

EI-357

ANNE HAVENICK CROSS

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INTERVIEWER: JANET LEVINE

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TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY: NANCY VEGA, 6/1994

TRANSCRIPT REVIEWED BY: PAUL E. SIGRIST, JR., 6/1994

SCOTLAND, 1902

AGE 6

PASSAGE ON "THE CALEDONIA"

Oral Historian's Note: Mrs. Cross mistakenly gives her maiden name was "Goldberg," which is actually her mother's maiden name. Mrs. Cross' maiden name is "Havernick." She also incorrectly states her father's name as "Israel." His actual name was "Philip." Paul E. Sigrist, Jr., Director of the Oral History Project, 7/28/1994.

LEVINE: This is Janet Levine for the National Park Service. I'm here today in the Amsterdam House in Manhattan, New York with Anne Cross, who came from Scotland in 1902 when she was seven years old.

CROSS: Yeah, that's right.

LEVINE: And I want to say that I'm very happy to be here, and I'm looking forward to hearing your stories about your family and your coming to America.

CROSS: Yes. We have uncles and aunts. Uncle Jacob, and aunt, uncle, I have a big family. ( she laughs ) They were a very busy family.

LEVINE: Anne, why don't you start by telling me your birth date and where you were born?

CROSS: Oh, I was born in Glasgow, Scotland, and I was born in December 31, 1895. So I'm a pretty old lady.

LEVINE: And tell me how long, did you live in Glasgow the whole time before you came to America?

CROSS: Yes, that was our residence. We lived in Glasgow in a place called New City Road. That's the name of the street that we lived in.

LEVINE: Do you remember the house?

CROSS: I remember the house because I remember a neighbor whose name was Mrs. Olifant, and we were very naughty and we called her Mrs. Elephant. That was not very nice. And I was reprimanded for that, and I thought that was funny, but it wasn't funny to the teacher. So I got punished.

LEVINE: How . . .

CROSS: Know how you get punished?

LEVINE: How?

CROSS: You have to stand up in front of the classroom and hold your hand out and ( she demonstrates by slapping her hand ), and you remember not to make fun of anybody. So that went in one ear and stayed there. After that I behaved myself.

LEVINE: Tell me about the house you lived in. Do you remember what it looked like?

CROSS: Yes. We had a New City Road, I think it was called, and it was like one of the apartments here, but we didn't have, everything was on one floor, and we had a woman that came in and I think her name was Sally, and she helped us with the work. And I liked Sally because when she was off she used to take me out at night to meet her gentleman friend.

Ooh, and I liked that because the gentleman friend always gave me sweets, candy, and I always was nice with Sally, and she'd take me out and I met all her gentleman friends.

So I had a lovely childhood.

LEVINE: Now, how, what was your mother's name?

CROSS: Oh, my mother was Leah Goldberg.

LEVINE: And your father?

CROSS: Israel. Phillip Goldberg, yeah.

LEVINE: And your sisters and brothers' names?

CROSS: Oh, they have, I had Fanny and Annie and Rachel and Jeff.  
Oh, we had a big family. ( she laughs ) My parents were very busy. We had eight children. Six girls and two boys, Arnold and Nathan. We called him Nat, but in Scotland we called him Nathan. That was a Jewish name.

LEVINE: Now, were you closest to anybody in particular in the family?

CROSS: Oh, yeah. I was close with all my uncles because they used to spoil me and give me money for my bank, and I was very close to all of them, you know.

LEVINE: So you had uncles and aunts, right, living around you in Scotland?

CROSS: Yes. I had, yes. We were all close together. And we had "tanta" this and this one, and I learned everything.  
And I had a very happy childhood.

LEVINE: What did you do that made you so happy?

CROSS: Well, I was spoiled. If I wanted to see something, there was a circus, and all I had to do was tell one of my uncles, "I'd like to see that circus." Oh, right on the job. He helped me. So I was, in a way, not the only child, but I was really a little bit spoiled. ( she laughs )  
But I liked it. ( she laughs ) And I enjoyed it, and I loved America. As soon as I came here, ooh, I thought America was the most beautiful place. ( she laughs )

LEVINE: Let's talk a little bit more about Glasgow before you came to America.

CROSS: Oh, in Glasgow was New City Road. We lived on a place called New City Road. And we had, oh, we used to be naughty, and there was a lady. Oh, this was very naughty. The lady's name was Mrs. Olifant, and we were very naughty, and I must say we used to call her Mrs. Elephant. And I was told, I was reprimanded, "Don't ever say that again."  
So I learned to behave myself. And I was a good student, you know.

LEVINE: What was school like?

CROSS: Oh, school was lovely, you know. You had to pay attention or you'll get smacked hardy and, you know. So I learned to pay attention and give my parents, they were proud.

I had a good record in school, and I tried to behave myself, you know. And it was a happy, happy day in school. I loved it.

LEVINE: Now, you had, did you live in an apartment, or did you live in a house?

