

**EI-1247**

**MATHILDA HENSEL GROSS**

**BIRTHDATE: OCTOBER 17, 1921**

**INTERVIEW DATE: JUNE 28, 2002**

**AGE AT TIME OF INTERVIEW: 80**

**RUNNING TIME: 1:03:41**

**INTERVIEWER: JANET LEVINE, PH.D.**

**RECORDING ENGINEER: JANET LEVINE, PH.D.**

**INTERVIEW LOCATION: ELLIS ISLAND**

**TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY: TAPESCRIBE**

**TRANSCRIPT REVIEWED BY:**

**POLAND (GERMANY), 1952**

**AGE: 30**

**SHIP:**

**PORT: BREMEN**

**RESIDENCES:**

LEVINE: Today is June the 28<sup>th</sup>, the year 2002. I'm here at Ellis Island in the Oral History Studio with Mathilda Gross—

GROSS: Uh-hmm.

LEVINE: —who came through Ellis Island—

GROSS: No.

LEVINE: No?

GROSS: No. That was different. That's why we looking for the place.

LEVINE: Oh, okay. Well, you en—

GROSS: [unclear] in '52.

LEVINE: In '52.

GROSS: I was at no—no—

LEVINE: Yeah, this was still open.

GROSS: Oh.

LEVINE: This was still open.

GROSS: Yeah.

LEVINE: But, okay. We're going to get the whole story.

GROSS: Yeah.

LEVINE: But Mrs. Gross did immigrate to this country—

GROSS: Yeah.

LEVINE: —in 1952 when she was 30 years of age. She's 80 at the time of this interview. And this is Janet Levine for the National Park Service.

GROSS: Uh-hmm.

LEVINE: Okay. If you would say again for the tape, please, your birth date.

GROSS: Yeah. Oh, just a minute because it's a different—in Germany, used to have always the day—

LEVINE: That's okay. Whatever way you want to say it—

GROSS: Yeah.

LEVINE: —is good.

GROSS: Now, I want to tell in first month.

LEVINE: Okay.

GROSS: Yeah, so—

LEVINE: What month was that?

GROSS: Yeah, I'm born in October 17—

LEVINE: 19—

GROSS: —1921.

LEVINE: Right.

GROSS: Yeah.

LEVINE: And where were you born?

GROSS: That was in Poland.

LEVINE: Do you—can you say the town or the—

GROSS: Yeah, I—I can say but, you know, can spell it. I have to put a spell—

LEVINE: You want to write it out?

GROSS: Yeah, yeah.

LEVINE: Okay.

GROSS: It's kinda hard, you know. That's the village, was the place. [pause]

LEVINE: We should say that you came here from a refuge—

GROSS: [unclear]—

LEVINE: —camp, right?

GROSS: Yeah, yeah.

LEVINE: Yeah.

GROSS: But from Germany. We're from Germany.

LEVINE: Okay, well, we'll—we'll cover all that. So how do you pronounce this—  
this name of the place you were born?

GROSS: Strongy.

LEVINE: Strong—

GROSS: Strongy.

LEVINE: Strongy.

GROSS: Strongy. Yeah, that's why I called you—when I tell you, you know—

LEVINE: I would never know how to spell that.

GROSS: No, no.

LEVINE: Okay. It's spelled P-S-T-R-O-N-G-I.

GROSS: That's right.

LEVINE: And that was in Poland.

GROSS: Yeah.

LEVINE: Now, how long did you stay in Pstrongi?

GROSS: Oh, until I was 18.

LEVINE: Eighteen.

GROSS: When the war—when the war started, we have to leave.

LEVINE: Okay. Now, let's talk first then about your first 18 years—

GROSS: Yeah.

LEVINE: —in that—in that little town. Was it a little town or a big town?

GROSS: A little town.

LEVINE: Little.

GROSS: That was, you know, a poor—we used to live poor.

LEVINE: What—what did people do there?

GROSS: That was a farmer place. Everybody have a few cows, sheeps, geese, all different kind of animals.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

GROSS: And—

LEVINE: And what was your father's name?

GROSS: Ah, that's—it's—in German, that—Johan [PH] but here in English, that is John.

LEVINE: John.

GROSS: John.

LEVINE: Okay. And your—your maiden name was Hensel.

GROSS: Hensel, yeah.

LEVINE: H-E-N-S-E-L.

GROSS: That's right.

LEVINE: And your mother, what was her name?

GROSS: Pauline.

LEVINE: Pauline. And do you know her maiden name?

GROSS: Yeah, Schultz.

LEVINE: Schultz.

GROSS: Uh-hmm.

LEVINE: Okay. And [clears throat] when you think of your childhood and growing up in Poland—

GROSS: Yeah.

LEVINE: —what are the things you remember most?

GROSS: We was poor but we was happy because we—all week we worked, then hard and, for Sunday, we have a good—a big meal.

LEVINE: Ah.

GROSS: And a lot of dancing.

LEVINE: Oh, really?

GROSS: Yeah. [chuckles]

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

GROSS: Yeah.

LEVINE: And would—would people visit each other?

GROSS: Oh, always. The door not have to be locked always when you go and borrow something, bread or what, you know, ever, because that city, that was like seven kilometer. So then, just you have to walking or I going on a horse with a wagon to see the—so everybody have to be prepared and have something extra. [unclear].

LEVINE: Were you the only child or did you—

GROSS: No. We were five—five sisters there.

LEVINE: Oh. Oh. You were—you were five sisters.

GROSS: Yeah, yeah. I'm the baby. I'm the youngest.

LEVINE: Uh-huh, okay. So what was it like growing up with all girls and—and—

GROSS: Yeah, sometime fight.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

GROSS: Yeah. [laughs] And—but parents, they was strict.

LEVINE: How were they strict? What were they strict about?

GROSS: Oh, they—they hit you. Yeah.

LEVINE: But what—what would they hit you for? What were the kinds of things that—

GROSS: If—if you—oh, if you no listen. You have to listen and they tell you that, "We live together. We have to work together. But for parents, you have to listen what they say to you." Yeah.

LEVINE: Uh-hmm, uh-hmm.

