

EI-1347

GLYNNIS VALENTINE

BIRTHDATE: MARCH 1, 1914

INTERVIEW DATE: OCTOBER 10, 2004

AGE AT TIME OF INTERVIEW: 90

RUNNING TIME:

INTERVIEWER: KEVIN DALEY

RECORDING ENGINEER: KEVIN DALEY

INTERVIEW LOCATION: KENT, WASHINGTON

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY: TAPESCRIBE

TRANSCRIPT REVIEWED BY:

WALES, 1923

AGE: 9

SHIP: CARMANIA

PORT: LIVERPOOL

**RESIDENCES: NEWCASTLE, PENNSYLVANIA; WARREN, OHIO;
DETROIT; SPOKANE, WASHINGTON**

DALEY: Good afternoon. This is Kevin Daley for the National Park Service and the Ellis Island Oral History Program. Today is October 10th, 2004, and I'm in Kent, Washington State, with Mrs. Glynnis Jones Valentine—

VALENTINE: Right.

DALEY: --who came from Wales in 1923—

VALENTINE: Right.

DALEY: When she was nine years old. So we can start the interview, and thank you very much. Oh, for the sake of the tape, oh, that's okay. Mrs. Valentine's son is here, and again, your name is?

DAVID: David.

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DALEY: David Valentine, who was very helpful in arranging this interview. So, can we start with your maiden name?

VALENTINE: Maiden name is Jones.

DALEY: And your date of birth?

VALENTINE: March 1st, 1914, and March first, by the way, is a Welsh holiday; it's Saint David's Day.

DALEY: Oh. And what was the town that you were born in?

VALENTINE: Pontardawe

DALEY: Can you spell that, please?

VALENTINE: P-O-N-T-A-R-D-A-W-E. It's a Bridge on the Dawe River.

DALEY: And can you describe the town? Was it a big town?

VALENTINE: Oh, it's kind of hard to describe. It's divided. One side is on the hill, and you go down the hill, and you're crossing a railroad and a river to get down to the other side of town. And well, it's just a small town. It's kind of hard to say. There's a bus line that runs through there. There's a highway—there are two highways that run through there. And that's about—well, there's a steel mill. And I don't remember what else. And just outside of town, there's a coal mine.

DALEY: And what kind of town was it? Was it a farming town, or like you said, a place for coal mining?

VALENTINE: Well, it was just a small town, and it had, there was a bus line that ran through it. And there were small shops, a lot of shops. And there was a big public hall; a lot of things were being held there for the whole area. There were doctors in the town that people from all around came to see. And there's a river, a canal, and a railroad that runs through there. I don't know what else I could say about it.

DALEY: Well, let's talk about your family. First of all, did you live in the town itself?

VALENTINE: Yes, in one section of it.

DALEY: And can you tell me about your family, about your parents?

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VALENTINE: My mother and my father, and for a while, when my father came back from the service, we lived in the same house with my grandmother and my aunt, my mother's sister. And then we moved to another part of town on our own. My father's family lived in a neighboring town, so we were all very close. It was another town, but it was walking distance; it was like two and a half or three miles.

DALEY: And what was the name of that town?

VALENTINE: That was Clydach.

DALEY: Can you spell that, please?

VALENTINE: C-L-Y-D-A-C-H. And that was where my father's family was.

DALEY: And what was your mother's maiden name?

VALENTINE: Williams.

DALEY: And was she from this town originally?

VALENTINE: Yes, she was.

DALEY: How many brothers and sisters did you have?

VALENTINE: None.

DALEY: So getting back to the house, the house that you eventually wound up in, the residence, was it a separate house?

VALENTINE: The house that we lived in was a house that was adjoined to the house next door, but each house was complete, yard and everything, separate and complete on their own. The house had two bedrooms and a small storage room upstairs, and it had a big kitchen-dining room-main room downstairs, plus a sitting room that was separate.

DALEY: Is that something you would call a two up, one down?

VALENTINE: That's the way people lived in, at that time. And the big pantry.

DALEY: Mm-hm, and what did your father do for a living?

VALENTINE: My father was—I think he worked in the steel mill originally. And then after the war, he worked as a mailman, or a postman, over there.

DALEY: And did your mother work outside of the house?

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- VALENTINE: She did for a while. She lived in a big home—I mean, she worked in a big home as the maid there, the main maid. And her aunt was the housekeeper in the big home.
- DALEY: Can you describe the personalities of your mother and father, what they were like?
- VALENTINE: I don't know how you would describe them. They were my mother and father! [Laughs]
- DALEY: Well, was your father—were they strict, were they permissive, or--?
- VALENTINE: Well, he was fairly well-known by the people around there because, as I say, he was a postman. And he was an ex-serviceman, and he belonged to the British Legion, and of course there were a lot of people who belonged to that. And so he would be known through that circle. I don't know what else you would say. They had grown up in that town, so they were known as they grew up, both of them.
- DALEY: Were you a religious family?
- VALENTINE: We went to church, yeah, but not what you'd consider religious, I don't think.
- DALEY: Which church—which denomination?
- VALENTINE: The Congregational church, at that time.
- DALEY: Do you remember the name of the church?
- VALENTINE: Do I remember what?
- DALEY: The name of the church?
- VALENTINE: No, I don't. I know where it is! It's up on the hill. But it was the Congregational church in the town.
- DALEY: And just talking about domestic life, do you remember celebrating holidays? Do you remember what celebrating Christmas or Easter was like? Were there special things that you did?
- VALENTINE: Well, Christmas of course, and New Year's. Saint David's Day, because we were in Wales, and that was the first of March. That was Saint David's Day. Easter, I suppose, you'd call it celebrating. It was a very important church holiday. I don't know what else.

