

KM-017

EDNA LEAH ZARETSKY BRODIE

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INTERVIEWER: KATE MOORE

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RUSSIA, 1920

AGE 14

SHIP RECALLED AS "THE LATVIA"

MOORE: Good morning. This is Kate Moore in Santa Monica, California on January 10, 1994 at the home of Edna Zaretsky Brodie, who came to the United States in the fall of 1920 at the age of thirteen.

BRODIE: Fourteen.

MOORE: Fourteen you say, okay. Could you begin, please, by giving us your full name?

BRODIE: My full name?

MOORE: Yes.

BRODIE: What do you mean?

MOORE: Uh, first name, middle name, last name.

BRODIE: Oh, (she laughs) just give my name?

MOORE: Yes.

BRODIE: Edna L. Brodie, Edna Leah Brodie.

MOORE: Leah.

BRODIE: My husband's name was L., was Leo.

MOORE: Leo. And Leo was his first name or his surname?

BRODIE: Leo was his, his surname was Brodie.

MOORE: Brodie, so he was Leo Brodie.

BRODIE: He was Leo Brodie.

MOORE: And what was your maiden name?

BRODIE: You got it there.

MOORE: Could you spell it for us on the tape?

BRODIE: Z-A-R-E-T-S-K-Y.

MOORE: All right. And what town were you born in?

BRODIE: I was born in Nistetska [ph] Petrikov [ph]. That is a

small city of Petriko [ph].

MOORE: Could you spell both of them? Do you know how to spell them, those towns? Can you spell the town that you were born in?

BRODIE: Zaretsky, not in Russian but in, well, English?

MOORE: Yeah.

BRODIE: In English?

MOORE: In English, could you spell the name of your town, so that we know how to write it?

BRODIE: Oh Zaretsky, that would be Z-A-R-E-T-S-K-Y.

MOORE: Zaretsky. And then . . .

BRODIE: Zaretsky.

MOORE: Zaretsky, right.

BRODIE: You don't, you can't pronounce the I?

MOORE: Zaretsky?

BRODIE: The I, Zaretsky. It's hard for you to pronounce it, the I?

MOORE: No, no, that's okay.

BRODIE: Because every country, every language is different.
Some people can't pronounce it (?).

MOORE: And that was located in what region, again?

BRODIE: It was in Stetchka [ph] Petrikov [ph], in Minsk. You
know . . .

MOORE: In Minsk, yes.

BRODIE: Minsk Gubernia, which is the state of Minsk.

MOORE: The state of Minsk. And how big, how many people
lived in your town?

BRODIE: They, between where it is, you know. That's what was
that. Minsk Gubernia. (?) Mozear. The Mozear was
in the city, a small city also called Mozear.

MOORE: And how do you spell that?

BRODIE: M-O-Z . . .

MOORE: That's okay.

BRODIE: Mozear, I think, M-O-Z-E-A-R.

MOORE: Mozear, okay.

BRODIE: Z-E-A, I think.

FEMALE VOICE OFF MIKE: It wasn't in (?). That's why I looked.

MOORE: Okay. What is the major industry, how big was that town that you lived in? How many people lived in your home town, about?

BRODIE: I should know how many people, but it was a small town. It's not that big a town.

MOORE: About, let's say, if you had to guess, what would you say?

BRODIE: I don't know what to say, you know, those statistics. I'm not good at statistics.

MOORE: Under a thousand people?

BRODIE: Oh, much more.

MOORE: Much more than a thousand.

BRODIE: Much more than a thousand.

MOORE: Okay. What was the major industry?

BRODIE: At least three thousand.

MOORE: At least three thousand, okay. What was the main . . .

BRODIE: The main industry was, bollini [ph] they call it, certain boats, certain boats that you, you use not for people, for certain things, you know, everything, food, for transporting.

MOORE: Small boats, transporting, all right, okay.

BRODIE: See, I don't pronounce the R neither. That's why I asked you, see.

MOORE: Oh, yeah. I see. But what was your father's name?

BRODIE: My father's name was Ely. E-L, how would that be spelled? E-L, Y, I suppose.

MOORE: Yeah, E-L-Y. Okay. And what was his occupation, your father?

BRODIE: That's it. He used to deal with the bollini [ph], the equipment that they used.

MOORE: The boat, the transportation.

BRODIE: No, no. He used to deal with the equipment that they made boats with, all the iron, you know. They have

the things in iron!

MOORE: The iron parts.

BRODIE: The iron parts.

MOORE: I see.

BRODIE: He used to deal with that.

MOORE: In construction, or . . .

BRODIE: When they constructed the bollini [ph], which are the boats, he used to supply the metal.

MOORE: The metal, the iron.

BRODIE: All the metal.

MOORE: I see.

BRODIE: All the metal things.

MOORE: All right. And how would you describe your father? What did he look like? Do you remember?

BRODIE: Well, he was, you want me to start. He was medium, medium weight. Medium height, and medium weight.

MOORE: And medium means five-foot six inches tall, or . . .

BRODIE: Five foot, uh, five-foot-eight, nine.

MOORE: Five-foot-eight, nine. And what color hair and eyes did he have?

BRODIE: He had black hair, and a beard.

MOORE: And a beard.

BRODIE: He had a beard. You know, years ago everybody used to wear a beard.

MOORE: That's right.

BRODIE: The men used to wear a beard. So he had the black hair, black curly hair, and then he had a beard.

MOORE: And what was he like? What was his personality like? What do you remember about him?

BRODIE: I don't know, now I'll talk (?). My father was brought up in a small, in a town, you know, the town, you know, a little town. And they were, everybody was poor in those days, especially the Jews. So after when he was very young, when he was a kid, he lost his father and his mother. So he went to school for charity, through charity. And there wasn't much charity, because there were very few, very little

people there, you know. But a Jewish boy must go to school, you know. So they, so that's how he went to school. And every, and the neighbors gave him a day to eat. Each day he had to go to a different place.

MOORE: So he ate at neighbors on different days.

BRODIE: On different days.

MOORE: I see.

BRODIE: See? Then he probably discovered, he wanted to go to the city, which is where we live, Petrikov [ph]. So I don't know how he met my mother. I don't know that, you know, but the fact is he met my mother, and she was, he was only nineteen, and she was probably younger. And in Europe they didn't know anything. They didn't have, they didn't have contraceptives or anything, so they had as many children as they could have, you know. So we always had a lot of children.

MOORE: And your father's personality? What would you say about him?

BRODIE: He was very, he was very witty.

MOORE: Witty?

BRODIE: Witty. I remember he used to tell jokes, you know, the peasants, you know, the peasants used to die laughing, you know. So, now he was witty and he had a nice personality, an even temperament. And he was very . . .

MOORE: What about your mother?

BRODIE: My mother, I don't remember much, because when she died I was just a little kid, about three maybe.

MOORE: Do you remember what they said about your mother? What was her personality? What was she like? What did they tell you?

BRODIE: My mother was like a quiet personality, probably shy in those days. And she was very, she was very efficient, an efficient person, because I remember we had pictures in the house, in the house that was a needlepoint, and beautiful tablecloths that she made. Because when my, because when my older sister, at that time, was, then my father remarried, you know. So I don't (?). But, yeah. So my sister, you know, my sister used to sometimes, you know children, they get angry. When we had a fight, she used to say, "I don't want you to use my mother's tablecloth."

Something like that, you know.

MOORE: For punishment.

BRODIE: She always used to tell those things.

MOORE: Do you have pictures of your mother? Do you have any pictures? Do you know what she looked like at all?

BRODIE: No. My mother, we had one, we went and had one picture of my father, and he went, and somebody got it in the family, some cousin, I don't know. We never got it back. You see, I'm talking about my father, he was nineteen years old, he got married, he liked the city. It was a beautiful little city, and he wanted to live there. So he built a house, (?). He went to a church, to an old church, you know, where they, you know, where they discarded the church or something.
(she coughs) See, I have bronchitis.

MOORE: It's okay.

BRODIE: And he bought the, and he bought the stained glass, and he built a beautiful house with stained glass. And they had everything. Anyhow, they asked him the things, and they, oh, I'm sorry.

MOORE: That's all right. You had stained glass.

BRODIE: I'm sorry.

MOORE: No, no.

BRODIE: I'm sorry. Then they took him to the army. My
mother . . .

