

KECK-92

CELIA (TZPKY) KOTZ ADLER

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INTERVIEWER: DEBBY DANE

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RUSSIA, 1914

AGE 12

SHIP NAME NOT RECALLED

DANE: This is Debby Dane, and I'm speaking with Celia Adler on Thursday, November 21, 198. We are beginning the interview at 10:50 AM. We are about to interview Celia Adler about her immigration experience from Poland/Russia in 1914. She was twelve years old. Celia Adler, if you could tell me what town you were born in and a description of how big it was, if it was a small village.

ADLER: Yes, the name of the town is Liskiva [PH] and it's between Russia and Poland. It was a small town of one street, small houses, one on each side, a whole wall of the. In the center of the , of the, uh, street there was a, like a ditch and when the water that of the rain came in, we

children used to go swimming there. That's the kind of a town. But it was, my recollection is that it was good town. I'd never heard of any robberies or of, uh, rapes or of whatever, just good people, friendly. If there should be a wedding or any other celebration, the whole town used to come along and celebrate. This is what I remember. I also remember the town when I said goodbye to my parents. I, I am beginning to get dry--

DANE: You're getting--

ADLER: --that all this thought, no, no, it's just a feeling. For all these years being here and away from my parents, whenever I have to say goodbye to somebody, I just have to cry. That's how I remember my mother.

DANE: Uh-huh. Uh-huh. Your father was a dairy man.

ADLER: Yeah.

DANE: What did he have to do? What did that mean?

ADLER: Oh, he started to be a shoemaker, really. Also, by, by a coincidence in Russia, if you are acquainted with those years, they used to take in service only second births, the first born a, a son, would be, uh, excused from the army. The second born was supposed to go. So my father

was the second and he had to go and e, um, he didn't want to go, so my grandparents sent him away to a different town to be their son and a different name. That's how he saved himself. That's, that's true, that's what it was, under the czar. So my father landed into our family that is was a shoemaker and they learned him the trade and so forth. Years went by, everybody forgot what happened, then he came back. He was a perfect shoemaker. But he didn't like it very much. Some years later then my brother, his son, grew up and he became a dairyman. So he dropped the shoemaking and he was with my brother. Now, the position of making, of making cheese, like, for instance is, uh, we, we didn't have any cows or anything to, to have milk, but the peasants around, the villagers, they had cows and they had, so my brother used to pick up milk, bring it home and between my father and him they made cheeses and sold it. That's what was his profession.

DANE: In your town, was it mostly Jewish people or, or mostly Gentile?

ADLER: In the town was mostly Jewish, some Gentile too, but the villages were packed with Gentile people. They were nice people. They used to, the children, I played with a lot of Gentile girls. And, uh, some were Jewish, uh, farmers used to be away from town, from our town, but when the Jewish holidays came along, they used to pick up the whole family, bag and

baggage, into the wagon with a horse, pull them into our town. And they found room, they always found room to stay the holidays. So that was a lively occasion.

DANE: Uh-huh. Uh-huh. Did you speak Yiddish or Russian or Polish?

ADLER: Only Yiddish, but I, we too, you see, we weren't allowed to go to schools in Russia at that time. But we had a private, uh, tutor. The rabbi's granddaughter disappeared for a few years and there was nobody there and she came back with these languages. So I knew Russian. I don't, I don't use it so I really to be frank with you, I don't, I had no-- But I spoke Russian when I came here and Polish, but the main thing was Yiddish. The Yiddish we spoke with the family.

DANE: And your son was telling me that you lived in that region called "the Pale", which I have since read about. Are you familiar with that expression "Pale of the Settlement?"

ADLER: Uh, no.

DANE: That was, I just was wondering, it's where, I understand, that Jews between Poland and Russia were placed and had to live because the czar wasn't crazy about having Jews in his domain and I just wondered if you knew anything about that.

ADLER: No I don't, I probably was too young to know.

DANE: Yeah.

ADLER: --and coming over hear, I was anxious of knowing the way of living here so I, I didn't, uh, never went back or anything like that.

DANE: Uh-huh. When you were a little girl, did you hear anything about America? Your sister was here or your mother's sister? Who was in America?

ADLER: Uh, two sisters. One was married when I got here and one was still single.

DANE: Uh-huh.

ADLER: And they were here several years and that's who I came to.

And, uh, when the ship arrived and passengers went off the boat to Ellis Island, the people from America, like my sister, came to pick me up. But they wouldn't, uh, let me off on account of the age and they, I had to have papers, uh, to be sure that they would take care of me.

DANE: Uh-huh. Uh-huh. Before we get to that I'm wondering did she write to you? Did you have any idea when you were growing up what America was like? Would they send letter to your mom and dad?

ADLER: A little, the, uh, both of my sisters were very independent when they came here. They tried to make a life of their own. They did not bother my parents. This I know. But I, when I reached the age of fourteen, I already had two years of learning how to sew and they knew that if I knew how to sew, know any sewing, I could make a living. Otherwise they really couldn't afford to do that. So it is, I remember when my parents used to get mail from America and they tried to, my younger sister especially, tried to explain to my parents that if they sent me up that I'll be better off than I am in Liskiva [PH] and they shouldn't worry about sending me out. But they didn't consult me. They just between the two of them made up

their mind for me to go.

DANE: Huh.

ADLER: So I didn't know what I wanted or not-- I just didn't.

DANE: Huh, huh, isn't that amazing?

ADLER: Yeah.

DANE: Was it, you had been taking a seamstress apprenticeship with someone for two years?

ADLER: In, in Europe yes.

DANE: Yes, and did you, you were being tutored also by the rabbi's granddaughter?

ADLER: Yeah, in writing, reading and writing letters. I used to write letters home when I got here, but I, I must say that I don't know much about it.

DANE: Did your parents think you'd be better off over here? Is

that why they sent you away because it was--

ADLER: Well, we were poor people. Not really poor, but there was no future. Most of the young folks left. You know, they would go to a bigger city in, even in Europe or they would go to America. That was the easiest thing. Unless you don't have anybody, that was the hard thing. I had two sisters and, uh, and I got here.

DANE: Do you remember the day when your mother and father said, "Celia, you're going to go see your sister and you're going to live in America." Do you remember that?

ADLER: I do. I don't, I wouldn't remember the date but I, I now that I got very upset because and I couldn't say no to my father or mother. We never said no. It was their decision to do. I had to go. But it was in my mind all the time maybe I should say I want to stay home. I loved my parents and I loved my home and I loved my friends. But the time came and my sisters sent, uh, what do you call it, uh, (Russian words), (son's voice off mike), ship's passage, uh, the voyage, what do you call that, I uh, remember when my father received a letter with, uh, a, some kind of writing that "Tzpký Kotz", that was my name there, Tzpký.

DANE: Kotz, Tzpký.

ADLER: That was my Jewish name.

DANE: Oh, that's sweet.

ADLER: Yeah. That, uh, I am eligible to use this paper to go to America. I looked at it and I still couldn't make up my mind that I'm really going away. It was going away. It so happened that, uh, they got to Antwerp. We had to stay the whole week until the ship came in. And at that time everybody was thinking whether they should go back or not.

DANE; Yeah, I bet you did.

ADLER: --the ship came and everybody went, everybody.

DANE: Oh boy. Before you leave your village though, in your story that I read, your parents had planned for you to go but you were still going to be in your town for three or four more months in the summer before you would actually leave. Is that right?

ADLER: Yes. I think they wanted me to stay a little bit longer. Frankly, the parents weren't sure, all parents, and the children left all of a sudden. Because I would think you'd go nuts. You, you really don't know

how it'll work out. Some--

DANE: Did they, did they treat you special those months?

