

**EI-19**

**RITA DAISY REISSELBERG STANALAND AND LUCY REISSELBERG  
BEVACQUA**

**BIRTH DATES: MAY 25, 1932 AND NOVEMBER 17, 1936**

**INTERVIEW DATE: JANUARY 8, 1991**

**RUNNING TIME: 58:29**

**INTERVIEWER: PAUL E. SIGRIST, JR.**

**RECORDING ENGINEER: BRIAN FEENEY**

**INTERVIEW LOCATION: ELLIS ISLAND RECORDING STUDIO**

**TRANSCRIPT ORIGINALLY PREPARED BY: PAUL E. SIGRIST, JR.,  
7/1991**

**TRANSCRIPT RECONCEIVED BY: JOHN MURIELLO, 4/1995**

**TRANSCRIPT REVIEWED BY PAUL SIGRIST.**

**AUSTRIA, 1939**

**AGES 7 and 2**

**SHIP: "THE BREMEN"**

**PORT: BREMERHAVEN**

**RESIDENCES:**

- **VIENNA**
- **NOVA SCOTIA**
- **THE US: LEONIA, NJ**

**SIGRIST:** Good afternoon. This is Paul Sigrist for the National Park Service. It is Tuesday, January 8, 1991. This is our first interview here in the studio in 1991. We are here with Rita Stanaland and Lucy Bevacqua, who came from Austria in 1939 with their mother and they were detained here at Ellis Island for ten days. Welcome. Why don't I ask each of you first, uh, to state your full name and your date of birth.

STANALAND: Uh, you mean our maiden names?

SIGRIST: Yes. Why don't you go first.

STANALAND: All right, fine. Rita Daisy Reisselberg and I was born in May 25, 1932.

SIGRIST: Lucy?

BEVACQUA: Uh, Lucy Ruth Reisselberg. I was November 17, 1936.

SIGRIST: Thanks. Let's talk about your parents. What were their names?

STANALAND: Our father's name was Herman Reisselberg and my mother's name was Clara Elsa Hartwich.

SIGRIST: And what did your father do for a living?

STANALAND: Uh, my father was an engineer.

BEVACQUA: An electrical engineer.

SIGRIST: I see. And, I'm sorry, in what city? Did I ask?

STANALAND: Uh, well, uh, he didn't work as an engineer in Vienna, Austria. He, they, worked as shipping, uh, agents on the Danube. I don't know what shipping lines. It was he, they had, uh, he and his father had the office.

SIGRIST: I see. And let's talk just briefly about your mother. What was her

name?

BEVACQUA: My mother's name was Clara Elsa Hartwich. She was born in a little town near Leipzig and she met my father because she was his brother's secretary in Leipzig. And my father came from Vienna one day to the office in Leipzig and that's where he met my mother.

SIGRIST: I see. Do you remember when they were married?

STANALAND: August 18, 1931.

SIGRIST: I see. Let's see, let's talk a little bit about, of course you were both very young children, where did you live? Can you talk about your actual house that you lived in as a child?

STANALAND: Oh, in, I, we lived in Austria, in Vienna on, uh, the Rothaustrasse. That was 21 Rothaustrasse. It was a very, very large apartment and my father's parents and his sister also lived in the apartment. It had two dining rooms. They were gigantic and, chandeliers, it must have had fourteen or fifteen foot ceilings. And I know many times we went up to my mother's parents in a little town and stayed with them which, during the summer in particular, I really liked. I think I liked that better because we were able to go out and, you know, play in the yard.

SIGRIST: Did they have a farm of some sort? Animals or...?

STANALAND: They had a goat. (she laughs)

SIGRIST: Do you remember the goat's name?

STANALAND: Lizzie. (they all laugh)

SIGRIST: That's interesting.

STANALAND: What else would you call a goat?

BEVACQUA: They had a dog.

STANALAND: I don't remember the dog.

BEVACQUA: Yeah. And Opah kept rabbits. That was Sunday dinner.

SIGRIST: Opah was your grandfather?

BEVACQUA: Opah was my grandfather.

STANALAND: Oh, and my mother's brother kept pigeons and once in a while they cooked a pigeon to eat. I don't care for pigeon. (she laughs)

SIGRIST: This was at your grandparent's farm?

STANALAND: Yeah. I guess a small country, the country. Sounds great.

SIGRIST: And you said they ate rabbit for Sunday.

BEVACQUA: My grandfather kept the rabbits and that's what they were kept for. They were not pets. They, they were food. And when Rita and I were in Engelsdorff last year, uh, the fruit trees that my grandfather had

planted were still there.

SIGRIST: Wow.

BEVACQUA: Some of them, not, not all of them.

SIGRIST: Do you, I'm sort of hung up on the rabbit for a second. Do you remember how it was prepared? How did they cook it?

STANALAND: I'm sure I didn't eat any. (they laugh) He also had chickens. I know I had chicken. He had a big strawberry patch and he had a cherry tree and he used to hang the pie plates or something in the cherry tree, used to chase the birds away because they always ate them. And then Sunday afternoons they used to have coffee and they'd send, when I was old enough, they'd send me down to the bakery in this little town and come back with all the rolls and, uh, you know, I guess you would call them a type of Danish. And we'd have coffee in the afternoon.

SIGRIST: Would you go and spend a long period of time there, like a month at a time or...

STANALAND: Yes, yes. It was, I guess, a vacation for my mother.

SIGRIST: Did your father stay in town?

STANALAND: He came once in a while but I think mostly, you know, we were just there for a period of time to stay with them.

SIGRIST: A little respite.

STANALAND: Yeah.

SIGRIST: Back in Vienna, did your mother work at all or...

STANALAND: No, no.

BEVACQUA: No, only, only Dad worked.

STANALAND: Yeah.

SIGRIST: And were there any other brothers and sisters?

STANALAND: No, just the two of us.

SIGRIST: Just the two of you, I see. Did you share a bedroom in the apart...?

STANALAND: As I told you, it was this very large apartment and after I was born they acquired a room from an, an adjoining apartment and made it a nursery so, that was also a large room, so Lucy and I were in this nursery which was right off my parent's bedroom.

SIGRIST: Do you remember when your mother was pregnant with Lucy?

