

EI-360/DUNKELMAN/ROSENBERG

RAE GUTKIND DUNKELMAN AND ANNA GUTKIND ROSENBERG
BIRTH DATES: DECEMBER 13, 1904 AND MARCH 6, 1906
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INTERVIEWER: JANET LEVINE, PH.D.
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CLIFTON, NEW JERSEY
TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY: NANCY VEGA, 4/1998
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POLAND, 1920
AGES 16 AND 14
PASSAGE ON "THE RYNDHAM"
PORT OF EMBARCATION: ROTTERDAM

RESIDENCES: LODZ, THEN SMALL VILLAGE
PATERSON, NJ

LEVINE: This is Janet Levine for the National Park Service,
and I'm here today at the Daughters of Miriam in
Clifton, New Jersey. It's July 27, 1993, and I'm
here with two sisters who came from Poland in 1920.

DUNKELMAN: Yes.

ROSENBERG: Yes.

LEVINE: Uh, Anna Gutkind Rosenberg was fourteen when she
came through Ellis Island, and her sister Rae, Rae
Gutkind Dunkelman . . .

: We didn't come just together. We came with our
mother, and we were three sisters. One lives in
Florida, the younger one than us.

LEVINE: Oh, okay. I'm going to ask you all about that.

Well, anyway, Rae was sixteen when she came through Ellis Island. Um, we're here today with Kevin Daley, who is the recording engineer, and Karen. Speiser[ph], who is the Director of Development and Community Relations here at the Daughter of Miriam, Daughters of Miriam, and Keith Reiserwisk[ph] from The Herald News is also here today. So I want to say that I'm very much looking forward to hearing your story about life in Poland, about the decision to come here, and about, uh, your experiences at Ellis Island, and also after you settled here in America. Well, let's start at the beginning. Anna, would you say your birth date?

ROSENBERG: What you says?

LEVINE: Your birth date.

ROSENBERG: I said March the 6th.

LEVINE: And the year?

ROSENBERG: 1906.

LEVINE: And Rae, your birth date?

DUNKELMAN: December the 14th.

LEVINE: And the year?

DUNKELMAN: 1904.

LEVINE: Okay. Um, and the town that you were born in,

Anna?

ROSENBERG: Lodz, Poland.

LEVINE: Do you remember that very well? Did you live in Lodz the whole time until you left for America?

ROSENBERG: No. We, we had to leave Lodz in the war, in 1914.

It was very bad, and, uh, most houses were bombed by the Russians came in, the Russians came in. We were, I mean, the Germans came in, and the First World War, 1914, when the war broke out, my father came before. My father left us. It got very bad in Poland. He couldn't make a living. It was very, very bad. But we had owned a house with a partner, a big house, a brick house. It was a big city, all brick houses, and we couldn't make a living. My father had here a sister, my mother's sister. She also came because it was very difficult to make a living in Poland and Russia. It was very bad. So when they came, they came, I wasn't even born yet. My mother's sister was married. She came here with her husband, and the husband, a big family, came. Also for the same reason, because you couldn't live in Poland and in Russia.

LEVINE: What did your father do before?

ROSENBERG: My father, we had a grocery . . .

DUNKELMAN: He had a business.

ROSENBERG: A grocery store. And he used to be an agent, like he bought, took orders from groceries. He went to the wholesalers, and all that, all the grocery stuff. Not vegetables, but dry things. Rice, coffee, beans, salt. Everything, everything that the grocery stores needed, and he gave orders. And, uh . . .

LEVINE: Tell me, let me ask Rae. Rae, what do you remember about your father's grocery store business?

DUNKELMAN: Uh, my mother was the salesgirl, and they sold coffee and herring, you know, all that stuff. And my father was outside, you know? But we were small, you know. We didn't know nothing about things like that.

LEVINE: What was your father's name?

ROSENBERG: Joseph.

DUNKELMAN: Joe.

LEVINE: And your mother's name?

ROSENBERG: Sarah.

DUNKELMAN: Sarah. Jewish, Sarah.

LEVINE: And her maiden name? Do you remember?

ROSENBERG: Sachs[ph].

LEVINE: And you had one sister?

ROSENBERG: Yeah.

DUNKELMAN: I had two sisters. One was born here.

ROSENBERG: Three, we were three sisters. The younger one, then one was born in America, but we came with three sisters. And, uh, we, uh, were supposed to come . . .

SPEISER: Can I interrupt? (break in tape)

LEVINE: Okay. We're continuing now. I wanted to say that Rae is facing me across the table, is on the microphone to my right, and Anna is on the microphone to my left. Okay. So we were talking about your father and his grocery business.

ROSENBERG: Oh, that's in Europe.

LEVINE: And your mother worked also.

ROSENBERG: My mother, she had a lot of children, six children already, but she had to be in the grocery store. They took in somebody in the house for the children.

LEVINE: To take care of the children.

ROSENBERG: Sure. My mother would help in the store.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. Do you remember the house? Describe the

house that you lived in?

DUNKELMAN: The last house was on Governor Street.

ROSENBERG: Not, in Europe she's talking.