ADLER: Uh, they, they, I have a felling that they did. All of a sudden I became a big shot in the house.

DANE: That's greta! Did you stop sewing and just stayed at home and around the house or did they still have you going and doing your seamstress work right before you left?

ADLER: Well, the seamstress, when you have reached, like, ten or twelve, in those years you go to s seamstress for one year without pay and, uh, the next year I got twenty-five rubles for a whole year. That's how, that's what it paid. I didn't make much when I came here neither.

DANE: Uh-huh.

ADLER: So after two years, I was already fourteen. Letters started to come in that I should come over. So I gave up the, uh, I stayed on, you know, loafing. (She laughs.)

DANE: In the story I also read of a special day that you

described so nicely about going blueberry picking.

ADLER: Yeah.

DANE: Do you remember that day?

ADLER: That was, that was way before. My mother, as you know, that Russia was very cold, and whoever had a little money, they used to store their food. We had a cellar, they called it a cellar, when it's not too cold and not. So my mother used to, uh, pick berries in the woods. We had an awful lot of, uh, woodland all around and, uh, also the little pails we had in the yard to store it away, prepare it, cook it, whatever they had to do and, uh, store it away for the winter. So one, uh, morning, when she was ready to go with some women or neighbors, she herself, I didn't know anything about it, she decided it's time for me to learn a little bit something for a, running a home, I suppose, or something. She woke me up in the dark, I remember just like it, it would happen now, and I woke up and I was glad she did it. It was, uh, a, some kind of a very, uh, it made me more important yet. And I picked berries with my mother. We carried a bag and sang songs all the day, all the way.

DANE: Ah, do you remember any of those songs?

ADLER: Yeah.

DANE: Is it too much, could you sing one?

ADLER: Oh my God! In Yiddish?

DANE: Yeah.

ADLER: In Yiddish. I know a song that's short so I'll sing that.
I'll--

DANE: Do you want a drink before you do? Just a--

ADLER: You better stay and take care of me.

MARTIN ADLER: She also knows one in Russian which they would have
sung there.

ADLER: This song is always sung by a farmer. He raised up some
children, he also raised the goats. "Ship,Ship" I think you call it. "The
Good Ship." And, uh, one day he was sitting and having some happy, some
thoughts, and he started to sing a song. If you'll know, if you wouldn't
understand some words, I'll tell you later.

DANE: Okay.

ADLER: Okay. (She sings Yiddish song.)

DANE: Lovely. I'm not, I want, unfortunately--

ADLER: There is a beginning of when I sing (Russian words).
That's the one, you work your fields. So he says that he's such a lucky
man. Did, did you understand, Elsa?

ELSA: A little.

ADLER: So in the song he explains why he's so happy.

DANE: Uh-huh.

ADLER: He hears all the (Russian word) and the (Hebrew word),
that's a Hebrew word. When you work, God gives you, when you work in the
fields, God gives you, uh, health that you can work in the, uh, and then my
maidle, (Yiddish), that means my girl, he doesn't make much fuss about his
dress or dressing. He sews up a little fladle (Yiddish), that's like the
dress, he gives her two sheep for (Yiddish word), as a wedding present and

he marries them off that way. It's a really lively little song.

DANE: It's wonderful! Oh, it's great! And so you would all sing these songs?

ADLER: We would sing the oldest songs going picking berries or any other thing. O always sang. I still do in the house, just sing. But we used to go bathing like, so we would sing, going and coming and splashing the water and, and singing, all singing.

DANE: And you'd pick berries in pitchers and then pour them in the baskets and go get more and--

ADLER: We. we had baskets with two handles, two, uh, like this here, something like that--

DANE: Handles.

ADLER: --on the basket. A stick was put in and two baskets was carried by two women. And on the way back they were filled, we tried to be filled. So we used to, uh, put all the baskets together in one place and, uh, and go to find the, uh, keeper of that, that area. They had an awful

lot of berries there but they had a keeper and dogs and everything. When my mother was the cashier, everybody paid in a coffee can. That's like a bundle of cents. And when all the money was collected, the, the guy came out. I remember that red headed fellow. Honestly, when I talk about it, I see him, with a big dog, ferocious dog. When my mother gave him the, uh, money, change, he took the dog, turned around and walked away and everybody spread all over the place. Picked our, uh, we had buckets like home-made, bring it back to the place to hold it where berries is, pour it in, go back and sometimes somebody would get lost and they would howl like that, "Where are you? Where are you?"

DANE: Oh, that, so he--

ADLER: It was a lot of fun.

DANE: --he was the keeper of the forest. You had to pay to allow you to use the forest?

ADLER: I don't know exactly, uh, how it worked. I really don't remember much. I have an idea in the later years around here that the forest really belongs to the czar, it was under the czar. He had these people to take care of it, they, that people shouldn't steal or take trees if it's available and all that. But there was, once in a while, I, I

remember once in a while somebody would come from a bigger town and buy all the wood up and cart it away, and they made boards out of it, and they made the furniture out of it and all that. So this here keeper, if you paid him, he let's you go-- Nobody could use up the berries, you know, it gets rotten any way.

DANE: That's right. So it sounds like you had a, a wonderful life that involved being out with nature and the animals and berries and making your own--

ADLER: I did, I did. I still like it. I really like it. For the years that I worked and I started to make a little money, of course, the first thing went to my parents. Uh, but I used to, uh, remember to put away a few dollars here and there and go to the mountains for two weeks vacation. That really took the cake. I loved that. I loved nature and, uh, singing, dancing.

DANE: Some other things in your town before I forget. Um, we're, we're sitting here drinking tea, and there was, your son said that you have, when you were in Russia, the teacups are different than they were here. Can you describe them?

ADLER: It used to be (Yiddish phrase), if you know what that is. It's, um, how would you describe, uh, it was a contraption of, uh, of tin, you put water in, and on the top is a little, uh, place that you put a, a cup like that, uh, with your tea, and the water brews it. And when it's finished, there was a little thing that you turn and you get the tea out.

DANE: Huh. It's different.

ADLER: That's nothing new. I saw it in the department stores here, too, in the later years.

DANE: Huh, I'm used to tea bags.

ADLER: Oh, oh this is used with the loose tea. And I used to get the Russian, we had, oh, we have Russian tea here. Delicious, in the little tin boxes. I still get it sometimes.

DANE: But the glass, it was the glass. Because you didn't have cups to drink you said we used to hold "stakan chan." (Yiddish phrase.)

ADLER: Stakan means a. a bucket, a, a cup. No, we had it. Martin, I remember that there were two people in my town that made them out

of, uh, what would it be, clay.

DANE: Clay.

ADLER: Clay, yeah, regular cups.

DANE: And you'd but them from him?

ADLER: And you'd buy it from the guy that made them, that makes it, sure.

DANE: Uh-huh. In your town, there was a church?

ADLER: Yeah, Yeah. Church, the church brings me a lot of beautiful memories because, as I already remarked, we have a lot of villagers go by. They used to come to shop in this own, but the nicest time un the year is when they have the weddings. The weddings they have the costumes. It was, I didn't have fancy clothes so maybe that's why it's, uh, it was so attractive. Those ribbons that the girls used to come with, ribbons--

DANE: In their hair?

ADLER: In their hair, hanging down all the way down there. That's the brides. Uh, with the, be starting at the beginning Sunday come in spring, all these people are to go out and getting married in church and by, by the way, the church was so spooky that we children were afraid to go by, even. Nobody knew what was staying inside.