CROSS: We lived in a house. We, I never knew what apartments were like. I had never seen an apartment till I came here. They were like a house. We had ( a telephone rings ) a bed. But all on one floor, the bedrooms in one place. ( break in tape )

LEVINE: We're going to resume now after this telephone, uh, ringing. And you were saying that you loved candy and sweets.

CROSS: Oh, and I loved it. And there's a sickness in the family called diabetes, and you may get that if you're not careful, and I loved all kinds of rock candy and all kinds of sweets. And I was told, "If you want to grow up and be healthy, you must refrain from too many sweets." So I reminded that, because I didn't want to spoil my life afterwards when I felt that one day I'd get married and bring children up, and I didn't want them to have a record of a mother who was, you know, couldn't, you know, keep

her promise not to indulge in sweets, which was not good for me. So I made out all right. I had a good record in school.

LEVINE: What did you call sweets in Scotland?

CROSS: Candy.

LEVINE: Candy.

CROSS: It was just candy. There was rock candy. There was fudge, and all kinds of chocolate. Oh, I loved chocolate creams! Oh, that was terrible. That was my downfall.  
( she laughs ) But then I learned, because there was a history of diabetes in the family, and I was warned not to indulge in too much sweets. So I remembered that, and I grew up and took notice of what I was told because I knew one day I'll have children, and I don't want them to inherit anything like that. See, I was looking ahead.  
( she laughs )

LEVINE: Tell me about the chores. Did you have chores that you had to do at home?

CROSS: Yes. We had to sweep up. Not heavy work but, you know, if we had dinner we had to clear the table, and we had a housemaid called Lizzie. I think her name was Lizzie

Borden. And she, you know, we helped her. So, as a result of helping her to clean up, she took me out at night to meet her gentleman friends. Oh, and that was a big treat.

LEVINE: And where would you go with Lizzie?

CROSS: Oh, she'd take me to see all the sights around town that was busy. And my mother allowed me to go with Lizzie because she, you know, she took me to places that I didn't know, I wasn't supposed to go. But we didn't have any drinking or anything like that. I was, oh, I was a lover of sweets. And she brought me candy, and then my mother said, "No, you have to refrain because you may get diabetes."

LEVINE: Well, tell me about when you were, when you were at home, what would you do with your mother? What kinds of remembrances do you have with your mother?

CROSS: Well, Mother would teach us to knit, you know. And she taught us to knit stockings because in the wintertime we didn't wear socks like the children do. We had to be warm, so I was taught to learn to knit stockings.

LEVINE: Did you like that?

CROSS: Oh, I liked that because then I was very proud when I

knitted something, some little thing, like for the doll.

Oh, I thought I did something wonderful. ( she laughs )

And, you know, I was very proud to learn how to knit.

LEVINE: Do you remember things you did with your father? Do you remember any times with him?

CROSS: Oh, yeah. My father would take me to different places that some of his friends, he was a carpenter, and he made very interesting tables and they did this, carpentry was something he had learned when he was young. And there was one table that was so beautiful, you know.

LEVINE: What did it look like? Do you remember?

CROSS: It was a mahogany table, but it was sort of in-laid with different patterns. And you know what we did with the table? We learned how to put it on the table and made believe it was spirits. We were very, we were very naughty in those days and made believe there were spirits. And I had a very happy life.

LEVINE: Do you remember any stories from your childhood that you liked?

CROSS: Yes. I remember taking, going into a garden. Oh, and there were such beautiful flowers, and we didn't have a

nice garden. You know, we had a little garden. But I took about four or five roses and I was punished for that, you know. And I never would do that again. But I had a nice childhood. And Mother and Father were indulged, you know.

LEVINE: Do you remember singing or dancing when you were in Glasgow?

CROSS: Uh, once or twice there was Mahogany Night, they called it. It was a holiday night, and I went to a dance, and I learned, one of my uncles taught me how to do the dance that they did, you know, a sort of, a sort of naughty way. But I enjoyed my life immensely, I loved it. And I often tell my grandchildren about it, and they liked to hear the stories. So we had to behave ourselves.

LEVINE: Did you have a grandmother or a grandfather?

CROSS: Yes, I had a Grandma Leah, and Grandpa Israel, yeah. And they were orthodox, you know. And it was a Saturday, they called Shabbos, and we were brought up religious. You mustn't do this on Saturday. And besides that, when I reached the age of fourteen I had to fast. You know, it was called the Day of Atonement. And we were called up, you know, were brought up with religious grandparents,

and when that day came we didn't eat all day. But you could only do that when you reached the age of twelve.

Not for the children. But once you were twelve you were considered a grownup, and you had some sense. So I did that. I liked that, and I was accustomed to not eating all day long. First I didn't like it because I was a bit what they called a nosher. I liked to eat. But I learned to observe the rules because we respected Grandma and Grandpa. And we did, they were orthodox, so.

LEVINE: What did your grandpa do?

CROSS: Grandpa was like a carpenter. He designed tables, very interesting, beautiful tables. And that was his work.

