

## Summary of Oral History: Bella Adler

RG#: RG-50.119.0001

This Summary was written by a USHMM Volunteer on [05/2022]

Tape I: Bella (née Hamburg?) Adler states her birth in Kėdainiai and upbringing in Lithuania; teaching Latin at a Hebrew school in Kaunas; meeting her husband, Leo, marrying in August 1940; their decision to emigrate to the U.S. via Japan and on through Curacao; her husband's trip to Kobe, Japan leaving Dec. 6, 1940; the increased Soviet oppression in Lithuania and the difficulties in her attempts, now pregnant, to travel to Japan; obtaining her exit permit and departing for Moscow in April 1941, never seeing her family again; her departure difficulties with the NKVD in Moscow due to improper papers partly due to her German citizenship (her husband was German); the premature birth of her son May 21, 1941; her imprisonment in Moscow; describes her husband's origins with parents Nathan and Miriam from Nuremberg and upbringing in Ansbach, difficulties in Japan, and extradition to Shanghai where he remained until 1946 or 1947.

Bella and her baby were sent east by crowded railcar with many nationalities to a camp in Aranki (?), near Gorki [?]; no communication had come from her husband or family; describes the difficulties of caring for her baby; her eventual arrival in Karaganda (Qaraghandy, Kazakhstan) after 6-8 weeks where she was transferred by truck to Spassk; and her stay in a hospital with possible typhoid.

Tape II: Bella talks of her disappointment with a Professor Bauer who had met her husband but may have misstated her sense of important details. Bella goes on to describe life in Kazakhstan; her child's illness with diphtheria and recovery; her post-war actions to gain recognition from authorities that her status as a German Jew should be treated differently -- and better -- than the Soviets' treatment of other German nationals; her receipt of official word regarding her parents' deaths in 1947; her transfer to Odessa and her son's case of measles; her transfer to Vienna where she was able to send a letter to a cousin in Hartford, CT who knew her husband had relatives, Rabbi Bender, in New York City; through this contact, Leo and Bella learned of each other's situation; Leo soon thereafter in 1947 arrived in the U.S.; Bella joined him in January 1948; and her son's bris at 7 years old in New York.

Bella describes her difficulties during the early years in America before they went to Basel; they later had two more sons, all three sons became doctors; she concludes describing her family's connections with the Jewish community.

(Considerable Background Noise)