

EI-290

ALICE NORHADIAN KHAVLIJIAN

BIRTH DATE: circa 1908

INTERVIEW DATE: 4/20/1993

RUNNING TIME: 1:45:00

INTERVIEWER: GRACE OFLAZIAN

RECORDING ENGINEER: PETER HOM

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TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY: NANCY VEGA, 8/1994

TRANSCRIPT REVIEWED BY: CHARLES MITCHELL 10/2006

TURKEY (ARMENIAN), CIRCA 1920

APPROXIMATELY AGE 13

PASSAGE ON "THE ROCHAMBEAU"

PORT OF EMBARKATION: HARVUT

RESIDENCES: TURKEY: SEPASTIA

US:

ORAL HISTORIAN'S NOTE: Mrs. Khavlijian is the sister of Arshalous Kebabjian, interview EI-298. Paul E. Sigrist, Jr., Director of Oral History, 11/3/1995.

OFLAZIAN: Good afternoon. This is Grace Oflazian for the National Park Service. I am here today, April 20, 1993, on a Tuesday afternoon, 1:55 PM at Ellis Island Recording Studio. I am here with Mrs. Alice Khavlijian who is an Armenian who was born in Sepastia, Turkey. She came to America in 1919 when she was eleven years old. Good afternoon, Mrs. Khavlijian. How are you today?

KHAVLIJIAN: Fine. I'm glad to come to this country.

OFLAZIAN: Can you give me your date of birth, please?

KHAVLIJIAN: I think it was 1908 or something like that, or '10.
Somewhere there.

OFLAZIAN: Do you remember the month you were born in?

KHAVLIJIAN: What month?

OFLAZIAN: Which month, yes.

KHAVLIJIAN: No. I don't know. But we made our own. One day
everybody, my sisters came and we were in same bed
and we were talking. She says she born May 8th or
something like that. And I said, "I did the same
thing." My other sister, we all the same, same
time. And we were laughing like anything.
(she laughs)

OFLAZIAN: So where were you born?

KHAVLIJIAN: Sepastia, Turkey, in Sebatz.

OFLAZIAN: Can you spell Sepastia for me?

KHAVLIJIAN: Sepastia. S-A-E, or P, D-A, (Armenian). No, I
don't know.

OFLAZIAN: (Armenian) is the Armenian for "I don't know."

KHAVLIJIAN: Sepastia.

OFLAZIAN: What was your maiden name?

KHAVLIJIAN: Norhadian.

OFLAZIAN: Can you spell it?

KHAVLIJIAN: N-O-R-H-A-D-I-A-N.

OFLAZIAN: How many people you were in the family?

KHAVLIJIAN: We were my father, three sisters and brothers. But we had my uncles. They, we were all in one big, big, uh, yard park, (Armenian).

OFLAZIAN: (Armenian) is the Armenian for "We say it"

KHAVLIJIAN: We had one, my older, my grandmother was older. It was, my oldest uncle. And then we were in the middle. My father was middle born, we were middle of space. Very huge house we had. And they made separate when they got, I guess had children or things like that. And my other uncle, the other corner.

OFLAZIAN: Can you name me your sister's name?

KHAVLIJIAN: Yes. Agavnyr Kilarjian.

OFLAZIAN: How do you spell Agavnyr?

KHAVLIJIAN: Agavnyr. A-G-A-V-N-Y-R.

OFLAZIAN: Do you know what does it mean in English?

KHAVLIJIAN: Yes. Stone.

OFLAZIAN: And what about your other sisters' names?

KHAVLIJIAN: Arshlous.

OFLAZIAN: Can you spell it?

KHAVLIJIAN: Uh, A-R-S-H-L-O-U-S.

OFLAZIAN: And can you tell me what does it mean in English?

KHAVLIJIAN: Arshlous?

OFLAZIAN: In English.

KHAVLIJIAN: Lous are about in the morning to get sunshine.

OFLAZIAN: Which means dawn in English. You said you were three sisters, right?

KHAVLIJIAN: And one brother.

OFLAZIAN: And what was his name?

KHAVLIJIAN: Barkab.

OFLAZIAN: Can you spell his name for me?

KHAVLIJIAN: B-A-R-K-A-B. Barkab. He was the youngest of mine.

OFLAZIAN: What was your father's occupation?

KHAVLIJIAN: His work?

OFLAZIAN: His work.

KHAVLIJIAN: My father used to make, he was, uh, yergot.

OFLAZIAN: Yergot is the Armenian word for iron.

KHAVLIJIAN: Zenker, zenker.

OFLAZIAN: Zenker is the Armenian word for guns.

KHAVLIJIAN: Guns, and then katza.

OFLAZIAN: Ball. Katza is the Armenian name for ball.

KHAVLIJIAN: (Armenian) He had that kind of business in Sebatz.

OFLAZIAN: What was your mother's maiden name?

KHAVLIJIAN: Jejaian.

OFLAZIAN: Can you spell it?

KHAVLIJIAN: J-E-J-A-I-A-N, I guess. Jejaian.

OFLAZIAN: What was her name?

KHAVLIJIAN: My mother? Anna.

OFLAZIAN: So Anna Jejaian was your mother.

KHAVLIJIAN: Huh?

OFLAZIAN: Anna Jejaian was your mother.

KHAVLIJIAN: Right.

OFLAZIAN: Have you ever tried to help your mother when you were a little girl?

KHAVLIJIAN: Help my mother?

OFLAZIAN: Yes.

KHAVLIJIAN: Well, I guess my mother and my brother, we had a three-story house, and my mother used to go milk the cows. We had two cows. (she laughs) And then we used to play together and my mother used to help, she had a closet. (she laughs) This is

very funny. And I don't know, I was, I got sick, something, right. My belly button, it got pimple-like. (Armenian)

OFLAZIAN: Infected.

KHAVLIJIAN: Infected. And then my mother had a closet, she had everything. So I was the oldest, I said, "I'll put my hands on the floor and you go back of me and get that (Armenian)."

OFLAZIAN: (Armenian) is the Armenian word for sweet.

KHAVLIJIAN: Sweet. (she laughs) And I was pains. All of a sudden when I got up to the closet this burst. All the blood and (Armenian).

OFLAZIAN: The infection.

KHAVLIJIAN: The infection, it broke up with blood and everything. I was screaming. My brother was screaming. My mother run upstairs. Oh, thank God my mother said, "It's all right." And she made the cross to herself. She said, and my name wasn't Alice, it was Mishkinas first. And, oh, she says, she came and hugged me and she says, "Thank God everything now is over." So that's the way it

happened first. And then I don't know, what can I say.

OFLAZIAN: Why your name was changed to Alice?

KHAVLIJIAN: Huh?

OFLAZIAN: Why . . .

KHAVLIJIAN: Oh, when I was in the orphanage in Haleb, the (Armenian) told me, "What's Mishkinatz? I'm going to name you Alice." And I liked it. I said, "All right."

OFLAZIAN: You said that there was a closet, right?

KHAVLIJIAN: Yes.

OFLAZIAN: What did you have in that closet?