STANALAND: Uh, yes, in a way. I don't remember her looking pregnant but I remember the day Lucy was born. (she laughs) My, I was being taken care of by my Aunt Ella, my father's sister, and we went to the corner grocery store and there was an egg carton thing, you know, the large,

corrugated egg crate type of thing and for some reason I always wanted one and because I had a new sister that day the grocer sent it out for me. (they all laugh)

SIGRIST: Let's, let's talk a little bit about religious life. Now, you're father was Jewish, your mother was not. How were you children brought up then?

STANALAND: Well, in Germany, in Austria, I remember we had Christmas trees and we had Christmas. We also had Christmas at my mother's family and we also had Hanukkah with my father's family. And I remember distinctly, I guess I must have been about, when I was about five or six, all of a sudden no more Hanukkah. And we used to go to a hall where they had a party and I had asked, "Well, we're not going this year?" And everybody, you know how you, it made an impression, everybody at the table sort of looked at each other. "No, we're not having it this year." And I, that's all I really knew about it. And last, I think I remember the last Christmas in Germany, we were at my other grandmother's, my Omah, and we had the Christmas tree and we went to church that night...

SIGRIST: Is this out in the country?

STANALAND: Yeah, this is in Engelsdorff. And then we went to church that night and we came back and we're sitting there and Santa Claus came down. Only Santa Claus turned around. I realized it was the, they had a tenant in the upstairs apartment, because she had a bun sticking out of the back of the hood and that's when I knew there was no Santa Claus. (she laughs) But it was, it was very pretty. They had real candles on the tree and it was different.

SIGRIST: Was there a big dinner that was involved in all of this, too, or...?

STANALAND: I don't remember dinner. It was only, Christmas Eve is the big celebration in Germany. Christmas Eve is more celebrated than Christmas Day, I believe.

SIGRIST: Since, since you sort of celebrated both at one point, were you also going to church?

STANALAND: No, as a regular thing. No.

SIGRIST: On Christmas Eve?

STANALAND: No, that we were with my grandparents and we went with them but, uh, not in Vienna. I don't think we ever went to church on Christmas Eve. My mother wasn't a very religious woman.

SIGRIST: What sect was she? Was she Catholic or...?

STANALAND: Uh, no, no. Lutheran.

BEVACQUA: But when we moved to Nova Scotia the people, we lived in a very small town and the people didn't care what religion you were but you were supposed to follow some religion and since the nearest temple was in Halifax, which was about seventy miles away, we obviously couldn't go to temple, so my father started sending us to the Anglican Sunday school there. (they laugh)

SIGRIST: So you really, you are a sort of...

BEVACQUA: A misch-masch. (they laugh)

SIGRIST: Yeah, a liturgical mongrel.

STANALAND: Well, uh, we both wound up marrying Catholics to add to the confusion. (she laughs)

SIGRIST: Now let's see, 'course Lucy would be too young, Rita, did you go to school at all in Germany?

STANALAND: Yes, yes, um...

SIGRIST: Kindergarten?

STANALAND: I went to kindergarten. I even attended first grade for a while. Oh, there's a custom in, it was in Englesdorff anyway, in Germany. When you start school you get this big cone, I mean big, about three or four feet and it's filled with candy and, you know, all sorts of goodies. And I remember they got my sister a little one because, you know, you have to do something.

SIGRIST: That's right. (he laughs)

BEVACQUA: It was called a "tute."

STANALAND: A "tute." I, I can't, you know, I remember very vaguely and I wrote, I had, uh, reading in German and I had started writing in German and

then that was it, you know.

SIGRIST: Were your parents educated people?

STANALAND: Yes.

BEVACQUA: Well...

STANALAND: Well, of course...

BEVACQUA: My mother...

STANALAND: My, my mo...my father, well educated, my mother went how long...

BEVACQUA: My mother only went to school until she was fourteen and then she told me she always worked after that, from the time she was fourteen years until she married she worked and she said each job that she got was always a little better than the last one. And that's how she ended up working in my grandfather's office in Leipzig.

SIGRIST: I see. Do you remember some of her other jobs? Did she ever talk about...

BEVACQUA: Yes. She, she told me she once worked in a music school where they sold sheet music and pianos, so...

SIGRIST: Was your family at all musical?

STANALAND: Don't mention "musical," please. Our father made us take piano

lessons and to this day I cannot stand pianos. (they laugh)

SIGRIST: Were you taking them when you were in Germany?

STANALAND: No, no. We started that up in Nova Scotia. The other job, I think it's funny, my mother had, part of her duties were walking a Saint Bernard that belonged to the boss. And she said she'd take the dog out and he would drool on her from her waist to the hemline and she said she ruined all her skirts because she had to walk this dog. She can't stand, she couldn't stand Bernards. (Paul laughs)

BEVACQUA: One of the things that was a duty that my mother had when was a child was to find food for the animals. And she would go into the fields that the farmers had already harvested and pick up anything that was left behind. But she told me one time she was so tired of it she, she just hated going out, it took so long, so she went into the field that had not been harvested and she took all the stuff, she and her girlfriend, because the girlfriend had to do it, too. And they brought it back and, of course, everybody was saying, "Oh, where did you get all this?" And I think her father or her mother caught on to what she was doing. (they laugh) I think, I don't think she was punished but I think she was told firmly after that she was not to do that anymore.

SIGRIST: Were your grandparents strict people?

STANALAND: In, in what sense?

SIGRIST: Well, were they, were they great disciplinarians? Were they, um, were they cold people?

BEVACQUA: No.

SIGRIST: Were they warm people?

STANALAND: I, I don't know. I have very warm remembrances of my grandparents, actually on both sides. They were very warm. My father's father, I think, you know, they used to have temper tantrums in, uh, his mother used to have temper tantrums but not with us, you know. I don't remember them, you know, I thought they were wonderful grandparents but we only knew them for a short time really.

SIGRIST: You said your father was Rumanian but were his parents living near where you were? I mean, had they all moved?

STANALAND: Well, when I say Rumanian, he was born in Rumania. I don't think the family originated in Rumania. I think it had gone from Rumania to Germany and back to Rumania and everybody at that point was living in Vienna.

SIGRIST: I see.

STANALAND: They were a group of brothers and sisters.

BEVACQUA: My father was born in Bucharest.

SIGRIST: I see. As children, describe what your parents looked like. When you were kids, what did your parents look like?

BEVACQUA: My mother was pretty. That's what I remember most about her. She was a lovely, lovely looking woman.

SIGRIST: What color hair?