DUNKELMAN: Oh.

ROSENBERG: You're talking about Europe. The house was a very big, all big houses. There were big cities. No little houses.

LEVINE: What was it made of?

ROSENBERG: Brick.

LEVINE: And was it a whole house, or part of a house, or . . .

ROSENBERG: They built the house with the big, uh, place to go in, because they used horses and wagons, you know? And brick, big stones is in the yard. They make it in two parts. They made a place to go into the yard with the horse and wagons, because they had, they have toilets in the yard.

DUNKELMAN: Like a big, a big (?), they had two garages.

ROSENBERG: And they come and take this, uh, this out. They use it for fertilization, you know? They take this, they come in. They had to have a place, every house is built, you know, with a place to go and (?), to go into houses, and the front is

stores, you know? It was stores, a lot of stores.
My father had it with a partner.

LEVINE: I see. Now, what did people, what did people do
mostly for work in that . . .

ROSENBERG: This place where we come from was all industrious,
like Paterson was silk city, over there they have a
lot of textile. But, uh, at that time they didn't
have no silk. Everything was made from wool and
cotton, I believe. They make, so there was a lot,
there was a big, there was big factories also, but
everybody wanted to make a living, so they learned
a trade weaving. And they bought themselves a few
looms, and, uh, and they, uh, somebody gave them
this stuff to make the materials, and they made
materials such as big shawls, full shawls, you
know, shawls, you know, they were wearing. They
didn't have much coats those years, but everything
big, big. In the winter every woman had a big
shawl, like a blanket, it looked, with fringes,
plaids, beautiful. And, uh, most people were in a
business, because it was too bad to go to work for
somebody else. They couldn't get no job. So they
learned, and they worked for themselves.
Very,,very poor. No electricity. They worked by a
candle, or by a lamp, a kerosene lamp, they used,
kerosene. And they were so poor they didn't even
have money for kerosene, and for candles. And they

worked many hours, and at the end of the week they hardly get any money. They used to buy everything for, from the book, the groceries. They didn't have no money. And they needed a lot of stuff, they had a lot of children, and they, we had to give them without money everything they came to buy, everything is not packaged. It's in burlap bags, you know, everything, all kinds of rice and beans and everything, coffee, everything comes in big, uh, burlap bags. And when you come in you ask for a pound or two pounds or half a pound. They have a little shovel, and they put it in a paper bag, and they weigh it. Everything is weighed.

LEVINE: Do you remember anything, Rae, about the store?

DUNKELMAN: The store?

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

DUNKELMAN: Yeah, I remember some things, you know, but not too much.

LEVINE: Did you ever have any, did you do chores around the store?

ROSENBERG: No, we didn't.

DUNKELMAN: No. (voices garbled)

ROSENBERG: Not in the store. We were young, very young.

DUNKELMAN: I was young.

ROSENBERG: I was, maybe when they had it I was maybe five years, six years, at the most six years. When my father left I was seven years.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. Now, were there Jewish people and were there non-Jewish people living in your neighborhood?

ROSENBERG: Mostly Jewish, and some Pollacks. Mostly Jewish.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. And did you get along well?

ROSENBERG: We wanted to get along well, you know. But, uh, the Pollacks are very big anti-Semites. They were very big anti-Semites. No good.

LEVINE: So you personally experienced some feeling like that?

ROSENBERG: Well, when my father used to go into the synagogue, they were, and the Pollacks, and they threw stones, and they got the stone in the head and everything and, uh, everybody like this.

LEVINE: Were you a religious family.

ROSENBERG: Very religious.

DUNKELMAN: Orthodox, Orthodox.

LEVINE: How did you observe your religion when you were in Poland? What did you do to observe?

DUNKELMAN: We went to school, but the Polish people, you know, they came into the store and they started taking the cigarettes. They were stealing.

ROSENBERG: Saturdays the stores, every store was closed on Friday afternoon, every store. And when they opened up Saturday night, they came, the Pollacks. As I told you, we had everything in Burlap bags, and they came in and they could grab a bag with anything, rice, or whatever thing was in the bag, and they walked out with it. We couldn't do nothing to them, we couldn't do nothing. What are we going to do?

LEVINE: Were there police? Were you aware of police?

ROSENBERG: They didn't do nothing. They didn't do nothing. No.

LEVINE: Do you remember, uh, things that your mother cooked when you were little girls in Lodge?

ROSENBERG: Yeah, sure.

LEVINE: What dishes do you remember?

ROSENBERG: They cooked very good.

DUNKELMAN: My mother knew how to cook (?) . . .

ROSENBERG: Everything.

DUNKELMAN: And chicken soup, and she made all kind of stuff.

ROSENBERG: Everything.

DUNKELMAN: Gefilte fish she made by herself.

ROSENBERG: She was baking good. And then she had a girl, you know, that took care of everything, and if not, she did it. I was even maybe ten years old, I was a good cook, in Europe. I knew everything.

LEVINE: Do you still cook some of those things that you cooked way back then?

ROSENBERG: Yes.

DUNKELMAN: We made stuffed cabbage.