KHAVLIJIAN: Oh, that closet, my mother had a (Armenian), all sweets, like, in the room. (she laughs)

OFLAZIAN: What kind of games you used to play with your sisters and brother?

KHAVLIJIAN: I didn't play much with my sisters. My older sister, a little older than me, and then I used to play more with my brother.

OFLAZIAN: What kind of games you used to play with him?

KHAVLIJIAN: Oh, we had, what do you call? (Armenian.) And that's (?). There was a beam, and we, my father made it, because he was a carpenter too, like. He made, it was like this, and there was holes. And . . .

OFLAZIAN: Mrs. Khavlijian is describing the game she used to play with his brother.

KHAVLIJIAN: Hmm? And we used to take this and put in this holes.

OFLAZIAN: Was it in marble?

KHAVLIJIAN: No. It was wooden made, and my father made it, see. Everybody didn't have that. My father made. And, you know, it was big beans that there is like big, not (Armenian), the other one, black. You take it out, you put in the water.

OFLAZIAN: It's different kinds of beans.

KHAVLIJIAN: Yeah. That was bigger, so we used to use that.

OFLAZIAN: Was that a lima beans?

KHAVLIJIAN: Something like lima beans. But it wasn't lima beans. That you take it when it was Lent.

OFLAZIAN: Have you ever tried to help your mother in cleaning or cooking?

KHAVLIJIAN: No.

OFLAZIAN: You don't.

KHAVLIJIAN: I was too little.

OFLAZIAN: Do you remember going to church?

KHAVLIJIAN: Yes. I used to go to the church because they came and took my father from the house and they rested. And my grandmother used to take me, hold my hand and then we go to the prison to see my father.

OFLAZIAN: Was your, was the church closer to your house?

KHAVLIJIAN: No, not that, not that close, no.

OFLAZIAN: Did you walk?

KHAVLIJIAN: Yes.

OFLAZIAN: For how long?

KHAVLIJIAN: I don't know. I was too little. But I remember

exactly how these things. You think that it was just a day.

OFLAZIAN: Do you remember the church, the complex of the church?

KHAVLIJIAN: Yes.

OFLAZIAN: Can you describe that for me?

KHAVLIJIAN: It was a big church, and it was all marble. And then that was (Armenian).

OFLAZIAN: Angel.

KHAVLIJIAN: Angel.

OFLAZIAN: (Armenian) is the Armenian word for angel.

KHAVLIJIAN: Angel (?) where, you know, down. About this height, and there were angels. And I used to go and with my finger I used to put to the eyes and things like that.

OFLAZIAN: Touch them.

KHAVLIJIAN: Uh-huh, touch them. Because my grandmother used to pray for my father that he should be, come out from the prison.

OFLAZIAN: Do you remember for how long the Batarak took place? Batarak is the Armenian word for Divine Liturgy.

KHAVLIJIAN: I don't know. I don't know. I don't know.

OFLAZIAN: Do you remember celebrating Christmas in Sepastia?

KHAVLIJIAN: Oh, yes. That I do remember because my grandmother was very religious and, like New Year's she used to, he used to have a big oven downstairs in the basement and the floor was green marble and white marble. And they had a stove, real, how they make here, big like that because it must have been for a big family, whole, before they would, you know, they got children and everyone. It was, and it was closed. But when the Christmas holiday came she used to open it. It was curtain closed, see. And he used, she used to open that. And she used to bake all week.

OFLAZIAN: What kind of food she used to bake?

KHAVLIJIAN: Bread, porridge. All those things.

OFLAZIAN: (Armenian) for the length of time, Armenians do it.

KHAVLIJIAN: Huh?

OFLAZIAN: Okay. What other things she used to . . .

KHAVLIJIAN: (Armenian). You know, (Armenian).

OFLAZIAN: Different kinds of sweets.

KHAVLIJIAN: Different kind of sweet, yes.

OFLAZIAN: She used to bake.

KHAVLIJIAN: And then my other sister, now she's in an old age home, she used to give to her to take, we have relatives that they (Armenian). (Armenian), they were rich.

OFLAZIAN: (Armenian) is the Armenian word for rich.

KHAVLIJIAN: And the street, there were poor people, and she used to say, "Give this to this house, this house." And she used to take it. I remember that, and my sister, she used to cross the street. She had the girlfriend, and she always went and played there, and I used to cry. And they used to play bride and, uh . . . (she laughs) (Armenian)

OFLAZIAN: Groom?

KHAVLIJIAN: Groom. (she laughs) And she didn't want to play with me. I said, "I'm going to tell Mommy." We used to call my mother Amma, because they all used to call her (Armenian), Amma. When I called Mom or Marik it was a shame, like, it wasn't not right, see. That's the way the . . .

OFLAZIAN: Why your sister didn't take her with you?

KHAVLIJIAN: Because they didn't want to show that they play. (she laughs) Uh, (Armenian). Bride and groom. And I used to say, "I'm going to tell my Mommy if you don't take me." And she used to take me.

OFLAZIAN: How do you describe your house in Sepastia?

KHAVLIJIAN: We had a big, big, a yard when you come in, and it was all marble, big, big. (Armenian), marble.

OFLAZIAN: Do you remember . . .

KHAVLIJIAN: We had the, we had the water that used to come all the way from far away, but we called (Armenian).

OFLAZIAN: (Armenian) is the Armenian word for fountain.

KHAVLIJIAN: Fountain, like. And we had, and two water, and that was a hand. It used to, no, no. It used to

run all night and all day, and it was a hand, the breast. So. And everybody used to come and take from our house, but that we never drank, because that was a river. It was dirty, just washing clothes, clothes or things like that. And then we had another water. They used to drink with a pail that was. And that was like that.

OFLAZIAN: With hands, you mean?

KHAVLIJIAN: With hands. (Armenian)

OFLAZIAN: Ms. Khavlijian is explaining how they used to pump up the water from the ground.

KHAVLIJIAN: The ground, yeah.

OFLAZIAN: Do you remember going to school?

KHAVLIJIAN: School? Yes. I remember first grade. And I went, and first grade, I don't know, that there was a little boy, too. And lunchtime he said, "Let's not go to school. Let's go walk around the school, and then we go home and tell Mommy, you know, we went." I said, "You know, my aunt lives right close to the river. She's always sitting there. What she sees?" "Oh," she says, "so what?" We did. And

this aunt saw, and then she called me or what, I don't know. And next day, must be it was that they must be, it was Friday, because Saturday there wasn't any schools, see. And my aunt, I don't know how, tells my mother that Alice was walking around with a little boy, and I saw. She didn't go afternoon at school, see. And Saturday my mother caught me, and she hit me, and she said, "Why did you do that?" I said, "I didn't do." (Armenian)

OFLAZIAN: (Armenian) is the Armenian word for boy.

KHAVLIJIAN: So, and my mother punished me. She punished me that I shouldn't do that to, you know, not to go to school. And she punished me all day Saturday.

OFLAZIAN: What kind of punishment she gave you?