DANE: And was this a Christian church?

ADLER: Jewish, Jewish people weren't allowed to go in--

DANE: So it was scary?

ADLER: --so we didn't go in.

DANE: Did you imagine what was inside?

ADLER: I always imagined but then I, then I visit here in New York the cathedrals here. It, it must be like that because it was a beautiful church. The church was so tall, like, in comparison with the houses in, uh, Liskiva [PH]. But when you would come in on a horse and buggy, the first thing you would see is that church, you know. But, uh,

going back to that Sunday when all these couples would come in with their parents. First of all it was very lively in town because they came in wagons and they played their fiddle. You know they didn't have much music, it was just a, just a fiddle, sitting in the wagon while coming there and all the whole town was out to see what's going to happen. They went in pair by pair and got married and coming out in that very large round square they do, they did dancing and that was just beautiful.

DANE: And the women wore white? What, did they have special blouses?

ADLER: No, they had colors, a lot of colors. The, the clothes, actually, what they had is, was they have one for weaving. You know, they grow in the fields, and then they dig it, and then they grind it and they, they make cloths, cloths out of it. That's it. But, uh, the top used to be white with the Russian embroidery, the red, the cross work, beautiful.

DANE: Hmm, oh it's gorgeous! Bright! And then the skirt?

ADLER: Right, right. Very tight, very tight in the waistline and enormous amount of the skirt. The colors, they didn't make one color, I

want you to know. They must have been artistic. The colors in the skirts, in the clothes, is something, I saw, something, something like this. See this is handmade, handmade too. So this was the skirt, enormous and wide, a wide waistline. There was an awful lot of pretty girls there too.

DANE: Ah.

ADLER: He's listening. (Referring to sound engineer.)

DANE: He likes it. How are we doing on time?

SOUND ENGINEER: Uh, we should probably flip in a couple of minutes.

MARTIN ADLER: The cup thing, not to mess it up, but to finish it because it's cute and only a Russian knows it. When they made the tea with the tea on the top and the hot water on the (?), it came in a glass or a cup without a handle and it's very, very hot. So how does one pick up a glass of hot tea? You can't hold it around like this. So the key that she taught me, but we haven't got the story straight, you put a finger. a thumb on the top and your middle finger on the bottom--

DANE: Ah.

ADLER: That's right, that's what I--

MARTIN ADLER: --and then you could hold it as hot as it could be.

But moist Americans grab it in the middle-- On a cold drink and it doesn't work. So if you get one you have to remember to put your thumb on the top.

ADLER: That's, oh yeah, that's--

DANE: That's a good trick!

ADLER: That it is, yeah.

DANE: It's a good trick because there were no handles.

ADLER: It's not hot, yeah.

DANE: But even on the bottom it doesn't seem--

MARTIN ADLER: No.

ADLER: Well you just, uh, hold the edge so that the edge of the glass, so.

DANE: At the weddings, were you allowed to participate? I mean, did you go and dance and--

ADLER: All these weddings, not the Russians, unless you really knew them very well. You see, with, the stores in my town were all owned by Jewish people but the Gentile used to shop there so you knew some, my parents knew a lot of them. So they would bring over presents, you know, like a few things or something like that. But as a whole, they participated, they danced with each other and so forth, but it was very beautiful to watch.

DANE: Hmm. It's amazing they'd all come at the same time.

(Addressing the recording engineer.) Should we switch?

SOUND ENGINEER: Yeah.

DANE: And I guess I'm supposed to slate this end. This is the end of side one. I'm speaking with Celia Adler. She's Interview Number 92. It's 11:20.

END OF SIDE ONE, TAPE ONE

BEGINNING OF SIDE TWO, TAPE ONE

DANE: This is the beginning of side two, Celia Adler, Interview Number 92. We're starting this side at 11:25. We're still in your village and I understand there was a nobleman in your town who had a phonograph?

ADLER: Yeah.

DANE: Do you remember that?

ADLER: Yeah.

DANE: Can you tell me--

ADLER: They called him "Agrave." [PH]

DANE: Agrave. [PH]

ADLER: Agrave. [PH] That's his name in Russia.

MARTIN ADLER: Like Prince.

ADLER: Like a, like a Prince. He was supposed to watch us for the czar, collect taxes and do all that. He had the nicest town, the nicest, uh, house in town. He had a, a "bridgka" [PH] (Yiddish), you call it like a wagon with a fence around it, all hay inside. It was bedded. And he would drive on the streets and everybody would have to raise your hand and say hello to him, and all that. And, uh, he was, the only one, the only time I ever knew that there was such a thing, it plays, it plays. Friday night he respected the Jewish religion. He used to put the phonograph, you call it the phonograph, in the window and it played all Jewish, uh, records.

DANE: That's amazing!

ADLER: He did.

DANE: Would people come and listen and--

ADLER: Not inside. I don't think anybody was inside in the house. But the windows used to be open and the, that, uh, horn was by the windows. I heard 'em a lot of times.

DANE: Isn't that amazing that he would do that.

ADLER: Yeah, he used to get Jewish records.

DANE: Now was that surprising for you to hear this machine that made music?

ADLER: Very surprised. At first we didn't know what, what's happening. And they, very, very, uh, people that are really anxious to know where it comes from. They used to make friends at him, you know started to talk and, "Can I see the machine?" He was glad to, to show it. I, I didn't see it, frankly, but a lot of people did. And that's the first day I heard music, except you sing, and that music you sing, you play.

DANE: And this had, did this have instruments on it too or was it like an orchestra?

ADLER: No, he used to turn, I remember that he would turn the, uh, a handle and it played and must have been, what would it be, Martin?

MARTIN ADLER: A phonograph, an old time phonograph?

ADLER: It still plays that way, doesn't it?

MARTIN ADLER: Yep.

ADLER: Sure.

DANE: Yeah. Music. And because, you didn't have electricity, did you?

ADLER: No.

DANE: Did you know that there was such a thing?

ADLER: No, I didn't, I didn't until I got here. As a matter of fact, when the ship started and one of the, we were on the boat, um, I'm running out ahead of time with you?

DANE: Yeah. What do you mean?

ADLER: I, I want to tell you what happened--

DANE: Is she jumping ahead?

ADLER: --when I saw lights.

DANE: Oh, go ahead. No, that's good. Yeah.

ADLER: In reference to the lights, when my ship stopped it was very early in the morning. One of the fellows, a young fellow like this guy, used to sneak away from the third class, we were all the way down on the bottom, and look to see what's happening up there. He was the first one that saw the lights in America and he came running, screaming, "I saw--" In Yiddish it even sounds better in words, "(Yiddish words) America." "The light is on." "The licht (Yiddish) is burning. "The licht (Yiddish) candles are burning." So by the time I got there and many other people, I saw a strip of as long as the eye can reach of lights in America.

DANE; Was it spectacular?

ADLER: Very spectacular. I couldn't imagine that all these here can burn. We had (?) candles at home. We had one lamp that went on chains up and down. It burned on kerosene. That's the kind of light I was used to.

DANE: And this is so bright.

ADLER: Oh, oh.

DANE: Ah. Let's go to the last day when you, you were leaving your village. If you could describe that day to us and how it was.

ADLER: Well, it was kind of a mixture of sadness and gladness. As I already remarked, I didn't know whether I want to go or not. But the preparations that were made for me to go. We used to, my mother was afraid maybe I wouldn't have any food and, uh, so she baked, uh, they call it "zahara." You cut a slice of bread and you dip it in vinegar and sugar and you bake it and this can stay for God knows how long. And a, a bag full of, uh, that she gave me along. And I had a new hat and I had a new dress and, uh, you know, it was kind of tempting. What I, what I didn't like was the way my mother cried. I can still hear her.

