

**EI-264**

**ROSE SZANTO SIMS**

**BIRTH DATE: MAY 10, 1896**

**INTERVIEW DATE: 3/24/1993**

**AGE AT TIME OF INTERVIEW: 96**

**RUNNING TIME: 00:51:00**

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

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**TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY: NANCY VEGA, 10/1995**

**TRANSCRIPT REVIEWED BY: IRV SILBERG**

**HUNGARY, 1904**

**AGE 8**

**PORT: HAMBURG**

**SHIP:**

**RESIDENCES:**

- **HUNGARY: SZATMAR**
- **US: NEW YORK, NY; CLIFTON, NJ**

LEVINE: This is Janet Levine for the National Park Service. And I'm here today in Clifton, New Jersey at the home of Rose Sims, who was born Rosa Szanto in Hungary. And she came through Ellis Island to the United States in 1904 (Ms. Sims coughs) when she was eight years old. Today is March 24, 1993, and Rose is ninety-six years old. I'm very happy that I happened to meet you here today, and I look forward to hearing about your story starting out in Hungary. So why don't we start by your telling your birth date.

SIMS: My birthday is in May the ten, 1896.

LEVINE: Okay. And the name of the town where you were born?

SIMS: Szatmar, S-Z-A-T-M-A-R.

LEVINE: Now, did you live in Szatmar the entire time before you came to the United States?

SIMS: No.

LEVINE: No. How long did you live in Szatmar?

SIMS: That's a hard question for me to answer, because I'm sort of forgetful. And I'm ninety-six years old, which is not surprising that I'm forgetful.

LEVINE: Well, do you remember things about Szatmar?

SIMS: I remember many things.

LEVINE: Tell me what it was like there for you.

SIMS: Well, it was very, very hard. Everything was very expensive, and work was very hard to find.

LEVINE: Was it a little town?

SIMS: It was a little town.

LEVINE: And what did people do there for work?

SIMS : Mostly farming.

LEVINE: Did your father farm?

SIM : My father? No. He was a shoemaker.

LEVINE: And what was your father's name?

SIMS: Samuel.

LEVINE: Samuel, that's Szanto.

SIM : Szanto.

LEVINE: Szanto. And, um, what do you remember about your father? Do you remember any experiences with your father when you were still in Hungary?

SIMS: I'm sorry, I don't want to remember anything about my father.

LEVINE: Okay, okay. Um, how about your mother?

SIMS: Oh, she was a doll. She was a doll.

LEVINE: What was her name?

SIMS: Uh, Miriam.

LEVINE: And her maiden name? Do you remember your mother's maiden name?

SIMS: Yes, Berger, Miriam Berger.

LEVINE: B ---

SIMS: B-E-R-G-E-R.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. And what was your mother like? Tell me ---

SIMS: I can't explain how sweet she was, how dear she was. Everybody loved her.

LEVINE: Can you remember experiences with her in Hungary, things you did together?

SIMS: Yes. She was always sweet and happy, and tried to do the best she could for us.

LEVINE: Were you a religious family?

SIMS: Yes, very.

LEVINE: Did your mother observe the -- observe religious occasions?

SIMS: Yes.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. Do you remember any of those occasions, and how you celebrated them?

SIMS: Yes, yes. My mother stayed home on that day with us, a whole day, and she prepared food that we liked. And there was -- there wasn't much else.

LEVINE: Do you remember some of the foods your mother prepared that you liked?

SIMS: Yes, stuffed cabbage.

LEVINE: Did you ever help her cook it?

SIMS: I was a baby.

LEVINE: Oh, you were too young. Uh-huh. Stuffed cabbage. And is there anything

else that you can remember your mother preparing?

SIMS: Eh, yes. She used to make soup that we liked very much. There was greens in it and little noodles -- squares, small noodles -- and we liked that very much. So she prepared that for us once a week. And also we -- we dot [sic]-- we got, I guess that's about all. All we had was this soup. We couldn't afford much more.

