

EI-492

MARY CUNNINGHAM KENDRICK

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INTERVIEWER: PAUL E. SIGRIST, JR.

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TRANSCRIPT PREPARED AND REVIEWED BY: PAUL E. SIGRIST, JR., 8/1998

SCOTLAND, 1927

AGE 7 (AS RECORDED IN THE INTERVIEW)

PASSAGE ON "THE TRANSYLVANIA"

ORAL HISTORIAN'S NOTE: Bob Jones, who was instrumental in locating interviewees in the Utica area of upper New York State, is also present during this interview. Paul E. Sigrist, Jr., Director of Oral History, 8/19/1998.

SIGRIST: Good afternoon, this is Paul Sigrist for the National Park Service. Today is Thursday, July 7th, 1994. I'm in New Hartford, New York, outside of Utica, with Mary Kendrick. Mrs. Kendrick came from Scotland in 1927. You were seven years old at that time?

KENDRICK: Right.

SIGRIST: Yeah. And I also want to say that Bob Jones is also present in the room. Anyway, thank you for letting me come out. Can we begin, Mrs. Kendrick, with you giving me your birth date, please.

KENDRICK: November 8th, 1918.

SIGRIST: And where were you born.

KENDRICK: Auchinleck, Scotland.

SIGRIST: Can you spell that?

KENDRICK: A-U-C-H-I-N-L-E-C-K.

SIGRIST: Thank you. Where in Scotland is that?

KENDRICK: Uh, that would be the west coast, south of Glasgow, in the Cumnock area, Ayr, which is a Robert Burns country everyone is familiar with, that's it.

SIGRIST: Can you tell me a little something about the town, what it looked like when you were a little girl?

KENDRICK: It's a coal, it's a coal mining town, was a coal mining town. That's where my father worked. I can, I can remember row houses, all of the houses attached together. And I can show you a picture of them later. I can remember my schoolyard, a red brick school with a fence all around it, high, spiked. Very small town, and the men all went to work in the mine a few miles away.

SIGRIST: You said that the houses were all attached. Did you live in an attached house?

KENDRICK: Uh huh.

SIGRIST: Can you describe the house that you lived in specifically for me?

KENDRICK: I can remember it being very small. I can remember an open fireplace with the soup kettle hanging there. I can remember the bathrooms being across the road.

SIGRIST: Was that a separate building that stood...

KENDRICK: Uh huh, uh huh.

SIGRIST: ...where the latrines were.

KENDRICK: And the women were always busy out keeping the stoops clean. They'd whitewash them or did something of this kind to them, you know.

SIGRIST: Was there an upstairs to the house?

KENDRICK: No, no, no.

SIGRIST: What about a kitchen? Was that where the fireplace was?

KENDRICK: That's what I'm saying, I, I sort of remember a big, open room. There may have been divided rooms but I'm very vague on that. I remember when we used to go and visit my, my rich aunt in another part of town. She had a regular house. She had, she had rooms and she had all this stuff. She owned the bakery and she was the affluent one in the family (a clock chime can be heard in the background) so that, so I think our house was

let's talk about your family. What were your brothers' names?

KENDRICK: There's a David, who is named after my father who is David
Cunningham, and then Archie, Archibald I guess is the proper
name. Archie was my younger brother.

SIGRIST: So you're in the middle of the two brothers.

KENDRICK: Uh huh, uh huh.

SIGRIST: What was your relationship like with your brothers when you were a
little girl? (he clears his throat)

KENDRICK: I remember fighting with my older brother quite a lot. (she
laughs) I guess that's normal. And the little one was, I guess
he was the favorite in the family, the little one, yes.

SIGRIST: Is there something that you remember that you enjoyed doing,
either with your brother or with your family, as something that
was fun to do? Something stick out in your mind?

KENDRICK: I remember like once a year, and it couldn't have been too many
years because I was too young, but at times going to the
seashore, and that would have been down near Ayr, and getting,
getting a treat there and walking in the water. And the treat
was fish and chips, I think, in a paper, in a newspaper. They
made a cone out of newspaper and put that in there. I remember a
playground around the school where we used to play, my brothers
and myself. I remember, the reason our coming to this

country was a severe depression. There was a, the national strike was on in 1926 and we used to go to the playground and get our meals there. There were, charity I guess, and then we got a little tin can of soup to bring home for the evening meal, I guess.

