on their heads. At the dinner table, they were seated with a book under each arm to train to keep their elbows off the table. If they dropped a book, they had to leave the table. Emma had no choice but to obey the spinsters although she was able to correspond with her parents and speak to them by phone. School was different as all the children were Jewish. During morning and afternoon breaks, they never spoke about picnics, parties, vacations or boys but talked about whether they should go to England, America or Australia. No one understood what it meant to talk about going away. She understood that the political movement in Germany hated Jews and wanted to get rid of them so they had to leave. Her father had served in World War I where he earned the Iron Cross and could not understand that anything could happen to his family. Emma, like her father, thought that all the trouble would blow over. Her father felt that he could

not leave Germany as he could not earn a living for his family since he could not speak any other language but German.

- 15:00 The farmers did not know that her father was Jewish and he did not tell them so Emma does not know if his business was affected. At the dinner table, the family would discuss what was happening. Her mother's friend from Nuremberg requested that Emma babysat as she wanted to visit her husband who was recuperating from a heart attack in the hospital. Emma went to their house and on Kristallnacht, November 9, 1938, the Nazis smashed the door in and demanded the man of the house. The wife replied that he is in the hospital and they used their bayonets on all the mattresses and the crib but luckily they were able to remove the children and the baby quick enough and the father was not found although hiding under the crib. The Nazis said that this was happening to all the Jews in Germany and they left. Emma wondered what was happening to her family but the telephone wires were cut.
- 20:00 The next morning she used a public phone and learned that her house was broken into and her father was sent to Gunsenhausen (?). After a few days, he was transferred to Dachau. Her mother begged her to come home so she obtained a travel permit and went to the train station and bought a ticket. There she met her father's friend who asked how the family was and when she told him the facts, he suggested she go to the SS and request they release her father. She was not sure if her action would make life more dangerous for her family or not. She decided to go in and saw a row of filing cabinets on one side, chairs on the other and a man in SS uniform sitting in the middle. She was asked her name and address and purpose for visiting the office and she answered him. She was told to get out and she quickly left. She took the train home and saw her mother was having a nervous breakdown as she could not stop crying. There was only a visiting nurse who came to their town twice a week. She informed her brother and her mother about her action at the train station.
- 25:00 Her mother could not sleep alone so Emma slept with her. A few days later, they received a phone call from the Burgomeister (?), the Mayor of Kronheim, who instructed her mother to come alone to his office with proof that her husband had received the Iron Cross. Upon the mother's return she felt better as had hope for her husband. After a week, Emma's father returned from Dachau where he had spent just four weeks and Emma could not recognize him. He was cold so the four of them slept in one bed and they talked all night but her father would not talk about himself. It was her father's habit to say morning prayers in his study with the door open but the next morning, he closed and locked the door as he prayed. He gave thanks to the almighty for being released and begged G-d to help release the other inmates. It was so difficult to hear the father's prayers that her brother left the house. Her father saw things done to other people and perhaps to himself and he was starved.