GROSS: And—

LEVINE: Wh—what kind of a little girl were you? Were you a good little girl or—

GROSS: Oh, I—I think so but, you know, that's probably going to be silly for you to [unclear]. When you small, up to years—14 years, after confirmation,

then you have to working hard there. But before 14, then you have to do—watching cows, feeding like, you know, on a farm but not such a big farms like here. So small things but you have to always doing something.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

GROSS: Yeah.

LEVINE: So everybody worked together?

GROSS: Oh, yeah.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

GROSS: Oh, yeah. And they have to—and everybody, no. On [unclear], chickens and the geese, you—wintertime, we had sheeps. Then the bigger sister, they was making the thread from the wool. And then after, they make—my oldest sister, she make the material.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

GROSS: Yeah.

LEVINE: And then—

GROSS: And from flax too. We have our bed sheets, everything homemade.

LEVINE: Wow.

GROSS: Yeah, yeah. Oh, yeah. That what you make it, and wintertime, gloves for hands or the socks. Then you just have to make it yourself. So—

LEVINE: Did you do that too?

GROSS: Oh, yeah. Yeah.

LEVINE: So you learned, as a girl, how to—

GROSS: Oh, yeah. Yeah.

LEVINE: —how to make the—the cloth and—

GROSS: [unclear] things because you have to watch and the oldest, the sister, what they're doing. And you have to just learn and—

LEVINE: Uh-hmm.

GROSS: —to do and some things for yourself.

LEVINE: Uh-hmm.

GROSS: Yeah.

LEVINE: Uh-hmm, uh-hmm.

GROSS: Yeah.

LEVINE: So how about cooking? Did you learn to cook when you were little?

GROSS: Yeah. So, really, that the cooking, that was kinda plain, everything the same.

LEVINE: What would you have, normally speaking? What would you have for eat—for food.

GROSS: Cabbage or the—these pierogies.

LEVINE: Oh.

GROSS: Yeah, or the stuffed cabbage. Then you was making everything the same. And—but this macaroni, then we had—have to making ourselves, of chicken eggs and flour. And we have enough flour because we have at that farm, was everything growing on that farm. And then there's macaroni and, for a Sunday, chicken. The Saturday we have to killing that chicken and eat then. [chuckles] The—that's everything. And for—in wintertime, then a pig have to be—prepare it and smoked in a chimney that—

LEVINE: Do you remember that, smoking the pig?

GROSS: Oh, yeah.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

GROSS: Oh, we was waiting but, you know, can have everything what you want it. [chuckles] Just listen. Yeah, what you [unclear] because that's—have to be—last for—for all year, like.

LEVINE: Oh.

GROSS: Yeah.

LEVINE: Can you remember what they did when they—when they would kill a pig and smoke it?

GROSS: Oh, yeah. Yeah.

LEVINE: What did—how did they do it?

GROSS: Oh, first, they killing pig and they have to be cleaned in a big part, that pig—take off, I don't know what you say, hair or—

LEVINE: [unclear]

GROSS: Yeah. That have to be cleaned and af—you heat the [unclear], doing that. But after, the sausage and the rest and the ladies preparing the rest of—so then the guys, that's what, they killing. And—and after, display them on making pieces for, like, ham. Then they have to be smoked, yeah, and bacon. Yeah. And then we was eating and we was eating from bacon the skin too. One day, when you have that, when they was frying—when they was frying the bacon—then today, I have that piece of skin and make [unclear] together, that piece of skin from—you know, from the back end, because that's too tough to be—together eaten. So then the skin was taken off separate, frying.

LEVINE: Uh-hmm.

GROSS: Yeah.

LEVINE: Uh-hmm. And how long did that pig last the family?

GROSS: Oh, that's—like one or two pigs for whole year. But the fact, nothing was throwaway. The head—what, there was headcheese made—

LEVINE: Oh.

GROSS: —with a press with—you know, first cooked and, yeah, that was kind of plain, you know.

LEVINE: Uh-hmm.

GROSS: And—but we had all those animals, geese, turkey, chicken. We have our own. Some people have some of them no when they was very poor.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

GROSS: But some way, they have to just go through on helping themselves different way.

LEVINE: Uh-hmm.

GROSS: Yeah. So then, one time after the war—

LEVINE: Well, tell me wh—about when—when the war—well, first of all, you said you were—you were a religious family.

GROSS: Yeah.

LEVINE: And you—how did you practice your religion? What did you do?

GROSS: So then, first, when you're young, we'd—we have to go to church on a wagon with horses to church. And when you 14 you have to be confirmed. Then they learning you from the—all the religion and I know in Polish and I know in German, and so that way and I was always—prayed when the mother—when the kids going to bed. That was, say, in, you know, in—in Polish and in German too. "Ich bin klein. Mein herz ist [unclear]." [PH] So, "I'm small and my heart is clean," something like prayer.

LEVINE: Uh-hmm.

GROSS: And we was no going to—often to church because that was far away.

LEVINE: Oh.

GROSS: Twenty kilometers.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

GROSS: But, you know, that—but we was taken under the parents' [unclear] religion and believing in God.

LEVINE: And this was the Lutheran church.

GROSS: Lutheran, yeah.

LEVINE: Now, do you remember any prayers in Polish that you said?

GROSS: Yeah, but I forgot but—

LEVINE: Oh, you forgot?

GROSS: Yeah. But some things that I know in the Polish, the Ten Commandments and then there is a song too that's in Po—in Polish is my best language.

LEVINE: Ah.

GROSS: But you know what? I went to school. In fourth grade, I finish the school because there was no caring to be educated, just the parents want you to working. Yeah, to working. So I was eight years old when I started school. And after I was sick, I catch the—I was sick. I have pneumonia, that caught a very bad cold and then, after I was sick and—but when you 14, then you can finish your school because we no can—there was no—in a village to—in a city. Yeah, that they went out to anniversary. There's a college, yeah. But, no, from our place then nobody went. So in fourth grade I finish school.

LEVINE: So you—

GROSS: And the rest I learn by myself—

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

GROSS: —when I grow up.

LEVINE: I see. So you went to school at eight and you stopped at 14.

GROSS: Yeah.

LEVINE: And that was typical of—

GROSS: Yeah.

LEVINE: —of the people in your town.

GROSS: Yeah, yeah.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

GROSS: [unclear] town.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

GROSS: I missed one year when I was sick so then—if you're 14, then you no have to go longer. So—

LEVINE: And what do you remember about the good times? W—when you were growing up till 18?

