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AXEL EDWARD OHRN

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- **US: STAMFORD, CT**
- **SWEDEN: RAMNAS**

HOM: Good afternoon. This is Peter HOM for the National Park Service. Today is Wednesday, February 27, 1991. We are in the Home in Darien Connecticut of Mister Axel Ohrn who came through Ellis Island in 1924. Correct?

OHRN: Well, we left Sweden 1924. We had Christmas aboard ship, and oddly enough we came in exactly the first of January 1925.

HOM: O.K.

OHRN: Yeah.

HOM: Well, let's start by talking about your parents. Can you tell me the names of your parents?

OHRN: Parents, yeah, my, my father's name was Edward Albin OHRN, OHRN in Swedish by the way. Now he came here about two years before me, my brother and my mother. And the reason he left Sweden is because we started to get a recession over there before it got here. So that he had a friend in this country that he was going to come and be together with and work. But it just so happens by the time he get, he got here, the recession started here. My mother, whose name was Elin Elizabeth Norman, had three sisters and a brother right here in Stamford, Connecticut. So that's how we happened to land in Stamford. My father got a job here. And he worked and saved enough money so that he could have passage for us so that we left Sweden in 1924. And we came on the old S.S. Stockholm.

HOM: Yes, well let's talk about your life in Sweden.

OHRN: Life in Sweden.

HOM: Yes. What did your mother do for a living, if anything? Did she work? Did she...what did she do?

OHRN: No, my mother was a typical housewife. I had a brother who was four years younger than me. Name was Arne. And went to, uh, school like most normal children. I enjoyed going to school by the way. I had wonderful teachers. And, uh, even at that time which was way back in 19...(he pauses) 1917, 18, it must have been around that time. We start school at seven in Sweden at that time. And, uh, believe it or not, even at that time when I went to school when you got to a higher grade, they started teaching not only Swedish, but English and German at that time. And, uh, nowadays when you go to Sweden, everyone

speaks English. All the children speak, and most of the young people like your own age. And, uh, we lived in a part of Sweden where we had a lot of snow, by the way. And when wintertime, I used to go to school on skis. And that would start sometimes as early as September. And so we would get snow and then it would thaw and we get snow on top of that. And, uh, and then when spring would come, we were always looking forward to going barefoot when summertime came and, and when ever we heard the cuckoo out in the wood that was, we'd run home and mom I heard the cuckoo. I'm going to take my shoes off and go barefoot, even though it was quiet cold at the time.

HOM: O.K. Well, can you describe your house, your living arrangements. Did you live in a house or an apartment or...

OHRN: Well, it just so happened that that where we lived, it was a village, it was not a city.

HOM: What was the name of the village?

OHRN: The name of the village where I was born was Ramnas, R-A-M-N-A- S, in the county or state of Vastmanland, Sweden.

HOM: Could you spell that please?

OHRN: Vastmanland. And, uh, my father was a smelter. He made what they called "the Lancashire steel." This was a method that was imported from England. That's where the word Lancashire, England comes in. And I, I remember asking him, "Well, Pop, why do you call it Lancashire?" Well, because it was some sort of, uh, ingredient that they had to mix with the steel which made it the strongest and the best, cleanest steel in the world. Used for very, very skilled tools for doctors and reeds on the accordion, by the way and similarly whenever you need a good steel, that's the kind of steel they made. Nowadays, of

course, everything is computerized. That system has now gone, gone with the wind; it's no longer that system. But that's what he did for a trade. And we lived in a, in a, I don't know, you call it a village I guess, which was owned by a company that owned that whole area and housing was furnished to all these smelters. And, uh, they had a little garden where they grow vegetables and potatoes, fruit trees. Very beautiful little garden.

HOM: Right.

OHRN: And, uh what else would you like to know?

HOM: Did each house have its own garden. Or was this a garden, or was this a garden for the whole community?

OHRN: Yes, each, no, each, each house had their own little garden.

HOM: And did you work in this garden or (unintelligible).

