

KM-031

MARY KARZ (KARZARNOVSKY) HOLTZ

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INTERVIEW DATE: JANUARY 24, 1994

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INTERVIEWER: KATE MOORE

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TRANSCRIPT REVIEWED BY: PAUL E. SIGRIST, JR., 12/1994

RUSSIA, 1920

AGE 10

PASSAGE ON "THE ROTTERDAM"

Oral Historian's Note: Mrs. Holtz is the sister of Sam Karz, Interview KM-030 and Maurice Karz, Interview KM-032. Both brothers are present during this interview. Paul E. Sigrist, Jr., Director of the Oral History Project, 12/11/1994.

MOORE: Good afternoon. This is Kate Moore for the National Park Service. Today is the 24th of January, 1994, and I am in San Diego, California at the home of Mary Holtz of the Karz family, who came from Russia in December 1920, when she was eight years old. Why don't you begin by giving me your full name and date of birth, please?

HOLTZ: My full name, my married, my single name was Mary Karz.

MOORE: And originally Karz was?

HOLTZ:Originally, that was my parents' name, Karzarnovsky.

MOORE:Karzarnovsky. Could you spell Karzarnovsky?

HOLTZ:Yes, I can. K-A-R-Z-A-R-N-O-V-I-K-Y-R, uh, K-Y.

MOORE:S-K-Y.

HOLTZ:I can write it down for you quicker.

MOORE:Okay. We'll do that afterwards, okay?

HOLTZ:Yeah.

MOORE:We'll do that afterwards. Godo. Okay. And, so your name was Mary Karzarnovsky.

HOLTZ:Karzarnovsky, but it wasn't Mary at that time. It was, they called me, one of my cousins called me Matilda, one of my cousins, they had me different names till it went to Mary. (she laughs)

MOORE:I see. And your date of birth, please?

HOLTZ:My date of birth, March 25th.

MOORE:Yes?

HOLTZ:That's it. (she laughs)

MOORE:19 . . . 19 . . .

HOLTZ:(she laughs) 19, um, 1912. 1910? 1910, he says.

MOORE:1910. Okay. So you were actually ten years old when you came over.

HOLTZ:Yeah.

MOORE:Okay, 1910. Now, where were you born?

HOLTZ:I was born in Minsk, Russia, M-I-N-S-K.

MOORE:And what size town was Minsk then?

HOLTZ:One of the big, one of the biggest towns like any, like Moscow, or any other of those big cities.

MOORE:And what did the town look like? Do you remember? What do you remember about the town?

HOLTZ:I remember the town very well. It was, we lived in the, one of the finest neighborhoods. Because my, a cousin, my cousin, uh, was it a cousin or an uncle? It was an uncle, huh? My uncle bought those, my uncle bought the property which had, which had one, two, three or four homes on that estate, beautiful homes. Because those homes were taken by government at that time, all the high government people

lived in these homes before we came there, before my uncle bought the places. When they all ran away, because the war started, the war was just going to start, the First World War, they all ran away, the big shot in the government. They didn't want to stay there because they would be arrested or hung or something. So shot to death, probably, most likely. So they all left, and so my uncle had a job, had a prospect to buy that place, the whole place, and he got it for practically nothing, but it was a gorgeous place. Gardens in the back, with lots of fruit, fruit gardens. Fruit gardens, and the front was all vegetable gardens on both sides, and the middle was a great, big gate that you drove in or walked in and, to each home. To each home, there was only three or four homes, that's all.

MOORE:And how large . . .

HOLTZ:Big homes.

MOORE:Big homes. How many rooms?

HOLTZ:Big homes. They had three bedrooms. A lot, each bedroom was larger than those two rooms with the kitchen together, and they had fireplaces. They had regular fireplaces, beautiful, all in tile.

MOORE:All right. So, we'll go back to that in a moment. So that's, what was the major industry at that time of Minsk, when you were a child? Do you remember?

HOLTZ:My dad had a yardage, he sold wholesale and retail yardage, and he used to go to Moscow, he used to go, from Minsk he used to go to different countries where he used to get the merchandise what they didn't have in Minsk, so he'd get it wholesale. And then he'd bring it back to Minsk and keep some in the store, and the rest sell to the other storekeepers.

MOORE:Now, what was your father's name?

HOLTZ:Leon Karz.

MOORE:Leon Karz.

HOLTZ:Leon Karzarnovsky.

MOORE:And his occupation was a merchant?

HOLTZ:Yes.

MOORE:And did he have any other profession at that time?

HOLTZ:At that time, no. He didn't have any other profession, except that he had a beautiful voice. Because his whole family

had gorgeous voices. His sister was an opera singer, and she sang beautifully. And all of his family had beautiful voices, and my father had a beautiful voice. So he sang in different temples and different places, New York, and different, when he came here. In the old country he used to sing.

MOORE:So he was a cantor.

HOLTZ:A cantor, and he was, also had the store.

MOORE:And what did he look like, your father?

HOLTZ:I'll show you the picture.

MOORE:No, you have to say it for us for the tape, if you can.

MOORE:Well, he was a handsome looking man, and he had a moustache and a little small beard, a very small beard, and a moustache. I have a picture here. So . . .
(she laughs) And he was a good-looking man. My mother was a beauty.

MOORE:Go back to your father a little bit. How tall was he, would you say?

HOLTZ:My father was a tall man. He wasn't short. He must have been six feet, no, maybe five-nine, five-nine. (she laughs)

He remembers he was five-nine. Between five-nine and six feet, somewhere around there. My mother was also, she was taller than I, than I am.

MOORE:Was your father's, how would you describe your father's personality and temperament?

HOLTZ:He was very good natured. He was a very good natured person but he, every once in a while, he was a slightly nervous person, but he was good-natured. But he, my mother was the one that held onto the strings of the way my father, because my father took a lot of chances during the war. He used to go from Minsk to Moscow to sell certain things where they couldn't get it there, and it was very dangerous to go. If they would have caught him, he would have been put against the wall and shot complete, right away, without any problems or trouble or anything, without anything.