KHAVLIJIAN: I don't know. Whatever, I don't know. She put me in the room. We have so many rooms. They have downstairs and the top, all looked like a basement. And we had a basement, too. And we had a cat, and this cat, when we just passed in the middle, always used to make a hole, and he used, she used to make poo-poo and everything. It was pretty hole, and my mother used to get mad. And when they came, I

guess that was 1915 maybe, I don't know, before the genocide, when they came, when they put my father in jail because my father used to make guns and everything, money, so they came and they start to put big something to look if my father's hide anything back in the walls, see. But they couldn't find anything real. Well, just the same, and after that we never saw my father.

OFLAZIAN: What was the name of the cat?

KHAVLIJIAN: I don't know. Pussycat (Armenian).

OFLAZIAN: What it look like?

KHAVLIJIAN: It was greyish or black or something, it was nice. And always she used to poo right in the middle of the place.

OFLAZIAN: Have you ever played with it?

KHAVLIJIAN: Yes, no. They used to keep that in the basement for mice or things like that. So, and then one day we were sleeping. We had two cows. The oldest cow had a baby that I don't remember much, but the second time my father and my mother went that the cow is going to have a baby. And they put in the

blanket, and my mother, we didn't have a heat or anything, we used to have a big (?) that they make a coal fire. They make that big so the (Armenian) not to be die, keeps warm.

OFLAZIAN: (Armenian) is the Armenian word for baby cow.

KHAVLIJIAN: Yeah. (Armenian) So, (Armenian). And my father and my mother, sometimes they used to go visit my uncle's house in (?), and my older sister was the boss. She used to take care of us, and we had a little lamp that with gas you light. There is the gas, and there was a little nipple. My daughter has in the country. So she starts playing priest. She put the blanket on the head, and she start singing or things like that, and she used, that was the, that was my older sister, and while she was playing, the gas lamp fell. And she runned, and she went and she brought water and she put it out, and that happened twice, I think. I don't know. I forgot everything. And they never, never, when my father used to get up, she used to wash his hands and face with the water, I said, in the yard. And then we used to love my father so much, we used to take the towel and one used to stand on the side

and one used to hold and give the towel to my father's hand. (she is moved) It was nice. And then they came with the, must be the war started or whatever it was. They took it. That was it. We never saw my father no more. (she is moved) And when they, if he grants us, they used to say to all the people, they used to find letters that you people go daytime, and they go in the night, they used to say. And he came, Murat, Murat, where the big river that.

OFLAZIAN: Murat is the name of the river.

KHAVLIJIAN: They used to call Muratket River.

OFLAZIAN: We are going to pause for a few moments for the recording engineer to flip the tape.

END OF SIDE ONE, TAPE ONE

BEGINNING OF SIDE TWO, TAPE ONE

OFLAZIAN: This is Grace Oflazian. We are resuming now the interview of Side B with Mrs. Khavlijian. Mrs. Khavlijian, you just said that they took your father. Who took your father?

KHAVLIJIAN: They came, two policemen.

OFLAZIAN: Who were these policemen?

KHAVLIJIAN: (Armenian), they called.

OFLAZIAN: Were they Armenians?

KHAVLIJIAN: No, Turkish, Turks. So they came and they took, they put in a prison for a while.

OFLAZIAN: Why they took him? Huh? Why they took him?

KHAVLIJIAN: Well, I guess, my father used to make guns, and that was his business. So, and sometimes I didn't have too much hair, and the man used to work for him. He used to come, and he used to put me on his (she laughs) on him and he used to come and take me to, and my uncle used to have a coffee shop, and he, they used to have, they used to cut hair too, and they used to cut my hair so it gets body, comes better. So, and I used to cut my, I never used to go out late because I was, I used to shame, I didn't have no hair. I used to play in the garden. We had a huge garden, a huge garden, beautiful garden. Pears, peaches, and we had bees that make honey. And my father, when they time that they're going to take the honey out, he used to put

something on his face, and we had a low porch from our house on the garden, and we used to watch, that how he, you know, takes the honey out, like. (she pauses) And then, I guess, then this, they started to come and the Greeks, there was a lot of Greeks in our town. they came at night. They took some rugs and some furniture. They said they were going to immigrant us, so we said, "It's better to give to the Greeks than the Turks." (she laughs) They're going to come and take it. That was my older sister. She was, she put a lot of things in the, where the water is, the pump, inside. There was the pump, and there was a cupboard, and she used to open it, and then she caused lots and lots of good things.

OFLAZIAN: How old was she then?

KHAVLIJIAN: Maybe she was twelve, fourteen, around. She knew. She was, you know, I was, I didn't know anything. And they said, when they came and took, we were going to go and they said, "We're going for the nice places." And my, they knew my grandmother, everybody, but they didn't tell this. They said, "We're going to go very nice, to nice places." And

they made bread, they made (?), the rye bread and things like that, and they took. And my sister, we had a, keeps the water cold. It's, but it's not a brass, but it's more thicker than brass, and they keep water, like a pitcher. It's a pitcher, but brass pitcher. There is another word, but I forgot. Whatever it was, and she had, with her hand, on the way that they were take us all day and the night they used to take us someplace and we used to lay down on the floor, like a small, couple pebbles on that, my grandmother. And they start to take the five, six years old babies. My brother, my uncle's children, and my grandmother used to put her skirt top under her, her under it so they didn't see to take the kids. One, my brother's name was Barkev, and my uncle's son was Oskehan. So, and before that, when we went from Haleb, my mother died and my, before died, Oskehan was about my age. And he used to, he used to come and sit next to me, and he used to say to my mother, "Anna, Anna (Armenian)." And, "You make a son to you." And we used to sleep together with him. He died. A lot of people died at that time.

OFLAZIAN: Why he died?

KHAVLIJIAN: Huh?

OFLAZIAN: What was the reason of his death?

KHAVLIJIAN: Because after that when they took us away, they took our houses and we went, I don't know where we went. They took a lot of places, they used to take us daytime, and we used to sleep night time.

OFLAZIAN: Where did you used to sleep?

KHAVLIJIAN: Wherever they took us. On the floor, (Armenian).

OFLAZIAN: (Armenian) is the Armenian word for ground.

KHAVLIJIAN: Ground, yes. And I don't know. After that, after that we were sitting, a man came. A man came, and my grandmother said, "I have money." That was a station, train, train station. We were sitting there, and he said, "I have money. If you can take us someplace so we pay you." And he says, "All right." He took us. It was kind of half dark and half light. We go about five blocks maybe, like that was their house. They were Turks, Hamma. This was Hamma.

OFLAZIAN: Hamma is a city in Syria.

KHAVLIJIAN: It's in Arabic country, Hamma Haleb. This was Hamma.

OFLAZIAN: Which means that you went from Sepastia to Hamma?

KHAVLIJIAN: Yes.

OFLAZIAN: By train.

KHAVLIJIAN: No, no, no. We walked. No.

OFLAZIAN: What happened in the station of train then?

KHAVLIJIAN: So, maybe I'm mixing a little bit. They put us to this station, and then they were going to take us. There was someplace that they kill a lot of Armenians.

OFLAZIAN: And how old you were at that time?

KHAVLIJIAN: Five, six. That's all I was.

OFLAZIAN: So where was your father during this time?

