

EI-639

EDITH (VIOLA) PETERSON BEVERIDGE  
BIRTHDATE: NOVEMBER 12, 1903  
INTERVIEW DATE: JULY 20, 1995  
RUNNING TIME: 55:40  
INTERVIEWER: JANET LEVINE, Ph.D.  
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TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY: JOHN MURIELLO, 12/1995  
TRANSCRIPT REVIEWED BY: CHARLES MITCHELL, 8/2006

SWEDEN, 1919  
OSTERGOTLAND  
AGE 16  
PASSAGE ON "THE STOCKHOLM"  
RESIDENCE: GRAVERSFORS,  
US RESIDENCE: BOSTON, MA  
PORT OF EMBARKATION: GOTEBOG

LEVINE: Today is July 20th, 1995, and I'm here with Edith Beveridge, who came from Sweden in 1919 when she was sixteen years of age. And today Mrs. Beveridge is ninety-one years of age. She will be ninety-two in November. And I want to say that I'm looking forward to whatever you can remember. If you remember it, great, and if you forget some things that doesn't matter. And also feel free to say anything you can remember because I don't have any other information.  
Okay?

BEVERIDGE: No. No.

LEVINE: Okay, just for the tape, Mrs. Beveridge, would you say your date of birth again? Your birth...

BEVERIDGE: November 12, 1903.

LEVINE: Okay. And where in Sweden you were born.

BEVERIDGE: My home, that would be called Graversfors. That's, that's outside of Norrkoping.

LEVINE: And how do you...

BEVERIDGE: The nearest town.

LEVINE: And how do you spell Graversfors?

BEVERIDGE: That's G-R-A-V-E-R-S-F-O-R-S.

LEVINE: Graversfors. Okay. And that's outside of...

BEVERIDGE: Yeah. That's outside in the country.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. And the nearest town in Norrkoping?

BEVERIDGE: Norrkoping, yeah.

LEVINE: Norrkoping. Okay. And it's in the state of...

BEVERIDGE: Ostergotland.

LEVINE: Okay. Now did you...

BEVERIDGE: That's, that's more the southern part of Sweden.

LEVINE: Okay. Were you in Graversfors up until the time you left for America?

BEVERIDGE: Yes. Except I did go into Norrkoping to, to work there.

LEVINE: Oh, okay. Well, let's start out with your very early life. Do you remember as a little girl...

BEVERIDGE: Oh, yes. Yeah.

LEVINE: What do you...

BEVERIDGE: Well, we, we had the school, of course, and, and our place and everything else. And we had to walk quite a bit, quite a long ways to, to get to school. And then, of course, you know, like, like here we had recess and, and did some exercise and things like

that, and sang. And, and then we had a Sunday school I went to. And one time I said to the teacher, you know, that we could, when they had the, oh, what would you call it now? Well, it must have been like for the Christmas program or something. You know, why, why don't we get together and sing? And that time I played guitar a little bit. And then two, three others did the same thing. And then one father to one of the girls, I guess, he came and kind of helped us along, so he had a violin. And we had to stand with our back to the people, so that we wouldn't, you know. Oh, that was...

LEVINE: Was that because you were embarrassed, or you thought you'd giggle or...

BEVERIDGE: No, no. Evidently she was afraid that we would giggle, and I imagine that's why. So. But anyway, that was funny that we had to stand with the back, you know, singing and playing. But I think that's why, you know, if we should start giggling and carry on.

LEVINE: Well, do you remember any of those songs? Could you sing like a little bit of any of those songs from

then?

BEVERIDGE: No. Well, just one religious song that we sang that I can remember.

LEVINE: Oh, good.

BEVERIDGE: Yeah.

LEVINE: Could you sing a little of it?

BEVERIDGE: I, I, no. I can't sing. I haven't been singing for, I don't know, ten, fifteen years since I was down in Florida. Then I sang pretty good. But not now.

LEVINE: What...

BEVERIDGE: My voice is gone.

LEVINE: What...

BEVERIDGE: It was like something, they come from, from east and west, they came from north and south, and, and, you know.

LEVINE: This is a hymn?

BEVERIDGE: Yes.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. Yeah, that's sounds familiar.

BEVERIDGE: Yes.

LEVINE: This is now the Lutheran church where you were...

BEVERIDGE: Yes. I was Lutheran then. Now I'm a Baptist.

LEVINE: Oh.

BEVERIDGE: Most of my family came to this country. And, one by one. And my oldest sister came, and then after that one after another came. So I think most of us came over here except, I think it was, well, a couple of them died home in Sweden. But then since I came here I had two brothers home that I visited in '68.

LEVINE: What was your father's name?

BEVERIDGE: Now they're gone. His name was Gustaf.

LEVINE: And your mother?

BEVERIDGE: Helma.

LEVINE: Helma. And do you remember your mother's maiden name?

BEVERIDGE: Ostrom.

LEVINE: O-, O-S...

BEVERIDGE: O-S-T-R-O-M.

LEVINE: Okay. And...

BEVERIDGE: Her, her youngest brother was a doctor missionary in Congo. They called it The Congo then, which is Zaire now.

LEVINE: Oh. Uh-huh.

BEVERIDGE: So, and I had a book (unintelligible), and then give to someone down in Florida there to the minister's wife, and she lost it, and oh, I felt so bad losing it, because the whole history about him and what he

did, you know, in Congo.