GROSS: Yeah.

LEVINE: What—what were the good times? What—

GROSS: Yeah.

LEVINE: —made you happy?

GROSS: In a village, they're making every weekend—they're making dancing party, you know, in a room, just a few people, the young people. But you—they no let you in before 14 when they growing up. People—the young people dancing. But if you're 14 and if the confirmation, then you can get in on watching.

LEVINE: So in other words, confirmation was a very important—

GROSS: Yeah, yeah.

LEVINE: —turning point in your life.

GROSS: That means you are like lady. You're young lady. Yeah, that was—but before 14 when they young, like a boy or a girl, they're sitting. Then they chase you away. [laughter]

LEVINE: Is there anything else that you could do after you had your confirmation that you couldn't do—

GROSS: Yeah, that—

LEVINE: —before?

GROSS: Yeah, that way, we can go on dancing already and if they're growing, if they're 14. And that was make me more happy because, you know, like—like, they kick you out from the place that you no can—just for a little while. And after then, they'll let you. That was in our place. I don't know if that was all over like that.

LEVINE: And then were you able—then did you work after you were confirmed? After confirm—

GROSS: Oh, yeah. Even before work.

LEVINE: You did the same kind of work but you—

GROSS: Yeah, yeah.

LEVINE: —just did—

GROSS: Always on the farm.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

GROSS: On the farm.

LEVINE: And that was what your father was, a farmer?

GROSS: Yeah, yeah.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

GROSS: He was farm—that's why we went from what is [unclear] for us. Yeah. We have to go from—well, we stop here on the ship and we went to Minnesota.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

GROSS: [unclear].

LEVINE: Okay. Well, tell me when you became aware that there was a buildup of the war, of World War II.

GROSS: Oh.

LEVINE: What—what did you experience—

GROSS: Oh—

LEVINE: —before the war?

GROSS: Yeah, there was talking a lot. There was, in Polish, you know, at that time, I knew the best. That was there in—the Polish people, they were saying, "It's going to be war. They want to beat up Hitler." Because they said people that, you know, have the tanks—he's got the tanks from [unclear], just some kind of, you know, silly thing. But [unclear] in '39 find—and I was in Warsaw at that time, because I have a—a Jewish friend from drugstore. And she's got a daughter in Warsaw. And she says—in Poland, they was calling me Marja [PH]. She say, "Marja, if you can bring in chicken and butter, some kind of food to my daughter to Warsaw, because they're talking like it's going to be war on them, in Warsaw." That's a big city. Then she asked me. So when I went out to Warsaw and that what the war started. And after hundred-thirty kilometer, I was walking home from Warsaw.

LEVINE: A hundred and thirty kilometers?

GROSS: Yeah.

LEVINE: Wow.

GROSS: That was taking me a whole week.

LEVINE: Oh! So you were walking back from Warsaw.

GROSS: Yeah.

LEVINE: And what did you experience of the war?

GROSS: Oh, I went through that.

LEVINE: But when you—when did it first—when did you first know that there was a war?

GROSS: The—that what I was in—in Warsaw. Because before the war, what she says, bring her for her daughter something, and then when I was there and they say war and you no can go no place. They no let nobody in. Just everything was like [unclear]. Everything was soldiers. That was some kind of—yeah, and that's where I decided I going to walk. But for me, was be taken only—maybe two days. I could make—I was young at that time. But see, people go and refugees coming from far away and everybody wants to come to Warsaw. That is going to be protected. And they will say I am crazy. W—that direction I'm going, that's the front where they're shooting. Then I went with the stranger people back to closer by Warsaw. I was going back and forth and that was taking me all week. But I come home. When I come home, that was the bombing going through our house, because that was the front where there was Germans and the Polaks. But, you know, I was always afraid because I know that I come from German family, like somebody but—and I have no papers by me or nothing. But I spoke fluent Polish, you know. Then I says—but then got that and they no ask me for paper because they was checking once a while. So when I was walking I see lot of people dead and ammunition on the soldiers, Polish, on German, in between. So today, listen. I remember I said, "Really, I was crazy." But I was not thinking.

LEVINE: Uh-hmm.

GROSS: Just, I want to get home. But through the dead people and the ammunition, like the grenades, everything, because, you know when is [unclear], that they killing and everybody stays there. And I was [unclear]

because that was by the street, why have to go. And [unclear] so then—then I figure today I couldn't make it in—no.

LEVINE: Did—did you pass soldiers?

GROSS: Yeah.

LEVINE: And what did they do? Did they s—stop—

GROSS: Yeah, not just one asking me because they asking me what from I come. I say, "I come from Warsaw." If German was asking me if I see Polish soldiers, I say, "Yeah." And I say, "It's not too far away, on horses, white horses." That is [unclear], they call then. So—and the—the Germans, they have tanks. And there—there was—but I got—because my mother, she spoke good German. She come from German colony. And then I remember little bit, so the Germans ask me and then little by little, I was talking to them where they ask me [unclear] I see Polish soldiers. Then—and I say, "Yeah, I saw the"—but I was very poor, my language. But little bit, that way I know I answered them and [unclear]. But there was friend. Oh, in the Polak [unclear], they were saying, the Polish people when I was going to Warsaw, then they say, the Germans, they [unclear] for [unclear]. That's why I want back because I say, "I no want to be killed." But they was just scared and—on [unclear]. But when I see first time the Germans, that they was friendly, they asking—they gave me coffee and something else to eat. But I was too scared to eat and coffee. I no want it because I was just, you know, very nervous and went here today, when I went through that—when I went through—through two wars, because after, in Germany there was again war with Russia and Germany.

LEVINE: Uh-hmm, uh-hmm.

GROSS: Yeah.

LEVINE: Uh-hmm.

GROSS: And that—that's where you were when they putting us in Germany in these refugee camp where we having this. For me, that brings me to crying because when we come from Poland to Germany, then they putting us in these refugee camp. They took away our house, everything and we got beaten. Yeah, just the Polizi [PH] was staying in the door and we have to go through and they're hitting us. And they saying—so Hitler done to Polak too. That's why we was blamed for the war when we no even know Hitler. We no see—we was born. We was [unclear] Polish chickens. But you know, in a wartime, the—everything can come—

LEVINE: So who was beating you?