MOORE: Which army? The Russian Army?

BRODIE: That was, Russia was fighting with Japan, I think.
The Russian Japanese Army.

MOORE: I see. Russian Japanese.

BRODIE: Uh, fight, war. I think, the Russian Japanese War.

MOORE: Uh-huh.

BRODIE: The Russian Japanese war. Well, he was, he didn't
have much, any education in the Russian, you know what
I mean.

MOORE: So you spoke, what did you speak at home?

BRODIE: At home? When I was a little girl, when I was young
we spoke mostly Jewish.

MOORE: Yiddish.

BRODIE: Yiddish.

MOORE: Yiddish.

BRODIE: Yiddish. But later on, in later years we always spoke mostly Jewish, because we didn't play with the Gentile children.

MOORE: You didn't play with the Gentile children. Don't worry, this is hard to get used to. So when you were little you spoke Yiddish with other children, too.

BRODIE: Because we didn't play with, we weren't allowed to play, you know what I mean. The Jewish children played with the Jewish children, see?

MOORE: When you say you weren't allowed . . .

BRODIE: Although we lived together, you know, in the small vicinity. There were just as many Jewish houses as Gentile houses, you know. But the children never played together.

MOORE: Who decided that? Do you remember? Who said you couldn't play together? Was it an agreed . . .

BRODIE: We got along wonderful. My father got along

wonderful. In fact, his customers were Gentile, you know. But it was, but that's how people were. They were kind of, I forgot the word for it.

MOORE: Segregated?

BRODIE: Yeah, they were like segregated as far as the, as far as religion was concerned, you know what I mean.

MOORE: Do you, what about your brothers and sisters?

BRODIE: So then, what I'm trying to say. Then they took him to the army, and the army, you know, he didn't take up music, because his parents were, he didn't have any parents. So he didn't want to go to the army because no Jewish kids wanted to go to the, to the czar's army, you know what I mean.

MOORE: Why?

BRODIE: Because the czar wasn't nice to the Jews.

MOORE: Yeah.

BRODIE: See what I mean? He was, well, anyhow, in 1920 we had all kinds of pogroms. We wouldn't have had it if the czar was a nice person. See what I mean? Okay. So he learned how to play, how to play the clarinet in

the army. That's the kind of a person he was. And he was in the orchestra, uh, in the . . . band.

MOORE: So in order to not fight, he learned to play a musical instrument?

BRODIE: Right. See what I mean?

MOORE: (she laughs) Well, how many brothers and sisters did you have in your family?

BRODIE: There must have been about nine kids at least, with the first wife, but they used to die off, some of them passed way. And, you know, how many . . .

MOORE: Do you remember the names of your brothers and sisters?

BRODIE: Sure.

MOORE: Could you tell us the names of your brothers and sisters?

BRODIE: The first one was Dinah.

MOORE: Dinah?

BRODIE: Dinah.

MOORE: Dinah, right.

BRODIE: The second was Mana, which is, how do you want me to say it? In Russian?

MOORE: Yeah.

BRODIE: The Russian names. The second one was Mana.

MOORE: And how do you spell that? M . . .

BRODIE: M-A-N-A. M, yeah, M-A-N-A.

MOORE: M-A-N-A, okay.

BRODIE: Then, that was the first one. The third one was Julia. This is in Russian.

MOORE: Was that a boy or girl?

BRODIE: A girl.

MOORE: A girl. Julia.

BRODIE: Julia.

MOORE: Julia, okay.

BRODIE: Because I don't remember what was her name in, I get very confused.

MOORE: No, but with nine children. (she laughs)

BRODIE: No, no, no. I know their names just like that, I can rattle off, but in the way, the way we call Julaye [ph], we call her Julaye [ph], in English it's Julia. And I can't remember for the moment what she was, Julia. And Yasef, Jospheh.

MOORE: Hmm, the fourth one.

BRODIE: We had only one boy, and all girls. And what was the next one? That's about all, that's about all that was left from when my mother, on my mother's side.

MOORE: From your mother, your real mother's.

BRODIE: From my real mother, yeah.

MOORE: And did you have step brothers and sisters?

BRODIE: I have step-brothers, they came here. One lives in Israel and one lives here. In fact, he can walk over. He always used to come and walk over here.

MOORE: How many brothers, step-brothers did you have, and sisters?

BRODIE: Wait, we used to call him. (?) And then one had two

names, (?).

MOORE: So how many step brothers and sisters did you have all together?

BRODIE: Some, all together? Oh, boy. All together, I got my sister, the older, she's standing next to her. And the third one comes from the a twin. The twin passed away right away. In fact, she lives in New York. And that's about all I have now, one sister left out of my, all my sisters and brother, one.

MOORE: So do you remember the house you lived in, more about the house? Could you tell . . .

BRODIE: I remember every detail, but the house is not there any more. And if it's there, it's not the same house. But I remember was that was the front. Remember I told you about the stained glass? That was there when you come in. And then we had, then we had a big, what do you call it, a living room. Then we had a big bedroom. In other words, the kitchen was in the center. On one side we had the bedroom, and on the other side was the big room. Later on, my father made it into two bedrooms, one, two bedrooms. Two bedrooms in the living room, and the living room. And then the

big, the other, the other part of the house, they had bedrooms. You know, we used to sleep together, you know. It's not that everybody had a room like here, you know what I mean? We used to sleep together, but all together how many? Wait a second. Two passed away. Two passed away as soon as my father married the second wife.

MOORE: What did they die of, these children?

BRODIE: Scarlet fever.

MOORE: Scarlet fever. What other things did children die of besides died of scarlet fever.

BRODIE: That's the only ones I remember that died of scarlet fever. One is, like I said, from a twin, passed away. He didn't have a name yet. (she clears her throat)

MOORE: So this house was made of what? Was it a stone house or a wooden house?

BRODIE: A wooden house.

MOORE: It was a wooden house.

BRODIE: In those days, yes. I don't know if there were stone houses there. (she clears her throat)

MOORE: How many, how was it . . .

BRODIE: (?) how was the, it was beautiful. It was mountains over there, and it was a valley underneath, you know, underneath the mountains. Not all around, like here are mountains. And then there was a field, then there was the woods. And my father built, what do you call it, where you fetch water.

MOORE: A well?

BRODIE: A well. We had a well, and all the neighbors used to come to get water, you know, to fetch water from it.

MOORE: How was your house lit? Do you remember? How did you light your house?

BRODIE: It was on the ceiling, it was, what do you call it? A gas, gaslight.

MOORE: A gaslight.

BRODIE: Gaslights. We had something like a shade, what do you call it? You know what I mean, around it.

MOORE: So it was lit with gas. How was it heated, you house? How was your house heated?

BRODIE: Heated with wood.

MOORE: Wood. And where was, where was the wood fires? Were they in the kitchen?

BRODIE: No, they were, they had special stoves, like, special, where the, you just heat the house, you don't cook there.

MOORE: I see. A wood stove.

BRODIE: Just a wood stove especially for heating the house.

MOORE: What about bathroom facilities? Where did you, is it in . . .

BRODIE: Bathroom outdoors.

MOORE: Outdoors.

BRODIE: Outdoors. You can imagine in all those cold weathers we had to go out.

MOORE: And what about animals? Did you keep animals?

BRODIE: Oh, yeah. We had every animal around. We had usually two cows, a horse. In the spring we had a calves, and we had geese and we had ducks, geese, ducks.

MOORE: Chickens?

BRODIE: And chickens, of course. Your own eggs, everything, sure. And then we had a cellar where we used to keep the stuff.

MOORE: Where were the animals kept?

BRODIE: The animals were kept out of here, but there was a coop in the kitchen for the chickens.

MOORE: Inside your house.

BRODIE: Inside the house. At night they used to come in. In the morning they would leave. The ducks, I remember I used to think, take the ducks and the geese and the ducks, and whatever, out in the fields.

MOORE: And, let me just, and did you have pigs?

BRODIE: No. Jewish people . . .

MOORE: That's right.

BRODIE: . . . weren't . . .

MOORE: That's exactly right.

BRODIE: . . . allowed to . . .

MOORE: Yeah.

BRODIE: . . . have pigs . . .

MOORE: And how about . . .

BRODIE: . . . or eat pigs.

MOORE: Right. How about goats?