MOORE:What was he selling that was so dangerous?

HOLTZ:He was selling, they didn't have any sugar. He was selling saccharine and because at that time sugar was, no sugar, and saccharine was very dangerous to take from one state to another country, to a different place, and he took chances.

MOORE:Was he smuggling it, actually?

HOLTZ:Yes.

MOORE:(she laughs) And so your father took chances in life a lot.

HOLTZ:Oh, he took such chances, that the last time he was, the last time that he went, that's why we're in this country, because the very last time that he went he always put his suitcase with the money and double-decker money that nobody ever knew, for years he did that and nobody suspected him because he was always away from his suitcase. The last time he was also away from the suitcase but the police went and knocked on each one, and he got horrified. And so he skipped the train and he went, he left the train and he was, so they wouldn't catch him.

MOORE:He left the suitcase, too?

HOLTZ:And he left the suitcase. And they couldn't, they didn't know whose it was because they couldn't get a hold of him. And he came home, he walked most of the way, and so by the time he got home, he was all, his clothes was ragged and he was barefooted and all that. He was in a mess, and that's when he decided that he'd better write to his brothers to come to America.

MOORE:Wow.

HOLTZ:Now, that's a story for you.

MOORE:That's a story all right. Now, what about, back to your mother, then. What was your mother's maiden name to begin with?

HOLTZ:Rebecca, uh, Greenberg.

MOORE:Rebecca Greenberg, okay. And what occupation was she, did she have?

HOLTZ:Well, she was a designer.

MOORE:What type of designer?

HOLTZ:Any kind. She'd design anything, without even a pattern.

MOORE:Major clothing.

HOLTZ:Dresses, little boys' suits, everything.

MOORE:And what did she look like?

HOLTZ:Beautiful. (gesturing to a photograph) There she is.

MOORE:And her hair was what color?

HOLTZ:That long.

MOORE:Long, down to her waist?

HOLTZ:Right down, further than her waist. Take beautiful, thick, dark brown, brown, I think it was brown before she got grey. It was dark brown, very thick, beautiful. She was a beautiful woman.

MOORE:And how tall was she?

HOLTZ:I can show you the picture. She was taller than I am, a head taller.

MOORE:So about five-five?

HOLTZ:Five-four.

MOORE:And what was her personality and temperament?

HOLTZ:She was the smartest person on earth. I don't think there's another person, she knew my father like a book. She knew exactly what every child was thinking about. She knew what every child had in mind. And we were five children, and she knew every one of us by heart. She knew everyone's character, everyone's temperament, and so my mother, to me my mother was an angel.

MOORE:And what were her chores around the house?

HOLTZ:Well, we always had maids in the house, so she was usually, she didn't do any housework. She usually helped my father once in a while, not very often, because she didn't have to. He had several people working. And she was bearing children, and having children, you know.

MOORE:She took care of the children.

HOLTZ:Well, she just kept an eye on the children, and we had maids. And, uh . . .

MOORE:Nannies?

HOLTZ:We had five, six children. Seven? Two died.

MOORE:Did you have, did you yourself, did you have a nanny take care of you?

HOLTZ:Oh, yes.

MOORE:Oh, I see.

HOLTZ:I had a separate nanny.

MOORE:The microphone.

HOLTZ:Oh. Excuse me.

MOORE:You had a separate nanny.

HOLTZ:Yeah, it was separate for the children, and separate for housework, and every once in a while another one would come in separate for other things.

MOORE:Did you have gardeners and . . .

HOLTZ:We didn't, we didn't have the gardeners because we lived with my uncle who bought, when they were running away, when people were running away, all the Communists were running away, what were they, Maurice? What were the people that were, before the Communists were there? You don't remember? Oh. Anyhow, before anything happened, when there were problems people were running away from there. And my uncle had a chance to buy a beautiful, beautiful, beautiful place with gardens and trees and everything, and he bought it and he let us live in one of them.

MOORE:Now, how many, name your, could you name your brothers and sisters in their order of birth?

HOLTZ:Certainly, certainly. I wasn't the first one. The firstborn was a boy. I don't know his name. I can't remember his name, but it was a boy. I was the second one, and my brother Sam was the third one, and my sister Rose was the fourth one. And my brother, and there was another brother that died, and then my younger brother, Maurice.

MOORE:Well, how many years between each of you?

HOLTZ:Probably two years.

MOORE:Okay. And, now, back to your house, then. You said your house was a lot, how large was your house that you lived in?

HOLTZ:The rooms were, they're not like here. The ceilings were double, they were so high, like you see in those great, big mansions. And each room was like three rooms of these, I mean very large. As a matter of fact, the bedroom was so large that my mother had to put a baby grand piano in the bedroom, because the dining room and the living room was, in the dining room and the living room she didn't have room, so she put it in the bedroom. It was so large, it was immense.

MOORE:And how were those rooms heated?

HOLTZ:With little pieces of wood like that, little, little pieces of wood like that. We used to put it in there, and then the heat would come out.

MOORE:In the fireplace.

HOLTZ:In the fireplace, yes.

MOORE:And how were the rooms lit?

HOLTZ:Huh?

MOORE:How were the rooms lit?

HOLTZ:How were the rooms lit? Uh, I think it was gas. Gas, by gas.

MOORE:By gas, okay. And what kind of furniture did you have, like
in the living room and dining room and kitchen?

HOLTZ:Nicer than what I have. Everything was hand-carved. My
mother's furniture was beautiful, and everything was
hand-carved furniture.

MOORE:Who else lives in your house? Anyone else besides the children
and your mother and father?

HOLTZ:No one else.

MOORE:And did, how far from town was that house?