GROSS: Yeah. I don't know. Oh—

LEVINE: Was it German—

GROSS: First—no, first, Pol—Polish—

LEVINE: Polish.

GROSS: —in that place—

LEVINE: The—the soldiers?

GROSS: Yeah, yeah. They had the uniform.

LEVINE: Uh-huh, uh-huh.

GROSS: They have a uniform. That was like—they call them militist [PH] but they was like police.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

GROSS: Yeah.

LEVINE: And they were beating you. Now, I—let me just understand.

GROSS: Yeah.

LEVINE: Did your mother—

GROSS: Yeah.

LEVINE: And d—were your mother or father of German extraction? Were they German?

GROSS: Yeah, yeah. No, that's—that's—we ca—they call men like they grandfather. Then a grandfather. They come from Germany.

LEVINE: Germany. On both sides? Mother and father?

GROSS: Yeah, yeah. From Germany and they come to Poland.

LEVINE: I see.

GROSS: But my father was arrest in Poland and we was born in there.

LEVINE: Oh.

GROSS: But after, they was blaming us.

LEVINE: I see.

GROSS: See, for Hitler.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

GROSS: And so—

LEVINE: So how often did you get beaten? Was it just one time?

GROSS: No, that was more time and it's—it's—now, I think when—oh, my father, he starved from hunger; my mother too. My mother too. First, my mother.

LEVINE: Was this in 1939?

GROSS: That was in '40.

LEVINE: In '40.

GROSS: No—yeah, '45.

LEVINE: Oh—

GROSS: [unclear]

LEVINE: In the camp?

GROSS: Yeah. No, no.

LEVINE: No.

GROSS: That was no in a camp. We still was in a village. Me, I was—have to go to a doctor place, working, and my sister with mother someplace else. And my father, my—someplace—they're splitting us. They no kept us together, like—and then I have it good by doctor. The—I have enough food and—but after, then from Germany, somebody started. And they asked us if we want to go to, really, Germany—to Germany. Then we can live down there when we was separate, when we left our property. We have to just get out of there, because there was so much attack on us with the first, the neighbors come and they kick us out. So—but when we—and then we worked and separate. We haven't enough food. And

after they ask if we want to go to Germany, so then—and my husband, I— at that time, I was no married. We was married in '48. So then after the war—so then we went down to Germany and there was Russia— because, you know—I don't know if you know. Germany was split in four pieces.

LEVINE: Uh-hmm.

GROSS: One piece got Russia, one England, America, and Russia. So then we went on the Russia side and that, what we went in the camp. And when we come there we have to—and that was in January on [unclear]—that was—we slept. They kept us in a barn in January.

LEVINE: Hmm.

GROSS: And then we have food only once in 24 hours. One potato or one big soup spoon, horse soup, like or this or that. You—if we have it tonight, usually like five o'clock before started dark, because we no have the lights. And then we have that one potato and then we have to wait until next day. But in the meantime, on [unclear] and that [unclear], they no let us sleep.

LEVINE: Hmm.

GROSS: Like when I was working when here in America, [chuckles] with my accent they was asking and so, more or less, I told them when we was working together. He says, "Mathilda, why do you working here? You should write a book." I say, "Oh, the book was—be too heavy." [laughter]

LEVINE: Uh-huh. Well, wait. Before you talk about the camp—

GROSS: Yeah.

LEVINE: —in the Russian part of Germany—

GROSS: Yeah.

LEVINE: —the—just say a little bit more. Your—your family got split up—

GROSS: Yeah.

LEVINE: —while you were still in Poland.

GROSS: Yeah. The father—mother die in Poland when she was—my sister. But my sister have to stealing the food when she was milking the milk. She—mother was not working. She w—was allowed to have that food.

LEVINE: Oh.

GROSS: Yeah. So and then I was [unclear] my sister come to bed. And then she die, no have food. And after Father, when he was in Germany, we was in the camp. But I have a good—one oldest sister, she find out that we in that camp in Mecklenburg. So she come and she talk to us. Listen, until—I just have to telling this. We come in 6,000 people in the [unclear] but we have a warmer place. We have a big place where there was builded from cement blocks. Then our neighbors that from Poland, they couldn't sleep. We was laying by each other like herrings because we no have no clothes or nothing but that was warmer. For the rest, they was sleeping in a barn with a draft, you know, where they kept that stuff from the farm there. So then my sister, oldest sister, oh, that was quiet, far away, but somebody from—her neighbor come to that place in that camp when we was there and allowed—nighttime, they was asking, "Johan Hensel and Mathilda Hensel, if they are here," there for my sister neighbors. And they asking. So we're on the—on stairs and—because we was sleeping [unclear] on front and somebody walk in. That what they was asking. And then so—then they was asking if we are there. When we was already—and my father, he was older guy. Then he was sick already. But—so my sister, she says coming to her. But I told her to my oldest sister, will she took us? Then she—we told her, she's got her kids, small kids. I said we have a [unclear] and then I said, "Who knows what kind of disease we have?" Because nighttime, when we get up in that camp, there was dead people. They starve and they're lices. And you no can wash and nothing. And say—then we come in, 6,000 people. After four weeks, we was only 2,000 left. Sometime have to cry. [voice breaking] I said, "God was so good to me that I could reach 80 years old."

LEVINE: Mmm.

GROSS: I was so lucky.

LEVINE: Uh-hmm.

GROSS: Yeah.

LEVINE: What—tell me, what were people like when they were living in those conditions with the lice and no—

GROSS: Oh!

LEVINE: —food?

GROSS: Oh, yeah.

LEVINE: How did people act to each other?

GROSS: Yeah. No. The—nobody know what is going to be with us, what we see in that paper. But then we thought, 'Who knows what's tomorrow going to be?' We have an already [unclear] too. But just, I—we was thinking for my sister—she took just in time, but we was just 2,000 left over from the 6,000. Yeah. That was all big group, nothing to eat—for lices. But what I want to say—so then when she come, we—I—we come by her. We had lices. And she says, "Don't worry. We're going to clean," and she—she was taking us back there—

[END OF TAPE 1, SIDE A]

[BEGIN TAPE 1, SIDE B]

GROSS: People that—when we knew them, they was from all over. But everybody was there when they—somebody select from German family, you know. They was just kicked out and everybody was just hungry and they don't know what's going to be tomorrow. And in the beginning, you hungry but after, you're weak and you no can do nothing. That was like outside because that was big farmer where they putting us in the camp. That was big place. They was calling like at war but in English, I don't know how to telling you on—they have the potatoes outside. We was thinking we're going to go on some way baking or eating them raw. But there was Russian soldiers. And when we come closer to the pile of potatoes they was shooting like in the air, just make us scared. Listen, I gonna make you sleepy.