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- DALEY: How would you celebrate Christmas? What would Christmas--?
- VALENTINE: Regular Christmas, 25th of December.
- DALEY: Did you do anything special on Christmas Eve?
- VALENTINE: Well, when I was older, we would go to Christmas Eve service at church.
- DALEY: And did you have a special dinner on Christmas Day?
- VALENTINE: Well, we had Christmas Dinner, with chicken or turkey, and plum pudding, fruitcake.
- DALEY: Did they have Christmas trees for decoration in Wales?
- VALENTINE: Christmas trees, yes, but not as much as they do here. Maybe they do more so now, but at that time, not everybody had Christmas trees. But my mother used to try to have a Christmas tree for me. And the Christmas tree that we had was not a pine tree; it was a holly, with thorny leaves and the red berries.
- DALEY: And was it decorated with candles, or--?
- VALENTINE: I don't remember candles on it, but there were other trimmings on it, like ornaments and tinsel.
- DALEY: And was Easter celebrated as much as Christmas? Was it as big a holiday?
- VALENTINE: Well, it was important, and we would have Easter eggs, and go to church, of course. Apart from that, I don't know.
- DALEY: And you mentioned March first?
- VALENTINE: March first is a Welsh holiday, it's Saint David's Day, and I don't remember what we did, except that we had a special dinner.
- DALEY: And he was the patron saint of Wales?
- VALENTINE: Of Wales, yes.
- DALEY: So, we also like to talk about how you ate: what kind of things did you eat?

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VALENTINE: What kind of friends?

DALEY: No, what kind of dishes you ate? What kind of meals did you eat? Anything that sticks out in your mind, that you remember?

VALENTINE: Just about the same as anybody, I guess: ham, pork, fish. Just like anyone; I don't know of anything that was really special.

DALEY: And did you go to school while you were in Wales?

VALENTINE: Yes, I did.

DALEY: At what age did you start?

VALENTINE: I went to infant class, and I think that was probably at either four and a half or five, because that came before first grade. And then we had, well, standard one, we called it, and standard two. Standard three—I think I went through all of those there.

DALEY: And did you—do you remember anything specific about school, like a favorite class, or a favorite teacher?

VALENTINE: About the classes?

DALEY: Yeah, did you have a favorite subject, or a favorite teacher? Anything that sticks out in your mind?

VALENTINE: Well, I can remember the faces of some of the teachers, but I don't remember their names. I didn't dislike any of them; I was fine. The school mistress, the principal, was a very important person. I mean, you didn't cross her in any way! [Laughs] She was the head!

DALEY: Was this is religious school, or a secular--?

VALENTINE: No, it was a regular public school.

DALEY: Do you remember the name of it?

VALENTINE: Hofstrand [PH] School was one. I don't know the other one, except it was a secondary school.

DALEY: And this was in the town?

VALENTINE: In Pontardawe.

DALEY: Getting back to your family, did you have a lot of relatives in the town?

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VALENTINE: Yes, my mother's sister and her husband, and my mother's brother and his wife, and their three children—my cousins, of course. My father's brothers and sisters—there were several of them—and their children; that would be my cousins. And I used to visit there quite a bit, and we'd play together.

DALEY: Did you have grandparents alive when you were growing up?

VALENTINE: Yes, my father's parents were alive, and my mother's mother was alive when I was little.

DALEY: And they lived in the town also?

VALENTINE: My grandmother lived with us, on my mother's side. She was a widow, so she lived with us. And my other grandparents lived, my father's family, lived in a nearby town. And it was a very close distance; it was walking distance. Of course, walking could be three or four miles! [Laughs] But it was walking distance.

DALEY: So one of the things I wanted to ask you about—was your father's service in the First War?

VALENTINE: Yes, he was.

DALEY: He was in the Army?

VALENTINE: Yes, he was in the Army Medical Corps.

DALEY: Oh, did I ask you his name, his first name?

VALENTINE: What name?

DALEY: Your father's first name?

VALENTINE: Oh, no. It's William.

DALEY: William.

VALENTINE: It was William David Jones.

DALEY: And your mother's maiden name?

VALENTINE: My mother's maiden name was Williams.

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DALEY: Williams, okay. So can you tell me a little bit about your father going to war?

VALENTINE: My father going to war? Well, I can't tell you anything about his going to war, because he left about four months after I was born. And any man—when I was growing up, and got so I knew some people, or would recognize people, any man in uniform was my father, because I saw him seldom at that time! It took me a while to learn who my father was.

DALEY: And what year did he go into the service?

VALENTINE: Nineteen fourteen, right on to the end of the First World War.

DALEY: And he served as a medical person?

VALENTINE: Yes, and he was over in France.

DALEY: How often would he come back to visit?

VALENTINE: Oh, I couldn't say. I mean, he was my father. He had some injuries. I remember one he would talk about: he was shot right through his hand, and he had no feeling in his thumb for a while. But he could use his hand fine. I don't know about some of his experiences as a medical man, but I think the time he was shot he was carrying a stretcher, and the thing was shot out of his hands, and he had to change his grip. I remember him saying that.

DALEY: And I think you mentioned something about he was in a gas attack?

VALENTINE: In what?

DALEY: Gas attack?

VALENTINE: Yes, he was. I don't know how that happened, but it was a mustard gas attack, and that bothered his lungs for the rest of his life. And that was one reason we came out to this country from Wales, is because of the gas. Because back there the doctor had told him that he wouldn't last much longer in that climate. So we came out here, to my Dad's cousin.