BEVACQUA: She had chestnut hair that threw a, threw a lot of red. And she was fair-skinned with blue eyes.

SIGRIST: Tall? Short?

BEVACQUA: No, 'bout five four Mother was, five three and a half. Always she kept herself very nicely. She was always slim when she was young but the thing that I remember the most was that, well, she was very loving. I loved her a lot, but she was pretty. She was a, she looked like an angel to me.

SIGRIST: What about Dad?

STANALAND: Dad was about six feet tall. He was a big man and he had brown eyes and an increasing bald spot on the back of his head. And, you know it's strange, when we, when I was young he was, in, in Vienna, he was a very...(she is moved)

BEVACQUA: Rita remembers him as a very gentle, loving man and after the experiences of the war he lost his family, he lost his friends.

SIGRIST: I see. It took its toll on him.

BEVACQUA: It took its toll on him. He was a sick man in, uh, physically and

spiritually.

SIGRIST: I see, I see. Let's talk a little bit about just kind of everyday life as when you were kids. (to Rita) You were in kindergarten, going to school.

STANALAND: Uh, huh.

SIGRIST: (to Lucy) You were just a babe in arms probably. (Lucy laughs) You said your mother didn't work afterwards.

STANALAND: No, no.

SIGRIST: So she was always around the house. Was she a good cook?

STANALAND: Oh, well in Austria my father's family had some money so they had a cook but my father used to love to tell the story of my mother's cooking attempt. My mother, he told her he liked dumplings and took out a dinner napkin, they were quite large, and he showed her you take a piece of dough, you make a piece, a square, and you put the dumpling in. Only she went into the kitchen and made a dumpling as big as the dinner napkin. (they laugh) And he never let her live that down. I think the cooks were kind of glad she didn't stay in the kitchen.

SIGRIST: Did your, did the cook that you have, was it a live-in cook? Did you have live-in help that lived in this huge apartment or...

STANALAND: I don't know if they came every day or if they lived in. It was a maid too, you know, it's the kind of thing I didn't, we didn't pay that much

attention. They were there and I didn't pay that much attention to it.

SIGRIST: So did you guys ever help out in the kitchen or, you know, certainly...

STANALAND: Not there.

BEVACQUA: Not then.

STANALAND: No.

SIGRIST: No.

STANALAND: And when we went to my grandmother's in Engelsdorff, life was a lot simpler, you know, I remember. Well, we didn't, we were too young to help out but my, you know, we, we would go into the kitchen and watch my grandmother cook and she had a summer kitchen out in the back in that big piece of property.

SIGRIST: Could you describe that house at all or was it...

STANALAND: Yes. It, it's, my grandfather built it or had it built and it was a big, big square and had three stories; two apartments and another apartment way up which we still have never seen but the two apartments were equal. The, on one corner there were, not outside steps but they were outside of the apartments enclosed and, uh, the toilet was really in the hallway so you had to leave the apartment. It was something new as far as plumbing goes and kind of reminded me of the trains, you know, you pull it and the lid falls down, off the bottom. (she laughs) And the bathroom, the rest of the bathroom was a tub. That was right off the

kitchen, you know, I guess because of the hot water. And it was very simple but it was a...

SIGRIST: But for a country house progressive.

STANALAND: Oh, it's still standing, believe it or not.

SIGRIST: Is it stone or frame or...?

STANALAND: It was stucco on the outside. I couldn't tell you but my cousins live in it now and we saw it for the first time since the war in 19..., it was exactly, almost fifty years since we left. And, but, we had two boy cousins and they each have an apartment and we stayed with them and they made a few minor changes 'cause it's in East Germany and, but it, on the inside it was beautifully kept. Very, very nice.

SIGRIST: How was it heated?

STANALAND: Radiators. They had radiators. I don't know how they heated it.

BEVACQUA: Back then?

STANALAND: Yeah, those radiators were there. Steam. But I don't know. And downstairs was a big laundry room with two big burners and they used to boil their laundry, you know, big vats. You'd throw everything in. My mother boiled laundry, I think, until the 1940's.

BEVACQUA: But even after we moved to Leonia...

STANALAND: Yeah.

BEVACQUA: She would still boil white sheets and things.

STANALAND: Yeah.

SIGRIST: Um, the grounds of your grandparent's house, um, was there, was there another building, a barn or some kind of other...?

STANALAND: No, it wasn't a barn. It, uh, over on one side they had a, my grandfather had a workshop and my grandmother had a, what, bes..., I guess they called it the "summer house." And she had a kitchen in there and we ate most of the meals during the summer when we were up there, we ate over there. I guess it was cooler than the rest of the house. But you didn't sleep there, you just, you know, sort of spent the day there and what was Opah? A machinist?

BEVACQUA: Yeah, he had a machine shop.

STANALAND: Yeah, and he had a lot of tools there, too.

SIGRIST: I see. It sounds like your grandparents on your mother's side really had a profound effect on you as children.

STANALAND: Yes.

SIGRIST: They were a very important part of your life.

STANALAND: Yes, I would say so. I mean that's the one, that's, I remember that

more clearly than living in Vienna.

SIGRIST: Um, good. Well, let's go on to the, get you to America. (they laugh)  
Can you sort of describe who wanted to come to America and why.  
What were the circumstances?

STANALAND: Well, as we mentioned before, my father had to leave. He had a younger brother who had come to the United States in the Twenties and my father could see what was coming in Europe and being Jewish, he felt he had to leave. So he did leave. And, uh...

SIGRIST: During what year or do you remember?

STANALAND: He left in 1938. That's all I remember. I can't tell you when. And I think the idea was that he would supposedly send for my mother and the two of us. I don't know the circumstances. There's one story where he was rather absent-minded. He had a telegram and he was walking around with it, having thought he sent it, in his pocket. But eventually my mother said, "I think we'd better go." She was, we were all with her parents at the time and, uh, I guess she got the necessary papers and we headed for Bremerhaven.

SIGRIST: Let's talk a little bit about your father in America. Did he get employment right away, do you know?

BEVACQUA: Well, his brother had established a firm here in the United States.

SIGRIST: That did?

BEVACQUA: It was an engineering firm.

SIGRIST: I see.

BEVACQUA: A consulting and engineering firm and my father worked for his brother. And then he got him a position in a cod drying plant up in Nova Scotia. The product that was made was called a "Whistmont Turbo Dryer" and the company had contracted to have a turbo dryer installed to dry cod fish up in Lunenburg, Nova Scotia. And my father became the plant engineer and that's why he was in Nova Scotia when we...