SIGRIST: So your father was involved with the national strike?

KENDRICK: Yes.

SIGRIST: Tell me what you know about that.

KENDRICK: I, very little. It was, he was in the coal mine but it was, the coal mines all went on strike. It's my understanding that all of Great Britain went on strike, not only the coal mines but I'm, I'm vague about that. They, you call it the "national strike." That's what I remember, too. So the country was shut down. The British Isles were shut down. My father had a cousin come from Oriskany Falls [NY], which is just south of here, to visit. And he's the one who persuaded him to come here. So Dad came in 1926, which is when the strike was on, I believe.

SIGRIST: What do you know about, prior to the strike, what, what your father did in the coal mines, or do you remember him coming home from work...?

KENDRICK: I can remember him coming home dirty, yes, with a little, little lamp on his head. Other than that, not too much. I was pretty young.

SIGRIST: Was that what a lot of men in that town did, the coal mines? Were they employed...?

KENDRICK: That's what I remember, that's what I remember. We had, I think it was my mother's sister who ran a bakery there, you, Polly, I remember the bakery. And, and this, this well-to-do one I mentioned earlier, I think her husband was in charge of the, what they called the gas works, that is the municipal lighting and heating system for the town. Other than that, I don't know, Uncle John, I think he was a coal miner also. I think they all, pretty much that was it.

SIGRIST: What was your father's personality like?

KENDRICK: Well, he was a pretty good guy, wasn't he Bob? (she and Bob Jones laugh) He was, he was a very out-going person. He was the kind of person that I think wanted to come to his country to do something better for himself and his family. Had visions of, you know, the golden streets (she laughs) and all that kind of, unfortunately he ran right into the Depression here a few years later. But he loved America, he loved it.

SIGRIST: What was your mother's name?

KENDRICK: Jean.

SIGRIST: And what was her maiden name?

KENDRICK: She was Jean Wylie, W-Y-L-I-E.

SIGRIST: And tell me a little bit about your mother's background.

KENDRICK: She, what, the thing I can remember about her, she worked in a nursing home when she was young girl. Of course, education wasn't important then. They maybe went to school 'til they were twelve or fourteen or something. And she, that, she worked there.

SIGRIST: What about her parents? Did she have parents that were living that you remember?

KENDRICK: I didn't, no, they were gone when, they died early.

SIGRIST: Did she ever talk about her parents?

KENDRICK: No. Probably did, I don't remember. She had a couple sisters that I remember and I went to visit one of them when I went to Scotland ten years ago. She's now deceased but, she had two or three sisters and a couple of brothers, one who was killed in World War One. My father's father, to go back, went to Africa to work in the gold mines. He was another adventurer (she laughs) who wanted to do something better. So I heard quite a bit about him because he was a, he was away from home a great deal. So my, the grandmother on that side was alone a great deal and I guess she spent a lot of time with us from what I recall.

SIGRIST: Do you remember much about that grandmother, anything that sticks out in your mind?

KENDRICK: No, no I don't.

SIGRIST: You just know that she was with you.

KENDRICK: Uh huh, uh huh.

SIGRIST: What was your mother's personality like?

KENDRICK: She was, uh, I remember her after she came to this country more than anything and I don't, I never thought she was terribly happy here. She missed her sisters over there. She was kind of a shy person who, she didn't take well to American ways. I, I have often wondered if she were a little resentful of having to come here.

SIGRIST: Because it was really your father's decision?

KENDRICK: Well, I don't know about that but I,m, I'm sure it probably was. But then, as I say, we ran into the Depression and things were, were not too easy. And she had to go to work cleaning. He lost his job. She had to go to work cleaning houses and would get hand outs of clothes for us kids and so on. And things were tough, you know.

SIGRIST: So she really went from one tough life to...

KENDRICK: To another.

SIGRIST: ...another tough life.

KENDRICK: And it got better after a while but, when Dad got a job and it was better but...

SIGRIST: You mentioned that you remembered the schoolhouse...

KENDRICK: Uh huh.

SIGRIST: ...where you played in. How long had you been in school prior to coming to the U.S.?

KENDRICK: Oh, probably about, what do they, of course it's different terminology there, what did I come in here? Did I come into the fourth grade? No, I wouldn't have. Second or third grade, I remember.

SIGRIST: Do you remember attending school in Scotland?