LEVINE: Uh, now who else was in your family, your brothers and sisters? What were their names?

SIMS: Elsie, Sarah. Sarah was the older one. She was the oldest. Then Elsie, and Gertrude, and me.

LEVINE: Oh, all girls.

SIMS: All girls.

LEVINE: In your family. Uh-huh.

SIMS: Five of us.

LEVINE: Now, did your mother work at all when you were still in Hungary?

SIMS: What's that?

LEVINE: Did your mother work?

SIMS: Oh, yes.

LEVINE: In Hungary?

SIMS: She supported us.

LEVINE: Oh. What did she do for work?

SIMS: She made bluing for clothes to wash clothes with. And if she was -- if she had the money, she could make in big. This way, she didn't have the money, so all she could do is buy the -- the contents and put it in bottles. She -- she made a liquid out of it. And that's -- that's went off very well in Europe. Everybody used bluing after they washed the clothes. So that was, she -- they needed that. So she had in the basket, which was on her arm, about a dozen little bottles with bluing. And that's what she sold. And that's how we - - we suppo-- she supported us.

LEVINE: Now, was bluing used the way bleach is used here? Is bluing like bleach?

SIMS: No, no.

LEVINE: What was bluing used for?

SIMS: Bluing made the clothes whiter, a little bit whiter. That's what everybody felt at that time, that bluing made the clothes a little whiter.

LEVINE: What did your mother buy in order to make the liquid bluing?

SIMS: Uh, it was like stone, she bought it in the drugstore. I remember. I was there with her. It was -- it was like a stone, pieces of stone. And she melted that down with water to a certain color, and that's what made bluing.

LEVINE: Hmm. Now, was she the only person doing that in your town?

SIMS: As far as I know, yes.

LEVINE: Hmm. So she supported you and your sisters with that? Uh-huh.

SIMS: OF course, we couldn't have a lot of nice things, or a lot of fancy clothes. But she did the best she could with what she had.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. Did you have other family nearby -- your mother's family or your father's family, aunts and uncles, cousins? Did you have?

SIMS: Yes. My mother had a sister living in -- I forgot where she lived. It's on the tip of my tongue, but I forgot.

LEVINE: Okay. Well, if it comes to you, you can say it later. Was it a nearby town?

SIMS: Yes.

LEVINE: Do you; did you used to visit there? Did you visit your aunt?

SIMS: I don't think so, because we couldn't afford the fare.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. How did people get around?

SIMS: Wagons. We would hire a wagon.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. And what did you do for fun when you were a little girl? Do you remember?

SIMS: We -- we had very little fun in our life, very little. Because we had to go to work as soon as we were, we got older -- say, about five years old. We had to start working.

LEVINE: What would you do for work?

SIMS: Well, we would pick up from the ground the apples that fell down, and put it in a bag.

LEVINE: So did you do that?

SIMS: Yeah.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. And your sisters, did they do that, or did they do other jobs?

SIMS: They did that also.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. Were you closest to any particular family member?

SIMS: Yes. My mother's sister.

LEVINE: Then she would visit you? And what was her name? (pause) Uh-huh. So would you see her very often?

SIMS: Not very often.

LEVINE: Why did you like her so much?

SIMS: Well, because she was the only relative I knew that -- and that was from my mother's side. And, of course, my mother was my favorite.

LEVINE: Um, what else do you remember about the town? Could you describe the town at all, what you remember about it?

SIMS: Which town?

LEVINE: The town of Szatmar?

SIMS: Oh, Szatmar. Yes, I remember everything about Szatmar.

LEVINE: Tell me everything you can think of.

SIMS: It was a nice little town, and people were very friendly towards each other. And work was scarce, like everywhere else. And also that was farming, mostly farming. My father wasn't a farmer. He was -- he was a shoemaker.

