

EI-675

EMMA KATHARINA SCHMID SCHWARZ

BIRTHDATE: NOVEMBER 26, 1907

INTERVIEW DATE: SEPTEMBER 29, 1995

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INTERVIEWER: PAUL E. SIGRIST, JR.

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GERMANY, 1926

AGE 18

PASSAGE ON "THE HAMBURG"

SIGRIST: Good morning. This is Paul Sigrist for the National Park Service. Today is Friday, September 29, 1995. I'm in Brielle, New Jersey, and that's spelled B-R-I-E-L-L-E, Brielle, New Jersey with Emma Schwarz. Mrs. Schwarz came from Germany in 1926. She was eighteen years old at that time. Mrs. Schwarz, thank you for letting me come out.

SCHWARZ: You're welcome.

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

SCHWARZ: Yes. I was born in Hausen, November 26th, 1907.

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SIGRIST: And Hausen is the name...

SCHWARZ: Hausen.

SIGRIST: Is that the name of the town?

SCHWARZ: H-, that's a little town. And it's, it's near Ulm. The city is Ulm.

SIGRIST: Can you spell Hausen, please?

SCHWARZ: H-A-U-S-E-N.

SIGRIST: And spell Ulm, please.

SCHWARZ: U-L-M.

SIGRIST: And whereabouts in Germany is that?

SCHWARZ: "Der" Ulm is on the Danube River. And it's, it's in Wuerttemberg.

SIGRIST: Okay. Can you spell Wittenberg, too, please.

SCHWARZ: That's W-U-E-R-T-E-N-B-E-R-G.

SIGRIST: Thank you. Can you say your full name for me before you were married?

SCHWARZ: Middle name, too?

SIGRIST: Everything. Your full name.

SCHWARZ: Emma Katharina Schmid.

SIGRIST: And can you spell Katharina?

SCHWARZ: K-A-T-H-A-R-I-N-A.

SIGRIST: And spell Schmid.

SCHWARZ: S-C-H-M-I-D.

SIGRIST: Okay. We got all the spelling out of the way. (he laughs)

SCHWARZ: Yes.

SIGRIST: Do you know anything about your birth? Did anyone ever tell any stories about when you were born?

SCHWARZ: Yeah. I, I was the, the tenth child. My family, we were ten children, five boys and five girls. And I was the last one. And, of course, I was not expected anymore, but I came anyway. (she laughs) And, of course, I

was the apple of the eye, if a bit, from the family, being the youngest and the smallest.

SIGRIST: Did your mother ever tell you anything about the circumstances around your birth, like what happened when you were born?

SCHWARZ: Well, I was born during the night. And when, when the other children, the ones that were at home at the time, they were told that they had a little sister. And, of course, that time the story was the stork brought the baby, right? And, that's about it for, everything went well.

SIGRIST: Uh-huh. Were you named after anybody specific?

SCHWARZ: Yes, I was named after, my mother's name was Katharina. And "immer" they, they took my, my father thought it was too fancy a name. And they were debating between Elsa and Emma. Emma won out. (she laughs)
E-...

SIGRIST: He thought Katharina was too fancy.

SCHWARZ: E-M-M-A.

SIGRIST: Uh-huh. So they named you Emma.

SCHWARZ: Right.

SIGRIST: Can you tell me a little bit about Hausen, the town that you were born in?

SCHWARZ: It's a very small village with all farm, farmers. And my father had a small farm. And, of course, at the time there just three of us home. My brother, my sister, my brother was six years older than I, my sister four years older than I, and myself. And so we had to help on the farm.

SIGRIST: Was the farm, where was the farm in location to the village itself?

SCHWARZ: Out, out of the village.

SIGRIST: How far?

SCHWARZ: Oh, we had acres here and there. They were not like the farms today where all the ground is together. You know, where you now just, we had acres and here and somewheres else. It was like spread out.

SIGRIST: The land that you owned was scattered around?

SCHWARZ: Today it is different. Yes. Today it is different. They did everything different.

SIGRIST: How long would it take you to get from your farm to the village.

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SCHWARZ: Oh, anywhere, about a half hour.

SIGRIST: On foot?

SCHWARZ: On foot.

SIGRIST: On foot. Can you describe for me the village itself, the buildings in the village and what it looked like?

SCHWARZ: Yes. It was all red (she pauses), what do you call it, roofs.

SIGRIST: Red roofs?

SCHWARZ: Red roofs. Red, red house, and then the big entrance, and then there was the barn on one side, and another smaller barn, and then the big garden, with fruit trees. My mother had all different berries, and we had cherries, we had plums, apples, pears, everything.

SIGRIST: You're describing the house you grew up in?

SCHWARZ: Where I grew up in.

SIGRIST: Talk to me about the village itself. What did the village look like?

SCHWARZ: Was, the village was just like, if our house was here, then the next one,

and that was the same again. It was the house with the, the entrance, and then the barns, and on the opposite side it was the big garden again.

SIGRIST: So the people who lived in the village...

SCHWARZ: That's how it was...

SIGRIST: ...had the same kind of housing that you had?

SCHWARZ: Yes. That's how the houses were laid. "Und" there was the street, and on either side it was laid out the very same.

SIGRIST: Were there any other buildings in the village that were not houses?

SCHWARZ: There were two restaurants. Two restaurants where was big enough to hold weddings and all, and the other one was smaller that was butcher and bakery included in that. And also they had a little store for little things what you'd need.

SIGRIST: Was there a church in village?

SCHWARZ: Yes. We had an, a church, and we had schoolhouse, and in the schoolhouse there was one room with seven grades and one teacher.

SIGRIST: We'll talk about that a little bit later. How often would your family go into

the village from your farm?

SCHWARZ: Oh, oh we were, it was right in the village. We just worked out in the fields and came back in. You see?

SIGRIST: Oh, so the house itself was in the village...

SCHWARZ: It was in the village.

SIGRIST: I'm sorry. I misunderstood. I thought the house...

SCHWARZ: No. It's, it's a village...

SIGRIST: I see.

SCHWARZ: ...and every, all the houses are there. There are no, no grounds, no fields in between.

SIGRIST: You went out to, to your fields that were scattered.

SCHWARZ: To the fields. Right.

SIGRIST: I understand.

SCHWARZ: Uh-huh.

SIGRIST: Okay.

SCHWARZ: And, and school, you know, it was during the first world war. We had to go out and pick leaves for the horses that was dried. We had to, different things where they made, we called it the Brennesel. It was, it would grew this high. (she indicates) And it had like fibers when you, and that's how they made, that's how bad it was at the time, where they made cloth from it.

SIGRIST: Can you spell Brennesel, please?

SCHWARZ: Brennesel. It's B-R-E-N-N-E-S-L-E-R. Bren, Brennes, E-L. Not E-R.

SIGRIST: Brennesel.

SCHWARZ: Brennesel.

SIGRIST: And this was the plant that you made cloth out of?

SCHWARZ: That was the plant. That's what we had to get, and it was put on the truck, and was taken to the factory, and where they used it for different stuff. Our church bell was taken during the war.

SIGRIST: Why did they take the church bell?

SCHWARZ: To make bullets. Imagine. That's...

SIGRIST: What do, what else, what do you remember about the period of World War One. You were, you were a small child...

SCHWARZ: I was seven.

SIGRIST: Yes.

SCHWARZ: I just started school with seven year old. And I had two brother who were taken right away, the oldest boys. And then in 1917 and '18, my other two brothers were also taken. My mother had four boys in the war. And the oldest two died in the war. And the other two were wounded, you know. And it, it was a very bad time. We, we lived on the farm, but we were just as short in food because everything was taken, you see. It was not as bad as they say today as the Second World War with Hitler. They, when they tell me that, that's, that was even worse.

SIGRIST: What, what did you eat then? If...

SCHWARZ: We had...

SIGRIST: ...food was hard to find, what did you eat during that period?

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SCHWARZ: Well, we had our own wheat to make flour, right? To go to the mill. We had our own flour. We had chickens for the eggs. And you were allowed one, one pig, or a bull to be slaughtered for your own. And that was of course smoked.

SIGRIST: If you were allowed one animal, then am I to believe the authorities took away everything else?

SCHWARZ: They took, they took, and I can tell you a story. (she laughs) My father thought he smart. He had a lot of bushels of straw, and he hid one pretty big calf that he thought that he could have then for himself. Don't you think when the inspection came along that little the noise. (she imitates a calf) (she laughs) So we were caught.

SIGRIST: Did he get into trouble for trying to hide...

SCHWARZ: Yes, he, he did.

SIGRIST: What, what was his penalty?

SCHWARZ: He had to, he had to pay I don't know how many marks, maybe fifty mark fine, and of course the calf was taken. It, it was tough, too, at that time.

SIGRIST: Were there other shortages at that time other that food?

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SCHWARZ: Well, they, we had to give everything away. My mother had maybe say twenty-five chickens, so they know about how many eggs you would get. She had to give some of the eggs away. It wasn't that we had our own. I, I remember where I had, for my birthday I was allowed, I had an omelette with, from two eggs. But my mother had all them berries and fruit that she made jam, and, and canned things, you know. So we always had something. It wasn't always meat. Maybe Sunday we had meat, but during the week my mother was a good cook, she could make from anything, you know.

SIGRIST: Do you remember there being soldiers in your town at that time?

SCHWARZ: Yes, we, we had, maneuvers went by. You know, when they had maneuvers? And we also had Russian and French, what do you call them, Gefangene. (she pauses) During the war. You know, when they, when they get from the other side, they, I can't think of the name.

SIGRIST: French and Russian soldiers there?

SCHWARZ: Were, were taken in, you know...

SIGRIST: Prisoners.

SCHWARZ: Prisoners of war. (she laughs)

SIGRIST: Uh-huh.

SCHWARZ: We had what, what worked on the farms, too.

SIGRIST: What do you remember about those prisoners of war? What sticks out in your mind?

SCHWARZ: Well, they, they were very nice. They were very friendly and were happy to be treated right. We, we never had any complaints, you know, that they weren't treated right. Everybody was glad that they helped them and they were happy. And in the evening, I don't know where they ever got a, what's the Russian instrument? They would make music, and everybody would listen to it, you know.

SIGRIST: Where were they housed?

SCHWARZ: They were housed in, in the homes.

SIGRIST: Oh, in the privates homes?