KHAVLIJIAN: They took him. They took him, the Turks took, the (Armenian), I remember. And they took him and they put all Armenians in a prison, and not only my

father. A lot of them, a lot. And then we don't know what they did. And when they start to immigrate us, that we used to walk, and then they used to say, supposed to, some people find the letters that you walk daytime and we walk night time. That's the way, but we never see them. After my, they took the men in a prison.

OFLAZIAN: So you did not see your father after.

KHAVLIJIAN: Never after, no, no. And then they started to take boys. And my grandmother, you know, they would all, they used to wear those wide skirts, and my uncle's son and my brother, they, she used to hide them under her skirt that they'd be saved.

OFLAZIAN: So you walked through the desert of Syria, right?

KHAVLIJIAN: And you know what kind of, what kind of, it was this big. They called Haladada. You know what's Haladada? They called, that was a blood mountain, they used to call. And we walked this much. I don't know how my mother saved us, believe me. And it was so high, if you just put your one foot down, you'd be killed, that high. Very cruel, very cruel.

OFLAZIAN: So what did you eat in the desert?

KHAVLIJIAN: Huh?

OFLAZIAN: What did you eat in the desert?

KHAVLIJIAN: Well, whatever they took with them, you know. They make a lot of things. And I guess whatever you, I don't know. (she laughs)

OFLAZIAN: So you came to Hamma, right? You said you came to Hamma.

KHAVLIJIAN: Yes. We came to Hamma, and then this, he was a Turk, this man.

OFLAZIAN: Who was that man?

KHAVLIJIAN: He used to let me where the trains are, you know. About five, ten minutes from his house. So my grandmother says, she says, "Look, these children. Maybe you have some room or somewhere. I have money. We pay for you." See? And our money, my sister (?), she's in an old age home, she saved it. We, they had a pail like this. It's a pink cab. So my grandmother put all gold pieces, you know, big (Armenian) or (Armenian), all those things

made.

OFLAZIAN: Armenian jewelry, gold jewelries.

KHAVLIJIAN: So, and he put in that can, in the oil. You can match (?).

OFLAZIAN: The Armenian word for oil.

KHAVLIJIAN: And she gave that to my sister to carry. She says, "You're little." Oh, and Sepastia, where we came for one day or what, everybody knew who was there. We are rich, we are poor. And the Turks were this way, like you and me. They look our clothes, everywhere. And he, one of them, he said to my grandmother, "I know," he says, "we know, you have a lot of money." And my grandmother said, "You took it. We left everything. We didn't take anything. We haven't got anything." He says, "Lying, we had the money. It's in the can." And my grandmother said, "You will try to sneak the other side." And she did. That's why real we are saved. Otherwise we never, never would have survived. We used that money for the train. We used, we went when this person came, and he kept us and we gave money, and they never opened the door.

They were Arab Turks. Arab was nice to us, really. Nobody took us nowhere. Arabs took.

OFLAZIAN: You mean the Syrian Arabs?

KHAVLIJIAN: Yes.

OFLAZIAN: But they are Muslim too, right?

KHAVLIJIAN: Yes, this was Muslim.

OFLAZIAN: Weren't you scared of them?

KHAVLIJIAN: No. They were very nice to us. They gave us a big room, and they put a straw, you know. And then we slept there for the while, because we were in that street they sent you to. Oh, my God. Where I become, (Armenian).

OFLAZIAN: Dezor, you mean?

KHAVLIJIAN: Dezor, yeah.

OFLAZIAN: They took all the Armenians to Dezor, and the Turks killed them.

KHAVLIJIAN: Dezor.

OFLAZIAN: And killed them.

KHAVLIJIAN: They all killed. And these people saved us. And then we, and my mother, she left us there. She says, and there was a lot of people that they, where the railroad is. They're sleeping on, you know, on the floor, that they're going to carry somewhere else, give them a room, whatever it was.

So she saw one of our cousins. Her name was Bitha. She brought with her, she says, "At least if I go buy something my children wouldn't be alone with these people." You know, they were very nice but, you know, after all, a mother is different. She don't know when she leave us. So she came. She came with us, and she was (Armenian). My mother went . . .

OFLAZIAN: (Armenian) is the Armenian word for smart.

KHAVLIJIAN: Yeah. She was (Armenian). So she said to my mother, "Let's take the children, must be there is a church here. After all, there is not all Muslims. Must be there is a Christian, too. Let's go, go find out where the church, or things like that." And then they took us and they found a church, a Greek church. And then they found a room, is house.

OFLAZIAN: Is this in Hamma?

KHAVLIJIAN: Huh?

OFLAZIAN: Is this in Hamma?

KHAVLIJIAN: Yes. This is in Hamma. So, and then they came and they took us. It was one room. And she was, and this girl, she had a girlfriend, and they were young. They said they don't want to stay with my mother. They want to go, you know, their own, like. So, and they went. One of them, both of them, I think. They got married with a Turk. And then later on, later on they, they came back later on. I guess, I don't know, they want to survive or they didn't want to bother with my mother. Whatever it was. So when we went this Greek church there was a little house, maybe like this. We used to sleep on the floor. Until I don't know, (?) got everything. Until this man, he works in a railroad. My mother says I have money, can you take me to Haleb. So he took us Haleb.

OFLAZIAN: Do you remember for how long did you stay in Hamma?

KHAVLIJIAN: Hamma?

OFLAZIAN: Yeah, for how long?

KHAVLIJIAN: Maybe one year. I don't know. You know, I was young. And I don't know. I used, it was Hamma, or Haleb. I don't remember. But I think it wasn't Haleb. Maybe Hamma. I, we start, we used to go. There was another, he's living, this guy Kirshayon, his name. And when we went we met them there, and we used to, and I was, we used to go later to . . .

OFLAZIAN: (Armenian) is the Armenian word for mountain.

KHAVLIJIAN: Mountain to get some wood so to make, you know, cooking or things like that. And my mother used to say, "Go, go." She used to say, "(?)."
(she laughs) She didn't like that much. But she want to have wood, too. And we used to go. The Turks, there was a mountain. We don't know where we went, and this, so they, every Friday they come and they have a picnic, like. They have everything. When they saw us, they gave us whatever they had. They knew that we were Armenian, you know. Of course they knew. So, and everything they used to give us.

OFLAZIAN: Like what? Like food, you mean?

KHAVLIJIAN: Food, bread, and what they had, eggplant, you know, on the fire. They cleaned, those things with (?), like that. They used to keep us. (?).
(she laughs)

OFLAZIAN: So after you left Hamma, you came to Haleb, right?

KHAVLIJIAN: My mother, there was, they were going because there was no work, too, nothing. How much money you can have, it's gone. So my, a little twelve years old boy, he knows how to go to Haleb, and he takes, like, a few families, but I don't know how many days. So, and my mother says, "I want to stay. We go, too. What I'm going to do here?" And we went. I don't know how many days we walked until we got Haleb. And there was, what they used to call? Not Gardnershach. I don't know. So we went there, and then a couple of days we slept in the church outside the, you know, church. And how much they're going to keep. And then somebody came, they know, we know. He said, he took us Hokedun. There was a place that they used to call Hokedun.