LEVINE: Did you have, did he make shoes for the family?

SIMS: No. He just fixed them.

LEVINE: Fixed them. Uh-huh. Did the farmers come in? Was there a market day when the farmers came?

SIMS: Oh, yes, yes. They always had a day, market day.

LEVINE: And what kinds of things, can you remember the market day? What it was like?

SIMS: Yes, they, they were selling all kinds of fruit, vegetables, house ware, everything.

LEVINE: So would your mother sell her bluing on market day?

SIMS: On market day, no. She stopped making bluing and she was selling on market day all kinds of things, large pieces of, like, furniture.

LEVINE: Oh. Where did she get the furniture?

SIMS: She bought it, and -- and s-- re-- sold it over, making a little profit. And that's how we got along.

LEVINE: So she did that and she sold the bluing.

SIMS: No.

LEVINE: After the bluing.

SIMS: She got through with the bluing. Her arms hurt her very badly. It was heavy to carry those bottles.

LEVINE: So then would she buy the furniture from individual people? It was furniture that people sold her, or was it new furniture?

SIMS: No, it was second-hand furniture. And there, she would sell it, and make a little profit. And that's how she supported us.

LEVINE: Now, was the town largely a Jewish population, or were there Jewish people as well as Gentile people?

SIMS: It was a mix, mix.

LEVINE: And how did they get along?

SIMS: Very good.

LEVINE: Did you go to school at all?

SIMS: Oh, yes.

LEVINE: What do you remember about school there?

SIMS: Uh, I was in the first class, second class, and I remember that I liked it very much.

LEVINE: What (clears throat) excuse me, what was the school like? Was there one class for all the children?

SIMS: That's right. One class for all the children.

LEVINE: Do you remember what the schoolhouse looked like? What did the schoolhouse look like?

SIMS: Oh, what it look like? Oh, like general, general school. I mean, nothing special about it. Nothing that you would notice.

LEVINE: Was there one teacher?

SIMS: One teacher. And one large room.

LEVINE: And do you remember the house you lived in, what that looked like?

SIMS: The house I lived or she lived?

LEVINE: You.

SIMS: Yes, I lived in a little -- I think we had two rooms for the children, five of us. My --and then my mother and father, that made seven. And then we had the

two rooms.

LEVINE: What did your mother cook on?

SIMS: Stove.

LEVINE: What made the fire? What made the heat?

SIMS: Uh, we used to go out and gather wood, wood.

LEVINE: And how about water? Did you have running water, or did you go someplace to get water?

SIMS: We had to go to get the water from the, from the ocean.

LEVINE: Did you go?

SIMS: I was too small. But my older sister went, and, of course, my mother, when she had time.

LEVINE: Do you remember your mother washing the clothes?

SIMS: Yes.

LEVINE: What was that like?

SIMS: In -- in the ocean. Everybody washed in the ocean.

LEVINE: Do you remember any good times from that town?

SIMS: There were no good times. We never played.

LEVINE: Do you know? What was it that caused your mother and father to decide to leave and to come to the United States?

SIMS: We had a stepbrother here who was good to us. And he sent us money to come to the United States.

LEVINE: Now, was that your father's son, or your? --

SIMS: Yeah.

LEVINE: Your father. Your father had been married and had a son?

SIMS: Yeah.

LEVINE: And he was your, and he sent money for the whole family?

SIMS: Yes.

LEVINE: And do you remember packing up to leave?

SIMS: Yes. We were very excited.

LEVINE: What had you heard about America? What did you think about it before you ever saw it?

SIMS: Well, we heard that it was paved with gold.

LEVINE: And did that stepbrother write letters to you?

SIMS: Well, he wrote letters to my parents.

LEVINE: And do you remember anything that he told them before they left about America?

SIMS: No. No, we were too small. I think I was only about five years old.

LEVINE: Well, when you, do you remember what you or your mother packed up to take to bring here with you?