- 30:00 He said that at night, he would crawl from tent to tent and tell the inmates not to commit suicide as it would be doing the Nazis' work for them and he would read a psalm to them. Her father did this, knowing what would happen to him should he be caught. **Tape 1, Side B** Her father came home with frostbite on his fingers as he only wore cotton pajamas though Dachau was bitter cold being near the Alps. Also, he had to stand on formation for hours and might have been hung up for a minor infraction. They nursed the father's hands when a young policeman from the village came to their house. He had earned pocket money when he weeded their garden. He reported that their deed for their house was worthless and they must seek other accommodations. They had difficulty finding a place to go as most of their relatives had left. Their cousin in Augsburg(?) was willing to give them a room in her house so they sold some furnishings and gave away the rest. They moved there in the beginning of '39 to a room with one bed where they all slept so the parents had no privacy.
- 35:00 The cousins were sympathetic to them but had their own lives. At first they ate with the cousins but later they obtained a kitchen in another house where Emma and her mother did the cooking. One day they were notified that one child would be eligible for the Kinder transport leaving Munich for England and they had 48 hours to decide which child it would be. Since Emma was 14 and the cutoff was 15 they picked her as her brother might get a chance later. She was told that when she got to England, she must try hard to get her brother out. Emma was permitted one suitcase and a paper bag in which she carried two sandwiches and an apple for the journey. Her parents took her to the train, blessed her and put her on the train. They told her that they loved her and hoped they would soon be together. When she looked out the window at her parents, she realized that she might never see them again. She really did not know where England was. Emma and her brother had taken English lessons from a Jewish lady in Augsburg as thought they might go to an English-speaking country such as England, America or Australia.
- 40:00 Now she realized that her parents had not studied English. Although she did not know who contacted the family about the Kinder transport, she knew there was a worldwide organization based in Palestine who collected money from all over the world. Perhaps their money served as a bribe for the Nazi official to supply the train with an engineer and a stoker. As the train started to move, the door to the compartment opened and a wicker basket placed inside. All the children looked at the basket and looked at her as she was the eldest. She thought the basket was full of snakes so it took her awhile to open the lid. Finally, she did so and saw two sleeping babies. She asked the others to look at the babies. None of the children knew each other. There were no adults, just children from infancy up to Emma's age. They discussed how they were going to feed and diaper the babies.

45:00 They collected boys' handkerchiefs to use as diapers. To prepare for sleep, Emma closed the lid on the basket and led the children in the Shema and the prayer of faith that is said before sleep. Soon the babies woke up as they needed to be fed and diapered. She fed the babies as the others did not volunteer and assumed that she would take over. They diapered the babies and realized they were twin girls, about three months old but had no ID. Emma felt it must have been difficult for the mother to place the basket on the train. This endangered all the children as the babies were not on the manifest and may not be permitted to cross the border. Each baby had taken about half a bottle and Emma realized there would be more feedings so filled the rest of each bottle with water.

50:00 Germany was preparing for war so the train was forever being shunted off to the side so it took a long time to reach the Dutch border. By the time they got 3 km. from the border, all the children were hungry and the babies only were getting water. The babies were placed in the basket with the lid shut and first they cried but then they napped. The train stopped and a German soldier got on with a bayonet over his rifle and checked the number of children and suitcases against his list. He asked who the extra basket belonged to and Emma replied that it was hers. The babies started to cry and the soldier opened up the lid with the bayonet and saw the infants. He turned around and walked out of the train. Emma noticed his shiny new wedding ring and did not know if they would be reported. The train started up, got a new engine and continued on to Holland so they were not reported. At the first station, the train stopped and the doors opened and Dutch farm women came in to feed them milk and butter and cheese.

55:00 The women held the babies and fed them. There was a young boy in the corner who had not moved since they left Munich. He would not talk, eat, drink or go to the bathroom. One of the women put him on her lap, talked to him and took him to the bathroom. The women only spoke Dutch and the children only spoke German but there was no barrier between them. When the women fed the children, they were thanked and when they hugged the children, they were hugged back. All the women left except the one caring for the boy. Emma wondered how she was going to get back to her own family. This made her think of her own family and she cried but felt that maybe things will work out. They reached Hook von Holland where a boat and children from the Kinder transport from Berlin waited for them. It had taken them three days from Munich and they were two days late. Jewish ladies looked after them and told them to go on board. They could not place the two babies on the ship as did not know if an English family would take them. They thought of placing the babies in an orphanage. Emma would not accept it so they wired England and got permission and the babies were allowed on the boat along with the 500 children from the train.