OFLAZIAN: Was this an Armenian church?

KHAVLIJIAN: Like a, huh?

OFLAZIAN: Was that an Armenian church?

KHAVLIJIAN: Greek church.

OFLAZIAN: A Greek church.

KHAVLIJIAN: No, it wasn't Armenian. I think it was Greek church. It wasn't that type. And, uh, and . . .
(she pauses)

OFLAZIAN: Did your mother come to Haleb in order to work?

KHAVLIJIAN: Well, they said there is, that had been Hamma. Hamma there wasn't anything. And they used to, whoever used to find, they used to send to (?), see. And we couldn't go out. It was very difficult. And this Muslim man, (Armenian), you know.

OFLAZIAN: Land owner.

KHAVLIJIAN: (Armenian), very nice. He took us in the train to Haleb.

OFLAZIAN: Did your mother find a job in Haleb?

KHAVLIJIAN: Haleb, yes. We find some, when he, we went, we went this Hokedun, and it was, but (?) was there from Gesaria he came by himself. He left his family and he came there, and he saw my mother talking to him. He says she's Norhadian, and he said he's Norhadian. They are, you know, a Turk cousins, like. And he gave a job to sit on the door that, you know, a couple of dollars, what they give, not money, but bread or things like that. Bread was enough anyway. So that, that's the way. And then after that I don't know what happened.

OFLAZIAN: So how long did you stay in Haleb? For how long did you stay in Haleb?

KHAVLIJIAN: I stayed (Armenian).

OFLAZIAN: (Armenian) is the Armenian word for "I don't remember."

KHAVLIJIAN: And then my mother died. My older sister, it was in the, she was with her friends in the (Armenian). You know (Armenian).

OFLAZIAN: Did your mother die in Haleb?

KHAVLIJIAN: Yes.

OFLAZIAN: What was the reason of her death?

KHAVLIJIAN: I guess when she had something she used to feed us.
I guess, you know, without nourishment, or things
like that. And we worked. I was a little girl.
My mother went and, buy (Armenian) that . . .

OFLAZIAN: (Armenian) is the Armenian word for corn.

KHAVLIJIAN: But that's a different kind that, wool, we used to.
And then I used to get, you know. And my, older
than my, me, she used to make a thread, the wool
thread, and then my mother used to make a
(Armenian).

OFLAZIAN: (Armenian) is the Armenian word for socks.

KHAVLIJIAN: Socks. And the Arabs used to, you know. And she
used to make it, and we used to, she used to sell
it.

OFLAZIAN: So do you remember for how long did you stay in
Haleb? For how many years?

KHAVLIJIAN: Well, my mother died Haleb. And I don't know how
long we stayed, but after that, from Hamma this
Turk man, he took us, and then there was like a,

they used to call (Armenian), they used to call. And then my mother, we went, and they took us, and my mother used to work there. And we used to do something. So after that my mother died.

OFLAZIAN: We are going to pause for a few moments while the recording engineer flips the tape.

END OF SIDE TWO, TAPE ONE

BEGINNING OF SIDE ONE, TAPE TWO

OFLAZIAN: This is Grace Oflazian. We are resuming now the interview of Tape Two with Mrs. Khavlijian. Mrs. Khavlijian, you told us that your mother died in Haleb. So where did you go then? What happened to you?

KHAVLIJIAN: Well, we went. We knew there was an orphanage there. They used to call Aharon, (Armenian).

OFLAZIAN: (Armenian) is the Armenian word for orphanage.

KHAVLIJIAN: Orphanage, yes.

OFLAZIAN: Was that an Armenian orphanage?

KHAVLIJIAN: Huh?

OFLAZIAN: Was that an Armenian orphanage?

KHAVLIJIAN: It was an Armenian orphanage. They took us, but they didn't take us. We had to go sit outside. We stayed a couple of days, and we slept outside the orphanage. Maybe they thought we were lying or something that we have family. They want to rid of us or what, we don't know, but that's the way it happened. But, anyway, they took us.

OFLAZIAN: So did you go with your sister and brother?

KHAVLIJIAN: My brother that . . .

OFLAZIAN: Barkev.

KHAVLIJIAN: Oh, yes. Only Barkev was with me.

OFLAZIAN: Where was your older sister and other sister?

KHAVLIJIAN: They stayed in, uh, Zoronoltz. They put all the Armenians, Zoronoltz.

OFLAZIAN: In the police station?

KHAVLIJIAN: It's not a police station.

OFLAZIAN: Ammunition center?

KHAVLIJIAN: (Armenian). Where they have the soldiers, yeah. So she went there. There wasn't any soldiers. It was empty, so they put all Armenians there. See, they had little rooms, big rooms, things like that. And then we used to, with my Arshlous sister, she was in the orphanage, and my brother died. So he cried and cried.

OFLAZIAN: What was the reason of his death?

KHAVLIJIAN: Huh?

OFLAZIAN: Why did he died from?

KHAVLIJIAN: I don't know. I was really young.

OFLAZIAN: How old was he when he died?

KHAVLIJIAN: About five, five, four. And I used to cry. I used to cry, and there was a teacher, mother, they used to call. Her name was Dickin Bizar.

OFLAZIAN: Was this in the orphanage?

KHAVLIJIAN: Yes. This was in the orphanage. I used to cry. And she says, "I'll take care. I have my big son." She had one son about my age, and I couldn't eat. I used to look inside. There was a lot of

children. You know, (Armenian). They're all, I used to get sick. So, and I couldn't. After that what happened? (she sighs)

OFLAZIAN: So this woman, did she took you to her house?

KHAVLIJIAN: Which woman?

OFLAZIAN: You were just talking . . .

KHAVLIJIAN: Bizar?

OFLAZIAN: Bizar, yes.

KHAVLIJIAN: It's, she's in the orphanage too, but she has, you know, she was different. Her, with her son and things like that. And we just, we played and things like that. And then we . . . I don't remember.

OFLAZIAN: So did you go to her house? Did you go to her house?

KHAVLIJIAN: No, no. She was in an orphanage. They used to have, but, you know, they were more private, like they had rooms like that. There was a lot of rooms.

OFLAZIAN: So tell me, how long did you stay in the orphanage?

KHAVLIJIAN: I stayed and then they had some kind of (Armenian).

OFLAZIAN: She doesn't know how people came and they robbed the priest's daughter from the orphanage.

KHAVLIJIAN: Sisters, they were. And then I was there. We were there, a lot of them.

OFLAZIAN: Who took them away? Who were these people?

KHAVLIJIAN: Turks.

OFLAZIAN: The Turks.

KHAVLIJIAN: The Turks. So, and then it got calmed down, like. And it was all right, whatever they gave us we used to eat. And this Dickin Bizar person, she always take care of me until, you know, I got used to it. I used to cry. After that I don't remember.

OFLAZIAN: So tell me, how long did you stay in this orphanage?

KHAVLIJIAN: Not much, not much. It got closed. It got closed. It didn't last too long. That was just for that

time, I guess they had.

OFLAZIAN: So where did you go then?

KHAVLIJIAN: Oh, and one day they came, they were looking the
Turks. They were dressed nice, they covered. They
want to take . . .

