

EI-563

BRITTA WEBER BEERS

BIRTHDATE: APRIL 5, 1920

INTERVIEW DATE: NOVEMBER 11, 1995

RUNNING TIME: 55:01

INTERVIEWER: PAUL E. SIGRIST, JR.

RECORDING ENGINEER: SAME

INTERVIEW LOCATION: WILBRAHAM, MASSACHUSETTS

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY: JOHN MURIELLO, 11/1995

TRANSCRIPT NOT REVIEWED

SWEDEN, 1925

RESIDENCE: MOTALA, OSTERGOTLAND

AGE 5 US RESIDENCES: STATEN ISLAND/OAKLAND, NE/ADA, OH/ETC.

PASSAGE ON "THE STOCKHOLM" PORT OF EMBARKATION: GOTEBOG

SIGRIST: Good afternoon. This is Paul Sigrist for the National Park Service. Today is Friday, November 1st, 19', I'm sorry, November 11th, 1994. I'm in Wilbraham, Massachusetts, just outside of Springfield, with Britta Beers. Mrs. Beers came from Sweden in 1925. She was four years old and ten months when she arrived in this country. Anyway, thank you for letting me coming over.

BEERS: You're welcome.

SIGRIST: Can we begin, Mrs. Beers, by you giving me your birthdate, please?

BEERS: April 5th, 1920.

SIGRIST: And your maiden name, please?

BEERS: Is Weber.

SIGRIST: Can you spell that?

BEERS: W-E-B-E-R.

SIGRIST: Can you tell me where in Sweden you were born?

BEERS: Motala. M-O-T-A-L-A.

SIGRIST: Thank you. Can you tell me where in Sweden that is?

BEERS: It's the souther part. And it's the count, or the county is Ostergotland. That section. It's the southern part of Sweden.

SIGRIST: And do you have any first hand recollections of that town?

BEERS: Not really so much the town. I do remember that my aunt lived across the, there was like a waterway. And my aunt, my mother's sister lived across the waterway.

And in the wintertime that would freeze over. And when I was a little girl, of course, I always wanted to go to school, but I was too young. And my mother would pack me a lunch and I would go to my aunt's house, and just cross over. And I know there was a big factory there called Motala Verkstad. And that's where a lot of people worked. That was the main factory in the town. And that was right near us.

SIGRIST: Can you spell that, please?

BEERS: Motala would be M-O-T-A-L-A, and Verkstad would be V-E-R-K-S-T-A-D. And that's like a factory.

SIGRIST: And what did they make there?

BEERS: I really don't know. I don't know what they made, but it was a big factory.

SIGRIST: Were your parents from this town?

BEERS: Well, my father was from a town called Ervastbe. And I'm sure how you pronounce, or you spell that, but it's probably E-R-V-A-S-T-B-E. Something like that. But my mother was from Motala Verkstad. See, they

called the town that, too.

SIGRIST: What was your father's name?

BEERS: Helmer. H-E-L-M-E-R.

SIGRIST: And a middle name?

BEERS: Alvar, A-L-V-A-R. And then he had another middle name. (they laugh) I won't go into that, but it was, well, do you want me to?

SIGRIST: If you, yeah.

BEERS: Okay. E-G-E-D-I-U-S, Egedius Weber, W-E-B-E-R.

SIGRIST: Why so many names?

BEERS: I have no idea. I guess his mother liked to, to name her their children. (she laughs) He came from a family of thirteen, and they all had, I guess, long names.

SIGRIST: Tell me what you do know about your father's background and his upbringing.

BEERS: Well, he was born, as I say, in Ervastbe. And he was one of thirteen children. And I don't just in what, you know, how he came, whether he was middle or what. I don't know that. But his father had like a farm. They used to farm and grow their food. And they were very poor, and sometimes my father, or grandfather would go out in the woods and cut, you know, chop down trees and sell that. And I know they were very poor, because the children were always hungry, my mother said. And I don't know what else to tell you about it, but it was a nice little house, a small house. And...

SIGRIST: Was, was there a particular story that your father used to like to tell about his childhood?

BEERS: Well, he told me one time that he stole a knife in the store. And he went home and he couldn't sleep all night. He had to bring it back. (she laughs) Makes me cry when I think of that. And also, I guess his grandfather was living with him, too. And I guess his mother just couldn't have that many people anymore. I mean, she only had like a room down and a room up. And all these children. So she said to my father, you

have to drive Grandpa to an old people's home, you know. And so he did. And he said, oh, it hurt him so much to do that, you know. It was so bad. (she cries) And he says, he would, she would pick on me to be the one, you know. So that was kind of sad. But outside of that I don't know too much about that.

SIGRIST: Was that a typical thing in Sweden for extended members of the family like grandparents to live...

BEERS: Well, I don't know that it was. It might have been at that time. I know now people are given apartments. You know, they don't have to pay rent or anything. They're just given apartments. And they can bring their own furniture. And they have a very good, like a pension system, or whatever you call it. Social security, whatever you call it. So everybody there that's old now live very fine. And they don't have to live with their family. I don't think many of them do. They go into their own apartments, you know. But in those days, it might have been different. That was many years ago.

SIGRIST: What was your father's personality like?

BEERS: He was a slight man. He was five foot seven. He was humorous. Very kind. Rather quiet and subdued, you know.

SIGRIST: Can you describe what he looked like in words?

BEERS: Well, I don't know exactly. Sort of reddish brown hair. He had a nice face. And, I don't know, I could show you a picture of him, but I, that would help you any. (she laughs)

SIGRIST: Well, maybe when we're done we'll look at pictures.

BEERS: Yeah.

SIGRIST: From your own childhood, and this can either only be from Sweden or in America, is there a particular story that you like to tell about your interaction with your father, or something that you did together, or something he did for you?

BEERS: He was a very kind man. You know, he took us a lot of places, you know, when he had a car. He didn't always have a car.

SIGRIST: Is there one specific time where he took you somewhere that really sticks out in your mind?

BEERS: Not really. We usually, like when we lived on Staten Island when we first came over here, we used to go to the beach a lot, because the water was right there. And we'd have picnics and things like that. But not particularly, you know, where I was just involved with him. It was usually a family affair most of the time. You know, my mother and their friends and all would go to the beach, or go someplace and have a picnic on Sunday. And but, no, there was nothing that particular, you know, about just my dad. But he was just, just a very kind man. A good father.

SIGRIST: What was your mother's name?

BEERS: Her name was Gerda. G-E-R-D-A.

SIGRIST: And her maiden name?