HOLTZ:It wasn't very far from town. As far as that goes, it was,
each section had on the side some little places where you
can buy it, but then the main place where my father had
the store, that was, all the stores were there, one after
another, different kinds of stores. The drugstore, I
remember, was on the corner, and you had to go down the

stairs to the drugstore. It was a big drugstore. And so the stores were where my father's store was, in the section of the, where all the stores were. And across the street from the store was a big hospital. I remember that.

MOORE:So your father actually ran, was a merchant who ran stores in town?

HOLTZ:He ran a store.

MOORE:A store?

HOLTZ:A store. But he gave, like I say, he used to buy merchandise, and he used to go, and then he used to sell it, sometimes, what he had over, to other stores.

MOORE:Did you have any animals at home?

HOLTZ:No.

MOORE:Did you have horses or . . .

HOLTZ:No.

MOORE:Okay. Did you have a garden?

HOLTZ:Oh, yes.

MOORE:And what did you grow in the garden?

HOLTZ:The garden, my window, my bedroom windows was in a great, big garden from here, I would say, like a half a block long. And trees, rows of trees, fruit trees, apple trees, orange trees. I mean, not orange trees, pear trees, plum trees. And in between the trees they had bushes of different kind of, what do you call it, berries? Bushes of different kind of berries. Red berries, blueberries, this kind of berries. Bushes, bushes, right in between. It was beautiful. And then we had, towards the back of the garden we had a great, big swing where the children used to swing up and down, and there was like a, a little house built out of, you know, thin wood that you could see through, where we children used to sit and eat, and they had a table and benches, and we used to, and then the swing was right opposite, and we used to swing, you know, I remember. It was beautiful.

MOORE:Who did the cooking in your family?

HOLTZ:That's one thing, my mother used to like to do her own cooking, even though we had help. But she used to be a very good cook, and she didn't depend on anybody.

MOORE:And what was your favorite food at that time?

HOLTZ:My favorite food, I tell you, I had all kinds of favorite foods.

(she laughs) We enjoyed all kinds of food that my mother made. I enjoyed everything she made. Roast chicken, and chicken with beets, with a lot of carrots, grated carrots with honey in it and wrapped up with the meat. Oh, it was delicious.

MOORE:She was a good cook, huh?

HOLTZ:She was a wonderful cook.

MOORE:And describe the kitchen where she cooked.

HOLTZ:The kitchen was a very big kitchen. Like I say, every room was very large, and the kitchen was a very large kitchen. And it had a place where you can rest, and it had chairs and a table and everything.

MOORE:And how about the oven. You mentioned an oven that was in the kitchen?

HOLTZ:An oven was in the kitchen that was all tile on the outside, and it was like a hole like this (she gestures) where you used to put the stuff in.

MOORE:A large hole where you put . . .

HOLTZ:Well, first you made it warm, made it hot by putting wood in there and burning the wood, and it would heat up the whole kitchen, the whole place, the stove. It would, and you could put things in to cook inside, because the, well, the wood was separate, and all around was where you used to put the food to cook.

MOORE:Well, describe, describe a typical meal in your family. Tell me about when you ate your meals, and how you ate them.

HOLTZ:We ate our meals like about twelve thirty, one o'clock was a big meal.

MOORE:In the afternoon.

HOLTZ:Yeah.

MOORE:And who ate at the table, then?

HOLTZ:We all did, and the servants used to help us, you know, bring the dishes, take the dishes away and stuff. But my mother used to like to do the cooking because she was a wonderful cook.

MOORE:And what about entertaining people? Did you have dinner parties at home?

HOLTZ:My mother, there was always people in the house. There were

always people. They knew a lot of people there, too. There was always somebody coming in, coming and going, coming and going. I remember that.

MOORE:And were there other family members nearby? Do you know any of your other family members?

HOLTZ:Yes. My uncle that bought the place, he was, that was my mother's sister, and she lived there with the family. And right next to us was a neighbor that lived right, almost on the top of us, close, so close that they were close with us.

MOORE:What about your grandparents?

HOLTZ:My grandparents we had to go to, we had to take a, let's see. Did we walk? I don't remember. I think we walked over to my grandparents. It wasn't that far. Maybe about three or four blocks away, and she lived on the third floor of a big apartment, of an apartment house.

MOORE:What were your grandparents' names? Do you remember?

HOLTZ:Yes, Greenberg.

MOORE:And their first names?

HOLTZ:Uh, my grandmother's name was Hannah Greenberg, wasn't it,

Maurice? Hannah, uh, Hannah Greenberg and Jacob.

MOORE:Jacob, okay. And did you, how often did you see them?

HOLTZ:Oh, maybe twice a week or three times. I used to, quite often.

MOORE:Were you particularly, who were you closest to in the family
as relatives?

HOLTZ:My grandmother.

MOORE:And so you . . .

HOLTZ:I used to sleep with her. In her bed was just like, all
feathers, you know, like a down bed. I'll never forget,
a clean, you know, her sheets and pillowcases were
starched. Everything was just beautiful, so, I used to
say to my mother, "Why don't you starch it? Why don't
we starch it?" So my mother used to say, "I don't like
it starched. Grandma likes it starched." Everything was
starched. And I used to get under her covers, yeah, I
used to sleep with my grandmother. That's, oh, I used
to feel so good. (she laughs)

MOORE:And describe your grandfather. What did he do?

HOLTZ:My grandfather was a wonderful man, too. He was in the
wholesale business, too, in the wholesale yardage

business. And he didn't have a store. He used to just go out and buy it and sell it immediately to the stores.

MOORE: Tell me any anecdotes you have about your grandmother and grandfather. What, anything, or your family? Are there any favorite stories you tell about your family members, about their characters, at all?

HOLTZ: Well, my dad used to love to sing, and his whole family, like I say, my, his sister was an opera singer. They were always singers on my father's side. We used to get together and sing. I used to sit and play the piano, and they used to sing. And I played the piano, and this one and that one used to come in, and everyone used to sing and enjoy.

MOORE: What type of songs did you sing?

HOLTZ: Russian songs, Jewish songs, Hebrew songs, all kinds, different nationalities, different ones.