KENDRICK: I remember a couple things about it. This soup kitchen thing that I mentioned to you. And I remember vividly a teacher by the name of Miss Taylor [ph]. She was a very strict teacher. Apparently, we were taught knitting in school and, but we could only do it at certain times during the day. And a short time before we were to leave to come to this country, I was caught knitting under my desk like this (she gestures) and she took a strap to me. And I, I can see those welts. You know, you talk about caning (she laughs), two welts right up here (she gestures), coming over on the boat.

SIGRIST: And I should say for the sake of the tape that you're pointing to the underside of your forearm.

KENDRICK: They didn't fool around in the school (she laughs) with discipline then. But I ever, that, I, that I remember. I remember my brother Dave getting hurt on this fence that goes, went around the schoolyard. It had points on it and I remember the day we had to take him home with a big, jagged cut on his, here (she gestures), playing around there. That's about all I remember about it.

SIGRIST: Did you attend church when you were in Scotland?

KENDRICK: They tell me that we went to the Presbyterian church there, uh huh.

SIGRIST: Do you have any memories of that, though...

KENDRICK: No.

SIGRIST: ...yourself? What about ways of practicing your religion at home?

KENDRICK: I don't remember.

SIGRIST: Did you have to say prayers, or something along those lines?

KENDRICK: I don't remember that.

SIGRIST: Do you remember celebrating a holiday?

KENDRICK: They weren't much on Christmas, was not a big thing. I think we all got an orange in our stocking. That was about all. New Year's was a thing, what did they call it? Hogmanay, hogmanay. And, where everybody went visiting New Year's and passed out pennies for good luck or for forgiveness and good luck. If you had been unfriendly with your neighbor or if there had been something there was, some kind of a tradition like that. I'm vague on it but I know, even, even in this country Christmas was not a big thing with my mother and dad. But they always liked to have a little New Year's celebration, yeah.

SIGRIST: Interesting. Tell me a little bit about, you said your father got involved in the strike and wanted to come to this country.

KENDRICK: Uh huh.

SIGRIST: When you were a little girl, what did you know about America?

KENDRICK: Nothing, absolutely nothing.

SIGRIST: Was your, was your father writing back to your mother or...?

KENDRICK: Oh, I, I'm sure there was some communication. I remember hearing about the fact that he had obtained a job. That he did have a house, a flat. I think our first home was a flat down in Utica which this cousin Oriskany Falls had arranged. And he had

quite a job at a company in Utica, it was a mill, and he was running a crane which moved big, heavy metal pieces. (to Bob Jones) Bosert's [ph], what did they make, Bob? You know, this kind of thing. And he worked there for a long, long time.

SIGRIST: And is that the job that he got when he initially came to this country?

KENDRICK: Uh huh, uh huh.

SIGRIST: So there was like a year where you were living by yourselves...

KENDRICK: In Scotland.

SIGRIST: ...in Scotland without your father. You mentioned visiting a wealthy aunt.

KENDRICK: Uh huh.

SIGRIST: Whose, whose sister is she?

KENDRICK: Aunt Maggie was my father's sister.

SIGRIST: And she owned a bakery, you said.

KENDRICK: No, that was a different, that was another sister.

SIGRIST: That was a different one.

KENDRICK: Aunt Maggie was the husband [sic, wife] of the man who ran the gas works.

SIGRIST: Was the wife of the man...

KENDRICK: Wife, yes, sorry, yeah.

SIGRIST: What do you remember about visiting Aunt Maggie? You said she had a nicer house. What sticks out in your mind about the house?

KENDRICK: Just having good meals and I, there was always a family joke about why did she always have to serve cabbage. (she laughs) That's all I remember about that. Any time we had cabbage, Aunt Maggie's name would come up, so...

SIGRIST: What do you...

KENDRICK: Aunt Polly was the one who had the bakery and we liked to go there because that's where we got all the goodies, all the good hand outs.

SIGRIST: What kinds of baked goods did you look forward to eating? I mean, what kinds of stuff, what was a treat for you to have?

KENDRICK: The little currant, little currant cakes, it's like pie crust with raisins and currants in between. (she clears her throat) I remember she made good bread for us and, uh...

SIGRIST: What did you eat in Scotland? Do you remember...?