BEERS: Her maiden was Blom. B-L-O-M.

SIGRIST: And can you tell me a little bit about her background?

BEERS: Well, she lived right near the water. It was like a row house, because everybody who worked in this factory I told you about lived in this row house. And it was like red, red long buildings. And not too big an apartment, and my mother was brought up in there. And they used to go wash the clothes down in the back by the water. They used to pound them on the stones. And, and then she would carry them home, and, you know, I guess hang them out to dry. But she always had a hip. You know, she was kind of crooked a little bit. And it got worse with age. But she said that's from carrying that heavy laundry basket on her hip. And she was a very good housekeeper. And she used to always keep house for her mother, you know, after school, take care of things. Because her mother used to have roo, boarders come in. Not boarders, but people who came for meals at noontime. So they had to do all the cooking and everything. So she was always helping her mother.

SIGRIST: Do you know, let me ask you this same question. Is there...

BEERS: Yes.

SIGRIST: ...is there a part of her childhood that she used to like to tell, or a particular story about her upbringing that she would often tell?

BEERS: Not really. Well, I guess just with her sister, they used to have a great time. Her sister had a beautiful yard. And they used to go there for coffee all the time, and people were always there, and, had a beautiful yard. And, and I guess they would go out dancing a lot. You know, they had a, like, they call it the folks park. And they'd have a dance platform there where they'd go dancing on Saturday nights, and, I think they didn't have that exciting a life like the people have in this country. You know, it was kind of laid back. But just with her friends and things, they used to go to dances and things like that.

SIGRIST: Do you know how your parents met?

BEERS: I'm not sure. But I, I guess probably at a dance. That's the only thing I could figure out. I, I don't know that I ever heard how they met. Yes.

SIGRIST: That being the most important social occasion.

BEERS: Yes. Yes. That was. Or in the park, you know, where they had food and things, I suppose, they could buy, you know.

SIGRIST: Now when you lived in Sweden...

BEERS: Hm-hmm.

SIGRIST: ...it was your mother and your father and you?

BEERS: Yes.

SIGRIST: And did you have brothers and sisters?

BEERS: I had one later. He was born in the United States, yes.

SIGRIST: Over here. Did your mother ever relay any information or any stories about your birth, or when she was carrying you?

BEERS: Not really. But I know that she had been, they, see, when they first went together, and I guess she got pregnant. You know, while they were going together. And in Sweden at that time, you couldn't live home.

You know, there was no way you could live with your family at home. So my father had to work. And he had to try to make up enough, get enough money so they could get an apartment. So they rented an upstairs apartment. I think it was one room and a little kitchen in this ladies house. Her name was Mrs. Franson, and she had a lot of children, too. So they rented that little room. And that's where I was born. And, you know, I took pictures of that when I was just home. (she laughs) Yeah.

SIGRIST: Now, what extended family, if any, do you remember in Sweden, other than your aunt? You mentioned your aunt.

BEERS: Oh, my aunt, and she had three children. And then my mother had a brother and his wife. And they had a son. And a lot of cousins.

SIGRIST: Were any of the grandparents living at that time?

BEERS: No. But I have a cousin. I have two cousins that I went to see now. One eighty-three. That was the aunt I told you about. That was her daughter. She's eighty-three now. Her husband's ninety-one. And I

went to visit them. And they're great. And I have another cousin who's a little older than I am. I'd say maybe around seventy-two, I mean seventy-seven. And he and his wife live there. And, of course, all these offspring, you know, from, from these families.

So they gave me a party when I was over there last September and October. And there are about thirty relatives, mostly relatives there. And so there's a lot of offspring from these, but none, none of my aunts or uncles are living now. No, they're all gone.

SIGRIST: Was your father working in the factories when you were in Sweden?

BEERS: I think he was working in one of the factories. I don't know which that one was now. He did have a job, but I'm not sure just what he did.

SIGRIST: Did your mother work outside the home?

BEERS: No. She just, no, she just was all house, you know, homemaker.

SIGRIST: Well, tell me what you remember about the actual space that you lived in, if anything.

BEERS: Well, it was very tiny. I remember that. There's a little living room. I could show you a picture here some, if you want look at it. (she laughs) There's a little living room and just a little bitty [sic] kitchen. And I remember one Christmas my father said let's go shopping for your mother. And we're going to, that's probably one of the occasions I could tell you about. So he bought her a copper pot. You know, they love copper in Sweden. A copper pot. And they used to cook in that, you know. And a knife. So she, he says, "Don't tell Mom what we bought." So I came home and I says, "I, we didn't buy you a copper pot, and we didn't buy a knife." I told, I spilled the beans. (she laughs) So that was one thing, and they laughed, of course. Because I told her exactly what we had bought, yeah. Yeah.

SIGRIST: Are there any details about, this is an apartment, yes? Are there any details about the apartment that stick out in your mind? For instance, like a certain piece of furniture that you remember, or...

BEERS: No. I, I wouldn't remember that. No.

SIGRIST: Okay. Do you remember, or did your mother ever relay to you later about she entertained you, or how children entertained themselves? Games, for instance?

BEERS: Yeah. I, I don't remember any games or anything. I probably, you know, paper and pencil, or something like that. Maybe crayon. They had no money, so they could buy me big toys or anything like that, you know.  
(she laughs)

SIGRIST: What do you think your earliest memory is?

BEERS: I would say going across that water. You know, the, growing, going across that water, my mother, I mean it was ice then. My mother would watch me go, because she could see my aunt's house on the other side. And then she'd wait for me when I came back, you know. Somehow she watched for me, she knew what time I was coming.

SIGRIST: Is there a relative, your aunt comes to mind, that, that is very important to your growing up period in...

BEERS: I think that she would be. Her name was Signe. S-I-G-N-E.

SIGRIST: And what sticks out in your mind about your aunt?

BEERS: Well, just that I was there a lot, you know. And my cousin would take care of me a lot. The one that I visited that was eighty-three. And, and all the times that, you know, we were together, because they were always together, it seems. The families would always visit all the time. And it wasn't that you get a lot of toys like the kids here get today, you know, because just couldn't afford it.

SIGRIST: Do you have any recollections of how holidays were celebrated at all?

BEERS: Well, I don't really remember the holidays. But I know that they always celebrated Christmas. And the Swedish Santa Claus, which is Jultomten. (she laughs)  
And that's J-U-L-T-O-M-T-E-N. It's a little elf. And he comes Christmas eve. And that's when you get your Christ, your, your presents, you know, if get any, which were very few. But they would have their smorgasbord, you know, and their lutfisk they call it.  
It's this kind of fish that they had with white sauce. And Swedish brown beans and hard tack, you

know, that knackebrod [PH] that they eat, and rye bread, and all kinds of goodies for Christmas.