LEVINE: No. You are kidding?

GROSS: Oh—

LEVINE: This is—

GROSS: Yeah. And my husband, he was five years in a war. It was in Russia.

LEVINE: Your husband came from Poland as well?

GROSS: Yeah, yeah. Yeah.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

GROSS: But that was just 20 kilometers different.

LEVINE: I see. Did—

GROSS: I—I don't know him when we was there in Poland. Just after the war that he come visit my neighbor that was his cousin. And we just met and we marry—got married after three weeks.

LEVINE: Oh.

GROSS: Because I—I—

LEVINE: Where did—how did you meet?

GROSS: A—he come visit his cousin from where we must—used to live in Germany, down by my sister where she—

LEVINE: After you got out of the camp—

GROSS: Yeah.

LEVINE: —where you went to your sister.

GROSS: From the camp, yeah.

LEVINE: He came—

GROSS: Yeah.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

GROSS: And then what we met and he was so poor. He come just from the war. He didn't have no shoes or nobody. And then—and I was by my sister and my sister, she's got five kids. So then we just—me and my sister just was there, like a little bit older. Yeah. So then we was there but, you know, the—I know that she no have enough for her kids to eat, that each [unclear] bread. But my sister, she put it higher, the bread, that they no can reaching because—oh, they have, like, stamps, my sister. Yeah. And stamps where she got the bread for the stamps and we no have nothing. So—but she was telling the kids no eat too much bread because we have to share it with—with Tante [PH], with aunt and—

LEVINE: Uh-hmm.

GROSS: And—yeah. And my father, yeah. Then when we come to my sister, or my sister was making potato pancake from that place, because that—anything—you eat what you gather. And my father, he was eating too much. He was crying.

LEVINE: Oh.

GROSS: And he say, "We eating like on our wedding by you."

LEVINE: [chuckles]

GROSS: But he was eating too much and there was less than only one week and then he passed away. Yeah, because we was—oh, have a hunger. Yeah.

LEVINE: Hmm.

GROSS: Yeah, that's a big story and [unclear]. You know, here we come. That was—we was happy.

LEVINE: Well, would you say—now, you—

GROSS: Yeah.

LEVINE: —met your husband. He came there. And you liked each other right away?

GROSS: Not really, no. But [laughter] I have a different friend. But after a while my sister husband and my other sister husband, they say, "Oh, don't wait for him." His name was Henry. He say, like my husband. He was our—"They are our people," and the other one, [chuckles] they are stranger. You know, the long time ago that was different. Usually, the older people, they pick you the—

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

GROSS: —husband or the partner. Yeah. And there was a—so then, little by little, and I don't know if they're still alive or they are dead—so little by little, you know, I—I get used to and I start to like him because the—I've been told so. "That is our people and the other one, that was stranger people."

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

GROSS: Yeah.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

GROSS: [unclear]

LEVINE: So then, wh—how did—how did it happen—

GROSS: Yeah.

LEVINE: —that you came to this country? What—what—

GROSS: Well, so then we was working in Germany when we got married—

LEVINE: Then you left your sister. Did you leave—

GROSS: Yeah. Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah. We left from—when I get married.

LEVINE: Right.

GROSS: Because he come from—he was in American zone, my husband.

LEVINE: Oh.

GROSS: Only come in Russia zone. So—and—

LEVINE: Did you have an actual wedding?

GROSS: No, no. No wedding. No. I have a—from his cousin, borrow some kind of dress. And by the farmer, they make some kind of food, little bit and then my sister to help little bit. So then when he come and, after second time, he come. But that was not so easy, going for my—through the board there. That was strict. Russian didn't let you through. But we figured out New Year, that was the—we thought everybody get drunk, then no watching so bad. So then, what you want to know?

LEVINE: How—how it was that you came to this country. But you—

GROSS: Oh.

LEVINE: But this is—this is very important. You—you—you snuck over to the border to the American—

GROSS: Yeah.

LEVINE: —part.

GROSS: [unclear], yeah. Yeah.

LEVINE: And—and—and you did it on New Year's Eve—

GROSS: Yeah.

LEVINE: —thinking everybody would be drunk.

GROSS: Yeah, yeah. Yeah, because—and so then we come to my husband in American zone. And so then we was married, like, oh, by my sister that jus—in a city hall, like.

LEVINE: Uh-hmm.

GROSS: Yeah. On—by—my husband in American zone and in a church.

LEVINE: Oh.

GROSS: Yeah. So—

LEVINE: In—in a Lutheran church? Did they have a church—

GROSS: Yeah. Oh, yeah.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

GROSS: Every village, they have that church. Every village in German—in Germany, it's—was better. [unclear] big city, there was everything knocked down. The bombing were—come through, you know. Oh, that was—that war is no pleasure.

LEVINE: No.

GROSS: I went so much through. So—

LEVINE: Hmm.

GROSS: Anyhow, when we got married and after my husband was working by the farmer d—for nothing, just for food. Yeah, the farmer was [unclear] like, at that time, there was just me and him. And then after—

LEVINE: Now, did you get enough food when you were there in the American's—

GROSS: Yeah.

LEVINE: —zone?

GROSS: Yeah, yeah.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

GROSS: That was much better. And—but after, like this daughter what you saw, she was born in Germany. An older son, [unclear], there was born. I have two kids born in Germany and two in America. I have four.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

GROSS: So then my husband, after when we have the first son, he start to thinking, 'We have to get out there from here, that we going to have kids, that we can have something,' because his family lost everything in Poland and we no have nothing. So then the Grosses family, they was talking always to go in—in different country, no matter where, Australia or Canada or America. So then he stopped working by the farmer and he went, collecting unemployment. That what the beginning was and unemployment office was staying—showing sign if somebody want to come to America. So then he sign up—

LEVINE: Uh-hmm.