KENDRICK: Oatmeal. (she laughs heartily) Oatmeal, and a lot of soup. And I'm talking, again, depression days there, but I force myself to eat oatmeal in the wintertime now but I really don't enjoy it. (she laughs) A lot of porridge, is the name, you know.

SIGRIST: Can you, can you describe for me how that was made? I mean, just what is porridge, I guess, is the question?

KENDRICK: Porridge, there's oatmeal and water. And they made it the old fashioned way over there, of course, they didn't have this instant stuff. And it was cooked, I, you know, I think they'd cook it up and then you'd eat it the next morning. It would be maybe on the back of this coal stove, this coal thing that, and milk. A lot, a lot of soup. My mother was a great soup maker and I guess I've picked up that tradition. I like to make soup.

SIGRIST: How would she make soup? For the sake of the tape, tell us how she'd make soup.

KENDRICK: Oh, start with a meat bone or chicken bones or something and she cubed every little vegetable one quarter of an inch. It took her a long time to cut up the carrots and the potatoes and the onions and it always looked just perfect. (the microphone records a popping sound) I put mine in the food processor today. she laughs) She was, and she liked to make, I remember stew and...

SIGRIST: Did she cook everything over the open fireplace or did she have a

stove, too, in the house?

KENDRICK: Over there I don't think there was a stove. I, I, but I'm vague on all that.

SIGRIST: Do you remember what you wore as a little girl in Scotland?

KENDRICK: Well, in the school that I went to it was, you had to wear a uniform and it was a blue serge skirt and a blue serge top. They, they had uniforms. It was not a parochial school. it was, you know, a regular public school but that was the rule in those days. And that was one of my first unhappy memories when I came to this country, I wore it to school because there wasn't anything else to wear. And boy, what a ribbing I took. (she laughs) And I remember some time on in the, after I had been there a while, some smart kid pulled my skirt down. And we both got sent out to the hall, anyway, to be disciplined there. So after a while I got conventional American clothes but they thought that's what I should wear to school. I can't remember what the boys wore, probably some sort of a uniform, though.

SIGRIST: What about like your mother in Scotland, do you remember something that she might have worn or an outfit that sticks out in your mind? Just a second. (he readjusts Mrs. Kendrick's microphone) In words, if you can describe it in words.

KENDRICK: I can't, I can't really, I can't. I, I've looked at some old pictures and our passport picture there shows pretty much what

she looked like, but you're going back seventy years. It was old fashioned clothing, I guess.

SIGRIST: Now you said before that your mother, once she got to America, may not have been very happy about being here.

KENDRICK: Uh huh.

SIGRIST: But in the year that her husband was over here, was she looking forward to coming here or did not want to leave Scotland at all?

KENDRICK: I don't have any recollection of it. I really don't. And my impressions, you know, of her not being happy, are just impressions I had later on in life when I thought it was hard for her and she, she didn't make too many friends except British people that they did get in touch with through some organization. They went back to Scotland several times. They had relatives, my father's relatives came and stayed. They immigrated through Canada, so they did communicate with them a lot and went to visit up there. She was more comfortable in a setting with British people is what I'm trying to say.

SIGRIST: Do you have any recollections of getting your papers together and getting ready to come to this country?

KENDRICK: No, I don't, I don't. When I, when we visited there ten years ago, visited a couple of cousins who said they, they remembered the very day they took us to the boat in Glasgow and how I was crying and everybody was crying. I, I don't, I don't honestly

remember.

SIGRIST: Do you remember what you took with you, what kind of luggage, if any, that you had or...?

KENDRICK: I don't, no, I don't. (she pauses)

SIGRIST: Well, so the cousins went with you to Glasgow and that's where you picked up the ship?

KENDRICK: Uh huh.

SIGRIST: Do you remember what the name of the ship was?

KENDRICK: The Transylvania.

SIGRIST: And what do you remember about being on the ship?

KENDRICK: Being very seasick for one solid week. And a, a steward on board the ship who, this was November and it was stormy coming across the Irish Sea and then over, the steward trying very hard to get us to go up on the deck to get some fresh air, I think we were second class passengers, just to get fresh air. I can remember some nice guy doing this for us. And then my recollection was of, of him helping us to get our gear together in order to disembark in New York.

SIGRIST: Do you remember where you slept on the ship? Can you see it in your mind?

KENDRICK: I can remember there were four of us in one cabin and everybody being very sick.