DANE: Yeah.

ADLER: I never saw my mother or father cry. So this was-- First of all, am I ahead of your time?

DANE: No.

ADLER: No. First of all, there was the whole town was out just to say goodbye. There was a wagon with hay, fresh hay, and, uh, the peasants that belonged in the thing to take me. Uh, so that was a very exciting, I didn't know that it was exciting or maybe I, I thought I'm better off than you, you see, I'm going, and things like that.

DANE: Uh-huh. One thing before you go to get in the wagon, your dad, your father took you to the rabbi--

ADLER: To the rabbi, yeah. That was a very, uh, something very, uh, I don't know how to express myself, very, uh, holy, I would say. I was never in the rabbi's house and here I am in the rabbi's house, never known what, books as much as your eye can reach. And the rabbi came and stood up. He knew that my father told him he was going to bring me. He stood up and put both hands on my head and blessed me. And that's one time I wanted to cry. I don't know why. But this made it sure that I'm going. Maybe that's, that's why. And that's how, uh, then we came to the house, all the neighbors. Everybody kissed me and everybody cried and all.

DANE: There was one detail when you came back that I just loved. Um, when you came back from the rabbi's house, you

said your father took your hand.

ADLER: My father, neither my father nor mother, I remember them take me around or kiss me or do something. But the devotion they had to each other didn't need it, you see. So when I came back from the rabbi I knew that this is the end now, I wouldn't see my father nor mother and all that. So it was kind of sad to leave. With all my sadness, I never went back. I should have gone when they were alive, but I didn't. One of these things.

DANE: Then it was time when the driver came into the house and said--

ADLER: "Let's go."

DANE: And you came out.

ADLER: I didn't mention that I didn't go alone. In those years, I don't know whether the story, that's a true story, under the czar that we had to, uh, pass, uh, what do call the. now I forgot, the border. We had to, so that there was men like agents that made families. I became a, a (her new family name) instead of (Her old family name), because

the couple that I, I started to be their daughter had a little girl and I went.

DANE: Do you remember anything about the trip, if you went on a train or--

ADLER; On a train, yes, on a train. We, we got to, uh, do you want to know the names of the, this guy, this, um, man with the wagon left us in, uh, Volkavisk [PH]--

DANE: Volkavisk [PH]?

ADLER: Volkavisk [PH] that's the nearest town. From Volkavisk [PH] to Warsaw I went on a train.

DANE: Had you ever seen a train before?

ADLER: Never. I never saw one. When I come to, uh, what's that name, that was it, I saw for the first time a train when I went off the wagon and, uh, the man brought us down from the wagon and he left us near the train in Volkavisk [PH]. Then boarded the train and went all the way to Warsaw where we got off from the train and we had to go through all the, the length of Warsaw to take a train to Antwerp.

DANE: Did you like the train or did it scare you?

ADLER: I, I was, yes, but this was very exciting. For a minute I forgot about what I left behind.

DANE: I bet!

ADLER: Selfish, aren't I?

DANE: No, I mean you were so impressionable, you'd never seen--

ADLER: Yes, very impressive, very impressive. Who could see this?

First of all, I was fascinated by the noises it made. The, my town was so quiet I can't tell you. It's not many people, and all that. But this train I'll never forget. When, When I came to this country and I used to go to see my sister in, uh, Paterson, they had in those years this kind of train. Before it started the smoke goes up and the, and the train makes the enormous noises.

MARTIN ADLER: Steam trains, coal fires.

ADLER: Coal, yeah.

DANE: And did you sleep on the train?

ADLER: No.

DANE: No.

ADLER: No, it was, it was too noisy, I wasn't used to, uh, to hear
the noises. Then we got to Antwerp and checked
into the hotel, and to find out that there was no ships
going to America anymore. It was in '14.

DANE: The beginning of the war.

ADLER: Yeah. So, uh, it was a question that, of, we all go back.
A lot of people came from a lot of places I never
knew, in that hotel. You see that was special for, uh,
immigrants. Whether we go back or wait, maybe, maybe a
train is going to come, a week, a whole week we stayed
there.

DANE: Now were you aware at your age that you may be stuck? Now

you're not even in America but you're not even in your village anymore. I mean, did you feel--

ADLER: I did, but you see my mother, my new mother, made me very comfortable and the little girl was a good help too. And I, and on top of that, there was a girl my age in the hotel, a real, a real daughter, and the lady from the hotel made an outing and she took me. So all of a sudden, me and my sister being there, so we sort of snapped out of a lot of things. You see, it's not so terrible. I teach my grandchildren now, "Don't be afraid. Don't be afraid if you have to do something," or so forth. That's how I did to myself. Don't be afraid, there are other girls your age. And we went to a park which I never saw, and that's how the week went by. And once, all of a sudden, the proprietor of the hotel came in and said, "I want you to know that a ship is here and it might be the last ship. You want to go, you want to go back." I didn't think of anything, of going back. I just went up on the ship and came, here I am.

DANE: Ah.

ADLER: All these years.

DANE: It's amazing that, because the war had started to, the world was rumbling with war by then.

ADLER: Uh, it didn't start yet in '14, did it Martin?

MARTIN ADLER: Yeah.

ADLER: It started in '14?

MARTIN ADLER: In August 1914.

ADLER: People didn't know really the danger yet there. Later on they had a lot of trouble like, uh, everybody else.

DANE: Did your sisters send you passports and tickets?

ADLER: The passport, you see, I couldn't get a name there. That's right.

DANE: She sent a passport.

ADLER: The passport is to pay for my ship and all.

DANE: Uh-huh, and tickets?

ADLER: Yeah.

DANE: And so you had all that stuff when you left your town.

ADLER: I had all the, everything ready including that paper to cross the border. This I used before and then after the, the passport we paid on the ship.

DANE: Uh-huh. Uh-huh. In Antwerp, at this point I don't think they were doing it but just to confirm, did you have to go through any medical exams in Europe before you came over?

ADLER: No, no, but I did on the ship going getting off.

DANE: Uh-huh. Uh-huh.

ADLER: They gave me, I still have a mark on my left hand. They, they, Uh, I don't know what it is they call it, it--

DANE: A vaccination?

ADLER: You protect, you protect yourself of bringing in something.

DANE: Uh-huh.

ADLER: I had an idea. I had a swollen arm for a long time.

DANE: Ugh. Ugh. And did they, did they make you get in lines and--

ADLER: In lines, we stayed in lines, sure. That was in Ellis Island. That was already in Ellis Island.

DANE: Let's stay on the boat for just a second. Do you remember the name of the boat by any chance?

ADLER: No, this I don't remember.

DANE: Yeah, do you remember the trip over? What, if there were storms, if what it, where you stayed on the boat? You were, travelled--

ADLER: We were, we were on the ship four weeks and they were very bad days.

DANE: Four weeks?

ADLER: Four weeks. We had very bad days on that ship. Because we were taken down, all the, down, the last insides. You didn't see light and you didn't see anything and most of the people were seasick. I was lucky, I wasn't sick. And, uh, that's how we lived. I had my zahara. I didn't have to wait for, but they, they gave you food. The soups, mostly in bowls, with the wooden spoons, you know.

DANE: Would they bring it down to you or did you--

ADLER: They brought it. We never, we never left the place. Only that young boy used to sneak away. Nobody saw him. And he would bring news to say that he saw people there and they were walking around. There be no place to walk.

DANE: You didn't go up onto the deck?