OHRN: Well, it's a, this was only a small, like a small kitchen garden. But they were all allotted a large area where they grew their potatoes, that was like a community but you know, for themselves. And, uh, Sweden has been blessed with a lot of berries in the woods, all kinds of berries. Blueberries, raspberries, wild strawberries. So at summertime, we would, uh, enjoy going through the woods picking berries. And I remember as a young boy, I would go very often with my grandmother. I visited a lot with my grandmother Norman. And, uh, even got lost in the woods there one time. And it got to be dark. And it seems to me the whole village was out looking for us. And we, it got dark, and I heard the church bells chiming away. I guess they were looking for us. But she found her way back so everything turned out all right. But that was just one of the things that happened.

HOM: Yes, well let's talk about the food, since you mentioned food.

OHRN Food?

HOM: Yes. Was your mother a good cook?

OHRN: Excellent cook. My mother was an excellent, as my wife is today so I've been very spoiled.

HOM: Uh, huh.

OHRN: And, uh.

HOM: What kinds of food did she cook? Did you ever help her cook?

OHRN: Well, the Scandinavian love fish. We had a lot of fish, especially herring. Herring is a very stable diet for the Scandinavians and, uh, we lived, there was a lot of water around Ramnas. There was plenty of fishing. And, uh, basic meat and taters (he laughs).

HOM: Was there...

OHRN: Yeah, what else?

OHRN: At that time

Mrs.

OHRN: At that time, yes. Now of course, nowadays its, if you're over there its, its become so Americanized, you wonder sometimes if you're in Sweden or if you're in the United States, it's pretty much the same.

HOM: Yes, well did your mother make anything that you especially liked, a favorite

dish?

OHRN: Pancakes.

HOM: Oh, pancakes.

OHRN: Very delicious pancakes (he laughs).

HOM: Did you ever help your mother make them?

OHRN: Not really. Not really.

HOM: Let's talk about school life since you talked, talked some, somewhat about that.

OHRN: About what?

HOM: About school life.

OHRN: School life.

HOM: Describe how, did you have school in a room with other children or were there buildings. Describe...

OHRN: Oh, we had a very lovely building. We have had the privilege of visiting Sweden many times since I've been there. And would you believe that my old school building is still standing there in Ramnas.

HOM: Really.

OHRN: And I remember especially, this is odd, I used to sit there by the window and I used to sit and look out through the fields. It's a beautiful place by the way. It's

a very beautiful place with greenery and garden and flowers. Everybody had flowers in their windows. And I remember I used to sit and I guess, like all little boys, I guess at that time when I was about 13 years old; I'd sit there. And I'd be sitting dreaming about the world, I guess a lot of little boys do. But I had wonderful teachers. My last, in my last class was a male teacher. His name was Frederick Karlson. And, uh, I loved school, so I managed to get good grades. I got very good grades, which I was very happy over. And I remember the day I told him we were going to go to America. And he said, "Oh", he said, "I'm going to miss you", he said, "It's too bad because", he said, "I have already applied so that you could continue your higher education in Vasteras", which is a very beautiful large city, the nearest city, about three miles away from where we lived. By the way, Vasteros is where the A.B.& B. Company have their headquarters.

HOM: Uh, huh.

OHRN: You've heard of A.B.& B, Asea Brown and Bouvier, are now the largest electrical manufacturers in the world.

HOM: Uh, huh.

OHRN: And, uh, I have a lot of cousins, uncles...

HOM: Is there a...

OHRN:...work for that company.

Mrs.

OHRN: Engineers.

OHRN: Yeah, all engineers. And nowadays they're travelling all over the world where they represent A.B.& B.

HOM: Uh, huh. So your father came here first for...

OHRN: Yeah, he came here first.

HOM: For, how long was he here before you?

OHRN: Two years.

HOM: O.K. So he ...

OHRN: He came over in 1923.

HOM: Right, so he was in the United States earning a living.

OHRN: Yes.

HOM: While you, your brother and your mother were back there.

OHRN: Well, I started school; I went back to school when I came here.