SIGRIST: So the whole family was sick.

KENDRICK: The four of us, yeah.

SIGRIST: Do you remember, you may not actually, but do you remember there being other travelers to America, other immigrants, people who were going to America for the intention to, you know, stay there?

KENDRICK: I don't, no.

SIGRIST: If you were sick in your cabin all the time...

KENDRICK: Uh huh, that, that, most of the, most of the week. My mother talked about that later, how hard it was to (she laughs) keep us all clean and so on.

SIGRIST: And how long was the, was the voyage? I...

KENDRICK: It was about a week in those days, I think.

SIGRIST: What do you remember about the ship coming into New York Harbor?

KENDRICK: I, I don't know whether it's my later pictures but I, I just do remember this man bringing us up on, onto the boat and seeing the Statue of Liberty. And the weather was better at that point and,

uh...

SIGRIST: And then do you remember having to, to undergo any kind of examinations or anything? Once the ship docked, what happened?

KENDRICK: There was, there was some time involved there and, and my father met us there. I remember that. I remember his, everybody being very glad to see him and he us. The actual place and so on, I, I'm not sure of. And I guess my thoughts that it was Ellis Island was a, you know, I just assumed that's what it was and thought that's what it was. He met us and, I think, the same day, maybe not, then we went on a train to, to come to Utica.

SIGRIST: Do you remember seeing your father?

KENDRICK: Uh huh.

SIGRIST: Because it's been a year or so since you've seen him.

KENDRICK: Uh huh.

SIGRIST: Do you remember how you felt when you saw him?

KENDRICK: Well, not really, but I, just, in conversations about it I guess, you know, he was, he was so happy we had all arrived (she laughs) safely because he'd been having a hard time, too.

SIGRIST: And so he took you right up to Utica when you...

KENDRICK: Uh huh, uh huh.

SIGRIST: Can you describe for me the house that he took you to? You said he had a house for you...

KENDRICK: It was a two story flat on Seymour Avenue in Utica. And it was a nice, nice flat, three bedrooms which was beautiful. And these cousins had helped to put the furniture in it and so on. And I remember being very happy about that. It was more room than we had had before. Before we went to the house that night, we went to the other cousin's house for supper. And it was the night before my birthday and they had a nice supper. And she took me to a little gift shop. She was a funny old maid type (she laughs). She took me down to a little gift shop down the street, the Linen Shop on Square [ph] Street, and here I was seven years, I was going to be eight. My birthday present was a very nice linen handkerchief. (she laughs) And, so that cousin and I, well, we kept in touch through the years. She died in a nursing home not too long ago and I did go and see her occasionally.

SIGRIST: What was the cousin's name?

KENDRICK: Grace Cunningham.

SIGRIST: So that would be on your dad's side.

KENDRICK: Uh huh.

SIGRIST: Tell me about, tell me like the first six months, what was different for you in this country? What things were different about being in Utica than had been in Scotland?

KENDRICK: The school, you know, was hard. And, of course, we spoke with a decided Scottish brogue and the kids would make fun of us, and that part of it. I do remember acquiring a couple of friends, (she clears her throat) a Jewish friend who has remained a friend until today. She, her father lived up the street, they lived up the street from us and we used to do a lot together. So she was kind. Some of the kids weren't so kind. I remember my father taking me particularly on long walks. He was a great walker 'til the day he died. Never owned a car. And we, he walked me all over Utica to get acquainted with things. And I don't remember my brothers going for some reason. I just remember my father taking me. Maybe that's my ego coming through, I don't know. He was, I remember Sunday nights we used to go to the Church of the Redeemer to see a series on the life of Christ. And we would walk up the railroad tracks to get to that. What else did we do, I don't...

SIGRIST: Were your parents religious people?

KENDRICK: Uh, yes. We became attached to a Presbyterian church just around the corner from us. I remember, I remember going to Sunday school and my father, I don't remember my mother attending church. Here again, I think maybe she was not sure if she had the right thing to wear, she didn't speak properly, this kind of thing, you know. But I, right from the very beginning, I was

very active in Sunday school, stayed in that church for a long time and then went to another Presbyterian church downtown. I guess I went where the boys were, you know.

SIGRIST: So the church not only was a (Mrs. Kendrick clears her throat), of course, you know, a spiritual, but it was also a social outlet, too.

KENDRICK: Uh huh, uh huh.