SIGRIST: Very certain, specific foods for the holidays.

BEERS: Yeah. Specific, yes, yes.

SIGRIST: Did you come from a religious family?

BEERS: Not really religious, no. I mean, they believed in God, but they were not church goers. They would probably go on, on, they used to call it Julota, and I don't know how to spell that. But it was five o'clock in the morning.

SIGRIST: Say it slowly?

BEERS: Julota. It might be J-U-L-O-T-A. Something like that. And the people would go there five o'clock Sunday, on Christmas morning. That was a religious, that's about the most religious time of the year for the Swedes I would say. But they weren't religious. But they did, you know, of course, believe in God. They were good...

SIGRIST: And what sect would they have been?

BEERS: Lutheran.

SIGRIST: They were Lutheran.

BEERS: Most of Sweden's Lutheran.

SIGRIST: It's, that's the state religion?

BEERS: Hm-hmm. Yeah.

SIGRIST: What about at home? Were there any ways, and you can extend this to America if you want, were there any ways that you practiced your religion at home?

BEERS: Not really. My mother used to say, you know, she used to have a little prayer she used to tell me to say. But they were not really religious, like people that go to church every Sunday, you know, like that, no.

SIGRIST: Do you remember any prayers that, that your mother may have taught you, or your father?

BEERS: I don't remember any more.

SIGRIST: Yeah.

BEERS: Something like "Our Father," but it's in Swedish, and I can't remember the words now.

SIGRIST: Right. Did you have relatives in America?

BEERS: Yes. That's how we got here.

SIGRIST: Who lived in America?

BEERS: My father's two sisters were here. And my mother's sister who had gone from Sweden when she was like seventeen. And what happened was she was going with this fellow, and he got TB. And I guess some relative came back to Sweden to visit. And he asked her if she would take my aunt Siggan. Her name was Siggan.

SIGRIST: S-I-G...

BEERS: S-I-G-G-A-N. Well, that's her nickname. Siggert. [PH] Siggert, I think it is. I'm not sure of that, but Siggan is what we called her. S-I-G-G-A-N. And he asked her, would you like to go to America. And she

says, "Oh sure," thinking he was kidding. So he went and bought her a ticket, because he wanted her to get away from this boy, because he was afraid that she would get TB. So she went back with somebody's aunt, or something, that had been visiting there. And she was heartbroken, of course, because she loved this boy so much. But I guess he died eventually, anyway. And she got married out in Nebraska. She went out to Nebraska to live, I guess with somebody, she was working for some relative, or something out there. And she got married and she had two children. And they finally migrated east, and went to Pennsylvania and bought a farm. They were farmers. And they bought a farm down there.

SIGRIST: And was this the relative that your father was, your, your parents were in contact with?

BEERS: Well, a little bit. But the one that sponsored my mother and father and I was my uncle Sigge. S-I-G-G-E. He was married to my father's aunt, sister. And they lived on Staten Island. So when we came in on the boat he met us after a fashion. He didn't come right away. We thought he had abandoned us. (she laughs)

SIGRIST: What was he doing for a living in...

BEERS: He was a printer.

SIGRIST: On Staten Island?

BEERS: He was a printer. I don't know if he was there or not, but he was a printer eventually. But I don't know what exactly he did then. But he and my aunt lived there, and they sponsored us. That's the way we got here.

SIGRIST: Did, did your mother ever relay to you any information about the process of them getting ready to leave?

BEERS: Well, she did tell me that they had to go into I guess Goteborg to do some kind of papers and all that to go. But they had no money. So my father said he had to borrow money from his mom and dad. Not that they had much, but the kids had grown by now, so they probably had a little more. And my mother had to borrow from her parents so they could make the trip. And, so I know that when they went to Goteborg, they left me with my aunt that I was always was at. And, over

night, because it was an over night trip. And, and I was crying for them. And I bit my uncle in the ear. (she laughs) I was so annoyed, you know. Because I had never been left alone before without my parents. But, anyway, we came to Staten Island and, and I might tell you about my, our boat trip.

SIGRIST: Well, now let's see. You left from Goteborg.

BEERS: Goteborg.

SIGRIST: And what was the name of the ship?

BEERS: Stockholm.

SIGRIST: And, this is where your memory sort of kicks in, doesn't it?

BEERS: Yeah.

SIGRIST: Well, tell me what you do remember about the voyage.

BEERS: Well, I remember, it of course was wintertime. And it was a rough voyage. And we hit an iceberg. And I guess there was a hole in the ship. So we, we didn't

even know if we'd ever get to land. But it took us two weeks. And I remember playing on the deck, or I don't know if I remember. I maybe heard my father say this. We were playing on the deck, my father and I. And a wave came and tipped the deck. And at those times they didn't have the closed railings, you know.

They were open. And I almost went right on, right through the railing. My father just grabbed me in time, or I would have been gone. (she laughs) And anyway, when they got to Ellis Island or to New York, everybody was so happy, because they thought for sure we were going to go under, you know. Because it had a big hole in the ship, I guess. But they must have kept pumping it out, or whatever. And I don't that ship ever sailed again. They made a new Stockholm later, but I think it went to dry, dry dock, and they never used it again.

SIGRIST: What about information that your parents may have relayed to you? For instance, did they ever tell you about how they felt about being on the ship, or...

BEERS: Well, my mother was sick most of the time. She had, you know, seasickness. She, she was sick all the time. And my father and I, you know, we used to walk

the deck, or whatever. And, then I remember one night. I guess my mother was better this night. They had a piano player in this, it was like a lounge. And I guess I went out. Whether somebody gave me a quarter or so, it was probably a nickel, or a penny, I don't know. I went out for something. To buy something, or whatever. And when I came back the doors were closed. And I couldn't get in. It was these double doors, and they were, you know, so heavy. And I couldn't get in. So I was screaming out there. Somebody finally let me in. (she laughs) So I was petrified. I thought I was going to stay outside. Yeah. But my mother, as I say, was, had seasickness most of the time during that trip.

SIGRIST: Do you remember something that your parents packed, that they brought with them as a memento of Sweden?

BEERS: No, I wouldn't remember that.

SIGRIST: Do you remember what they took with them?