HOM: Yes, well let's talk about before you came, still in Sweden. Do you remember how you felt when you found out that you were coming to America? How, how did you mother tell you that we are going to America?

OHRN: Well, well we really... as I told you, we came because the unemployment began to be very severe in Sweden, and, uh, they had no such thing as a dole or unemployment or anything like that, but as I said, because my mother had her relations here, I guess that sort of eased the attention a whole lot. But to be real honest with you, I wasn't happy about coming here. I loved Sweden. I always have.

HOM: Uh, huh.

OHRN: But, uh, and of course, I don't know if I stated in the letter that I wrote to you, but we had one of the worst storms ever. December, I think, is the worst time of the year you can possibly go on, uh, the Atlantic, especially the North Sea. We got into a storm the very first day. Nobody was allowed on deck. The rudder broke. They were delayed for a day, and, and sometimes you thought you'd be swallowed by the sea. The boat would go down like up to the hull (he gestures). All you could see was water all around you. And then all of a sudden, you saw nothing but the blue sky. And then as the old Stockholm got up on top the crest of the wave would be standing, shake, you think we were going to break in half. And then we would go down, and all, this was all the way across until we got to Halifax, Canada. A lot of people from Finland was on the boat, and most of these people went off at Halifax. And when we finally got into New York, the old Stockholm, it looked just like a (he pauses) like an ice ship. It was completely covered with ice. And when I saw New York, the first time of course, this after we got to, you know we, we had to go to Ellis Island.

HOM: Yes, well before we get to Ellis, let's talk about before, still back in Sweden.

OHRN: Yes.

HOM: How did your mother feel, and, or your brother feel? Were they excited?

OHRN: Oh, my brother was only nine years old. To him, it didn't seem to make much difference. He, he was, I couldn't see anything one way or the other.

HOM: And your mother?

OHRN: My mother, of course, she was kind of sad leaving her mother. She had

wonderful, wonderful parents. But, I mean, it was do to, naturally my father needed their job. It was mostly unemployment and, uh, that was it. There was no work to be had.

HOM: Did she feel sad or happy?

Mrs.

OHRN: (unintelligible).

HOM: How did you feel leaving all you friends and relatives back in Sweden?

OHRN: Well, I was kind of, I felt sad. But I uh, made the best of it. I said, "If, if this is gonna be what my father, you know, wanted, why, certainly make the best of it." After all, I was only thirteen years old so it uh, you know, makes a big difference, too. But I uh, I kept in touch with my schoolmates for many, many years. As a matter fact, until several past away, they are now gone. Every Christmas, I would keep in contact with my school friends, people I went to school with.

Mrs.

OHRN: Tell about your jobs.

OHRN: And uh, what else would you like to ...

HOM: Well, how did you get from your home to the, uh, port? By train? Did, what port did you leave from?

OHRN: Oh, from home, from our place, uh, well we went on the express, it was an express train directly from Stockholm to Gothenberg, by the way, where my wife comes from, she comes from Gothenberg. Very clean, very fast. It was an overnight.

HOM: Overnight.

OHRN: Overnight trip. And uh, when we got to Gothenberg, we, they put us up in the hotel near the piers where the Swedish-American Line is anchored. And we stayed there overnight and the following morning, we were all ready to board ship and um...

Mrs.

OHRN: (unintelligible)

HOM: O.K. So now you're on, now you're on the ship and your going. Well, you mentioned that you celebrated Christmas on the ship.

OHRN: Yes.

HOM: Can you tell if you did anything special?

OHRN: Well, I tell you, there wasn't much celebration because the storm was so bad that everything had to be chained down you might say. I knew they had a piano there. And that piano really was bolted down because thing were just going from one side of the ship to the other. I can remember, even the poor lady that was to take care of the cabins, I felt sorry for her. She was just as sick as the rest of us. mostly everybody was sick. The only one I remember being up and around was my little brother. And uh, there wasn't much. There was a Christmas tree, but I don't remember anyone having any Christmas celebration whatsoever.

HOM: O.K. Describe the accommodations. What were, what was the accommodations like?

