EI-654
ANNA MOORE
BIRTHDATE: MAY 7, 1922
INTERVIEW DATE: AUGUST 22, 1995
AGE AT TIME OF INTERVIEW: 73
RUNNING TIME: 58:14
INTERVIEWER: JANET LEVINE, PH.D.
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INTERVIEW LOCATION: ELLIS ISLAND ORAL HISTORY STUDIO
TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY: TAPESCRIBE
TRANSCRIPT REVIEWED BY: JANET LEVINE

CZECHOSLOVAKIA, 1928
AGE: 6

PORT: BREMEN
SHIP: ADRIATIC
RESIDENCES: MEDVEZE (a village near SVEDNIK), CZECHOSLOVAKIA
NANTICOKE, PA; CLIFTON, NJ and KANSAS

LEVINE: Okay, this is August 22nd, 1995 and I'm here now in the Ellis Island Oral History Studio. I'm about to interview Anna Oblatiloff Moore, who is the twin sister of Mary Oblatiloff Domyon, who has just been interviewed. Anna, maybe you'd also like to say who else is here with you visiting Ellis Island.

MOORE: I'm here with my brother-in-law, Rudy Domyon, and my kid sister, Regina Oblatiloff Rutledge. She was born here. She's the American citizen, naturopath.

LEVINE: Natural born American.

MOORE: Right.

LEVINE: Okay. Well, let's see. I wanted to say that Mary—both Anna and Mary came from Czechoslovakia in 1928 and they were six years of age. Okay, Anna, would you just give your birth date and also the town in Czechoslovakia where you were born?

MOORE: I was born May 7th, 1922 in Medveze, Czechoslovakia.

LEVINE: And you were in Medveze, when you think of Medveze, what do you recall of the town?

MOORE: I recall it's a very beautiful agriculture farm life. We played an awful lot out on the farms, crossing the bridge to go to my aunt. She didn't have any children, so she doted over my brother, my twin sister and myself.

LEVINE: What was this aunt's name? Do you remember her name?

MOORE: Anna Bobeck.

SISTER: (whispering) No.

LEVINE: Anna Bobeck?

MOORE: Is that my aunt?

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

MOORE: Anna Bobeck. She was married to—was it Lipinsky? That was the last name. What I really remember the most going across the bridge over that brook and evidently I fell off.

LEVINE: You fell off?

MOORE: The bridge, and I hit my toe and the toenail has never (laughs) grown since. When somebody sees my foot, they'll always ask me how I got rid of my toenail. So I still remember that --how I fell off the bridge and lost my toenail.

LEVINE: Now, were you named after this aunt, Anna? Was—

MOORE: Evidently.

LEVINE: I mean, was she someone who you were very close to at the time?

MOORE: She's my mother's sister, yeah, and the families are very close there to one another. Probably they just named their children after their aunts, grandmothers, cousins.

LEVINE: Do you remember any experiences when you went to visit your aunt?

MOORE: Usually they just gave you food and you enjoyed having the food and they played with us. As I said, they didn't have any children. Got all the attention that we needed, as young children. [Chuckles]

LEVINE: Do you remember any of the foods that you ate?

MOORE: Yes.

LEVINE: Before you came to this country?

MOORE: Yes. Pierogis. They have them here in frozen food departments.

LEVINE: Do you know how to spell it?

MOORE: Pierogi, P-R-O-G-A, [incorrect spelling], pierogi.

LEVINE: And how would you have it when you were a little girl in Czechoslovakia?