ROSENBERG: And my grandchildren, they love it. And they, and always they have my food even now. I have a grandson, a doctor, I have, uh, a granddaughter.

LEVINE: We're going to talk about that later. Let's say, um, did you go to school when you were in Poland?

ROSENBERG: No. I didn't go to school.

LEVINE: No? And, Rae, you didn't either?

DUNKELMAN: Huh?

LEVINE: Go to school?

DUNKELMAN: Yeah, Hebrew, Hebrew school.

LEVINE: Oh, Hebrew school.

ROSENBERG: I didn't go to school because I was young, and then the war broke out right away, and there was no life. We had to hide. We had to leave, leave the city, and go to a small town, because the Germans came in, they bombed, you know? And we lost everything. My father was in America. We were six children. The youngest was not even a year old. And . . .

LEVINE: Well, let me, Rae, did you go to school for a few years?

DUNKELMAN: Huh?

LEVINE: You were a few years older, so did you go to school for a while?

DUNKELMAN: I went in Hebrew school in Europe.

LEVINE: Yeah. Tell me what that was like. What do you remember about that?

DUNKELMAN: I didn't even want to go, because my father made me go, you know? He was busy, you know, in the store. So I stopped going altogether. I didn't go much there.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. Did you learn? Did you learn Hebrew?

DUNKELMAN: Yeah, I learned.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. And so do you remember when the war started, when the bombing started?

DUNKELMAN: My father left, you know, because he didn't want to go to the army, so he left and he went to this country. We had, my mother had a sister here, and so she, so he went away from Europe and he went to this country. And then we were left in the house by ourselves, and then the war broke out, and they started shooting, you know, in the windows. Me and my two brothers were in the room. So after that the windows was broken and everything, so we had to leave, you know? We went to, to my mother's sister. It was very bad.

LEVINE: Was your mother's sister in the same town?

ROSENBERG: Yeah. My mother had . . . (voices garbled) My mother had two sisters.

DUNKELMAN: After that my mother had, my grandmother had a sister in a little country, you know, called Suhinev[ph], like a little country. So they had a butcher store, and my uncle had a butcher store, too. So we went there, and we stayed there till, uh, till after the, my father sent for us, you know, to come to this country. So . . .

LEVINE: So, um, so what happened then? You went to your, you went to your mother's sister's house, and then how long did you stay?

ROSENBERG: We were separated. Everybody lives in one room in

Europe.

DUNKELMAN: We were separated. We didn't have, they had . . .

ROSENBERG: When I talk you don't talk, because it's no good
you talk, you talk, and it's no good.

LEVINE: Okay, one at a time.

ROSENBERG: When you talk, that's all.

LEVINE: Okay, Anna. What you were saying.

ROSENBERG: What were you up to?

LEVINE: You were saying that you, after you went . . .

ROSENBERG: She went with a younger sister to, my mother's
sister, she couldn't take, we were six children.
We couldn't go to one family, because they had
their own children, we lived in one room. So I
went with my youngest brother, he was a baby, to my
grandmother, my mother's mother, and I stayed there
for many years I stayed with my grandmother. And
I . . .

LEVINE: What was your grandmother's name?

ROSENBERG: Uh, she was the second name was Sachs[ph], but the
first name was Rachel.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. What do you remember about her? Do you
remember sometimes . . .

ROSENBERG: Yeah. She was a very quiet woman, very, very, uh, she was a very religious woman and, uh, if she only could spare a few, something, a few little money, she would go to the rabbi and give it to the rabbi.

She would take it off from her, from her food, and she believed, always believed in the rabbis. She used to go consult everything with the rabbi. Before she made a decision, anything, the moves or anything, she went to the rabbi, was the rabbi, what the rabbi said, told her to do, she did.

LEVINE: Do you remember any things that she taught you, that she wanted you to learn?

ROSENBERG: I learned it myself. Nobody taught me. I picked up to be religious and very kosher and everything, and the rest didn't. I, like nobody told me how to be, I wanted to be like this. I learned it from my parents and from my grandmother. I didn't go to the new style, and I'm still like this, and none of them are like this, none of them.

LEVINE: So where did you go, Rae, when your family had to split up? Who did you go to live with?

DUNKELMAN: We went to a different country, you know? The little country, and my grandmother was there, and my mother's sister. So I went with somebody, you know, to help them out. I was young at that time, and I didn't have anywhere to go, because . . .

ROSENBERG: Because it's separate, see? We had to be separated.

DUNKELMAN: So I stayed there till, till we went. Then we got a room, you know, something like that room there.

LEVINE: Were you with any of your brothers and sisters?

DUNKELMAN: Huh?

LEVINE: Were your brothers and sisters with you?

ROSENBERG: No.

DUNKELMAN: No. We all was separated.

ROSENBERG: They practically didn't have where to stay. They stayed in any place, the two brothers. They were older than us, see? We were the youngest, the girls. So I stayed with my grandmother as long as I could, and they just were in the street, that's all. They didn't have where to be, the two brothers.

LEVINE: So, so the two brothers were in the street, you were with your grandmother. Rae was with . . .