SIGRIST: Were there other Scottish immigrants attending that church?

KENDRICK: I'm not sure about particularly Scottish. There were other British people, I think, and in the same neighborhood there were some Irish people that my mother and father got acquainted with. My mother did latch on to a, a couple of Irish ladies who had come over about the same time. And they were very close. But they would not, they were not Presbyterian. They went to another church but they did visit and have a cup of tea together and so on. But we stayed with the Presbyterian church pretty much.

SIGRIST: What were some of the ways that you and your brothers tried to be American, tried to Americanize yourselves, if any?

KENDRICK: I think I was very concerned about speaking properly, you know, getting rid of the Scottish accent. I don't think my older brother ever did. Even before he died at age seventy or so, he still had a distinct Scottish brogue. I think I was conscious of

doing that. In high school I joined the debating society and things like that so, I was in the play group and the theater group.

SIGRIST: Constantly having to use your voice and...

KENDRICK: Uh huh, uh huh.

SIGRIST: Can you do a Scottish brogue for us, having listened to it for a good chunk of your life?

KENDRICK: (referring to Bob Jones) Oh, Bob, Bob can do a better one than I can. (she laughs)

SIGRIST: But just on tape, if you could just say maybe a prayer or something using the accent that you heard your parents use?

KENDRICK: Well, there's the one about "It's a braw breck moonlech neck the neck you can [ph]." (Bob Jones laughs) "It's a bonnie bright moonlight night tonight," you know. Prayers, uh, I don't know.

SIGRIST: I was just hoping to get maybe just a bit of the brogue on tape.

KENDRICK: Was that a, "Some hay meat and can he eat and some had eat, have meat that want it, but we hay meat and we can eat so let the Lord

be thanken," yeah.

SIGRIST: Thank you.

END OF SIDE ONE

BEGINNING OF SIDE TWO

SIGRIST: Tell me what your parents did for fun? If they had a chance for entertainment, what would they do in those days?

KENDRICK: My father got involved in soccer. There was a, a group there, what was that, the Mons Post, (to Bob Jones), Bob? Does that, the Mons Post, which was a British organization, Scot---...

SIGRIST: Mons?

KENDRICK: M-O-N-S. I don't know what it means.

SIGRIST: Mons Post.

KENDRICK: Well, and..

BOB JONES: Mons Post.

KENDRICK: ...and they had activities, including the soccer game. And they would have picnics and suppers. They had a club house, I think, down on South Street where they would go on occasion, too, yeah. But, and then my father got very

involved in soccer and was eventually coaching it around the area. So, and my older brother was very interested in soccer and played a lot.

SIGRIST: Do you know if your father was interested in that when he was in Scotland?

KENDRICK: Uh huh, uh huh.

SIGRIST: He had always been athletic.

KENDRICK: He was, yeah, right. Well, in that part of it they called it, they didn't, well, they called it soccer football, and then it was different.

SIGRIST: You mentioned that your parents went back to Scotland.

KENDRICK: They went back to visit quite a few times.

SIGRIST: What was the first time they went back?

KENDRICK: Oh, I don't know.

SIGRIST: Was it soon after you were here?

KENDRICK: I don't think so. I think it was quite a while. I want to say that it was after World War Two, as a matter of fact, that they went back. And they went back together several times and my father went back on his own once or twice.

I don't know why, what the reason for that was but he went on his own. He, he wanted to make the trip more than she did, I think.

SIGRIST: Do you remember your mother and father, or your mother, your father or your mother talking about what it was like that first time to be in Scotland again after all that time?

KENDRICK: (she clears her throat) I remember my mother saying, "Your father didn't stop walking from the time he got there until the time we left." She said, "I never knew where he was. He just couldn't wait to get around to see everything that he had always seen and all the relatives and friends and so on." So he, he always loved going back. She found it very tiring, very exhausting to try to keep up with him, I think.

SIGRIST: I wonder if she was seasick going back over? They went by ship, I assume, when they went the next time.

KENDRICK: I think they flew, or didn't. Maybe they went by boat one time but I think after that they flew. (a chiming clock can he heard in the background)

SIGRIST: Of course, your mother still has family over there, correct?

KENDRICK: Uh huh, uh huh.

SIGRIST: And your father, did he have family also?