BEERS: Well, I know my mother took a lot of rag rugs. You know, the people in Sweden makes, make their own runners. You know. And things like that. And I

guess she took a lot of linens with her, because there, you had to have so many linens when you got married, and all that. So I guess there was a lot of dish towels and things like that. And maybe handmade things, you know. Pictures, and all. Because they're great for their embroidery and everything. That is a church that I was baptized in. (she indicates)

SIGRIST: Oh.

BEERS: And that is needlepoint that somebody has made.

SIGRIST: For the sake of the tape, I want to say that we're looking at a needlepoint frame hanging on the...

BEERS: Hm-hmm. Yeah.

SIGRIST: ...on the wall, of a church steeple.

BEERS: Yeah. And that's still there.

SIGRIST: Uh-huh.

BEERS: Yeah.

SIGRIST: What, what do you remember about the ship, well, the ship docked. And, was it your uncle that, that came to get you...

BEERS: Yeah. He didn't come right away, as I said.

SIGRIST: Now, why didn't he come right away?

BEERS: Well, I think he thought we were going to be in New York. He thought the boat was going, boat, you know, dock at the boats, at the, the boat was going to dock at the port in New York. But instead we had to go through Ellis Island because we were aliens, you know. And we had to go through physicals and everything else. And he didn't know that for some reason. So finally he found that that's where we were. So he came over on the little ferry, I guess, to get us.

SIGRIST: Do you know if you had to undergo any kind of exams in Sweden before you left?

BEERS: Well, I know I had four vaccinations. I had four, four marks on my arm, on my left arm. I had to have those. And I guess my mother and father had, had one. And we had to do that. Yeah.

SIGRIST: Did they ever relay to you any information about what happened at Ellis Island at all?

BEERS: Well, we waited, of course, a long time for my uncle. And, and we see all these people going through lines. Some were rejected. You know how they are. Put in certain, in a different room, and all that. And my mother says, boy, we're lucky that we came through this, you know. Because they could have rejected us, I guess, if there was anything wrong, you know. But my, my uncle finally came. So we were happy to see him. And then we, I guess he took us back to Staten Island where we stayed for I think a year or more.

SIGRIST: What's your first memory of being in the United States?

BEERS: My first memory of being there is going to school, and not being able to speak a word of English. But my other aunt, my other, my father's other sister also was there. And she had a little girl that was a year younger than I. And her name was Naime. N-A-I-M-E. And we both had to go to school. And I guess we were in probably kindergarten, or something. Of course,

the kids made fun of us. So one day, we, we heard the bell. I guess we went for lunch, or whatever. And then we heard, I guess we went home for lunch. I think that was it. And then we went back, or we started to go back, and Naime said to me, "Let's not go back," because she says the kids make fun of us, and we'll just stay out in the woods here and pick flowers until the bell rings. So the bell rang and we went home. And my uncle says, "What are you doing home?" I said, "Well, the bell rang." You know, I told him in Swedish. He said, "That was the first bell." He says, "You've been playing hooky." And he found us out. And he locked us in the bathroom. And my cousin who always had to go to the bathroom was happy, because now she could go, you know, to the potty when she wanted to. (she laughs) But I was so upset that I unrolled the whole roll of toilet paper. And the bathroom was full of toilet paper. (she laughs) But the children, you know, were, well, you know how children are. They're cruel, especially to something foreign. But it took us a while before we could master the language, of course.

SIGRIST: Did your parents ever attempt to learn English?

BEERS: No. They, they both knew how to read and write, but through their own, you know, through their own will. My mother wasn't, you know, great at it, but she used to write. And she'd always have me correct her, her spelling. My father not as much, but she, you know, learned to read first, and, and learned to write, but all by themselves.

SIGRIST: In, in English?

BEERS: Yeah.

SIGRIST: Yeah. In English.

BEERS: Yeah.

SIGRIST: You mentioned that, that you had some difficulty, because you were sort of the foreigner among the kids.

BEERS: Yeah. Sure.

SIGRIST: What about your parents? Did they have any kind of experiences of, of prejudice because they were immigrants?

BEERS: No, I don't think prejudice so much. You know, they just had a hard time, because not knowing the language, you know, if you're going to go to work, you don't know what people are telling you, and my father became a carpenter. I guess he had known a little bit it in Sweden, but that's what he did for a living in the beginning. And then we stayed in Staten Island a while. And then my mother was anxious to see her sister who lived in Nebraska. Of course she hadn't seen her since she was, you know, young. So they, I think my father bought a car. And they went out, I can't remember. It might have been a train. I don't remember that part of it. But I know they went to Nebraska. And my uncle put him to work on the farm. So he worked with him on the farm.

SIGRIST: So did you go out with them...

BEERS: Yeah.

SIGRIST: ...or were you kept in Staten Island?

BEERS: My mother and father, no, no. We all went.

SIGRIST: Do you have any recollections of, of what Nebraska was

like?

BEERS: Oh, yeah...

SIGRIST: Was it difficult...

BEERS: ...very flat. Yeah. And they had a big farm. A lot of cattle, and pigs and chickens and all that. And it was a big house, and we lived with them.

SIGRIST: Where in Nebraska was this?

BEERS: Oak, it was in Oakland. It's on the outskirts of Oakland, Nebraska. And my father worked there for him quite a while. Then I remember one Christmas eve there, they had to lights. You know, they didn't have electric lights out there. Just oil lamps. And one Christmas eve I remember my aunt had the nice big dining room, the table was set, and they had this beautiful Christmas tree, but no lights. Candles, you know. Live candles. And no one could leave that room. You know, someone had to always be there to make sure it didn't catch on fire. And I remember sitting there watching that beautiful tree. So that was nice. But then they didn't, my father didn't stay

there all that long. I guess my uncle was kind of mean to the animals. And my father couldn't stand that. So he went over to a neighbor, and he worked there for a while. Then my mother worked out then, worked for this man. Swedish man. He was a bachelor.

And she used to keep house for him. And I was with her. And my father lived on the other farm.

SIGRIST: When you were in Staten Island for the year before you went to Nebraska...

BEERS: Yes.

SIGRIST: ...did your mother work outside the home for that time?

BEERS: No. No.

SIGRIST: In Staten Island was there a large Swedish community?

BEERS: No, I don't think so. A few rel, relatives, which was my uncles, you know. Like, his father and mother lived there. And, of course, my other aunt and uncle were there, too, and my cousin. But I wouldn't say there wa a lot of Swedish people. There could have

been, but I don't remember that.

SIGRIST: So would you say that most of your parents' social circle would have been relatives...

BEERS: Oh, yeah.