DALEY: So your father came back in 1918 from the war?

VALENTINE: Yes, uh-huh.

DALEY: And what year did you leave to come to America?

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VALENTINE: Nineteen twenty-three.

DALEY: Was your father a postman?

VALENTINE: He was a postman then when we left, and when we got out here, he got a job through his cousin, I think, who was working in a factory.

DALEY: So, it was basically for health reasons that they decided?

VALENTINE: Yes, yes.

DALEY: When he decided, and you were preparing to go, was there any sort of a farewell celebration given to your family?

VALENTINE: I suppose, but I mean, I just took things in stride, you know. I mean, what happened, happened. I didn't know the difference between one thing and another. So.

DALEY: Do you remember packing to come to America?

VALENTINE: I don't remember the packing, but I remember coming here.

DALEY: Which port did you leave from?

VALENTINE: We left from Liverpool.

DALEY: And how did you get from your home town--?

VALENTINE: We went from Swansea by train, up to Liverpool. Taxi, I guess, from the train over to the dock, where we got the ship.

DALEY: And was there any sort of medical or legal examination before you got on the ship?

VALENTINE: I guess there was, but I don't remember. I remember the medical examination, both over there and over here, when we got over in this country.

DALEY: Mm-hm. And what did you think when you first saw the ship. What was the name of the ship?

VALENTINE: Carmania. R.M.S. Carmania.

DALEY: Carmania. Do you know which steamship line that was?

VALENTINE: Cunard.

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DALEY: And what did you think when you first saw the ship? Was it awe-inspiring?

VALENTINE: I just—I was with my folks; I just trusted them. I didn't think it strange.

DALEY: So, do you know how long the trip was, over?

VALENTINE: Five or six days, I believe.

DALEY: And which class did you travel?

VALENTINE: Third class.

DALEY: Third class?

VALENTINE: Mm-hm.

DALEY: Were you in your own little room, or were you--?

VALENTINE: We had our own cabin, yes. It had four bunks in it.

DALEY: Did it have a porthole?

VALENTINE: No, we were in the center, which was better, in a way, because it had less of this! [Laughs]

DALEY: Do you remember any highlights of the trip? Was it--?

VALENTINE: Yes, I remember a few. It was kind of rough part of the way. I don't know whether it was the roughness or what that caused it, but there were two corridors that went down to the dining room, in the section that we were in. And the one corridor was closed off, because it sprung a leak, and we had to go down past the galley in order to get down, and that was kind of hard when the crossing was kind of rough, to smell that food on your way to the dining room! [Laughs]

DALEY: Did they feed you well?

VALENTINE: Oh, yes, I think the food was pretty good.

DALEY: Was it anything special?

VALENTINE: No. There were long tables that we sat at, and each table there was a sideboard that came up if the crossing was rough. And there was one

whole day when the side was up, to keep the dishes from sliding off the table.

DALEY: And your fellow passengers—were they mostly English-speaking, or was it a mix of people?

VALENTINE: They were—in our section they were mostly English-speaking, and there was another section that there were foreign people of some kind. A lot of them spoke English, but I mean, in their own way.

DALEY: And did you walk around the ship a lot, explore the ship?

VALENTINE: Oh, yes, there was nothing else to do!

DALEY: Did you go up on deck a lot?

VALENTINE: Yes.

DALEY: What was that like? Was it—did you get seasick?

VALENTINE: Well we did, but not from being up on deck. It was just because we had a rough couple of days there, a really rough couple of days.

DALEY: Was there any sort of entertainment on the ship, to help you pass the time?

VALENTINE: I think they sort of—well, it was organized by someone on the ship, of course, but they picked people from the passengers to put on entertainment of some kind.

DALEY: So the crossing was about five or six days?

VALENTINE: Mm-hm.

DALEY: Do you remember coming in to New York Harbor?

VALENTINE: Yes, and I remember that as we passed the Statue of Liberty, and everybody went over to see the Statue of Liberty, and the ship sort of went like this! And my mother says, “Come here.” And so we stayed up here, on the high end! [Laughs] Up by the railing!

DALEY: Oh, you were afraid the ship was going to tip over?

VALENTINE: I guess, uh-huh, because it was quite a tilt!

DALEY: What time of year was this, that you came?

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VALENTINE: October. I don't know the date, but it was October.

DALEY: And do you remember leaving the ocean liner, and going to Ellis Island? Do you remember that part of the trip?

VALENTINE: Yes, we were on—we had gotten off the ship, and we were all lined up. And we opened our suitcases. We didn't have our trunks with us, but they opened the suitcases, and then they would check the suitcases. And then we closed them up when we went on the other ship, to take us to Ellis Island.

DALEY: So you went to Manhattan first, and then you went to Ellis Island?

VALENTINE: Yes, uh-huh.

DALEY: Do you remember the small ferry that took you from Manhattan to Ellis Island?

VALENTINE: No.

DALEY: Okay, and what happened on Ellis Island?

VALENTINE: On Ellis Island? Well, I don't remember where we started out, but we were in this huge hall, and the seats were all lined up this way, and there were a lot of judges sitting up here. And there was a huge flag in the middle, hanging down. And I know as we moved along on the row, and we got over, passed under the flag, and a man in the group that we were in said, "Well, I guess we're in now!" [Laughs] Because we passed under the flags. I just remember that; it had nothing to do with whether we were accepted or not, but—

DALEY: Was it just a matter of a legal examination on Ellis Island, or was there also a medical examination?