MOORE: Well, you roll out the dough and you stuff it either with mashed potatoes or sauerkraut or cottage cheese, and you boil them, and then you sauté onions in butter. There they did not have oleo (laughs)--butter. And they would put that sautéed butter over the pierogis and it was very, very good. We were raised on them. Or the potatoes, my mother had, when she'd go out on the farm, that's what she would be doing. She would dig up the potatoes and people had a lot of potatoes for their meals, either mashed or just boiled. They raised their cows there and they had cream, sweet milk, homogenized milk and sour milk and I got home from the farm, that's what you ate, those broiled potatoes, dipped in that milk, and that was another meal. Then they raised their cabbage and in the fall they'd haul the heads of cabbage, shred the cabbage and store them in big barrels and that's what you would eat, also, during the winter, the sauerkraut, and it was very good. There's many different ways that my mom used to fix it. So you ate that and you had chickens. You raised chickens and on the holidays they would go cut—they would cut the—they would kill the chickens and we would have that on the holiday, but sometimes you couldn't afford to kill the chicken because that chicken laid eggs and you were able to sell the eggs and get some money or exchange, make an exchange for the egg and you got some merchandise. Or you took your eggs to the market, if you saw a blanket or something like that, you could make the exchange for the eggs.

LEVINE: Do you remember market day? Was there a day when—

MOORE: No, but I guess my mother did that because I don't remember the market days, until we got older and I think that was when we were leaving Medveze to go to Europe, when the train would stop and we'd see what was going on and my mother would explain it to us. But there was this Svednik, a town close by but we never went there because you went by horse and buggy or the (laughs) cow. Or your mom got on the horse and she drove into town by herself and would bring some material. My mother worked on the farm. She worked on the fields, and my older brother, John, he was two years older than we were, and he was our babysitter. He took care of us. He built the fire because it was cold there in the

fall, in October, and he was giving some a horsy ride and I was on his back and he kicked up his legs and I fell into the fire. My stocking started burning and my shoe and by the time my mother reached me, why the stocking and the shoe was really burning and I got I guess third degree burns. I remember my mother bringing me home and going into the cow barn and she stayed by the cow there and got the manure. She put it on my leg and that was the way she treated it. Well, that was a hometown remedy. She bandaged it. I don't know how, but she made me walk. I've never had any severe scars or injury to it that disabled me from walking. And I was able to walk all the time and that's what helped me from not forming the scars. I think the burn was about two weeks old when she finally found someone to drive me to the next town, Svednik, and the doctor looked at me and he just thought my mother did very well the way she treated the burn. And later on, when I went into service, the physician that examined me, he asked me how I got that scar and I told him, and he said—see, they knew about penicillin way before (laughs) we knew about it in the States.

LEVINE: Wow. Do you recall any other home remedy treatments from—

MOORE: Yes, if you had sore throats, my mother would cut garlic in half and rub the garlic on the cloth. She'd put that around your neck and of course, she carried that then onto when we got to America. If we had sore throats when we were young children, that's what she would do and of course we didn't like the smell. [Laughs] And then she gave you tea, hot tea with honey, when you were having a cold. When you got a cut, they washed it out with water and rubbed it with a little salt to get the bacteria out of the cut. They did a lot of soaking their sores, and if you stepped on a nail, you just soaked your foot in salt water and they applied the pressure to that little entry where the nail went in until it started bleeding. They didn't—that's what I remember when somebody would have an accident.

LEVINE: How about garlic and other kinds of spices or whatever? Was that a popular thing?

MOORE: No, I don't remember having strong spices, not like in Italy. But I do remember having onions, fresh scallions, garlic, bay leaves and parsley. They used an awful lot of parsley and salt and pepper and vinegar. Sugar and honey. They used a lot of honey.

LEVINE: Do you remember any festivities or big celebrations when you were small?

MOORE: They had—the Greek Orthodox [sister and niece said it was Russian Orthodox] have a lot of Saint's days, and usually in the town some of the ladies would prepare most of the food and the people would meet in somebody's home, but it turned out always to be a religious form of events. There was one time I remember where the church people and their priest would bring their banners down to the brook, the running water, and he would bless the water. What

holiday that was, I don't remember, but then that's when it turned out to be very festive, and the people in the village would cook their meals and, you know, the people would join in the celebration. And then the families would always get together on some of the—most of the holidays, and cook their meals and just drink and enjoy it and celebrate the Saints Day. Then when there was a wedding, it would take you about a week. There would be parties in the groom's house and the parties in the bride's house.