BRODIE: No, we didn't have goats. No, because we had, because we had, what do you call it? We had cows for milk.

MOORE: Well, do you remember, how about the furniture in that house?

BRODIE: The furniture was (?), I remember we had a sort of an out closet. A beautiful, what do you call it? What do you call it?

MOORE: Um, cabinet, would it be? Sideboard?

BRODIE: What I mean to say, it was finished. Wood, but it was finished, it was a big one. And on one side we had all kinds of like jams and cookies and stuff. And when they had company, they would take out. You know, my father was such a, such a good housekeeper. He was very, a very . . .

MOORE: What about a garden? Did you have a garden?

BRODIE: We had a big garden where we used to grow everything. Carrots, and cabbage, and beans and everything. And then he used to preserve it. It was all my father because my mother, my stepmother then was busy with the children, you know. So he used to preserve all these things. And I remember he used to make the jam, the jelly, the jam (?) on the fire. And that was for the whole year, like, you know, until the next season. And what else? There are so many things. So many things.

MOORE: What about your grandparents?

BRODIE: My father's, my father didn't have parents.

MOORE: But your mother . . .

BRODIE: So I didn't have grandparents, you know. His parents died when he was a very small child.

MOORE: Right.

BRODIE: I can't talk . . . (she clears her throat)

MOORE: It's hard to talk now. What about your mother's parents? Where did they live?

BRODIE: My mother's parents lived not far, in a little, in the, what you call, in the country, like, in the country. So I used to see my mother, she didn't come much because, you know, in those days the mother-in-law, you know, you know what I mean? Even this is going on nowadays, too, right? So she didn't come. I don't ever remember her being in my house, but I used to see, she had to pass my house in order to go to the city, so I used to see her that way.

MOORE: So she'd come by your house on the way to the city.

BRODIE: She didn't come by the house. But I used to, by chance I used to . . .

MOORE: Oh, by chance.

BRODIE: I used to play out there some days, and I would see her.

MOORE: How far was your house from the city?

BRODIE: She was very little and pretty. She was like the Swedish, the, uh, what do you call them? Like all those the countries together.

MOORE: Scandinavian?

BRODIE: Yeah, Scandinavians. She was like, my sisters, too, one of my sisters was like her. She had exactly the same complexion, blue eyes, light skin and blonde hair, straight, nice and straight. That was my sister. My older sister had reddish hair. She was beautiful. This is her husband's picture. (she shows Ms. Moore a photograph)

MOORE: Ah.

BRODIE: He was a . . .

MOORE: Painter.

BRODIE: Painter.

END OF SIDE ONE, TAPE ONE

BEGINNING OF SIDE TWO, TAPE ONE

MOORE: Well, the house that you lived in, that little house, how far from the city was it, about?

BRODIE: You had to walk up a, what do you call it, a mountain, like. In other words, you know, the mountains. I explained to you we had mountains. And then from there to walk up all the way, but gradual.

MOORE: That's okay.

BRODIE: But gradual. I remember it wasn't steep, like. It was gradual.

MOORE: So you gradually walked up the mountain, and how far did you have to walk, as a guess, to town, do you think?

BRODIE: As a guess I would say about two blocks from my house.

MOORE: To the town? The town?

BRODIE: The town.

MOORE: Yeah. You walked up this path, up the hill. And where was the town, in relation to your house?

BRODIE: The town was right on the, right on the hill.

MOORE: So . . .

BRODIE: On the hill.

MOORE: A short walk, would you say?

BRODIE: In fact, the czar's family, some of these families, lived right next to our house. They used to, in those days they had a gramophone, something like that.

MOORE: A gramophone?

BRODIE: A gramophone, you know, you turn the, and they used to play the gramophone. I used to listen to the music.

MOORE: Which czar's family was that?

BRODIE: And on the other side, on the opposite side, I think the czar lived there, if I'm not mistaken, yeah. Maybe not, if not the czar, then it's a close family.

MOORE: Do you know which part of the family that was? Did anybody tell you which part of the family?

BRODIE: Well, I know my oldest sister was learning how to sew. That was supposed to be her trade.

MOORE: A seamstress, just right.

BRODIE: A seamstress. So he used to come, so she worked for somebody, you know. And one of the, one of the cousins used to come, come in there, you know, because he used to do repairs, repair stuff, you know, but they used to make, make clothes. You know, in those days they used to make it, make the clothes. (?) (she coughs) And so he liked her. She was very attractive.

MOORE: Who liked her? Who liked your sister?

BRODIE: The cousin.

MOORE: The cousins?

BRODIE: The czar's, one of his cousins.

MOORE: Oh, so the czar's cousin liked your older sister.

BRODIE: He liked her. So he used to (?), a lot of times he used to come. Not because he had to, but he used to come, you know. She had a lot of hair, a mass of hair, wavy, wavy hair, did she. And (?) (she clears her throat) What was I going to say?

MOORE: To whom were you closest in the family? Who was your, who did you get along best with and feel the closest to in your family?

BRODIE: I get along with everybody. Maybe the children were trained like that. We didn't fight and we got along with everybody. Only one sister (?). The one that lived in New York, we were very close. She came with me to this country.

MOORE: She came. That's all right. (she laughs)

BRODIE: She, sorry. She had to wait another year because she wasn't of age to, because we came here with a (?) of orphans. See, that's the (?) of the thing. And after the, after we went through a Revolution, and then we went, (?), and then was the war, the war started. And then, after the Revolution, at that time or in between, what was I going to say, the pogroms started, you know. So, yeah.

MOORE: What do you remember, now, what do you remember about the Revolution?

BRODIE: I remember the Revolution, they went, I remember I even went, with whom I went, I went by myself to see what's going on. I watched them. That was only one time.

MOORE: Watched them being, who's "them?"

BRODIE: Watched the people that were revolting, you know, the, all these people that revolt. They were against the czar, so they, uh, so they revolted, and that's when we (?), and then they revolted and killed the king, so they revolted, and then that's why, that's why we have Communism in Russia.

MOORE: What about your schooling? What do you remember about going to school?

BRODIE: About going to school, I didn't have very much schooling, because, let me see about my schooling. Yes, the Jewish people didn't go to public school. They weren't allowed, not (?). If you had a (?) someplace, your child yet, you know what I mean? But, you know, then, but it was hard. It was hard. So, besides, you know, like I said, every religions, the two religions were, in other words. The Jews have their own religion, and they sent to school, they wanted to send their children to the Jewish Hebrew school, the Jewish Hebrew school, Jewish school is mostly Hebrew. Like my brother, he went to this school for a long time, studied Hebrew.

MOORE: And the school that you went to, then, how big was it? Where was it?

BRODIE: That was in Russia, but it was a Jewish school, so I went to school. So I went to the, Jewish, Hebrew, we studied everything, Russian, in that school.

MOORE: How far from home was that school?

BRODIE: You know, the whole city is not so big. The whole city is probably, if it's three miles it's a lot. (?)

MOORE: So you went to school. Did you walk?

BRODIE: Sure we walked to school, of course.

MOORE: And how big was the school? How many children were in each class?

BRODIE: Not so many. I would say about twenty-five children, maybe, thirty.

MOORE: And do you remember any of your teachers or your schoolmates?

BRODIE: When the one schoolmate, I don't remember what she looked like, but she, in those days they used to teach you like that (she gestures), teach you how to eat. So the teacher would sit there. You would have, every child would get a certain amount of time, you know. But the teacher, we studied, studying you study separately, you know, that's another, another thing. But the teacher used to sit and would say, "Go ahead, eat." Even if you had wrong, you made a mistake, she corrected you. That's how they used to teach. Now they don't do it like that. So then after they (?),

they got, so right now I didn't, but then I stopped going to school because my father had to pay for every child that went to school. So after a while he stopped me. You know? Then, when the Revolution started they had volunteer teachers. So I went to volunteer school.

MOORE: A school that was taught by volunteer teachers?

BRODIE: By volunteer teachers, that's right.

MOORE: What was your favorite subject?

BRODIE: I remember, I guess reading and writing. I never get much arithmetic (?). I guess that's why I don't, I don't care for mechanical things. I'm not inclined that way. (Ms. Moore laughs)

MOORE: What games did you play at that time? Any favorite games that you remember?