KENDRICK: Uh huh, uh huh, he had a brother. And, well, of course, his sisters had come to Canada but he had at least one brother there. Oh, and a sister. He had a brother and a sister there. So he enjoyed meeting them, but then he would take off and go to a soccer game or do something, you know, and she'd...

SIGRIST: Leaving your mother by herself.

KENDRICK: Right, right. (Mr. Sigrist laughs)

SIGRIST: Tell me a little bit about when your family was here in Utica, were you ever involved in any kind of traditionally Scottish activities? For instance like Scottish dancing or, that's what sticks out in my mind most, was there an outlet to do that and were you involved in it?

KENDRICK: No, only I remember doing it, at Utica that time had summer programs in all the playgrounds and one of the activities was folk dancing of various kinds. I remember doing that at that time there, going to the playground in the summertime and doing the, I suppose it was, you know, Irish folk or Scottish folk dancing. And then, at the end of the summer, there was a big field day where we all performed and did that. But that's the only thing that I remember about that.

SIGRIST: Do you think that your, your parents were nervous that

their children would lose their Scottish heritage by being
here in America and by trying to be like American
children? I mean, was that a concern?

KENDRICK: I, I heard my father make the remark one time about me
(the microphone records a popping sound), "She became a Yankee
very fast," so (she laughs), and then when my husband and I went
to visit in Scotland a few years ago, one of, one of my
cousins said that to me, that, "You became a Yankee,"
insinuating that I forgot all about my Scottish tradition, my
Scottish heritage, you know. But I don't know.

SIGRIST: When, when you were a young woman, say like in high
school, were you ever, embarrassed is perhaps too strong a
word, but was it ever a concern of yours that you had immigrant
parents and that, that you may not be proud of that fact that
they were more sort of old world?

KENDRICK: Oh, I don't, no, no, no, I have, I have none of that
at all. I don't.

SIGRIST: Not when you were growing up.

KENDRICK: No, no. I think the early, the early days with the,
the strange clothes and so on were a little bit. No, in high
school I had a good time. I don't remember anything like that
at all.

SIGRIST: Tell me, did you get a job when you got out of high

school?

KENDRICK: Uh huh.

SIGRIST: And did the, did the money that you made, did you contribute it to the household or did you...?

KENDRICK: Uh huh, you bet I did. (she laughs) It wasn't very much. (she clears her throat)

SIGRIST: What was the first job that you got?

KENDRICK: I went to work for the newspaper. I had, I had won a prize in, in high school, in my senior year of high school for, oh, that magazine that all the kids, they still have it, I guess, Scholastic Magazine? I had written my autobiography for a contest. I had an English teacher who took a shine to me and she helped me, encouraged me. And I won, I guess it was second prize or something. And she trotted me down to the newspaper to have a little story put in. In those days they did things like that. And I fell in love with it, with the newspaper office and the fact that my name was in the paper and so on. And before I graduated from high school that same year, I went down and applied for a job, uh, just maybe even to work for the summer is the way I put it. And that's the way I was hired at eight cents an inch. Whatever they printed, I was paid eight cents a printed inch for it. And so I was assigned to cover these playgrounds that I mentioned earlier. And, of course, I wrote volumes, you know, I

could see this eight cents multiplying (she laughs) into
hundreds of dollars. I think my first paycheck was something
like three dollars and fifty cents, which was great in 194--,
no 1936, when I graduated from high school. And then I was hired
to stay on and, and train as a reporter. So it was...

SIGRIST: How did your parents feel about you getting a job...

KENDRICK: Oh, well, they...

SIGRIST: ...like a reporter.

KENDRICK: ...they were just busting their buttons, you know,
they, my father thought that was great. And at the same time
he was writing a column for the paper doing soccer games, you
know, a soccer column. He didn't get paid for it, though, I
did. But, uh, so that, you know, that was pretty good. And
then, that, that worked into a pretty good job for several
years, until I left and got married. And then, then I went back
again.

SIGRIST: When was that? What year did you get married?

KENDRICK: '43.

SIGRIST: And what was the gentleman's name that you married?

KENDRICK: Roger Kendrick.

SIGRIST: And tell me how you met him.

KENDRICK: Do I have to? (she laughs) It was a blind date. One of the reporters at the paper, a lady reporter, had a friend who, as a matter of fact lived across, in the same, same apartment house. My husband was in the same apartment house as her friend. I didn't know my husband at that point. She had been given two tickets for a Faxton Hospital charity ball, four tickets.