SCHWARZ: In the, in the, in our homes. Yeah.

SIGRIST: Did you have a prisoner that stayed with you?

SCHWARZ: Yes. Yes. We had one.

SIGRIST: What do you remember about him?

SCHWARZ: He had the room upstairs. We had a one story home, but there were three bedrooms, like under the roof. One, one wasn't un, the middle one, but then the others were under the roof. And he was up there. They had like one man what sort of looked them over that they behaved themselves [sic], but we never had any trouble.

SIGRIST: The man that lived with you, what nationality was he?

SCHWARZ: He was a Russian.

SIGRIST: Did he ever try to, to teach you anything?

SCHWARZ: No, not really. They, towards evening they would get together, them all, because the village is small, and all the houses are close together. So in, in the evening they would meet, and sit there and make a little music and sing.

SIGRIST: Whose responsibility was it to feed him?

SCHWARZ: The, the person where they lived with.

SIGRIST: So, so your mother had to feed him?

SCHWARZ: Yes. Yes. He ate right with us. You could have, there were some people, there were some people what were a little skeptical. You know having another from another country, somebody. And they would eat in the kitchen. But we, we never made him in the kitchen. He could eat with us. He was a very nice person.

SIGRIST: How did your family feel about having to have this prisoner in their house?

SCHWARZ: Well, you know how you, my father and mother felt that if one of their sons would be a prisoner of war, hoping that they would be treated right, too. So that how they were. They, they treated them just as it was one of us.

SIGRIST: Talk to me a little bit about your brothers who had to serve, and what you know about their experience.

SCHWARZ: Yeah. Well, my oldest brother was taken immediately.

SIGRIST: What was his name?

SCHWARZ: It was Georg.

SIGRIST: Can you spell that, please?

SCHWARZ: That's, you would say George here. G-E-O-R-G. Like you say George.

SIGRIST: But in German it's Georg.

SCHWARZ: Georg. Yeah. And he, he was wounded then in 1915. And...

SIGRIST: Wounded how?

SCHWARZ: He, into the leg. And he took, he dug out with his knife the bullet out of the, the foot here. And I have the bullet here. My father gave me that. And he was still limping. He was home first in the hospital in Stuttgart. My mother went to see him. And then he came home and had, I think, I don't know whether it was ten days or so where he could stay at home yet. But he, they took him when he was still limping and going with the cane back. And he died then in, let's see, he, he died in October, 1915, soon after he was taken back.

SIGRIST: Do you know where he died?

SCHWARZ: He died in France, in "Algonnenwald". I forget how you would say here. And the other one was killed in 1916, the 12th of September.

SIGRIST: And what was his name?

SCHWARZ: His name was Yak, Yakob. Jacob.

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SIGRIST: Can you spell Yakob?

SCHWARZ: Yakob. We say "Yot," a Y, right, you say here? Y-A-K-O-B. Yakob.

SIGRIST: And tell me what you know about his experiences.

SCHWARZ: Well, he, he used to work on the farm where the oldest boy was, learned bakery.

SIGRIST: Georg was a baker?

SCHWARZ: He was a baker.

SIGRIST: Yakob did field work on the farm?

SCHWARZ: He, yes, he, he loved horses. He worked somewhere in another town that had six horses, and he just loved horses. (she laughs) It was his, and another one was...

SIGRIST: What do you know about the...

SCHWARZ: ...a mechanic.

SIGRIST: What do you know about the circumstances of, of Yakob's death during the war?

SCHWARZ: Well, he, he was completely shelled. You know. They couldn't find any, really good parts of it. They, they did send his little testament home. They found that. And, of course, his name plate. They knew that. And the oldest one was going, come out of the dug out, into, was going to go to the bathroom. And he was killed right there.

SIGRIST: And that was Georg?

SCHWARZ: That was Georg.

SIGRIST: Now, you had two brothers who served that, that were wounded but came back.

SCHWARZ: Yeah.

SIGRIST: Tell me about their experiences.

SCHWARZ: Well, they, the one wounded, he, in the back, he had a lot of splinters in there. He had many operations after that. And he was...

SIGRIST: What was his name?

SCHWARZ: Hans.

SIGRIST: Hans.

SCHWARZ: Yeah.

SIGRIST: H-A-N-S.

SCHWARZ: Uh-huh. And he was in Belgium, in the hospital. And, and he came home, and had to go back, too, but he did come, he didn't have to out in the field anymore. He was sort of, I think he worked in the hospital, something like that. And then the other one, he was very sick with malaria.

SIGRIST: And what was his name?

SCHWARZ: And his name was Martin.

SIGRIST: M-A-R-T-I-N?

SCHWARZ: Uh-huh. And...

SIGRIST: Did he get malaria during the war?

SCHWARZ: During the war.

SIGRIST: Do you know where he got the malaria?

SCHWARZ: Also he was in, not in Algonnen. What's the other name where so many...

SIGRIST: Well, just the country will be fine.

SCHWARZ: France.

SIGRIST: He was in France also.

SCHWARZ: France. Yeah. All, all mine were in France.

SIGRIST: They were all in France.

SCHWARZ: Hm-hmm.

SIGRIST: Let's, let me just go shut that door. We're going to pause just for... (break in tape) When he got malaria, did he come home then?

SCHWARZ: No, he, he did, not at the time. No. But he got it again after the war was over. It came back once more. You know, it's very high fever.

SIGRIST: What, what do you remember about, about Martin's malaria, and him being home at that time?

SCHWARZ: (pause) Not really much. You see, I was, I was fourteen when, when the

war was over. But we sort of were kept away. My mother didn't want us, because malaria is, where they kind of, they have such high temperature, you know, that they sort of don't always know what they're talking about.

SIGRIST: I was just wondering if you knew how that was treated. You know, what did, what your mother do to, to make him feel better?

SCHWARZ: (she laughs) Well, my mother was like a, like a good nurse. She just was with him a lot, and gave him good food. And I think at that time it was mostly home remedies.

SIGRIST: Do you remember some of those home remedies that your mother, even like for you kids...

SCHWARZ: The, all kinds of teas, you know. Camomile tea, from the lime tree, the little blossoms.

SIGRIST: The lime tree?

SCHWARZ: Yeah. We call them linden.

SIGRIST: Oh, a linden tree.

SCHWARZ: In Germany you call them linden, but in England you call the lime trees. It's the same thing.

SIGRIST: And how would she prepare one of these teas?

SCHWARZ: And she'd make teas.

SIGRIST: How did she do that?

SCHWARZ: She cooked the, the blossoms in there, and they were, the tea was drunk, but it was also good for bathing. You know. And, oh, we, we had so many different teas. I forget. Rosehips, whatever from leaves that she had.

SIGRIST: Who taught her how to do that?

SCHWARZ: I guess that's how they used to grow up. My mother was born in 1861, you know. And there was a lot of home remedies. People didn't call a doctor right away.

SIGRIST: Were there other things that she would do when the children were sick? Other ways of...

SCHWARZ: Yes. We got, I tell you I had the mumps. (she gestures) And she put mash potatoes into a cloth, and you had that around here. (she indicates)

SIGRIST: Around your neck?

SCHWARZ: Around your neck. (she laughs) And on the chest. All this kind of stuff I remember.

SIGRIST: I have one more question about your brothers during the war.

SCHWARZ: Yeah.

SIGRIST: Your brothers who died during the war, how did that affect your family?

SCHWARZ: Very much. Mother, mother, I remember my mother, she would be milking the cows, and she knew that I did, I, I could milk good, but I didn't like it. And I would come into the stall where the cows where, and my mother'd be, and praying, and praying and crying, and praying and crying. And that's where I learned a lot of prayers, from her. And I would come in with my little stool and bucket to milk. She'd say, "I already did it, Emma." She would, she would do it, but she was crying an awful lot thinking about them boys. You know.

SIGRIST: You mention that your mother taught you prayers.

SCHWARZ: Yes.

SIGRIST: Can you say a prayer for us that she taught you in German on the tape?

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SCHWARZ: Oh, yes.

SIGRIST: Would you do it, please?

SCHWARZ: Yes. "So nimm, denn, meine Hände, und führe mich bis an ein selig Ende und ewig Licht. Ich mag allein nicht gehen, nicht einen Schritt, wo Du willst stehen und gehen, dann nimm mich mit."

SIGRIST: Thank you. Let's, let's talk about your mother. We haven't really discussed her yet.

SCHWARZ: Yeah.

SIGRIST: What was her name?

SCHWARZ: Her name was Katharina.

SIGRIST: And her maiden name?

SCHWARZ: Miss Banzhaf.

SIGRIST: Can you spell that, please?

SCHWARZ: B-A-N-Z-H-A-F. B-, Banz, B-A-N, it's a C-, H-A-F. Banzhaf.

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SIGRIST: And what do you know about her background?

SCHWARZ: Well, she also came from a little farm, and she only had one sister. And the sister got the farm where she, and my mother married my father, and that was right from the next town, like a neighboring town.

SIGRIST: Do you know how your parents met?

SCHWARZ: Well, it, it was like little festivals, you know, what they were giving like around harvest. Like they have today, they say Oktoberfest. And we had Kirchweifest it was called.

SIGRIST: Can you spell that?

SCHWARZ: It's like a church, you know. Kirch, Kirche means K-I-R-C-H-W-E-I-F-E-S-T.

SIGRIST: Thank you.

SCHWARZ: Kirchweifest. And then there were weddings. You know, where people met. And they met several times on occasions like that. And I guess they fell in love and they were married.

SIGRIST: Do you know what year they were married?

SCHWARZ: Yes. They were married November 20th, 1988.

SIGRIST: 18'.

SCHWARZ: 18'. 1888.

SIGRIST: 1888. (they laugh)

SCHWARZ: Yeah.

SIGRIST: They would be truly remarkable.

SCHWARZ: Oh, yeah. Yes.

SIGRIST: Tell me a little bit about your mother's personality and what her temperament was like?

SCHWARZ: Oh, she was really, she was a strict mother. She was strict. You didn't get away with anything with my mother. She was good, but you couldn't, you couldn't ever tell a lie to her. You got it immediately. (she laughs)

SIGRIST: And what would she do to punish you if you told a lie?

SCHWARZ: She would take something away. Something, she'd find what, what, you know. Or you had to do something.

SIGRIST: You mean like a household chore.

SCHWARZ: Yes. Yes.