SIGRIST: ...in Staten Island?

BEERS: Just speaking Swedish, you know, it would be that way, yeah.

SIGRIST: Were there any discoveries in, in Staten Island or New York City, or I suppose even Nebraska, that either you or your parents had never seen before? Something that was just very new to them or to you?

BEERS: Yeah. Well, I guess, people lived a little different here, you know. And, of course, the beach, and all. Not that they didn't have a beach in Sweden, but it's not salt water. It was fresh water, you know. But, I don't remember. Cars, I guess. Cars all over like that. Bigger schools and things like that.

SIGRIST: As a child did you like Staten Island or Nebraska

better?

BEERS: I liked Nebraska because my cousin was there and, you know, we used to play a lot, and it was a big place you could run around in, you know. So I think I liked Nebraska better.

SIGRIST: The relatives in Nebraska, were they, were they still all speaking Swedish amongst themselves?

BEERS: Even the Jewish merchants in town. We'd go to town every Saturday night. And the merchants in town, the Jewish ones, even they spoke Swedish. If they didn't speak it, they understood it. There were that many Swedes out there.

SIGRIST: Describe for me what, what town was like in Nebraska in the mid 1920's.

BEERS: Yeah. Well, it was kind of small. You know, they had small stores, and it wasn't a great big town. It was a small town. But they had a number of stores where you could do your shopping. You know, groceries and clothes. Of course, some groceries you had to buy, most of the food they grew. But there were some

things that you just had to go for sugar and flour and things like that, you know, that they didn't have I guess. But it was small, nice little town. A lot of Swedish people. And I guess my aunt had a lot friends there that we met, you know. So it was great. Hm-hmm.

**END OF SIDE ONE**

**BEGINNING OF SIDE TWO**

SIGRIST: Then what happened? You were in Nebraska for how long?

BEERS: Oh, I would say, well, my brother was born there.

SIGRIST: What is his name?

BEERS: His name was Bertil. He's dead, he's dead. Bertil. B-E-R-T-I-L. I guess named after Prince Bertil in Sweden. And he died at the age of nine when we lived in, in Connecticut. Yeah. We had lived in Connecticut then.

SIGRIST: So you had moved back by then.

BEERS: Yeah. Yeah. Yeah, from Nebraska we came to Ohio. Now by this time my Uncle Sigge and my Aunt Helfrid, who we went to in Staten Island, had moved to Ohio. So that...

SIGRIST: Why? Why did they move to Ohio?

BEERS: I guess my uncle got a good job there. So they bought a house in Ada, Ohio. A-D-A, Ohio. And that's where my mother and father decided they would to next. Because he also had a brother in Connecticut. So we stayed in Ohio for a while and we lived my aunt and uncle. And I remember my Aunt Helfrid said that all the neighbors were competing who would have their clothes on the line the earliest in the morning. So my mother, of course, being the good worker that she was, they had it out by six o'clock. They had their clothes on the line and my aunt was so happy because, because they beat the neighbors. (she laughs) And that was a college town. And I guess my uncle took some courses there. So one day he came home and he wanted, and my cousin was there, too, that little

Naime? Her mother had by then divorced her husband, and my Aunt Helfrid had taken her, you know, to, to live with her. So my uncle came home one day and he says, there's a class, and, and they want you people, or you and Naime to go and sing Swedish for them, you know. So we had to go to college and to this class and we sang Swedish. And I always say I went through college in the front door and out the back. (they laughs) So that was kind of fun.

SIGRIST: So how, how long had you been in Nebraska?

BEERS: Well, let's see. My brother was born in Nebraska, and he hadn't been conceived when we went there. So I would say he was maybe a, a year old. So we must have been, maybe a few years. A couple years I would say in Nebraska.

SIGRIST: A couple years and then you went to Ohio. Do you remember the transition for you, what it felt like to go from school in Staten Island, which was a relatively hostile experience...

BEERS: Yeah. Yeah, yeah.

SIGRIST: ...to school in Nebraska, and how did...

BEERS: Yeah.

SIGRIST: ...what were the differences?

BEERS: Well, that was, well, in Nebraska it was a one room school house. You know, where they had a pot belly stove, or whatever. The teacher used to have to go in the morning and make a fire. And there was just a one room classroom. And all the grades were in there. But I remember that I kind of sort of liked it. By that time I was speaking a little better English. So, you know, they weren't making fun of me. And...

SIGRIST: And you were surrounded by Swedish children...

BEERS: Yeah. There was, there was a lot of Swedish children there, too. And we used to put on shows and everything, and sang, "School days, school days," you know, "Good old rule, golden rule days," and things like that. So we had a lot of fun. It was nice. Yeah.

SIGRIST: In Nebraska what did the adults do for entertainment?

BEERS: Well, not a heck of a lot. They, Sundays they'd probably go over to visit friends. You know, and have a cup of coffee or something, and just talk. They didn't do all that much. You know, it was just like home life. That's the way it was.

SIGRIST: What, what ways did you, probably looking back on it now from where you are, what ways did your relatives, because they had a, a more established life out there.

BEERS: Yeah. Hm-hmm.

SIGRIST: What ways did they hold on to, to their Swedish customs? What, what things did they do that perpetuated...

BEERS: Well...

SIGRIST: ...things that they had done in Sweden?

BEERS: Well, I don't know. I guess they kept their, you know, their holidays, and things like that. Mostly Christmas then and Easter. They cooked different for Easter and different for Christmas, and...

SIGRIST: What, what about food? Because, of course, you're, you're on a farm now.

BEERS: Yeah.

SIGRIST: It's a whole different kind of thing.

BEERS: Yeah, yeah.

SIGRIST: What kind of cooking did your aunt and mother do that comes...

BEERS: Well, simple really. You know, like, the Swedish people like what they call "rotomos." It's R-O-T-O-M-O-S. And that is potatoes and turnips. And you mash them together. And you usually serve them with sausage or bacon or something like that. Then for Easter they have hard boiled eggs. Not hard boiled eggs, soft boiled eggs. They like them soft boiled hot. And then they'd have different kinds of and things like that, you know. Ham. Stuff like that for Easter.

SIGRIST: Well, and of course, you had animals on the farm in

Nebraska, too.

BEERS: Oh, yeah. Hm-hmm. Sure.

SIGRIST: Did, did they slaughter the animals there?

BEERS: Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah.

SIGRIST: Can you describe that for me?