VALENTINE: There was also a medical.

DALEY: Oh, do you remember what they did?

VALENTINE: Well, I know that my father went one way; my mother and I went another way. And I don't think we had to strip, but they checked your lungs, and they checked your hearing, and things like that. And the lungs, especially, I guess, because they were checking for—I don't remember what was common at that time, like diphtheria and things like that.

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DALEY: And your father had to get an inoculation?

VALENTINE: I don't know, because we weren't with him. And I don't remember, in their talking, what he said.

DALEY: Do you remember how long all together you spent on Ellis Island?

VALENTINE: Well, it seemed like a long time, but it was—it was from the middle of the morning to the middle of the afternoon sometime. I know we had a meal there, somehow. Whether it was a box meal or what, I don't remember. But I know that as we were leaving the island, my father was eating an ice cream cone, and we were going on down towards this other ship. And we turned around and looked back, and up on the second floor were this whole row of railings, and people were standing behind those, and they were people who were being held over, either for further examination, or being returned. But I can remember looking up, and seeing those people watching us leave.

DALEY: So you left Ellis Island the same day, and where did you go from there?

VALENTINE: And we took a train [pause]. The train—must have gone on a boat and taken us across to New York, because we just kept right on going from then. We were going to Newcastle, Pennsylvania.

DALEY: Did you have relatives in Newcastle?

VALENTINE: My father had a cousin in Newcastle.

DALEY: And what was your living condition, where did you live when you first got to Newcastle?

VALENTINE: When we first got there? Well, for the first week we lived at my Dad's cousin's home, and then they found a home for us. And then it was an upstairs flat, and we had to walk up these stairs to get up there. And it was a garage, I think, underneath. But we lived upstairs. I don't know how it got furnished; they must have bought the furniture after we got there or something, because it was furnished, but I don't remember who did it, or how.

DALEY: And did your father find work right away?

VALENTINE: He may have. I don't know. He worked in a factory. His cousin may have had something to do with his being there; I don't know. I wasn't in on that part, so—[laughs]!

DALEY: His cousin worked in a factory?

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VALENTINE: No, he didn't work in a factory, but he knew a lot of people. He was quite influential in the town, so.

DALEY: Was Newcastle a big town?

VALENTINE: Yeah, it was a city! Newcastle, Pennsylvania, yeah. I don't know. Well, there was a steel mill there. What else was there? I think there was a railroad center or something there. I don't remember what else.

DALEY: And how long did you stay at this first apartment?

VALENTINE: At the first place we stayed that we were in? With my uncle?

DALEY: After—the one--?

VALENTINE: Oh, after. We were in Newcastle for less than a year, I think, and then we went to Warren, Ohio. And there were some relatives there. But how all this was arranged, I have no idea. But my father worked when we got to Warren, Ohio. I went to school. We lived right across the street from the school; I remember that.

DALEY: And do you remember which grade you started at?

VALENTINE: Which grade?

DALEY: In the new school?

VALENTINE: I don't know, second or third.

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BEGIN TAPE ONE, SIDE B

DALEY: And your father found work?

VALENTINE: Yes, I don't think it took him very long. It was probably through his cousin that he got in. I don't know.

DALEY: Do you remember what kind of work he did?

VALENTINE: All I know is it was a steel mill. I don't know what kind of work he did.

DALEY: And did your mother stay home, or did she--?

VALENTINE: Yes. No, she stayed home. I remember that in the steel mill, there was a German man, from Germany, who'd served in the German Army, who worked in the same section as my Dad did. And in the gantry up above there was an American-born German. And he knew that my father was British, and somehow he managed to off-balance a load? And the man who saved my father was the German! Who had been a prisoner of the British over there. And he said that he was so well-treated and everything, and so—but the one who caused the problem, he was American-born.

DALEY: Yes.

VALENTINE: And just had no real contact with him.

DALEY: In the first places that you lived, in Pennsylvania and Ohio, were you living in a section, an area, that had a lot of other immigrants?

VALENTINE: I don't think so. There were my mother's and my father's relatives, or cousins, who were around, in both places. I don't know there were a lot of other people there from—

DALEY: Well, I wanted to find out if there was any sort of—

VALENTINE: Organization?

DALEY: Well, after that, any sort of resentment, or prejudice, because you were immigrants?

VALENTINE: No, the only resentment we ran into was this American-born German, with my Dad, who had been a British soldier. That was the only resentment that we ran into.

DALEY: And in school, were you--?

VALENTINE: In school, no. I remember in one class, and the teacher said—when I stood up and answered some questions or something, and the teacher said to the children, "Now why can't you talk like she does?" because they talked with sort of a slang or something. And I felt like falling through the floor or something! I mean, it didn't sound like praise to me! And I don't suppose the kids did, too, but anyway.

DALEY: Did you speak with a—is there a Welsh accent?