OHRN: Well, the accommodations were two bunks on this side and two bunk on that side (he gestures). I had the lower bunk and my brother had the other one. And uh, my mother had one on this side and a another girl.

HOM: Uh, huh.

OHRN: A friend, because the bunks, they were all filled, you know, there was no, no spare cabins whatsoever. That was the third class, by the way.

HOM: Uh, huh.

OHRN: And, uh, the food was good whenever you could eat. The Swedish-American Line is always been known for, you know, their... the ship was spotlessly clean, very clean.

HOM: Well, what kinds of food, do you remember the type of food you had?

OHRN: Well, it was (he pauses) very typical breakfast. What usually is served. Cereal, and uh, I don't, I don't remember having any, I don't remember having any, uh, fancy food. It was mostly...

HOM: Yes, just...

OHRN: Basic, you know.

HOM: Uh, huh.

OHRN: Vegetables, meat and potatoes I guess. And, and uh, whatever.

Mrs.

OHRN: And fruit.

OHRN: Yes and fruit. It was good food.

HOM: Were people seasick? Do you remember people being seasick?

OHRN: Very much so. Practically everybody was seasick.

HOM: Were you seasick?

OHRN: Yeah, very much so. Oh, you want to die when you're seasick. I don't know, have you ever been seasick?

HOM: Um, no, I don't believe so.

OHRN: What?

HOM: I don't believe so. Not yet.

OHRN: It's (he laughs) it's the worst thing ever. You want to die.

HOM: Uh, huh.

OHRN: What?

HOM: How did you past the time of day? Did you play games? Did you talk? What did you do?

OHRN: Yes, they um, they had all sorts of things going on. But there again see, when, if your sick and miserable, I guess, you don't feel like taking part. But they, they, they had, they had music there by the way. They always, they had an orchestra.

HOM: Uh, huh.

OHRN: And uh, music. And uh, I guess in the, in the second and first class, they was more deluxe. And in the third class, (he pauses) but it was nothing, nothing wrong with it.

HOM: Uh, huh. But for the most part you stayed down on deck, below deck.

OHRN: Well, we weren't even allowed to go up on deck.

HOM: Oh, that's right.

OHRN: Most, most of the voyage, uh, the storm everyday, it never, it never gave up. Those wave, I would say, I'm not exaggerate, it, they must have been fifty, sixty foot high. It, it was horrible.

HOM: Uh, huh.

OHRN: Anybody who has, if they haven't been on the ocean, and, and seen the way they, they think maybe you're exaggerating. But believe me, you're not. It's, it's like you think you're gonna be swallowed up in that ocean and that whole ship is sitting down there in the valley.

HOM: O.K. Well now, O.K., you come into New York. Well, you said first of all, that it stopped in Halifax, Canada first. And many people got off there.

OHRN: Yes.

HOM: Then you proceeded into New York.

OHRN: Yeah, yeah.

HOM: O.K. Now describe how you felt when you first saw the Statue of Liberty. Were you, did you, do you remember seeing the Statue of Liberty?

OHRN: Well it, that, that was of course having read about America in school, we knew all about, mostly you know, in Sweden we, we studied geography about the whole world so, I mean I had, I knew pretty much what was in New York. But when I saw the skyline, when I saw New York after I had, after we went through Ellis Island, and got out, got down to Battery Park. It was a day like this with, they had a big snowstorm. Must have been a couple days before because there was no more white snow on the ground. It was pretty dirty and it was pretty bleak. And uh, I wasn't too happy. I was kind of homesick I think. I sort of missed Sweden when I saw it.

HOM: Well, when the ship came in, were there people on deck to see the Statue? The Statue of Liberty?

OHRN: Oh yes, oh yes. When we, as we pulled in into New York Bay, we, we were, we could see the, the Statue. And of course, that was quite a thrill to see that, you know and that's, that's...

HOM: I'm sure you were relieved to see the Statue.

OHRN: Yeah, oh yes, yeah. That's quite an experience.

HOM: O.K. So now this boat comes into, uh, it docks in a port at Manhattan. Did you take a ferry to Ellis Island?

