

RG-50.781.0001

Summary

Felicia Sachs records her memories without an interviewer, dedicating her remarks to “Peter”, apparently her only child. Felicia explains that the Nazi officer who arrested her husband, Hans, was so taken with Peter’s cuteness as a baby that he gave her both his prisoner number and destination (Oranienburg), necessary information if she was to try to get him released.

Felicia explains the mass arrests of Jews in her area, no date or location mentioned, prompted supposedly by the assassination of Ernst vom Rath, a mid-level diplomat to France. Felicia describes the relationship of dance pioneer Rudolf Von Laban and the Nazis. (Part 1, timestamp 00:04:30). She anticipated the coming persecution of the Nazis but was unable to persuade Von Laban and her husband to flee. Felicia describes the loyalty of many acquaintances – her son’s nursemaid, Margaret Saidler (?); Mr. Klumpt (?), her accompanist; a family friend, Hans Meyer – as well as those who did not stand by her, such as her husband’s brother, Walter, who was a judge on German Supreme Court. Felicia describes how the family of her half-sister, Dora, was able to escape to the Netherlands, but they deported to a death camp after the Nazi invasion; their daughter, Marian, Felicia’s niece escaped from the truck to the camp, but Dora and her husband perished.

Felicia describes an incident at a store near her ballet studio (Part 1, timestamp 00:18:40) with a man known as “the Chinese Captain”, and other incidents before obtaining her immigration certificate to America. She also describes her observations of the character and behavior of Nazi men. She describes the brave actions of Father Max Kolbe who saved others in a death camp by sacrificing himself.

When the Nazis released her husband after 17 days, he returned with multiple diseases and injuries. Felicia arranged for a doctor and insisted that they leave as scheduled for England despite his reluctance due to his injuries. She describes the dramatic final steps of her family’s departure by airplane to Britain with the subsequent departure to the United States on the HMS Queen Mary. Felicia describes some of the dance costumes that she brought with her on the ship (Part 3, timestamp 00:26:00).

Felicia concludes with reflections of her husband’s personality during his imprisonment and how they reunited with Margaret, Peter’s loyal nursemaid.