SIGRIST: So this is actually before you got here this all happened.

BEVACQUA: Yes.

STANALAND: Yes. He was up there already when we came.

SIGRIST: I see. And you said your mother just sort of took the initiative and decided to get you over.

STANALAND: That's, can, yeah, she fin..."We'd better go now." I guess things were happening that I wouldn't be aware of. And I remember leaving and we arrived in Bremerhaven.

SIGRIST: Do you remember your mother talking about it a lot as a kid? I mean, how did you, as a small child, how did you feel about coming to America, because surely your mother mentioned it...?

STANALAND: Oh, it was, it was mentioned. We even had English lessons, at least I

did. I know my mother did, too. And I still have the book. It was "Grandpa and the Tiger." (they laugh)

SIGRIST: Was there a local school or...?

STANALAND: No, no, no. They, someone came to the house. This was in Vienna. And I didn't pay too much attention of course, you know, I must have been five or six. I wasn't that interested. And I don't really know how much my mother picked up. But she always learned her English from "True Romances" magazine up in Nova Scotia. (they laugh)

SIGRIST: It seems you lived a fairly comfortable life in Vienna, obviously.

STANALAND: Yes.

BEVACQUA: That's true.

STANALAND: Yes, we did.

SIGRIST: So, all right, do you remember packing or anything like that?

STANALAND: Yes, I remember. Well, I'll tell you, I remember when the apartment in Vienna was broken up and the things were being sent to storage in Switzerland. And, of course, in German I guess you wouldn't call them the Germans, you know. The Nazis, if you want to say so, you know, were very, "You can't take this. You can't take that," and inspected everything and then they sealed the trunks and...

SIGRIST: So they supervised this whole procedure.

STANALAND: Uh, it was kind of sealed, yeah, on account it was a supervised thing. And I don't know why I remember that except I do remember that particular thing. And I know other apartments in that building people were selling things on auction and it's, I mean you know it's just an impression of the whole thing breaking up at that time.

SIGRIST: Was this a difficult time for your mother?

STANALAND: I think so.

BEVACQUA: I think it was very difficult for her. I think she was, she was alone. My father was not here. She had two little children she was responsible for. Uh, I don't know when my grandparents went back to Rumania, but they did. They...

STANALAND: I think in '38, too. The end of '38.

BEVACQUA: 1938. My grandmother died during the war of natural causes. My grandfather survived the war. And I know it must have been very hard for my mother. She was, she was very young. She was only twenty-nine.

SIGRIST: Yeah.

STANALAND: Yeah.

SIGRIST: Now was there communication between your father and your mother at all or had there been...?

STANALAND: No, there was some but again, you know, I don't know to what extent at this point. I just, I thought we only stayed with my grandparents for a short time but my mother's sister in Germany recently told us no, we were with them obviously from before Christmas on '38 to the time we left, 'cause I went to school in Engelsdorff, too.

SIGRIST: I see.

STANALAND: Yeah.

SIGRIST: So you, let's get you to Bremen then. Did you take a train? Is that how you got...?

STANALAND: We took the car to Leipzig, the train station, and then we took the train to Bremen.

SIGRIST: Did your grandparents see you off or anything like that? Was there anyone who...?

STANALAND: Yes, my au...,my uncle. My father's, my mother's brother went with us and, uh, I don't know if Opah went with us or not. I just remember at one point looking at my grandfather and thinking, "I don't think I'll see him again." (she is moved)

SIGRIST: Now you went to Bremen. This is where you left from?

BEVACQUA: Right.

SIGRIST: Did you have to stay there a few days before, I mean, did you arrive...?

STANALAND: You know, I don't know if we stayed. We might have stayed overnight in a hotel. I really couldn't tell you that honestly. We got on the boat.

SIGRIST: What was the name of the boat?

STANALAND: The "Bremen," yeah. And then the boat went to Southampton. That was, uh, my aunt, my father's sister was there and she couldn't get on but we saw her. She came to see us and we waved and I think they stayed there for a while and from Southampton they started toward the United States.

SIGRIST: What class were you traveling?

STANALAND: Now...

BEVACQUA: Well, certainly not first class and certainly not steerage.

STANALAND: No, uh...

BEVACQUA: Something in between.

STANALAND: Between. We had a cabin, inside cabin.

SIGRIST: Can you describe that at all?

STANALAND: Yeah, it was a room about this size. (she gestures, they all laugh) It had a cot, a bed over here and a top and bottom bunk. And I think I

was on the top.

SIGRIST: I see.

STANALAND: (to Lucy) Yeah, and you were on the bottom and mother there or whatever. You know, it was small and narrow but it wasn't uncomfortable, I mean, you know...

SIGRIST: Right, right.

STANALAND: And, you know, I just remember you'd go on deck and every time you'd turn around there was somebody serving soup. The steward's soup and little sandwiches and I suspect it might have been "tourist" if there's such, if there were such a thing at that time.

SIGRIST: Or it could have been second class.

STANALAND: Yeah, or second class.

SIGRIST: Let's talk a little bit about the boat ride. Was it a rough ride? Was it smooth?

STANALAND: For the most part it was smooth. One morning I remember I woke up and I was seasick and my mother, you know years later we talked about it, my mother said yes, they hit a spell of bad weather and everybody was seasick. And I think one of the things I remember most, we would go in the dining room and I never had pudding or Jello before. Don't ask me why but there sitting was a glob of vanilla pudding and the motors, of course there was a vibration on the ship and this thing is sitting there shimmying. (they laugh) I had a little

tough time with that.

SIGRIST: Oh, dear. (they laugh)

STANALAND: But I, my mother would have told you I knew that boat inside out. I was all over it. I think one day I would really like to take a cruise but it, uh, the "Bremen" was a very nice boat.

SIGRIST: Did you get a chance to play with other children, for instance, on that boat? Were there organized activities or anything that you remember?

STANALAND: I know, no, I don't remember anything like that. All I remember is eating soup and sandwiches. (she laughs)

SIGRIST: Because it was war time or almost war time, do you remember any kinds of safety drills or any kind, anything like that?

STANALAND: No. You have to remember the war hadn't started yet.

SIGRIST: Right.