MOORE: And you said your father's sister was an opera singer. Where, did she sing professionally?

HOLTZ: Professionally, in Moscow.

MOORE: Oh. What about religious life? What was it like at home?

HOLTZ:It was, we were not, let's say, how should I call it, you know,
real, real . . .

MOORE:Zealous.

HOLTZ:Huh?

MOORE:Overly zealous.

HOLTZ:Overly, no. We were just, just religious without too much
of it.

MOORE:Did you go to temple regularly?

HOLTZ:We went during the holidays.

MOORE:The high holidays.

HOLTZ:The high holidays. And maybe once in a while on Saturdays.
Once in a while my father used to go, once in a while,
not all the time.

MOORE:Did you keep kosher at home?

HOLTZ:Yes, they kept kosher at home.

MOORE:And were you, who was more religious, your mother or your
father, would you say?

HOLTZ:They were, my father never interfered. My mother was the one

that did, my mother was the one that, (she laughs) that ran the roost, I would say.

MOORE:Did you experience any religious persecution or prejudice of any sort?

HOLTZ:When we were there? No.

MOORE:And describe the high holidays celebrations. Describe something that you remember back when you were a child of any particular dinner or gathering of family members.

HOLTZ:Well, the family members used to come to the house, and I used to, used to play, and they used to love to listen and sing. And we used to sing a lot, and my father, there was always singing in the house. If not me, my mother, my father. My mother was not a singer, but she used to love to listen. But my father, the whole family, his family, they all had voices, born voices, not . . .

MOORE:So on high holidays you would sing?

HOLTZ:Yeah, we would sing, we would, I used to know so many songs and play the piano and sing, play the piano and sing.

MOORE:What about school life? Do you remember school life there?

HOLTZ:Uh, school life, I used to have a private teacher at home.

So I didn't go to school. I used to have a private, down there it wasn't, they didn't tell you you had to go to school, you had to go to school. You had to know your, you had to have an education, and my parents wanted me to have a good education, so they had a private teacher come and teach me home.

MOORE:And did they teach, did every child have a different teacher?

HOLTZ:Uh, no, because I was, no one of, the other children went to kindergarten.

MOORE:Oh, I see.

HOLTZ:They went to kindergarten. My brother, my sister, they went to, there was a kindergarten, and they went to the kindergarten there with all the other small, just like here.

MOORE:Did you learn any English prior to coming to the United States?

HOLTZ:No.

MOORE:Did your parents know English before coming?

HOLTZ:No, no. (a telephone rings) Excuse me. You can answer, Maurice. What else did you want to know?

HOLTZ:When you were learning at home, what was your favorite subject, then?

HOLTZ:The favorite, first of all, I was, I had to learn to read, and arithmetic was my favorite subject, because I was very good in it.

MOORE:What languages did you learn?

HOLTZ:Well, don't forget I was still young. I didn't, I spoke, I spoke Russian, I spoke Jewish and Hebrew.

MOORE:And what did you speak at home?

HOLTZ:Uh, Russian.

MOORE:You spoke Russian.

HOLTZ:Russian and Jewish.

MOORE:To whom did you speak Jewish, then?

HOLTZ:To my mother and my father, and Russian, also. But the majority of time we spoke, the most time, most of the time we spoke Russian.

MOORE:I see.

HOLTZ:Because I can speak now Russian, and after all these years

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people are surprised that I can speak Russian yet.

END OF SIDE ONE, TAPE ONE

BEGINNING OF SIDE TWO, TAPE ONE

MOORE:What about to the hired help? What did you speak to them?

HOLTZ:Russian.

MOORE:Right. And so, your grandparents, what did they speak to you?

HOLTZ:Russian, too.

MOORE:Russian too, okay. Now, who decided to come, you said, you mentioned this incident about your father where he made, took the last risk.

MOORE:That was what decided us to come here.

HOLTZ:And how did your mother react to that?

HOLTZ:She wanted, she was very happy about it.

MOORE:So it was, who did they know in the States already?

HOLTZ:My father's brothers, there were three of them here. Three or four, huh.

MOORE:Where were they?

HOLTZ:In Los Angeles.

MOORE:All right. How did they, then, arrange and get ready to go?

HOLTZ:What do you mean arrange and get ready to go?

MOORE:How long between the decision and leaving did it take?

HOLTZ:Well, it was, by the time we got here it was three months, because it took us, we had to sneak out of the country because they wouldn't let anyone go out of the country. The Communists wouldn't let anybody go out unless they were, what do you call, Maurice, what do you call Russian? Huh? Anyhow, unless a person is very, very poor and dressed real bad and they're on a horse, you know, in a wagon, and no one paid much attention, that's the way we got dressed, and that's the way we went.

MOORE:So you dressed down.

HOLTZ:Otherwise we'd never be here.

MOORE:All right. Now, back up a little bit. What do you remember about the Revolution as a child?

HOLTZ:Well, when the Revolution started I was, it was just, all I remember is all the high, the big chiefs, the big people, the, all ran away from the city. They all ran out of the

city to go someplace where they could stay, where they didn't, weren't bothered. So they left a lot of places vacant. I'm talking to her. I'm sorry, I'm not . . .
(referring to the sound engineer)

MOORE:That's all right. It's just, you don't have to, she's just recording, because the microphone's . . .

HOLTZ:I see. So it was very, it took us a long time to get to the States because we had, we had a hard time.

MOORE:This is interesting, now. Now, what happened to your house and all your possessions and the baby grand piano . . .

HOLTZ:We left everything.

MOORE:Standing?

HOLTZ:We left, just left everything there standing, and we left.
Because my uncle that had the place, that owned the place, we just left everything as is. We only took some clothes, that's all.

MOORE:And what's, did you take anything dear to you? I see you have a picture of your mother on the wall. What did you take with you at all?

HOLTZ:Well, we took, just like I say, a few things that was very,

very close to us.

MOORE:Like what? What type of things?