ROSENBERG: Was with my mother's sister.

LEVINE: The sister.

ROSENBERG: With her sister.

DUNKELMAN: But then we were together after that.

LEVINE: And for, for several years.

ROSENBERG: Yeah. And then it got very, very bad in the big city. No food. The Germans came in. The Germans took over Russia. Yeah, they came in, the Germans. And we, all the houses, the big houses, was broken, and everybody left everything. They didn't care for anything. We just wanted to save ourself. We were looking for food, where to hide. So whatever somebody could hide, so we had a little country with my mother's family, you know, my mothers and sister lived there. So we went there, and then we got a room in this very small town. Only each, each house was just a room, was a smaller village, beautiful village, very nice. But, uh, very poor, everybody's very poor. So, and it was the country, we went out and picked berries. We went to the forest, we picked mushrooms. It was beautiful there.

LEVINE: Do you remember the name of that place?

ROSENBERG: Yeah. It was called Suhinev[ph].

LEVINE: Can you spell it?

ROSENBERG: I can't spell it, Suhinev[ph].

LEVINE: Okay.

ROSENBERG: It was a small town.

LEVINE: So you have fond memories of that place? You have fond memories of . . .

ROSENBERG: Yeah.

LEVINE: Of Suhinev[ph].

ROSENBERG: Yeah. It's everything before my eyes. I was very young. Then my mother was very sick. She was sick a long time. She got sick on her foot, arthritis or something. And we didn't have no father, no mother. We stayed with the family. Then my mother got a little bit healthy, she started to smuggle. There was not, we didn't have nothing to smuggle. There was nothing to be gotten, no flour or anything. But, anyway, she managed, she find out in another town they haven't got sugar, and it was sugar in our place, so she took a few pounds of sugar and went on a train and tried to find a baker or somebody to buy it. There was plenty of customers. And what we didn't have and the other place had, she used to buy there and bring it to us and sell it and make a few pennies. But she had, we had family in that town, too, so my mother slept over to get the train. And you weren't allowed to sell it. You weren't allowed to bring from one place to the other, weren't allowed. But she did it. If the police caught it, they took it away, and she lost it. So . . .

LEVINE: So she traveled by herself then, by train?

ROSENBERG: Took a train, and went to another town. That town was occupied by the Austrians, see, so it was better. It was no more Russians. It was either German or Austrian, and it was much better than with the Germans, with the Pollacks, and with, those years the Germans were our friends, those years, the First World War. They trusted us.

LEVINE: So you remember, um, your mother was smuggling right up until you left for America?

ROSENBERG: Yeah, yeah.

LEVINE: That was what she was doing.

ROSENBERG: Made very little money. My two brothers, they were older, they got themselves a job in a lumberyard. They were very young boys. They wanted to make a, some little money. In the summer they worked outside with the, cutting the boards and everything, and making them in, uh, in, you know, in the lumberyard they have to make it straight to cut the boards. So they were (?), like these two young boys, they came over later. We didn't come together. Just my mother and the three girls and the youngest brother. The two were left in Europe yet.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. Did your mother and father communicate

with each other when he was in America?

ROSENBERG: It was, it was, uh, no communication. We weren't allowed to write letters. Because in the wartime they weren't allowed us no, no writing letters. We weren't allowed. But after this stopped, my father, my mother had an address, my father couldn't write us because we didn't live no more in the town. He couldn't find us. But my mother wrote a letter and told him what happened. So he, uh, my mother said we have no more house, don't come home. And, uh, so my father made already papers, and he sent for us. He wasn't even a citizen yet, but we could come, a wife and children could come to a husband even if he wasn't a citizen. Otherwise you had to be a citizen. To bring over somebody from Europe, you had to be a citizen. But he wasn't.

LEVINE: Okay. Um, so when you, uh, when the decision was made to leave for America, do you remember packing up anything?

ROSENBERG: Yeah. We had the certificate, the birth certificate, if you were born in the big city, so my mother left us in the town yet, and she went to the big city to get together the birth certificates. Of course, we had to have birth certificates to make passports, you know? We can't, you know. So she went, she got together the birth certificates and, uh . . .

LEVINE: Did she, Rae, do you remember anything your mother packed to take with you?

ROSENBERG: We didn't have much to pack.

DUNKELMAN: We didn't have nothing.

ROSENBERG: We didn't have no, no nothing. We didn't have anything. My father didn't send much money, and all the, through the years my mother didn't have money to buy, so we, we didn't have nothing. We came . . .

DUNKELMAN: I remember on the train, we went to the train.

LEVINE: You went, from the little village where you were living, then you went by train . . .

DUNKELMAN: We went to the train.

ROSENBERG: We had to go back to, to the big city.

DUNKELMAN: My mother got me to hold a little basket which had a few dollars. She says, "They might take it away from you. When they come to look what you got there, just hold it like this." And I was holding the money right there, not much money, in my hands. And I went over to the desk, and they looked what's in there.

LEVINE: So you took a train, then, and where did the train take you?

ROSENBERG: We waited till everything got ready. She had to go to Warsaw for her, to, uh, for the consul. I didn't go, because I . . .