STANALAND: When we were on the high seas evidently Hitler marched into Poland and the boat reversed during the night but there were many Americans on board and so it turned around again and continued. But at that point nobody thought of U-boats or anything like that. There hadn't been any incidents so there were no drills that I can remember. There might have been, you know, just a regular drill for in case of any disaster but not a particular type of drill.

SIGRIST: Do you remember how long the trip took.

STANALAND: I would have sworn seven days but I can't be sure. I really can't be sure.

SIGRIST: Do you remember how long you were in Southampton? Was the boat there overnight or...

STANALAND: It's anoth..., I can't tell for sure, you know, it just seemed like we stopped briefly just to get people on board and then left. So it might have been overnight for all I know. I can, it's one of those things, I just can't remember that detail.

SIGRIST: Do you remember taking any kind of, of course you were just a kid and you (to Lucy) were even a smaller kid, do you remember having a toy or something, a teddy bear or just something you were holding on to? It must have been, you know, this is a new experience for a little kid and...

STANALAND: My sister had a doll. I don't remember having a toy. All I can remember was after we were on board the boat I remember I left a red leather pocket book at my grandfather's and it had my initials on it and for years I yearned for that and he sent it to us after the war. (they laugh) But I don't remember that I had any particular toy that I was fond of at the time.

SIGRIST: I see. Do either of you have stories about the Statue of Liberty? Do you remember seeing the Statue of Liberty when you pulled into the harbor?

STANALAND: I think I do. Everybody went topside of course, you know, when you approached New York Harbor and we were so close and there was so much anxiety at that time about getting in and, you know I think, I can't be sure, I just remember an impression of the harbor because when I've been in the harbor it sort of comes back to me, but that's about all.

SIGRIST: Let's talk about, how did you get to Ellis Island? (end of side one)  
O.K., how did you get to Ellis? Why did you end up at Ellis Island?

STANALAND: Well, my mother was a German citizen. She was German and, of course, the war had just broken out and she was considered an enemy alien within a few days of this and I imagine they, you know, they were going to detain her for a few days. And I remember, you know, my uncle came to the boat to take us to this house in Leonia, New Jersey, but we weren't going. And all I remember is we, we must have, we were on a ferry and we came to Ellis Island. And I didn't get too much of an explanation at that time. There would be just a little bit of, you know, my mother really didn't know at that time.

SIGRIST: Did your mother ever talk about later on to you how she felt when all this happened?

BEVACQUA: She said she never stopped crying. She said from the time the Coast Guard cutter came out to meet the ship and she was first interviewed by Immigration officials until she finally got out of Ellis Island with my uncle, she said she never stopped crying. She said her face was as big as the moon and all red. She was scared to death that they were going to send us back.

SIGRIST: Yeah. Now how long were you at Ellis?

STANALAND: I believe it was from the eighth to the eighteenth.

SIGRIST: Of September.

STANALAND: September.

SIGRIST: And let's talk a little bit about your impressions of Ellis Island or whatever you remember your mother talking about. As a little girl you had this great big playground, sort of...

STANALAND: Not quite. (she laughs) No, we, well I remember the Great Hall and it was loaded with benches and, of course, you sat on the benches all day. There was really nothing else to do. And they did have a playroom and they did take a small group of children up for twenty minutes at a time and they even then, I don't know why I thought of this, they were guarding us as if we were going to break out of there. And I remember the playroom had an open area; you could go out on sort of a deck and it had a view of the city. But it was twenty minutes and the toys were kind of old and shoddy but they were toys and it was a break in the routine of the day because most of the day we sat on the benches and, you know, you're waiting for a number to be called or something to happen and...

SIGRIST: And you just didn't know...

STANALAND: Yeah. And then at night we would, they had dormitory rooms upstairs

and, oh, you would, I don't know how, I don't remember, there were quite a few people in each room and it had one bathroom and we were in there and I can't stand the smell of Ivory Soap to this day. It was, that was the...

SIGRIST: That's all they gave you.

STANALAND: They gave you and the people were, my mother always said these people in the room with us never saw indoor plumbing before because they shoved everything they had down the toilet and the toilet overflowed and, of course, no one wanted to go into the bathroom. There was an inch of water on the floor. And they, they'd get you up at the crack of dawn...

SIGRIST: And then what did you do? They woke you up and...

STANALAND: You went down to breakfast and then you sat in the hall and then you...

SIGRIST: What time were you woken up?

STANALAND: I think they came in time to get up. It was a revelry thing, you know, if you were in the army it wouldn't have been much different.

SIGRIST: What was the staff like? Who was on staff here at that time?

STANALAND: I, I can't really remember. It was, you know, the woman, it was a woman I believe who, and they locked the doors on the bedrooms at night, I mean, you know, there maybe were ten people or fifteen

people with children in a room and then they'd lock the door and you'd be in there for the night and in the morning they'd open the door and yell in, "Time to get up," and you'd drag yourself down to eat something in a hall and then you went back to waiting.

SIGRIST: Where were you fed?

STANALAND: It was a dining hall and I couldn't tell you where. That was my first introduction to American bread and that was a disaster. (she laughs)

SIGRIST: You didn't like it, huh?

STANALAND: No. It had no resemblance, the rye bread had no resemblance to what we knew and I remember a man sitting across from me at breakfast one morning, it was corn flakes, a new experience, and I was very suspicious. And he said, "Eat it. It's good for you." But, you know, I can't remember the other meals. Corn flakes and rye bread.

SIGRIST: This brings me to, makes me think who else was here when you were here? Who, do you remember who some of the other people were? Who the other children were?

STANALAND: There were a group and, I remember somebody said they were gypsies and they were in one corner of the room and it was a very, very large group and the kids were always running around and my sister spent most of the day sleeping because she evidently didn't sleep well at night. She was only two and a half. She had this doll clutched in her hand and one day a little boy came and snatched it away and, of course, I was off and running and I caught up with him.

He ran into his group. I grabbed it away from him and came back and there was a woman sitting next to my mother and she said, "Oh, you shouldn't have gone after him. You could have been hurt. They're gypsies," and, you know, that was the extent of playing with other children.

SIGRIST: Well, you said that they sort of herded the kids up and brought them out to a playground.