61:00

**Emma Mogliensky**

**File 2 of 3**

**November 15, 1996**

**RG-50.106\*0053.02.03**

### **Summary**

- 00:00 Emma Moliensky describes her two-hour crossing the channel from the Netherlands to the English coast as being "rocky" which caused her to suffer extreme seasickness. Then they took the train from Harridge (?) to London. There they were placed in a large hall that had a large stage. About 100 children at a time went up on the stage and the adults picked the children who they had been matched with. Each adult took one to three children. The Chief Rabbi had told the King that the children from Austria and Germany would be safe if they could be admitted to England without a passport and a visa. The King wanted to know who would look after the children and the Rabbi replied that the Jewish community would care for them so they would not become a public charge. The Chief Rabbi also secured permission from the Prime Minister. The Jewish organization in Great Britain carefully matched the children with the families so that observant children went with observant families and less observant with less observant families. The names of the children were read aloud alphabetically and the names of the adults were read who then claimed the children. There were about 500 children on Emma's train and fewer on other trains. No one knew how long they would stay in England, that there would be a war or the Holocaust. They thought it would probably be a few months before they could return home.
- 05:00 The family she was matched with only spoke English and she only spoke German so Emma found it a struggle to communicate. Besides the parents, there was a daughter, a year younger than Emma, and a son, several years younger. She was given her own bed in the daughter's room but she was tired and the girl continuously talked in English which Emma did not understand. She remained in that home a few months and Emma's English improved. She enjoyed the free library where she could take out first grade books which she used to teach herself to read English. Emma was placed in her age-related grade and the teacher did not speak German. She did not do well, especially in math where all the terms (add, subtract) were different from those in German. They realized that she had trouble but no one tried to help her as outside of the Jewish community, no one had conception of her problem.
- 10:00 Emma tried to get her brother over and she succeeded. When she received a letter that he was arriving on a specific transport, she went to the great hall to meet him. He was placed with another family who lived nearby and she could visit him until September first when the war began. Germany bombed Poland and on September third, England declared war on Germany. The British government wanted to assure that all the children

would be safe so they were evacuated into the countryside. Her brother was evacuated but at 14, Emma was considered too old to evacuate. Some mothers evacuated with their children as occurred in her family so she was left alone with the husband. Perhaps she was there to take care of him but Emma thought it improper and called the Jewish committee. She was transferred to a home of a couple, both doctors, who were married less than ten years with no children. The husband was in private practice and the wife did research for a London chest hospital. They tried to make her comfortable but it was hard as she was a teenager. They sent her to a private junior college which they thought would be preferable over a public school but, again, only English was spoken.

15:00 Math was difficult for her but she did well in English literature. She had spent time in her grandparents home when she was young and her parents went on vacation. There she read the Shakespearean plays translated into German by Schiller. She devoured them so when she studied Shakespeare in Junior College, she understood them as found Shakespearean English more comfortable than spoken English. Her foster parents, the Cohens, were pleased of her success. She was asked to write an essay on something that occurs during daily life. Her foster father was attached to an air raid shelter and first aid post where people obtained free health care. Sometimes he brought his patients home and would use Emma's type O blood for their treatment. Emma wrote about this and received a grade of A and the teacher read the essay aloud so Emma decided to become a writer. Her brother lived with a non-Jewish family with two boys in a non-Jewish village. The foster mother was nice except said that his country is at war with her country and she did not want to hear any German which forced him to learn English quickly.

20:00 Mail service stopped between England and Germany as they were at war which made life difficult for Emma, her brother and her parents as they could no longer communicate. The International Red Cross devised a form for 25 words that the children could send one month to the parents and the parents could send one form the next month to the children. Emma and her brother were cut off from friends as no one spoke German and they did not speak English. They attempted to squeeze a lot of information in those 25 words and the parents did the same. A message was returned in '43 marked "address unknown" which they knew was the code for being transported East to a camp. They hoped the parents could live through it. London was bombed and Emma was 16 and joined the fire watching group once a week at night and worked for a company of accountants in the inner city during the day. Her fire watching post was outside of St. Paul's Cathedral.

25:00 She could do nothing when the big bombs fell but if incendiary fire bombs fell, she could put them out with buckets of sand. Except for St. Paul which was only hit by one dud bomb, the inner city was almost entirely destroyed. An air raid shelter was built in the basement of her home and Emma and her foster mother went down for supper, the six o'clock news and changed to clean daytime clothes so they would not have to run out in

pajamas in case of an emergency. They placed their shoes nearby so they could jump into them quickly. Mr. Cohen was attached to an air raid shelter every evening at an underground subway station where hundreds of people came for shelter. He did diverse activities including delivering babies and caring for the dying. He only came home one night a month. At 17 and ½, Emma joined the British Army. **Tape 2, Side B** As an enemy alien, she was given a choice to either join the Army, work in a munitions factory at night, or work in the land Army where you might get billeted to a farmer's house with no other woman. Emma decided on the Army as did not want to work at night or be alone with a farmer.