BRODIE: Yeah. It was, sure. We used to have, like, put a stone here (she gestures) and put a stone there, and then have a second piece of wood, then you see if you can knock down. That's a game we used to play, play with stones. What do you call it, I forget. I forget the name of things, all kinds of things, we used to

play. We had certain, certain mud, dried. It's made out of sand, dried. Like a clay, it's like a clay. (automobiles can be heard in the background) And we used to take some little pieces of wood, and make all sorts of things out of it. Build a little house, and make little pots and pans and stuff like that. All these things, we used to create things. Not here. You can go into the stores. The stores are loaded, with, with junk, all kinds of junk. I call it junk. (Ms. Moore laughs) Because people don't need that much, you know. It's just pollution. You have to put it someplace. It pollutes, it pollutes the, uh, atmosphere.

MOORE: Well, what about meal time at home? Did you eat together? Describe a meal at home.

BRODIE: Yes. Mealtime was everybody got together every meal.

MOORE: How many meals a day did you have together?

BRODIE: Two, I think, but not that many, like in day time and night time. The morning I don't remember.

MOORE: And what was a typical meal? What did you eat?

BRODIE: We ate potatoes, a lot of potatoes, baked potatoes.

And bread, and we didn't have sal--, and then we had the vegetables from our garden. So it wasn't any fancy, you know, like over here you have all kinds of fancy stuff. It was plain, plain food.

MOORE: What was your favorite food at that time?

BRODIE: There wasn't so much to pick from. (she laughs)

MOORE: There wasn't so much to pick from. (Ms. Brodie laughs)

BRODIE: Yeah. (she laughs) You either eat the potatoes or you don't. (they laugh) Eat the bread or you don't. But everything was, you know, for instance, I didn't like, uh, I didn't like something, I didn't like anything that cooked a long time. And in the Jewish religion, Friday night, you're not supposed to cook any more or do anything, you know. So they used to put the, you stuffed the meat and the potatoes or whatever. They used to put it in the stove, in the ashes, like, you know what I mean? And it would cook overnight in the ashes. You closed the oven, closed the stove. So that I was supposed to eat. We were supposed to eat it the next day. So I hated it.
(she laughs)

MOORE: What about religion?

BRODIE: (?)

MOORE: What about your religion, in a sense? What was your, how did you practice your religion?

BRODIE: Well, the religion is this way, you know, like I said, weekends you're not supposed to do everything. You go to church.

MOORE: Synagogue.

BRODIE: To the synagogue. You go to synagogue. And what else do you do? You just don't do everything. You rest. You don't work. No working on holidays. And the food, you know, the kosher, you know what kosher food is? So they make the food kosher. In other words, kosher food you had to eat all the time, you see. It's got to be kosher. Of course, now I eat pork and everything.

MOORE: Now you don't keep the same kosher, you don't keep kosher now.

BRODIE: No, first of all, I'm not a religious person now, (?), you know.

MOORE: What about your mother and father? Who was the most religious of the two, you think?

BRODIE: My mother, I don't remember at all, you know. But you mean my step-mother?

MOORE: Yeah.

BRODIE: Ah, I think my step-mother was a little more religious, yeah.

MOORE: Okay. So what about . . .

BRODIE: My father wasn't a fanatic, you know. He did the usual things that a Jew was supposed to do. But he wasn't fanatic. And the children, of course, never, always grew up, and they would never keep religion, a fanatic religion.

MOORE: You mean orthodox?

BRODIE: Orthodox, yeah. (she coughs)

MOORE: What about your holidays, your favorite holidays? What were they?

BRODIE: My favorite holidays? I don't know if I had favorite. I suppose Hanukkah was, when you get the gifts, you

know, Hanukkah, you get gifts.

MOORE: And were there special foods at Hanukkah? Did you eat special foods?

BRODIE: At Hanukkah, yes. At Hanukkah you have pancakes, potato pancakes. Or the, but they had pancakes if they have the flour, you know. And you send gifts, you give gifts. The gifts you make, you know, like Christmas.

MOORE: What do you remember as a gift, a favorite gift you got as a child? Do you remember any?

BRODIE: Not the children. They would send a gift into your house, for anybody.

MOORE: So a general gift for everybody?

BRODIE: General gifts. We didn't have anything the gifts like now. (she laughs)

MOORE: Describe how you got to America. How did you get here, and why?

BRODIE: Well, that's the really important thing. We, after the war, like I told you, my father was dealt with the boats, the boat people. And after the war, you know,

when the war started, that's when, that's the time, see, I forget, when the war started. Oh, had not, no.

He had no business. So we moved to where my, to my stepmother's parents. Not to their house, but we moved where they lived. That was as, a country. In a countryside, you know what I mean? So we moved there.

And then we were poor, you know what I mean, because he couldn't, because he didn't have work. So we got already all there, especially my sister, and from New York, she's a couple of years, ten years older than I.

So we said we want to go to this country. Oh, yeah, my sister, my older sister was already in this country, because I had aunts and uncles that were here, a couple of aunts and uncles.

MOORE: So your father was alive when she left?

BRODIE: When my, yeah, in fact, when I left my father was, my father was still alive.

MOORE: Oh. So you coming over with doesn't mean that you were an orphan. You were not an orphan.

BRODIE: I was an orphan because I had no mother.

MOORE: Oh, because you had no mother. I see.

BRODIE: Yeah. And then the, as soon as it started, I was still in, I was still in, uh, on my way (?). My father, they killed my father.

MOORE: Who did?

BRODIE: The, uh, you know, the, uh, I told you. The anti-Semites.

MOORE: Let's back up a little bit . . .

BRODIE: Those were, those were against the Jews. Like they used to have a saying in Russia, "Kill the Jews and save Russia."

MOORE: Well, let's . . .

BRODIE: That was their mentality, see?

MOORE: Let's back up a little bit before that now. When you were in school, did you ever have any prejudice or bigotry? Did anybody persecute you? You were in a Jewish school, of course.

BRODIE: Yes, I was in a Jewish school, with nobody but the children that lived there. They used to, they used to be, sometimes I would pass the teenagers, you know. They would grabe me in a not nice place.

MOORE: They would grab your body.

BRODIE: My body.

MOORE: In vulgar places.

BRODIE: In vulgar places. You know, they didn't do anything special. It was just, you know . . .

MOORE: The Gentile teenagers.

BRODIE: Yeah, because I'm, because I'm a Jew. So I'm nothing, I'm nobody. They can do anything. See what I mean?

MOORE: Did they ever call you any names?

BRODIE: Well, I can't remember if they called me, sure, yes, they did, sure, yes. They called me "dirty Jew."

MOORE: And did it get worse as you got older, up to the point . . .

BRODIE: I didn't, they didn't do it to older people, too old, too old, you know what I mean. But I was a child, and they were big children. I was a child, they were a little bigger. So they had the nerve to do it, but they wouldn't do it to older people.

MOORE: Do you remember your father discussing fear or

anything about the anti, anti-Semitic feelings? Do you remember any discussion at home about that?

BRODIE: Never. I never heard anything like that. We got along. We got along wonderful with all the neighbors. They liked him, and they did business with him. You know what I mean. It's just like a, socially, like, I don't know how to explain it, but they used to, we used to get along very nicely, the neighbors.

MOORE: Now, your sister, you said, came here first, to the United States.

BRODIE: Yeah, she came first, because I had, I had two aunts and uncles, something like that.

MOORE: Who lived where?

BRODIE: Who was here already before.

MOORE: Where in the United States did they live?

BRODIE: My . . .

MOORE: Your aunts and uncles? Where did they live?

BRODIE: They lived in the same city, Petrakov [ph].

MOORE: And then when they came here, to the United States?

BRODIE: And then they came here to the United States, so my sister, my older sister sent, well, should start to write letters, send letters that she doesn't want to, she wants to get away from Petrakov [ph], you know, and she wants to go to this country, you know. So finally they sent her, they sent her a ticket, or they sent the money for the ticket or something like that.

MOORE: I see. Where did they live?

BRODIE: And she came here.

MOORE: Where did they live, your aunts and uncles?

BRODIE: Over there?

MOORE: No, here.

BRODIE: Here they lived in Brooklyn.

MOORE: In Brooklyn! Oh, yeah.

BRODIE: In Brooklyn. They all lived in Brooklyn. It was, the family always stuck together, and that's how many children learned to stick together.

MOORE: And, excuse me. I didn't understand, what number child were you?