LEVINE: Before the wedding?

MOORE: Before the wedding, yes. And the day of the wedding the groom's party would come to the bride's house and all the relatives would just line up, sit around in chairs and the bride would go to every family member and ask for forgiveness before the bride and groom went to church to take their vows. I remember that. To me that was very sad (she laughs). It wasn't a fun experience for me.

LEVINE: What do you think it was that was so sad about it?

MOORE: Well, the mother that she's getting rid of her daughter and she would have to go in and live with the groom, (pause) most of them. The majority of the time that's the way it happened.

LEVINE: You mean the new couple would set up a household and the mother of the bride would go?

MOORE: And the groom's—the bride and the groom would go to the groom's house and that's where they lived.

LEVINE: Oh, with the groom's mother and father?

MOORE: Right, and if that bride [sic.] groom was out of town, the bride's mother felt she was really losing the daughter. She's going to go live with the groom and then she wouldn't see her every day like she normally would have, if she were in the same town. (She coughs.)

LEVINE: Were there—you say there were—you said there were about fifteen families?

MOORE: Yes.

LEVINE: In the town. Now, were there a number of little towns with about fifteen families that were nearby?

MOORE: They were close by, yes. You would take, maybe about twenty minutes to an hour to walk. They lived in a cloistered type like, the families together, and then their farms were way out. Their farms were not like the farms here in America.

They all lived together and then they had to go in their wagons to get to their farms.

LEVINE: So what was it like being in a town with fifteen families? I mean, (Mrs. Moore coughs.) compared with when you came here and, you know, the communities were a lot larger.

MOORE: It was—to us as children I think it was very intimate and you felt very close almost with anyone there. A lot of them were family and they just married and lived close by. Indeed there had cousins, aunts or uncles. There wasn't a stranger to you there in the small town. I think in a sense it was very good. (She laughs.) They got together. They weren't lonely like they are sometimes in the States. And if they weren't related to you, they made you be (she laughs) related to them. I enjoyed that. Yes, I liked that very much. It was different from America. I know my mom was very, very lonely after her family, because her family was very, very close to her and my mom was the oldest and she assumed the responsibility. I'm sure she felt guilty that she had left them because their mom, her mom, died when she --she was nineteen years old and my mom was the oldest. So she did as much as she was able to. She wrote to them constantly. She sent them a lot of packages. We were always getting packages ready to mail to Europe.

LEVINE: Uh-huh, yeah. How about music or dancing, what part did that play in your life over there?

MOORE: It played a very happy part of my life, I remember. Their costumes, their dress, there was always musicians there. They sang constantly. They danced a lot. When we came to America, the only music we knew was from our church, our church dances. And then as we got older going to high school, then they had nickelodeon music for us and teachers as chaperones. But the people in Europe did a lot of singing and dancing. They were very happy people.

LEVINE: What would be an occasion for it, for dancing?

MOORE: Any occasion.

LEVINE: So it was done like, in a given week you were apt to have . . .

MOORE: Yeah, there was. All Saint's Day, unless it was Advent or Lent before Easter and Christmas, then they didn't have the music, but they had it all the time in the parks.

LEVINE: Was this, you had mentioned, is it Russian Orthodox, or Greek Orthodox that you—

MOORE: It was Russian because it was near Russia on the Polish border. Greek Orthodox is like from Greece, Marseilles, but it was a Russian Greek Orthodox.

LEVINE: Now, was there music in the church?

MOORE: Yes, they had music. Their form of music was by choir. They didn't have—

LEVINE: An organ or anything?

MOORE: No, because—no, it was the choir. Maybe had a little piano or something like that, but they don't have the type of music they had in the States.

LEVINE: And do you remember going to school with your brother and sitting with him there?

MOORE: Yes, we were in—we got a little restless (she laughs) and we were sort of acting up and the teacher told us to leave the classroom. So we left. (She laughs.) We waited until my brother got home from school because if we would have arrived home before my brother did, my mother would ask why and if you would tell her why, we would have been disciplined. But I'm sure when my brother got home (laughs) she found out because my brother was put out with us because he would never do anything like that. He was—he was a very good role model to both of us. [Laughs]

LEVINE: Do you remember any other experiences with your brother growing up in Czechoslovakia?