OHRN: They, they took us, they took us from, from the ship over to Ellis Island in a ferry. That's right. And, uh, we had the opportunity to visit Ellis Island this late summer so that, uh, it brought back a lot of memories when I got there. Of course, now it's so fancy. All I remember is that great, big hall which is still

there. And everything was all partitioned off. And, uh, the partition looked like it was chicken wire to me. It could have been something else.

HOM: It might have.

OHRN: Huh?

HOM: It might have been.

OHRN: Looked like chicken wire because, but it, see, it must have been hundreds and hundreds of stalls. Do you, do you want to know about it?

HOM: Uh, sure. Just describe about Ellis Island.

OHRN: About Ellis Island.

HOM: Sure.

OHRN: Well, my poor mother was a nervous wreck. She was so scared. I felt so sorry for her because we had heard these stories about people, you know, being shipped back. But she didn't really have to worry because we had a very strict, good examination over in Sweden, and we passed, no problems.

Mrs.

OHRN: (Unintelligible).

OHRN: And, uh, but of course, poor thing, she had been awful seasick; too the whole time so I guess she wasn't feeling too good. But anyway, we had no problems in passing the physical. But, uh, it really was, to me, it, it was unbelievable to all these countries from all over Europe with all these languages being spoken. It was just like uh; I don't know what kind of word to use. Uh...

HOM: I can imagine. How long were you at Ellis actually?

OHRN: We were only there to go through the, all these different...

HOM: Less than a day.

OHRN: Oh, yes.

HOM: O.K.

OHRN: I would say it probably a good part of the day that we were there. We started in the morning.

HOM: Uh, huh.

OHRN: And then uh, it must have been in the afternoon when we boarded the ferry and went to Battery Park.

HOM: Did you have any food at Ellis? Did you eat at Ellis?

OHRN: No.

HOM: No, nothing. O.K.

OHRN: If we did, if we did, I can't remember.

HOM: Uh, huh.

OHRN: I really can't remember. I don't think so.

HOM: O.K. Well, O.K., after you finished at Ellis and you get on the ferry...

OHRN: Yeah.

HOM: You took the ferry to, where did you take the ferry.

OHRN: We took the ferry to Battery Park.

HOM: Right.

OHRN: And, I tell you what happened to me at that. Being thirteen, at least my thirteen, I felt very grown up and I was easily embarrassed. And at that time, the ferry had just one bench on this and a bench on this side (he gestures). And it had an accordion player there walking back and forth playing the accordion. And I remember over on that side were two black fellows sitting over there, very black. And we had never seen a black person before except what we saw over at Ellis Island. And that's then. And my brother being only nine years old, he sat there staring at them, you know, he was so impressed. "My goodness," he said, "Who could they be?" you know. And I was so embarrassed, I kept shoving him. "Arne," I said, "Stop that. Stop staring." Well, they sitting pointing at our heads. We had beautiful, expensive Cossack hats on. It was cold. It was winter.

HOM: Yes, I can imagine.

OHRN: Nowadays, those hats, I know they're very expensive, but that time in 1925, I guess to them, we looked funny. They were sitting, pointing at our heads, you know, laughing at us and that made me even more embarrassed (he laughs). What uh...

HOM: O.K. After you get to Battery Park...

OHRN: Got to Battery Park, my father was there.

HOM: Yeah, your father met you.

OHRN: And my uncle. They met us.

HOM: Uh, huh.

OHRN: And, uh, we got on to the train. And we got off at Stamford.

HOM: O.K. When you were in Manhattan, how did you feel finally being through Ellis?
Were you...

OHRN: What did I? Well, I, I was sort of disappointed. I, I thought a little different. I
thought it was awfully dirty. I wasn't used to all that dirt.

HOM: Uh, huh, I can imagine back in Sweden, it's really clean out there.

OHRN: Spotlessly clean where we lived. Trains in Sweden are spotlessly clean.

HOM: Uh, huh.

OHRN: And then, these trains were, I thought (unintelligible) I thought they were
old-fashioned and, uh, behind times. I remember the windows were very, very
dirty. It wasn't, nothing clean about it.