SIMS: Our clothes. And something to eat.

LEVINE: And do you remember leaving, leaving your little house?

SIMS: Yes. We said goodbye tearfully to the house.

LEVINE: Did you expect to return, or did you think you would never come back?

SIMS: No. We knew we'd never come back.

LEVINE: So, then, how did you go from your house to the ship?

SIMS: Oh, we hired a -- not a wagon but a, a carriage -- because we wanted them to think that we can afford to travel.

LEVINE: (laughs) What's the difference between a wagon and a carriage? What makes a wagon different from a carriage?

SIMS: A wagon was cheaper, and a carriage was dearer. And so it gave us some little bearing.

LEVINE: Was the carriage fancy?

SIMS: No.

LEVINE: But it had, it had a roof?

SIMS: Yeah, it had a top with tassels.

LEVINE: So you took the carriage, and where did you go?

SIMS: We went to the ocean to take the boat.

LEVINE: Do you remember what port you went to?

SIMS: No.

LEVINE: Do you remember the name of the boat?

SIMS: No.

LEVINE: Did you have to stay in the port town for very long before you left on the boat?

SIMS: I -- I think we were there about a day.

LEVINE: Now, was that the first time you had been out into a bigger city? Do you remember what struck you about it?

SIMS: (coughs) I can't remember.

LEVINE: So did you get examined before you left?

SIMS: No.

LEVINE: Okay. Do you remember the actual leaving?

SIMS: Actual leaving?

LEVINE: When you left?

SIMS: Well, we all felt sad. Because we lived there all my life.

LEVINE: Do you remember anything your mother or father told you, about leaving, or about coming here, or?

SIMS: Oh, yes. My mother was very happy, and told us we -- we'll have a better life in America.

LEVINE: So what was your voyage like?

SIMS: It was -- it was pleasant, at least for the children.

LEVINE: Do you remember where you slept?

SIMS: Uh, yes. There was a big bed, and we all slept in there -- in that one bed.

LEVINE: Were you down in the hold of the ship, down in the bottom with a lot of people?

SIMS: Yeah.

LEVINE: And did you, did you, were you fed by the steamship company, or did you bring your own food?

SIMS: We brought our own food.

LEVINE: Do you remember what it was?

SIMS: Bread, chicken fat. We used to get bre-- chicken fat on bread and we liked it, and toast. And that was our main meal, as far as I know.

LEVINE: Was there anything that happened aboard ship that you remember?

SIMS: Well, we were in a hole downstairs, and there, we made -- we made ourselves happy. There was no other way. So we -- we sang, which we enjoyed. The children enjoyed it. We sang, and I guess that's all.

LEVINE: Did you go up on deck at all?

SIMS: We weren't allowed, but we used to sneak up. And then we'd watch people dancing, and that gave us a kick.

LEVINE: And what?

SIMS: That gave us a kick. We enjoyed it.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. And do you remember the boat coming into the New York Harbor?

SIMS: Hamburg.

LEVINE: Oh, you left from Hamburg. Uh-huh. Good. So you've started to remember more things, that's great. Now, so you left from Hamburg. Do you remember the name of the ship at all? Okay. Do you remember when the ship came into the New York Harbor?

SIMS: Everybody remembered that because there was shouting and happiness when we came in. There was such happiness. But then we waited and waited and waited, and nothing happened.

LEVINE: Do you remember seeing the Statue of Liberty?

SIMS: I don't think so.

LEVINE: Okay. So you got into the harbor, and you were on the ship but you just stopped in the harbor and, for a while, nothing happened.

SIMS: No. It seemed that the boat was cut in half, like. Half men on one end, and the other half on the other end. And my mother was separated from me. It was on a Friday, and I remember having a twist, that's a *khala* [ritual bread] that we bless on Friday night, and that was all that I had. And I spent the whole day looking at that twist, and finally I took a piece out. And I said, "Oh, I'm gonna get a licking for that." But when my mother saw me, she was so happy. We got together again, and she said, "It's all right, it's all right."