MOORE: Yes. Yes, he was very protective of us, even in that little small town in Czechoslovakia. And then when we were on our way to America, he took care of us on the train. He just saw that we wouldn't get lost. He spoke for us, and if he was offered just one piece of candy, he reminded the person that he had two sisters, and he made sure he got something for his two sisters. Then when we were on the ship, he was the leader. He took us all over the place and we walked into this huge bathroom and all we knew was water from the brook. We didn't have running water and faucets, and when we got into this bathroom, we didn't know what to do. And when we did put the faucets on, we were very interested and thought it was fun until we opened them all the faucets, and we didn't know how to close them. And that scared us and I guess the attendant to the bathroom happened to walk in and he saw us there. He was very kind to us. He knew we were very frightened and my brother was trying to explain to him what had happened and apparently he did not understand our language, but he knew we were upset and he was very kind to us. He didn't throw us out on our ear. (She laughs.)

LEVINE: Do you remember seeing your first flushing toilet (pause) on the ship?

MOORE: No.

MOORE: Evidently it was on, but I do not remember them. But I do remember (clears her throat) our sleeping quarters. I thought we slept in this huge room with a lot of people there, and my mother slept on the bottom bunk. There were many, many bunks in that room and I remember if we didn't get lice in our hair, my sister related to the long backup. It was because we had lice and we had to be—and they gave us lice (?) treatment. We had to stay there overnight.

LEVINE: Well, before we talk about that, just what do you recall about the preparations to leave? To leave Czechoslovakia?

MOORE: I remember my mother preparing us for years, it seemed. As soon as we found out my dad was working out his papers for our entry to the United States, he would write what we had to have ready and then some of my mom's lady friends went there ahead of her and they wrote to her that you can't have lice, and you can't have any marks on your skin and make sure you don't have a cold. They referred to their eyes as pink eyes, and if you have that, they will not let you in. So my mom, I remember sitting on the doorstep with the door open. She'd always comb our hair looking for lice and when we got to the ship, we had lice and I'm sure it was from the mattresses. As a child, my mother, I just knew when she was pleased with us, that she didn't find any lice when she let us go. We were always sitting by her there and she was cleaning our hair.

LEVINE: Did you both have long hair?

MOORE: We did. We had beautiful long hair, sort of brownish reddish hair and it was very wavy and my mother just loved to comb it. She took pride in our hair.

LEVINE: How did you wear it?

MOORE: Long and braided.

LEVINE: Two braids?

MOORE: Two braids.

LEVINE: And let's see—as far as what was said to your mother by her friends who went earlier or by your father who was already here about what she needed to take with her, do you remember that?

MOORE: No, I don't remember her ever telling us that. They apparently had told her—she didn't take too much luggage, and I'm sure what they had written to her probably says "You will not wear the clothes you are bringing with you." So my sister [mother sic], apparently left them for her sisters, but she did bring a lot of pillows and featherbeds and that's what she brought.

LEVINE: So your mother left clothing mostly for her sisters?

MOORE: I think the ones that she had, yes, I would say that.

LEVINE: What was behind that? Why was it—why was that true, that you wouldn't wear the clothing here?

MOORE: Yes, that's right because they wore very different clothes from what they wear now.

LEVINE: Can you talk about that?

MOORE: Oh, pleated skirts. They're pleated skirts. It was just an art, the way they made their clothes. Their blouses were open in the front and with the round v-neck and pleats. Just pleats all over. Puffy sleeves with little tiny pleats and big ruffles. They were all handmade. They were all embroidered and that's one thing I regret, that my mother left her clothes in Europe because we don't have any. I understand my sister had my mother's one outfit. That's kind of too bad that we don't have (laughs) any of that to show. We did have a lot of aprons because her sisters would make the aprons and send them to her, but they were just embroidered. They were not ruffled or pleated or smocked. They wore a lot of smocked clothes there.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. So do you remember the departure? Do you remember saying goodbye to your grandparents?