DUNKELMAN: A passport, you know.

ROSENBERG: I was fourteen years, I didn't need no passport. She needed.

LEVINE: And so where did you, where did you go after you left when you had your papers?

ROSENBERG: Then everything was ready. My mother got the passports, and she had to go for that to Warsaw, to the consul.

LEVINE: And then when she got them, then what?

ROSENBERG: Then we arrived, we tried to get the train to go out from Poland, you know, but we couldn't get no trains, you know? We had to be in the, in the, before they take the trains, we just had to be at the stations. We had a very, we had to wait for a train. And it's not so far from us to go to Germany. We went to Germany first, you know? Not, it doesn't take long, but because we didn't get straight transportation, we had to get off all the time, you know, wait for trains. It took a long time. We didn't have no food. My mother bought a bread, and she gave, had a knife and gave us a piece of bread, you know? Like for breakfast, or

for lunch or for supper, we had it, for weeks and weeks we had a piece of bread and nothing else. That's how we traveled. And then we got to Selfin[ph], in Germany, that was not far from Poland, and in Germany everything was wonderful, because the war was on our side, not on their side.

They came to us to ruin everything, see? For us, everything got broken, but nobody, the Russians didn't go, get into Germany, so everything was wonderful. When we came there it was like day and night. Poland didn't have nothing, they had everything. We slept over one night in a hotel, and then we started to go to, uh, to Holland.

LEVINE: Do you remember Germany, Rae? Do you remember Germany?

ROSENBERG: Germany?

LEVINE: When you were going to Holland to catch the boat?

DUNKELMAN: I can't remember.

ROSENBERG: The, we didn't go out, we just slept over. We were interested. We didn't have no money. How are you going to, what are you going to do?

LEVINE: So then did you get, when you got to, uh, you either got another train?

ROSENBERG: Yeah, yeah. Then it was better. When we got ourselves to Germany, it was better. We went to

Holland. In Holland we had to wait weeks for a boat, and many, many people.

LEVINE: And were you examined there?

DUNKELMAN: A lot, examined, doctors, yeah.

LEVINE: You remember the examinations?

DUNKELMAN: They examined us, they took us off, all the clothes off, and they, you know . . .

ROSENBERG: Gave us showers.

DUNKELMAN: We went to the bathtub and took everything off. And I remember my youngest sister, how old at the time? Ten years old. And the, me and my sister went in the bathtub, and they gave us soap to wash.

ROSENBERG: But they didn't give you a towel.

DUNKELMAN: The soap in your eyes, they didn't give you no towel.

ROSENBERG: The soap was up, and they didn't give us no towels.
(voices garbled)

DUNKELMAN: I washed her head, and the soap ran into her eyes, and she was crying. They didn't give, and then they took away the clothes and, you know, they took to the exterminator.

ROSENBERG: For weeks and weeks we didn't change no clothes.

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DUNKELMAN: So, they did that to everybody, you know?

ROSENBERG: We didn't have clothes. We didn't change no clothes for weeks and weeks, until we came to America.

LEVINE: So what was the ship, then, that you got, the name of it?

ROSENBERG: Oh, Ryndam very bad, very bad.

LEVINE: Okay.

ROSENBERG: Oh, the tables were turning over.

LEVINE: I think what we'll do here is pause, and then we'll continue after a break about the trip, Ellis Island and coming to America.

END OF SIDE ONE

BEGINNING OF SIDE TWO

LEVINE: This is Janet Levine for the National Park Service, and we're continuing now. I'm speaking with Anna Rosenberg and her sister, Rae Dunkelman, who came from Poland in 1920. Anna is on the microphone to the left of me, facing me, and Rae is on the microphone to the right of me. We were talking about getting on the boat.

DUNKELMAN: Yes.

LEVINE: What do you remember, Rae, about being on the ship?

DUNKELMAN: I don't remember nothing.

ROSENBERG: You were sick.

DUNKELMAN: Oh, I was in the hospital all the time, throwing up. They gave you good food. I looked at the food, I feel like throwing up. But she walked around and she ate everything. I couldn't eat nothing. Till the boat stopped, I was in the hospital.

LEVINE: Were you, were you way down in steerage, in the bottom of the boat, in the . . . (voices garbled)

DUNKELMAN: Yeah.

ROSENBERG: It was here, and upstairs.

DUNKELMAN: We were all the way at the bottom.

ROSENBERG: A very, very bad boat for the third class, it was. It was the first class, third class, you know? If you were in the third class, it was bad.

LEVINE: So it was a big dormitory, like, or was it a cabin, that you slept in?

ROSENBERG: It was a big boat, a lot of people on it. Crowded, very crowded. And the boat stopped in Ireland and picked up some people there. We passed around there, and some Irish people came up, and they were dancing, they were full of fun. But we were very

sick on the boat.

LEVINE: Did you go to the dining room?

DUNKELMAN: Yeah, they gave us the food. Oh! We never, we thought, we thought we would never have it any more, but we start hiding the bread. Because we didn't know we were going to get the, you know, food here. Because we never saw, they used to, the old country in the war, to bake the bread without, from the peel from the potatoes they made bread. We couldn't get a bread.