HOLTZ:Very, very small things.

MOORE:Like, give an example of a small thing.

HOLTZ:Jewelry, what we had on so we can hide it in here (she gestures)
and nobody should see it. Otherwise clothes, some clothes
and a few suitcases and that's it.

MOORE:And describe leaving the house. Did people come to say goodbye
to you, or . . .

HOLTZ:Uh, we didn't have a chance to say goodbye to many people,
because we left in the middle of the night. We left, we
had to sneak out of the city.

MOORE:And how did your parents explain it to you as a child when
they started.

HOLTZ:They didn't have to explain it. I saw it all. And I, at that
time I still remember how it was.

MOORE:So you remember them talking, planning, the sneaking?

HOLTZ:My father got a hold of a man that had a horse and buggy, and
he got a hold of him and he talked to him and he said he's

going to pay him so much or so much if he's going to take us to the Polish border. And the Polish border was not, not in Warsaw but in Lida, a city which is called Lida, Poland. It belonged to Poland.

MOORE:How do you spell Lida?

HOLTZ:L-I-D-A. And it used to belong to Poland. And Poland was freer, much freer, than the Russians were, the Communists. They were, you could do things, you could, everything was free. You could go places. They had restaurants. They had everything. It was free. But not in Russia, in communist Russia. That was nothing free. They watched you like a hawk.

MOORE:So what happened? The wagon came with the man in the middle of the night.

HOLTZ:Then the wagon came with the, in the middle of the night. He was very frightened, but he said he'll do it if we'll pay him so much, and so on. And we said we would if he'll take us directly to the Polish border.

MOORE:What did you wear?

HOLTZ:We wore, my grandma gave us all her other clothes that she used to wear when she was young, and when my mother was

young. It was like old clothes, you know, like you see nowadays the people that have nothing. Old, worn clothes.

MOORE:Sorry. (referring to the microphone)

HOLTZ:Old, worn clothes. But they were warm, and we, we just went that way. We left everything. We didn't take clothes along. We figured if we get to Warsaw where it's free and the Poles were there, and the Polish people let everybody go out and buy what they wanted, and they have stores and they had, they had everything that any city would have, like in this country.

MOORE:Did you plan on buying clothes in Poland?

HOLTZ:Oh, yeah.

MOORE:Okay. So you got out. Do you remember the trip through the night in those clothes?

HOLTZ:We had (she laughs) in those clothes, I remember, we were like, dressed like, they say, how would you say, like people that are running away from . . .

MOORE:Refugees.

HOLTZ:Refugees, we were refugees, exactly. That's the word I wanted. We were just dressed like refugees, all old

clothes. My grandmother . . .

MOORE:So what about the trip? Do you remember the buggy trip?

HOLTZ:The buggy trip, we had to stop. The horse was tired, we had to stop. My father used to get down, my mother used to get down and walk behind the horse, and just the children were sitting in the, in the wagon.

MOORE:And how long was that trip to the border?

HOLTZ:It was a long, long trip.

MOORE:Like would you say, a child, of course, remembers differently.
How long is long?

HOLTZ:It was, it was almost three weeks or more by the time we got to the border, because . . .

MOORE:Where'd you sleep, then?

HOLTZ:We didn't, we slept right in, we didn't even stop anyplace because there was no place. It was just desert, not desert, forest, or stuff like that. It was, there was no place to stop.

MOORE:Where did you eat?

HOLTZ:We took along what we had, and just, we ate what we could,

and that's all.

MOORE:And you kept moving.

HOLTZ:We kept moving, day and night. And, until we got to that place.

MOORE:Because a horse can't walk three weeks in a row, can it?

HOLTZ:But we stopped and let him rest, and we stopped and let him rest. That's why it took us so long. It took us three months to get to this country, so you can imagine.

MOORE:What was the atmosphere during this whole trip, do you remember?

HOLTZ:I remember.

MOORE:What was it like?

HOLTZ:I remember when we came to Poland, you know, Warsaw, like a new world opened up to us, a new world, just like you come to America. And it was just, we saw a man drive in a horse and buggy. He had a whole load full of bread, and the bread was fresh, and it smelled so good. And my father went down and stopped the man to give us, to buy some bread from him. That's how we, just, that's how we were so anxious to have a smell of bread, eat some bread. It was very, very, how should I say, it was such an adventure

that no one would believe if they didn't go through it themselves.

MOORE:Did anyone threaten you on the road there?

HOLTZ:No, there were, they didn't threaten us because they always let the poor people wander off wherever they wanted to go, and we were dressed like very poor people, we were dressed that way. So . . .

MOORE:Once you got to Poland what did you do?

HOLTZ:When we got to the Polish border there was a train waiting. There was a train standing, not waiting, for us, but standing, and it was not a regular train. It was a train, a baggage train that you put baggage in, and there was a bunch of soldiers sitting in a group, Polish soldiers, and they saw, and they saw us with the little, this one was a little one, (referring to her brother Maurice) like he was only about six, seven months old, or maybe a year, not even a year. When we started, you were not a year old. When we started out you were not a year old, Maurice. You must have been nine months old when we started out.

MOORE:And so you saw soldiers, and what happened?

HOLTZ:And the soldiers took pity on us, and when that, a freight train came, you know, when the freight train was there and it was going to, we had to wait for hours to get the, till the freight train went. So when the freight train was getting ready to go, the soldiers pushed us all into the, into the train, into the, and they went in, and they sat all around us, and we were just in the middle, sitting bunched up, feet and everything. We hardly put a foot out. (she laughs)

MOORE:And where was the train going?

HOLTZ:The train was going to the other side of Poland, to Warsaw, towards Warsaw, to Lida.

MOORE:To Lida.

HOLTZ:Uh-huh.

MOORE:And how long was that trip?