HOM: Uh, huh.

OHRN: So, I mean, maybe I shouldn't say this, but that's how I felt (he laughs).

HOM: Uh, huh. Well, I can understand this feeling. So um, you took a train up to Connecticut.

OHRN: Yeah.

HOM: O.K. Now let's talk about your life after, after you came. Did you start school?

OHRN: Yeah.

HOM: How was, how was the adjustment? How did you handle it?

OHRN: Well, I, I had no problems. I, I started to go to school and my father had already now been here two years so he was now, he wanted to take out his citizen papers right away so he had already taken out what they called "the first papers." So he was going to evening, uh, school where they had the naturalization classes. So I went with him in the evening to Rye School in Stamford. And after I had been there, oh, just maybe a week or so, the teacher said, "You know, Axel," he says, "You don't belong here," he said, "I'm going to arrange for you to go to high school." So I went to evening high school in Stamford. And, uh, I, I had no problems. I, the language came quickly to me. I always had a little Swedish-English, English-Swedish dictionary in my pocket. Whenever I heard a word, I would look it up and it must have helped because it didn't take me very long,

HOM: Did you learn English... did you know English before you came to the United States?

OHRN: If I had stayed longer, I would have. Because after you graduate, then you would go into English and German. I had just started.

HOM But you, for the most part, you learned English here.

OHRN: Most of it was all here, yes.

HOM: In school?

OHRN: In school, yes.

HOM: O.K. What about your mother? Did your father speak English?

OHRN: Very much so, yes, they, it was actually, actually very little Swedish spoken in our Home. It was mostly English. And, uh, uh, since her sister were married to, uh, you know, they weren't Swedish except one of them. Uh, English was mostly spoken in our Home.

HOM: How did your mother learn English?

OHRN: Well, she, I guess she just...

HOM: Did she go to classes?

OHRN: Reading the... no she didn't go to school. But it didn't take her, she spoke very good English. I guess through her sister and our relations, being, constantly speaking English and reading the papers. No, she had no problems at all. I would say she spoke very good English.

HOM: Yes, well how about your brother? How, how did he adjust? Did he adjust well?

OHRN: Oh, he had no problems whatsoever. He had, he had pals there right away at school and he, he adjusted very quickly.

HOM: Uh, huh. Well, O.K., let's go into your adult life now. After school, what did

you, what did you do after high school? Did you go to college?

OHRN: Well I, after school, I, I went in, I, I started to, I went to work for at that time, it was called the great A&P Company, Atlantic Pacific, and I had a job there. And then after I got older, I had a chance to go into as an apprentice in the electrical construction business for the old Fairbanks Electrical Company in Stamford, Connecticut. And, uh, this was in 1926, and believe or not, then we got that horrible depression started here.

HOM: Uh, huh.

OHRN: So it wasn't too long before I, (he pauses) there was no more work to be had in the electrical industry. So I got a job up in Bridgeport, Connecticut where I worked for a bakery and stayed there for about four and a half years during the Depression Years. And it was very, very difficult. Very low pay, very hard. And then back in 19 (he pauses) must have been 1930, let's see (he pauses). Things started to.. to pick up again and I got back into electrical construction again. And I stayed with that and, uh...

Mrs.

OHRN: '36

OHRN: (to Mrs. OHRN) Could you remember what year that was?

Mrs.

OHRN: '36

OHRN: 1936. That's right. I got back and, uh, I was lucky that I managed to get employment with some very good electrical contractors. Mostly all in this New York area. Eventually I, I mean all through the years I went from foreman to superintendent. And when I retired, I was superintendent for one of the largest electrical contractors in the country, Fishback and Moore. And, uh, I did do the very first enclosed mall in this whole Eastern seaboard here, in Albany, New

York, where I, I was one of the superintendents for a joint venture with Nager Electric and Portchester Electric. It was a joint venture, very large. And, uh, later on I went to another equally large company and it was all, all in this New York area. And as I say, I retired with Fishback and Moore.