MOORE: Yes, uh-huh. It seems they were crying for a long time by the time we left, and when the sisters would get together and they'd start crying, I really thought this was the day we were leaving, good. But it wasn't. [Laughs] So they did cry because they realized that they probably would never see her again and my mother being the only one leaving, she knew she would be alone there without her sisters.

LEVINE: Do you remember anything that anybody told you, maybe advice or anything like that, before you left?

MOORE: No, I don't remember. Maybe my oldest aunt . . . for us to be good children to my mother. We were quite small, and she was young and brave to do that. Naturally, as children we were very excited. We just couldn't wait to get to America.

LEVINE: Did you have any expectations of America or of your father before you came?

MOORE: Yes, I think I had, and apparently I took the image from one of my uncles and how he would be dressed when we would see him, but I had no idea when I

would sit on his lap, and he had that (laughs) woolen suit on, which didn't impress me very much. I didn't know him. I felt very uncomfortable and naturally he took us on his lap and hugged us and I was very anxious to get off his lap, as soon as I was able to. We were bashful of him because we didn't remember him.

END OF SIDE A/ BEGIN SIDE B

LEVINE: Did he look like you had imagined him?

MOORE: Well, I cannot answer that question. You know, I—

LEVINE: Okay. So do you remember leaving on the wagon and going—

MOORE: Oh, yes, I do remember leaving and that to me was very sad and cruel [Chuckles] when they were leaving because they were just crying and I think crying and behavior or people like that is very frightening to a child. And I felt if . . America must be a bad place, why are they crying for us like that. I didn't realize it was the attachment to the relatives. We were attached to my mother. I wasn't concerned about leaving anyone else. My mom was the one that was going with us, and if she's going to be there, everything was going to be all right, and why should they be crying like that? That's my impression.

LEVINE: And do you remember anything about from the time you left the town until you arrived at the port where the Adriatic left from?

MOORE: Yes, I remember the train impressed me very much.

LEVINE: Well, this was really the first time you had traveled out of your little town.

MOORE: Oh, yes. Yes, the first time I traveled out of the little town was going to Svednik to have this medical attention for my burned leg and that town was probably just about six miles away. We just didn't have any reason to go. We had everything in that little town. If you didn't have it, you did without.

LEVINE: So what impressed you when you went to the port?

MOORE: The other cities and the towns, looking out the window. I think that's when I first experienced my butterflies in my stomach that I am really leaving them. The bigger cities we went through, it was frightening. I don't remember what city we stopped in, but my brother opened the window and the man, the people in the train station, they were very friendly. It seemed they knew that we were going to

(laughs) America. They were all coming to the windows and shaking hands with us, and this one man gave us a candy bar, our first candy bar, a chocolate candy bar.

LEVINE: You had never seen one?

MOORE: No, and I don't know if he gave us three or if he just gave one, but I was sitting by the window. I remember my brother reaching across and getting the candy bar. That was on our trip. Then going into Bremen, getting on the boat, it was congested, naturally and to a small child, I'm sure we had this smothered like feeling many the Adriatic sailed from where?

MOORE: I think it sailed from Brennan and into Liverpool and we picked—

LEVINE: Oh, and then from Liverpool to—

MOORE: Right, uh-huh.

LEVINE: Now, you mentioned some things about the ship. Is there anything else about the passage that you remember that you haven't already mentioned?

MOORE: No, I don't remember the type of food we had on the ship. I just remember those long tables and this man that was so kind to my mom, took us to the dining room with us and he told my mother he would take care of us and then we would take some of the food to her. One of the fruit, an orange. I'll never forget the smell and the way the juice (laughs) squirt out of the slice of orange. It was—I think to this day when I be eating an orange and the juice (laughs) squirts out, it reminds me of my first orange.

LEVINE: Did it taste good to you?

MOORE: Yes, extremely good. Very good.