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- VALENTINE: Welsh, or English, I don't know. Probably Welsh, yes.
- DALEY: But did you feel that it made you stand out?
- VALENTINE: I think so, particularly after it was pointed out that they should speak like me. Why should they speak like me, you know?
- DALEY: Well, in terms of language, is there a Welsh language?
- VALENTINE: Yes, there is.
- DALEY: Did your parents or any relatives speak that?
- VALENTINE: Oh, yes, we always spoke it at home.
- DALEY: Oh, at home it was always Welsh! Do you remember the language pretty well?
- VALENTINE: A lot of it.
- DALEY: Could you say something in Welsh for us?
- VALENTINE: For instance, like what?
- DALEY: Like, a prayer, or—
- VALENTINE: Well, you would say—well, when my mother and I went on the ship, on the Queen Mary, for a trip back, and there were two women that got off the elevator. And one said to the other, “[Welsh]?” which: where are we going now. And I said, “[Welsh]?”, which: where do you want to go? [Laughs] Which surprised them, too.
- DALEY: So back in Wales, it was—the common language was Welsh there?
- VALENTINE: Yes.
- DALEY: Did they teach you in English at all?
- VALENTINE: We had both, both languages, because I've always spoken English. I don't know a time when I didn't! And if we went down, down to Swansea, down to the big city, very often we dealt in English. Some shops, smaller shops, we could talk Welsh, and get by with it. But I always had both languages.
- DALEY: So you grew up bilingual?

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VALENTINE: Yes, uh-huh.

DALEY: Okay, coming back to America, you went through—you're in Ohio now.

VALENTINE: No, Pennsylvania to start out with.

DALEY: Yeah, and then you went to Ohio?

VALENTINE: Yes.

DALEY: What was the name of the town in Ohio?

VALENTINE: Warren, Ohio.

DALEY: Warren. How long did you stay in Warren?

VALENTINE: Less than a year, I think, and then we went up to Detroit, where my mother had an uncle. And we lived near them. And my Dad got a job in the steel mill up there, in Detroit. Or in a factory of some kind, doing assembly, I think.

DALEY: Do you remember the house where you lived in Detroit?

VALENTINE: In Detroit? In Detroit. I don't remember the first house we were in in Detroit. I really don't remember where we were when we first went to Detroit, but then we bought a place of our own across the street, in Ferndale, Michigan, which is a neighboring little town to Detroit.

DALEY: Do you remember the name of the street that you lived on?

VALENTINE: I lived on then? Oh, yeah, for years—Jean Avenue.

DALEY: And how old were you when you moved to this house?

VALENTINE: When we moved there? Probably ten or eleven. Close to eleven.

DALEY: So you were still in elementary school?

VALENTINE: Yes, yes. We had moved around quite a bit from the time I was nine when we first got there to the time we finally settled down.

DALEY: And this town outside of Detroit, you finally settled down?

VALENTINE: Mm-hm.

DALEY: So--?

VALENTINE: I went to school, and all through high school, there.

DALEY: Do you remember the name of your high school?

VALENTINE: The name of the high school? Yeah, Lincoln High.

DALEY: Did you have a favorite subject?

VALENTINE: I don't remember.

DALEY: And—

VALENTINE: I don't think I disliked any of them, so.

DALEY: And what did you do after high school?

VALENTINE: After high school? I worked in Jill Hudson Store for a while. Jill Hudson was a department store. It was the department store at that time. I guess I was there quite a while.

DALEY: Did you go to Detroit a lot?

VALENTINE: Well, I worked in Detroit, yes.

DALEY: Oh, that's where the store was?

VALENTINE: Uh-huh.

DALEY: Oh, so it was an easy commute to get to work?

VALENTINE: Oh, yeah, because, I mean, my road was here, and this was a block and a half over [laughs] is where we lived, and we were in Ferndale.

DALEY: Oh, okay.

VALENTINE: And this was Detroit on this side, so.

DALEY: And what did you do for fun, like during high school or this time, for social activities, for fun, entertainment?

VALENTINE: I don't know, just whatever we did at school, I guess. I roller skated with some of the youngsters I knew, though they knew—up closer to the school than I did. But we could roller skate. And we played jump rope. And I don't remember what else.

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DALEY: And did a lot—did your parents bring over a lot of their traditions from Wales?

VALENTINE: I don't know. We, Saint David's Day was the first of March; we always celebrated Saint David's Day. That was a Welsh holiday. My mother had some relatives in Detroit, so we would be with them. And eventually we joined a Welsh society, so that we were always able to keep some of the traditions alive.

DALEY: What was the Welsh society like?

VALENTINE: The Welsh society? Oh, they would have hymn sings, and they would have a couple of Sundays during the year when they would have special gatherings for hymn singing, and singing their own hymns, the Welsh hymns. And they would celebrate Saint David's Day; they would have a dinner. And they would have dinners throughout the year, various reasons.

DALEY: And was this organization, did it also help new immigrants, financially, or to get a start in the country?

VALENTINE: I don't think so, not financially. They would be helpful in just getting them adjusted, and welcoming them to be part of the group.

DALEY: And you joined the service?

VALENTINE: I did, yeah.

DALEY: What year did you join the service?

VALENTINE: I don't know. What year did the war start?

DALEY: For us, 1941.

VALENTINE: Well, I guess it was late '41, or very early in '42, that I went in.

DALEY: So you went from the department store to the service?

VALENTINE: Yes, yeah.

DALEY: Which branch of the service did you go into?

VALENTINE: Navy. I was a WAVE.

DALEY: And what was your job in the WAVE?

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VALENTINE: Oh, I worked on IBM machines; that's what I had done in civilian, and that's what I did in the service.

DALEY: Where were you stationed?

VALENTINE: Washington, D.C.! [Laughs] Where else?

DALEY: Do you remember, was it in downtown Washington? Do you remember the building that you were in?

VALENTINE: No. I worked in the Navy Yard.

DALEY: And was that your only station, in the WAVE?

VALENTINE: Yes.

DALEY: How long were you in?

VALENTINE: Until the end, and shortly after, because there were people being discharged, and we had to go through all those records, and discharge people. So I was in shortly after the war ended, because I was in through a discharge period.

DALEY: And what grades and ranks did you go through while you were in the service?