And Grandma was just a house, oh, you know what she did? Charity work. If somebody didn't have anything to eat, Grandma was right there, very charitable, and helped out children that couldn't, you know, were not cared for. And I had a, really a very interesting life.

LEVINE: Now, do you remember things that you did with your grandpa or your grandmother?

CROSS: Yes. They took us to a show, what they called like here the Hippodrome, and it was like going to a circus. And, oh, and I loved it, and I loved it because they gave us

each a bag of candy. My sister and myself, I had a sister, my sister Kelly, and we had a bag of candy to ourselves.

And, oh, I loved that candy. And then I was told there's diabetes in the family, and I should not have too many sweets.

LEVINE: Do you remember any dishes that your mother or your grandmother made that you liked when you were in Scotland?

CROSS: Oh, she made what they call . . .

LEVINE: ( there is a rustling noise made on tape by Mrs. Cross disrupting her microphone ) This is the microphone.

CROSS: Oh! She made something, it was a kugel, potatoes. Ooh, and it was so delicious. And we used to put a little sugar on it. ( she laughs ) But I was told that there's a diabetes in the family and I was warned, even when young, "Don't be really a pig," they told me, "and don't eat too many starches and sweets." So I remembered that.

LEVINE: Do you remember your family observing religious occasions in Scotland?

CROSS: Yes, they went to school, uh, they went to shul, they called it, and there was a, they called Rosh Hashanah was the beginning of a new year. And then they had a holiday called

Yom Kippur when you had to atone and go to the shul, they called that, the synagogue. And you had to go and atone for the sins. And my sins, I had sins. I was in a waiting room, and I took three gumdrops on the table. And God punished me, because when I went out of the waiting room my quarter rolled down the gutter. So I got punished right away. ( they laugh )

LEVINE: You got it over with fast.

CROSS: Yeah. Because, see, I loved candy, and we were not allowed to have it.

LEVINE: Well, tell me something else. In other words, when you were, when you were with your family, your grandmother and grandfather, do you know where they were born?

CROSS: They were born in their, oh, yes. They were born in Russia.

LEVINE: Do you remember stories they told you about Russia or coming to Scotland?

CROSS: Yeah. They told us on the ship, and one of my drunk uncles, I've forgotten his name, used to have a little schnapps, they called it. And he was told he must not drink any more. And we loved to listen to what we called Bubba. That was a Jewish name for grandmother, and we brought

up in the Jewish religion, you know.

LEVINE: Do you remember any stories that Bubba told you?

CROSS: Yes. She told us, you know, that we, we were in a waiting room once and at a doctor's place. And when nobody was looking I took about four gumdrops. And when I went out God punished me right away because my quarter rolled down the sewer. So I never took anything like that again.

LEVINE: Now, when you were living in Scotland, in Glasgow, do you remember stories about America that you heard from whoever came here?

CROSS: Yeah. They used to tell about, you know, when they made up stories, you know, that Grandpa did this and Grandma did this. But I think they were, they did this to entertain us. I think most of it was fabricated, you know. But they, a good life. They did everything for us. And when the holidays come, Rosh Hashanah, that's the beginning of the new year, they bought us gifts and lovely clothes and everything.

LEVINE: Do you remember your clothes? Do you remember dresses or clothes that you liked, that you had?

CROSS: Yeah. And, of course, we never wore socks. Always, because

that was a cold country, and so I never owned a pair of socks till I came to America, and we never wore socks.

We wore long stockings that were knitted by hand. Grandma used to knit stockings, and they were so warm, you know.

And it was a lovely life. Yeah, I really enjoyed it.

LEVINE: Well, did you have toys? Do you remember what toys you had?

CROSS: Oh, yeah. We had dolls. Oh, we had little furniture toys that you could put on the, you know, miniature little . . .

LEVINE: Like a dollhouse furniture.

CROSS: And we had a doll, oh, we had a dollhouse. And we had very, you know, indulgent parents. They gave us a lot of things, you know. If Uncle would come, he'd give us the (ha'ness). That was a Scottish coin, and we had a bank. And he says, "Remember, that goes in the bank!" You know, so we learned to be thrifty right from the beginning, you know.

LEVINE: Did you have a favorite uncle?

CROSS: Yes, I had Hymie. Oh, and he was very indulgent. He used to, you know give us a lot of things we shouldn't have had. He used to give us candy bars, you know, and sweets,

we called it. And he would spoil us, and my mother said, "Now, there's diabetes in the family, you mustn't give her too many sweets." So we learned to abide by that rule, because they warned us, "When you grow up to be a young lady and you have children, you don't want your children to inherit, to be diabetics."

LEVINE: Did you ever become diabetic?

CROSS: No, no. I learned my lesson because I was very fond of the children. I thought, "If I like candy, I'm not going to spoil their lives." So I was careful.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. Okay. Now, do you remember getting ready to come to America?

CROSS: Yes. Oh, we were so excited. Beautiful America. Oh, I was waiting to see the Statue of Liberty. That impressed me. And I was showing off and I was saying, "I'm going to see the Statue of Liberty." ( she laughs ) That was, to me that was the biggest (?), and I loved, I remember the name of the ship. We came on the Caledonia.