BEERS: Well, one day I remember when my uncle slaughtered a pig. And I went into the barn. And the pig was hanging up and they slit him down, you know how they do. And the stench was so horrific, I had to run. I thought, oh my God, what a terrible thing to do. You know, but of course, they use that for their meat, you know. They just cut him up, and put him wherever they put him. I guess they probably smoked him, or whatever they do, because they had no refrigeration. They had a cave, I remember that they, we, you went down into this cave where they kept all the canned stuff. You know, she used to can, and, and jars, you know. Different fruits, and...

SIGRIST: Do you remember experiencing any kind of dramatic

weather situations in Nebraska?

BEERS: Yeah.

SIGRIST: Yeah?

BEERS: I'll tell you, one time a cyclone was coming. And they, my uncle came in from the fields, and he says, everybody down in that cellar, because the cyclone was coming, and you know, could tear down everything. And my brother I guess was just a little bitty baby then, and, you know. And we went down there, and of course, you close the door and it's so dark you can't see a thing. No one had a flashlight or anything. And my brother didn't make a peep, and I thought for sure he was dead, you know. But he wasn't. I guess he was just sleeping or laying there, you know. Hold, we were holding him. But that day I remember very well. I was frightened to death. I thought, my gosh, the whole house is going. But we were okay. It passed over. So that was good. Hm-hmm.

SIGRIST: Did your parents like being in America?

BEERS: I think so. They liked it. My mother missed Sweden.

But, you know, she never went back for about twenty-five years, and, before she could afford to go back. And then she went, and she went for the whole summer I remember. Of course, on the boat, yeah, you know, they were still going on the boat by then. And, and then after that she started to go back quite frequently. And towards the end now, you know, years later, she would go ever summer, she would go and visit her family. And then finally the last few years before she died she didn't go anymore. But she liked that. My father went back a couple of times, but that was all. And I've only been back twice. I went back after fifty years, and now I went back after twenty. Yeah. So, this is my last visit this year.

SIGRIST: And you were, you were there just recently, right? In October?

BEERS: Yeah. I went, I went in September and came back in October.

SIGRIST: Uh-huh.

BEERS: Three weeks. Yeah.

SIGRIST: Were there any things, was, was, let me rephrase that.  
Was there something in America that they didn't like specifically?

BEERS: I don't think so.

SIGRIST: Something about life here that...

BEERS: I really don't think there was. Because my father always said this is a good country. You know, he says he would never want to live any other place. And my mother was the same way. I mean, she missed her family, but wrote all the time, you know. Holidays they'd call. You know, my mother would call there. And of course, she'd have to watch her time. She'd have to get up in the middle of the night and make the call, because the time was different. But, no, they, they loved America. They had no, no, no desire to go back to live. She loved to visit, of course, but no. And she had a lot of memories from Sweden. But, you know, they never, ever said, well, let's go back to Sweden. Never.

SIGRIST: Did they send money back to Sweden?

BEERS: Oh, yeah. Yeah. She used to send money. Like especially at Christmas time she'd send money so they could buy their food, you know, that they like and all, because it's expensive over there. So she would send money, yeah.

SIGRIST: How long did you live in Ohio?

BEERS: Well, let me see. I'd say a few years. Now this is what happened. My father got a job, I guess, or someone offered him a job in New Jersey. We had relatives there, too. Through marriage, you know, it was not real close relatives. And this man had said to my father, you know, come to New Jersey, because he worked in the, I think it was the Mack shop, where they made Mack trucks. He said it's very busy now, and this is the time to come and go to work. Well, my father didn't go at that time exactly. But later on he thought about it and he said, I'd better go. So he took off by himself, and went to New Jersey. And we were all back there in Ohio. So then I guess he called for my mother, you know, to come over, because he got her an apartment. So my aunts says, "Well, if you're going," she says, "I'm going." So my uncle came from work one day. He used to work for this print shop.

And my aunts says, "Gerd and Helmer are going to New Jersey," and she says, "I'm ready to go, too." He says, "Well," he says, "If you sell the, if you sell furniture," he says, "I'll sell the house." And they sold it within a couple of days. And we all went to New Jersey. (she laughs)

SIGRIST: And where in New Jersey did you go to?

BEERS: New Brunswick. That's where my father had the apartment. They eventually bought a house, or rented an apartment in Dunellen, New Jersey. And he worked for Art Culler or something in Dunellen for many, many years. They finally went to California and settled down there.

SIGRIST: You've seen quite a bit of the, of the...

BEERS: Of the country. Yeah.

SIGRIST: ...of the country, considering...

BEERS: Yeah. Well, we went to New Jersey, and then, then from there we went to Connecticut. Up to Norwalk, Connecticut. And he was working up there as a

carpenter for a while.

SIGRIST: Is that where your brother died?

BEERS: My brother died in, in New Jersey.

SIGRIST: In...

BEERS: No, wait a minute now. In Connecticut.

SIGRIST: You said in Connecticut.

BEERS: Connecticut. Yes, in Connecticut.

SIGRIST: What did your brother die of?

BEERS: Pneumonia. Of course they didn't have penicillin in those days.

SIGRIST: What, what do you remember about that experience and how it affected you and your parents?

BEERS: Well, of course, my mother was heart, we were all heartbroken. He was only nine. And, but he had always had eczema. Eczema, you know, on his arms

here. (she indicates) And the poor little thing always wore, even in the summer, wore long sleeved shirts because he ashamed of his eczema. Like behind his legs and, and there. But that isn't what killed him. But he just got sick, you know, with cold. And I guess he got very sick, and my mother just called the doctor, and doctors would come out at that time. And so he said we'd better get him into the hospital.

So we went to the hospital with the doctor and brought my brother. And I guess he lived about a week and then he died. Of course, it was a horrendous exper, exper, experience for my parents. And so she had a girlfriend in Bridgeport, Connecticut. And we went right over there after he died because my mother didn't even know how to handle it. And so she helped us, you know, with funerals and everything, making the arrangements. And so he's buried up in, in Westport, Connecticut.

SIGRIST: Did your parents, under these circumstances, did your parents ever regret coming to this country?

BEERS: No. Never.

SIGRIST: They never acquainted the two...

BEERS: I never...

SIGRIST: ...events?

BEERS: I never heard that they regretted it. No. They thought they made a good move, you know.

SIGRIST: Tell me a little bit about what it's like for you, and let's sort of zip ahead maybe to your teenage years.

BEERS: Okay. Hm-hmm.

SIGRIST: Are you in Connecticut at that point still?

BEERS: Yeah.

SIGRIST: Tell me a little bit about what it was like to be a teenager, American through and through...