VALENTINE: What was I? I was Petty Officer First Class. I went from—I don't think I was even a Petty Officer when I went in, but I was Petty Officer First Class just before I came out.

DALEY: And did you live in Washington?

VALENTINE: Anacostia, right across the river.

DALEY: Was it a nice place to live in?

VALENTINE: It was then. I think it's sort of changed now, but that's where the receiving station was, on that side, on the Anacostia side.

DALEY: And how did your parents feel about your going into the service?

VALENTINE: Oh, that was fine! My Dad had been in the service, so, I mean, it was acceptable.

DALEY: And what did you do upon leaving the service?

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VALENTINE: Well, let's see. I went back to Detroit, and I don't think I got a job right away in IBM. I think I worked in Jill Hudson department store for a while, before I went back to IBM.

DALEY: And did you socialize a lot, or go out on dates?

VALENTINE: Not a lot.

DALEY: When did you get married?

VALENTINE: I don't know! When did I get married [laughs]?

DAVID: You know, I don't have a good date on that one; I wish I did. It was after you moved to Chicago, though, so that was it.

VALENTINE: Was it?

DAVID: Yeah, well yeah, because you met [unclear].

VALENTINE: Yeah, I guess it was.

DAVID: Did you work at the--?

VALENTINE: It would be forty something.

DAVID: --ethyl plant for while?

VALENTINE: Huh?

DAVID: Did you work at the ethyl plant for a while?

VALENTINE: Ethyl?

DAVID: Yeah.

VALENTINE: No, Grandma did.

DAVID: Oh, okay.

VALENTINE: I didn't.

DAVID: I know you went to work for a bank in Chicago.

VALENTINE: Hm?

DAVID: Remember, you went to work for a bank in Chicago?

VALENTINE: Yeah, I did, Northern Trust.

DALEY: Oh, so you moved from Detroit to Chicago?

VALENTINE: Uh-huh.

DALEY: By yourself?

VALENTINE: Yeah.

DALEY: Do you remember what part of Chicago that you lived in?

VALENTINE: I don't know if I started out there or not, but I wound up on the near north side. I think that's where I went to start out with, because I don't remember any other part of Chicago.

DALEY: Up by, is that Lincoln Park, that area?

VALENTINE: No, not that far north. Near Oak Street.

DALEY: And in Chicago you--?

VALENTINE: Near Oak Street and—is it Oak Street Beach, the beach that's right down there?

DAVID: I know that you used to sing in the choir with the bank?

VALENTINE: Huh? Yeah, I did.

DAVID: I said, remember, you used to sing in the bank choir.

VALENTINE: Yeah.

DALEY: You worked in a bank? Which bank did you work in?

VALENTINE: Yeah, I did. Northern Trust.

DAVID: Because she sang on the radio once.

DALEY: Oh!

VALENTINE: Oh, a couple times [laughs].

DALEY: Oh, what was the chorus? Could you describe the chorus? This was a bank chorus?

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VALENTINE: It belonged, it was a bank, yeah. And they sang at, oh, a couple of public affairs. I mean, they were the chorus that filled in for like Christmas or Easter, or something like that.

DALEY: And you made it to the radio, too?

VALENTINE: Well, we broadcast one time. It was—yeah. But it was a big chorus. I mean, I didn't do anything special! [Laughs]

DALEY: And is Chicago where you met your husband?

VALENTINE: Yes.

DALEY: How did you meet him?

VALENTINE: We lived in the same building, I think.

DALEY: And his name?

VALENTINE: The same building.

DALEY: And his name is—his name was--?

VALENTINE: His name? Bob.

DAVID: Robert David.

VALENTINE: Yeah, Robert—Bob [laughs].

DAVID: I know.

DALEY: And how did you meet him?

VALENTINE: Well, we lived in the same building, and we very often wound up going out to eat at the same time. And sometimes we'd eat together. And maybe we'd be down at the beach, and I mean, who was down there, but Bob! So, I mean, we hadn't gone down together, but, I mean, where else were you going to go?

DALEY: And how long did you know each other before you got married?

VALENTINE: Almost a year, I think.

DALEY: And you got married—did you get married in Chicago?

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VALENTINE: Yeah, we did.

DALEY: And did your parents make it to the wedding?

VALENTINE: Yeah, mm-hm.

DALEY: And where did you first live together in Chicago?

VALENTINE: When we got married! I don't know [laughs].

DAVID: Where, Mom?

DALEY: Do you remember the section?

VALENTINE: Oh, where! Oh, Oak Street.

DAVID: Yes, not too far off of State. I don't remember being there, but I heard.

VALENTINE: Oak Street, near Oak Street Beach, and near north side is all I know. I could go there, but—

DAVID: Well not anymore you couldn't, because that building's not there anymore.

VALENTINE: It isn't there?

DAVID: No. [Laughs] You can find the corner, but you wouldn't find the building.

VALENTINE: I wouldn't, huh?

DAVID: No.

DALEY: And what did your husband do?

VALENTINE: He worked for the government. For what department?

DAVID: Railroad Retirement Board.

VALENTINE: Railroad Retirement Board.

DALEY: Do you know what he did for them?

VALENTINE: Yeah, he was doing clerical work.

DAVID: Mostly claims processing.

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VALENTINE: It was what?

DAVID: Claims processing for the people [unclear].

DALEY: And did you continue to work in the bank after you were married?

VALENTINE: No. I did for a short time, but not very long.

DALEY: And you started a family?

VALENTINE: Yeah.

DALEY: How many children do you have?