LEVINE: Okay. We're going to pause for a second. (break in tape) Okay. We're resuming again. Now, do you remember when the boat came into the New York Harbor? Do you remember seeing New York from the boat?

DUNKELMAN: People were standing downstairs and waiting for the people, we saw people, my father there, yeah.

LEVINE: Where did you see your father? Where was he?

DUNKELMAN: They were, they were waiting for us. The boat stopped, you know. Then they let us out. And they, they were waiting, my father was in the interview with my father, you know? So then they opened up the gate, and we went out to my father.

LEVINE: So that was Ellis Island.

DUNKELMAN: Yeah, Ellis Island.

ROSENBERG: A lot of them are sitting, and they asked us if, you know, what, if you know how to read, you know? And we were reading something. There were all kind of languages, you know? We read what we could.

LEVINE: What else did they ask you?

ROSENBERG: Pardon me?

LEVINE: What else were you asked?

ROSENBERG: This I don't remember. This I don't remember.

LEVINE: What else do you remember about Ellis Island?

ROSENBERG: I think we slept over. Didn't we sleep over in Ellis Island? I think we slept over, because we were waiting for the father, you know, and this and that, until somebody was, there were other people.

DUNKELMAN: They were dancing and singing, all the people. Oh, it was very nice. Yeah.

ROSENBERG: This, too much about Ellis Island I don't remember. We were interested very much in, to my father, to see my father, you know?

LEVINE: What was it like when you saw him?

ROSENBERG: Well, we didn't know nothing how he looks, anything like that. We didn't know nothing. My mother had

to say, "This is the father." That's all. We didn't know. Because he changed, you know? In Europe he was dressed different. In Europe he had the little beard. In America he didn't have no beard, you know? He dressed in American clothes, you know? So we, and he gained weight, you know? He looked different than we thought, you know? Because we don't remember nothing from Europe, because we were young, my father got up very early in the morning to go for business, you know? And he, when he came back, we were asleep already. We didn't remember him much. We didn't see him.

LEVINE: Rae, did you remember your father?

DUNKELMAN: When he looked up, he (?) my father. You know? He looked different, you know? He wasn't religious like he was in Europe, you know? Different.

LEVINE: And, um, so where did you, when you were released from Ellis Island, where did you go?

ROSENBERG: We went to my mother's sister's house.

LEVINE: Where was that?

ROSENBERG: In Paterson.

DUNKELMAN: Paterson.

ROSENBERG: Paterson. She lived in a big house, and they were very nice to us. And, so the girls had friends

that lived in a one-family house. The girls had friends, so they went to sleep by their friends. They gave us their bedrooms, you know? Because we came, we came, uh, we were four children before. We were six, but two had to be left over Europe yet.

LEVINE: So it was the two of you.

ROSENBERG: Three sisters, and a little brother.

LEVINE: And a brother.

ROSENBERG: He came. And he stayed for my aunt's house. He stayed, you know, they had to give us clothes. We didn't have any clothes, from top to bottom, and they gave us clothes, and they gave us the bathrooms to wash ourselves and everything. And, uh, then they brought some things for us to help us. And, uh . . .

LEVINE: Did you go to school?

DUNKELMAN: Night school, we went to night school.

ROSENBERG: We went to . . .

DUNKELMAN: East Side night school.

ROSENBERG: My father had with a part this summer, looms, you know? That was the made material, weaving. So he taught us how to, the trade, he taught us. I was very young. I couldn't reach it, so I had to stay on

a bench, you know, to do the work.

LEVINE: So he taught you how to weave on the loom in your house, in your aunt's house?

ROSENBERG: Oh, we had a shop.

LEVINE: A shop.

ROSENBERG: With a partner, he had a shop. We learned there, and it takes some time. We were very poor. My father didn't have much money. And, uh, till we learned, and then we got a little money, we started to buy things. We all got together. My mother got rooms. My father got rooms for us. It was hard to get rooms in Paterson, very hard.

LEVINE: Did your mother and your sister and both of you, were you all working with the looms?

ROSENBERG: Not my mother. Just I, one sister went, the little brother and the little sister went to school. They were very young. And I and my sister learned how to weave, how to work. It takes some time till we know.

LEVINE: What was night school like for you?

ROSENBERG: What was that?

LEVINE: The night school?

ROSENBERG: Night school, oh. We went to, it was a night

school up Main Street in Paterson. It was a high school, but in the night they had teachers teaching the, the immigrants, you know? We went from seven, I think, till nine, I think it was. And . . .

LEVINE: Do you remember how you were taught, what they do?

ROSENBERG: Well, they taught us how to sing the, My Country Tis Of Thee. And, uh, we started to learn, we started to learn. Like, we started like little babies. From the beginning we didn't know nothing. We had to start right. Because we didn't have much schooling in Europe, so we had to, my sister and my little brother went to school, and they learned very good. They were smart and everything, very good. They learned, in four years my sister graduated, she made it to four years, my sister.