SIGRIST: The what hospital?

KENDRICK: Faxton Hospital, here in Utica. F-A-X-T-O-N, Faxton. And they run a charity ball every year and she, being a society person, was given tickets. And she asked me if I wanted to go with this guy who lived in this apartment house. And, as they say, the rest is history. We went and had a good time.

SIGRIST: And you married him in 1943, you said.

KENDRICK: Uh huh.

SIGRIST: And how many children did you have?

KENDRICK: Four.

SIGRIST: And will you name them, please?

KENDRICK: They were Jean, Joanie, Roger, and Helen.

SIGRIST: And was your, was your husband American born?

KENDRICK: He was American born. He was born in Rochester, New York. His father was born in Manchester, England. His mother was Scottish but, she was Scottish but she was born in America, near Ellis Island, was it the day or two days after her mother landed in this country. She had been, they, they had come from Prestwick town. So she was Scottish and Grandpa Kendrick was, was English.

SIGRIST: Was there anything, any philosophies that your parents taught you when you were young that have sort of carried you through your whole life, certain rules they had for you to live by that, that have stayed with you until this day?

KENDRICK: Oh, that's a tough one. I, (she pauses)...

SIGRIST: Maybe, maybe a certain way of looking at life?

KENDRICK: I, I, I can't think of any specific thing, uh, personally...

SIGRIST: Was there an expression that one of them used over and over again, a platitude of some sort?

KENDRICK: (she pauses) Nothing, nothing comes to mind.

SIGRIST: Well, what about yourself? What, what ways do you think that you still retain your Scottish-ness? What about you is inherently Scottish, do you think? (Mrs. Kendrick pauses) Perhaps something that you enjoy or, or a way of looking at things?

KENDRICK: I don't know, I don't.

SIGRIST: Of course, you "became the Yankee fast," so..

KENDRICK: Became what?

SIGRIST: You "became the...

KENDRICK: Became a Yankee fast, right. I think I appreciated Scotland maybe more after I went back for the visit that I had because having left there at such a young age, you know, I didn't have great recollection or connection with it. But going back, I was very impressed with the fact that I had come from this beautiful (she laughs) country and, and had, have had a happy, I think very successful, life here. And maybe my early beginnings and, and tough times, you know, I know what it's like to, to work for what you want. And I don't know how, how to answer that.

SIGRIST: What was the, when did you go back to Scotland, what year?

KENDRICK: '81, I went.

SIGRIST: That was your first time back?

KENDRICK: Yeah, '81 or '82, I'm not sure, yeah.

SIGRIST: Did you see the house that, that you lived in and, did you go to your childhood...

KENDRICK: No, that, that had all been torn down, no.

SIGRIST: When you were there, did you feel some kind of emotional connection with the country?

KENDRICK: Oh yes, oh yes, yeah. Yeah, I remember the street where this bakery was, where Aunt Polly was, walking down that. That brought a lot of memories back to me. And the schoolyard, yeah.

SIGRIST: Did your parents, even though they went back and forth, did your parents ever want to move back to Scotland?

KENDRICK: I think my father would have gone back in, in retirement years. I, I think he kind of wanted to die in Scotland. But that didn't happen, no.

SIGRIST: How do you think your life would have been different had you stayed in Scotland?

KENDRICK: I've often wondered. I don't know, I don't know what

I'd, uh, maybe I would have, maybe I would have gone on for a, more education than what was offered at that time. I don't know.

I've always been a curious, kind of a pushy (she laughs) kind of person, you know, so I may have had, had some good opportunities there, too, like I did here, you know. Without a college education I did all right for myself and, uh, you know, and interestingly but I'm not sure what would have happened over there.

SIGRIST: It's a hard question...

KENDRICK: Uh huh, uh huh.

SIGRIST: ...because we don't really know.

KENDRICK: Uh huh.

SIGRIST: Well, Mrs. Kendrick, I want to thank you very much for letting me come out...

KENDRICK: You're certainly welcome.

SIGRIST: ...and ask you these questions about coming from Scotland.

KENDRICK: Isn't it great.

SIGRIST: This is Paul Sigrist signing off with Mary Kendrick on Thursday, July 7th, 1994, with Bob Jones in

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attendance, in New Hartford, New York. Thank you.