HOM: How did you meet your wife? Do you remember that?

OHRN: Well, that was quite a story. When I was working for the bakery during the Depression Years, she lived with her sister in Springdale, Connecticut. She happened to be one of the customers that we had. And, and I saw her up there in the window and I said, told a friend of mine, "That's the girl I'm going to marry,"(he laughs). Of course, she didn't know it. And it was quite a while, but we, we met at a dance in Port Chester, New York. We used to have some very wonderful get together with, with a lot of Scandinavians. It was Swede, Norwegians, Danes, Fines what have you, Irish, the whole works But it was basically Scandinavians dance. So I met her again and that's how we start.

HOM: How long, how long after did you married?

OHRN: How long after?

HOM: Yes.

OHRN: We got married the fourth of October 1934.

HOM: Uh, huh.

OHRN: We ran away and got married. In Rye, New York (he laughs).

HOM: And you've been together since.

OHRN: What's that?

HOM: You've been together since.

OHRN: We've been together ever since. Fifty-seven coming up this fourth of October.

HOM: Oh, Congratulations. That's a long time (OHRN laughs). O.K., before we end this, is there anything you'd like to say before we end this interview?

OHRN: Well, uh, this probably hasn't been very complete, but I mean if, if you think...

HOM: Well, if there's something you want to put in, just, just say it.

OHRN: Uh, well I tell you, I don't want you to misunderstand me when I say I was very unhappy. Those must have been very normal... remember, I told you at thirteen, I felt like I was much older, I felt like I was much older than thirteen. But that, but that's all I was. And I was very Homesick.

HOM: Yes.

OHRN: And, uh, but as I going, got going to school and got involved with other young people my age, and, uh, I got accustomed to it. And, uh, and of course, both my brother and I became citizens through my father. Through, because he took out his citizenship papers as quickly, as he could. He wanted to be American when he, he was here. He wanted to have his American citizenship paper, which he did. And so my mother not too long after, she did the same thing so we were, they were citizens. And, uh, this country has been very good to me. I feel like I've been very, very blessed. Especially with my wonderful wife. Right now we have, we have a son and a daughter. Frederick is married to a very lovely girl name is Lynn Leonard. They have four children.

HOM: Uh, huh.

OHRN: Amanda, Winston, Melinda and little Alex. And Barbara is married to Michael Taylor. Also wonderful daughter. They have two daughters. Desiree is married and lives presently in Bountiful, Utah. They had a little boy. Jessica is married to Carl Horton, and they live in Alexandria, Virginia. He is an attorney. He works in the Patent Office in Washington. And they have a little boy. So we, we are great-grandparents. We have two great-grandchildren and we have, we're very fortunate because Fred and Lynn live in New Canaan, the next town right next to us. Barbara is still here in Darien with Ike.

HOM: Uh, huh.

OHRN: So, and of course we are members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, commonly known as the Mormons.

HOM: Uh, huh.

OHRN: And we have a chapel right here in New Canaan. And we're very active in the church. That keeps us busy. And, uh, I don't know how much you know about the Mormons, but they have missionaries throughout the world.

HOM: Yes.

OHRN: And, uh, even from our own ward up there, we have ten missionaries only from our little ward, ward which is the congregation that we belong to.

HOM: Uh, huh.

OHRN: So we're very involved in that, and as I said, I've been retired since 1973 from my electrical construction. But I'm busier than ever now with my garden. I grow

a lot of flowers.

HOM: Uh, huh.

OHRN: And...

HOM: O.K. Well, is there anything else?

OHRN: Unless you have something to ask me.

HOM: No, that's really it.

OHRN: Except I just want to say uh, I, I think it's very nice of you nice people to come here and take your time and spend with us. I appreciate it very much. What do you do with these records?

HOM: Well, actually, we can talk about this later on.

OHRN: Oh.

HOM: Um, let me sign off on the tape now.

OHRN: Yeah.

HOM: This is Peter HOM for the National Park Service signing off with Axel OHRN.

OHRN: Well, thank you very much.

END OF INTERVIEW