LEVINE: So did you both keep working in your father's shop? Did you ever have other jobs?

DUNKELMAN: She worked at a different place. I worked, I didn't start working when my, my uncle, he had looms there. So I learned there how to work, you know? So then after I found jobs.

ROSENBERG: When we knew how to get around, we knew a little bit English.

DUNKELMAN: But I worked, I worked till sixty-five, I worked.

LEVINE: Always on a loom.

DUNKELMAN: Till I got married, yeah.

LEVINE: Did you always work with the looms?

DUNKELMAN: Huh?

LEVINE: Were you always working on the looms?

ROSENBERG: Sure.

DUNKELMAN: Yeah. That's all I did.

LEVINE: And how did you meet your husband?

DUNKELMAN: My husband? We were in the same neighborhood, you know? In the same club we used to go. I belonged to the chorus there. So that's how I met him, you know?

LEVINE: What neighborhood?

DUNKELMAN: Huh?

LEVINE: In Paterson?

DUNKELMAN: Yeah, in Paterson.

LEVINE: And, uh, you had a social club?

DUNKELMAN: A what?

LEVINE: A social club?

ROSENBERG: They had a lot of clubs.

DUNKELMAN: Yeah, yeah, a social club.

ROSENBERG: A lot of clubs. And we belonged, and even if we went, we enjoyed ourselves, and then we went, like now it is, we went for trips, to camps, you know? Because you've worked and made a little money, and in four years my parents bought a house. In four years my parents bought a two-family house, a nice two-family house. And my mother saved up a little money, and she bought furniture. Everything was all cash. The house, you only paid in a little money, you know? It was a beautiful house.

LEVINE: How did you meet your husband, Anna?

ROSENBERG: I, uh, I went back to Europe in 1929. I went back to Europe.

LEVINE: You went to Poland?

ROSENBERG: Back to Poland.

LEVINE: Why did you go back? (an announcement over a public address system is heard in the background on the tape)

ROSENBERG: I, uh, I knew, I knew a boy, it was a family boy, so I went back and I got married there. I came back in a year, around 1930 I came back.

LEVINE: So the man you married, had he been in the United States, too?

ROSENBERG: When I married him we both came. I was a citizen.

In 1930 I came back. I was there a year in Poland.

LEVINE: So you went back to Poland to marry him?

ROSENBERG: Because we had a lot of family there, and we loved each other, see? (an announcement over a public address system is heard in the background on the tape) And, uh, I was always, it was always my home, the family, my mother's sisters had their children my age, her age, and we got together, very much close together. So, uh, to me I said I'm going home. When I said, we didn't like Poland, but to me, I said I'm going home because on account of family. I had a lot of family there.

LEVINE: Was your grandmother still there?

ROSENBERG: My grandmother came to America a little before we came, with my grandfather. That, with my mother's, we had the family and the sister and brother move. My uncle, two uncles, came themselves after we came, they came. They had business, big business. They left everything, they came to America. They were smart people.

LEVINE: So they all settled in Paterson?

ROSENBERG: Yeah, they lived in Paterson, they lived.

LEVINE: So when you went back home did you, to Poland, did you go to, in order to marry your husband? Is that

why you went?

ROSENBERG: Yeah, yeah. I went back. I stayed with my mother's sister, I stayed. I got married there, and then I came with my husband to America. Yeah.

LEVINE: And what did your husband do here?

ROSENBERG: My husband, his parents had a bakery in Europe, and he was a baker, so he went to the same thing in America.

LEVINE: He was a baker here, too?

ROSENBERG: Yeah, till he died he was a baker.

LEVINE: And how about your husband, Rae? What did your husband do?

DUNKELMAN: He went by his uncle, the textile, upholstery, yeah. But then my, the uncle went bankrupt. He went to insurance, the Washington National Insurance. He was a salesman there.

LEVINE: And, um, did you have children?

DUNKELMAN: I got two daughters.

LEVINE: And their names?

DUNKELMAN: One lives in Arizona now. She got two boys, and she lives in Tucson, Arizona.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. What's her name?

DUNKELMAN: Helene Hopmeyer[ph].

LEVINE: Uh-huh. And your other child?

DUNKELMAN: Huh?

LEVINE: And you have two?

DUNKELMAN: One lives in New York.

LEVINE: And who's that?

DUNKELMAN: Loretta, Loretta. She's not married, Dunkelmann.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. And how about you, Anna?

ROSENBERG: I have a son and a daughter, and my daughter lives in Fairlawn.

LEVINE: And her name?

ROSENBERG: Charlotte Herman. And my son lives in New City, Melvin Rosenberg.

LEVINE: And you have grandchildren? (an announcement over a public address system is heard in the background on the tape)

ROSENBERG: He has two sons, two sons. And my daughter has a son and a daughter. They're married. She has, again, she has a grandchild, a grandson, and I have a great-grandson.

LEVINE: How are you enjoying this phase of your life?

ROSENBERG: This?

LEVINE: Now.

ROSENBERG: Not good.

LEVINE: Why?