LEVINE: Do you know why they separated you?

SIMS: I don't know why. I can't imagine why, to this day.

LEVINE: Okay. Well, Rose, we're going to stop here for a minute so Kevin can turn the tape over.

SIMS: Yeah. And then my Aide could go to her family if she wants to.

END OF SIDE ONE

BEGINNING OF SIDE TWO

LEVINE: Okay. We're starting now Side B, and I'm talking with Rose Sims, who came

from Hungary. Okay, so, Rose, you were separated from your mother for most of the day.

SIMS: Most of the day. (coughs)

LEVINE: And you happened to be holding the *khalá*, is that it? And you didn't want to eat it, but you finally did.

SIMS: I was hungry, and I decided to take a piece out.

LEVINE: Well, so then what happened? Do you remember your first impressions of Ellis Island?

SIMS: My first impression was I was very, very happy to -- to see Ellis Island.

LEVINE: Had you heard anything about Ellis Island before that?

SIMS: No.

LEVINE: So what happened when you went inside?

SIMS: Well, we -- I remember we had nice food on the table. Each person passed by had a plate of soup, a good plate of soup. And I don't remember anything else that we ate, but we did get a very good plate of soup and a piece of bread.

LEVINE: How long did you stay at Ellis Island?

SIMS: Oh, we stayed there a long time.

LEVINE: More than a day?

SIMS: Oh, yeah. Many days.

LEVINE: Do you know why you stayed there so long?

SIMS: No. I -- I --- I guess my relatives didn't come forward. My -- my h-- father's son didn't come forward. And somebody had to vouch for you, for your support, and there was no one to vouch for us.

LEVINE: What was your stepbrother's name?

SIMS: Morris Eckerman.

LEVINE: And do you remember your sleeping accommodations while you were at Ellis Island?

SIMS: On the boat?

LEVINE: No, on Ellis Island.

SIMS: On Ellis Island? I really have no recollection of the sleeping accommodations. I don't know where we slept, or how we slept.

LEVINE: You remember how you spent your days when you were there for several days?

SIMS: Just doing nothing, just do nothing.

LEVINE: Do you remember how you felt then?

SIMS: Well, we all felt a little sad, the children, mostly. We didn't know what to do

with ourselves. We had no one to come in and liven us up.

LEVINE: Were there a lot of people there when you were there?

SIMS: Yeah. Yes. There were mothers and fathers with their children. Like my mother and father.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. Do you remember the examinations that you had there?

SIMS: What kind of examinations?

LEVINE: Physical examinations.

SIMS: Pardon me?

LEVINE: Physical examinations? Looking through your hair, your eyes?

SIMS: My eyes, I remember the doctor looking at my eyes, and that's about all.

LEVINE: So then what happened? Did your, did your stepbrother finally arrive?

SIMS: Finally.

LEVINE: Did he ever tell you why he hadn't come sooner?

SIMS: No, he didn't.

LEVINE: So where did you go when you ---

SIMS: We left.

LEVINE: --- left Ellis Island?

SIMS: My stepbrother got us a room -- one room, downstairs in the basement. And I remember there was a bed there, and not much more.

LEVINE: Where was the room?

SIMS: In the basement.

LEVINE: In, was it in New York City, or was it in?

SIMS: New York.

LEVINE: And do you remember anything about your first impressions of America?

SIMS: Well, it wasn't the same as it was before. I didn't see any paves with gold. In fact, I didn't see any flowers on the curb instead of gold. There was a disappointment.

LEVINE: So what did your, did your father go right to work?

SIMS: No. My mother did. She started buying old furniture on time, and that's how she -- we made a living.

LEVINE: Hmm. How did she transport the furniture?

SIMS: She, she hired somebody with a wagon. That's the only way, at that time.

LEVINE: Do you remember where in New York you were living?