LEVINE: And had you ever heard of oranges?

MOORE: Never. Never heard of oranges. We had pears and apples and cherries. That was the extent of our fruit.

LEVINE: Do you remember the ship coming into the New York Harbor?

MOORE: I do remember it coming into the harbor and I don't remember spending the night on the ship or getting into the little boat to get to Ellis Island.

LEVINE: What was your impression of Ellis Island?

MOORE: (Clears her throat) Just push and shove and getting scared and remembering what my mother was always looking for us. I wondered if I had red eyes that morning and so I wouldn't limp going up the stairs. Didn't have any rash on the body and I hope I heard him, what he was asking me, so he wouldn't think I were deaf. And just wanted to get through it and go and reach America. I didn't realize I was in America.

LEVINE: Well, you must have heard about Ellis Island beforehand?

MOORE: Oh, yes, my mother's friends, lady friends, used to write to her and what to expect. So we knew what was going to happen, but we just did not realize the crowd.

LEVINE: So then do you remember being met by your relatives and taken to Hoboken?

MOORE: No, not as well as my sister does. I do not remember that very well.

LEVINE: But you remember when you got to your father?

MOORE: I remember when my father came and picked us up.

LEVINE: He came to Hoboken?

MOORE: Yes, uh-huh, and picked us up.

LEVINE: What do you remember about that particular moment?

MOORE: Well, I was excited that he was our American (laughs) father. Yes, uh-hmm, just we were going to be part of America. Yeah, I was glad to meet my father.

LEVINE: And then what was it like for you getting used to having a father after not having been with one all those years?

MOORE: It was hard and like my sister said, he was a—he disciplined us constantly and not having a man around the house, I think we sort of feared him. He probably felt we needed it and maybe he just did that because he realized he didn't have any part in bringing us up until the time he saw us. So he was the father and he was the one who was going to bring the family, the way it always has (laughs) been that way in Europe, you know, in the home.

LEVINE: Do you remember any changes in your mother after she came here?

MOORE: Yes, I do remember. I think she really was anxious to be a part of America. I think she pushed us more to Americanize us than any mom or my mom's lady friends in the town in Nanticoke, Pennsylvania. She immediately start working for her citizen paper and she told us not to mention it to any of her friends

because she was ashamed. They would tease her because those women that came to America did not work for their citizen paper. I think that my mother was the only one.

LEVINE: In other words, they were holding onto the Czechoslovakian ways.

MOORE: Yes, but they—yes, and my mom did not, for her children's sake. She really wanted us to be Americanized, as much as she was able to and as fast as she was able to.

LEVINE: And was your father also—did he also feel that way?

MOORE: No. My father did not want to leave his roots. We were not allowed to speak the English language in the home and that was difficult for us because the only contact we had with the Americans and the American language was when we went to school. Now, school was very hard for me. For my sister it was not, but we were kept two years in the first grade because we could not master the language or the reading.

LEVINE: Do you remember learning the language, any problems it had for you?

MOORE: Yes. Oh, yes. It was very hard for us, and the teachers realized that. They kept us there in the second year. My mother used to get a neighbor girl to come to our house to help us to read, and she paid her a quarter. A quarter was a lot of money at that time, but once we got—were able to speak the English language, we got along well. Not well. We weren't A students, but we passed.

LEVINE: Well, now, this neighbor, was she also from Czechoslovakia?

MOORE: No. Her parents were born in America and she was an American child. Now, maybe her grandparents were immigrants.

LEVINE: Do you remember anything about the Czechoslovakian community in Nanticoke?

MOORE: Yes. I think maybe that's what held us back because we were among our own and we weren't made or forced to learn about the American customs. I think if there weren't that many, we would have been forced to go out and learn the American ways a lot sooner.

LEVINE: So were there ways that your mother or that you have retained that are those Czechoslovakian ways?