LEVINE: Did you know him?

BEVERIDGE: Oh, yes.

LEVINE: Tell me about him. What was he like?

BEVERIDGE: Well, he was very, very nice, because I think I was about eight years old when he was home visiting, he and his wife. And then they were, from Sweden they were going to Congo. And I don't know if they were just home visiting here, or if they came direct. That was the first time I don't remember now. But, oh, no, I don't remember that.

LEVINE: What was his work? Did he ever talk about that?

BEVERIDGE: He was a doctor missionary. Yeah. Well, yeah.

LEVINE: And was he a Lutheran missionary?

BEVERIDGE: No, no. I think more Baptist. All of us got to be Baptists here.

LEVINE: Now, were there Baptists in Sweden?

BEVERIDGE: They have that, too, yes. But not from my hometown.  
It was mostly Lutherans.

LEVINE: Was there one church in your hometown?

BEVERIDGE: I couldn't remember now.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

BEVERIDGE: Couldn't remember.

LEVINE: Do you, do you remember any, any ceremonies or any kinds of observances of holidays or festivals, or anything in Sweden that maybe we, we don't have here, or we don't have it in the same way here?

BEVERIDGE: No, we had the, you know, because Christmas time we had like the, we still do, have that smorgasbord.

LEVINE: Was that Christmas Eve?

BEVERIDGE: Yes. Christmas Eve, we always celebrated at Christmas Eve.

LEVINE: And what would be on the smorgasbord?

BEVERIDGE: Oh, like meatballs and, and "sill."

LEVINE: What's sill?

BEVERIDGE: Pickled herring.

LEVINE: Oh.

BEVERIDGE: And pickled beets and "medwurst" [PH] and "limpa"  
and...

LEVINE: What's limpa?

BEVERIDGE: That's bread.

LEVINE: Oh.

BEVERIDGE: Uh-huh. And veal loaf. I used to make that here.  
Yeah. And head cheese. And then, of course, we had  
the famous "luttefisk." You know, fish. So that's  
what Joe always telling about he was still going to  
have it here. So, that's what we had. Quite a bit

of food. And, of course, we had lingon berries. I don't think they have those berries here. No. You know, to go with pancakes. And that was good.

LEVINE: Well, do you remember any other dishes that your mother made?

BEVERIDGE: We, we had a pig. And so then they slaughtered that, and of course, then they preserve that and had that for the whole winter, you know. My mother made sausages and things like that, so we, we could go and get some from that, you know, to eat from.

LEVINE: Was it, was it smoked? Is that how it was preserved?

BEVERIDGE: I don't what they had it in, if they had it in salt or whatever, I couldn't remember what, what that was.

LEVINE: Was that pretty...

BEVERIDGE: But we had a big, big buck, and we had that for different cuts. You know, like roast pork, and, and like that.

LEVINE: Did, was that typical, that a family would have a pig...

BEVERIDGE: Yes.

LEVINE: ...and they would slaughter it, and...

BEVERIDGE: Yes, yes.

LEVINE: ...have it all year?

BEVERIDGE: Yes. That's what they did.

LEVINE: Were there any other things that each family did for food?

BEVERIDGE: No, I couldn't think of anything.

LEVINE: Well, in this little town in the country, Graversfors, did, did, was there a market day, or did, were there any shops in town, or...

BEVERIDGE: I remember they came with a horse and buggy, and they had those smelts. They delivered that. And that's, that's all I can remember that they came with.

LEVINE: How about vegetables?

BEVERIDGE: And, of course, sometime, you know, they went in town and got some things that they needed. Living out in the country we didn't have any store like that, like here. You know, so, I know my father went travelling to town and got some things that we needed. So.

LEVINE: What was your father like when you were a little girl?

BEVERIDGE: Oh, well, what could I say? He was very nice. But, you know, we were so bashful. My, my, mother was a seamstress. I'm getting dry. So, anyway, she made clothes for us. Dresses and things. And then, you know, we had to go and say thank you to him. But not to her, but say thank you to the father, which I thought was funny.

LEVINE: Why was that, do you think?

BEVERIDGE: I don't know. That's what we did. So.

LEVINE: How many...

BEVERIDGE: I know we were more bashful.

LEVINE: How many children were there in your family?

BEVERIDGE: We were, I think my mother had nine all together. And, of course, we had very little room. So I don't know how in the world they managed. We, my sister and I talk about that now. How, how could we manage with so many, you know. But...

LEVINE: Do you remember the house? Could you describe a little bit the house you lived in?

BEVERIDGE: Yeah. Yeah, that, that's all burned down now. I did see when I was home 1968. And then they had it more like for a summer cottage, now, you know, when I was home '68. Now it's burned down. So.

LEVINE: Was it...

BEVERIDGE: Of course we had no, no electricity.

LEVINE: Did you have running water?

BEVERIDGE: No. We had a well. We had good water for one thing.  
And then, of course, we had to go outside.

LEVINE: To the outhouse?

BEVERIDGE: Yeah.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. Do you remember your mother doing the  
laundry?

BEVERIDGE: Yes. And that they went down to the river, and they  
had a big, big, big bucket, and they did, oh, I don't  
every three months or something like that. So I  
don't know how, where they kept all the sheets and  
everything. And then had to mangle all that. So  
that took about three days to do all that. And then  
rinse it in the river. And then had one of those, I  
don't know what you call it to slap it, you know, to  
get the water out of it.