GROSS: —on the [unclear]. That was the unemployment office. That was the sign on—become free, like refugees with both, just my husband have to working a little bit. And then that's wh—but that was taken. Listen. They was checking us for two years. That was not so easy because, like me, I come from Russia zone. They have a question if I'm a communist or I'm no Nazis. And my husband was soldier. There was—we have to go in that place where—been checked for two years. That was not so easy, like now. No. Only no can tell a—a lie, nothing. But they was asking me. They was sending from one place to another. Strict. There was, yeah, you no steal or you no kill. Your record have to be clean.

LEVINE: Uh-hmm. Now, was your husband working for those two years? Or how did you f—how did you—

GROSS: No. He no work. That's the way he collect unemployment.

LEVINE: And then—but you could get food—

GROSS: Yeah, yeah.

LEVINE: —from what he collected from the unemployment.

GROSS: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

GROSS: So a little bit, you know.

LEVINE: Uh-huh, uh-huh.

GROSS: That was—

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

GROSS: —a little bit. And then that's the way we come here and like a refugees because, you know, you have—they asking, just like you, from the beginning—

LEVINE: [chuckles]

GROSS: —where you was born—

LEVINE: Right. [chuckles]

GROSS: —in Poland. And then when you come to Germany, what you was doing and, like me, from Russia too, they was just picking on me. I say I was—because in Germany, that's such a style that you have to learn in something. I was—belong to Red Cross.

LEVINE: Uh-hmm.

GROSS: I had on my uniform, just in case in wartime that first helfe [PH]—help, like the first help on the training. But I know how the blood works and how many bones—

LEVINE: Uh-hmm.

GROSS: —you have, and then from everything. But there was—I supposed to be nurse but when we have a—how you call a—mmm—exam or a—

LEVINE: Uh-hmm.

GROSS: Yeah, yeah. And they bring in bloody person, when I see, [breathes sharply], oh, I say, you know—one of the teachers say, “Well, Mathilda, you can't be nurse.”

LEVINE: Uh-hmm.

GROSS: No. That makes me more sick than the person.

LEVINE: Uh-hmm.

GROSS: So that's way—but I was learning for the [unclear] parts—

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

GROSS: —and how heart beating. So everything I forgot, and I know how many short bones I have and how many long—

LEVINE: [chuckles]

GROSS: —and [unclear] bones. So everything—see, that—you have to do something. And I was in Germany. There was the [unclear] from city girl. They went in a village, working, one from village. They come for a while in that city.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

GROSS: They was, like, exchanging—

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

GROSS: —time where there was not what—yeah, but they was checking us. And I just wonder now, that's different. Oh, people coming so [unclear].

LEVINE: Yeah.

GROSS: And they're coming just to make trouble. Yeah. And we was glad that we have enough to eat.

LEVINE: Yeah.

GROSS: But in the beginning, we no like the food. [chuckles] But now, [unclear] what kind of rotten food is that on—on the ship. Then we was—have those big grapefruit.

LEVINE: Oh.

GROSS: Yeah, grapefruit. Soon when we looked, then we have to throw in—yeah, we was sick for the 10 days. So I said [unclear] to my daughter—today, I say, “Oh, when we land in here someplace, we start to throwing up.” Because the kids, we was let down in a boat and they was throwing up on each other. They was throwing up on me. My husband couldn't—but he was so sick.

LEVINE: Huh.

GROSS: Yeah.

LEVINE: What port did you leave from? Can you remember?

GROSS: Oh, Bremen.

LEVINE: Bremen.

GROSS: Bremen harbor.

LEVINE: Uh-hmm.

GROSS: Yeah, Bremen harbor.

LEVINE: Uh-hmm. And the ship.

GROSS: Yeah.

LEVINE: Do you kn—what—just describe the ship. It was a—it was an Army ship, you said?

GROSS: Army, yeah, because the soldiers come to Germany. They bring in so—American soldiers to Germany. And after [unclear], then they bring in the people, refugees, like somebody when they come into America. But they have to be checked. No, you have to—yeah, you have to have a—a clean record. No? Not just [unclear] because some—when we was talking to the really poor Polish guys. But they was—in wartime, they was stealing something. And they find out, see, how strict that was. And they couldn't come.

LEVINE: Uh-hmm.

GROSS: We thought, you know, we going to be friends here when we come to America. But you know, when you come in stranger land you don't know their language. We have two kids. We no have a dime to buy milk. In Minnesota, we—we have the—the milk and the food. That what—my husband was working. And me, I was milking the cows too—

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

GROSS: —because we are farmer people.

LEVINE: Yeah.

GROSS: And—

LEVINE: Well, just say, when the—what happened when the—when the ship came into the New York harbor?

GROSS: Yeah.

LEVINE: Do you remember that?

GROSS: Oh, yeah. I remember. Yeah.

LEVINE: And what did—what happened to you then?

GROSS: There that we—I have my cousin and I have my uncle here to that place. And so we was writing a letter because we don't know each other, mine uncle—

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

GROSS: I don't know in what year he came. And—and that was his daughter that meet us when we come here. They're bringing pumpernickel and ham. Oh, I say, after so many years, we was eating and we met each other, like my uncle's daughter and uncle, so—but when they wrote letter I say, "How we going to, now, find out who we are?" So I told him what kind of coat I going to wearing and they told me what they going to wearing.

LEVINE: By letter?

GROSS: By letter.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

GROSS: Just. Yeah, we no have no picture.

LEVINE: Yeah.

GROSS: Nothing. Just by letter and they was keeping their eyes open. And then first they recognized me because I say I going to have a green coat. [chuckles] Of course, that's what—I got it, that green coat. And then so there—and then we recognize and we was eating. We finish eating and talk a little bit. And we have to go on a train from here, from that water.

LEVINE: Now, when they—you—you never came to Ellis Island.

GROSS: No.

LEVINE: But you got off in Manhattan, in New York City?

GROSS: Yeah, that what—we don't know the name. That's why today I come. That is our anniversary, 50 years ago when we come.

LEVINE: Fifty years ago today?

GROSS: Not today.

LEVINE: Oh.

GROSS: In April.

LEVINE: April.

GROSS: Yeah.

LEVINE: Fifty years in April.