ADLER: Not until, until the day the same guy came to holler, "I see America." That's when I walked up and I stayed there right until, never went up.

DANE: Did it, was there ventilation? Was it, what did it smell like? I mean, was it--

ADLER: Not, not so good. Not to talk about. It was a bad, a bad experience in the four weeks but, uh, I, as I said before, have made it.

DANE: Would you, where did you sleep? Did they have bunks?

ADLER: We had, uh, mattresses. Mattresses on the floor, on the sides, there was people all over. We never undressed to go to sleep. We slept in the clothes.

DANE: Did you ever think you'd go crazy?

ADLER: I don't think I had that thought in those years. I only hoped to get there and see my sister. I knew my sister was going to come and take me and after that everything will be all right.

DANE: Yeah. Did anyone feel well enough to play music? Would you entertain, or was it--

ADLER: Nothing. It was a sad voyage, really sad. Because most of them are sick. They were sick and when you are all the way down there are no rails to over. You know that's what made it a very, very bad voyage.

DANE: They never came down and took you out and cleaned it up and then--

ADLER: I think once or twice maybe somebody tried to clean it. It was too crowded. You couldn't do much. And everybody had their baggage. I had a little, about that size, small basket with my, with all my belongings.

DANE: A little, about twelve inches?

ADLER: Yeah, with two handles. I had the zaharas there and my mother gave me an extra skirt and blouse. That's the clothes we wore.

DANE: Huh. When you came the little boy came down and said, "I see America."

ADLER: "I see America."

DANE: And you were allowed to come upstairs.

ADLER: We didn't ask anybody at the top because that, that we'll have to get off. So that's true because--

DANE: It's time to get off.

ADLER: Everybody grabbed their clothes, their baggage, they had all kinds of bags, and they walked. And we didn't ask, I don't remember anybody saying to get out, go walk up or down. Um, before I knew what happened, I was standing by the rail and I saw that light I told you. The, the whole world was little. It was good to see, I tell you.

DANE: How did you, were you excited?

ADLER: I felt that I cannot breathe exactly right for some time. I kept, my lungs must have been clouded up. Four weeks is a long time to live that way. But, uh, this wasn't all yet. Then, uh, the ship, the ship didn't stop at Ellis Island. It stopped a way, a long way, and a ferry came to take the passengers in to Ellis Island. That's, that's where I started to breathe right and, uh, I felt that I'm all right holding onto my little bag. I was ready to go meet my sister. When I got there the first thing, the first thing, uh, they put, they, I was in a line and there were doctors and nurses and they took, did the, uh, whatever you call it, what do you call this?

MARTIN ADLER: Smallpox.

ADLER: Smallpox.

DANE: Smallpox.

ADLER: The smallpox, I couldn't think of that name.

DANE: Do you want to take a drink?

ADLER: I can't believe how much I can remember. It's wonderful.

MARTIN ADLER: I can't remember things from when I was fourteen. I don't have any idea what went on.

DANE: Before we get to Ellis Island, I keep holding you back, tell me if you saw the Statue of Liberty?

ADLER: I did. It was very, very pale before. It must have been, must have been the lights on before. But then as the light went on we couldn't see very much. It's quite far, you know. It's quite far from there. But the main attraction was the lights. I don't know whether it was New York. It must have been New York, that strip of, uh, terrific lights.

DANE: Uh-huh. Uh-huh. When you saw the Statue, did it impress you at all? Had you ever seen anything--

ADLER: I never see anything and I knew very little about it. That's why some people did, I'll tell you the truth. And I looked at it and it was very clean then. I saw the Statue of Liberty in the later years. It was never as clean as that time. Either it was new or, uh--

DANE: It was barely--

ADLER: --not used much or whatever. But I did, was very impressed and then the ferry stopped and let us off to the, uh, Ellis Island. That house was so big against my Liskiva [PH]. I never saw such a house and when we got through with the injections and we had to go through there, through a different room, that was even bigger. It was so big. Everything was big.

DANE: And it was made out of marble also. Did, did, had you--

ADLER: Uh, I'm not sure but, I, I remember boards, a lot of boards.

DANE: One more thing about, um, the Statue of Liberty. Did you, could you tell that it was a woman and her arm, I mean, could you see all of--

ADLER: We were talking about it in the downstairs when they had nothing to do. Some people knew more than I what it was doing in America. Some people were even, were here already and then they came visiting and came back. So I knew that there is such a thing as a Statue of Liberty and this gives you freedom, and everybody right to form opinion.

DANE: Uh-huh. Uh-huh. The medical exams. They gave you a smallpox vaccination.

ADLER: Yeah. They also examined me, too.

DANE: Did you have to get undressed?

ADLER: Just the top. Not all of it neither. For the injection I had to push my sleeve up but I had to open a little bit my blouse and, and the scope went all over the place.

DANE: And lice, did they check your hair for lice? I, they did in later years that's what, they were, in the '20's.

ADLER: I know. Everybody had lice. My town had too. No, the hair, they didn't touch my hair. I had an enormous head of hair. Braids all the way down to the waistline. Maybe they were too lazy to look that long. (She laughs.)

DANE: And how did they treat you? Were they, oh, I know, did they also check your eyes? The doctor, do you remember that?

ADLER: Yeah, sure, they eyes, the throat, your throat. There was a lot of doctors. There wasn't one. There was a lot of them. And nurses too. They had the tools to give to the doctor, I remember.

DANE: Did they speak Yiddish to you or did, was there a translator? How did you communicate?

ADLER: They don't even talk to you. They do whatever they have to do and that's it. But, uh, maybe, uh, there probably was, uh, people that knew languages. But I didn't need it. All I was looking for was my sister. Because I, I saw the other side of the gate. You know this building, the Ellis Island they had a gate that opened like a garage from that side. People were standing and waiting for the

people to take off, to take. When they came to me they wouldn't let me go because my sister was single, she had no way of showing that she'll support me, uh, I stayed over. That was another sad-- Because I didn't know, the, I thought to myself maybe they'll send me back after all. But they didn't. The next day my older sister came with a little girl of three. And papers and all the things and they let, they let me off.

DANE: Did you ever think, did your parents, your new parents that you came with, did, when, did you separate from them?

ADLER: That's when they, they got off. He had a brother who took them off. They took all the family. We just said goodbye and, and they were gone.

DANE: And you were there all by yourself?

ADLER: All by myself.

DANE: What were you thinking?

ADLER: I didn't know what's going to happen to me so I didn't, I don't think I thought I was thinking. Because before I looked around they was gone and it got dark and we were rushed in, hundreds of people into that big building and we were given dinner. A big bowl of soup with a spoon, (doorbell rings) a wooden spoon. And that was the dinner. But I still have, I still have my zaharas, that, uh, dinner was very little good. But it was, somebody's coming in?

DANE: Yeah.

ADLER: Oh, just put it away anyplace, Martin.

SOUND ENGINEER: You're going to need another tape, too, soon.

DANE: Okay. I think we're going to go for it. This is the end of side two, tape one, Celia Adler. She's Interview Number 92, it's 11:50.

END OF SIDE TWO, TAPE ONE

BEGINNING OF SIDE ONE, TAPE TWO

DANE: This is the beginning of side one, tape two, Celia Adler, Interview Number 92. It's 12:05. This is the first day you're on Ellis

Island. Your parents, your new parents that had brought you over, have left. Your sister wasn't able to come and get you, and there you were. You had eaten dinner. Then, did you make friends? Where, did you find a corner a corner to sit in? What did you do?