LEVINE: And where was the mangle?

BEVERIDGE: We had, we had a, another little room where we could  
keep clothes, winter clothes and things like that in.  
And I think we even had a bed there sometime, you

know, so some of us slept there during the summertime. When it wasn't too cold. So we had the mangle in there. And also that big bucket, you know, where they had the, all the fish and sausage, not fish, but meat and sausages and preserve. Of course, that was in the wintertime when we had to have some after they slaughtered the pig.

LEVINE: Were you closest to any particular brother or sister?

BEVERIDGE: I, well, my younger sister that's here now, we were more in age. It's just about three years between us, three and a half years between us.

LEVINE: And what is her name?

BEVERIDGE: And we're the only ones living now.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

BEVERIDGE: Uh-huh.

LEVINE: What is her name?

BEVERIDGE: Agnes.

LEVINE: Agnes.

BEVERIDGE: Yeah. She lives up in Norwood now.

LEVINE: Oh.

BEVERIDGE: So, we're the only ones left.

LEVINE: It's Norwood, Massachusetts?

BEVERIDGE: Yes.

LEVINE: And how, how did you enjoy yourself when you were a little girl? What did you do for fun?

BEVERIDGE: Well, we didn't have very much, I'll tell you, compared to the children here in this country. Here I think they are more, they're spoiled with the things they get.

LEVINE: Well, compare your childhood to the way children are now.

BEVERIDGE: Well, we just had to make our own fun. See, like we

could go off in the mountains, and we could pick, I remember picking stones, and make like a home or a house. (a telephone is ringing) And got stones, you know, for furniture and things like that. And if we had a doll, why, you know, we had that with us. That's, that's all I can remember. So, we didn't have much of a childhood.

LEVINE: What was school like in Sweden?

BEVERIDGE: It was okay. And, then when the, the school teacher in the first grade, if you call it like first grade here, she had a sewing class for us. So we had to learn how to sew by hand, of course. So I remember I made a night gown, and how to get all the gathering in the back of it. And she said I did very, very good.

LEVINE: Well, did your mother teach you how to sew, too?

BEVERIDGE: No. I watched her with her sewing machine, and I sat down and made some doll clothes and things like that. So they were going to send me to a school to take that up, but they didn't. So, instead of that they got some pictures of themselves. Oh. And then, of

course, he died very young. He was only fifty-five when he died.

LEVINE: So in other words they were going to spend the money to send you to learn how to be a seamstress.

BEVERIDGE: Yeah. They were going to, but...

LEVINE: They didn't.

BEVERIDGE: No.

LEVINE: They used the money for photographs?

BEVERIDGE: Yes. That's what they did.

LEVINE: What kind of photographs were they, in a studio?

BEVERIDGE: Well, big, big pictures of themselves [sic]. Separate that they had hanging on the wall.

LEVINE: And where did they have them taken?

BEVERIDGE: In town, I guess.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. Wow. And, let's see. So, is there anything else about your childhood, did you have grandparents around that you remember?

BEVERIDGE: And then, no. And then we went in the, in the summertime we went to pick berries. You know, like blueberries and another kind of berry that we had. (she coughs) So, and then, of course, we planted, my father planted potatoes and carrots. Things like that. So we, we had plenty to eat. Even during the war when we had nothing but turnips to eat, morning, noon and night. The first world war? Yeah, that was hard.

LEVINE: I guess turnips must grow very well in Sweden.

BEVERIDGE: Maybe.

LEVINE: Because that's a big item, isn't it?

BEVERIDGE: Yeah.

LEVINE: Now did people plant their own turnips in their own back yards or something?

BEVERIDGE: Yeah. Well, we had a plot of land where he had his potatoes and whatever he did grow there. And then we had, instead of like here, you know, refrigerators and like that, we had some kind of a underground, what should I call it?

LEVINE: Oh, like a...

BEVERIDGE: Where they store things to keep it cool.

LEVINE: Right. A root cellar?

BEVERIDGE: That's right.

LEVINE: Is that what you call a root cellar?

BEVERIDGE: Uh-huh.

LEVINE: And, let's see. So you, how long did you stay in school? How old were you when you stopped going to school?

BEVERIDGE: I think I was only about twelve.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. And then what did you do after that?

BEVERIDGE: Then I, then I went to Confirmation class. So.

LEVINE: Oh, so that was pretty typical...

BEVERIDGE: Yes.

LEVINE: ...that a girl would stop school at about twelve?

BEVERIDGE: Yeah.

LEVINE: Then she'd study for the Confirmation?

BEVERIDGE: Yeah. That's right.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. And what was the Confirmation ceremony like?  
Do you remember?

BEVERIDGE: Oh, of course, we had to study the Bible and things  
like that, and so. I can't remember very much about  
it.

LEVINE: And then after you were confirmed, then what did you  
do?

BEVERIDGE: Then I went, with so many of us there, you know, and my mother had plenty to do with all those in this very little room that we had. And so then I went in town to Norrkoping, and worked then, on, in the factory.

LEVINE: What kind of a factory?

BEVERIDGE: Oh, golly. I don't know what to say. You see all those on, on the shelf there? (she indicates)

LEVINE: Oh, yarn.