HOLTZ:Oh, it was, I think, around five, six hours, that's all. Not so very long, but those soldiers were eating bread, and we were all crying. (referring to her brother, Maurice) He was crying. He was a little baby. And he wanted some bread, and the soldiers took pity and gave him some bread. (she laughs) It was, it's a story that you could

make a beautiful picture out of it, I'll tell you that.

MOORE:And what were your parents, what was the mood of your parents during this time?

HOLTZ:The mood of the parents was, especially my mother was, she was a soldier. She was, I don't think that people like her, really. I don't think there were any one that I know that was like her. She had a lot of guts. She had a lot of strength, not so much, she was thin, but she had a lot of guts and she had brains. She had a lot of brains. And my father listened to her, and he was a good man.

MOORE:When you were children, what did you do for entertainment during this whole time? Did you sing? You said your family sang.

HOLTZ:What? We did what we could, you know. We sang, we, we just did about anything we could do.

MOORE:And so what happened once you got to Warsaw?

HOLTZ:Once we got to Warsaw we were in prime. (she laughs) That was the best time of our lives. We went right away to a hotel. There were a lot of hotels, and they, the company that, let's see. The company that knew that we were going to America, they had places for the people to stay, and

so we went to this particular place where all the other, they used to say in Russian (Russian), the people that wanted to go to America. And they used to come to stay in that particular big hotel, a big, big place. They used to give you to eat and everything. They used to give you lunch, breakfast, everything.

MOORE:Now, did your parents, at this time, ever tell you anything about America before you went?

HOLTZ:No.

MOORE:Did they know much about it?

HOLTZ:They didn't know much about it themselves. They only knew that it was a free country, and they knew what my uncles used to tell them, that it was wonderful to be here, and they were all in Rochester, New York. That was where we, that's where we came, to Rochester, New York, first.

MOORE:All right. Now, from Warsaw, uh, from Lida, sorry, you were in Warsaw, were you?

HOLTZ:We came to Warsaw. And in Warsaw . . .

MOORE:Back up one second. In Warsaw, why was it the best time of your life?

HOLTZ:The best time of my life, where?

MOORE:When you got to Warsaw, why was that . . .

HOLTZ:Because everything was free. We had all the food we wanted.

We had, my mother went out with the children and she bought us all new clothes. Every one of us was dressed to kill.

My mother was a real, she knew dresses, you know. She knew how to dress us. My uncle sent us some money from America, and we went out and we had ourselves all dressed up from top to bottom. We looked like pictures.

MOORE:What did you do, too, there?

HOLTZ:And we had to stay there to wait for the visa.

MOORE:How long did you wait?

HOLTZ:We waited for over a month, I think, because it was, it took time to get this and to get these kind of papers and those kind of, it wasn't easy. But we didn't mind, because we used to go out and eat all the time. (she laughs) In different places. And we were living the Life of Riley, then. (she laughs)

MOORE:And then at one point you got your visa. Did you have any medical examinations there to go through?

HOLTZ:We didn't have any medical examinations until we got to the ship, and then they checked everyone.

MOORE:What ship?

HOLTZ:Um . . . Let's see, do I remember the ship? I can't remember the ship. I used to remember the ship, but I don't remember now.

MOORE:That's all right. It doesn't matter. All right. From Warsaw, you were there?

HOLTZ:From Warsaw we went to Germany. We had to go to all different countries to get to the ship. The ship was in the Netherlands, in the Netherlands. So that's where we got the ship. It was in Am, Rotterdam. Was Rotterdam where the, or Amsterdam? Where is, Rotterdam is where all the ships are? No? He's shaking his head. Where was the ship?

MOORE:Whatever you think, it doesn't matter. He's not helping you.

HOLTZ:I want him to know, I want to ask him where the ships are. Rotterdam or Amsterdam? You don't know?

KARZ:The ship was the Rotterdam and we took it in Amsterdam.

HOLTZ:We took it in Amsterdam. So why didn't you tell me?

MOORE:The ship was the Rotterdam.

HOLTZ:Yeah, the ship was called Rotterdam, and we took it in Amsterdam. I want him to help me. (referring to her brother, Maurice, also present) When we got on the ship it was really nice.

MOORE:Do you remember seeing the ship for the first time?

HOLTZ:Yeah.

MOORE:Back up. How did you get from Warsaw to Amsterdam?

HOLTZ:Well, we had to go to Germany.

MOORE:How?

HOLTZ:We had to go by train.

MOORE:By train.

HOLTZ:To Germany, and there was a, and then we went, from Germany we went to Rotterdam, was it Rotterdam?

MOORE:Amsterdam.

HOLTZ:Amsterdam, the, where the ships are, Amsterdam. So we had to go to Amsterdam and wait to get on the ship.

MOORE:How long were you there?

HOLTZ:Not too long. I think around a few days.

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

HOLTZ:That's right.

MOORE:What did it look like?

HOLTZ:Oh, it was tremendous. It was beautiful. They had first class, second class, third class. Third class was down below, second class and third class, first class.

MOORE:What class did you travel?

HOLTZ:My uncle sent us, we were lucky to get the third class.
(she laughs)

MOORE:You were down below.

HOLTZ:We were down below. (she laughs)

MOORE:And what was it like down . . .

HOLTZ:But we didn't mind, because we had everything that the upper class, we used to go upstairs anyhow. (she laughs)
You know, when you're kids, you're not going to stay downstairs, so we went on the second floor and we went

around. And many times we ate on the second floor. You know how kids are.

MOORE: Did any family members see you off at the boat? Were you alone, only just your family?

HOLTZ: Just my family. We never had anyone in Warsaw at that time.

MOORE: And what, when did the ship depart, what month of the year?

HOLTZ: We came to this country in, let's see, we came to this country . . .

MOORE: You said in December.

HOLTZ: December the 20 . . . No, not December. I know it was cold. But we came to Los Angeles, so it, we came to, first we came, let's see, I can't remember. We came to Los Angeles first, yes. We came to Los Angeles, because . . .

MOORE: No, no.

HOLTZ: Our uncles were in Los Angeles, weren't they?