MOORE: Oh, yes. Up until now, until my mother's dead five years ago, we always spoke to her Czech. We were not—I could not speak American to her, and I think it's because we were—we had to speak the Czech language at home and my mother did not like that. She said, "Speak to me in English, so I would learn the

language." She knew her way around and I think sometimes those friends of hers resented her more because my mother was able to read the funny papers. My mother was able to get on the bus or train and go to New York City, where the other ladies were not. So I admire my mother. She was the one that had a lot to do.

LEVINE: Yeah. How about yourself, do you consider yourself part Czech and part American or how do—

MOORE: No. I'm an American. I don't like the idea, that's my personal idea. I feel if you come to America, that's why you came here and be Americanized. My family was extremely patriotic and my children, if my children's friends find out that I was born in Czechoslovakia and my children would say, "Don't say anything. She's the most (laughs) patriotic American that I have ever known."

LEVINE: Do you think that that patriotism stems in part from the fact that you did start out in another country and then came here?

MOORE: Oh, I think so. Yes, I appreciate what we have here. There's absolutely no comparison. There isn't any other country in this world like United States.

LEVINE: Well, tell me about when you finished school. Then did you work for a while after school?

MOORE: I worked in the summertime. When we moved to New Jersey, when we graduated from high school in Pennsylvania and I did housework for a month and then I went into Forstmann because there he was during the war and they were paying a lot of money: Seventy dollars a week. Now, I knew I was going into nursing, into training, and that's when I realized, when I went into training how different America was from Czechoslovakia. See, we didn't have very many American friends in this coal mine. It was always another Czechoslovakian family until I went away to school. It really wasn't the (laughs) American way of life, and yet it was. It was a lot better, but you spoke the Czech language in the church. Our social activities were around the church. Our music was around the church.

LEVINE: So where did you go to school?

MOORE: In Patterson, New Jersey, to St. Joseph's Hospital, nursing and then I went into service in the air force and I was there ten years. I just loved it.

LEVINE: And when did you meet your husband?

MOORE: In England. He was from Oklahoma (laughs).

LEVINE: And he was in the air force, also?

MOORE: Uh-huh. Yeah, and we married and have four children: Three girls and a boy.

LEVINE: What is your husband's name?

MOORE: Max Moore. He's an orthodontist and we have nine granddaughters, no grand boys.

LEVINE: What are your children's names?

MOORE: Judy, Marie and Shirley and Robert.

LEVINE: Well, I didn't—I should have asked you earlier, but do you remember the Depression and what effect it had on you?

MOORE: We were at the—well, I don't know if it had any effect. It was toward the end of the Depression. That was the only town that we ever lived in. I just assumed that's how everybody lives. I was not aware of the Depression. Everybody lived that way. We didn't know we were poor, like I said (laughs), until I went into school. But our friends, most of them were all on public welfare and so this is the way of life.

LEVINE: And how about when the Second World War was building up, do you remember what you thought or felt or what you—

MOORE: We thought it was terrible. We couldn't believe it, you know, why anybody would want to fight us because here we had everything. Everybody was so kind in America, why would anyone want to start a war, but then, you know, we were in high school and we were studying why they were fighting, wanted to fight, why Japan attacked us and why Hitler was going through Europe. We knew about the war because my mom used to get her mail from Czechoslovakia and she'd sit down and read us those letters to us, and that upset us because all our relatives were there. My mom was the only one here with my dad.

LEVINE: Uh-hmm, so it really was personal

MOORE: It was.

LEVINE: with your family.

MOORE: It was very personal.

LEVINE: Do you remember your motivation for signing up with the air force?

MOORE: I think, I think it's because—the way my mother instilled this patriotism.

LEVINE: Oh.

MOORE: We really were very patriotic. When I went to school, to high school and those bands would play, you know, even now sometimes it sends goose bumps through me and it sort of subconsciously does relate to the hard times, their bands, the military music. Not that we heard about it that much in the farming town where we were raised, but my mother used to tell us about that. It's just, I don't know. I think we did that because we knew good we had it in America. And the people—American people really don't realize it, the other countries, how they are. There's no comparison in this world. America is the best. I shouldn't say America. I should say United States. I was corrected that so many times when I was in England. The English people didn't like when we referred to America. They wanted, you know, because it wasn't America. It was United States. They said, "Remember, there's Canada above you" (Laughs), which was right –correct.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. How is this phase of your life, now that you're retired?