- 30:00 She could either become an orderly or a cook. Since she knew how to clean, she decided to learn how to cook. She had to cook for 2,000 men and still remembers how to make a pie crust (500 pounds of flour, 200 pounds of shortening, 200 pounds of baking powder and a pound of salt). She had to sift the powder into the shortening by hand and used a special sink. Emma encountered anti-Semitism in the training camp when the instructor said he would be happy to put her in an airplane and drop her over Germany without a parachute. He was a professional soldier and did not want women in the Army, certainly not foreign women. Emma earned her high school equivalency diploma while the other girls went dancing. After the war, after serving four and one-half years, she was discharged and got free college education. She met an American stationed in England and they corresponded and dated when he was available. He fought in Belgium and France and was discharged directly to the U.S. after the war ended. After graduation, she went to the U.S. to visit her brother, her grandmother and an aunt and uncle.
- 35:00 Accidentally, she met the man who she had corresponded with and dated and they decided to get married after she completed her one year commitment of teaching in England. She returned and married David Mogliensky and they had three children and seven grandchildren. During the war there was food and clothes rationing. Emma and her brother only received food coupons, no clothing coupons from the Kinder transport. When they outgrew their clothes and shoes, it was embarrassing to ask their families for coupons to get new ones. Also, during the war it was hard to keep the dietary laws so Emma promised herself to observe them when she got discharged from the service. She kept her promise and her children and grandchildren also keep to the dietary laws and are observant. Emma was happily married and visited Israel several times. Ten years ago her husband got ill and passed away. Then she moved from Albany to Baltimore to be close to her children. She has a son and a daughter in Baltimore and a son in Silver Spring. Her children begged her to return to Germany to have closure.
- 40:00 Emma felt that she had lived three lives – Germany, England and the United States. She thought there was no one for her to see in Germany but agreed if her children went along. She went to Germany for a week with one son and her daughter. They flew to Munich, the capital of Bavaria and rented a car to drive to Kronheim. Her son drove, her daughter



navigated and she translated. Kronheim looked the same and she found her home where now other people resided. The woman who lived there was upset that they took pictures of the house and was worried they wanted to take claim of the house. They talked but were not invited in and Emma did not want to enter. They walked around the house and saw the fruit trees in the orchard. Then they visited the synagogue which had been turned into a chicken coop and was now divided into apartments. Emma saw her school and the little castle in the middle of the village. Then they drove to Bechoven (?) where her father's parents are buried. She had written to the Mayor of the city if he knew where they were buried and he agreed to meet her.

45:00 The cemetery was not desecrated and the Mayor replied that he did not know where the graves were but he would make a search. They met him at his office and he said that it was a coincidence that he had other visitors just a week ago and when he came to the new section, he saw her grandparents' gravesite. The cemetery had been consecrated in the 1400s as a Jewish cemetery. On the gate was a sign that indicated that the cemetery is under Bechoven's responsibility and must not be desecrated. The Mayor was very nice and drove them in his car while his son, about 12 or 13 years old followed them. The gravestones in the older section had sunken into the ground and could not be seen but gradually as they went toward the newer portion, more and more of the gravestones were uncovered. Most of the stones were sandstone and the engraving was mostly obliterated by weather. Her grandparents' gravestone had an inscription in black granite set into the sandstone so soon was clear when the dirt was tissued off.