ADLER: Everybody was on edge, the people that got off, the people that remained were very much on the edge because they envied the other people that got off. After all, they go through so much. I had no friends at all. Um, they took us in and they gave us a bowl of soup again with, uh, a little something as big as this, I think. A roll. That was, that was the dinner. From this room, we went into another one, still bigger, was an empty room with people, were already sitting by the wall and their clothes there. On the ceiling, they had hammocks. I slept in a hammock. And you want to know what happened to me with this hammock?

DANE: Yes.

ADLER: I walked in, as I said, to this room, and I didn't know where that I am, holding my little satchel. I had a handbag. A friend of mine gave me a small sailor hat, a going away present. The hatpin was that big, that long, doesn't fit on the hat, stands up there. So I walk in with that hat, I pinned my hat. I thought I'm getting off. I put on my hat, I put the two pins in and I walk, like a queen, I walk in that room with

hammocks and people sleeping on the floor and whatnot. I decided to take a hammock. But I didn't know that to lie down you had to take off the hat. I had a problem. Don't ask. I was standing by the hammock until some man came from the back, pulled me up, and I remained sitting on the hammock all night because I was afraid to push. If I start moving, that hammock is going to start swinging.

DANE: How high were you off the ground?

ADLER: I couldn't reach it. And, I wasn't tall enough to begin with, but it was like halfway. People then, they're not (?), they're Israeli. They evidently didn't have room enough for all the people that remained. There was a lot of people remained I never knew what happened to them. But I did. Anyway, at daylight I managed to turn over a little bit and I jumped down from the hammock still with my hat and hatpins. (She laughs.) I had no idea I couldn't sleep a wink. I was afraid that my sister wouldn't come, something's going to happen. I was afraid to move, I'm going to fall down from the hammock and maybe I'll lose the zaharas. I still had a couple of them. Anyway, I just turned around very slow, and I was, reached the floor, and I walked. I didn't know where the door was, I must have been sleepy or something, until they started to, to call to go in a line, in all languages. I got there, and then I saw my older sister on the other side of the gate. She had a little girl of, uh, three years old

on her hands and her identification I guess and papers and what not and, um, I didn't know my sister. I was born when she left. She left already before. But we had pictures and I knew it was her.

DANE: So you recognized her.

ADLER: I recognized her through the pictures. And she knew by the clothes, I don't know, she knew that it was me. So we got together and, uh, we started to walk. Walking out from Ellis Island to the pavement where the ships are, what do you call that, uh--

DANE: The dock?

ADLER: The docks. The docks. Took some time there. From there we took a trolley. I remember. And we got to Bayonne.

DANE: New Jersey.

MARTIN ADLER: You forgot to tell, when you got to the pavement, when you left your hat, and you, that was the end of Europe.

ADLER: Yeah. (She laughs.) That was very funny. In those years,

when you came over from Europe or anywhere else, they call you greenhorn. My sister was in this country for quite a few years. She wasn't a greenhorn. All of a sudden I arrived and I'm a greenhorn. I held onto my basket, and the hat was pinned up, and she was sure that anyone who will see me will know that I just got off the boat. And she didn't want it. She made me leave, she took everything out and wrapped it up in a paper, put it under my arm, and she left my basket with my hat there. I'm not exaggerating, but I looked back until I didn't see it any more. It was my whole treasure.

DANE: Oh. And she took the pins out?

ADLER: Took the pins out and left it with the, she didn't take it out. It was in the hat.

DANE: And did you say, "But I want to keep my hat?"

ADLER: I wouldn't dare to say anything. Are you kidding? She can turn me around and send me back. (She laughs.)

DANE: I'll do whatever you say.

ADLER: Whatever you say. Bring me home.

DANE: Oh, how horrible. And it was just left there on Ellis Island?

ADLER: Left it there. Maybe somebody found that and it's hanging somewhere's yet as a souvenir.

DANE: Does that make you sad?

ADLER: Well, I didn't want to lose it. First of all, I never wore a hat. I never even, I saw hats, people used to come to our town. But I didn't have one. And I kind of liked it. I liked this, uh, cousin that gave it to me. And, uh, the hatpins I liked. It was something that a young girl liked. But I lived through that, too.

DANE: How sad. (Mrs. Adler laughs.) Did they ask you, when you were on Ellis island, did they ask you any questions? Did you have to go before a man that said, "What's your name? Did you bring any money?"

ADLER: I, oh, no. Didn't ask anything. They, at my age, at that

time, I knew the reason they depended on the honesty of the person that takes you, that takes you off. And my sister came all equipped and she saw that I didn't, uh, let me go out with the other sister. So, so, uh, she had money, she had papers signed from all people and all that stuff. She said, "They didn't ask me any questions. Yo go through the, uh, examination, they don't ask you, they don't, uh, they just write down what they see and that's it."

DANE: Did you have to wear a tag with your name on it?

ADLER: Yeah. Sure. All the time.

DANE: So everybody was walking around with--

ADLER: Big tags.

DANE: Some people have had, um, seen things and tasted foods for the first time either on the ship or on the voyage in Europe, or on Ellis Island. Some people saw their first black person. Did you have any things that you saw for the first time, well, besides trains and electricity, I mean, besides the normal things, were there other--

ADLER: Well, I didn't have a chance because I was taken from place to place until I got to Bayonne and for several

weeks I was in the house with my, my, walked in. My sister had a family, she could use a little help, and I was willing. So I stayed with her for a while until a cousin that lived in New York, a married cousin, had a dressmaker in Cleveland Street, are you acquainted with Cleveland Street?

DANE: Not Cleveland Street. I mean, not Cleveland Street.

ADLER: Because she mad her clothes. She made her clothes there. So before she came to see me she spoke to the dressmaker, told her that I know my business, I know how to sew, and all that. Because there was no question of going (?). I couldn't. So she got me a job nd she took me into New York and I lived in New York for a while. That's where I started to make friends.

DANE: And you started working when you were fourteen?

ADLER: I, maybe, already fifteen by the time everything went through. And, uh, four dollars a week. I knew how to sew. It was very strange. I knew, the same thing, the sewing, here and there. Sure.

DANE: What about school? Is that a ridiculous question?

ADLER: Later, later years I went to night school like, uh, when my other sister got married and she settled down in Williamsburg, that's alongside Coney Island, Brooklyn, and all that. From there. I went to school there for three years.

DANE: Night school.

ADLER: Right.

DANE: And you worked during the day?

ADLER: I worked during the day, also by, with a private, uh, dressmaker. Then in the later years I, when I was, uh, when my other sister was married maybe three or four years they moved away to New Jersey. That's when a cousin of mine took me up in a factory and I, she found a place for me to live, and that's how I went in a normal way.

DANE: And working hard. Did you, how did you start to learn how to speak English if you didn't go to school?

ADLER: Yes. It was a little hard in the beginning because both of

my sisters didn't speak English at all, Yiddish, plain Yiddish. But once I got into school I got it very quick.

DANE: Hmm. So for your first few years did you speak English?

ADLER: No. I didn't associate with anyone that I needed it. They were all greenhorns. (She laughs.)