MOORE: Well, it's very good. It's very restful because only in America you can do this, if you work hard enough and you could do almost anything you want to in America. You grow in America. In Europe, the time we were raised, my parents were raised, once a farmer always a farmer; once a shoemaker, always a shoemaker. In America it isn't this way. If you have the money and you have the motivation, you could go for . . . My mother became a citizen because of her son. She said someday he won't be able to say "I can't get that job mom, because you weren't a citizen." My mother just wanted my brother to get a government job that he would be well enough and secure enough if he worked for the government.

LEVINE: Did he?

MOORE: No. [Laughs] Which that was her way of thinking that he would have a government job and if he would not get a government job, it was because she did not become a citizen. She wanted to be a citizen, and when she became a citizen, my dad was and that helped us to automatically become citizens because they both were citizens before we reached twenty-one.

LEVINE: Do you remember the day that your mother became a citizen?

MOORE: Yes, I remember. This man that worked in the courthouse came and picked her up. I was in high school, and—

Sister: We were all a nervous wreck.

MOORE: Yeah, I could not concentrate and it was so exciting. We were so excited, but we were not allowed to tell that to anybody.

LEVINE: So he picked her up and took her to the courthouse?

MOORE: Courthouse and he helped her. I remember questioning her and the only question I remember vividly was, “Mom, who picks the President,” and she said, “People pickle President.” [Laughs] But there were other questions that I had to ask her. Then when we got home from school, my mother gave us the news because the judge told her, “Yeah, you got your citizen paper.”

LEVINE: And was that a celebration?

MOORE: No, just between us and my mother worked her way through. I don’t think she even told my dad for a couple days until the situation was such. See, and her lady friends—my mother, I don’t think she ever went out and told them, “I’m an American citizen,” because they’d make fun of her and she didn’t want that.

LEVINE: So it was really you and your sister and brother.

MOORE: That’s right.

LEVINE: And mother who knew.

MOORE: That’s right, and we knew what she was working at, uh-huh. She learned how to read the American—like signs, by reading the funny papers.

Sister: [whispers] Jokes.

MOORE: Uh-hmm.

LEVINE: So you and your mother and sister and brother really went through a lot together?

MOORE: Yes. We helped each other. We were the support group. She was the leader. During the Depression, you know, some of the people, the Americans had cars and my mother would always say, “Children, there’s a better way of life,” and I’d always say, “But she didn’t go. How does she know that there’s a better way of life?” and she says, “I could feed you,” and she looked at me and she said, “I could make you clothes, but,” she said, “you have to get it all and put it up here.” She said, “There’s a better way of life,” because she knew what the other Americans had in that small town and she knew that her husband was a coal miner and if he would stay there, that’s the kind of life he would have. When we got out of high school, we went to New Jersey and we were able to get a start easier in the larger town.

LEVINE: Now, is Regina your only sister or brother born in this country?

MOORE: No, we had another one. She died of pneumonia and I hate to tell this in front of her (laughs), but I don't think my mother wanted to have another child, but she was determined to have an American citizen born.

LEVINE: Oh, so Regina's the American citizen born?

MOORE: That's right, yeah. Right. My mom came in and she was determined. She was very patriotic. She was just so happy to be here in America and raise her. . . Her children would have a better way of life. She didn't care for herself. It was for her children.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. Okay. Well, is there anything else you can think of that has to do with coming here as a six year old and living your life here?

MOORE: It was very exciting and we were—the older we get, the more thankful we are that we are in America, and thank my father for bringing us here.

LEVINE: Okay. Okay. Well, let's end here. I've been speaking with Anna Moore, who came from Czechoslovakia at six years old in 1928, and this is Janet Levine for the National Park Service and I'm signing off.

END OF INTERVIEW