LEVINE: Do you remember your mother, who did you come with? When you came to America who came on the ship with you?

CROSS: Mama and Papa came to America.

LEVINE: Mama and Papa, and your sisters?

CROSS: And my sisters. Oh, I forgot my sister, oh, and Lizzie.

LEVINE: Lizzie came, too?

CROSS: Lizzie, and I can't think, oh, Minnie and Molly and Tanta, you know, I forgot my sister. Most of my sisters' names.

LEVINE: Fanny?

CROSS: Oh, Fanny was my older sister. And it was such a wonderful life to come to America.

LEVINE: And did Nathan come, too?

CROSS: Who?

LEVINE: Nathan, your brother?

CROSS: Yes, my brother came, Nat. We called him Natie, Natie, N-A-T-I-E. We didn't call him, just Natie.

LEVINE: And when, do you remember anything your mother packed up to take with you?

CROSS: Yes, she, oh, you know, she was religious and she took her English candlesticks from Scotland because she called, (Yiddish). You know, she was religious, and every Friday

night she lit the candles, and that was, we called Shabbos.  
And we had to abide, my grandma didn't want to do this.  
Goldberg was her name, and so we observed what Grandma  
and Grandpa Goldberg did.

LEVINE: Now, did Grandma and Grandpa come with you?

CROSS: Yes, they came on the ship with us. And they . . .

LEVINE: So there were a lot of you who came.

CROSS: That was a big family, and they showed us where, we had  
good passage, we had cabins. But they showed us when some  
people couldn't afford to come here, but someone helpful  
in a charity, and they were in a place down below called  
the steerage, which was cheaper, steerage. And that name  
impressed me. They called it steerage, because these  
people had not, see, our parents had paid money to go to  
Glasgow, to Scotland. But some people hadn't much money,  
so it was a charity that took care of them, Jewish people.  
And if they were sick and they had the burial grounds  
for them, so it was a (Yiddish). That's a story. But  
it was a very interesting life. I loved it.

LEVINE: Well, now, so you were in a cabin.

CROSS: Yes.

LEVINE: Was it a big cabin, or how many people were in the cabin with you?

CROSS: Oh, there was about four people. Yeah, about four people in the cabin with me.

LEVINE: And was the cabin comfortable?

CROSS: Oh, it was lovely. We, and men, it was in a good place because it was a place that wasn't so comfortable called steerage, which some poor people couldn't afford to. So they had in a place down below called the steerage. I remember that name.

LEVINE: Do you remember if there was a dining room that you went to?

CROSS: Yes, we had a dining room, and we had what they called Shabbos. And we lit it, on Friday nights we lit, we had, we lit the bench, we had the Friday night, and we, you know, they, my grandparents were religious. See, I'm not so religious now, but I observed it. Do you know, to honor them. And we went to, my uncles came from Belfast and a lot of different places. And, oh, I had an uncle that was very clever in carpentry, and he designed a beautiful table and, you know, we loved it and, you know, it was

mahogany. And you know what we did with the table? We, you had a game (?), and we raised the hands and we saw spirits. ( she laughs ) We did a lot of silly things. I can't believe I did it, but we had a wonderful childhood, wonderful.

LEVINE: Do you remember the food aboard the Caledonia?

CROSS: Yes. Oh, it was, one thing was called plum pudding. Oh, and I loved that plum pudding. And very good vegetables and soup and chicken and I loved the whole thing. ( she laughs )

LEVINE: Do you remember anything that happened aboard the ship that you remember coming over here?

CROSS: Yeah, there were some people who couldn't tolerate the rocking of the boat, and they became seasick. And we thought how stupid to get seasick, it was so much fun in the boat. But they were older people and they couldn't take the rocking of the boat. And then later on I had sympathy for them. I said, "Huh, you'll be old yourself one of these days, don't make fun of them." See, I was naughty then. I said, "How come they don't like this?" See, I was a little selfish, but I learned. There were a lot of people who couldn't afford the trip, and the

charity organization paid for them, see, and then it dawned in my head not to be so smart. But it was . . .

LEVINE: Tell me about when the ship came into the New York Harbor?

CROSS: Ooh, I was so excited. New York City! My parents said, "Don't make so much noise. You're not the only one that came in here." ( she laughs ) But I couldn't, to think I came to America . . . ( someone enters the room )

VOICE OFF MIKE: Hi. I was wondering who was here.

LEVINE: So do you remember when you saw the Statue of Liberty?

CROSS: Yes. I thought that was the most wonderful, I took pictures of it, and we have pictures of it. And I always remember that trip on the Caledonia. That was the name of the ship. And I loved, the food on the ship was so good. I never tasted anything like it. ( she laughs ) And we had a housekeeper that came, she didn't come with us, but she took us to the boat, and her name was Lizzie. And she gave us so much candy to have on board ship. She spoiled us. And Mama used to say, "I don't want Lizzie to spoil you so much because when you grow up you'll have bad teeth, you know."