STANALAND: I don't think they took any of the gypsy kids, though. I don't remember them. There were other children there but I, you know, it was just a small group and I couldn't tell you. I think we were in our own way all caught up with what's happening here and I remember, as my sister said, my mother was so frightened. And one of the first impressions coming here was going into a small room and having a man sitting at a desk and screaming, obviously in English, to her and she's crying and there was an interpreter and when he interpreted he was saying that my father was dead and my mother was lying. She didn't come over here to join him. She came over here to spy and, of course, that got me very, very upset. So later on we were, I don't know if she was talking to my father or to my uncle on the phone but, you know, she was able to calm us down and tell, you know, my father is alive. But, uh, it was a very, I don't remember being upset but I must have been to a certain extent. I think you kind of push that out of your mind, certain little things you remember.

SIGRIST: Was she ever taken away from you at any specific time that you remember? Was she, were you ever left while she was taken off for questioning or something to that effect that you remember?

STANALAND: I don't think so. I really don't think so but I couldn't tell you for sure. I think I'd remember that.

SIGRIST: Yeah, the whole experience was so traumatic.

STANALAND: Yeah, yeah.

SIGRIST: Were you allowed to wear your own clothes while you were here?

STANALAND: Yes.

SIGRIST: Do you remember any of the clothes that you had when you were a kid that you brought over?

STANALAND: Yeah, a red velvet dress with a lace collar. (she laughs)

SIGRIST: Very appropriate.

STANALAND: Well, it wasn't really red. It was sort of burgundy. I don't know, that must have been my favorite, my all time, I'm sure I wasn't wearing that but, no, I don't remember anything particular. Just that one particular dress.

SIGRIST: Did Lucy get a bed of her own or did she sleep with your mother?

STANALAND: (to her sister) Do you remember? I have a feeling she slept with my mother.

SIGRIST: Were you pretty much contained in the main building or for any reason were you allowed to go to any other part of the island? For instance, did you have to go through a medical checkup or anything like that?

STANALAND: I don't remember a medical checkup, no.

SIGRIST: So pretty much you were just...

STANALAND: Yeah. You sat in the Great Hall and you ate your meals in the dining room and you came back to the Great Hall and that's...

SIGRIST: There was nothing to do.

STANALAND: There was really nothing to do. I don't remember any other activity except going, you know, probably we went into the Interrogation Room several times. I just happen to remember one time but I think, you know, it happened more than once, but that's about it. My uncle, my father's brother, came to see us several times during the stay.

SIGRIST: Where did you visit with him?

STANALAND: In the Great Room.

SIGRIST: He was allowed right in.

STANALAND: Yeah, uh, huh. You know there was nothing that could be done at that point.

SIGRIST: Well, let's get you out of Ellis Island. (they laugh)

BEVACQUA: We'd like that.

SIGRIST: O.K., how did you get off the island?

STANALAND: By ferry. My uncle came for us and I guess he had his car and then we drove up to, it must have been the West Side Highway...

SIGRIST: How was everything cleared up legally? How did, how did they decide that your mother was not a spy? Did they finally contact your father or...?

STANALAND: No, I don't think they ever contacted my father but I think, I really don't know, I guess they decided that it was kind of crazy, you know. Maybe they saw all the papers. Nobody ever said what happened.

BEVACQUA: Well, I think probably Uncle Noldy did some, some work talking to people and getting the thing cleared. And finally, yes, we were allowed to, to leave, to go to the United States.

STANALAND: I think we were, yes, I think it was also part of it, that we were going to go up to Canada and we were not going to stay in this country. We were going to be...

SIGRIST: They were more willing to just free you.

STANALAND: Yeah, to go up to Canada. But I still remember, I always tell my sister, we go over the George Washington Bridge and you get on the ramp to Route 46 and there's a little ramp that goes off to Leonia. And every

time I get on that, that was my first impressions, you know, it was one of those things that sticks in your mind and it hasn't changed it seems, fifty years, that's one bend that hasn't changed. And we went down and there, I was very impressed, we pulled in the street where they lived and it had two brick columns, you know, very, very stately looking.

SIGRIST: He had done very well for himself?

STANALAND: Well, that was the street. Yeah, but he, he had, he did well for himself, actually.

SIGRIST: Now did you stay in Leonia or did you, were you taken right up to Nova Scotia?

STANALAND: We stayed in Leonia for, what two, probably three weeks. My, the day we arrived my uncle's sister, excuse me, uncle's wife was leaving for her mother's funeral so, this is quite, I don't know how my mother survived it. She's thrown in a house with her two children and his three children and my mother doesn't speak any English and it was two weeks of...

BEVACQUA: Chaos.

STANALAND: Chaos, good word. Chaos.

SIGRIST: Did you like your cousins?

BEVACQUA: (a pause) We liked our cousins. We didn't like their mother.

STANALAND: That's the truth.

BEVACQUA: That's the honest truth.

STANALAND: Yeah, that's true. And she, she was a divisive woman and when she came back, I mean if she saw any harmony she managed to...

BEVACQUA: Destroy it.

STANALAND: Destroy it.

SIGRIST: Well, at least after all you'd been through you didn't have to deal with her.

BEVACQUA: No. (they laugh)

SIGRIST: She was going...

STANALAND: No, no. (she laughs) Then we, my uncle took us, we went up to Boston.

SIGRIST: How did you get to Boston?

STANALAND: By train. He took us to Boston and then we got on a ferry from Boston to Yarmouth, probably was a little farther, maybe it was, it wasn't Bar Harbor, Portsmouth maybe or maybe it was running from Boston. Anyway, it's an overnight ferry that runs from there to Yarmouth, Nova Scotia and he went with us and my father met us and the first words

out of my mouth were, "Uncle Daddy!" He was a bit crushed. (they laugh) We hadn't seen him, though, you know, for a long time.

BEVACQUA: Probably over a year.

STANALAND: Yeah. And then we went to a little town where he was in Lunenburg and we stayed there for four years.

SIGRIST: The overnight ferry actually, probably wasn't very exciting for you because you were tired of being on boats. (they laugh) Did your mother ever mention to you later on that she just felt like this trip was endless? That she would never see your father?

STANALAND: I think she, I think she had times, I can't imagine at her age, you know, having gone through that. There's nothing in my experience now that was that stressful, you know. There you are with two children, a world...

SIGRIST: Alone.

STANALAND: Yeah, and your world is coming apart and you don't know what's going to happen next.

BEVACQUA: She was never very willing to talk about that. All of this information we had to drag out of her and that's why a lot of the dates, I would ask her, "When did this happen," and she wouldn't answer me or she would talk about something else. It was a very painful period for her, I mean, she said "goodbye" to her parents and I'm sure she had no idea when she might ever, ever see them again.

