

## ELLEN MENDEL

Interview Summary, March 25, 1992, New York City  
United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

Born in Essen, Germany in 1935, Ellen Mendel discusses her comfortable childhood with her parents Ernst and Jella Hochofer Mendel; how her grandfather, great-uncle, and father were physicians; her father's preparations for her family's immigration to the United States; living in Brussels from 1939 to 1940 while they waited for visas for the United States; how the boat they emigrated on, the Van Dank, was torpedoed and sunk on its return trip; how her maternal grandparents Eva and Ferdinand Holchherr were killed at Sobibor; how other family members were killed at Auschwitz and Theresianstadt, how her aunt Ella Holchherr survived the Holocaust; how her aunt and uncle, Erica and Franz Josef, fled Holland by disguising themselves as French peasants; and how she was a teacher and then a guidance counselor in the New York City schools for 32 years.