DANE: So you stayed pretty much within a Yiddish community, worked with people that spoke Yiddish. Did you have any interaction with people that made you feel like a greenhorn? Were there ever times when you-

-

ADLER: They did. They did. I'll tell you my incident. When I started to work in Clinton Street and I lived with, uh, four people that, they lost their parents. They had a big apartment. They took me in. I lived with them for a while. I worked as a private dressmaker. In the beginning I couldn't remember where to go. This is a walking distance. You don't know where, in downtown New York, but I'll mention the names in case somebody else wants to know. I lived on Second Avenue and Second Street. We had to walk to Houston Street. That was two blocks. Then walk with Houston to Clinton. That's where the store was. The youngest of these four

children that I lived with was a young fellow in school. So the older sister, that ran the house, the family, told him, "You'll have to take Tzpkky to the dressmaker when you go to school in the morning." Now, he didn't want to walk with me because everybody saw that I'm a greenhorn. That's when I went through this here thing. Until one day I said to myself, "I'm going to make a mark somewhere else, and I wouldn't go with him, because he tells me to go behind him." He says, "If you see my friends go, go behind me. Don't go straight." That's a true story. Honestly. I came, that day, to Clinton Street with him and I noticed that there was a wine store with Jewish initials and it wasn't Maneshevitz [PH]. (She laughs.) It was somebody else. Big Jewish initials. I had my mark. The next day, go to school. He says, "Tzpkky, you going?" "I'm going. I'm not going with you." So the older sister came running. "You'll get lost. We wouldn't find you." The whole thing. But I didn't listen to anyone. I walked out with my nose up and I got to that store and there is the Jewish sign. I turned, and I got to my dressmaker.

DANE: Oh, what a great story. What a great story. (Mrs. Adler laughs.) Any other times when you had to, when you just said, "Enough. I'm not going to take this." And, and find you own way?

ADLER: Eh, not really. I got along, my sisters. And, uh, it didn't take very many years that I really was on my own. And I liked it

that way better. I helped my parents with whatever I could.

DANE: Did you send money back?

ADLER: Sure. And, uh, as I already mentioned, I used to save up through the years. I was lucky in one way, because I had turned out to be a very good dressmaker. Because I was from Europe, they make very good clothes there. So I was (?). I worked all year without any strikes. They had a lot of strikes in those years. Slacks, you know what that is. And, uh, that's how I went, I got along. So, through the years, I managed to have a little money, and I went to the mountains every, every summer. I had a grand time. So I really didn't have much, much trouble. I always, I loved people. Up to this day I have many people.

DANE: When you came to New York it was so different from your village. I mean, the buildings. Tell me about, what did you think? Did you wish that you could go home?

ADLER: No. No. Once I started to settle down I knew that I'm better off here. I got older. You know, you, you get a little older. And I, uh, Trudy, the dressmaker had one more worker, a little bit older than I, and we kind of liked each other. So she took me places, uh, like we have, uh, on the East Broadway, downtown , they had the Jewish, uh, newspaper.

And on that newspaper they used to show news in Yiddish, not in English, of course. In Yiddish mostly. A Jewish neighborhood. So she used to take me, and to me it was very fascinating. I wanted to learn. So I knew who was getting elected. I didn't know why, but I knew, and things like that. And, uh, it wasn't bad.

DANE: Did you miss home when you first got to New York?

ADLER: Oh, yes, yes. I, I still have a lonely feeling sometimes. You don't, uh, you don't get away with this.

DANE: Uh-huh. You started to learn English at night school. Why is it, how did you come to decide that you should go to night school?

ADLER: Because I met people that had been to night school. So, you know, you tell each other. And I happened to have, uh, was very lucky, uh, English girl that she spoke Jewish, help, they help you, at the beginning. And then I became interested in reading. I was, I read an awful lot. This helped me more than school, even. So I was happy in my own way.

DANE: Uh-huh. Uh-huh. Citizenship. Did you become an American citizen?

ADLER: I didn't come, become a citizen until the middle forties.
I don't why it happened but, uh, I didn't.

DANE: Did you have to take a test by then?

ADLER: Uh, how did I get the papers? No, I think I knew quite well the, the presidents, the U.S. History. Whatever they ask you. I had two witnesses, my sister and my nephew, and I got my papers.

DANE: Was that an exciting day, or just a day like any other?

ADLER: Very exciting. Very exciting. I already visited museums and places and I knew that I'll be happy here, so I might as well be a citizen.

DANE: Uh-huh. Uh-huh. When did you first feel that you were an American? Maybe, maybe it was before or after your citizenship. Did you, when did you sort of start being able to leave your town behind and adapt to this new place?

ADLER: It didn't take me long because at first I mingled with Jewish people. It's very easy to understand each other. We'd go places and

see places and all that. I missed my parents, but I didn't miss the town because I, as older I got, the more I realized that there wasn't a life for young people there to begin with and I was glad that I got help and they took me away.

DANE: Hmm. And you had a child and did you, who went to college.

ADLER: You take, tell her there.

MARTIN ADLER: You've got the mike. (He laughs.) You put me through.

ADLER: (She laughs.) He went, I put him through school. He went to, uh, Hebrew school, five years, elementary school. He got, received a medal for science. He made high school, four years. Uh, uh, certificate of honor every year. Then he went to Brooklyn College, graduated with cum laude. Went in the army, there was no war or anything, but he had to give two years and they sent him away to, uh, Paris, to France, and put him into a personnel office. Two, two months he was in Germany, they sent him also to another school. And then he came back he had his, uh, arrangements to go to N.Y.U. for his masters, where he got his masters. He receive, uh, a grant for, uh, Sorbonne, where he spent a year there. Came back, completed, uh, city planner, and is still at it. Now he's a director.

DANE: And does that make you proud?

ADLER: Very proud. It makes me more proud, even now, that he gave me two beautiful grandchildren. Twins.

DANE: Hmm. Oh, that's beautiful. Did you ever go back to see your grandparents, your parents, his grandparents?

ADLER: To Europe, you mean?

DANE: Yeah.

ADLER: Oh, no. Never. I'm, this I'm sorry, because there was a time when financially I could have gone and there was, I wasn't married until I was twenty-eight, so there was no reason that I couldn't go. In between '20 and '30 there was a big exchange, people went and came. Why I didn't do that I don't know. It's just one of those things, you know.

DANE: Uh-huh. And finally, this is sort of a general question and I don't know if you have any thoughts on it. We sort of touched on it. Just your feelings as an American> Did you ever think of what this country stands for as opposed to if you stayed in your town?

ADLER: Oh, sure. Sure. It stands for a lot of things. Give you a lot of freedom. They give you a happier life to live and, than the czar, for instance, when I left, sure. I'm very happy to be here.

DANE: Can you think of anything else that I've missed, or a story that you know that--

MARTIN ADLER: Well, I know, maybe you could, um, you could, um, you could just sing a couple of songs, but we could go on forever. (They laugh.) You have the (Yiddish title of song), which I like, and then you have the other one you did for the kids the other day.

ADLER: Would it be all right? Jewish, uh, stories?

DANE: Oh, of course.

ADLER: I also know one song in Yiddish and Russian, and I just blend them in, like.

DANE: (Addressing the recording engineer.) Hold on. Let me find out how we're, should we switch, or, okay. Oh, this is great. I'm so glad you reminded me, because I made

a note when you said there was another Russian song.

ADLER: Well, I'm going to sing a Jewish song that they, they sing when I got here. I have an idea that it just sort of, uh, some, I don't know who wrote it, I don't remember that kind of names. Um, every time a war is on and off and all that, there is different songs coming out. This Jewish song is about, uh, a girl that came here, very beautiful and very talented, very everything. But the years brought her down to a skeleton, like. And, uh, a man who's the cousin that brought this girl over is sort of responsible. He sings this song, and he's very sad about it. So that's the song. In Yiddish, in Yiddish, yeah. (Sings the song in Yiddish.) That's still number one. It was a very, very popular song because there was a lot of people that came over and, and couldn't find what they expected, you see. So she just faded away, like. But I like that song about that. It made me cry because I was still young and I thought to myself, "I'm going to get that way someday, too."