LEVINE: Do you remember where the Caledonia sailed from? Where

did you go to catch the ship?

CROSS: We sailed from Glasgow, Scotland. And we came into New York Harbor.

LEVINE: Do you remember seeing the buildings and everything when you came in?

CROSS: Oh, I saw, and I had never seen such tall buildings in Scotland. And, oh, they pointed out the Statue of Liberty, and I was very impressed. And I used to dream about it and everything. It was a happy life.

LEVINE: And do you remember when you got to Ellis Island?

CROSS: Oh, yes. Then, oh, yeah. We had to be, it was such a big fuss because some reporters came in and they fingerprinted us and we had to, oh, take blood tests to see, oh. And, you know, if we were not in good health we were not admitted.

LEVINE: ( there is a rustling noise made on tape by Mrs. Cross disrupting her microphone ) This is the microphone. Can we just leave it like that?

CROSS: Oh, sure. And a lot of people were not in good condition, but we were just a couple of brats. And we were healthy.

We ate everything. And it was a wonderful life.

LEVINE: Do you remember being examined? Do you remember the whole examination that you had to go through?

CROSS: Yeah. We had, no, they examined, first of all, our ears. And said, "You hear this?" They said, "Boy, you hear everything." And we were all in good condition. We were in good health, every one of us. We were a big family, but we had good food and good care, and we had a wonderful physical report from all of us.

LEVINE: Do you remember what you had on when you came to America?

CROSS: Oh, I had, like, something like kilts, you know. And the men had laughed at that costume when they came here. Ooh, what a funny dress they told me to wear. But it was kilts. And I really tell my grandchildren about it, and they tell us, "How did you get here from America?" They thought America was so far away, but I used to tell the children stories about America, and we had a good, my grandparents indulged us with a lot of things that we were not supposed to get. They brought us banks that, you know, when you put the money in the bank it rang, it showed on the thing, it rang. We thought that was the most wonderful invention in the world. ( they laugh )

END OF SIDE ONE

BEGINNING OF SIDE TWO

LEVINE: Well, do you remember when you first got off the boat when you left Ellis Island?

CROSS: Yeah, and of course there were a lot of reporters. And we said, "Why are the reporters here?" And they said, "Well, these people just came from Scotland. There's a lot of us from a newspaper." Well, the newspaper was called The World Telegram, I think. That was the name of an old newspaper. Later on I saw that newspaper. And they took pictures of us, you know. And then this one is Fanny, and this one was Annie, and this was, I forgot some of my sisters. Oh, and was Tillie, we had Tillie. And then we, Uncle Morris and my, oh, my uncle was a carpenter, too. He made beautiful tables.

LEVINE: Well, tell me something about what struck you when you first finally got to America and you got off the ship, do you remember anything that you saw that you had never seen before?

CROSS: Yeah. When I saw the Statue of Liberty I had never seen, and I said, "Oh, we read about it in the history books,

and now we see the Statue." That impressed me, because it was something I read about and I thought I would never see it. And that was a wonderful trip, that Scotland.

LEVINE: Now, do you, where did you go when you left Ellis Island?

CROSS: We went to a place called Dunoon, a little country place. And we had a housekeeper. Her name was Lizzie.

LEVINE: And did Lizzie come with you from Scotland?

CROSS: Lizzie came to Scotland because she had relatives here, and we were very attached to Lizzie because we used to spoil us. You know, my mother said, "Now, you don't take too many sweets from Lizzie." But Lizzie really liked us, you know. And we enjoyed that. Lizzie was her name.

LEVINE: Well, did you, you went to a little town, and the town was called what?

CROSS: Uh, oh, isn't that funny, I forget the name.

LEVINE: Do you remember . . .

CROSS: And it was on New City Road.

LEVINE: New City.

CROSS: New City Road, it was on. Oh, Governor Street, that was

it, Governor Street.

LEVINE: And where was it? Was it in New York?

CROSS: It was in Scotland.

LEVINE: Oh, no. I mean, when you left Scotland and you came to America . . .

CROSS: Oh, then we came to Ellis Island.

LEVINE: And then when you came to New York, where were you then in New York, where did you live?

CROSS: Uh, some place uptown in Albany, I think, called. And the names were very foreign to me. But my folks got a place in Brooklyn out in a place called Flatbush, way out in a place called Coney Island.

LEVINE: And did you live there?

CROSS: And I lived in this (?), and I thought it was so funny that people ate corn on the cob out in the street. I said, "What a strange land this is. They have corn on the cob and they eat it in the street." I thought, "That's a very crazy way of living." But we did the same thing later.  
( she laughs ) We became, oh, and I loved America. Oh, I thought it was just wonderful. And I loved the teachers,

and the teachers, you know, some of the boys in the classroom used to talk a lot, and when they were warned several times not to interrupt they didn't obey. Oh, and they were called up to the front of the room, hold your hand out. ( she gestures ) So, remember, don't talk when you're in school.

LEVINE: That was in Scotland.