SIGRIST: Do you remember...

SCHWARZ: Or even outside bringing in wood, you know, for the, that time was a lot wood fire.

SIGRIST: Do you remember something that you did that, as a child that displeased her?

SCHWARZ: Yes. I remember my, my father had the milk route.

SIGRIST: A milk route? He delivered milk to...

SCHWARZ: He, he picked it up. The, the farms just had big cans outside, and he would pick them up, put them on the wagon, or on, in the winter on the sled, and take it to the next town. We didn't have our own, we call it Molkerei. What would that be where you make the cheese...

SIGRIST: Like a dairy?

SCHWARZ: A dairy, where you make the cheese and the butter and all that.

SIGRIST: Like a dairy. What was the word you used in German?

SCHWARZ: The what?

SIGRIST: The word that you said in German for dairy.

SCHWARZ: Oh, Molkerei. Mol...

SIGRIST: Can you spell that, please? (they laugh)

SCHWARZ: Yeah. M-O-L-K-E-R-E-I.

SIGRIST: Thank you.

SCHWARZ: Molkerei.

END OF SIDE ONE, TAPE ONE

BEGINNING OF SIDE TWO, TAPE ONE

SIGRIST: Anyway, you didn't have one of those in your town?

SCHWARZ: No, we didn't have it. So my father had that route. And he had to get up very early to, when we were out in the field we could see him coming back, and he came back, had a cup of coffee, and maybe a piece of bread, and came out in the field then, and worked with us. Very hard work always.

SIGRIST: You started telling a story about something that you did that displeased your mother.

SCHWARZ: Oh, yeah. Anyway, he would also, people would give him a package from the post, you know, if the courier couldn't take it. He used to come on the bicycle. So if he had it, and I had to take it to the minister's house. And I was told, be careful and don't drop it. But I dropped the thing. (she laughs) And I cried, and I cried. And I came home and my mother said, "Now, first of all I want to know. Did you break something in it?" So she went right to the minister's house, and she asked to open the package, whether if it's damaged, you know, that we would make good. And it wasn't broken. But she said, "See, you did not listen to me. You must have been fooling around to, to break it." You know. I mean to drop it. But that's the only where I, and then my brother, he had, he had one of them shells, like a little bullet. And he told me to hold it on so he could hit it with a hammer. We wanted to know whether it would make noise. So I had it there, and I, I still have here a little, that's where the thing went in, right here. (she laughs)

SIGRIST: The shell exploded. Uh-huh.

SCHWARZ: It hit me. And he told me, "Don't you cry." And a neighbor came down, her garden was right next to ours. And we were out in the garden. He was chopping wood, and then wherever he got the bullet from, who knows. But that's boys for you. (they laugh) So she heard me crying. He put me into the shed, and he said, "Don't you cry, and don't you tell." And he took his knife had he, he loosened it up to bring it out, you know. And it was stuck...

SIGRIST: And dug it out of your hand.

SCHWARZ: And I wasn't supposed to cry, right? (she laughs) So this neighbor heard and she, she said, "What are you doing?" And he said, "Nothing. Nothing." She said, "She's crying." So over she went, over the fence, came in. She said, "Oh, come on." And my, the other people were out in the field, see. (she laughs) So she helped and bandaged it up for me. Put something on, iodine, or whatever what they used.

SIGRIST: (he laughs) Tell me some of the things that your mother had to do around the house. What were some of her responsibilities?

SCHWARZ: Her responsibility? To keep a clean house, do the cooking, do the milking, and still help out in the field. And she would, by eleven o'clock, my mother would be going home from the field, walk home, and have dinner, because

we always ate our big meal at noon, noontime, or between twelve and one at least. No later.

SIGRIST: Did she have certain that she did certain things that you can remember?

SCHWARZ: Everyday the same. Everyday the same.

SIGRIST: So there wasn't...

SCHWARZ: Mon, on Mondays, Mondays, yes. Every other week was wash day.

SIGRIST: Can you describe for me how your mother washed the clothes?

SCHWARZ: We had like, with, with the brush. You had it in the, in the big, it was a wooden thing.

SIGRIST: Like a big tub?

SCHWARZ: Yeah, it wasn't a round tub. It was a long thing this way. (she indicates)
And so you...

SIGRIST: Long rectangular.

SCHWARZ: You had your soap water in there and you had a brush, and you, there was no washing machine at that time. I never saw a washing machine.

Never saw a washing machine until I came to this country. Everything was by hand.

SIGRIST: So she would brush the clothes. And then what?

SCHWARZ: Yes, especially, you know, farm clothes is strong pants and even shirts. And then you keep rubbing it yet, and you have to wind it. We didn't have a, a ringer to ring the wash. Everything was done by hand. One stood on one end and this, and then you would turn it until the water was out. (she gestures) And every wash was hung out in the, in the garden, you know...

SIGRIST: And she'd do that...

SCHWARZ: To dry.

SIGRIST: ...she'd do that every other week?

SCHWARZ: Every other week was wash day.

SIGRIST: Can you describe for me how she cleaned the house?

SCHWARZ: Well, we had no carpets. It was wood floors. They were washed, and they were, it was like, to me it seems that it was like an oil, what, what you put over to make the wood look nice. It was sort of a brown wood. Like this is, this is cherry. (she indicates) I don't know what the wood was

there, but...

SIGRIST: Was it, was it wide planking, like you have here in this room?

SCHWARZ: Yes. It was, it was this wide... (she indicates)

SIGRIST: Oh. So that's like about a foot and a half wide...

SCHWARZ: ...boards.

SIGRIST: ...board.

SCHWARZ: Boards. Yeah.

SIGRIST: Were there any...

SCHWARZ: And the kitchen was a cement floor. And we had, when I was little, we had the oven right in the kitchen. And we would, we would dry our own pears, apple slices, plums. It's, that's what we used to eat, you know. She would cook and make baked goods next to it, and we'd have maybe a plate of soup.

SIGRIST: Was this oven, describe the oven.

SCHWARZ: The oven was built in. The oven was built right into the kitchen. And it

had the, the open door. And as children, first my sister, and when I grew up, I had to go in and turn all that fruit and that, turn it over.

SIGRIST: How would you dry the fruit? Can you describe the process for me?

SCHWARZ: Just from, it was after you baked your bread, your, this oven was built in and they, they kept the heat. So this is when you put your fruit in to dry.

SIGRIST: Did you slice the fruit before you did it?

SCHWARZ: Oh, yes. Yeah. Only plums were left whole. And we had some very small pears, too, what, what were left. The others were cut, pears were cut in half and apples were sliced like, say, from a quarter, two or three slices.

SIGRIST: Then, when would you eat the dried fruit? How was it used?

SCHWARZ: That was cooked.

SIGRIST: You dried and you cooked it...

SCHWARZ: That was cooked with, "mit," what's "Lorbeerblatt" in American? (she laughs) Oh, if my son would be in, he knows all the words.

SIGRIST: Was it cooked in a liquid of some sort?

SCHWARZ: Oh, yeah.

SIGRIST: Yeah.

SCHWARZ: You cook it, and then you put sugar in, and, and you keep till, till it's really tasty. You see? But you, you put sugar in. And that time we had sugar not like in, you get today in bags. It was the big "Zuckerhut." (she indicates)

SIGRIST: Like a big cone.

SCHWARZ: It was like a cone. And you just take a hammer or some real strong instrument and hit it, and you put the piece in. And it would cook right in with it.

SIGRIST: What furniture did you have in the kitchen?

SCHWARZ: In the kitchen was nothing but a sink and a cooking stove. And then there was, here is the cooking stove. (she reaches for a photograph) (her microphone falls askew) Oh, I'm sorry.

SIGRIST: That's all right. Let me just put it back on you quickly. Okay. Yes, there was the cooking stove, and then...

SCHWARZ: And then there was, in, in where we, what you would call the living room, there was, was heated from the kitchen. And you had one of them two or three-planked forks where you laid the wood on or whatever you had, and put it way in. And you'd start with a piece of newspaper, lit it, and, in, and that how it was heated then. And in the wintertime, we cooked a lot right in our living room. It was the old German oven. It had a top with one door and two shelves. And on the bottom where you really could cook, it's really, you could roast, make a roast and all.

SIGRIST: So it, it sort of provided heat as well as another place to cook?

SCHWARZ: Oh, yes. It heated...

SIGRIST: Did it...

SCHWARZ: And you had, you had wooden rods going this way and that way around the, (she indicates) where after wash you couldn't dry it outdoors, you, you hang it on that.

SIGRIST: You'd hang it on a wooden rack that were there.

SCHWARZ: Uh-huh.

SIGRIST: Oh, that's interesting.

SCHWARZ: Yeah.

SIGRIST: What other furniture sticks out in your mind in the house?

SCHWARZ: In the house, then, we had the living room. That was our dining, we ate in that. We had a big table and we had a bench this and a bench the other way. (she is indicating) And then here was for a chair and, and on that side a chair.

SIGRIST: So you had a bench, the benches went on like an L shape.

SCHWARZ: The benches along the wall.

SIGRIST: Yeah.

SCHWARZ: Uh-huh. An L shape. Right.

SIGRIST: So the table was in the corner, kind of...

SCHWARZ: Yeah. Uh-huh.

SIGRIST: ...and the benches were along the wall sides. (he indicates)

SCHWARZ: Yeah.

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SIGRIST: And then you had a chair, and a chair. And who sat in the chairs?

SCHWARZ: My father was in the, my father was in the chair, and my mother was in the chair. And the children were all seated on the bench. And we had walls this wide, you know, and we had windowsills like this. (she is gesturing)

SIGRIST: Yeah. That big. You're, you're gesturing a wall that's what, maybe two and a half feet thick.

SCHWARZ: Oh. Oh, big walls. Yes.

SIGRIST: What other furniture sticks out in your mind that you had?

SCHWARZ: A sofa.

SIGRIST: What did it look like?

SCHWARZ: Well, that was, with all them fancy nails in, you know. And my father had a horse leather chair.

SIGRIST: Horse leather?

SCHWARZ: Horse leather. With, it had the wings here.

SIGRIST: Wings like (???)

SCHWARZ: You see sometimes some real old fashioned chairs, and, and nice. Everybody liked to sit in there. (she laughs) Whoever visited, they wanted to sit in that chair.