BRODIE: I was after, after my brother. My brother was after my sister, the one that lives in New York.

MOORE: You were after Joseph, and Joseph was . . .

BRODIE: Joseph was, (she pauses) he was, he was the fourth.

MOORE: He was the fourth child. So you were the fifth child?

BRODIE: Yeah. I think there was one child before my older sister that passed away.

MOORE: Okay. But of the living children, you were number five, then.

BRODIE: Then I was number five.

MOORE: Okay. So your sister went first. Now, how did it come about that you went? How was it decided that you went?

BRODIE: So me and my sister in New York, we were very close at that time. And we used to go all over, all over together, you know, do things together. And we decided that both of us, she decided first, of course, she was the leader, and (?). And then, oh, that's it, we were with some delegates from the HIAS, you know

the HIAS? It's a Jewish organization, and they sent delegates because they heard what happened to the Jews in Russia, Jewish children, so they sent delegates. So my sister here heard. She was already married at that time and she had a little boy. She heard that, she heard such a things and went and gave them some money, and sent for us, you know already.

MOORE: For whom did she send? For you?

BRODIE: She gave the delegate some money.

MOORE: Yes.

BRODIE: For both of us. Fifty dollars, she sent.

MOORE: Both of whom? You and who else?

BRODIE: And my, my sister from Russia, from New York. That's Julia, my sister Julia and me. So she found out about the delegates are going to go . . .

MOORE: Now, who found out? Your sister?

BRODIE: My sister here.

MOORE: What was her name?

BRODIE: My older sister, Dinah.

MOORE: Dinah found out.

BRODIE: Dinah found out.

MOORE: Delegates were going to Russia. So she gave money.

BRODIE: So she gave the delegate money.

MOORE: For you . . .

BRODIE: For me and my other sister.

MOORE: And your other . . .

BRODIE: Temporarily, that we should have something to live on.
See what I mean?

MOORE: Now, was your father living then?

BRODIE: My father, (she pauses) yeah, no, no, no. My father
passed away.

MOORE: So how old were you when your father died? How old?

BRODIE: I was old, when I started out. I was about, about
thirteen.

MOORE: So that's when, that year your father died, when you
were thirteen. And . . .

BRODIE: We were on our way when we found out that they killed him, because he was going back to the city.

END OF SIDE TWO, TAPE ONE

BEGINNING OF SIDE ONE, TAPE TWO

MOORE: And do you remember . . .

BRODIE: So on the way they killed him.

MOORE: And were there children at home, then?

BRODIE: The children, no. At home, the other children were at home. But he just went with my brother Joseph but they left him alone.

MOORE: So your father was killed, but Joseph was let go. He was not hurt.

BRODIE: He was not hurt. So he took care of my, then my stepmother, then my stepmother, with the rest of the children, came to the city, too. And my brother had to take care of them.

MOORE: So your brother took care of the family when your father died.

BRODIE: Right. So my sister, we weren't in this country. We

were still on our way. So she wanted to go and get my brother, but he said he doesn't want to leave my stepmother alone with the children.

MOORE: What did you know about . . .

BRODIE: That's how close we were. You know, we wouldn't do anything to hurt each other. You see what I mean? He understood that it would be a hardship the children, with small children, yeah.

MOORE: Well, let's talk about you coming here, uh . . .

BRODIE: So, we were coming here, so what happened, so we saw then the delegate, my sister, and we came, when we came to a certain city. I don't remember what was the city. I'll remind myself after. And we lived there for a while until we, with some family. We paid, of course we paid rent. So . . .

MOORE: So, wait a minute. Excuse me. Let me just back up a little bit. So you decided to go to America, and so you had to leave home and live with a family first.

BRODIE: No, we didn't live with a family. We just hired a room.

MOORE: Hired a room.

BRODIE: My sister and I, we hired it, and we paid.

MOORE: How did you get to that room? How did you travel there, from home?

BRODIE: Because, you know, people knew already and one tells the other . . .

MOORE: I see.

BRODIE: See what I mean? So then after a while when my sister found out that we're here, that the delegate found us, saw us, and gave us the money, I mean, we had it as soon as he found out. As soon as my sister saw the delegate, of course, we wrote to my sister to this country. And she sent us then the whole amount.

MOORE: To travel. She sent more money.

BRODIE: It was, money like five hundred dollars, I don't know.

MOORE: And how did she get that money? Did she . . .

BRODIE: She borrowed.

MOORE: She borrowed the money, and she sent it to you.

BRODIE: Yeah.

MOORE: And do you remember, what did you know about America?

BRODIE: Because her, because her husband, at that time had just started, he was not advanced yet. So it was hard. They somehow managed. But when they had to send us the big amount of money, they had very good friends. So they borrowed. They borrowed the money.

MOORE: Well, what did you know about America before you came?

BRODIE: Before I came . . .

MOORE: Hold on, please.

BRODIE: I didn't know nothing about America. I thought it was a fairyland.

MOORE: Let me get that again. (referring to a problem with the microphone) So you, you knew nothing about America. You thought it was a fairyland. And what did your sister tell you?

BRODIE: Like nothing is real. You know, like, when I saw, what should I say? Potatoes, for instance. I thought, I didn't know that they grow potatoes. I thought (?). (she laughs) I was a child, like.

MOORE: Yeah. And did your sister write to you anything about America before?

BRODIE: Yeah. She wrote, wrote letters. Not steady, but now and then.

MOORE: And what did those letters tell you about America?

BRODIE: She was talking about the people she knows, we had neighbors there that were here, went to this country. So there was one neighbor, she had girls. She had about two, three girls, and she used to tell us about them, you know, how she came to this country, and how they had seen her, and that they were very nice to her. They took her as their own child.

MOORE: So . . .

BRODIE: So where we were, all right again. So we stayed in, yes, we started out, oh, yes, we started out. I remember when we first, I missed something. When we started out to, you know, leave, and my father sold one cow, and he gave us a gold, a three ten dollars. Two gold, ten dollars.

MOORE: Two gold ten-dollar pieces?

BRODIE: Two gold pieces.

MOORE: From the sale of the cow.

BRODIE: From the sale of the cow. And so my sister was (?).
She took the two ten dollar bills, I mean, uh . . .

MOORE: Coins?

BRODIE: Coins. And she sewed them into her coat, some place
in the coat. On the way we were arrested one time. I
start to tell you something and then forget.

MOORE: Uh-huh. On the way you were arrested for what? On
the way to where were you arrested for what?

BRODIE: When we started out from Russia to Poland, on the
border, on the border from Russia to Poland so we had
to cross the border. And I think we were walking at
that time. And they stopped us. They, who was that?
Oh, yeah, the Polish. The Polish Army. The Polish
Army, the patrol. The Polish patrol stopped us on the
way. He said, "Stay." You know. And we had to stop.
And we were sometimes traveling with another woman,
and the woman had a child, I remember. So the mother
went, went with us, you know. We hired together
wagons and this and that, you know. And then we split

the money together. so my sister had, we had also some dried stuff, like dried bread fruit, dried berries. When we were in the country, we used to go picking berries, so we used to pick a lot, lots of berries, dried berries, a whole basket full, I would bring home, and she would bring home a basket full. And then we used to dry the berries. And she took it, she took those berries, and the bread, toasted bread, and something else, some greens, stuff like that. So when we came to Poland we should have something to eat. Because we didn't have anything, what else was it? She says, "Oh!" The guy stopped us. She says, "Oh! (Polish)" Did you ever hear that in Polish? It means, "Excuse me, gentleman. Do you remember me from, you know?" Because all of those army soldiers stopping in the house. They slept over. They stayed over. And, oh, so he says, "In that case." And she gave him something right away.

MOORE: Gave him what right away?

BRODIE: Some jam or something, I think.

MOORE: Yeah.

BRODIE: Maybe bread. Maybe bread, too?

MOORE: Did she know him? Did she recognize him? No.

BRODIE: She didn't. She didn't know him either. But that was an act. He should let us through and because of her the other woman with a child got through, too.

MOORE: That was smart, huh?

BRODIE: Yeah.

MOORE: Well, when you left home, let's back up a little bit. When you left home did, what was your father's reaction and your family's reaction when you left?

BRODIE: My father took us from the country to the city.

MOORE: How?

BRODIE: With a, by, by horse and wagon.