CROSS: Yeah.

LEVINE: Well, how about in America? How was the school different in America?

CROSS: Oh, and the schools were very particular because they gave you a physical examination first. And, you know, it sounds funny, but they examined your head. And if you didn't have, and I hate to tell you, but some people, they had vermin in their heads, and we never heard of such a thing. And we said, "How does this happen?" They said, "Well, some homes, they are not very clean, you know, and the children are allowed to do what they like." And we were examined so that they had something in their head called nits. And if you didn't, if you had nits you could have vermin and, oh, it sounds funny, but when I tell my children about it now they say, "Are you sure about that?" I say,

"Yeah." Because we were examined and if our heads were not clean, and they looked through you with a pencil, we went through all that. It sounds very unusual, but they did that. And so we were all examined, and we were given a clean, I'd say we were in good condition. We had measles and mumps and all the childhood diseases, but we were in good health.

LEVINE: Do you remember, was it difficult to understand people because of the accent?

CROSS: Yeah, they spoke so quickly, and we said, "I didn't get what you said," and they said, "Oh, I have to repeat it again?" And they were, some families got annoying with us, but others did, because a couple of reporters wanted to hear about Dunoon, where we lived, a little country place, and some of the reporters, now it comes to me that they were looking for a good story. And then it dawned on me, then I opened up and I told them the place we lived in, Dunoon, a country place, and we had a housekeeper. Her name was Lizzie.

LEVINE: So when you lived in Dunoon, that was a little bit outside of Glasgow?

CROSS: Yes. It was a country place, yes. It was like a farm

place.

LEVINE: Oh. So did, were there farmers living around where you lived?

CROSS: A farm, yeah. They had farmers, and that was a nice, and I had never seen cows and goats. I had never seen anything like it in Scotland. So it was a big thrill.

LEVINE: You mean you saw cows and goats here when you came.

CROSS: Yes, yes.

LEVINE: So when you went to school how was it going to school in America?

CROSS: Well, you know, we weren't dressed like American children because we had long, they call them gaiters, because we didn't, we were afraid of catching cold. We were not used to the American climate. So we were bundled up like, they called them gaiters. And then we said, "Oh, how stupid." Afterwards we learned to wear long stockings like the American children. But first we were very stupid, and Mama and Papa didn't know what to dress us in, but we learned. And then we learned to wear long stockings, and then Mama, Grandpa, Grandma used to knit stockings for us, homemade stockings, zucken, they called it. So we

had a good life.

LEVINE: So when you came to America did your father, what did your father do for work then?

CROSS: Oh, my father was a carpenter, you know.

LEVINE: He stayed making carpentry for work?

CROSS: In the carpentry, and he made tables, and they're wonderful tables. And you know what we used to do with the table, you know, with good mahogany tables, and we used to put our hands on like a spell and stuff, and we were very superstitious about the spirits. And then we went on the streetcar, and they called it a trolley, and we lived in a place called Brooklyn. And I never saw so many people out in the street, you know, in little private houses.

And it was very impressive, you know, and I liked America as soon as we got here.

LEVINE: Well, how was your house different from the house you lived in when you were in Scotland?

CROSS: Well, it was, they had the rooms upstairs, you know. And we had a regular, here when we came, to a regular apartment, but the bedrooms were upstairs, and we had a housekeeper, and her name was Lizzie. We thought that was such a funny

name, and we laughed at it. And, oh, and she was telling us a naughty story. She says, "Ooh, the Missis of the house caught a mouse in her blouse and she killed it with her pussy cat." ( she laughs ) So we listened to all these naughty stories, and my mother said, "I don't want you ever to go out with her again and listen to those bad stories about a mouse in her blouse." But it stuck in my memory and I thought it was very funny, but I didn't tell my mother.

LEVINE: What did you do? How long did you stay in school?

CROSS: Oh, well, I stayed in school till about the eighth grade. I went to graduation. My school work was good because I was really a good student because I loved, I had a good mark in history because I think America was the most beautiful place, and we saw Niagara Falls and I thought that was just, well, it was so beautiful. And we saw Canada and the Rockies, and I had never seen such beautiful places. It impressed me. I really loved America.

LEVINE: Then when you finished school what did you do? Did you go to work?

CROSS: Yes. Some of us went to night school to learn typing and stenography, and others went to work, and I liked to work

with the American people because they were so different.

I worked in the store, and it was called Landay Brothers.

LEVINE: What kind of a store was it?

CROSS: It was a music store, and I loved it. And I loved the elevators, and we had an elevator man. He was very funny.

And we'd say, "Willie, are you going up?" "I ain't goin' down. You goin' down, I ain't goin' up." Oh, and he made us laugh so. And I loved Americans, you know, all the talk and everything, and we learned. And then we went to, they took us in a place where there was a big sign up and the children had measles, so the man that took us said, "We ain't goin' in there, ain't." And I learned the word 'ain't.' I said, "What did you say?" "We ain't goin' in there, because there's a big sign up, 'measles.'" You know, and that was very impressive to us.