SIMS: Yes. I lived on Stanton Street, 306 Stanton Street.

LEVINE: Is that the, where is that? Was that in Manhattan? Was that in the Bronx or Manhattan?

SIMS: It was in New York City.

LEVINE: Now, did you go right to school?

SIMS: Yes.

LEVINE: What was your experience going to school in America?

SIMS: Well, what I remember plainly was that the girl in front of me had long braids, and I had inkwell and her braid almost touched the inkwell. So I took the braid and I put it aside, it shouldn't get wet. And she told the teacher that I pulled her hair. And the teacher came over and asked me, "Why did you pull that little girl's hair?" And I couldn't explain myself. I couldn't speak English. So I was, I was wrong and she was right.

LEVINE: Hmm. Do you remember learning to speak English? Do you remember learning to speak English?

SIMS: Oh, yes, yes. It didn't take long. The children spoke English and before I knew it I -- I was with -- with them.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. And were there a lot of other children in your school who had come from Europe?

SIMS: Yes. But some of them -- most of them -- spoke English already, and I didn't. So I couldn't explain myself to the teacher that I-- I didn't mean no harm.

LEVINE: So then did you, did you stay in school? How long did you stay in school?

SIMS: Up till 5B.

LEVINE: And then what did you do when you left school?

SIMS: I worked in a factory.

LEVINE: What kind of factory?

SIMS: Oh, I had a scissor, and I clipped the bottom of the skirts or something like that. I did some kind of clipping.

LEVINE: Do you remember the company you worked for? And then how long did you work there?

SIMS: Oh, I guess a few months, a few months. And I went to school, and I studied -- I studied. I wanted to be a stenographer, but I didn't have the education. So I -- I did some kind of paperwork. I don't remember just what it was. But later on, I -- I became a stenographer.

LEVINE: Did you go to school for that?

SIMS: Yes.

LEVINE: Did you go to school in the night, in the evening?

SIMS: Yes.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. And what about, your mother kept; did your mother keep selling the furniture?

SIMS: Yes.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. And was your father able to work as a shoemaker or not?

SIMS: He -- he -- he didn't earn much, because when people came in they didn't have the money to pay for the work. So he did the work for them, and didn't get paid. (coughs)

LEVINE: So, and what about your sisters? Did they, did they all find jobs?

SIMS: Yes. They earned a little money, and turned everything over to my mother. And that way, we got along. We paid our rent and my mother bought groceries and she did the cooking at night. So we got along.

LEVINE: Now, do you remember when you met your husband?

SIMS: Yes.

LEVINE: What were the circumstances?

SIMS: (pause) It wasn't very ---- It just, no special occasion. We were -- I think we were sitting in the park and he was sitting in the park, and we got together that way.

LEVINE: Hmm. And did you, did you see him for quite a while before you got married?  
Did you see each other for a while before you got married?

SIMS: Yes.

LEVINE: A long time, or a short time?

SIMS: Every now and then we saw each other.

LEVINE: So what did you like about him?

SIMS: He was a nice person, honest and he didn't earn much, but he was a good person. But a sick man. He was sick from the day I married him.

LEVINE: What did he do for work?

SIMS: What I did for work?

LEVINE: What he did.

SIMS: Oh, what he did? Not very much, because he was a sick man. He couldn't work. I did most of the supporting of the children.

LEVINE: Was your husband also coming to America from someplace else?

SIMS: Yeah, from Hungary.

LEVINE: Oh, uh-huh.

SIMS: Only thing, we never met there. We only met over here.

LEVINE: I see. So how many children did you have? Five children. And what are their names?

SIMS: Their names, Sarah, Elsie, Gertrude, Esther I left out, Esther. No, Elsie, that's Esther. Sarah, Elsie, Ger -- Gertrude, and me. That's only four.

LEVINE: Who was the last one? Oh, of your children that you had with your husband.

SIMS: Oh.