MOORE: By horse and wagon.

BRODIE: By horse and wagon. And then they let us off at a certain point, and we came to the city. He gave us the money and he cried.

MOORE: Did everybody cry?

BRODIE: And he cried, and he said, "God knows if we'll ever

see each other." And we never saw each other.

MOORE: And, well, so from there you went to the house, to the border?

BRODIE: From there, so we out in Poland. And then we went to where they recommended, everything before, you know. It was like a hotel, sort of a private hotel, like. What else, I don't remember?

MOORE: Do you remember getting, you went, how did you get to, where did you leave, what port did you leave from on the boat? Where was that port?

BRODIE: Well, I think it was Warsaw.

MOORE: Warsaw. And how did you get to Warsaw? You were walking part of the time.

BRODIE: We went there by train.

MOORE: By train.

BRODIE: By train. But I didn't, my sister took, took me to a certain point. We were there, while we were in Poland, she got together with the organization, (?) the HIAS, you know. In other words, we heard that they sent delegates to transport children. So my

sister and I went to the delegate, told him the story, and arranged, you know. And the delegate arranged.

MOORE: What was your feeling? Were you frightened? Was it frightening for you, or was it exciting an adventure? What did you feel about this at that young age?

BRODIE: At that young age, I wasn't frightened. In fact, I was very brave. I was frightened about anything, you know. guess, I guess when you're young, you don't realize the danger.

MOORE: So you got to Warsaw by train, and do you remember seeing the boat for the first time?

BRODIE: I remember seeing the boat for the first time on the boat. I have thought (?). So we slept over there, overnight, in the HIAS.

MOORE: In that organization.

BRODIE: In that organization. And we had a beautiful beds made, like a queen, like queens, you know what I mean?

MOORE: At that place, the HIAS place.

BRODIE: At the HIAS place. They treated us like royalty. And then we went to the transport of children. We had a

nurse with us.

MOORE: You had a nurse.

BRODIE: We had a nurse.

MOORE: Did you have an examination before you left?

BRODIE: Not, I guess no, when you come to Ellis Island.

MOORE: That's when you had it. But before that you did not have an examination?

BRODIE: No.

MOORE: What was the nurse for?

BRODIE: The nurse was to, in case anything happens, you know. There were smaller children than us.

MOORE: Now, your sister was how old?

BRODIE: There were small children, too.

MOORE: Your sister was, you were thirteen. How much older was your sister?

BRODIE: About two, three years.

MOORE: So she was fifteen, sixteen?

BRODIE: Something like that.

MOORE: Okay. And what did you have with you? What belongings did you bring with you?

BRODIE: From home?

MOORE: Yeah.

BRODIE: Nothing. I had one outfit that had belonged to my sister. She had, she had two. So she shared with me. A blouse and a skirt.

MOORE: What did you leave behind?

BRODIE: What did I leave behind? Of my possessions?

MOORE: Uh-huh.

BRODIE: Nothing. I had nothing at that time. (she laughs)

MOORE: Did you bring anything special with you that you kept? Did you bring a toy, or something from your family? Anything special?

BRODIE: Nothing special that I remember. Because after, when I was already in Warsaw, then they had, they had a dressmaker, and she bought me a nice outfit, you know

what I mean? That's all, I had a new outfit. That's about all.

MOORE: So you went over with a brand-new outfit made for you.

BRODIE: Yeah, made for me. That was when things were already better, you know. When we knew I was going already. But my, sister had to wait another year. Because she wasn't, she was not, she was too old.

MOORE: Your younger . . .

BRODIE: My older sister. Julia. Julia went with me. She's the one that . . .

MOORE: She traveled with you. Had she got there?

BRODIE: She's the one that instigated the whole thing.
(she laughs) And . . .

MOORE: So you got to Warsaw.

BRODIE: So she, I got to Warsaw. And in Warsaw they made for me a new outfit. That's about all.

MOORE: And Julia, who was with you . . .

BRODIE: She remained. She remained in the place with me.

MOORE: She stayed in HIAS. She stayed . . .

BRODIE: No, she didn't stay in the HIAS. She stayed in a, oh, there was a hotel, where all the immigrants used to stop off again. (?) And so she stayed there. But she had . . .

MOORE: And you had to come alone?

BRODIE: Yeah, I came here alone.

MOORE: So she stayed a year in Warsaw?

BRODIE: She stayed another year in Warsaw. She tried to . . .

MOORE: Did she have enough money for that? Wasn't that expensive?

BRODIE: What?

MOORE: To stay in Warsaw for a year?

BRODIE: Well, it was very cheap, because, you know, the hotel was special for these people, you know. So it was, it wasn't much.

MOORE: And so you had to come alone on the boat.

BRODIE: I had to come alone. So therefore they needed on

this, they needed somebody. So I was a little older but there were some, some children that were younger.

MOORE: But were you frightened to come alone?

BRODIE: No.

MOORE: And do you remember saying goodbye to Julia?

BRODIE: Sure, we said goodbye. And I was sort of glad that I'm going already. You know what I mean.
(she laughs)

MOORE: And how did she feel?

BRODIE: Well, she felt sad. But it's hard, you know, because you had so many things on your mind, going. And first of all it's hard to remember everything.

MOORE: Yeah.

BRODIE: Feelings and things.

MOORE: But she was, and the reason they kept her behind was what? What was her reasons?

BRODIE: She wasn't old enough. She wasn't young enough. She was too old.

MOORE: Oh, she was too old. And what about the boat? Do you remember getting on the boat?

BRODIE: Sure. Getting on the boat, I don't remember exactly getting on the boat, but I remember on the boat.

MOORE: Uh-huh. What was the name of that boat?

BRODIE: Latvia.

MOORE: The Latvia was the boat. And what day did you leave? Do you remember the day you left? No. Do you remember the month and the year? You said the fall . . .

BRODIE: It was in fall.

MOORE: The fall of 19 . . .

BRODIE: 1920.

MOORE: The fall of 1920. Oh, you arrived in the fall of 1920.

BRODIE: Uh-huh.

MOORE: Okay, never mind, okay. . . .

BRODIE: Yeah, I arrived, I arrived in 1920.

MOORE: Right. And . . .

BRODIE: This happened in between. I came to the, I came to Poland about 1919, 1918, and then I stayed in Poland a year till 1920, or the beginning of 1921, whenever I came out.

MOORE: What was it like on the boat? Describe the boat, where you slept and where you ate.

BRODIE: The boat was, I had, we had two berths, whatever.

MOORE: Uh-huh, two berths, yeah.

BRODIE: Berths, yeah.

MOORE: Bunk beds.

BRODIE: Bunk beds. I slept on the top, I think, and somebody else slept on the bottom. I don't remember. But I got acquainted there with friends. I had, where I was I had friends. You know, I had at least one friend. On the boat I had a good time. There was a boy who liked me. (she laughs) He was attentive to me, and he liked me. And then there was a girl. I had a girlfriend and a boyfriend there, on the boat. And the girl, the girl had, I think, two brothers, two

little brothers. And I had a good time on the boat.

MOORE: Do you remember was, how were the meals given? What about the food?

BRODIE: The food was okay. It wasn't exciting. The food, to tell you the truth, I don't remember.

MOORE: Do you remember where you ate? Did you eat together?

BRODIE: Yeah. You know, there were a lot of people at meal time. I don't know, maybe they had special table for the children, I suppose. But everybody used to eat. There were people that used to (?), you know. Everybody. Regular people, not children.

MOORE: Regular people. Well, what class was that?

BRODIE: Adults, you know, all the adults table.

MOORE: Hmm. What class did you travel in, then?

BRODIE: Naturally the third, the second, the second and there's third. I think third class.

MOORE: In third class.

BRODIE: And those people, the (?) people, they traveled first class.

MOORE: Right. Were you arrived in deck?

BRODIE: But I think we used to eat all together in the same dining room.

MOORE: You think everybody ate together.

BRODIE: Yeah, I think so.

MOORE: What about on deck? Were you allowed on deck, up on deck to see the ocean?

BRODIE: I think so. I'm not sure.

MOORE: Was the voyage rough or smooth?

BRODIE: At certain times it got rough.

MOORE: It got rough. Did anyone get ill? Did you get sick at all?

BRODIE: Oh, sure I got sick. I was very sick. See, part of the time I was happy because I didn't get sick, but then, I suppose, I suppose when it got rough, I got very sick.