GROSS: But—

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

GROSS: —my birthday—80 birthday was in October. So to the party I say, “Kids”—because my kids—my oldest is almost over 50 and Christie [PH] too, my daughter. I said, “Listen, that what I wish, that somebody brings me to New York. I want to see the place when we come. If I see the place,” I say, “I’m going to cry,” and because there was, like happiness and sadness.

LEVINE: What was the happiness and what was the sadness?

GROSS: Ah, that was miss, that I left everybody in—in Germany and here, that we know that we don’t know the America—American language but at least when I met—see my uncle and my cousin, that was little bit happiness. And we have the hand. But what—after, on a train, we was going two days to Minnesota and one night. And after the farmer pick us up in St. Paulis—in—

LEVINE: St. Paul.

GROSS: Yeah.

LEVINE: Now, did your uncle and your cousin stay here?

GROSS: Yeah, yeah. They stay here.

LEVINE: They put you on the train and then—

GROSS: Yeah, because they was here from New York and—

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

GROSS: —in Bronx.

LEVINE: Ah.

GROSS: Yeah. And then so—and from here on—after, then we have to leave. And we went—we was talking but the farmer, he not [several words unclear] that one year by [unclear].

LEVINE: Well—well, first, let's just say—

GROSS: Yeah.

LEVINE: When you—you took the train.

GROSS: Yeah.

LEVINE: You got off in St. Paul. St. Paul?

GROSS: Yeah, yeah.

LEVINE: And then, like, what happened? Who met you? How did you—

GROSS: The farmer, Christie Anzen [PH]. Yeah, the—he met us probably—I—I think so, we have something that he say [unclear] and he say—and we knew that his name and what place we go.

LEVINE: Uh-hmm.

GROSS: We knew that too but, yeah. So then he pick us up there, us, another family. Of course, that was big family.

LEVINE: How did you happen to go to him?

GROSS: Because we are farmer people.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

GROSS: If you—a factory w—what you know or somebody like a secretary or some kind of—then they have to find in that place [unclear] people.

LEVINE: But who helped—who helped you find that farmer?

GROSS: Oh, that is the—the office, the place.

LEVINE: In the camp?

GROSS: No, no.

LEVINE: No.

GROSS: That was after when we was out, after we got married. Then we was free. We was there only for six weeks in the camp there, in this lousy camp. But after—

LEVINE: Oh.

GROSS: —when I get married, when my husband was working, and after he don't work there, he wanted to just go, leave Germany, so that's why the sign was there. And then from the farmer, we have to go there to there where they was checking us, off and on for two years. Anytime—that was some kind of, how you call that—organization—

LEVINE: Uh-hmm.

GROSS: Yeah, that's what kind.

LEVINE: So they were checking you for two years when you were here or when you were still—

GROSS: No.

LEVINE: —in Germany?

GROSS: That—

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

GROSS: Before you were—

LEVINE: Before you came.

GROSS: Yeah.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

GROSS: Yeah, your record have to be clean.

LEVINE: Yeah. So you were milking the cows. Your husband was—

GROSS: Yeah.

LEVINE: —working the farm.

GROSS: On the farm with the horses—

LEVINE: But he didn't treat you that well?

GROSS: No.

LEVINE: No.

GROSS: He know that—at bedtime, they used to smoke and there was, like, the other guy was [unclear]. My husband probably was a little bit older. I don't remember exactly. But he no let them smoking. He was just telling them, "Hurry up." Working and working with their horses, you know, and their farm machinery. And after two weeks, he want to beat them up. Yeah. And when we went to church—we find our church in the [unclear] that—in that place so that that [several words unclear] in Minnesota. They say we came in the wrong place. The farmer used to have people from jail where he can treat them bad. And that's where he start to met—met us. No, not us. Just the guys, m—my husband and the other husband. Yeah. My daughter, she going to send you that—

LEVINE: Uh-hmm.

GROSS: —paper where we—

LEVINE: Was he a German man, the farmer?

GROSS: No, he was Norwegian.

LEVINE: Norwegian. Uh-huh.

GROSS: Yeah. But she was Jewish and she spoke Polish. Then I was glad.

LEVINE: Oh.

GROSS: Yeah.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

GROSS: Yeah, yeah.

LEVINE: So in other words, they tried to beat your husband?

GROSS: Yeah, yeah.

LEVINE: Uh-hmm.

GROSS: But that—his wife, the farmer's wife—

LEVINE: Uh-hmm.

GROSS: —and me, we come in between, like, because he comes so close and he [unclear]. And what he was saying, we—we no understand. But his wife, she spoke Polish and she—she [unclear] because we don't know what was happen, that she says she wants you—the guys to doing—hurry up more.

LEVINE: Uh-hmm.

GROSS: No stopping, smoking, whatever, because we don't know the reason. [chuckles] You know, when you come in different country, then you are—don't, really. [chuckles]

LEVINE: Well, now, was his wife kind to you?

GROSS: Yeah, yeah.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

GROSS: She was kind. And we have a separate, small house with one roo—room or the other family separate house.

LEVINE: Uh-huh, uh-huh.

GROSS: Yeah.

LEVINE: So then how did you get away from there?

GROSS: Yeah.

LEVINE: How did you—

GROSS: Because that what—we make a complaint. The German people was helping me—us when we was going to church, very—

LEVINE: Yeah.

GROSS: —American. But they knew some broken German language.

LEVINE: Uh-hmm.

GROSS: And they was helping and they say, "Wait a minute. We can help you something." And they let him know that somebody—they complains. They probably know we don't know nothing until they say—then the guys come and see, and they come and they was asking. And they're asking him if that was true. He say yeah, because he says the jobs have to be done. He got a big farm. So then the—they come on—when we make a complaint, they say—because we supposed to be there one year [unclear], you know, treat us good. Then we no have to—we was just six months and that's why. In the meantime, I wrote a letter to my uncle here in Paterson and ask him if it's possible—oh, if we can have a—a—we have to come back. And he says, "Yeah, anytime." Some way when we coming, then we going to find a job, special for my husband. Me, I had the two kids. And on—then the Polish people where we used to live there for a while, and then he—my husband find a job too but dollar an hour, you know. Yeah, that was long time. He was making, week, 39, but, yeah, after a while. But in the meantime, then we didn't have no money. Then the Polish people where we used to stay in there, then she says—she recommended a Polish store where we can get a—on a credit—

LEVINE: Oh.