SIGRIST: This is what we would call in this country a leather wing chair.

SCHWARZ: That's it. Because it has them things coming out. Yeah. And on, on the wall in there, there was like a little closet. A wall closet, just say about this size. (she indicates) That's where my father had his tobacco in there. He was a pipe smoker. (she laughs) The, the old fashioned, you know. He used to, it was a silver chain on it. It was a long thing, with a mouthpiece and then the, where the tobacco goes in was like china or like porcelain. You know. Pretty. It was pretty.

SIGRIST: Do you have any stories about your father's pipe's smoking?

SCHWARZ: Oh, yeah. He, he was big smoker. And when we were out in the field when I was a little girl, he would tell me, you know they would be working, making hay, or, you know, whatever, wheat, cutting wheat. And then he'd lay his, his vest there and his pipe, and he'd say, Emma, get me the, my pipe. So I would, and while I walked with it I always had that thing in my mouth. Oh, that was, tasted so good to me. (she laughs) My mother said, "Oh, that smelly pipe." I said, "I like it. I like it." It was, you know, that rotten smell, really. (she laughs)

SIGRIST: Did you ever try to smoke as a child? Did you ever, when your father wasn't around, try to smoke his pipe?

SCHWARZ: No. No. Only just by bringing it. You know, the cold pipe. No. I didn't, but I tell you, when I was married, I, I tried once the corncob pipe for the fun of it. My husband and I, we had a convertible. And we sat in there, and people (???) because we had the corncob pipe in there. (they laugh)
Just for, just for being funny.

SIGRIST: Tell me what your father's name was.

SCHWARZ: My father's name was Johann Georg.

SIGRIST: Yeah. John George we would say in English.

SCHWARZ: Yeah. Yes. And he was called "Hansjörg" in, in our town. And everybody...

SIGRIST: Why?

SCHWARZ: That's, they shortened that John...

SIGRIST: Johann.

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SCHWARZ: ...and Hans, Jörg was Georg, meant. And I was Hansjörgs Emma, and Hansjörgs Marie. And we used to sing a lot, my sister and I. She was four years older than I. And we were asked, like, if there was any festival, you know, to, to sing, and start when they had the dance music, the orchestra or whatever you would call it. It was the Oom-pah, Oom-pah, Oom-pah band, you know. So, you had to sing first and then they would play that, whatever you sang. And what, what, where are we going now?

SIGRIST: Well, you mentioned that you liked to sing. Do you remember any of the German songs that you sang with your sister?

SCHWARZ: Not really. Only like Christmas songs. I...

SIGRIST: Is, is there a song that you can sing for us...

SCHWARZ: Yeah.

SIGRIST: ...that in German, from your, from your childhood?

SCHWARZ: (she laughs) Well. (she sings) "Alles neu macht der Mai, macht die Seele frisch und frei. Lasst das Haus geht hinaus, pflückt ich einen Strauss. Primmelein im gold'nen Kleid, laden uns zu Lust und Freud. Mägdle klein, hell und rein, klingen froh darein."

SIGRIST: Thank you. (she laughs) What was, what did you say. What did that

mean?

SCHWARZ: All is new in May, makes your soul free and, macht die Seele frisch und frei. Frisch means, not fresh, not the way you, if you would say you feel fresh.

SIGRIST: Alive? Happy?

SCHWARZ: Alive. That's right. Macht die Seele frisch und frei. Leave your house, go outside and, and make yourself a bouquet of flowers. Pick flowers. And then that Primmelein means the primrose, what you call it here primrose. Primmelein in gold'nen Kleid, they always were yellow by us, and they, they were in the woods. You could get them in the woods. They bloomed all over the place during that. And we used to go and pick them And also the little, what do you call "Maiglöckchen?" (she pauses) Darn it. You know.

SIGRIST: Some kind of a flower?

SCHWARZ: Yeah. You know, brides have them, too.

SIGRIST: Lilacs...

SCHWARZ: It's a little, it has all little bells on.

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SIGRIST: Oh, for, lily of the valley?

SCHWARZ: Lily of the valley.

SIGRIST: Uh-huh. So that a springtime song you would sing, obviously.

SCHWARZ: Yes. Uh-huh.

SIGRIST: Oh, that was great.

SCHWARZ: Yeah.

SIGRIST: Do you remember any others?

SCHWARZ: Well, I don't know. Well, I can't think right now of...

SIGRIST: Maybe while we're talking.

SCHWARZ: Yeah. Yeah.

SIGRIST: If one comes to you just tell me and we'll do it.

SCHWARZ: Yeah. (she laughs)

SIGRIST: Tell me what your father's personality was like.

SCHWARZ: My father was a very good, honest, lively man. Everybody loved him.

And, of course, when the people, all the boys were in the war, everybody counted on my father to come and help them with things, because he was very good with things. And he loved horses. You know, he could, and if anybody was plowing, it bothered the life out of him if they didn't make a straight line. You know, he would go up to them and tell them, don't do it like that. You have to watch, you know. And help them, he was a very, he looks like a very...

SIGRIST: No, don't, no, no. You're all wired up. Don't move.

SCHWARZ: Oh, yeah. Okay.

SIGRIST: We'll look at the pictures later.

SCHWARZ: Yeah. He looks like a strong minded man. But he was, he was so very funny. And all the kids came by us. With all his ten children that he raised, all the neighbors little kids would come by him. And he'd, he'd be there, and he let them stand on his shoes. And he was in, in that horse leather chair. And they hold on to him, and he'd go like that with them.
(she gestures)

SIGRIST: He'd flip them up with his feet.

SCHWARZ: And then all of a sudden he had them on his lap. "O, Hansjörg, do it again. Do it again." It was, and he was just, he loved children.

SIGRIST: Tell me some of the ways, some of the things that you did with your father as a child.

SCHWARZ: Oh, I was with my father all the, most times. I'm talking, I'm thinking a lot of my father because my mother was busy with the household. So wherever my father went that little one came along with him. He would take me, he would take me when he went to the barber. That was in the next town. We didn't have a barber. And that was usually on a Sunday. He would go, and I'd be with him. And then around Easter time, he would always go, have a few colored eggs in his pocket. And he'd be walking, it was all through woods where we had to go to the next town. He would try to tell me something about, to look this way, all of a sudden he'd be hiding an egg somewheres. And he'd say, "Oh, I see, I see that rabbit out there," you know, the Has'. We call it a Has'. A bunny. And, "There must be a nest around here." So, we'd around with, he'd go with me, and then he'd, "Oh, there it is." He, he had the biggest charge out of things like that. He'd do that a couple of times with me on a Sunday, you know. (they laugh) Or, he'd, he'd, he loved flowers, too. He would take me through, and want to bring Mother a nice bouquet home. And we'd stop together, and we'd pick flowers on the way home to bring to her.

SIGRIST: Tell me a little bit about his relationship with your mother and their

interaction, and how their personalities worked.

SCHWARZ: Well, they were, you know, years ago there wasn't, I would say like today young people hugging, kissing, you know. I don't know whether there wasn't enough time, or, you know. (she laughs) They were always busy, but they were always in the evening, we all sat together. My mother was very religious. When then, around in the summer, the bells in the church would go at seven, in the wintertime at six, because it's gets dark earlier. And then we'd all, when the bell rings all the kids have to go into the house. They all go home. And then my mother would have the Bible. And she'd read from the Bible to us, and then we'd have like a little family discussion, you know.

SIGRIST: What religion were you?

SCHWARZ: Lutheran.

SIGRIST: You were Lutheran.

SCHWARZ: Evangelical Lutheran.

SIGRIST: And who was more religious in your family, your mom or your dad?

SCHWARZ: Both.

SIGRIST: Both were.

SCHWARZ: Both went to church every Sunday. My, if my mother couldn't go with all the children, and she'd excuse herself, and the minister, she use to tell us, he would say, I'd rather know you're home watching your children, than you sit in my church, and restless you don't know what I'm talking about, you, your mind is home with the, wondering what the children are doing. So...

SIGRIST: You mentioned that your mother read biblical passages. Do you remember, like, some of her fav, favorite parts of the Bible. One that sticks out in your...

SCHWARZ: Yeah. She, she'd, like went through the Bible, you know. She was just so knowledgeable of the Bible. But I, I was never that good, you know. I mean, I go to church and all, but I was never that good. So, but she, she just, when, when there was a "Sturm" coming, "Children, come on in," and the Bible came out, my mother would sit there and read the Bible. That's why when I came to this country I was still afraid of a thunderstorm. (she laughs) And the family I married into, they used to laugh because I would go to bed and I cover myself and sweat underneath the cover. And I said, my mother-in-law said, "What's the matter? Are you afraid to die? You never have to be afraid to die. You just fall asleep." You know. And so I thought, well, they were saying this is this kind of a lightning, this shape and this. And they'd sit on the porch and, and watch it. So I thought, gee,

if they can do it, why can't I? And I got away from it. But it was due to, "Children, come in," and then my mother would bring the Bible out, and it was so serious, you know.

SIGRIST: She was being so protective of the kids during the storm.

SCHWARZ: Yeah. Yeah. And she'd used to say, if you can say, "Gott der Vater, der Sohn," and the Holy Spirit, if you can say that, then you know that the thundering is further away. If it comes right away, you know it's right by you, if you only can say maybe one word. And so, you know, we were raised different.

SIGRIST: Sure, and it had this profound effect on you, you know, as an adult in this country.

SCHWARZ: Yeah. Yeah.

SIGRIST: Can you describe for me how your family celebrated Christmas?

SCHWARZ: Oh, yes. We, we had a Christmas tree. And...

SIGRIST: Where did the tree come from?

SCHWARZ: Oh, we, we'd go right out to woods, and my father would go out, and maybe one of the, my brother. And they come home on the sled, pulling

the, we had quite, when I was a child we had a lot of snow. Today they don't have that anymore. Not much.

SIGRIST: You remember there being lots of snow.

SCHWARZ: Yes. And so they would bring the tree home and we'd set it up. And it was set up, and I was little. I wasn't allowed to see it. And the one time I was just that age where I was nosey enough. I opened the bedroom doorway, and I was in, downstairs in the bedroom when my sister comes down with all the Christmas stuff. (she laughs) So, I knew then, they were, of course they told me, "Go right back into bed."

SIGRIST: How did you decorate the tree?