BEVERIDGE: It was like a spinning, you know, the, we were putting that on machines.

LEVINE: Oh.

BEVERIDGE: Filling them up. The machine was going until it got filled.

LEVINE: Oh, I see. So you were putting the yarn on the spools...

BEVERIDGE: That's right.

LEVINE: ...by machine.

BEVERIDGE: Yes.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. And, and were, were there a lot of...

BEVERIDGE: Then you, then you had to take that off when it got so much, and then put on another.

LEVINE: And how did you like doing that?

BEVERIDGE: It was okay. And then I ate in the Salvation Army for my lunch. I stayed with a woman, you know. And I don't know if she gave me any breakfast. That I don't remember. And then noontime I went to Salvation Army.

LEVINE: And what would be a typical lunch you'd have at the Salvation Army?

BEVERIDGE: Oh, I guess like soup and sandwich and things like that.

LEVINE: And then what would you do after work?

BEVERIDGE: After work, sometime I went home weekends. I went back home.

LEVINE: And how did you get home from, from...

BEVERIDGE: Well, then I had to take the train.

LEVINE: Well, did you have a social life at all? Did you go out on dates, or did you...

BEVERIDGE: No. No.

LEVINE: ...dance?

BEVERIDGE: I told you, sweet sixteen and never been kissed.  
(she laughs)

LEVINE: Kissed.

BEVERIDGE: Yeah. That's what my husband said. Yeah.

LEVINE: So, so, how was it decided that you...

BEVERIDGE: We had, we had dances and things like that, you know,

so.

LEVINE: In, in Norrkoping? Is that where you...

BEVERIDGE: No. Outside in, you know, in the country.

LEVINE: Oh, you had dances?

BEVERIDGE: Yes.

LEVINE: Were you a dancer? Did you like to dance?

BEVERIDGE: Not much. No.

LEVINE: So how was it decided that you would come to the United States?

BEVERIDGE: Well, one, one weekend when I came home from Norrkoping. And so then my brother said, "You're going to America." And he had a letter from my sister here, my oldest sister. And I said, "I am not." I took the letter and I threw it on the floor. I didn't want to go. But, of course, my, the ticket was bought and paid for, and so here I went. So I think I had my sixteenth birthday in Goteborg, you

know, where the boat went from.

LEVINE: Oh. Well, why didn't you want to go?

BEVERIDGE: Oh, I, I just felt that way. But I'm glad I'm here.

LEVINE: So did you, did you travel by yourself?

BEVERIDGE: Yes.

LEVINE: Well, why was it that your sister sent for you in particular. I mean, you had other brothers and sisters, didn't you?

BEVERIDGE: Yeah. Well, I don't know why she sent for me. I guess I was the oldest one of them. And then after that my youngest sister came.

LEVINE: Did you remember your older sister from before she came to this country?

BEVERIDGE: No, no. No. She was here, and I, I couldn't remember her.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

BEVERIDGE: Because she was home visiting one time, and of course, I met her then. Then my youngest sister was seven years old, and I guess I was about eight or nine. So, maybe a little bit more, because there's, I think there's about two and a half years between us. So. So she favored her, and, but, I don't know. They sent for me. Oh, that's how I got here.

LEVINE: How did you, how did you feel? Do you remember leaving your, your home?

BEVERIDGE: Well...

LEVINE: Your parent's home?

BEVERIDGE: It was, after all, it was kind of hard, you know, to say good-bye, and. And then when I came to Goteborg, then I was supposed to have a (she indicates her arm)...

LEVINE: Vaccination?

BEVERIDGE: ...handkerchief around my arm so my aunt and uncle

in, that lived in Goteborg, they would recognize who I was. And, of course, when the train came in they weren't there. And so it was someone else who was going on the same boat. And, Stockholm, and he had someone that came down and met him. So he said, "Poor little girl," he said, you know, "Go out and get a taxi." And so he went over to my aunt and uncle's home, you know, with the taxi with me. And he ran up the stairs first to find out if that was the right name and right place where I was supposed to go. And then, of course, I came. And many, many times I wish I had taken the address of him, so I could have written to him and thank him for what he did for me. So.

LEVINE: So when he, when he raced up the steps, your aunt and uncle were home? They were at home?

BEVERIDGE: No. My, my uncle and my cousin was down at the station by that time. So, and my aunt was home. Yeah. So.

LEVINE: So how long did you stay with them?

BEVERIDGE: Oh, I don't know how long I stayed. A few days, I

guess, before the boat went. I guess two, two, two or three days maybe.

LEVINE: So you think your birthday, your sweet sixteen birthday was during that time when you were in Goteborg?

BEVERIDGE: Yes.

LEVINE: Do you remember that? Do you remember any kind of a celebration of your birthday or anything...

BEVERIDGE: No, no. Nothing. No, no, no birthday like here. No. Nothing.

LEVINE: And so then did you have any examinations before you got on the ship?

BEVERIDGE: No, I didn't have to that time. I know later on they had, they really went through their heads to see if they had any lice and...

LEVINE: Yeah.

BEVERIDGE: ...bugs.

LEVINE: You know, I think, maybe we'll pause here for lunch.

BEVERIDGE: Yeah. Oh, it's after twelve now.