VALENTINE: Two.

DALEY: And what are their names?

VALENTINE: Glynnis is the girl, and then David.

DALEY: Glynnis was born first?

VALENTINE: Uh-huh.

DALEY: And where does she live?

DAVID: Well, Sacramento--

VALENTINE: She's in Spokane right now, which is—

DAVID: Right now she's in Spokane.

VALENTINE: She's supposed to be in Sacramento.

DAVID: Her mother-in-law isn't doing really well, and they're working on how to get her situated.

DALEY: Did your parents stay in Detroit?

VALENTINE: Yes, they did, until after my father passed away, and then I think by that time we were out here in Spokane, and my mother came out here. But as long as the two of them were still living, they were in Detroit.

DALEY: How old was your father when he passed away?

VALENTINE: I don't know.

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DAVID: I'm trying to remember now, too. He was at least seventy-something, but he may have been a little older than that. I mean, at least, I think seventy-six or so, maybe a little older.

DALEY: And you moved from Chicago to Spokane?

VALENTINE: Spokane. My husband's job transferred, so that's how we came here.

DAVID: Well, actually they did it on purpose. I remember hearing that one a few times. He moved out of Chicago on purpose, because he didn't like the idea of raising children in a place where the yard was on the roof. So, he purposely took a grade cut, and moved to Spokane. But, and it actually sounds like one of those silly romantic things in a way. He only knew Spokane because when he'd been discharged, the train stopped in Spokane briefly, when he was discharged from the service, on the way back to North Dakota, which is where he was from. So he'd really only seen it from the train, you know.

VALENTINE: Well, there was a vacancy out here, too.

DAVID: Right, but that was all he knew about the place, was he'd seen it from the train. And so he thought, "Well, that seemed like an okay place."

DALEY: And your husband was born in America?

VALENTINE: Yeah, in North Dakota.

DALEY: Okay, so you settled in Spokane?

VALENTINE: Mm-hm.

DALEY: And do you remember, did you buy a house in the city? Do you remember where you lived?

VALENTINE: We did, but not right away. Where'd we live?

DAVID: We lived in a second-floor apartment down on Montgomery, of that house.

VALENTINE: I guess.

DAVID: It was just a regular house, but the second floor they rented as an apartment. I was only six months old when we moved from Chicago to Spokane in 1954, and so I don't remember getting there. But I do remember living in that house. We must have been there for two or

three years, because I remember being about three years old when we moved to the house that you still have, on Calaspell. And we lived there, and Mom lived there, from—how old was I? About 1957-ish, I'm going to say, seven or eight, until just recently. So, I still consider that our, as our family, that's our family home, is that house [unclear].

VALENTINE: That's where Glynnis lives now, isn't it?

DAVID: It's where she's staying now, yeah. So you still own that house.

DALEY: And your mother came out to live with you?

VALENTINE: After my father passed away, yeah, my mother came out here. Out here—out to Spokane.

DALEY: And how long—and how old was she when she passed away?

VALENTINE: I don't know; somehow I never considered age.

DAVID: Well actually, I remember that being that she was eighty-six.

VALENTINE: Eighty-six?

DAVID: Yes, because I remember when you turned eighty-six, you said, "At least I made it, I've gotten past my Mom."

VALENTINE: Oh, I did, huh?

DAVID: Yeah, so.

DALEY: And how long did your husband work for the government?

VALENTINE: I don't know; a long time.

DAVID: At least twenty to twenty-five years, because he got his little, a little, you know, awards for that, for being that, yeah.

VALENTINE: He was working for the government when I met him, so.

DALEY: And how long were you married?

VALENTINE: About twenty-seven years, wasn't it?

DAVID: I'm going to have to take the Fifth on that one; again, I don't know. Those seem like dates you should have ingrained in your head, but I just—I never really—I think I knew when your anniversary was—

VALENTINE: Yeah.

DAVID: --but I never knew what number it was. You know, how many years it was.

VALENTINE: I couldn't tell you now, either.

DAVID: But I couldn't even tell you what the date of the anniversary was, now, but I remember that you, you know, we picked it up because you guys had an anniversary—

VALENTINE: Yeah.

DAVID: --and so you get the anniversary cards and stuff, but I don't think you ever said. We just picked it up, because that's when you guys would exchange anniversary cards, and to out to dinner or something. So—

DALEY: Do you remember which year you were married?

VALENTINE: [Laughs] I don't remember a lot of things! No, years are things that— that just don't stand out in my mind. I don't know [laughs]!

DAVID: I really couldn't pick it out. I do remember that her—they had like this group twenty-fifth anniversary thing between my father's brothers, or sisters, or something, because three of them were married within the same year or year and a half period of time. So they all kind of had their twenty-fifth wedding anniversary around the same time, but I couldn't tell you when that was.

DALEY: And so you stayed in Spokane until recently?

VALENTINE: Yes.

DALEY: And then you came to Kent?

VALENTINE: Mm-hm, I just came here a few months ago.

DAVID: Yeah, just about two months ago.

DALEY: And this is--?

DAVID: I made her move over here because it's closer to me. I just didn't like the idea of her being three hundred miles away all the time.

VALENTINE: And his sister is going back to California.

DAVID: Yeah.

VALENTINE: But so far, she's still in Spokane, so.

DAVID: Yeah, so.

DALEY: And this is called Arbor Village?

VALENTINE: Hm?

DALEY: Arbor Village Assisted Living?

VALENTINE: Yeah, yeah.

DALEY: Mm-hm. Do you like it here?

VALENTINE: Yeah [laughs]. Where else am I going to be?