SCHWARZ: With all different, we had, my mother would make cookies. And we'd have cookies on. We had beautiful Christmas, the balls, you know, and different glass, and colors. And we had a nice top for it, point. And the gifts for Christmas were all every year the same. And after, in January, after the holy three kings, what is, January 6th, the things are put away. Our toys were put away, my, my doll was put away. My, my brother had a wagon with four horses on, all made out of wood, you know. Everything was put away. And it was brought out again for Christmas. It was always new, every year. My doll was never out of the box.

SIGRIST: Because she just kept getting recycled every Christmas.

SCHWARZ: It was, it was, the little legs from the doll were, like, tied into that box. And around the neck. And so you carried, I carried my doll in the, in the box.

SIGRIST: What about...

SCHWARZ: That's how primitive it was.

SIGRIST: What about your parents? Did they give each other presents, or...

SCHWARZ: No.

SIGRIST: No. It was just for the kids, really?

SCHWARZ: No, that was not it. No. We just had a extra good dinner, you know, and cookies.

SIGRIST: Was there something special that your mother always made for Christmas?

SCHWARZ: Nice roast. Yes. And she'd have cake, you know, that, we call it Kranzkuchen. That's like braided. Jewish people have...

SIGRIST: Like challa bread, which is braided.

SCHWARZ: Yeah. But we had, it was round. And, and then she had different fruits, you know. We, we really, for Christmas I used to get an orange, a handkerchief, orange, handkerchief, what was the other thing? Oh, a little bar of chocolate. That was the Christmas gift. We didn't get like, you know, toys and all that.

SIGRIST: And how did...

SCHWARZ: I, I was always getting, you know, from the leftovers from the other children. It was just given back and back and back.

SIGRIST: You mentioned earlier that, that there was a Christmas song that maybe you remembered. Is there, is there a Christmas song that you remember that you sang?

SCHWARZ: Oh, boy. I know all the words. (she pauses) Oh, wait a minute.

SIGRIST: Well, that's all right. You can wait till later if you want.

SCHWARZ: Yeah. (she laughs)

SIGRIST: All right. Did you go to church, too, for Christmas? Was that part of the celebration?

SCHWARZ: Oh, yes. Christmas night, Christmas eve we went to church.

SIGRIST: At what time?

SCHWARZ: Oh, say around nine o'clock, and we'd come home ten o'clock. And then, of course, the next day we always went to church Christmas day, also.

SIGRIST: So you went Christmas eve and Christmas morning?

SCHWARZ: Yeah.

SIGRIST: Yeah.

SCHWARZ: Yeah. We did. But Christmas eve it was always, it was mostly singing.

SIGRIST: I see.

SCHWARZ: Yeah.

SIGRIST: We're going to pause just for a minute, and I'm going to put another tape into the machine, and we've got to get you to America at some point. (he laughs)

SCHWARZ: You mean you have all that here?

SIGRIST: Yes.

END OF SIDE TWO, TAPE ONE

BEGINNING OF SIDE ONE, TAPE TWO

SIGRIST: Okay. We're now beginning with Tape Two with Emma Schwarz, who came from Germany to America in 1926 when she was eighteen years old. We were just discussing Christmas, and, Mrs. Schwarz, you've just, as we were changing the tape, began to tell me a story about when you were ten years, and I told you to hold off until I got the tape going.

SCHWARZ: Yes.

SIGRIST: So go ahead and tell.

SCHWARZ: When I was ten years old I had spinal meningitis. And nobody where, my, my sister found me laying outside on a pile of stone. And with very high fever. And so, of course, they had to call a doctor then. And he, the doctor told us that there was one boy in the next town, next village, also. And it, it was, they said I was delirious, wanting to walk up the wall, you know. And saw animals, like, coming over into me. Terrible. And so then when the doctor came the second to see whether I was doing any better, what they gave me I don't remember, you know, that the boy died. And he

looked me over, and he said, brought my father and mother into the bedroom, and, and told them that doesn't look good, there is nothing he can do with me anymore with me, you know. So my father walked out of town because he was, he had it by that time. He walked out, was going to the, out of, to the fields. And he met this one man, an orthopedic man. He sort did a lot of home remedies, too. And he, he told him. And of course, he was the man what was the barber in the next town. You know, them barbers, they did other things on the side. So my father was down in the dumps and he told him. And he said, "Would you mind if I go with you? I'd like to see her." So he came and he looked me over, and he prescribed, first he put all, taped my whole back from here on down to here. (she indicates)

SIGRIST: The whole back?

SCHWARZ: The whole back. And then he said, enemas with oil in, the regular salad oil, to keep them intestines moist with this high fever. Because I was burning up, you know. Somehow they, I guess they couldn't bring that fever down. They had to give me baths, you know, with towels. Not into the tub, but with towels. And it finally, he brought the temperature with, also chamomile was used, and there was another. I think it's called "Spitzwegerich." It grows along the roads. The leaves from that.

SIGRIST: What is that called?

SCHWARZ: Spitzwegerich.

SIGRIST: Can you spell that, please?

SCHWARZ: S-P-I-T-Z-W-E-G-E-R-I-C-H. Wegerich. And that was used from the leaves, also made like a tea and applied. It cooled the body down, you know. And then this enema every day, it, it kept them alive. And what they were mostly worried was the kidneys and the bladder from it. But, and then he, he knew that the next farmer across the street, he had pigeons. And eh went over and he said, "Would you give the Schmidts a couple of pigeons?" And so my mother feathered them, you know, and cleaned them, and made broth from it. That's all I could have, you know. With a little maybe white bread soaked in it. And somehow I, I was quite a long time in bed. And of course, nobody could come. My mother was staying with me. Everybody else had to stay out of the room, for fear that somebody else would get it. But we never heard of anybody else. And where we got it, I in this little town, and this other boy, we were not together. Nobody from any of the people were together.

SIGRIST: How old were you when this happened?

SCHWARZ: I was ten years old.

SIGRIST: And, and what do you remember about feeling? How did you, do you remember how you felt during all of this?

SCHWARZ: Well, at, at first, I, they said I was just out, you know. The fever was so high that I, I wanted to get out of bed, I wanted to climb the wall, I, I said, "Oh, the animals were coming." Lion, "Löwen," come over me. And when I started to get better, you know, then people would come to the window and talk to me through the window. Some school children and the teacher. And for a while he, he gave me my lessons right through the window till I got better.

SIGRIST: Do you remember feeling weak or any of that?

SCHWARZ: Yes. Yes. And very skinny. I got very skinny from it. Because till I could again...

SIGRIST: Well, just eat, you know, drinking pigeon broth...

SCHWARZ: Yeah.

SIGRIST: ...and white bread. (they laugh)

SCHWARZ: And then, yeah, it, it kept me alive, but that's about it.

SIGRIST: When you were a little girl in Germany, or even a little bit older, what did you know about America? How did you think about America?

SCHWARZ: I didn't know nothing about America. I didn't know there was such a thing.
(she laughs)

SIGRIST: Did anyone in your family, had anyone ever gone to America?

SCHWARZ: No. They, there were two, the girl I came over with, her brother and her cousin. The mothers were sisters from them two fellows. They came a lot by us. And, of course, when there was some festival, they were also there, and, and would dance with my sister and I. And my mother always had cake. She was always prepared if we would bring friends home, she'd have an apple cake or a plum cake. And if they would eat, she used to make soft boiled eggs in a big dish like that. (she indicates) Maybe ten, twelve people sit around the table. You know. She'd feed them. And so we were well known. And they went to America, them two fellows. And they came home and, of course, they were dressed different than we dressed. They looked better. They didn't have the, the "Hosenträger." You know, they had the belt around here (she indicates), and beautiful white shirts, and light grey suits. I remember. And so they looked real good. And they kept talking how nice it was. And every year they came. And then this, the one fellow, his sister went to America, would go to America. So they said, "Why don't you go with her?" Well we had nobody in America. So they said, oh, their aunt what was another sister to their mother's lived in Chestnut Hill in Philadelphia. She'll be your sponsor. She would do it, you know. And everyone, well, first it was, they tried to talk my sister what was four years older than me. But then I grew up, and

they said, "Why don't you go? You, I think you would like it." So, I didn't want to ever be on the farm my rest, the rest of my life or marry a farmer. (she laughs) That was for sure. So, okay. And it, it did something for, and for a while I didn't even tell my people, until all of a sudden one day I, I said that I was going to America. And they said, oh, you know, they just thought I was kidding. I said, "No, I'm not kidding." I'm going to, I had to go to the consulate in Stuttgart to, I don't know what, for the permission to leave the country or what, what that was. Anyway, I, I went there. And this girl, too, I, she came from further away. So we would meet right there. We had to go the same time. I didn't know the girl at first, you know. And then my parents said, "Well, if you want to go, we know them two fellows so good, you know. They'd take care of you."

SIGRIST: How did your parents, when they, when it finally dawned on them that you really were going to America, how did they feel about that?

SCHWARZ: Oh, they, they felt bad. They, they tried to talk me out of it. You know. I couldn't speak the language. And they said, "You know, you speak different languages." I, I knew from my brothers from, they spoke a little after the war French, you know, and you can't understand a thing. And so I, I begged them, and I said I, and if I don't like it then, you know, I might come home. But I thought I would never do. So they gave in. And my father and my mother went to the city with me...

SIGRIST: Before you, before we get to that...

SCHWARZ: Yeah.

SIGRIST: ...what was some of the processes that you had to go through? What did you have to take care of before you left? You mentioned getting your papers.

SCHWARZ: Oh, yes.

SIGRIST: What was...

SCHWARZ: I had permission from the, the consulate. You had to go to them. And then it took a while until it came by mail that they, that I got permission to go, because they look into it whether you have somebody when you're once into the country. You see, you have to know who you go to. The name and, you know, who the relation would be. And so through that this girl left the same time as I did, I, I was allowed then. Got the permission.

SIGRIST: Were there any medical requirements that you had to fulfill?

SCHWARZ: Yes. Yes. Medical. Doctor's certificate. And I had my passport then. And that was I think around Christmas time when I knew that it, I thought I was allowed to, to leave. But then it took all this time till, till they got in touch I imagine with this aunt from the girl I came with. And I had to have

twenty-five landing money. You had to have that, so you wouldn't be, fall to the, the country that they would have to take care of you. You see, you had to have some money, probably to, would have to ship you home or what. I don't know.