BEERS: Yeah. Sure.

SIGRIST: ...because you were so young. And yet you, you have very much these old world parents.

BEERS: Yeah.

SIGRIST: What was that like for you?

BEERS: I didn't think anything of it, really.

SIGRIST: Were you ever embarrassed by them?

BEERS: No, never. Never. Never. Everybody loved my parents, you know. They were great. Yeah. No, because by that time they had, they were speaking fairly good English, you know. So they could communicate with anybody. And, of course, we went through the Depression in Connecticut. This was very bad. And my mother used to work out then. You know, work out for people like up in Weston, where they had the fellow who wrote, I can't remember, Cecil Holme, who wrote "Three Men On A Horse." And there was another man, Davis, Burton Davis who wrote books. So she used to work for these people. And she used to go do housework. And she would take their laundry and to that home, and iron it, bring it back. And for a basket of laundry like this she'd probably get a buck and a half, you know. (she indicates) That was big money in those days. But these people sometimes

didn't pay her. So she'd have to take credit at the store, you know, to get some groceries. And I remember one time she sent me up to the store to get some fish. And I guess she said filet. And I went into the store and asked for a pound of female. (they laugh) And the guy says, "What?" I says, "Well it's fish." He says, "Oh, you mean filet." (she laughs) But we lived right near the junior high school where I went. We, we rented upstairs apartment in this big house. And the landlady was Assyrian. And they were very good people. And her husband had Assyrian newspaper in New York. And he was, Brooklyn, I guess in New York, he used to travel. And the junior high school was right near there. Then after that I went to high school, but I had no problem, you know, with my parents. I was never embarrassed for them, no.

SIGRIST: Were there some ways that they tried to instill in you some kind of old world values.

BEERS: Oh, yeah.

SIGRIST: What, what are some of the things that you think your parents taught you?

BEERS: Well, they were, well, just to be honest, and you know, to be good to people, and you know, not to cheat, not to lie, and all that. I mean, they were very honorable people. And of course she had all her Swedish things with her, you know, around the house and everything. And so it was a Swedish house. Because my girlfriends used to always say, "I always remember your house, because of all the copper on the walls," you know. And things like that. But no, they, my mother always spoke Swedish at home. My father and mother always speak, that's how I come to know a lot of, to speak Swedish a little bit. I mean I'm not fluent, because there's so many new expressions that I don't know. But I still write to Sweden. I write to my relatives. I have a book, you know, a dictionary that I can look up the English word and it will translate. So I have to use that sometimes, because I don't know how to spell all the words. No, they, they, I think instilled good traits in me. You know.

SIGRIST: Do, did your parents try to discipline in a way that you felt was maybe a little too harsh when you were growing up?

BEERS: No, I don't think so.

SIGRIST: No.

BEERS: No, I don't think so. They were pretty, pretty liberal with me. But I do remember one incident. Near the school where I went, the junior high, there was a church called Christ Church. And every Friday night they had square dances. So I got my girlfriends together, maybe three or four of us. We were going to go to the dance. I guess it was New Year's Eve. And, and they were going to spend the night. So they were dance, we were all dancing, having a great time. And then everybody went upstairs, you know, for services. Excuse me. So they had refreshments there, and they had a whole big box of ice cream, dixie cups, or whatever. So we were going to be funny. We were going to steal the dixie cups, you know. Stupid. So it had been snowing. So here we drag the box across the street to our house, and up the stairs. My mother and father were sleeping. And they heard us, he, she heard me in the china closet getting glasses. We were going to make ice cream sodas and all that, you know. And she came out. She says, "What's going on?" And so I was telling her, I thought it was a big joke, you

know. Well, she was so mad at me. She says, "What did you do, steal from a church?" (she laughs) She says, "You bring that back now." So we took it back. And of course we had to drag it again. And my mother says, "Boy, the police are going to come here tomorrow." He says, "Because the tracks are there." He says, "These girls got to go home. They're not going to stay here tonight." So that was one time she was really upset with me. (she laughs) So that was something else.

SIGRIST: Was the first paying job that you ever got?

BEERS: That I got?

SIGRIST: Yeah.

BEERS: I worked, well, the first paying job I think was baby sitting, or cleaning someone's house or something. This was when I was in high school. And this woman, she was really tough on me. So I didn't last very long. I just told her I couldn't take it, because she wanted me to do so much for so little. So I quit. But my first paying job when I graduated from high school was in the Bachelor's Laundry in Norwalk,

Connecticut. And it was, I was there all by myself. This Jewish man owned it, and he had, people could bring their laundry in, and then he would take it back to Fairfield and wash it, you know. And every day he came a little later. I was supposed to get out at four o'clock. And every day he came a little later, little later, little later. So this happened about three times. And I told him, I says, "If you're not here by four o'clock tomorrow," it was just like a store, I says, "I, I'm locking up." And I did. And I was walking home. I had to go over the bridge to East Norwalk, and I see him coming. And he never was late again. (she laughs) But he was taking advantage, because I wasn't making any more money, you see.

SIGRIST: Did, were you responsible, did you have to give your parents some of that money?

BEERS: No, I never did.

SIGRIST: That wasn't...

BEERS: No. She didn't...

SIGRIST: That wasn't part...

BEERS: They never made me pay for anything. No. I have to buy my own clothes. But they fed me and they housed me. Yeah. They never asked for any board.

SIGRIST: When was the first time, you went back to Sweden after fifty years, right?

BEERS: Yeah.

SIGRIST: So that'd be 1975.

BEERS: '74 I think it was.

SIGRIST: '74. Tell me what that felt like to go back to Sweden, especially since you had so few firsthand recollections.

BEERS: Oh, God. That was fantastic. I, I, nobody knew I was coming, either. They knew my mother was coming. My aunt and my mother were going. And...

SIGRIST: Oh, your mother went with you.

BEERS: Oh, yeah. I went with her. And...

SIGRIST: How old was your mother at that time?

BEERS: My mother? It was '74. She was born in 1901, so she must have been seventy-three. About the age I am now. I'm seventy-four now. So it was about my age, she was. And so we went, and we surprised them all, and we had a ball. We had such a good time. And, of course, she, she spoke Swedish fluently, and that helped. And we went to visit all the relatives all over. And there was a man that lived in, underneath my, well, in the house across the way from my cousins. And my uncle, or my cousin's husband said, "Well, you know, he's got a car sitting in the garage downstairs." And he says, "Maybe he'll let you use it, because he never drives anymore." I don't know what kind it was. Some kind of a Swedish car. So we borrowed his car, and we went all around, you know. And my cousin and her husband didn't drive and they didn't have a car. So we took them all over, and we went visiting all over the place. And then when we brought it back, the car back, the an didn't want anything, but of course I paid him, you know for the use of the car. Filled it up with gas for him and put it back in the garage. And my cousin's husband washed

it and everything and put it back. So we had the use of the car then.