LEVINE: Okay. We'll stop here and resume later. (break in tape) Okay, we're resuming now after lunch, and I want to, we were talking about your coming here. The decision to come to this country. You said that your older sister...

BEVERIDGE: We talked a lot about the food and all that in Sweden...

LEVINE: Right.

BEVERIDGE: ...and my childhood and so forth, which wasn't very, you know, and coming to Goteborg.

LEVINE: Right.

BEVERIDGE: And I think that was about the, the last of it.

LEVINE: Okay. So then name the ship that you came on.

BEVERIDGE: That was S.S. Stockholm.

LEVINE: Okay. And what, what do you remember about the voyage on the S.S. Stockholm?

BEVERIDGE: Not much. I was sick for about three days. Then I got up in the morning to fix my shoe, shoes, and oh, I flopped back in bed again, and I shouldn't have done that. I should have gone up to get used to the, you know, waving back and forth. Rocking.

LEVINE: So you were seasick?

BEVERIDGE: Yeah. So, here I was in bed for a couple of days.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

BEVERIDGE: Oh. It takes...

LEVINE: Now...

BEVERIDGE: ...takes a little while before you get used to that rocking.

**END OF SIDE ONE**

**BEGINNING OF SIDE TWO**

LEVINE: What were your accommodations on the ship? Do you remember where you...

BEVERIDGE: As far as I know it was very, very nice.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

BEVERIDGE: Very nice.

LEVINE: Now were you travelling by yourself?

BEVERIDGE: Yes.

LEVINE: And you were sixteen years old?

BEVERIDGE: Sixteen years old.

LEVINE: Were you scared or excited or...

BEVERIDGE: No, no. Nothing like that, my, entered my mind. No.

No.

LEVINE: Well, did anything happen aboard ship that you remember particularly?

BEVERIDGE: No. No. No.

LEVINE: Okay. And do you remember the ship coming into the New York Harbor?

BEVERIDGE: Yes. We came in on a Sunday, and being, not being American citizens we couldn't get off, see. So, that's, on Monday morning when they took us to, they have these, what is it they call it, these travel aides. I guess you would call them guides. And so we came, quite a few of us on the street there. And here came my sister. They had been to New York for a wedding. And so she asked her if they had anybody in there with my name. And so there I was. When I heard that, you know, of course, then I, and I hadn't seen her, you know. So...

LEVINE: What was it like being with your sister...

BEVERIDGE: Well, I didn't know my sister. Yeah.

LEVINE: What was it like...

BEVERIDGE: Well...

LEVINE: ...getting to know her, and...

BEVERIDGE: Not, not much. You know, they say Sweden is cold and (unintelligible) even, I mean the people, you know. So, they didn't have that love and falling all over you like they do here. So, not that I can remember.

LEVINE: Do you remember any things that struck you...

BEVERIDGE: Of course, now maybe it's changed. You know, the younger generation, I guess everything is changed. Do I remember what?

LEVINE: Do you remember any things that were new, that you had never seen before, that, when you first came to this country, that were different?

BEVERIDGE: Well, I remember my, my, my sister and brother-in-law, we went into a restaurant to eat. And she ordered soup for, for herself and me, and the rest of

them had scrambled eggs. I understand now that it was scrambled eggs because it looked so good to me. And I was wishing, oh, why didn't she order that for me, you know. Because soup we had home, you know, quite a bit, so I wanted something different.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

BEVERIDGE: So, and then I was here in this country just a while. We came just before Christmas, like I said. And so she started work in a rom, they call it romper factory. You know what that is?

LEVINE: No.

BEVERIDGE: Well, they, they made clothes for boys, see.

LEVINE: Oh, babies?

BEVERIDGE: Yes. So they called it romper factory. And so, you know, it came from one person, and somebody else did something else until it got finished, you know, for...

LEVINE: That's were your sister worked?

BEVERIDGE: Yes. In Norwood. That, that was in Norwood. So my older sister lived there. And I came to her. And my first money here in this country was six dollars.

LEVINE: How did you get it?

BEVERIDGE: Uh-huh. So it wasn't much.

LEVINE: Was this for a week's work?

BEVERIDGE: I imagine that's what it was. Yeah. For one week.

LEVINE: And this was in the romper factory?

BEVERIDGE: Yes. In Norwood. So, and then after a little while I got into Boston, and worked for ladies there. Started with a kitchen maid. And we, I stayed there, well, it was one lady. She had about nine, nine people working for her. And I had to take care of the dogs. Clean their room.

LEVINE: They had a whole room.

BEVERIDGE: Oh, boy, I'm telling you. And this was on Conwald

Avenue. And then in the summertime they went out to Medfield, and she had a beautiful place out there. So, there they had horses and, and pigs. I don't think they had any cows. No, but she had horses and, yeah, I guess, yes, I guess they had cows, too, because we got the milk into Boston when we were there in the wintertime. Yeah. So they came in with that. That and cream. So. And we had to make our own ice cream. Which was rich.

LEVINE: Oh, I bet.

BEVERIDGE: The real, the real stuff.

LEVINE: I bet it was delicious.

BEVERIDGE: It was good. Uh-huh. So then from there I went to be ladies chambermaid. I took care of the lady and her clothes and things like that, which she had to wear.

LEVINE: Did you enjoy doing that?

BEVERIDGE: Hmm?

LEVINE: Did you enjoy doing that?