DANE: Ah. Would you sing that together? I mean, what kind of a occasions would you hear?

ADLER: Well, this particular song we sang single, like. We'd get together, especially in the mountains. All my joy was in the mountains. We'd get together near a hill and we'd make a fire on the bottom during the evening. And everybody does what they can. They dance, they stand on the head, anything. (She laughs.)

DANE: And someone would get up and sing?

ADLER: Someone would, sometimes we would assign the one. Say, "Hey, you, sing now." The other one say, "Stand on your head." And this kind of, we had a lot of fun that day.

DANE: Would everyone get sad? I mean, it sounds like such a sad song. Would people get sad after it was sung, or would you go into the next one? I mean, did it have special significance?

ADLER: No, they didn't, they, it was just by evening, to spend together. That's what it is. And, uh, then you get to the mountains. I never went to the same place, because I was anxious to meet other people. So that's more interesting than I would, I would go with someone, with one girl, cousin of mine, about twelve, Clara. But, uh, there we met other people. You walk out in the morning, uh, for a walk down the road. So and

then you get together and you talk about what you're going to do in the evening. Of course, in the day time you just like to be in the sun, hang around and so forth. And whoever had any sort of a talent, telling stories and singing songs and all that. And some evenings they had, uh, dancing, where I had never been to a, to a very high class places, small places, where they had a piano, and somebody who knew how to play, he or she would play and everybody would dance. It just makes, it was marvelous years, I tell you.

DANE: Oh, yeah. We're going to turn it over. This is the end of side one, tape two, Celia Adler, Interview Number 92. It's 12:35.

END OF SIDE ONE, TAPE TWO

BEGINNING OF SIDE TWO, TAPE TWO

DANE: This is the beginning of side two, tape two, of Celia Adler, Interview Number 92. It is 12:40. We were just talking, Mrs. Adler, about the song you just sang. Can you tell me a little, you were going to tell me a little bit more about what it was about.

ADLER: The one I sang?

DANE: Yeah.

ADLER: What's that? The (Yiddish title of song)? (Son speaks.)

That's about a man that brought over a cousin, a girl. She was very beautiful, young, ambitious and the years went by. When he met her, when she became that way, she wa so happy that she kept on saying, "God Bless America. God Bless America." Years went by, and nothing special happened to her. She got older and so forth. The same cousin that brought her met her and asked her, "How are you?" And, well, look at her, she said she hopes that all Americans burn up.

DANE: Oh, because it was no good.

ADLER: That was no good. That's the life, didn't treat her the way she wanted.

DANE: Now, you have two other songs. Tell me--

ADLER: This, uh, uh, this song is about a teller who takes a walk in the park. This is Jewish and, uh, Russian. He walks in the park and he

sees a very good looking girl. He asked her, well, if he can speak to her.

She says, "Why don't you come to my house?" When he came to the house she was ready to go with another fellow. So he says, Can you imagine how sad I was when I saw her go away with somebody else." Is that interesting?

DANE: Yeah.

ADLER: (Yiddish phrase.) That means, I was, but the boy sings that.

DANE: Do you want some water?

ADLER: (Sings the song in Yiddish.)

DANE: Hmm. And that had Russian and Yiddish in it?

ADLER: Uh, I can, I can do both, but if you want to understand. He walked in the park and he saw this good looking girl. He asked her whether he can talk to her. She invites him to he house. When he got to the house she was ready to go with somebody else. So he got so pale that he went to a side street, she shouldn't see him getting so pale.

DANE: Oh, it's sad. It's another sad one.

ADLER: Yeah.

DANE: And why don't you take a drink? I don't want you to--

ADLER: Thank you.

MARTIN ADLER: (Yiddish title of song) is my favorite because that's the one that the, uh, rabbi would sing with the students in the little house, uh, the peasant type of house where people went to school, since there was no school. And they would all sit around a fireplace, there was always a fireplace, and they would sing. And that's the way you might hear many.

ADLER: This is, uh, a schoolroom, a room in a school. There are several, uh, very young boys just started to learn and the rabbi is trying to tell them how good they'd be if they, if they learn the Torah. You know what a Torah is?

DANE: Uh-huh.

ADLER: But id they don't, they'll forever have to pull hard to make a living, like. That's the idea. He's encouraging the boys

to, uh, to learn.

DANE: And what's it called, the name of the song?

ADLER: The name is, uh, (Yiddish title of song). That means that in the room there's an oven that burns, that's a (Yiddish word), it burns a little fire to make the room warm, and the rabbi teaches the little children to keep on learning instead of loafing around and things like that. It's a nice little song.

DANE: Okay.

ADLER:)Sings the song in Yiddish.) (Son speaks.)

DANE: Oh, that's wonderful. That's beautiful.

ADLER: I'm glad you like it.

DANE: That's a beautiful little thing. Oh, I know what I wanted to ask you. One more thing, and then we can finish. Would you tell me your name when you were in Russia, and then when you got here again?

ADLER: In Russia, my both names were Tzpkv Kotz.

DANE: How do you spell?

ADLER: Tzpk^y, T-Z-P-K-Y.

DANE: Am I glad I asked. (They laugh.) And then when you came here?

ADLER: They changed hear my name from Kotz to Katz. That was until I became Adler.

DANE: Uh-huh. And your first, when did you become Celia?

ADLER: I came what?

DANE: Celia. Who named you Celia?

ADLER: Oh, both of my sisters decoded because it really, not only you find it hard to spell, but even in Jewish it's hard to spell but that was my name. I think it was my sister who decided.

DANE: Was that soon after you got here?

ADLER: Yeah. So my name turned into, uh Celia, instead of Tzpkly.

But Kotz is a very short name. They, uh. called me Katz until I got married. You're married, you marry the man, you use the name of the marriage.

DANE: When they started calling you Celia, did you like it? Did you feel strange?

ADLER: It was a little strange at the beginning but, uh, You get used to it. You keep on thinking that maybe you're getting organized, uh, Americanized.

DANE: Did that feel good or--

ADLER: Good. Feels good. You want to be on, uh, acknowledged when you live, and you do things. So, uh, actually my sisters named me Celia, before I even met people, so that was Celia, you know. And what the people, that came from my town, knew that my name is Tzpkly, and one of my cousins, Menachem, still calls me Tzpkly. (She laughs.)

DANE: Do you like it? Do you like--

ADLER: Yeah. I didn't mind.

DANE: Hmm. That's good. I think that we're done.

MARTIN ADLER: I've got one, uh, when you mentioned about America, when she first knew about it, you mentioned to me, when Frances, who was, came here, came back to visit your town from America, dressed differently and brought you a--

ADLER: It wasn't Frances.

MARTIN ADLER: It wasn't?

ADLER: That was another girl. That was long ago.

MARTIN ADLER: But she was dressed so differently that you--

ADLER: Well, the clothes is different, all definitely different from the small town in the years until, I think, until 1920, we didn't have any dresses.

DANE: Just skirts.

ADLER: All skirts and blouses. Sure.

DANE: That's amazing.

ADLER: That's what I came in, and that's the clothes I brought in.
My sister threw it away anyhow.

DANE: It's amazing, the greenhorns and-- You get used to a lot,
but you get used to it, you just get used to it.

ADLER: You do. You definitely do. If not, it's you're own
problem. It will happen, like it happened to the (Yiddish phrase). (They
laugh.)

DANE: (Addresses recording engineer.) Did we just get that, or
no? Okay. I think we really have to-- (Son speaks off mike.) This is the
end of side two, tape two, with Celia Adler, Interview Number 92. It's
12:47.