MOORE: That doesn't matter, right. We'll go back to that.

HOLTZ: No, just a minute. I really want to know. I remember that I was living, oh, in Rochester, New York. We came to Rochester, New York first, didn't we, Maurice? Didn't

we come to Rochester, New York, Maurice? We were supposed to be on the third class but, like I say, we didn't mind because we were children, we used to run up the second, up and down, but we had good food and we enjoyed, there was always dancing and different things on, you know, on the ship, in the first class, the second class. They had a lot of doings and music and everything, and we enjoyed it. We children, you know, you always, children go everywhere. You can't hide them from things. They just go here, there, and they find places to go.

MOORE:So did you enjoy that trip?

HOLTZ:I sure did.

MOORE:And you think you were . . .

HOLTZ:And I'm never, I'm not the type that I got sick or anything like that. No one in our family, no one.

MOORE:No one got sick.

HOLTZ:No one. Not, my mother didn't, my father didn't, no one got sick on the ship.

MOORE:And what was it like below? Can you describe it?

HOLTZ:It was, it wasn't the first class. It was, they treated us

very nicely. They gave us good food.

MOORE:And what about the beds? How were they arranged?

HOLTZ:The beds were two stories.

MOORE:Bunk beds?

HOLTZ:Bunk beds. In the first, in the second class they had single beds. Here they had two, like one on top of the other, two. So one slept here, (she gestures) one slept here, but it was all right.

MOORE:One slept on the bottom, one slept on top.

HOLTZ:Uh-huh.

MOORE:And how, did you have your own room?

HOLTZ:Yeah.

MOORE:Below?

HOLTZ:We had our own room below. We had all our own, because we were seven of us. We took up the whole space.
(she laughs)

MOORE:What about the eating accommodations? How did you eat?

HOLTZ:Well, they had three meals a day, and they had breakfast.

I think breakfast was from eight to nine, or from eight, from eight to nine thirty, something like that. And we always managed to be on time. (she laughs)

MOORE:What about, did you ever go on deck at all?

HOLTZ:Yes. We were most of the time on deck. When we weren't eating and we weren't watching somebody, we were always on deck, and we were always trying to get up on the top to see what's happening there. (she laughs)

MOORE:Do you remember, how long was that voyage, then?

HOLTZ:(addressing her brother Sam who is also present) Sam, do you know how long it took? That voyage was about, let's see, it was about, it took a long time, longer than the way they have it now. It took us about nine or ten days to get to America.

MOORE:Do you remember seeing land for the first time?

HOLTZ:The first time we saw land was in New York. We saw the Statue of Liberty.

MOORE:And what was that like?

HOLTZ:Everybody screamed. We all went out, standing outside on the side of the ship, and everybody was screaming and yelling

and praying and you name it.

MOORE:And how would you describe the atmosphere then? Was it joyful?

HOLTZ:Very exciting, very joyful and crying and everything.

MOORE:And was your whole family on deck then?

HOLTZ:Yes.

MOORE:And . . .

HOLTZ:Everyone was.

MOORE:I'm trying to think, I forgot what to say. Were there any anecdotes about the voyage? Anything funny that happened on the trip, on the boat, that you remember?

HOLTZ:Sam, do you remember anything that happened on the boat. (he answers off mike) (she laughs) (voice off mike)

MOORE:Do you remember seeing the skyline of New York for the first time?

HOLTZ:That's right, I did.

MOORE:What was that like?

HOLTZ:It was beautiful. It was different. You know, I never saw

anything like it. It was, so many people came to the boat, I mean, and the, one of, some people couldn't get off because they were sick, some people went off, people took them home, and some people had families, and they took them home to their families. We didn't, I don't remember who all came over to take us, to take us over. I think my uncles must have come over. No?

MOORE:Let's go back a little bit. Let's go back just a little bit, okay? Now, was there anything that you had never seen before besides the type of skyline in New York when you were on the boat? Was there anything new?

HOLTZ:I didn't, I never was on a big ship, so I didn't know.

MOORE:Okay. Now, when you got the ship and went to Ellis, how did it get to Ellis Island? How did you get from the ship to Ellis Island?

HOLTZ:The ship came directly to a certain place where they stopped, where they couldn't go any more, and then they took us, they took us, I don't remember how we got to Ellis, directly to Ellis Island. It wasn't far. It wasn't far.

MOORE:That's all right.

HOLTZ:And we had to, I don't know what kind of transportation we

had at the time.

MOORE:That's all right. That's all right.

HOLTZ:You know, I don't remember the transportation, what kind of transportation we had to go over to Ellis Island.

MOORE:That's an exciting moment, that's why. You're so . . .

HOLTZ:But in Ellis Island I remember so many people, so many people sleeping up on the top and down below, two stories, you know, here and there, up on the top. People getting sick.

MOORE:Do you remember getting off the boat?

HOLTZ:Oh, yeah. I remember getting off the boat, and we came right to Ellis Island. Because New York, it was in New York.

MOORE:Do you remember the Great Hall at all?

HOLTZ:I sure do. Oh, what a great big hall! That was the biggest place I ever went. You know why I remember it? Because I found a ten dollar piece. Somebody, I don't even know who dropped it. But I saw a piece of paper and it looked like money. And i went over, and I saw, I picked it up, and I looked at it, it was ten dollars. (she laughs) It was ten dollars. And I ran to my mother, and I said, "Do you know what I found? I found ten dollars! Look

at the ten dollars!" (they laugh) And it was a big deal, you know, because then I said, "I'm going to spend it on a lot of things." (they laugh)

MOORE:Well, do you remember also, did you stand in line?

HOLTZ:And we stand, we stood there, we had to stand in line to go and eat and other things. We stood in line for everything when we were there.

MOORE:Did you have a medical examination.

HOLTZ:Yes.

MOORE:And what was that like?

HOLTZ:Well, like they checked us . . .

MOORE:For what?