MOORE: And you remember being sick.

BRODIE: I remember being sick, very sick.

MOORE: Was anyone else sick with you?

BRODIE: Sure they were. There were lots of people sick.

MOORE: And do you remember seeing land for the first time?

BRODIE: For the first time, uh, we came at night.

MOORE: Hmm.

BRODIE: And we saw Ellis Island.

MOORE: And what did you see?

BRODIE: All we saw was a light at night. You know what I mean? You couldn't see much. They let us off from Ellis Island, and then they, then they examined you, I think, and you stop someplace.

MOORE: Back up a little bit. Did you see the Statue of Liberty?

BRODIE: Yes.

MOORE: And what was the reaction to that on board? Were the people . . .

BRODIE: My reaction to the Statue of Liberty? No, I don't remember my reaction. It's kind of, kind of peculiar

actually, I feel, you know. Like now, now the first thing I would be interested in, but you couldn't see, because it was dark.

MOORE: Hmm. And you said you got to Ellis Island. How did you get to Ellis Island? Did the boat come up to Ellis Island, or did you take another boat?

BRODIE: We took another boat to where they examine you.

MOORE: And what, you had an examination?

BRODIE: Yeah, then I had an examination.

MOORE: And what did they do in the examination?

BRODIE: They wanted to see if you're not lousy.
(she laughs)

MOORE: Oh, if you had lice in your hair.

BRODIE: Lice in your hair. If you had trachoma in your eyes.

MOORE: So you had an eye examination.

BRODIE: We had an eye examination. What else I don't remember.

MOORE: Were you frightened? Was anyone frightened? Were

they nice to you? How did they treat you?

BRODIE: They treated us already.

MOORE: Were you detained at all? Were you taken to the hospital?

BRODIE: No, no. I was healthy.

MOORE: Was anyone with you taken?

BRODIE: To tell you the truth, I can't remember everything. I can't remember.

MOORE: Maybe you didn't know.

BRODIE: I was not, you know, a child is, you know, children don't . . .

MOORE: And you were, what were you wearing then?

BRODIE: You are interested in yourself, you know. What? What was I wearing? The same outfit. The same outfit that the dressmaker made for me in Poland.

MOORE: And how long was that voyage altogether? How many, how long was that boat trip?

BRODIE: Three weeks.

MOORE: Three weeks.

BRODIE: Three weeks on the ocean.

MOORE: So, how, what do you remember of Ellis Island? Do you remember, tell me what you remember.

BRODIE: The only thing I remember is the food. The first impression, I saw black people. I never saw a black person before. That was very, oh, yeah, and the first thing, I don't know which I saw first, the first thing they gave me, bananas. They gave us bananas for all the children, and I didn't know what a banana is, or what you do with it. (she laughs)

MOORE: So what did you do?

BRODIE: So you know, you see a child, you know, somebody tells you, one child, to peel it, and you hand it, and then the next children see it, and they do the same thing.

MOORE: Did you like them?

BRODIE: To tell you the truth, I don't remember if I liked them a lot.

MOORE: Now, was it crowded?

BRODIE: I probably did.

MOORE: Was it crowded, Ellis Island? Do you remember the Hall, going into the Hall?

BRODIE: Ah, it wasn't so crowded. The first impression, I saw the black people sitting on the floor, you know what I mean? They didn't make a spread for you. They didn't make a carpet for you. (Ms. Moore laughs) You know what I mean? So . . .

MOORE: And besides the blacks and bananas, what else? Was there anything else new to you?

BRODIE: In Ellis Island?

MOORE: Did you speak any English before you came?

BRODIE: Of course not. (Ms. Moore laughs) Of course not. I suppose spoke Russian. So I don't remember, besides we had, the nurse, because she was an interpreter. If we had anything came up she would . . .

MOORE: She would interpret.

BRODIE: The interpreter.

MOORE: Where were you going, then? Was anyone there to meet

you at Ellis Island?

BRODIE: At Ellis Island, not. From Ellis Island they told, I told you they took us to this place, I forgot what you call it, where they examined you, and then they took us to the HIAS to sleep, because the whole thing happened at night.

MOORE: So it was in the, in the HIAS in New York? The HIAS place was in New York.

BRODIE: Sure. Sure, sure.

MOORE: How did you get there?

BRODIE: To the HIAS? Now we all, I don't remember, but we, I guess probably a car. They had cars. Gee, I don't remember how I got there.

MOORE: And where was the HIAS? In Manhattan? Or where was it?

BRODIE: The HIAS was in Manhattan.

MOORE: And from the HIAS, where did you go from there?

BRODIE: I stayed in the HIAS overnight and I waited, I think, until my sister and brother-in-law came to get me, to

get me out, you know what I mean? They have to make sure that there's somebody that will take care of me, you know what I mean.

MOORE: What was the HIAS like? What was it like there?

BRODIE: The HIAS? They were very friendly. Very nice. The rooms I don't remember, but everything was fine. Everybody was sleeping and everything. It was so impressive to me, that I was treated like that, you know.

MOORE: And your sister, do you remember seeing your sister and brother-in-law for the first time, then, when they came to get you? Do you remember that?

BRODIE: Oh, sure, sure. I remember. And I started crying when I saw my sister. I started to cry. She says, "Don't cry. You are here crying already. You are here." You know.

MOORE: And why were you crying?

BRODIE: Because, uh . . .

END OF SIDE ONE, TAPE TWO

BEGINNING OF SIDE TWO, TAPE TWO

MOORE: Your sister came to get you, and where did they take you?

BRODIE: My sister and brother-in-law.

MOORE: Yeah.

BRODIE: They take me into New York. On my way home, they took me by subway, you know, the first time I rode the subway. And I was excited, in general. So I left my, my credentials on the, on the bus, on the . . .

MOORE: Subway.

BRODIE: Subway. I don't remember if I ever got it or not.

MOORE: So you left your, all your papers, or your . . .

BRODIE: My papers, my credentials, you know.

MOORE: And what about, where did they take you? To Brooklyn?

BRODIE: They lived in the Bronx. That was, not in Brooklyn. The Bronx.

MOORE: Where in the Bronx?

BRODIE: You know Katonah Park? (she laughs) How can I describe it to you?

MOORE: What part of the Bronx?

BRODIE: Uh, it was, there was a little park called, not a little park, a park called Katonah Park. And they lived near Katonah Park.

MOORE: Uh-huh. And what was . . .

BRODIE: So I came to my sister, and my brother-in-law said the first thing, "Go, go ahead, we're going right in the morning, and get a pair of shoes." He was very nice. They were very nice to me.

MOORE: Where did they live? An apartment? A house? How did they live?

BRODIE: They lived in an apartment, in an apartment house.

MOORE: And how big was it?

BRODIE: Uh, a small house, maybe. Maybe two floors, and maybe only one. I can't remember exactly.

MOORE: And how big was their apartment?

BRODIE: They had one, they had a living room, a bedroom and a dining room, and a kitchen. Four rooms.

MOORE: So where did you stay?

BRODIE: I slept in the dining.

MOORE: And was this a rented apartment?

BRODIE: Uh, yes, sure, a rented apartment. It's not their own home.

MOORE: And what about plumbing and toilet facilities? Were they in the apartment?

BRODIE: There was always one facility, you know. Not fancy like here. You have, you have a bathroom for every, a bathroom.

MOORE: What about your, the neighborhood?

BRODIE: Like my sister now, like my daughter now, yeah.

MOORE: So your, the neighborhood there in the Bronx, what was it like?

BRODIE: It was a very nice neighborhood. It was beautiful. I used to go at night, late at night, come at night. Pass the park, do anything, nobody would touch you.

MOORE: What about school?

BRODIE: Isn't that wonderful? When I came here, I started

public school.

MOORE: Which school was it?

BRODIE: That was, they had a public school there, but I can't remember the name. Just about a block, not even a block away, I think.

MOORE: How did you learn English?

BRODIE: So I, so I went to school, the first thing, I registered in school. And yes, I went to school for some time, for maybe, maybe less than a year. And then I heard, then I got some, we got some bad news that we have to send money for the family, and my sister couldn't afford to do everything, so I had to stop school and go at night. Go to, go to, what do you call it?

MOORE: Work?