SIGRIST: Do you remember packing? What did you pack to take with you?

SCHWARZ: Oh. Well, I tell you, I wouldn't send anybody that far away. I, my father and mother took me. This dress that I have on in that picture, my...

SIGRIST: Can you describe that dress?

SCHWARZ: ...my father picked, it was red. He loved red. And I had to leave with a red dress. Then I had a lighter dress that was white with black. And I had a pair of brown shoes and a pair of black patent leather shoes, and I had two nightgowns. I had to sh, they, that time they wore shirts in Germany, the women. And two undergarments, panties. What do you call pants, they were down to here, you know, at that time. (she laughs) And I had I think two skirts and two blouses, what, for work, to start with work.

SIGRIST: Did you, what about hats?

SCHWARZ: I did not come with a hat. Would you believe that? (she laughs)

SIGRIST: Because they would have been in fashion in...

SCHWARZ: Because I, I had so much hair, you know, and I had long hair. And so I had that bun in there, in the back. I didn't have a hat. And I don't think the other girl did either. But then here, when we were here, this is when we started wearing hats.

SIGRIST: Did you take any objects with you? Anything other than the clothing?

SCHWARZ: Nothing that I remember.

SIGRIST: A personal object...

SCHWARZ: Just little jewelry. And, and, and a pocketbook. And a, I had my suitcase with all the stuff in there, you know. I, I wouldn't send anybody across the river with so little clothing, you know. (she laughs) But, and my mother when I, the morning that I left she was already five o'clock sitting on my bed, telling me to respect people, to be always nice and decent, clean, and do the right thing. Work hard, as good as you can, the best is not too much. And she says, "Always see to it that people look up to you, not down on you." And be a good worker. If you always listen to what you were told, you do it. And I did that all my life. To this day anybody ask me something, I'm right there doing it. (she laughs)

SIGRIST: Did your parents provide some kind of a send off...

SCHWARZ: No.

SIGRIST: ...gathering or anything like that?

SCHWARZ: No. I had one, my oldest sister was working in Berlin, and she surprised me, and came to Hamburg where I, before I, and you know they examine you there to, I, I had my hair nice, and, and everything clean. They put you through showers. You have to shower. And the hair is shampooed and washed to see whether you had any lice or nits they look for in your hair. And so my sister helped me to look decent again to, to go on the boat, you know.

SIGRIST: So you had to go to Hamburg to get on the ship.

SCHWARZ: Yes.

SIGRIST: How did you get from Hausen to Hamburg?

SCHWARZ: By train.

SIGRIST: And does anything stick out in your mind about that train trip?

SCHWARZ: Well, because this girl did not come from my town, she came from...

SIGRIST: The girl you were travelling with?

SCHWARZ: We, we, the train stopped there. And she was there with her mother and father at the train, and came in. They said so long to her. She was alone, too. So we travelled along alone. And, of course, that was the first long train ride I ever had in my life.

SIGRIST: Did you parents go with you to Hamburg?

SCHWARZ: No.

SIGRIST: No.

SCHWARZ: No. No.

SIGRIST: Do you remember saying good-bye to them in your town?

SCHWARZ: Yes.

SIGRIST: Can you explain a little bit about that to me?

SCHWARZ: Yes. It, it was a tough, a tough going to say so long to them, because I was their youngest. And my mother always kept saying, because my mother had trouble with her eyes through an accident. Not that that, but, that, "I know I always have you. You are my youngest. I always have you with me." And it didn't happen. I was the one what left, that went away

the furthest from any of them. (she laughs) The furthest they ever, two sisters went to Berlin, and the others were all near. Not far away.

SIGRIST: Did your parents give you something to remember Germany by, or remember them by?

SCHWARZ: (she laughs) Not, I tell you, the only thing that my father gave me was that, all the money rolled up, when they, through the Depression, you know, when you had thousands and hundred thousand and million rolled up. (she laughs) I still have that roll of money in the...

SIGRIST: You're referring to the...

SCHWARZ: Just for the fun, you know. He gave me, no, not the...

SIGRIST: The terrible inflation that hit Germany right after World War One.

SCHWARZ: Yes.

SIGRIST: Yeah, where money just didn't mean anything anymore.

SCHWARZ: It was terrible. On my confirmation, I remember we, after confirmation we went on a trip. The school trip, confirmants in the school. And the teacher that was taking care of us, he was sort of our guide. He went, when we came into the city, he went into the restaurant and paid for our meal, that

when we come in the afternoon that we get a hot meal. Because by that time it was already, the money was hardly worth anything. So that how things were done.

SIGRIST: And so your father gave you this big roll of bills as just kind of a...

SCHWARZ: Just for a, to remember...

SIGRIST: ...something to fill. (they laugh)

SCHWARZ: ...he says, yeah. To, from that's you're inheritance, you know.

SIGRIST: So you, you and this young lady...

SCHWARZ: Yeah.

SIGRIST: ...whose name is?

SCHWARZ: Anna Fad. F-A-D was her last name.

SIGRIST: Fad. Miss Fad. You and Anna are travelling on the train. You go to Hamburg.

SCHWARZ: Yeah.

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SIGRIST: How did you have to stay in Hamburg before you got on the ship?

SCHWARZ: Well, it was, we left early from home, so we, we arrived towards evening in Hamburg. And they had like a hall where all the, it, it was not similar like a motel here. But it had all rooms. It was a big building, because they, they left Germany by the thousand, you know. Every ship was full.

SIGRIST: Were these all immigrants who were in this?

SCHWARZ: All immigrants what came over. Unbelievable.

SIGRIST: And how long did you have to stay in this facility?

SCHWARZ: Well, so, we stayed overnight. And then one more day where they examined us all. And then we had the afternoon free, and this is when my sister came. And she took us in Hamburg to the zoo. She took us through, there was a tunnel, a tunnel, too, where I remember that I had never seen before. And then she said so long and, and left. And the next morning we went, boarded the ship.

SIGRIST: How did you feel when you were going through the showers and the hair?

SCHWARZ: Oh.

SIGRIST: I mean, how did that make you feel?

SCHWARZ: Awful. Awful. Frightful. Very much afraid, because they examine, you know, that they go through all the hair and see whether you're clean, whether you have, I guess they had people what probably came aboard ship, looked like they needed a good cleaning, you know. But they didn't, didn't make any difference. You could, and I, I, now I look clean. (she laughs) I looked exactly like you see me on that picture. And, but you have to go through all of that.

SIGRIST: And, of course, you came from a very different kind of family.

SCHWARZ: Yeah. Yeah.

SIGRIST: Yeah.

SCHWARZ: I mean, we were all clean people, you know. And, so then we were aboard ship. Well, everybody was German there.

SIGRIST: Had you ever been on a ship before?

SCHWARZ: No.

SIGRIST: What did you think when you were going up the gangplank into this ship? What ran through your mind?

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SCHWARZ: (she laughs) Well, that was sort of excitement, you know, for me, to, because I, I wanted to go. I really wanted to go. So it wasn't that I was frightened for that. It was just the idea that I didn't expect that they examine you, and you know, go through you, and ask you, of course, all kinds of questions. What kind of illness you had. You have to say all of your, measles, the mumps, what else is there? (she laughs)

SIGRIST: There's probably a whole list of things. (he laughs)

SCHWARZ: All a list. And of course that I had the spinal meningitis.

SIGRIST: Did that create any problem?

SCHWARZ: Not at that time. But I wonder whether it did when I was in Ellis Island.

SIGRIST: Well, good, we'll get to that when we get you there.

SCHWARZ: Yeah.

SIGRIST: What was the name of the ship?

SCHWARZ: The ship was "Hamburg."

SIGRIST: And tell me about what it looked like where you slept on the ship.

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SCHWARZ: Well, we were four in one cabin. My, my...

SIGRIST: What, what class passage?

SCHWARZ: Three. Third...

SIGRIST: Third class?

SCHWARZ: Third class.

SIGRIST: Yeah.

SCHWARZ: That's why we had to go to Ellis Island.

SIGRIST: Yeah. So there were four of you in the cabin...

SCHWARZ: First, second didn't have to go.

SIGRIST: Right.

SCHWARZ: So, we had like two beds on this side. (she is indicating) Here's the entrance. There are two beds, one on top of the other, and on this side, too. We had two other women on that side.

SIGRIST: So, so one bed, one of beds is straight across from the door...

SCHWARZ: Yeah.

SIGRIST: ...and the other set is right to the right of the door?

SCHWARZ: And, and in the center is a, was a little wash basin. But to go the bathroom, you had to go out. You know, that was not in the cabins. I mean, third class, you know, is third class. (she laughs)

SIGRIST: No nonsense. (he laughs)

SCHWARZ: No nonsense. So, I slept on the bottom and she slept on top, until she said she didn't feel good. Then I went on top, and she stayed, my friend...

SIGRIST: This is Anna?

SCHWARZ: Anna.

SIGRIST: And who were the other two women?

SCHWARZ: They were from somewhere else. And they weren't what you call, they certainly were two the first time travellers. They didn't talk much at all. Of course, Anna and I, we were seated next to each other when we ate. You know, they had, had us arranged like that. What made it nice, too. But then she got seasick. And I sort of had to help her, but I, I never got

seasick.

SIGRIST: Tell me about the things that stick out in your mind about being on the ship, and things that you did...

SCHWARZ: On the ship, we a good time on, aboard ship. Because they have different games that you play. And in the evening, too, they have, they have a, a place where you can go if you want to read or write letters or cards, you know. And then they have a, a big room where they have different games, the little horses, you know. And...

SIGRIST: The little horses? Can you describe that?

SCHWARZ: Oh, it's like on the stick, and it's like a, a half of a horse, like. And they, they go and move that horse. And whichever you pick, maybe four, four lanes. And if you, that horse goes, whichever makes the first is the winner then.

SIGRIST: Like, like a little horse race, sort of?

SCHWARZ: Uh-huh. Like a, it was a horse race. And they had different games. You could play cards. If you were a card player, you know, they would get you together with four people. And they had a movie. You could see a movie in there. That was my first thing, too, that I ever saw. (she laughs)

SIGRIST: Do you remember the movie?

SCHWARZ: No, I don't. (they laugh) It was more like pictures of different areas. Like country sites. We had, more like flowers, gardenings. You know, educational things. It wasn't like a, a love movie. It was more educational.