BEVERIDGE: Yeah, it was okay. So. And, and then after that I got to be a waitress. Well, I did both. See, if one lady, one servant was out, you know, I didn't. You took their place and did their work.

LEVINE: So you were a waitress for the same lady that you...

BEVERIDGE: No. No, with some other place. So. Yeah, I worked in Brookline. That's the last place I had as a waitress. And I worked for Mrs. Gaston. I think her, I think husband was supposed to be, I, I don't remember now. A governor, or something, and he lost out. But his name was Gaston. That was one lady. She hated to see me go, but I...

LEVINE: Why did you leave?

BEVERIDGE: Oh, well. I don't know what it was. Somebody that you work for, you know, and they always make trouble for you. Yeah. So I thought I better leave. So then I came to Brookline. And then after that I got married.

LEVINE: And how did you meet your husband?

BEVERIDGE: Oh, like Esther said to you, you know, my friend Esther Collinson, that I guess we met at the dance or something.

LEVINE: Now, yeah. Esther mentioned that you were her maid of honor?

BEVERIDGE: Yes.

LEVINE: Isn't that something. So how did you know Esther?

BEVERIDGE: I was, I was in, on Conwald Avenue, Number Four Conwald Avenue. That's where I was kitchen maid. And she was on Beacon Street. And it was a lot of Swedes, in, in Back Bay there working for the ladies. And so that's how we met. And I was the first one. She always says that. I was the first girl she met in this country. Yeah. So.

LEVINE: Did you meet, like, at a dance, or did you meet at a...

BEVERIDGE: Yeah, well, that was, that was, you know, right

there, you know, where I was working. So we went to visit one another there.

LEVINE: I see.

BEVERIDGE: And, then, of course, like I said now, I got to be Baptist. I was baptized in, on Shawmut Avenue in Boston. And she came visiting the church quite often. She and, and her husband. They weren't married that time, but, so that's how we got to, got acquaintances. And she and I worked together quite a few times.

LEVINE: Oh.

BEVERIDGE: Yeah. We had two or three places we worked together.

LEVINE: So you've been friends really ever since you came to this country practically?

BEVERIDGE: That's right.

LEVINE: Isn't that wonderful.

BEVERIDGE: Uh-huh. That's a good many years.

LEVINE: Yes.

BEVERIDGE: And then, that we both should land here.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. Wow. So, let's see. So, when you, when you met your husband, when you were married, did you stay in Boston, or did you...

BEVERIDGE: No, we were in Watertown, we had a house in Watertown. Yeah. Well, we were in Belmont first, and then we bought a house in Watertown.

LEVINE: And what was your husband's name?

BEVERIDGE: Name?

LEVINE: Hm-hmm.

BEVERIDGE: Arthur. Arthur Nelson.

LEVINE: And then, and then did you have children?

BEVERIDGE: And then I have a son and a daughter. Yeah.

LEVINE: And their names?

BEVERIDGE: That's Nor, his name was Norman. Norman Arthur Nelson. Just got a thank you note, now, because they just had a twenty-fifth anniversary.

LEVINE: Oh.

BEVERIDGE: So, and...

LEVINE: And your daughter's name?

BEVERIDGE: Her, her name was Sylvia. And not till now does she tell me, you know, that she never liked the name Sylvia. So, she, you know, but now I guess she likes. So I said, the queen of Sweden, her name is Sylvia.

LEVINE: Did you, did you ever have any heroes in your life? People that you looked up to? Heroes or heroines? People that you thought were just somebody to aspire to, or to be like, or...

BEVERIDGE: Well, I, I, living, living in Watertown there I got very much involved with the pastor and his wife and

his family, because it was too much for her to take care of. So he asked me if I could come and help her. And he baptized my daughter. And so, anyway, later on, you know, we had a lot of fun about that down in Florida. So, but, anyway, so that's how I got acquainted with them. And so I was with them for many, many years, when the grandchildren was six, seven, and now they're up in forty, I guess. So. And, so, of course, then she died, and so, then he asked if I wanted to marry him.

LEVINE: Oh, the pastor? The Baptist minister?

BEVERIDGE: Hm-hmm.

LEVINE: So he's, he was Mr. Beveridge?

BEVERIDGE: Yes.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

BEVERIDGE: Yeah. Yeah, he had a church in Belmont there for about thirteen years. So, we know each other for quite a few years before, you know.

LEVINE: Yes. Well, now, how did you come to be interested in becoming a Baptist from a, from a Lutheran?

BEVERIDGE: Well, I just, I couldn't tell you. My whole family here, most of them, my, my sister isn't, because she's still, she's not American citizen yet. Although she's been in this country so many years.

LEVINE: This is your older sister?

BEVERIDGE: No, my younger sister...

LEVINE: Oh, your younger one. Right.

BEVERIDGE: ...the one and only that's living now.

LEVINE: Yeah. Okay.

BEVERIDGE: Yeah. All the rest is dead. So. No, no, I don't think any of my sisters got to be Baptist, but I did. See, because the whole family was, that's how I got involved. Went to a Baptist church and, so, and then, of course, in Belmont, you know, we had our ladies' meetings and get together and it was a wonderful...

LEVINE: So it was a social...

BEVERIDGE: ...a wonderful time.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. Were there many Swedish people in the Baptist parish where you...