LEVINE: Do you remember -- did you have children? Oh, okay. So that was your sisters that you were just mentioning, you and your sisters. Uh-huh. I see. Okay.

SIMS: I wanted children, but I had a sick husband.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. So did your husband die young?

SIMS: Yes. He died many years ago.

LEVINE: And then what were you doing for work?

SIMS: Well, like I said, bought furniture. First, first I remember the bluing.

LEVINE: Yeah, your mother was doing the bluing. Then she bought furniture.

SIMS: Then she bought furniture, second hand. And then she started buying new furniture. And as time went on, we were doing well.

LEVINE: I see. And then were you a stenographer most of your working life?

SIMS: Yes.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. Well, uh, looking back on your life now, now that you're older and you started out in Hungary and you came to this country, what effect do you think it had on you, coming here as an immigrant?

SIMS: I was very happy to come here. But my marriage wasn't, wasn't a happy one. It wasn't that he was a bad person. He was a good man, but he was a sick man and he acted like a sick man.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. And his name was, his last name was Sims. What was his first name?

SIMS: Benjamin.

LEVINE: Benjamin.

SIMS: No, his name wasn't Sims. His name was S-Z-A-N-T-O, Szanto.

LEVINE: That was your father's name, right?

SIMS: Oh, that's right.

LEVINE: And your husband's name was Sims.

SIMS: That's right. I'm mistaken.

LEVINE: Yeah, okay. So, uh, so you really had to support yourself most of your life. What are you most proud of that you did?

SIMS: My children.

LEVINE: Are you thankful for anything in particular?

SIMS: Yes, for the children. Wait a minute, they're not my children.

LEVINE: Whose children are they?

SIMS: My sister's.

LEVINE: Which sister?

SIMS: Oh, that's the one I left out. That's the one I left out. Herm -- Hermi--  
Hermína or Hérmina.

LEVINE: Hérmina.

SIMS: Hérmina.

LEVINE: So you're the aunt to Hérmina's children.

SIMS: Yes, and I loved those children like they were my own.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. Okay. And what are their names?

SIMS: Oh. (coughs) Harold, and I remember Harold, mostly. I was with them  
continually.

VOICE: Grace --

LEVINE: Grace?

VOICE: Millie

LEVINE: Grace, Millie.

SIMS: Ohhh. How could I forget? Grace, Millie, Mildred. That's, how much is that?  
Three?

LEVINE: Harold, Grace, Millie.

SIMS: Harold, Grace.

VOICE: Gladys

LEVINE: And Gladys.

SIMS: No, Gladys is from another sister --from a different sister.

LEVINE: Okay. Well, so that's what you feel has brought you a lot of joy.

SIMS: Yes, the children.

LEVINE: Your sister's children. Uh-huh. Okay. And how about this period of your life, your old age period? What is that like for you?

SIMS: Very sad. It seems that years ago, when you didn't have children, people felt sorry for you. Now when you haven't got children, they'll take advantage of you. And they don't like old people like they used to years ago. I remember when I was a young girl, if an old person came in the -- in the car, I jumped up and give them-- offer my seat. They don't do that no more. Do you know that?

LEVINE: Yeah, I've seen that, too. Uh-huh. Well, are you happy that you came to America?

SIMS: Yes. Things were better here than over there.

LEVINE: Okay. Well, Rose, is there anything else you'd like to say before we close?

SIMS: I have nothing special, nothing special to say. If I had children, I'd probably have a whole lot to say. But this way.

LEVINE: Well, you have nieces and nephews, so --

SIMS: That's all.

LEVINE: Okay. Well, Rose, thank you so much. It's been a pleasure talking with you, and I'm very happy I had a chance to hear your story. Okay. Well, this is Janet Levine for the National Park Service, and I've been here with Rose Sims at Clifton, New Jersey at the Daughters of Miriam. And it's March 24, 1993, and I'm signing off.