SIGRIST: It didn't have a plot. Yeah. It was...

SCHWARZ: Yeah, it had, yeah.

SIGRIST: You mentioned that Anna was seated next to you at dinner.

SCHWARZ: Hm-hmm.

SIGRIST: Can you describe the whole processing of eating, and when that happened and...

SCHWARZ: Yes. Well, we were, we were seated on long tables that were like my room. Long tables.

SIGRIST: Twenty-five feet or so?

SCHWARZ: Yeah. On this side and that side. (she indicates) And they had a lot of stuff on the table. You know. For breakfast you, you had, they had toast

bread, they had rolls, they had cut bread, they had butter, they had bologna, different cold cuts, you know.

SIGRIST: How did you know it was time to eat breakfast?

SCHWARZ: They, they would ring. A bell would ring for first seating or second seating, if they had two seatings, you know. So you, you knew when to go. And then you would just stand in line and, of course, she stood always next to em, and that's how we, we would go. And sit down. And they have pitchers of milk. They have your glass or they have your cups sitting there. You know, they have them tables what have the little lip on to, in case with the "Sturm," you know, so things don't slide off. And the food was very good.

SIGRIST: Did you have any food that you had never seen before?

SCHWARZ: Yes. Lots of things. (she laughs)

SIGRIST: Do you remember what they were?

SCHWARZ: All different, you know. Meat. There was always meat and cheese and different, they had nice vegetable and all, you know. And roasts. They had...

SIGRIST: So the dining was a pleasant experience?

SCHWARZ: It was a pleasant experience. Really, good food, because I never had that good food at home.

END OF SIDE ONE, TAPE TWO

BEGINNING OF SIDE TWO, TAPE TWO

SIGRIST: Did you go up on deck of the ship?

SCHWARZ: Yes.

SIGRIST: And, and what did you see up on the deck of the ship?

SCHWARZ: Oh, we would walk around, look the whole thing, and then you would bring your blanket and you lay that on, you know. And all the people are laying around, or you can, I think the first time when I, when I did go over it was free to get chairs. But then when I, I went home after two years. I went back home, because I knew my, my people were so worried about me. So I saved and I saved, and went to a travel agent all by myself, made arrangement, and went to New York, took the ship Albert Ballin back. And I was only going to stay a couple of weeks. And where I worked the lady waited for me, too. She, you know. So I had to write to her that I, I

couldn't. My mother was in an accident. She lost her eye. She got, that time the cows had horns. And she went in to feed them. And this one went over and hit her right in the eye, and of course, the eye ran out. And I was out in the field. But by the time they told us when we came home, my mother was taken with the doctor with the automobile to the eye clinic.

SIGRIST: And that happened when you were in Germany, when you were visiting...

SCHWARZ: When I was thirty, 1928.

SIGRIST: And that was the Albert Ballin that you went over, B-A-L-L-I-N.

SCHWARZ: Ballin. B-A-L-I-N. Ballin. Albert Ballin.

SIGRIST: Ballin. I think two L's in Albert Ballin.

SCHWARZ: Yeah?

SIGRIST: I think so.

SCHWARZ: Yeah?

SIGRIST: Yeah. Well, good. We'll talk about that...

SCHWARZ: Yeah, we, we got off the track, yeah. (they laugh)

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SIGRIST: ...anyway, no, no more (???), on the trip over. How long did, did the voyage take?

SCHWARZ: Well, it was supposed to up to two weeks. Fourteen days. But I think that we made in thirteen.

SIGRIST: What time of the years is this?

SCHWARZ: May.

SIGRIST: In May of 1926.

SCHWARZ: May. June. I left in May and arrived here in June. I, I left the 26th from home, I left from Hamburg the 28th, and I arrived here I think around the 11th, 10th or 11th, something like that.

SIGRIST: Do you remember seeing the Statue of Liberty when the ship...

SCHWARZ: Yes. When the ship came in, we were not allowed to come in. We were docked outside, but we could see all the lights from Long Island. It was beautiful. Like string of lights, you know. It was beautiful. And then they said, you have to stay up, because when, when we get through the, that time that bridge wasn't there, the...

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SIGRIST: The Verrazano Bridge.

SCHWARZ: ...Verrazano Bridge. When you go through the, what is it called there?

SIGRIST: They used to call it The Narrows.

SCHWARZ: The Narrows. Then you come to the "Freiheits Denkmal." The Liberty, Statue of Liberty.

SIGRIST: Say that in German one more time.

SCHWARZ: Freiheits Denkmal. Free, Frei means free, and Denkmal means statue. Statue of Liberty. And of course, we stayed up. We were tired out. We, but we wanted to see it, you know. So when by daybreak then they go in, and go to the pier. And then of course, you are all lined up again to go, because you have a name tagged on there. (she indicates) And your destination. Where you go. And so they, of course, we had to go down, and take that, it looked to me almost like a barge. You know, where we were on. It wasn't a nice looking boat to go to Ellis Island.

SIGRIST: So after, after The Hamburg docked...

SCHWARZ: Docked.

SIGRIST: ...you then were put onto this barge thing, and taken to Ellis.

SCHWARZ: Yes. And taken to Ellis Island. (she coughs) And of course, there was that big hole that is still there. And they had all benches, all around and this way. (she gestures) So there were always lots of people, you know. And...

SIGRIST: And what sticks out about your time at Ellis Island?

SCHWARZ: Well, as we got into Ellis Island, well, there, it went that they just picked someone, why they picked me once more to put me into this little room with the doctor. And he said to undress, that he has to examine me. And I tell you, I was scared to death. I thought something happened that they're going to send me back. You know. He looked in my eyes. I remember that so well. He rolled the things up and down, my nose and my throat, and he felt me all around. (she gestures) And I was laying on, on the table. And a, a nurse came to the door and, and said the doctor should come out. He goes out and never came back. I was laying there. And I thought I started to worry. I was alone in there. So I got off the table and looked, and opened the door a little. Yeah, all my people were still sitting on them benches. So I, I got myself up on that table once more, because I didn't want that he would get angry with me. So a while later, nobody comes, look out again. I see where they all stand with their luggage in their hand. I quick got dressed. Took my suitcase and I know I had my passport. That I had. But I must have forgotten the birth certificate. I had to send for that later on in, from Germany again. But I

took that suitcase and ran, because they were all going to the boat to take them to, what is it? Is it Jersey City or Hoboken where you take train to Philadelphia? So this Anna said, "Where were you? Where were you? Everybody says, 'Where is Schmidt?'" I said, "I was laying there." And I said, "The doctor was called away and never came. So I just got dressed and I ran." (she laughs) Got in that, in that boat and went to the station, and then, you know, there you wait again, and, to get on to the right train you always have some guide there, you know, what looks you over. What name, and what, where the city is, where you're going to. So we get to Philadelphia. Of course, the men what we thought that her brother and his cousin would pick us up to bring to the aunt. Well, the one wasn't home yet, so her brother left and comes to the Pennsylvania station in Philadelphia. They wouldn't let him take two girls. He could take his sister, but he couldn't take me. That's how careful they were. "No. No." He said, it's, "We're going to my aunt's house, and she is right with, with my sister here." "No. You cannot, we can't allow you to take two girls." So he went and then told his cousin, by the time he got back he came then for me. You know where they put me? You know where they sell tickets? You have the things on there. (she gestures) I thought I was in jail. I was sitting behind this girl what was sitting to sell tickets, you know, for the. He finally came. And so then we went to, the aunt had dinner ready. She waited for us. And tired out. I was really tired out. And, of course, her children all talked English. It was just her, and she lost a lot of German. And her husband wasn't German. Their name was Kuntz. And we went to bed.

SIGRIST: K-U-N-S-T? Kunst?

SCHWARZ: K-U-N-T-Z.

SIGRIST: T-Z. K-U-N-T-Z. Kuntz.

SCHWARZ: Kuntz. Yeah. And the next morning we had breakfast by them. And then at ten o'clock from a travel agent a lady came and took us to Benderfield [PH] to get a job. So she took me first that was the closest in Chestnut Hill. And the lady liked me, and she said, yes. And she would pay fourteen dollars a week. So I was satisfied. I was poor as a church mouse, and it didn't sound an awful lot of money to me. (she laughs) And so then she took the other girl, this Anna, and she was also taken. And she took us back to the aunt's house. And on the next morning, she came and delivered us to them homes where we working. Just one day. And then we worked. Worked ever since. (she laughs)

SIGRIST: And what did you have to do for this woman?

SCHWARZ: Oh, I was, I was domestic. (there is noise in the background)

SIGRIST: We're going to pause. Just resuming now. So one day you got a job.

SCHWARZ: Right. I, I was hired as a domestic. I had to cook...

SIGRIST: Did you live with Anna's aunt?

SCHWARZ: Yeah. No.

SIGRIST: No.

SCHWARZ: Only that...

SIGRIST: That one night?

SCHWARZ: That night. And I had my own room. I had up on the third floor...

SIGRIST: This was a live in position...

SCHWARZ: Live in.

SIGRIST: ...that you lived in this...

SCHWARZ: As a domestic.

SIGRIST: Oh.

SCHWARZ: I had to, they had three children. They were English people. Montgomery Haynes. And they had three children. One was maybe nine, the other

eleven, and the boy, the boy was even in between them two girls. There was two girls and the boy. So nine, they were close in age, ten and maybe eleven or twelve then, you know.

SIGRIST: What were your responsibilities in the house?

SCHWARZ: To cook, and to take care of the household. But not to, they had someone coming in for cleaning. Just every day to go over things, you know, that everything was in order. Making the beds and the lady always helped me with making the beds. She would go on one side, I go on the other. And, of course, I didn't know much about cooking. And I couldn't speak a word of English and she couldn't speak German. So she had a German-English dictionary. And she'd go around with me and she'd...

SIGRIST: Careful. You're wired.

SCHWARZ: Yeah. She'd open the closet and she'd say, "Glass." Hold the glass. "Glass." The whole row, "Glasses." "Glasses. Knives, fork, spoons, plates." And she'd, always she was so patient to explain this is what we call it and it would be what you say. So she was just great that lady.

SIGRIST: And she was the mistress of the house?

SCHWARZ: She was the mistress of the house.

SIGRIST: Do you, do you remember the first word that you caught on to, the first word that she taught you?

