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Summary

Marie Louise Green (née Friedheim), born May 22, 1920 in Essen, Germany, describes: having a very happy childhood in an outer suburb of Essen as the only Jews there but no one asking or caring at that time; attending a Lutheran primary school and other private schools; when Hitler came to power, not being able to find a new school (Jews not yet being expelled but new enrollments prohibited); this being the first time she felt discrimination; finding a Catholic school that accepted her; tracing her mother's family in Germany to the 1600s and her father's to 1735; her father having fought in the First World War and being a successful businessman; the family observing only major Jewish holidays and events; not expecting Hitler to remain in power until, in 1934, her brother was beaten up by several local boys; her mother concluding that they must leave Germany; the mother of one of the boys who had beaten her brother calling with profuse apologies and saying she had punished her son; concluding that her older neighbors were not particularly receptive to anti-Semitism and that it was children who were being so indoctrinated; deciding to leave Germany; several of her father's family having already emigrated to Argentina; moving to Holland; living in the Dutch countryside to save money; her mother being a very strong and intelligent woman; the family's safety being threatened again in 1940-1941 after the Germans invaded Holland; having to wear the Juden star; her family receiving a summons to report to a concentration camp in August 1942; being taken by train to the SS registration station at Westerbork; a farmer neighbor trying repeatedly to intervene on the family's behalf; she and her brother receiving a telegram ordering them to return to the farm; her parents being ordered to Amsterdam and she and her brother then ordered to join them; the family living in a single room as all waited to be transported to a camp; being helped by Dutch Christian friends and neighbors, e.g., by hiding possessions, which were returned after the war; her brother being given a place to hide in an attic; Marie wanting to remain with her parents despite having a boyfriend who offered them a place to hide; her mother insisting that if all Jews had to go, she wanted to go with them; Marie being taken to a resistance hiding place and not wanting to stay but not being permitted to leave for fear of having the location revealed; being taken to a place to live for pay; being offered another hiding place near Rotterdam; having false papers; being the "luckiest person in the world" to meet the family that hid her until the end of the war and accepted no payment, gifts, or recognition; remaining in isolation and explaining to neighbors that her parents were in Indonesia (then a Dutch colony) while she was in Holland; her brother finding a different place to hide but not being accepted as an underground member because he was a Jew; her brother surviving the war; finding out from the Red Cross after the war that her parents had been sent to Sobibor and did not survive; returning to Amsterdam and living with her brother until both of them married; having a son and a daughter; moving to Adelaide, Australia.