LEVINE: Now, how did you meet your husband?

CROSS: Oh, yeah, he came, oh, to sell something. And they, he, when he came he was in the furniture department, and he was looking around the furniture. And he asked me, he said, "You like furniture?" And that was how I got friendly and I ended up marrying him. ( she laughs )

LEVINE: What did you like about him?

CROSS: Well, I liked him because he took time to explain everything in America about us, and I liked it because he didn't hurry. I said, "Why do they do this, and why?" "Oh, I'll tell you why." And half the time he was telling us lies, but we fell for it. ( she laughs )

LEVINE: Now, was your husband born in America?

CROSS: Yes, he was an American. And I thought that was so, I told my Uncle Archie, "Oh, I met an American gentleman." ( she laughs )

LEVINE: What was your husband's name?

CROSS: It was Barney, Barney. And I thought that was the funniest name. So I didn't like that name, I called him Ben. But it was a very interesting journey, and we liked it. Mother and Father were religious, you know. We had to, when we became fourteen, see, we had to follow the Jewish religion. And when you're fourteen you have to learn not to eat on a day called the Day of Atonement. Oh, and I thought that was very cruel. How can I go without eating? But my mother says, "How could you go? You'll go. You'll do it."

LEVINE: How did your mother like being here?

CROSS: Oh, she loved America. Ooh, she loved everything about America. It's nicer than Scotland, and, oh, she made fun of Scotland. "Oh, they haven't got this, but here in America, they have American, and they, what do they give them, injections. In America it's the land of wonderful, wonderful health." And we had Grandma and Grandpa with us, and they were religious. Oh, and they didn't do anything on the Saturday, which they called Shabbos. And we learned to, you know, we had respect for Grandma and Grandpa. They were very kind to us.

LEVINE: Do you remember if your, do you remember when you were married how many children did you have?

CROSS: I had two children, a boy and a girl.

LEVINE: And their names?

CROSS: And it was Jeffrey and Jan, and I thought those were such beautiful names, Jeffrey and Jan. Oh, that was a real American names, and I loved that. And then, you know, we never, we wore stockings to school because we were cold. Oh, we learned to wear socks and it was a different land entirely, and I loved it. And all my relatives were so

kind, and they gave us a little bank that you could, which impressed me. Now, here's a bank, and when you get dimes from your relatives it goes in this bank. I thought that was the most wonderful present. You see, I'm a Scotchman.  
( she laughs )

LEVINE: So do you have grandchildren now?

CROSS: Yes, I have Jeffrey and Jan.

LEVINE: And did they have children?

CROSS: Yes, they have children, a boy and a girl, they each have, yeah. So I have two grandchildren, Jeffrey and Jan.

LEVINE: Well, now, how is this phase of your life, your old age?

CROSS: OH, well, I liked it, but I liked American better. I'm very happy in America because I think they're more advanced in school, and they're more careful in school, and I like America. I'm more impressed with America, and I, someday I'll tell my grandchildren about Scotland, but I'll leave that place behind me because I, they're more sanitary here in many ways, and that impressed me. I liked the schools. They cared for the children's health when they go to school, and I was, I liked it here, so I think I'll stay in this country. ( she laughs )

LEVINE: Well, how do you like it here in Amsterdam House?

CROSS: Oh, yeah, I think that's wonderful. I had never been in a hotel like this, you know. Over there only rich people went to hotels, and we never went to a hotel like this. So I thought I was very wealthy.

LEVINE: Well, how do you spend your time now? Do you think back on your life?

CROSS: I'm writing a little story about it for my grandchildren, and I'm concocting it and telling all the phases. And they're so, "Did you finish the story, Grandma?" "No, I have this chapter to put in." And it's going to be an interesting story, because I loved America as soon as I got here.

LEVINE: Is there any, are there any ways that you're still Scottish? In other words, are there customs or habits or ways that you have?

CROSS: Once in a while, yes. You know, we loved a cup of tea, and they said, "Boy, you're the old Scotchman. You never want coffee, but you want a cup of tea." I says, "Yes, we like a cup of tea with a little milk or cream." So we have ways like that. And I learned to drink coffee.

You know, tea was the beverage we had, but I loved it all. And then my uncles were very kind, and, oh, I had a little savings bank, and I never saw anything so cute that held dimes. Oh, and I loved that. They said, "Now, every time you get a present you know where to put your dimes." So it was exciting, I loved it.

LEVINE: When you think back over your life now, what makes you proud? What are you proud of?

CROSS: Well, I was proud that I learned to do things in a more scientific way. You were careful about this. I liked it because they're more careful with the children's health, you know.

LEVINE: But you yourself, what makes you feel satisfied that you did in your life?

CROSS: Well, I like it because I learned a lot of things in America. There's places to see. And I liked it because they do something to better your life. You see, they're here very conscious of children's health, which I liked. Whereas if children go to school, well, they look at them. They just not in any way, but here I like it because they, if something, a child has a cough or something right away the doctor says, "Oh, you send that child into my office."