SIGRIST: Did she ever see them again?

BEVACQUA: Oh, yes, yes. After the war was over she started taking trips to East Germany rather frequently.

STANALAND: Uh, huh.

BEVACQUA: She'd go like every two or three years and she would enter East Germany with the, it was interesting. She had her passport and when she would go through the Communist whatever, she would ask them to please put her visa for East Germany on a separate piece of paper and not to stamp it into her book because it was during the McCarthy Era and she was afraid. This way she could just get rid of it and she would not have any vestige of having visited East Germany in her passport.

SIGRIST: That was a very smart thing to do. (Rita coughs) Would you like a glass of water?

STANALAND: No. (she coughs) Excuse me.

SIGRIST: It's O.K. We can get you some water if you want it. (Rita coughs)

STANALAND: Just let me blow my nose and I should be...(tape pauses)

SIGRIST: Well, you said you lived in Nova Scotia for four years. Let's talk about being a, a...(they giggle, long pause, background noises)

STANALAND: (officially off tape) You edit these tapes then, don't you? No?

SIGRIST: Not really. In fact, we'll be giving you a copy of this when, before you go.

STANALAND: Who listens to these?

SIGRIST: Not many people to be honest with you. Researchers mostly.

STANALAND: Oh, yeah.

SIGRIST: For instance, if someone's writing a book on Viennese immigration or something. (they laugh) Don't laugh. (they laugh) People write...

BEVACQUA: It will be cross referenced. (she laughs)

SIGRIST: Someone might look at this, Ellis Island, we actually have very few interviews with people who were here in the post 1924 period.

STANALAND: I see.

SIGRIST: Because people who were here were here for very specific and generally peculiar circumstances and fewer of those people have come to our attention. And so since I've taken over this job I've tried to find more of these people because inevitably they were detained here for long periods of time and often are very helpful in telling the story of that peculiar period in Ellis' history after immigration had stopped. The man I was telling you about who was here for psychiatric testing proved what we had long suspected, what had been denied all along

that there was shock treatment being given here at Ellis. He was here in '47. (to the recording engineer Brian) It's alright? O.K. (officially back on tape) Back to Nova Scotia. (they laugh) Let's talk about being kids in Nova Scotia and actually having your father and your mother together. Do you remember, you might remember Rita, your mother and your father seeing each other for the first time? No?

STANALAND: I think we were so, we were, I was looking forward to seeing my father so much that I would not have noticed anybody else at this point. Personally, those four years we spent in Nova Scotia were wonderful. I, for many years, I always wanted to move back. I wanted to move back but, uh, Lucy and I did go back in, was it 1983? Forty years almost to the day and it hadn't changed, not enough to, you know. I'm glad we came here. I realize now that I would not have, be where I am or what I am if I had stayed in this little town. At least I don't think I would have. It's one of those things. It's the way life is. But it was a wonderful town to raise children, wonderful.

SIGRIST: What was the house like that you lived in?

STANALAND: Houses!

BEVACQUA: Houses! (they laugh)

SIGRIST: You lived in...

BEVACQUA: Five of them.

STANALAND: A little town!

SIGRIST: You moved a lot.

STANALAND: Well, we rented, you know, because the Canadians were not willing to give my father permanent citizenship either, so we rented houses, one, two, four houses in four years. And it's a very small town so we, they were very nice. They are old houses. This is not a new town. This town was settled in, I think back in the early 1700's or maybe beyond that and, uh, they were all people's houses, other people's furnishings. We had a dog. I got a dog for my birthday one year, a little fox terrier.

SIGRIST: What was his name?

STANALAND: Skippy, what else! (they laugh) And he always managed, up in Nova Scotia they have "best parlor" because that was always sealed off. We weren't allowed in the "best parlor." And we would go away occasionally. We would go to Halifax. It was a trip to the big city and you'd be gone all day and that dog would manage to get into the "best parlor" and do his business. (they laugh) I don't know why I remember these things but I do.

SIGRIST: (to Lucy) Do you remember the house, the "best parlor." Of course, you're a little bit older now.

BEVACQUA: I remember the later houses, of course. I don't remember..

SIGRIST: Do you remember Skippy?

BEVACQUA: Oh, sure. I remember Skippy. I remember the first house and the

second house vaguely. No, that's wrong, the second and third I remember vaguely. And then the house after that I remember very well and, of course, the last house. And what was so great about Lunenburg, it was a very safe place to be and I was very small and yet I could wander all over and I was a wanderer. I had friends in every corner. I had a lady who baked bread and invited me in when the bread was fresh. And, uh, it was just a great place to be a child.

SIGRIST: What sorts of people lived...what was the name of the town?

BEVACQUA and STANALAND: Lunenburg.

SIGRIST: Lunenburg.

STANALAND: Burg, yeah.

SIGRIST: And what sorts of people lived there?

STANALAND: Believe it or not they were mostly the descendants of early German settlers. And have you ever been to Pennsylvania Dutch Country?

SIGRIST: I've been through it.

STANALAND: Yeah, and have you ever heard the accent there? They still had a German accent up there but they all spoke English for the most part in that particular town, and, uh, fishermen.

BEVACQUA: A lot. Fishermen. My mother said she knew, unfortunately, a lot of widows there because they would go out to the Grand Banks and then

they would hand fish from dories and a lot of the dories never made it back to the mother ship and a lot of men were lost at sea. And the reason that my father was working up there was, the way they dried the codfish was to lay it out on the docks and Nova Scotia summers are notoriously uncertain. They can be very wet and foggy and if that happened they would lose their entire crop, so to speak. The fish would rot instead of drying so they were trying to find a new way to dry the fish. And this was done in a factory in this turbo-dryer that my father was plant engineer for.

SIGRIST: Did your father enjoy this kind of work?

STANALAND: I think he, I think he enjoyed being up there. It was the uncertainty of what was going to happen after that job was finished that ate at him. But he really fell into the small town life. He joined the equivalent of the National Guard and, uh, I know he was very well liked by the people who worked for him. He was an exacting man but they liked him. The people up there were that type of people. They were just...

SIGRIST: It was sort of a German community.

STANALAND: Well, not, I'm not going to say they were, not really. I said they were Germans, descendants of Germans but they, I would not put them, say they were German. They were just a great, very, very down to earth people and I didn't realize how much until we went back in '83, you know. Very matter of fact about things.