BEVERIDGE: No, no, I don't think so. No, I don't think as many Swedes there. No, it's an American Baptist church. Uh-huh. Although they had a Swedish Baptist church out there. But, no, this is American.

LEVINE: And how about this phase of your life, this time of, when your, your children are grown, and in you're in your old, what we call old age...

BEVERIDGE: Well...

LEVINE: ...how is that time, this time for you?

BEVERIDGE: Well, I married Jim Beveridge. And then, of course, we went down to, he had a, not a home, because he rented down there, but we lived down in Florida for ten years. And we came up here every summer. From

May or June I think we used to come till September. And then we went back again to Florida. So every year we did that.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

BEVERIDGE: And, of course, I had a house in Watertown. And I wish I had kept that, you know, so then we would have had a place to go to coming up here every summer.

LEVINE: Where did you go?

BEVERIDGE: Yeah, well, we had to rent some place, so. Evidently he wanted to be near his daughter. And that was up in Worcester. So. Her husband was a minister, too, up there. Well, then we travelled quite a bit. So I was in California twice with him. And, and to Vancouver, which is beautiful. Have you ever been there?

LEVINE: No, I never have.

BEVERIDGE: Oh, it is beautiful. So we were there twice visiting with his family. So he was seven years old when they came over from Scotland. The family.

Voice off-mic: Oh, you're interviewing. Oh, yeah. Well, I just thought I...

LEVINE: We'll pause here. (break in tape) Okay, so...

BEVERIDGE: So we were in, back and forth for ten years. Then we came back here in 1986, and we, we got an apartment, a basement apartment in Garden Crest. Do you know anything about around here?

LEVINE: A little bit. Yeah.

BEVERIDGE: Garden Crest...

LEVINE: Garden Crest I know, yeah.

BEVERIDGE: ...is a beautiful place.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

BEVERIDGE: In Walton. And we came there, we got, my daughter tried everywhere to get a place for us. Because we stayed with her and with his son-in-law first. And so then they tried to get a place for us. That was

1986 when we moved, moved from Florida. And, excuse me, so anyway, what was I going to say now?

LEVINE: So you stayed there at Garden Crest?

BEVERIDGE: I've got to get my, yeah. Well, anyway, we, we got it June 1st. And then June 14th he was out taking care of the dog, you know, for his son-in-law, while he was away to the airport for his son. And he didn't come back, and I went to the window to look, and, you know, he should be back, and. And, well, anyway, then his son-in-law came. And so I turn around to go and open the door to the kitchen. I was in the living room looking out, and then I fell and broke my hip. So, and then, that's why my ankle, see how they swell.

LEVINE: Oh, I see. Yeah. So, so that's how you happen to come in here?

BEVERIDGE: Well, well, anyway, so I landed in a hospital then. And so I got a nurse, and she said, "I'm going to take care of you." She said, "My name is June." She said, "But don't call me June 14th." Because that was the day it happened. So, that struck me funny.

LEVINE: Yeah. Uh-huh.

BEVERIDGE: And then the 20th of July he was taken into the hospital. And he never got out of it. So he was in for three months. He died in October, '86. So, that was the first year here.

LEVINE: Oh.

BEVERIDGE: So then I got to live with my daughter and her husband. And so they built a mother-in-law apartment for me. So, they asked me what I wanted to do. Well, I just didn't know what to do, you know, with a broken hip and going with walkers and canes and what not. So they built that for me. So I stayed with her until Labor Day I came in here.

LEVINE: Oh. And how is for you in here?

BEVERIDGE: Very nice. Of course, you know, it's hard in the beginning. Now, like my cousin here, you know, she's got a hard time to, you know, gave up her home, and, you know, give up your...

LEVINE: Independence, in a way, yeah.

BEVERIDGE: ...furniture, and everything else. Well, independent I guess you can be in a way, because we have our own rooms.

LEVINE: Yes.

BEVERIDGE: The only thing that we didn't have in the rooms is bathrooms, and that's what she worried about, and I worried about going to the bathroom. Well, now, Esther told me, you know, that's, they have railings to hold on to. So.

LEVINE: What is it, what is it like for you to have give up all your things and, you know, come into a nursing home, or a home?

BEVERIDGE: This is more of a rest home than nursing home, yeah.

LEVINE: Rest, right. Right. Because people here can get around, right?

BEVERIDGE: Yeah. Well, at least you don't have to sit alone, you know, because she was working. And her husband

was living then, you know, and working. And then that left me alone in the house. Well, I know she worried about me many, many times. Because then her husband died. So, he was only fifty-nine. And she couldn't hold the place any longer because she had a, quite a bit of land to take, you know, all the trees and, you know, the leaves and everything else, and always something you have to do when you have a house. So, so she sold that, and so that's how I had to get out and do something else.

LEVINE: Well, how do you feel about your decision?

BEVERIDGE: Well, then I, I prayed about, my son said why don't you go into the senior citizen's out in Norwood. Well, I said I still would be alone, and I would have to have someone to do shopping for me, and do this and do that, and take me to doctors and what not. So, but, anyway, I, we had just been here visiting with Esther. And she said maybe someday that you'll be in here. So I said maybe. And so, then in the fall this happened. So I got in here. So. And, of course, you have to give up everything you have almost, you know, so. So, I haven't got too many things of my own here. But...

LEVINE: How is it not having your things?