And they look at your eyesight. I liked that. See, I was impressed with the health.

LEVINE: Do you remember things in your life that made you feel very happy?

CROSS: Yes, I had one uncle, Uncle Mo. And every time he gave us, came with us, he gave us, he bought us one of those dime registry banks that registered. We thought he was the most wonderful, a register bank, when you put money in it registers. Oh, I thought he gave us the moon. ( she laughs ) I thought that was the nicest thing that would register. Ooh, I'm talking so loud. But that was happy. And, he said, "I expect you will have a big, have a big bank account one of these days, and then we'll marry a rich man.

LEVINE: What did your husband do?

CROSS: He was a, well, he was an examiner of people, you know, he was with the Health Department, and he was examined, he wasn't a doctor, but from all the people that came from another country, somehow or other he examined them, and he gave them a good report. They need this and they need that, so, and that Uncle Mo, his name was. And I liked him, and I liked all my uncles. And I liked the one that

bought me a bank, ( sirens are heard in the background )  
because that bank, when you put money in it, it registers.

Oh, and I thought he gave me the most wonderful thing  
in the world. ( she laughs )

LEVINE: Can you, is there anything you like about here in Amsterdam  
House, your life here now?

CROSS: Oh, yes, I love it, you know. Because you meet very  
interesting people from others. You yourself, I'm so happy  
to meet you.

LEVINE: Well, I'm happy to meet you.

CROSS: You know why? Because you gave me an idea of a lot of  
things that I should look into. You know, in other words,  
I learned from you to better my life. That's what I like.

LEVINE: Well, the more you can remember about your life and you  
can pass along to your grandchildren, that would be very  
nice.

CROSS: Oh, yes. I do. They're going to write a story. One of  
my granddaughters says, "Oh, I'm going to write about my  
grandmother's life." ( she laughs ) And they're clever,  
you know. They have good vocabularies. See, in our house  
we, reading was a big pastime, you know. And Uncle wanted

to give us something, he gave us a book to read, not any other kind of book, but something to educate yourself about other countries, which was nice.

LEVINE: Can you remember any of your favorite books?

CROSS: Which books?

LEVINE: Your favorite books, the ones you liked the best?

CROSS: Oh, I liked, oh, I loved stories about this woman was very poor, and then she ran into somebody that was her landlady's husband. And, oh, I thought he, he was so kind to all the children, and then it was another woman that was a little bit crippled. And, you know, she had a hunchback, and they didn't like it. People were mean, and they called her Mrs. Elephant, which was very cruel. And then I had one time a lecture said, "That poor woman is a cripple and it's sinful to make fun of her." So then the kids got mad at me, and said, "Oh, you make fun of everybody because you're an American." I said, "It's very sinful to make somebody, the way they're built." So then they listened to me and the teacher gave me credit for advising the children. But I had a nice life. I met a nice man. He was in the record business, and I liked that. And he was a manager of a place called, oh, I've forgotten

the place downtown, where they sold a lot of records, discount records, a little cheaper, and I liked that. I loved selling. That was my pastime. And we got commissions if we, sometimes a buyer bought something that didn't sell, so we had to get rid of it, you know. So you got a prize if you could sell something that the buyer bought by mistake. And then we had a turn system. If you had a customer you couldn't take another one, but once it got very busy, then it was each man for himself. So, you know, I could run fast in those days, so we saw two customers coming at once, they would throw a catalog in front of me. I didn't care, I pushed the catalog and I got the customer. ( she laughs ) I'm sorry to say I was a grabber in those days.

LEVINE: Well, is there anything else you'd like to say, Anne, before the tape's about over, but is there anything else you'd like to say that you'd like your children and grandchildren and great-grandchildren in the future to hear?

CROSS: You know what? I'd like to meet you, I'd like to have a picture of you showing that was the first person here that informed me everything about America, and that impressed me, and I'm going to let my children know I met

this beautiful lovely lady who made me conscious there's a place like America, so I'm happy. And, you know, I'm fortunate. I'm in good health. I'm in my nineties. I'm pretty old now.

LEVINE: You're ninety-eight.

CROSS: Yes, ninety-eight.

LEVINE: Two more years you'll be one hundred.

CROSS: Yeah. So we were brought up to be careful and in good health and not to be, you know, there's diabetes in the family, so I was warned about that. So, in other words, and then my pleasure is meeting a beautiful lady like you.  
( she laughs )

LEVINE: Well, it's certainly been my pleasure to meet a beautiful lady like you. I want to thank you very much.

CROSS: Oh, well, I enjoyed it.

LEVINE: Well, I enjoyed it too, and I want to say that I've been speaking with Anne Cross here in Manhattan on July 25, 1993.

CROSS: Oh, how lovely. Well, I feel honored to meet you.

LEVINE: Well, I feel honored to meet you.

CROSS: I would like a photograph of you sometime, if you have it, to put it in my lovely book of memories.

LEVINE: Okay. Well, this is Janet Levine signing off for the National Park Service.

CROSS: It was a most beautiful day.