OFLAZIAN: Their faces were covered.

KHAVLIJIAN: Yes.

OFLAZIAN: Their faces were covered?

KHAVLIJIAN: Yeah. They're called (Armenian). So, and they
took me.

OFLAZIAN: The Turks took you? Where did they take you?

KHAVLIJIAN: Huh?

OFLAZIAN: Where did they take you?

KHAVLIJIAN: State house. Well, I guess they did good. But it
was lots of Armenians saved, and (Armenian).

OFLAZIAN: You run away. (Armenian) is the Armenian word for
run away. How did you run away?

KHAVLIJIAN: Uh, my older sister, it was in the Zoronoltz.

OFLAZIAN: (?) station.

KHAVLIJIAN: Yeah. It was big. Lots, all Armenians they put. There was nowhere else. So, and then they took me, and this was, they were beautiful people, very nice. She had a married daughter, and she had a son was just married. And her name was Assoum (Armenian). Very, very nice. And her daughter-in-law, she used to give me a broom to sweep the yard. You know, for short (Armenian). So, how to, (Armenian), he was (Armenian).

OFLAZIAN: Rich people.

KHAVLIJIAN: Rich. (Armenian), see. He was very rich.

OFLAZIAN: Very rich people.

KHAVLIJIAN: He wasn't ordinary man. And he had one son and one daughter. The son was married and the daughter was married, and she gave me the broom, and she, this woman (?), she says, "This (?) going to sweep the floor?" She says, "You." She gave the broom, and she never bothered no more. And my sister, when they took me, she comes back again, walks, to see where they take me. And a couple of times she

came. I didn't open the door.

OFLAZIAN: Why did you not open the door for her?

KHAVLIJIAN: Because I didn't want to go where they are. This place was, you know, like father and mother taking care of me. I didn't know better than that. So she comes a couple of times, and they had, I used to look, and I couldn't open, and I never used to tell them to. I used to keep that myself. And one day my sister come again. I opened the door. She brought two, three woman. They grabbed me. (she laughs) They grabbed me, and then they took me to the orphanage. And I used to cry, this time this (?) took me to this (?), so I play.

OFLAZIAN: Had you ever heard in those days people talking about America?

KHAVLIJIAN: I never. Oh, I heard when we were in my sisters or those Armenians. I don't know if that's before or after, that I don't know. But my aunt heard that we are alive, that this sister is alive. Right away we were in (Armenian). You know what is (Armenian).

OFLAZIAN: (Armenian) is the Armenian word for mosque.

KHAVLIJIAN: Right, right. And we were there, and she sent a thousand dollars to make passport and come America.

OFLAZIAN: Was your aunt here?

KHAVLIJIAN: Yes.

OFLAZIAN: In America.

KHAVLIJIAN: Yes. My uncle died that time. When the war came in, you know, when it was war. He worked so hard that they used to make coffins, that much there were people dying that time. And they were very busy. He was making coffins.

OFLAZIAN: What you were doing in the mosque?

KHAVLIJIAN: Huh?

OFLAZIAN: What you were doing?

KHAVLIJIAN: The mosque, it had all small rooms like that. There was no place, so they'd put us in the mosque. And they were hunting in the door. They used to watch. They used to watch. They were nice. You know, just watch.

OFLAZIAN: Were these the Syrian Moslem people?

KHAVLIJIAN: Huh?

OFLAZIAN: Were these Syrian Moslem people?

KHAVLIJIAN: These two men? I think they were Moslems. You know, (Armenian).

OFLAZIAN: That's the (?), you mean?

KHAVLIJIAN: Because people, my sister used to stay in Jammi. We were in an orphanage when we used to come from this to visit her. See, that's the time.

OFLAZIAN: So how did you receive this money from your aunt?

KHAVLIJIAN: Huh?

OFLAZIAN: When your aunt sent you the money, right, and the visa?

KHAVLIJIAN: My aunt sent the money, and my older sister, we had a cousin by my father's side, I think. And he used to live in the Jammi. They give everybody room to have, you know, room. A (?), they'd had. And my sister, they took my sister to their house over there, and they had a son. They were I guess

married that time or, and they had a little boy. And she used to take care of the boy. So, and when my sister, when we put our, my sister put our name, that who we have anywhere. So my sister knew that we have an uncle and an uncle's son. That's a different, the oldest son. They came to America when, the start, taking the young boys, Turks, around that time they came.

OFLAZIAN: So he run away during that time.

KHAVLIJIAN: Yeah. And we, we sent telegram or (Armenian). I don't know. So they came and they found us, and this (?) gave a job to my mother. She used to sit (Armenian). They used to call (Armenian), but it wasn't so much sick, but they used, you know, just like that. That's the (Armenian). I don't know what we did.

OFLAZIAN: Okay. Tell me what happened after you heard from your aunt. How did you manage to get out from Haleb with your sister?

KHAVLIJIAN: We got, it wasn't Haleb. I think it was in Atanna. I think it was Atanna.

OFLAZIAN: So from Haleb . . .

KHAVLIJIAN: (Armenian)

OFLAZIAN: It was during the war.

KHAVLIJIAN: (Armenian)

OFLAZIAN: So where did you go, then, after Haleb? Where did you go?

KHAVLIJIAN: Atanna.

OFLAZIAN: You went to Atanna. How did you manage out, to get out from Atanna?

KHAVLIJIAN: I think we were a few people that somebody, wait. No. I don't know, uh, how long I stayed. And my sisters, they came. They, they said if you three sisters go, it's too much. They're not going to take in.

OFLAZIAN: Where?

KHAVLIJIAN: Haleb, from Hamma. And this was only eleven, twelve years old. He was taken. He knows the way.
(Armenian) I don't know how many days.

OFLAZIAN: (Armenian) is the Armenian word for by walking.

Okay. Can you tell me, Mrs. Khavlijian, how did you come to America?

KHAVLIJIAN: How did we come? We was in that Jammi.

OFLAZIAN: Yes. And then what happened?

KHAVLIJIAN: And one day we used to go to the church and they came, some people. They went to church and they came, "Agavnyr, Agavnyr, you got money in the church." (Armenian)

OFLAZIAN: Agavnyr is your older sister, right?

KHAVLIJIAN: Yeah. He says, "Go. Your name is, you know, the church." That was, at that time we were Norhadian. So my sister goes and she comes running, laughing. She says, "Nine hundred dollars for (Armenian)." They received one hundred dollars from America.

OFLAZIAN: So, and then what did she do with this nine hundred dollars?

KHAVLIJIAN: Huh?

OFLAZIAN: What did she do?

KHAVLIJIAN: And my sister was, we have a cousin, she's taking

care of their son, you know. And she says, "Wait. Money comes from America, she's going to put (Armenian)." (she laughs)

OFLAZIAN: So tell me, how did you manage to come to America?

KHAVLIJIAN: And then how we did it? We had, we came Beirut, and then from . . .

OFLAZIAN: How did you go to Beirut from Haleb?

KHAVLIJIAN: Uh, (Armenian).

OFLAZIAN: You don't remember. Okay.