DALEY: Well, I'm also curious about how you feel. Do you feel more American, or more Welsh, or--?

VALENTINE: Well, I was only nine, so I've grown up American, so. I always had Welsh connections, so I guess I'm American. But I mean, it's very easy to be Welsh as well.

END OF TAPE ONE, SIDE B

BEGIN TAPE TWO, SIDE A

DALEY: Did you ever get back to Wales, to visit?

VALENTINE: Oh, yes, I've been back twice.

DAVID: Oh, more than that.

VALENTINE: Once with my mother, and once—three times, then. Once by myself, and once with his sister.

DAVID: Yeah, I'd say four, because you got another one in there, too.

VALENTINE: Did I?

DAVID: Just before your—my uncle wasn't doing so good.

VALENTINE: I don't know; I don't remember.

DAVID: You went back with [unclear].

VALENTINE: Well, I know I went back with Glynnis, and I went back once by myself—

DAVID: Right, once with your mother.

VALENTINE: --and my mother and I went back.

DAVID: And then once with the Corbin [PH] senior citizen group, where you stayed an extra week.

VALENTINE: Oh, that was on a tour, yeah.

DAVID: An extra week after that.

VALENTINE: Yeah.

DAVID: And that was pretty close to when you went with Glynnis, so I can see where you'd run those two together, yeah.

VALENTINE: Yeah. Well, I went with the—on a tour with the senior group from Spokane, because when I went back there, I mean, I went to London, and went from there down to my home! I didn't see anything, except what I knew before. And so when the Corbin Center was going over to Britain on a tour, I said, "Well, I guess that's the only way I'm going to see it," so I went with them. And then I stayed over an extra week, and backed on home.

DALEY: How did you feel, being back in the place you were brought up in?

VALENTINE: Well, it didn't seem strange at all, because I mean, I knew the places. I don't know how I would feel. It's a—

DALEY: Did you still have a lot of relatives there, and friends?

VALENTINE: Yes, I still do.

DALEY: Were they glad to see you?

VALENTINE: I guess so, yeah!

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DAVID: One of them, I think, lives in the house that you left when—

VALENTINE: Yeah.

DAVID: Still lives in the same house that she lived in when she was nine, before she came here.

DALEY: And when did your husband pass away?

DAVID: Oh, good, you can ask me that now.

VALENTINE: About ten years ago? That long?

DAVID: Forty—no, more than that. Kim was—twenty-six years ago.

VALENTINE: Oh, is it that long?

DAVID: Yeah.

VALENTINE: I know it's been quite a while.

DAVID: Yeah, about twenty-six years ago.

VALENTINE: We were still in Spokane then.

DAVID: Yeah, and I just, I'd only been—I'd moved away maybe two years. And, yeah, maybe two and a half, three years, something like that.

DALEY: Well, are you glad that your parents came to the United States?

VALENTINE: Well, I wouldn't know any other way! I mean, I was nine. I went where they went. It was still home to me, because that's where they were. I don't know how it would be any different.

DALEY: And do you remember, would you like to sing something in Welsh? Do you remember any Welsh songs?

VALENTINE: I've got a whole [laughs], whole record of them at home! Or here.

DAVID: Yeah. I got a hymnal over there, Mom, but the question is whether you feel like singing any.

VALENTINE: Yeah. Where is it?

DALEY: I'm going to pause the tape for a second. [Tape off/on] Okay, we have Mrs. Valentine is going to sing for us.

VALENTINE: [Sings in Welsh]. See, I can't sing anymore! [Sings] I can't sing.

DALEY: Oh, can you—

VALENTINE: It's [Welsh, approximately 35 seconds]. And that is: Onward Christian soldiers, marching as to war, with the cross of Jesus going on before. Christ the royal master leads against the foe. Forward into battle, see his banners go. Onward Christian soldiers, marching as to war, with the cross of Jesus going on before.

DALEY: Thank you.

VALENTINE: One's in Welsh, and the others in English, so.

DALEY: And your son mentioned that you were the President of the--?

VALENTINE: Welsh Society of Spokane, yes, for a long time.

DALEY: Okay, well, I just think will be a good place to end the interview. I just would like to ask: how do you feel, being an American who was born someplace else? Do you feel proud that you're here?

VALENTINE: Well, I grew up an American, so I don't know. Where I was born doesn't seem to matter. After all, I was only nine, and this is where I went to school. This is where I grew up. This is where I was used to customs and things. And that's about it.

DALEY: Do you still feel Welsh, though?

VALENTINE: Oh, yes!

DALEY: That's still part of you?

VALENTINE: Oh, that's still a part of me, because well, they have song fests every year, where they sing hymns, which sounds sort of out. But hymns are a way of singing! It's—and they can sing for hours, and they'll get a hymn that sounds real good, and they'll repeat and repeat that same hymn. And what else was I going to say? Well, we still celebrate, like, Saint David's Day, which is the first of March. And there is a national gathering in September, and I don't go now as often as I used to, but I used to go every year, wherever they were. And they were any part, all over the country! So, yeah. That's still an important part. That's still part of me, so.

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DALEY: Okay, well I want to thank you very much for the interview.

VALENTINE: Well, thank you for your interest!

DALEY: We're very interested. Again, this is Kevin Daley. I'm in Kent, Washington state, with Mrs. Glynnis Valentine.

VALENTINE: Used to be Jones.

DALEY: Used to be Jones, and her son David Valentine. And it's the tenth of November, 2004. And this is Kevin Daley signing out, thank you.

END OF INTERVIEW