SCHWARZ: (she laughs) Well, "hello." "Hello" was the first. And then she explained this, we say "Grüssgott," or "Guten Tag." And she says, "Good afternoon," or "Good Morgen." "Good morning." She'd teach me all them things. But you, you can't comprehend right away, you know, that. So in, in the evening I would, and she'd help me with cooking at first. She would say it, now it goes in the oven, and takes so long, and I'll be back, and, you know. But I had to serve. They were five people, then, on the table. And the man would sit on one end and he would do the serving. No matter what it would be. Whether it was soup, he would serve it and I'd serve it to the person around the table. I, she taught me how to put the knife, the fork, the small fork for the, the, the soup spoon here, and another spoon or the little fork on top. (she indicates) That's how the table had to be set. And everything was all right, until on Sunday they always had a big rolled roast. Not a rib roast. But the roast was rolled and tied with strings. And she told me it goes in the oven now. They were all dressed to go to church. "It goes in the oven now, we go to church, and then we visit, and then we take a little ride in the country, and then we come back and the roast is finished." So that was it. But there was no onion in our house. And I didn't know how to cook without onions. (she laughs) That was a big part by us. There was carrots and celery. And that's how you cooked. They ate very plain. So they said yes, dinner is ready. And brought the roast in, put it in front of the father of the house. And he had the plates.

So he would carve this roast and then he'd have the vegetable and the potatoes. He put it on and I had to serve it around. Well, the second slice, first slice went to the lady what was on the opposite side. The second slice went to the older girl, and so on as they were seated. The third slice, the blood started running out of that roast, and I, I looked, and, oh, my God, I never saw a rare roast in my life. Everything's cooked well. They said I just passed out. Down I went. So they took care of me. Never mind the eating. They took care of me. (she laughs) Carried me onto the couch. And how I got up into the bed I don't know. They must have walked me. But I was out of it. (she laughs) I woke up in my bed. And all could think of is, I'll be fired. I lose my job and what will I do. I have nobody to go to. So nothing was said. I couldn't understand that they said everything was good, until the next Sunday when I had my day off I went to this aunt's house. And she said, "Oh, of course, she got, it was the best roast, the best dinner. And that, that you fell down, you passed out and they were so worried about you." I said, "Didn't they fire me?" She says, "No. They, they like you. It was so delicious." (she laughs)

SIGRIST: How did it make you feel to not understand things?

SCHWARZ: Oh, that, it's, it's, I can't tell you the feeling you have. You stand there like a real dummy, you know. You try so hard to, to listen to every word, whether you can figure out. There are some words what are close, you can. But not many. But I tell you, I had in the third floor in my room, I had

the bathroom and my bedroom. And there was an open area where the children used it for their playroom. So I walked around, and I found all the little first grade, second grade, third grade books what they had in school. And that's how I learned. "Jane said this," and you know, I could figure out. Every night I was, every spare moment I had I would go through them and, and that's how I learned to get along at first, with playing words, you know.

SIGRIST: Did the kids know that you were looking at their books?

SCHWARZ: No. Because they were already, at that age they weren't up there much. It was, you know...

SIGRIST: Were the...

SCHWARZ: ...in June they play outdoors.

SIGRIST: Were the children as patient with you as the Mrs. Haynes was?

SCHWARZ: Very nice. Oh, very nice. They, they stood there and they tried to help to, you know.

SIGRIST: Did you attempt to explain why you had passed out to Mrs. Haynes?

SCHWARZ: Oh, yes. I, I said, you know, blood and "Blut" is, I said, "Ich sehe das Blut

vom Fleisch.” And she, you know, she’d have that book, she’d look everything up. She was so patient. I couldn’t understand it that she would bother with me. But that’s how we, and so blood, blood and Blut, you, you, that’s related, you know, you...

SIGRIST: So she understood why that happened?

SCHWARZ: Yes. Yes. But the one time when I got a letter, and she always was interested in what I hear from home. And so I told her Father’s “krank.” And she said, “Oh. Cranky?” Said, “No. Bed. In ‘Bett.’ Sick.” You know. She said, “Sick?” You know, she looked it up in the book, showed it to me. Yeah, Father is sick. (she laughs) She thought he was an angry man, you know.

SIGRIST: Did she attempt to speak German with you, or was she simply translating what you were saying?

SCHWARZ: She’d only translated. She couldn’t, she, she knew...

SIGRIST: I was just wondering if she tried to learn a little bit of it.

SCHWARZ: No. She knew as little of German as I knew of English. So she was always with that little book there.

SIGRIST: How long did you work for the Haynes?

SCHWARZ: Well, there's a sad story about that. I was there from June. And in November, when it is when they stand still for a minute for the, for the soldiers from the war time? Do you know?

SIGRIST: Oh, not Armistice Day.

SCHWARZ: Armistice Day.

SIGRIST: Is it Armistice Day?

SCHWARZ: Yes. And she said to stand with them, and we folded our, and she said you can say a little prayer in, in, in German. And they, for, I think a couple of minutes you stand there. So we did that. Then Thanksgiving came. Oh, and in the meantime, that lady went and she bought me, she felt sorry for me, she bought me the most two beautiful uniforms. The silver grey and the black one with the white apron. That how I served at the table then. Not in the kitchen when I did my work. But to serve I was dressed, you know. So Thanksgiving came. And this Anna, her brother asked this lady that he thinks that she should be making more money.

SIGRIST: That's right, because Anna is working with you in this house?

SCHWARZ: No.

SIGRIST: No?

SCHWARZ: Another house.

SIGRIST: Another house. Okay.

SCHWARZ: Further away. But her, her brother would go more often where I didn't see them as much.

SIGRIST: I see.

SCHWARZ: So. (she pauses) Forgot where I was.

SIGRIST: You were talking about Armistice Day and how you all said a prayer for the soldiers.

SCHWARZ: Yes. So Thanksgiving came and she brought me all this. So this Anna was up a dollar. She made fifteen dollar, then, a week. So this, their cousin comes to pick me up and asks my lady that it would be time to increase my wage. And she said, "No." She said, "I bought two beautiful uniforms, and aprons, and I don't up her yet. It is too soon. And I, I will take her if she has to go to a doctor, to a dentist. We do all that." But she said, "No." You know what he said? He said, "Then she leaves." He goes and he tells me, pack your things. The next day then, pack your things, I got a job for you up the street in the same block. I had no room to

myself there. I was, the army cot underneath the stairwell. You know, you know how it goes up a step that is rounded off? Underneath there was my, and I lived out of my suitcase. For a dollar they wanted more. Money wasn't my, I wanted a home, somebody what is nice with me. Well, the children cried, the lady cried.

SIGRIST: How did you feel about this man, this cousin...

SCHWARZ: Doing that.

SIGRIST: ...Anna's cousin speaking for you?

SCHWARZ: Yeah. See, he spoke English. I couldn't understand what he all said.

SIGRIST: So you didn't really even comprehend what was going on?

SCHWARZ: I didn't, yeah. So then I, he takes me up in that same block that lady. And she wasn't a bit nice. She wasn't a friendly person. You know. I, I would have been really a maid there. Treated that way. With this lady, if I could have stayed there, believe me, I would have had really a beautiful home.

SIGRIST: How long did you work for the Haynes?

SCHWARZ: Well, it was after Thanksgiving then. The beginning, it was going towards Christmas.

SIGRIST: So you had been there since June?

SCHWARZ: Yes.

SIGRIST: So, what is that, six months?

SCHWARZ: Not even.

SIGRIST: Not even that long. We have to end in just a couple of minutes. We've been going on almost two hours now. (they laugh)

SCHWARZ: Yeah. Yeah.

SIGRIST: Let me ask you just a couple of final questions. When you think of yourself...

SCHWARZ: Yeah.

SIGRIST: ...do you think of yourself as German or American?

SCHWARZ: Really American. The only thing what I do in German is count. If, if I, arithmetic, for, for sales, when I used to work in our salon here until I lost my eyesight. And I, I count, I'm very good in, in arithmetic. And I could do that, but I would do it in German, and then just that fast say it in English.

SIGRIST: But you think of yourself as an American?

SCHWARZ: As an American.

SIGRIST: Did you become a citizen?

SCHWARZ: Yes.

SIGRIST: What year did you become a citizen?

SCHWARZ: 1933.

SIGRIST: 1933.

SCHWARZ: I came in 1926. 192', after two years you can ask for the first paper, they say, your intention of becoming a citizen. I got that. And then 1933, the 31st of January I was alone in front of a church. See, today they take them by the hundreds. And even that time they took more. But the, where I worked at that time, I stayed six years in that place, then. They had two children, and I, I took care of, strictly of the children. And the man of the house went with me, and my lady's sister, they were my witnesses, in front of the church. And, oh, they were so proud to do that for me. And the church was so nice to me. He said he wished, you have to know a lot about our country. I knew with the congress, I knew with the senate, you

know. Everything. And I wished American young people would know as much as you do. And I had to write. And, "What a beautiful handwriting," he said. And he shook my hands. And he said, "You, you're great. We, we welcome you." He was so nice, and I was really proud. And, and my boss and, and his sister-in-law, they took me out for dinner then, you know. Made a real nice day for me. Really celebrated that I became a citizen. So then I, I meet, I met my husband...

SIGRIST: All right. Very quickly, what's your husband name?

SCHWARZ: Arno Bertholdt George Schwarz. (she laughs)

SIGRIST: And what year did you get married?

SCHWARZ: I, 1933. March 11th, 1933.

SIGRIST: And name your children for me.

SCHWARZ: I have only one son, Arno, junior.

SIGRIST: Are you saying Arno?

SCHWARZ: A-R-N-O, Arno.

SIGRIST: Okay, and that was your husband's name, too?

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SCHWARZ: Yes. And he's a junior.

SIGRIST: He's a junior. He's got his father's...

SCHWARZ: He's a junior. And I would have had a little girl, but that was born dead. So we just had one child. I lost my husband in 1969, right out in my background.

SIGRIST: We need to end.

SCHWARZ: Yeah.

SIGRIST: Mrs. Schwarz, thank you very much. We've been talking for two hours...

SCHWARZ: Now can you make something out of that? (she laughs)

SIGRIST: Yes. This is Paul Sigrist signing off with Emma Schwarz on Friday, September 29th, 1995 in Brielle, New Jersey. Thank you.

END OF INTERVIEW