BEVERIDGE: It does, it doesn't bother me one bit. No. No. My family got what they wanted there, so. Yeah.

LEVINE: Do you, how do you feel about your Swedish heritage? I mean, does, is that a big part of, of who you are, the fact that you're Swedish? Does that make a big difference in the kind of person you are and all that, do you think?

BEVERIDGE: Oh, I, I don't know what to answer on that.

LEVINE: Yeah. Do you, do you, I mean, do you feel like you're Swedish and you're American? You're both, or you're more one, or more the other, or...

BEVERIDGE: Well, right now I think I'm more American, because there's so many, many years since, you know. I did go home 1924 then, you know. That was before I got married. And then after he died, I went home 1968. And I haven't been home since. And, of course, now, one by one died, and I got nothing to go home for. If I was able and had someone with me, companion, I

would like to travel in Sweden and see a little bit of Sweden. But I've seen very little of Sweden.

LEVINE: Would you have any desire to go back there?

BEVERIDGE: No, I don't. No. No.

LEVINE: To stay, I mean, yeah.

BEVERIDGE: No. This is my home. I got my children here and my grandchildren and great grandchildren. So.

LEVINE: What do you feel proud of, that you've, that you've done in your life, that makes you feel satisfied or feel good about?

BEVERIDGE: Well, I'm glad I have my mind yet, for one thing.

LEVINE: Yeah.

BEVERIDGE: I think that's very much to be thankful for.

LEVINE: Yes.

BEVERIDGE: My age. Because quite a few of them here doesn't

know much.

LEVINE: Yeah, you're very sharp. Yeah, that's true.

BEVERIDGE: Yes. So. And that's what people tell me when I telephone them. You know, I'm lucky that I still have, I'm still alert. And, now, Esther is very, very forgetful. Yeah. So, I know I tell her things, and, "I never heard it before." And I, I, she has. So.

LEVINE: Now, do you and Esther reminisce very much? Do you find yourself sitting around talking about the old days or anything?

BEVERIDGE: Yes. We have done that quite a bit, a few times here. Yeah. Go back to old memories.

LEVINE: What are the kinds of things that you, that you remember, that you, that you like to talk about?

BEVERIDGE: Oh, well, how we met, and about her husbands, and the time we had together, and so forth and so on. Yeah. So.

LEVINE: Well, I suppose they're treasures in your memory.

BEVERIDGE: We got together and had parties, and invited one another, and so forth. Uh-huh. So, not only with them, but, you know, some other friends of mine that I still correspond with. Another, another girl, her name is Edith, too. And I've known her now since, yeah, what is it now? Before we were married, and before they were married. So how many years is that now?

LEVINE: Well...

BEVERIDGE: I was married thirty-five years with, with Arthur...

LEVINE: And he...

BEVERIDGE: ...when he died. And then I was alone about ten years. So.

LEVINE: Well, you must have married Arthur, you came to this country, you might as well say it was practically 1920.

BEVERIDGE: Yeah.

LEVINE: And you got married...

BEVERIDGE: Yeah.

LEVINE: ...you didn't get married right away.

BEVERIDGE: No. No. No. No, we married 1930.

LEVINE: Oh, okay, so 1930. So, from 1930 is sixty-five years.

BEVERIDGE: Yeah. Just think. But I was ten years that I was alone after he died. He died, what was it, my sister died '66. So '66. No. No, my husband died '66, and my sister '76. And, and she died in May I think it was, and then we got married in Novem, October. And then he died in '86. So I said now maybe I'll be dying '96. (she laughs)

LEVINE: Well, when you think of those parties that you had, were they, I mean, did you have, like, Swedish music, and was it...

BEVERIDGE: Yeah. We played cards, played cards.

LEVINE: ...was it mostly Swedish people? Uh-huh.

BEVERIDGE: Yeah. We played cards, and had a social. Very nice.  
Yeah. All the Swedes got together, and we had our parties. Yeah. Went here and there. So, yeah, it was nice.

LEVINE: Yeah. Okay. Do you think having immigrated to this country as a, as a sixteen year old, do you think that made a big difference in your later life? The fact that you'd come from somewhere else...

BEVERIDGE: Could have been. Yeah.

LEVINE: Do you think you've changed much over the years? I mean, besides getting older and all that. But I mean, just as a person, do you think...

BEVERIDGE: Well, I guess you mature more, you know, as you, years go by. That's all I can say.

LEVINE: Okay. Well, is there anything else that you can think of that has to do with coming from Sweden and

living out your life in this country and...

BEVERIDGE: No. No.

LEVINE: Yeah.

BEVERIDGE: No, I told you about the boat. And we, we just, we just stayed there. I don't know how long now they stay there, but we never got off. So, we didn't have to go off. And so I didn't see anything.

LEVINE: Right.

BEVERIDGE: Just a blank wall there, you know, with the big boats. I didn't see anything. Only, we stopped over there and, and then, you know, continued to New York.

LEVINE: Right. Okay. Well, I want to thank you very much. You, you remember a lot. You certainly are alert, and it's been very interesting, and the things that you remember. And I've been speaking with Edith Beveridge. And she came from Sweden in 1919 when she was sixteen years of age, and has lived here the rest of her life.

BEVERIDGE: That's right.

LEVINE: And this is Janet Levine for the National Park Service. It's July 20th, 1995, and I'm signing off.