50:00 On the front was the name, birthdates, and place of death of Malka Hubert and Rubin Hubert in German. Hebrew inscription was on the backside with a long description about each grandparent. Her grandfather's indicated he toiled in community service and passed away the 22<sup>nd</sup> of Iyyar and was buried on the 24<sup>th</sup> of Iyyar 5685 and desired to study Torah without limit and raised his children without the fear of heaven. Similar description for her grandmother that she died the first day of Succos and buried the first day of Chol Hamoed 5683, that she did not wander from good deeds, was committed to charity, her husband trusted her and her children respected her, and she saved the souls of the innocent. Emma's daughter had always thought Judaism started with her mother but now felt connected to the Jewish people back to Sinai. Emma said she would not have wanted to miss this experience. As a child, her parents would say if she was a good girl at the cemetery, she would be taken to the synagogue. She loved it because it was gorgeous. Emma asked the Mayor about it and he replied that it was burned to the ground on Kristallnacht. It was wooden and looked like a barn on the outside. It was collapsible and could be moved. Originally it belonged to students and their Rabbi who traveled across Germany and lived on the charity of communities. They took the synagogue apart and carried the boards and when they stopped for the night, quickly put it up and no one questioned them as it looked like a barn.

55:00 Upon arriving at Bechoven, one student got the plague and the others caught it from him so it remained there since the late 1700s or early 1800s. The community used it as their synagogue. It was magnificent inside with the walls painted white, pictures of birds painted by hand in multi-colors and quotations from the Talmud and the Torah in gold letters, scarlet curtains with scarlet velvet ropes and scarlet seats. The group went to the spot where it had stood and a hedge was planted around the perimeter of the area where it had been and at the center was a memorial to the citizens who perished. She asked why the memorial existed as there were no Jews in the town and the inscription was in German and Hebrew. The Mayor said it acted as a reminder to the town. They had been given money to rehabilitate their buildings so used a portion to build the memorial. The inscription surprised them. Then the Mayor asked if they wanted to see what the synagogue looked like on the inside.

60:00

**Emma Mogliensky**

**File 3 of 3**

**November 15, 1996**

**RG-50.106\*0053.03.03**

### **Summary**

00:00 Emma Moliensky and her children were visiting Bechoven (?), Germany where she had pleasant recollections of the synagogue there that was subsequently burned down during Kristallnacht. The Mayor tells her there are photographs of the synagogue in a shop so they visit it and see seven photographs on the walls. Six are of the inside and one of the outside. The owner still has the negatives so Emma was able to order copies and received them soon after she arrived home. The Mayor was very nice to them and took them for coffee. Emma, in turn, wanted to do something nice for him. She was able to find a Jewish Book Store in Munich and bought a book of psalms and mailed it to the Mayor for his son. Then they went to Tellmessaging (?) to see the grave of her other grandparents but it was getting dark so they quickly left. They stayed overnight in Munich and went to Dachau the next day. The camp appeared so sanitized to her that it did not look like a concentration camp. The huts had been torn down, one new one was built and the extermination oven had been removed after the War. There was a long building that is now a museum where the story of the camp is told in a peripheral way. Many busloads of school children were visiting. They had been given the task of finding items and when they found them they cheerfully called out. Emma felt that this action lost the atmosphere of the place. There were books to write your impression of the place.

One child wrote, "Sorry for what happened and I will try hard to learn never to let it happen again."

- 05:00 On the next page there was a signature of a skinhead who said that Hitler started the job and now it must be completed. That made Emma feel that she had enough of Germany and left for Switzerland the next day. She does not know if she got closure as she received both positive and negative messages. The Mayor in Bechoven was very decent but others were not so kind. She was happy to leave. Emma felt that her children got more from the visit than she did. The visit did not make things easier for her. She related how she visited her foster parents, the Cohens, every year for a week once her children were old enough to be left alone. Both the Cohens had long lives which she feels were due to their kindness. Mr. Cohen died at age 96 and Mrs. Cohen at 103. Recently she received a letter from England that they are trying to clean out the archives of the World Jewish Congress at Dreygunhaus (?). They have IDs from about 10,000 children from the Kinder transport including hers and would like to know if she wants it returned. She replied that she did and later received it. It had her name Emma Sarah as all Jews had to take on middle names—Sarah for women and Israel for men. This was the way all documents and mail had to be directed. When Emma arrived in England, she indicated that her name was Emma Sarah as she desired to keep her middle name as did not want to forget what happened.
- 11:00 The ID has her photo and her parents' names. Now she spends a lot of time giving speeches on the Holocaust in memory of her parents and foster parents as does not want her story to be forgotten.