

Kindertransport Association Oral History Project
Interview with
RUTH RAUCH
November 14, 1993

KEY:

- [brackets] describe action in the interview
- *Italics* indicates a word in a foreign language, spelled correctly
- {italics in bracket} indicates a word in a foreign language that may be incorrect
- {brackets} indicate indecipherable words

[FILE: EL_A_14_RuthRauch_11_14_93_mp3]

Interviewer: [question not recorded]

Ruth: Ruth Danzig Rauch.

Interviewer: From?

Ruth: From Munich, Germany. I was born on July 12, 1932. And I was born to {Gerta} and {Immanuel} Danzig. I was the only child. My father was a *shammes* of a synagogue, and so my early years in Germany were more or less built around the synagogue. My parents were very, very loving, religious people, good people. Being the only child, I was the center of their life. And they gave me tremendous amount of love. And it is, I realize, especially since yesterday in the workshop, I realize even more clearly that they gave me a very special gift, that those six years of my life have sustained me in all the traumas and horrors that followed. And I can say what I have learned from this reunion is that, whereas before I had been very angry, extremely angry at my parents for sending me away, I realize as an adult that they did the supreme sacrifice of sending their only child away, knowing more or less that they would never see me again. Because when I left it was in June 1939. I lived through Kristallnacht. And I do— Even though I was small, that one night, I have recollections of it. I mean, everything may not be the way it really was, but I remember. It has remained in my psyche all these years.

Interviewer: Can you describe it to me? What do you remember?

Ruth: Because I remember practically— Everything else seems to be an absolute blur or nonexistent.

Interviewer: But that night?

Ruth: But that night, two Gestapo knocked on the door. I lived in an apartment building. I remember the address, number 9 Maximilianstrasse. It was an apartment. I think it must have had two or three bedrooms. And that night, two Gestapo came and they searched the

house—for, I guess, several reasons. One was that my father was in the army in the First World War, on the German side, and they were looking to see if he had kept any guns as souvenirs. Because I remember, I was in my parents' room in the bed, and they made me get up, and they looked under the mattress to see if anything was being hidden underneath there. Also I remember in my living room we had a beautiful China closet, and in the China closet were many trophies. My uncle (my father's brother) was a well known skater.

Interviewer: Ice skater?

Ruth: Ice skater. In fact, he had skated with Sonja Henie. That's how good he was. And he had won many trophies. And in the China closet were all these beautiful trophies. And so they kind of ransacked the apartment and they took all the valuable silver things from the China closet. And I don't remember too much more.

Interviewer: Were you crying? Is that part of your memory?

Ruth: I don't remember if I was crying, no. All I can think of, I think I may have been just hanging on my mother's skirt, frightened of course, but I don't know if I was crying or was just mute from fear.

I did not remember, but through the records from the Red Cross I found out that the next day or that night (I think the next day), my father was taken to Dachau. And I do not remember {that} my mother and I were left alone. I cannot remember that period. I do remember that I was very, very protected since I was so young and did not really comprehend what was really going on. I do remember that it was difficult to get food after that night, and that we had neighbors, Gentile neighbors, who would go out and get food for us.

Interviewer: Were you living in a Jewish part of town? Or was there such a thing?

Ruth: Well, I guess it would be, because it was a large synagogue.

Interviewer: Were you aware of what was happening to other children on the street?

Ruth: No. My parents, as I said, protected me. I was kept in hiding, away from everything. I don't think they wanted me to see really what was going on. And I do remember that several weeks later (in fact, it was documented), five weeks later, my father did come back. He was released. In fact, I have a document with even his number on Dachau. They kept very good records. And they had done a good job—

[recording goes bad at 7:47.]