KHAVLIJIAN: (she speaks in Armenian for an extended period of time) So, and we got money. Maybe (Armenian).

OFLAZIAN: So you went to Beirut, right, to get the boat. So from Haleb you went to Beirut to get the boat, right?

KHAVLIJIAN: Yes.

OFLAZIAN: Okay.

KHAVLIJIAN: So . . .

OFLAZIAN: So do you remember how did you get to Beirut? Did

you walk to Beirut also?

KHAVLIJIAN: No.

OFLAZIAN: So did you go by train to Beirut?

KHAVLIJIAN: My sisters went walking.

OFLAZIAN: To Beirut?

KHAVLIJIAN: No, to Haleb. I think maybe it was from Hamma, if I'm not mistaken. And this man, he said that if you go three of you, you get caught. At least leave one. And they walked to, from Hamma to Beirut. From Hamma to Haleb, I'm sorry, Haleb. And then I stayed there, and this man, they kept me, I don't know for how long. So that was Armenian. That was somebody Armenian that they knew there. He tried to make my papers, see.

OFLAZIAN: So how did you come to America?

KHAVLIJIAN: How I came?

OFLAZIAN: Yes.

KHAVLIJIAN: So we one day take him, and they were screaming, "You have nine hundred dollars."

OFLAZIAN: Okay. And then?

KHAVLIJIAN: And then we made passports.

OFLAZIAN: Okay, uh-huh.

KHAVLIJIAN: You know, my daughter knows more than I do. I forget everything, (Armenian).

OFLAZIAN: Can you tell me from where you took the boat? Do you remember from where you took the boat? From which port?

KHAVLIJIAN: From Harput.

OFLAZIAN: From Harput. So you went to France, right?

KHAVLIJIAN: Yes.

OFLAZIAN: How did you . . .

KHAVLIJIAN: Oh, they, my sisters came before and the Red Cross took care of me.

OFLAZIAN: Okay.

KHAVLIJIAN: And then this was Harvut. I spent one month Harvut, and they take care. Red Cross paid all the money. But, you know, my aunt gave the money. But

Red Cross took care of me.

OFLAZIAN: Only you.

KHAVLIJIAN: Only me. My sisters came.

OFLAZIAN: She saw it in Haleb?

KHAVLIJIAN: No, no. They came before me America.

OFLAZIAN: Okay.

KHAVLIJIAN: They said, "If you go three of you, the lawyer,
they won't take you."

OFLAZIAN: So you went . . .

KHAVLIJIAN: That was strict.

OFLAZIAN: So you went one by one.

KHAVLIJIAN: Two sisters went, and I came along. The Red Cross
took care of me. They made me a beautiful dress.
They make so beautiful, nice shoes and nice hat.
(she laughs) When I came to Ellis Island
the . . .

OFLAZIAN: Do you remember the boat?

KHAVLIJIAN: Huh? Rochambeau

OFLAZIAN: Rochambeau, uh-huh. Do you remember, can you describe the boat for me?

KHAVLIJIAN: Yes.

OFLAZIAN: Okay.

KHAVLIJIAN: It was a big boat, and I said, just as you interview me, right, till twelve o'clock. I'm sleepy, I'm saying. She lost my papers, and she don't know where to put me because I am young. She wants somebody that, you know, a woman, same room. One up, one down. So anyway, after twelve o'clock this ship someone, and they took me my room. I stayed until one o'clock. Who knows what it was? So they tried not to leave me, you know, alone in a room. They find, and this girl was engaged. That's (?), engaged. Her, (Armenian) was America.

OFLAZIAN: (Armenian) is the Armenian word for fiance.

KHAVLIJIAN: Fiance. She was strange. So . . .

OFLAZIAN: So during . . .

KHAVLIJIAN: And then in the boat, this was funny. So I was so little, there was some Greek boys, they were coming

to this country. And it was November. The boat used to go up, down, and I used to get sick. And then we used to, they put all the boat poles so we could hold and walk to go to lunch and breakfast, dinner. And these three young boys, they always used to say, "First the petite." (she laughs) They should give me mine first. (she laughs)

OFLAZIAN: They called you petite?

KHAVLIJIAN: Petite. (she laughs)

OFLAZIAN: Do you remember what did you eat in the boat?

KHAVLIJIAN: Oh, it was (Armenian). I don't know. It was so, I couldn't eat because I got sick in the boat. I slept down and this French girl, she slept on top of me. She was very nice.

OFLAZIAN: So did you play in the boat with this guy?

KHAVLIJIAN: Huh?

OFLAZIAN: Did you play?

KHAVLIJIAN: What I'm going to play? I used to see lunch or, you know, dinner.

OFLAZIAN: Do you remember . . .

KHAVLIJIAN: They came out the same time. They said goodbye and everything to me.

OFLAZIAN: Do you remember how long the voyage took place?

KHAVLIJIAN: You mean . . .

OFLAZIAN: The crossing the Atlantic.

KHAVLIJIAN: Atlantic.

OFLAZIAN: How long? How many days?

KHAVLIJIAN: I don't know. Eight days? My sister came, (Armenian). That was the first time, and I was, but because I came (?), and then it was too much, three together, to come out for the Ellis Island, you know. They're not going to let us, they said. And my sister, they had a lot of trouble.

OFLAZIAN: We are going to pause for a few moments while the recording engineer flips the tape.

END OF SIDE ONE, TAPE TWO

BEGINNING OF SIDE TWO, TAPE TWO

OFLAZIAN: This is Grace Oflazian. We are resuming now the

interview of Side B of Tape Two with Mrs. Khavlijian. Mrs. Khavlijian, you just told us that you were in the boat coming to America. When you saw America from far away, what was your feeling?

KHAVLIJIAN: I don't know. I guess my sisters before me maybe, I was kind of happy. And to go to the country.

OFLAZIAN: Do you remember seeing the Statue of Liberty?

KHAVLIJIAN: I think I did.

OFLAZIAN: What was your impression?

KHAVLIJIAN: I was very young.

OFLAZIAN: Was there too many people in the boat?

KHAVLIJIAN: Yes.

OFLAZIAN: It was crowded.

KHAVLIJIAN: Crowded. So maybe I was the only one Armenian.

OFLAZIAN: So, do you remember how Ellis Island looked like?

KHAVLIJIAN: Oh, yes. You know what I did?

OFLAZIAN: What?

KHAVLIJIAN: Early in the morning I get up and I don't know where to go. I guess maybe that was the first time I went down. I look all the tables and things like that. I went some nice table, cakes and everything, and I sat down. And some lady said, "What are you?" I said, "Armenian." "This is kosher, kosher (Armenian) kosher." (Armenian), you know, (Armenian). (she laughs) (Armenian) We went, I went, they took me. We had, you know, they had, I guess, maybe the Jewish people were supporting them. And we had nice, just the same, I think, cakes. But when I saw that, it looked very nice. (she laughs) I went and I saw it.

OFLAZIAN: Did you eat?

KHAVLIJIAN: Huh?

OFLAZIAN: Did you eat?