BEVACQUA: Salt of the earth type people. They were very good people. Very honest people for the most part.

SIGRIST: Do you remember some of your neighbors?

BEVACQUA: Oh, sure.

STANALAND: Oh, yes. (she laughs) Mrs. Parks.

BEVACQUA: Mrs. Parks, who had a daughter named "Nonie" and whenever my parents wanted to go somewhere I was shipped over there to sleep. And I had to sleep with Mrs. Parks and she complained bitterly because I was a very restless sleeper but I was a very small child so naturally I moved a lot in the bed.

STANALAND: And then on Sundays we'd go and visit the Hewitts. Mrs. Hewitt. We'd go over there and we'd have Sunday dinner at Mrs. Hewitt's.

SIGRIST: What was that like?

STANALAND: Mrs. Hewitt. Oh, it was very nice. It was, she was an elderly woman and she, we'd sit there and everyone would talk. There was no television. There was no radio. We had radio but you didn't put it on and everybody talked and it was very just very, very nice. I think it's probably something we should be doing more now with our kids but we don't for some reason. And one of the things I remember in particular, they had a lot of old Victorian houses, high ceilings. This one man every year would get a very tall Christmas tree, move all the furniture out of the room, open the windows. The room would be ice cold and they'd have the real candles. And everybody in town would come and see this Christmas tree. It was tradition, you know, you went down to

see that Christmas tree. It was just, as I said, we have very, very fond memories of that town.

SIGRIST: Did you as a family maintain any kind of religious life once you were in Nova Scotia?

STANALAND: Well, that's where we went to the Anglican church and...

BEVACQUA: It was not a true family religious life, though. My father didn't participate nor did my mother in any of those things. They just sent us to the Sunday school. I guess it was just to help us fit in. They wanted us to fit in, I mean, we had to be there.

STANALAND: My father actually helped us with our Sunday school lessons, which I always thought was very funny, but not at the time. He helped us with our Sunday school lessons. He came to, they came to Sunday school plays if we had any but we didn't have Christmas. We had Christmas trees but that was it, you know. No formal...I mean I don't remember my mother and father ever going to church the whole time we were there, I mean, my whole life I don't think.

BEVACQUA: No.

SIGRIST: Let's talk about learning English a little bit. Now you had a few lessons before you left. Here you are in an English speaking community.

STANALAND: Yes.

SIGRIST: What did you do?

STANALAND: (to Lucy) Well, I don't know about you but I got into, we used to speak English, we picked up English at school and we'd come home and speak German to our mother. My mother would speak German to us. Now you have to remember the war broke out. England was already at war with Germany. And, of course, here we were speaking German and right away the kids at school got onto us, but it wasn't, or onto me anyway. But it wasn't nasty and I told my father and my father got upset and went up to the school and I felt badly that I had told him because I knew, I knew they were teasing. But not, I can't explain it, it wasn't nasty teasing. It wasn't that kind of a town. And I know that sounds strange but that's the way they were. But very quickly we picked up English. I believe within months we spoke nothing but English.

BEVACQUA: My mother said within three months we were babbling only in English, the German was pretty much gone. But my father had forbade her to speak German on the street. Well, in the house she could to us but on the street and, of course, she could barely speak four words of English, so she had a hard time at first. But I don't think we were ever discriminated against or anything like that...

STANALAND: No, no.

BEVACQUA: Because of the fact we spoke German. But as young children you pick it up so quickly, so naturally that the German disappears.

SIGRIST: Well, and, of course, you both were in school, you were, eventually were in school and you probably started off in school once you got up

there...

STANALAND: Oh, yes.

SIGRIST: And that helped. Well, we have just a few minutes left and I just want to sort of talk about your parents and their later years. Were they happy they came?

STANALAND: Oh, yeah. I think so. My mother at one point said, "Oh, I might move back," but she never, she never really, I don't think she really considered it seriously.

BEVACQUA: Once she had grandchildren there was no consideration. She would go back and visit her sister. She stopped going into East Germany and, but, once she had grandchildren she would never have moved away.

SIGRIST: When did you all move from Nova Scotia?

STANALAND: In '43.

BEVACQUA: June.

STANALAND: And we moved down here to Leonia and my father died in '52 and I have to say my mother became, went to school and became a beautician and wound up owning her own shop. I mean, I think my mother was a pretty terrific lady, you know.

SIGRIST: Yeah.

BEVACQUA: She was a very strong woman. She went through so much and she came through it so well. There was never a moment's hesitation. She always did what she had to do in the best way she could.

SIGRIST: The fact that she chose that career afterwards, was she always inclined that way? Did she used to do your hair as kids and do that kind of stuff?

BEVACQUA: No, she didn't. In fact she came to me one day and she said, "Lucy, what do you think I should do? Should I go to hairdressing school or should I become a laboratory technician?" I remember that so clearly. And to this day I don't remember what I said to her but she obviously made the correct decision because she was very successful as a hairdresser.

SIGRIST: Was she, is this something that she always wanted to do or was this spurred on by your father's death?

STANALAND: Well, I think...

BEVACQUA: Well, after my father died, she was working at Bendicks and she got bumped from that job by someone with more seniority and then she had to find something to do so she went to become a hairdresser. I don't think it was any great passion of her's.

STANALAND: One thing, my mother always dyed her hair. She was very particular about her hair and her hair always looked very natural. She had turned white at a very early age and her hair always looked nice, not

died. And I think that maybe that was one of the things that, you know, gave her the idea. And she was very, very good at it.

BEVACQUA: She was. She was very successful. And then when she couldn't do that anymore she worked as a nurse's aid in a nursing home. And then when she couldn't do that anymore she worked in my cousin's company as an office worker until she couldn't work anymore.

SIGRIST: And so she kept busy her whole life.

BEVACQUA: She did.

STANALAND: That's right, yeah.

SIGRIST: Well, and let me just, when did your mother die?

STANALAND: 1988. February, 1988.

BEVACQUA: Yeah.

SIGRIST: I see. Well that just about, pretty much, we're out of time now. (they laugh) That brings us a long way in a short time. Anyway, I want to thank you both very much for coming out to Ellis Island and being our first interview of 1991 and for sharing your personal remembrances with us.

STANALAND: Well, thank you for having us.

BEVACQUA: Thank you. We're very pleased to be here.

SIGRIST: This is Paul Sigrist for the National Park Service signing off.