GROSS: —for the two weeks so then, until my husband get paid. And then he was making \$39 a week and I was making my—but after when my kids get bigger, I got—I was working for 10 years here.

LEVINE: Uh-hmm.

GROSS: And then I was making dollar an hour too. I make \$29. [chuckles] Of course, that was part-time job.

LEVINE: Yeah.

GROSS: But we was feeling all right.

LEVINE: You were glad to get to Paterson.

GROSS: Oh, yeah.

LEVINE: Yeah.

GROSS: But we was wondering, listen, that the people throw away so much stuff here. And that was when we was leaving there and [unclear]. Then Thanksgiving, right. We don't know—there was no—in Poland, in Germany, Thanksgiving. But after Thanksgiving, we have a—we see in the garbage whole turkey, like that was burned, something. And by the

garbage, with my husband, we was going back and forth and to say how people can doing that. And we was feeling like taking but we no wanted that somebody see, because, you know, that was Paterson. It's tall buildings, like three or the four floors. And we said no. We not so hungry. We no have to. But we was just wondering and then so close, like everything when we no have nothing.

LEVINE: Hmm.

GROSS: But after, there was—we receive lot of clothes, like [unclear], my daughter and my boys, they have to wear their clothes from somebody else, from their neighbors. So we was happy, yeah—

LEVINE: So did you ever take the turkey?

GROSS: No, no.

LEVINE: You didn't? [chuckles]

GROSS: We was—no, no.

LEVINE: You were—

GROSS: We was no—thinking that maybe we gonna get sick because wh—went—

LEVINE: Yeah. You don't know why—

GROSS: —through. Yeah. And the worst thing like that, but that was the first time in my life [chuckles] that a whole turkey. I—we see in the garbage. That was—the top, like, was burned.

LEVINE: Right.

GROSS: Yeah. And—but—and we was going back and forth. And the—we was wondering. That was looking so silly. All we remind to us so often when—and after we told the people—after two years, we could understand—

LEVINE: Yeah.

GROSS: —that language. But after, we're saying something and we was—and all they say, "America." And they was saying probably somebody throw away because their turkey not come out too good. [laughter] And—but that was awful. We was going back and forth by the tur—we couldn't believe it.

LEVINE: [chuckles]

GROSS: Yeah, yeah. It's so many things. Oh, yeah. Life is nice but not always go so smooth. Yeah.

LEVINE: Right. Well, let's see. We only have a few more minutes.

GROSS: Oh, yeah. The hour—

LEVINE: Tell me—tell me what—what has brought you a lot of satisfaction in your—

GROSS: [unclear]

LEVINE: —in your life.

GROSS: Oh—oh, yeah. Like special here.

LEVINE: Yeah, makes you—

GROSS: Yeah.

LEVINE: —feel good when you—

GROSS: Oh, yeah. But in—in Poland, in our village, we was happy because we know—we don't know different.

LEVINE: Uh-hmm.

GROSS: You know. This—ever been, you know, that people don't have to—on a weekend, working together, talking together. And on a weekend, we was dancing. We have music.

LEVINE: Uh-hmm.

GROSS: Yeah. But on the farm we have enough to eat but you have to be careful—

LEVINE: Yeah.

GROSS: —that, you know, can finish today or, no, tomorrow, am I going be nothing? You have to be careful.

LEVINE: Yeah. Tell me, just at the very end here—

GROSS: Yeah, yeah.

LEVINE: Tell me how you feel about the World Trade Tower bombing.

GROSS: Very bad. Very bad on [unclear]. That was—happen when I was—oh, once a week, senior citizens, we go shopping to Food Town. And they brought us there on—our—our neighbor, Daisy, she's working. And she says, "Mathilda, you know what has happened? The planes to Washington and in New York, the two towers"—so I was—that was like in a dream. I said, "Really?" I u—I said to Daisy, "Are you really not having nothing?" "Oh, no." She said, "That was [unclear]." But we go shopping. We was not paying attention what they saying. Just, we was speaking the truth because we have a, like, hour or the hour and a half.

LEVINE: Uh-hmm.

GROSS: The time. But when I come home, all of a sudden, that was making me so sick.

LEVINE: What do you think about it now? How do you think—

GROSS: Now?

LEVINE: —about it now?

GROSS: Now, I even w—worst. But while—listen, I'm just telling to you. If you want to telling somebody—or maybe you have a more right to say it. But why did not they care here, America? Like somebody. Why allow the people what they coming doing the way they want to? Why is not punishment? Hey, they're—now, they're coming. They want to put in the style that is our style, telling America what—that way they want it. We was happy that we have enough food and a roof, and we was like helped. They not thinking. They're coming in and they put in their own style, their religion or their what—everything. Why they allow, like, for example, you know, I have an accent. But if I see president special but, you know, can do everything. But I was [unclear] telling on—then somebody else, like a Congress why they allowed the—it's too much freedom they gave it to their people. On this one, they was trained. After a while, after a couple days, I f—find out that there were 20. That looks like nobody cares. Listen, I'm just telling you something. America going to be sorry but it's going to be late. Please, somebody should care because that is the best place. No let them—allowed everybody to telling them what to do and look what kind of—to—[unclear] doing now. They're going too far. Too far.

LEVINE: Okay. Okay. We have to close here because we're—

GROSS: Yeah.

LEVINE: —we're at the end of the tape.

GROSS: Yeah.

LEVINE: I thank you so much—

GROSS: Yeah.

LEVINE: —for a—

GROSS: You're welcome.

LEVINE: —beautiful interview.

GROSS: Yeah, okay. I hope that I telling you that way I know. But this is all my life but thank God, I'm sleeping good and I'm in safety place, but in a city, like I wonder now in New York how people want to leave now. So much killing and so much—no, they shouldn't be doing like that. That's—should be some kind of—just—yeah. Now, I forgot—just some kind of order to do in that way that was. No like that way people come in, a stranger and they tell it how they want it. That should be stopped. Otherwise, it's going to be too late.

LEVINE: Too late. Okay. I want to say—

GROSS: Yeah.

LEVINE: —I've been speaking with Mathilda Gross and—

GROSS: Yeah.

LEVINE: —this is Janet Levine signing off for the National Park Service.

[END OF INTERVIEW]