KHAVLIJIAN: Maybe I ate a piece or something like that. And when they said, "You don't belong here." See? Who gets it? What they used to say for the Jewish people? You (Armenian). Are you, I think they said, "Are you Jewish?" I said, "No." Yeah. "Are

you Jewish?" I said, "No." (she laughs)

OFLAZIAN: So was Ellis Island crowded that time?

KHAVLIJIAN: I think it was.

OFLAZIAN: It was.

KHAVLIJIAN: Uh-huh. But I stayed only one night I slept in
Ellis Island.

OFLAZIAN: Where did you sleep?

KHAVLIJIAN: Huh?

OFLAZIAN: Where did you sleep?

KHAVLIJIAN: Uh, they had places in Ellis Island, because my
sister, they stayed three weeks.

OFLAZIAN: But you stayed only one night.

KHAVLIJIAN: One night. My aunt came, and my brother-in-law.
My brother-in-law, he took the boat, a little boat,
and he came. And I was in the ship yet, and he was
calling me.

OFLAZIAN: So, do you remember why did you stay in Ellis
Island?

KHAVLIJIAN: Huh?

OFLAZIAN: Do you remember why did you stay in Ellis Island?

KHAVLIJIAN: I don't know. That I don't know. Why? I thought we had to pass from there. They make sure, you know.

OFLAZIAN: Did you go through medical examination?

KHAVLIJIAN: Medical examination? I don't think so.

OFLAZIAN: Did they check your eyes?

KHAVLIJIAN: Maybe they did my eyes. I think my eyes. And then I stayed, I don't know, until one o'clock the first night. And I was sleeping, sitting just like this. And I guess they couldn't decide where to put me. You know, that it would be good for me, because I was young.

OFLAZIAN: So who came to meet you in Ellis Island?

KHAVLIJIAN: My brother-in-law. At that time my sister wasn't married. My aunt's brother came with me.

OFLAZIAN: So how did you . . .

KHAVLIJIAN: Meet me, and then my aunt came. And the judge

said, "Take her and make a beautiful American girl."

OFLAZIAN: So where did you go after you left Ellis Island?

KHAVLIJIAN: Huh?

OFLAZIAN: After you left Ellis Island where did you . . .

KHAVLIJIAN: Oh, my aunt. Who, my aunt brought us this country, and then my aunt and my brother-in-law came.

OFLAZIAN: Where they were living at that time?

KHAVLIJIAN: 25th Street, New York.

OFLAZIAN: How did you go over there? (she coughs)

KHAVLIJIAN: I don't know. I don't remember how we went. We went. I don't remember. (she laughs)

OFLAZIAN: So, and then what happened? Did you go to school?

KHAVLIJIAN: Yes. I went P.S. 14.

OFLAZIAN: So tell me how this . . .

KHAVLIJIAN: 27th Street.

OFLAZIAN: So tell me, how did you learn English?

KHAVLIJIAN: Well, when I stayed in the Red Cross they gave me a book, "Cat, dog." I think I used to love reading, and I had a little book. I always used to read, "Cat, dog." And there was a dog, there was the cat. It was much easier. I didn't have no trouble. Me and my sister, we never had trouble. And especially arithmetic. I was so good, very good.

OFLAZIAN: So did you graduated from the high school?

KHAVLIJIAN: I didn't go high school. I couldn't, because my aunt couldn't afford. And when we went to school, she used to have an embroidery place with her brother. And we used to go after the school to help them.

OFLAZIAN: What kind of embroidery?

KHAVLIJIAN: Embroidery. At that time was very styled beads, the blouses, the dresses, all beads. So we learned how to make the, make the beads. After school we used to go and help, help. And then my aunt used to say, I used to love, I think, to cook or something. I used to go and cook, and they used to come eight o'clock, nine o'clock, and we used to

eat.

OFLAZIAN: Did you help her in cooking?

KHAVLIJIAN: Huh?

OFLAZIAN: Did you help her in cooking?

KHAVLIJIAN: My aunt?

OFLAZIAN: Yes.

KHAVLIJIAN: No, she couldn't. Because when they closed the shop eight o'clock. So I, she used to send me home. And I used to do, and they used to love whatever I did. I don't know. I guess it came to me.

OFLAZIAN: So how the religious life in America?

KHAVLIJIAN: Oh, we loved it. Free country. There is nowhere else (she laughs) better than America. I wish I was born here. (she laughs) But still we were lucky, we were very lucky. God was with us.

OFLAZIAN: So, Mrs. Khavlijian, could you tell me what kind of hobbies do you have?

KHAVLIJIAN: I love cooking and crochet. I have a lot of

crochet I made, beautiful. The other day I said,
"I did this?"

OFLAZIAN: Have you ever done the lace work?

KHAVLIJIAN: I certainly could.

OFLAZIAN: Lace work is the needlework, the fine needlework.

KHAVLIJIAN: Yeah. Fine needlework. I did, but not too good.

OFLAZIAN: What . . .

KHAVLIJIAN: Because the, it was BMC It has to be BMC when you
make that.

OFLAZIAN: BMC is a special thread.

KHAVLIJIAN: A special thread.

OFLAZIAN: To make lace work.

KHAVLIJIAN: Yeah, yeah. I had, I brought some small (?)
finish, like. And over there, and I bought some
Five And Ten. It used to come six or twelve piece,
you cut. And the edge of that, like (Armenian).
You know what's (Armenian)?

OFLAZIAN: (Armenian) is a different kind of embroidery.

KHAVLIJIAN: And I put those together, and I make my living rooms . . .

OFLAZIAN: Covers?

KHAVLIJIAN: Not covers. Just the edge. (Armenian)

OFLAZIAN: On the back and on the handle of the chairs. What kind of cookings you made?

KHAVLIJIAN: Everything. (Armenian)

OFLAZIAN: What about chorec? Do you know how to make chorec?

KHAVLIJIAN: Oh, sure.

OFLAZIAN: Can you explain me how you do chorec?

KHAVLIJIAN: Uh, first of all the eggs has to be warm, not cold. Otherwise it's not easy to. And I put two (Armenian).

OFLAZIAN: Yeast. (Armenian) is the Armenian word for yeast.

KHAVLIJIAN: Yeast, and butter. And if you like I put some (Armenian).

OFLAZIAN: (Armenian) is a different kind of spice Armenian use. And then how you do it?

KHAVLIJIAN: And then I roll it, and then I braid it or I make a round, and I make, put it together and close it. And I make baklava, I make (Armenian), I make (Armenian).

OFLAZIAN: So tell me about your American life. Are you happy that you are in America?

KHAVLIJIAN: Of course. Is there any better than America? Never.

OFLAZIAN: Have you ever tried or you wanted to go back in Sepastia to see your homeland?

KHAVLIJIAN: No, no, that, no. But I love to go Hyasta. I went three times, but I like to go once more, believe me, to help.

OFLAZIAN: Hyasta is the Armenia.

KHAVLIJIAN: (Armenian) (she is moved)

OFLAZIAN: Okay Mrs. Khavlijian. This is very precious for us.

KHAVLIJIAN: Thank you very much.

OFLAZIAN: Thank you so much for sharing your beautiful life

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story today. This is Grace Oflazian signing off
with Mrs. Khavlijian for National Park Service.