BRODIE: You know, I forgot what you call that school. Between if you can't go to school and you're too young. What I could . . .

MOORE: Hold on. (referring to the microphone) So you . . .

BRODIE: You know, you know when a child, cannot go to school, he's they're too young, they send them to an in-between school, to a temporary school, like. I forgot the name of it. I just had it.

MOORE: Well, let's back up a little bit. When you first went to school here, did you know any English?

BRODIE: No.

MOORE: And what happened? How did you learn?

BRODIE: How did I learn? First I said, I go for a walk with my brother-in-law, and he says, you know, this brother-in-law, and I feel so, so bad, I said to him, "I feel so bad that I cannot speak English." So he says, "Don't worry." He says, "If you learn one word a day, just one word a day, after a year you're going to learn three hundred and sixty-five words." He said, "And then you can speak."

MOORE: And that's what you did?

BRODIE: So eventually you pick up, you know. You go to school. So I went to, what do they call it, school, I forgot, where they don't, where they teach you, maybe it will come to me.

MOORE: Night school?

BRODIE: No, not night school. So this, I went to this school I was supposed to go in, because I wasn't supposed to, I was supposed to go to school yet, you know. So they sent me to this temporary school. So I said, after a while, they don't teach you, they don't teach you English. They teach you how to cook and how to do this and that.

MOORE: Vocational school.

BRODIE: Vocational.

MOORE: They send you to vocational school, yeah.

BRODIE: Right, but they call different, I know that's what it is. So I went to, I don't remember where I was supposed to go, and I said, "I want to go to night school." I said, "Because they don't teach me anything." You know? I said, "Cooking, I could teach them how to cook, you know." You know, I was nervy, you know. I wasn't afraid of things. I wasn't shy. So I said, "I want to go to the school where they teach me English, you know. Where they teach writing and everything." So that was that. So I stopped

going to that school. They let me. And I started, and I went to night school.

MOORE: And did anyone ever make fun of you, or did you have any anti-Semitism here in this country?

BRODIE: (she pauses) I don't remember. I don't remember if somebody would express themselves something, you know, in a very diplomatic way they might have. But I can't remember. There's always a time, there's always some person that would do it, you know.

MOORE: Yeah, but you said that you heard bad news about your family that you had to get the money for your family, and that's when you went to night school.

BRODIE: So, yeah. So that's, that gave me a, gave me a reason, you know what I mean? I, not an excuse but a reason for them to let me go to night school.

MOORE: And did you then work? Did you go to work?

BRODIE: So I went to work. I remember my, I had a cousin here, I had two cousins, in fact. And my cousin was a, she was a very lively person, a very lively person. Very outgoing, you know. And she was very friendly with everybody. So she worked in a place and she

asked them if she could take me up, teach me how to sew, how to, so I said, and I would work with her, in other words. But the only thing they would have to do is put an extra machine, so she would (?). It didn't take, in a short time I was my own boss.

(she laughs) I used to work piecework there, so I worked piecework like everybody else. And that's how I started, I made a way, I made a living being a dressmaker, not a dressmaker, working in a shop, whatever, you know.

MOORE: And what happened, then? Tell me a little bit about your life? What happened after this? What happened?

BRODIE: After this I, and then I, then I looked for different jobs and all that. You know, everybody got to make (?). And so then, after a while, I met my husband. Or I remember that time, we were kind of slow, the industry. I met my husband, and we got married.

MOORE: How old were you then?

BRODIE: Then I was about twenty-two. Twenty-two or twenty-three, something like that.

MOORE: And your husband was, what nationality was your

husband?

BRODIE: He was also Jewish, yes.

MOORE: And was his family from the same area, or was he . . .

BRODIE: He came from Vilna originally.

MOORE: Was he born there in Vilna?

BRODIE: What did I say? Oh, I was talking about my husband.
Well, my husband wasn't, was an American. He was born
in Boston, Massachusetts.

MOORE: And so you met him.

BRODIE: So I met him, where did I meet him, in New York, yeah.
In New York, yeah.

MOORE: And you married.

BRODIE: Because they moved to New York when he was a little
boy. So that's how I met my husband.

MOORE: And did you have children and a family?

BRODIE: Oh, yeah. Then I had three children. One, the three
children that I had, my daughter. And I have a son.
My daughter, and then I have a son in Newark, New

Jersey, Newark.

MOORE: And what did your husband do for a living then?

BRODIE: Then he worked for a, he was a white-collar man. What should I call him?

MOORE: In business, or . . .

BRODIE: In a, it was, I think, a bank, I think.

MOORE: So he was a white collar worker.

BRODIE: A white collar worker.

MOORE: And so did your children, did you teach your children Yiddish, or did you speak Yiddish to your husband?

BRODIE: No. With my husband I spoke English.

MOORE: And with your children you spoke . . .

BRODIE: With my children English, so in the house we spoke English, you know what I mean?

MOORE: Well, looking back over your life, how do you feel about coming to the United States? Was it a good decision, or was it . . .

BRODIE: It was a very good decision.

MOORE: Did any of your family ever, did you ever want to go back?

BRODIE: No.

MOORE: Did . . .

BRODIE: Never.

MOORE: Did any of your family ever go back to live?

BRODIE: No. Nobody that I know of.

MOORE: And would you say that your family in general shares your attitude that it was a good decision? Do you think the rest of your family feels similar?

BRODIE: Right, right, the rest of the family similar. Because married here, I married a very, a very nice, you know, nice person. He was intelligent, he was fine, he was really, he didn't drink, he didn't smoke, he didn't do any of those things. And then we had three children, and they were all, they all went to college. And the one in New Jersey, Newark, New Jersey, he is a biochemist, and he works in the laboratory. In other words, he takes charge of the laboratory. And my daughter went to college. She was a schoolteacher.

And then she married a prominent lawyer. And that's my life up until now.

MOORE: And did you have any family tragedy that occurred once everybody got here to this country? Did anything happen?

BRODIE: The first thing, my brother-in-law, my oldest sister's husband, passed away, and he was only twenty-nine years old.

MOORE: How did that happen? From what?

BRODIE: He had a tonsil operation. In those days everybody had tonsil operations, you know. And then the the doctor was incompetent, and he cut his throat, I suppose. These days they would have sued, I would suppose, you know. But in those days, you know, so my sister remarried with a child.

MOORE: With her son.

BRODIE: With their son.

MOORE: Did anything else happen?

BRODIE: That was a tragedy to everybody, because he was a very nice, you know. He had very important friends and all

that. He used to come to the house. So then in a short time she married someone, she remarried.

MOORE: Do you think, however, she felt good about coming to this country, in spite of the tragedy?

BRODIE: Sure, sure. All over. Because there was nothing there. Even with my, even with my father, what should I say, if he should have the business, you know what I mean, the way it used to be, things would go smooth. There wasn't much of a future. You know, that there is a future, but not the way, everybody doesn't have the same taste. Doesn't understand what the future should be, you know what I mean.

MOORE: And you think that your children have a better future here?

BRODIE: Of course. In Russia, first of all, what do you mean, you asked me if I wanted to go back to Russia, you mean while they had Communism? Of course not, never, and certainly not now.

MOORE: Yeah. Well, that's a good place to actually stop. We'd like to thank you on behalf of Ellis Island for participating and helping us by providing your life

story. And of . . .

BRODIE: Thank you. It wasn't my life story, because I'll tell you about. If you got me when I was younger, I had a good memory.

MOORE: You have a very good memory.

BRODIE: I have confusion.

MOORE: No.

BRODIE: I have confusion in my mind.

MOORE: No, it was a very good, a very good story.

BRODIE: I forget. I start something, I forget. No, it's not like a story should be. Sometimes when I think, when I am by myself, and I happen to think about all those things, it seems that like it's so easy, you know. But . . .

MOORE: But anyway, you're doing a great service. And is there anything else you'd like to add?

BRODIE: Does it sound good?

MOORE: Is there anything else you'd like to add before we sign off?

BRODIE: I can't think of it for the moment.

MOORE: That's all right.

BRODIE: There are so many things, you know, that happens through your life, but who can remember. Sometimes you remember it without the (?), you remember.

MOORE: Well, thank you very much. This is Kate Moore signing off for the Ellis Island Oral History Project in Santa Monica, California on January 10, 1994.

BRODIE: That's what you call a memory.

MOORE: You have a very good memory.