ROSENBERG: Because we are alone, we have no husbands. The children are busy with their families, and we don't feel well, and our friends died, and we make the, we are like this, that's all. We miss, we lived a rich life, but we lived with people together, belonging, going together all the time, all in groups. Everything with people that we belonged together, you know?

LEVINE: How about you, Rae? Do you think about the old times very much now, nowadays? Do you think about when you were a little girl and your life before?

DUNKELMAN: I don't think about that.

LEVINE: No? Um, well, what are you most proud of that you . . .

ROSENBERG: Huh?

LEVINE: What makes you feel proud that you did in your life?

ROSENBERG: Proud? What did you do good? What do you remember in the good about your life?

DUNKELMAN: Not much.

ROSENBERG: Struggling, working hard, struggling.

DUNKELMAN: Worked hard, all my life.

ROSENBERG: Working hard.

LEVINE: When you first came to this country, did people treat you badly because you were immigrants, the greenhorns? Did you run into any of that?

ROSENBERG: Well, I'll tell you. We weren't used to get anything. We knew we have to work for everything, no matter how, we weren't used to good. So we didn't have it good here, and we didn't mind it. But what we liked it, because it wasn't like, uh, anti-Semites, you know? We were free. We felt ourselves free. We worked with all kinds of people and nationalities over here, with people. I worked with my kind of people, but when we worked we worked with all kind of people, and we got along very good. I have nothing to complain in America. I've worked for everything. I'm proud of it. Not, we didn't expect anything. We waited till we were able to buy, then we bought, we bought for cash. No, no paying out. We didn't owe anybody any money. That was our pleasure. Nobody came to the door knocking that we owed them money. If I didn't have money, I didn't buy. When I had money, I went to the store and bought for cash. That's

it. Whether for a lot of money, or for a little money, for cash. I never owned a house.

LEVINE: How about you, Rae? Is there anything you'd like to say about coming to America as a girl and living most of your life out here?

DUNKELMAN: I was, I'm very happy that I'm here. Yeah. But, uh, I had a lot of friends before, but they're all, came from the other side. But did they, you know, but some of them are here, and some of them passed away. So now the Russian came in, Russian people. Most of them are Russian people now. So you've got to talk Russian, you know, since a lot of them don't talk Jewish.

ROSENBERG: It's different now. We lost our, the old friends. They were much older than us, mixed. They didn't care, mixed. I belonged to societies, and I liked the people. I looked up to them because they were, they were working people, and they were satisfied, never complaining, working people. All working people. Some of them become bosses, you know, their own business. My brothers also, you know?

LEVINE: They . . .

ROSENBERG: They had a little printing shop, one of them had a little bakery. But he died, they moved away to California. They, you know, to Florida. I have two sisters in Florida.

LEVINE: Well, is there anything else you'd like to say before we close, before we finish? Is there anything else you'd like to say?

ROSENBERG: Not much, not much. I told you. We live on the Social Security. We worked, no relief. I'm proud of it. Never took the relief, I don't owe anybody any money. That's my pleasure. I'm proud, what I have was my own, you know? Nobody gave me for nothing. I worked with my sweat for everything. I like it. I'm used to that. I didn't expect anything. We came, my aunt had this beautiful house. She also was poor. She worked herself up in the wartime, in the First World War she had it very bad, also, but they happened to have worked themselves up, and they lived in a beautiful house. And we had, we were not in a nice house when we came, and we didn't expect they should give us. We waited until we had money, and then we paid into a house, you know, a little money. And we were all happy together. We were happy because we were all together. Before we all separated. We had to be separated, because we didn't have, see?

DUNKELMAN: I used to be a waitress in the Temple Emanuel, you know, for the nutrition side, volunteer. Twenty years I worked there.

LEVINE: And did that give you pleasure?

ROSENBERG: Yeah, we liked it.

LEVINE: You did, too?

ROSENBERG: Oh, certainly.

DUNKELMAN: I worked there twenty years.

ROSENBERG: Yeah, we liked it very much. Then we can't do it no more, you know? My hands shake, I can't walk. So I gave it up. I worked till I came to this day care, I worked, as a volunteer. And they have, they're still going on, the nutrition place, Temple Emanuel.

DUNKELMAN: I used to go to Arizona every year, two or three, months. But since I'm sick, I don't go no place.

ROSENBERG: In Florida I visit my sisters, two sisters I got there.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. Well, it's nice that you have each other.

ROSENBERG: Yeah.

LEVINE: And you're close to each other.

ROSENBERG: One brother just died, the youngest, he just died.

LEVINE: Okay. Well, I want to, I want to thank you very much. This has been a very interesting story.

DUNKELMAN: She did everything, not me. (she laughs)

LEVINE: Yes, you're important in this, too.

EI-360/DUNKELMAN/ROSENBERG

DUNKELMAN: I have a lot of trouble. It's like a boom-boom, in my ears.

LEVINE: You did fine. And I want to say thank you very much.

ROSENBERG: Yes.

LEVINE: I've been speaking with Anna Rosenberg and Rae Dunkelman, and this is Janet Levine for the National Park Service. It's July 27, 1993, and I'm signing off.