SIGRIST: When you were there did you feel any, any emotional connection to, to what you were seeing and where you were, or did it...

BEERS: Oh, yeah.

SIGRIST: ...did it sort of feel removed to you?

BEERS: Oh, no, no. Because I'd, I'd heard so much about it, and I'd seen so many pictures, that I, I felt right at home. You know, they made you feel right at home there, yeah.

SIGRIST: Well, and you, it seems like you pretty grew up in a very Swedish atmosphere...

BEERS: That's right. That's right. Always, yeah.

SIGRIST: ...at home. So it was always part of who you were.

BEERS: Oh, yeah. Sure. So, no, I was just happy to be there, because I never thought I would ever get there,

you know. Because my husband, you know he was very possessive, and he didn't really want me to go. I guess he thought I would never come back. (she laughs) So it was really a, a joy. And of course I came back after three weeks, so. (she laughs)

SIGRIST: What was your husband's name.

BEERS: It was Jim. James. Jim.

SIGRIST: And what year did you marry?

BEERS: In 1942.

SIGRIST: And children?

BEERS: We have two children, a boy and a girl. Jackie is forty-eight, and Jimmy is forty-five. Jimmy is single. He lives in Florida, in Pompano Beach. Jackie lives in Springfield, and she has been married several times, and is divorced. And she is bringing up two girls. One is thirteen and one is twelve. Yeah.

SIGRIST: What do you think is inherently Swedish about you?

BEERS: About me?

SIGRIST: Yes.

BEERS: I don't know. Someone asked me yesterday, you have an accent, or told me yesterday I have an accent. Do I have a Swedish accent?

SIGRIST: No.

BEERS: I didn't think so. But they say I have an accent from something. I says I have never been told that before.

SIGRIST: When you get your tape in the mail, when I send it back, usually because the quality of the recording is so high, even people who generally don't think of themselves as having accents will be able to pick it up.

BEERS: Yeah. Yeah.

SIGRIST: So when you get the tape in the mail, listen.

BEERS: Okay, I will.

SIGRIST: I would say that you do not have one.

BEERS: Yeah, I didn't think I did.

SIGRIST: Well, is there some, what, what qualities are a reflection of your Swedish heritage? What, what, what things about you, what, what do you, things that you like to do or ways that you behave...

BEERS: Hmm.

SIGRIST: ...may be part of your Swedish background?

BEERS: I don't know. I like to cook. Swedish people are good cooks. I like to bake. And I used to do a lot of embroidery and things I don't do anymore, because my eyes aren't that great now. But...

SIGRIST: Was that something that was taught in Sweden...

BEERS: Well, I think that, I think...

SIGRIST: ...or when you were here?

BEERS: No, here. But my mother taught me how to knit. And she taught me how to crochet. So I used to do a lot of that. I sued to crochet and knit for the kids when they were little. But I've gotten away from it now, as I say, because my eyes aren't all that great. But, I don't know. I think I just like home, you know, I'm a homebody more or less. I like friends but I only have a few, you know. I don't have a lot of friends. I mean a lot of acquaintances, but not a lot of friends. I have a few that I really like. Like David Nowey, the one you said.

SIGRIST: That we found...

BEERS: He's a good friend of mine. And his wife. And Jim and I used to always go on vacations with them. And we weren't, we loved to write and everything, but we never thought about taking a vacation. They would always prod us. We went to Hawaii twice, and we went to the Dominican Republic once, and down to Florida we'd play golf. So they're really good friends of mine. And as a matter of fact I'm going down for the weekend tomorrow, because they want to see all my Swedish videos and all the pictures. And I'm going to

stay overnight and come back Sunday. Yeah. But I, we have, you know, we have few close friends that we really enjoy. But mostly family. You know, we're family oriented I think, you know, more than anything.

SIGRIST: And certainly your parents...

BEERS: Yeah.

SIGRIST: ...you know, that was a great...

BEERS: Yeah. Yeah.

SIGRIST: ...a great, important aspect to their life.

BEERS: Yeah. I have a nephew up in Maine. And his last name is Johnson, but he's not Swedish. He is the son of my husband's sister. And he's always wanted to be Swedish. And he says, he always wanted my husband, he always thought of him as his father, you know. And he's, he's the fellow I went to Sweden with. He's the one that did all this video thing. He has a daughter over there and two grandchildren over in Sweden. So I went with them and we had a really nice time. Hmm.

SIGRIST: Were your parents, did your parents always consider their decision to come to America the right decision for them?

BEERS: Oh, yes. Always.

SIGRIST: There was never any question about that?

BEERS: Never any question. Never.

SIGRIST: How do you think your life would have been different if they hadn't come? What do you think would have happened to you?

BEERS: Well, I would, I would have been a Svenska flicka.  
(they laugh) You know what that is? A Swedish girl, over there. I guess I probably would have gotten married, I wouldn't have known any different.

SIGRIST: I'll be calling you on the phone to get the spelling.  
(they laugh)

BEERS: Svenska flicka is Swedish girl. Flicka is F-L-I-K-A.  
"My Friend Flicka," remember?

SIGRIST: Yeah.

BEERS: Yeah. Sure. Yeah.

SIGRIST: So your life would have been substantially different?

BEERS: Oh, I imagine so. Sure. Yeah. But I'm sure it wouldn't have been a bad life, because I see how they're living over there.

SIGRIST: It's a beautiful country.

BEERS: Oh, it's gorgeous. And I mean, everyone has beautiful homes or apartments, whatever. I mean it's lovely. They, they have everything they need.

SIGRIST: Well, great. Mrs. Beers, thank you very much for letting me come out here.

BEERS: You're welcome, I'm sure.

SIGRIST: This has gone by very quickly, actually.

BEERS: Yes. Well, thank you. It has.

SIGRIST: Yeah. It was fun.

BEERS: Are you going to have some cheese and crackers or anything?

SIGRIST: I am. I'm just going to sign off here.

BEERS: All right, great. Okay, fine.

SIGRIST: This is Paul Sigrist signing off with Britta Beers on Friday, November 11th 1994, in Wilbraham, Massachusetts. And it is around three o'clock. Thank you.

BEERS: Thank you.