HOLTZ:They checked us for everything. They checked our hearts and whatever. And we had to stay a week there longer because my little brother had, he caught a cold or something, or he had the measles, I don't remember what he had. But he had something that they made him stay, because I think he had the measles, or whatever it was. Anyway, we had to stay a whole week on the boat on account of that. And, where was I? (she laughs)

MOORE:Oh, so you were having everything checked medically at that time.

HOLTZ:Yes. They were checking us medically, and then finally after a weeks' time, my uncle came over and brought us to Rochester, New York, was it? Where did he take us? I think that's where we came first. We came, we came to Rochester, New York. That's where we lived for . . .

HOLTZ:Now, when you were there for a week, what did you do? What was the type, the week wait that you had?

MOORE:Every day the same thing. Lunch, breakfast, lunch and dinner, and in between you walked around and saw people, and they were walking around, those that couldn't make it, and those that went off, they went off. Those that were sick they didn't get off so fast.

END OF SIDE TWO, TAPE ONE

BEGINNING OF SIDE ONE, TAPE TWO

MOORE:And what was, what were your parents' attitudes when you were detained. Do you remember when they told you?

HOLTZ:Yeah, my parents, they were not excited about it. They knew what it was, that they had to stay there a week longer,

so they, they were used to those kinds of things.

MOORE:And what did your brother have?

HOLTZ:He had the measles, I think.

MOORE:Oh, all right. So your brother had the measles.

HOLTZ:Yeah, that's him.

MOORE:And, okay. So you all waited for him to get better.

HOLTZ:Yeah. When he got better a week later, they let him out.
So my uncle came and picked us up.

MOORE:And do you remember where you first went?

HOLTZ:To Rochester, New York.

MOORE:Do you remember the . . .

HOLTZ:No, first. Wait a minute. First we went on, what name, what's
the name of the street where my uncle lived. It was in
Rochester, New York on, Sam, do you remember the name of
the street?

MOORE:It doesn't matter. That doesn't matter.

HOLTZ:I can't remember the name.

MOORE:That doesn't matter. But let's, do you remember what it looked like? Do you remember any place that you first went to?

HOLTZ:Yes. We went to my uncle's place, and he had, he had a nice house, home, a one-story home, and he had, they had two children. They had two children, a boy and a girl. And his wife, my aunt was very nice to us. We didn't stay too long there. And after that they found a place for us, and we moved in our own place. They, we rented a place, it was upstairs. The first place we rented was upstairs, on the second floor.

MOORE:And what did your father do? What did your parents do for work when they first came here?

HOLTZ:My father was a cantor.

MOORE:Professionally.

HOLTZ:Professionally. And so he used to sing in different places, different synagogues and different places. And my mother was a designer, so she used to make little boy suits, the short little boy suits with the little, what do you call it?

MOORE:Sailor?

HOLTZ:Sailor suits.

MOORE:Yes.

HOLTZ:With a short, (she gestures) with a sailor. My mother used to make, she used to throw them out like nothing.

MOORE:And what about, uh, describe the place that you rented.

HOLTZ:And so she made . . .

MOORE:Describe, how was it heated?

HOLTZ:How it was heated? That's something I don't, I think it had gas heat, if I'm not mistaken.

MOORE:And how was, how big was the place, how many rooms?

HOLTZ:The first place was on Herman Street, wasn't it, Sam? On Herman Street, that we lived?

MOORE:Okay. So you think . . .

HOLTZ:In Rochester, New York?

MOORE:In Rochester, New York.

HOLTZ:Yes.

MOORE:Do you remember anything that you never saw before when you

were a little child and you went there, to Rochester?
Was there anything that impressed you?

HOLTZ:Nothing impressed me because when you're a child you get used to everything, whatever you see. I mean, if you don't see it here, you see it there, and nothing impressed me very much.

MOORE:What about learning English? How did you learn?

HOLTZ:In no time flat.

MOORE:And do you have any stories about going to school? Did you go to school?

HOLTZ:I went, right away I went to second grade.

MOORE:And what happened?

HOLTZ:And I enjoyed being in the second grade because there were a lot of kids that were like me, and they were learning how to speak English, and I learned how to speak English in no time flat. It was no problem to me.

MOORE:Were you ever teased for being . . .

HOLTZ:No, I was never teased.

MOORE:And were there other children . . .

HOLTZ:My mother dressed us like pictures. She made us the prettiest dresses, and all the kids envied us.

MOORE:And . . . (she laughs)

HOLTZ:Really, I'm not kidding. All the kids envied me and my sister, the way we were dressed. They thought, "Who made your dress? Who was the, who made your dress? Where did you get your dress?" That's the way they used to say.

MOORE:And when you went to school, did you ever, do you have any anecdotes about learning English, anything where people . . .

HOLTZ:No problem.

MOORE:All right.

HOLTZ:No problem. I had no one to help me.

MOORE:Do you remember teachers or playmates from your school?

HOLTZ:I remember one teacher, when I went to junior high school.

That's when I was older, when I went to, I think, to the seventh grade that time. And she was really a little, umm. She was the meanest thing that ever was. She hated everybody in the, not only in the class, in every class

that she had she hated everybody. She was mean. She had a stick, and she used to hit the boys. She really did.

MOORE:That's the teacher . . .

HOLTZ:That was the teacher.

MOORE:That stood out in your mind?

MOORE:What was her name? Mrs. Palace, I think her name was, if I'm not mistaken, Mrs. Palace. She was mean. She was terrible. All the other teachers were good, were very good. I had no problems with anybody.

MOORE:What about religious life when you came here? What was it like?

HOLTZ:The same thing. There was no, no problems.

MOORE:No changes?

HOLTZ:No changes, not at all.

MOORE:Your father being a cantor, does that mean that you went more?

HOLTZ:No, no. We, the family was always home, and only during the holidays we went to the, we went to our temples. During the holidays my father used to sing during the holidays wherever we were. Sometimes he used to sing in a different

state altogether. He used to, they, he used to go someplace else, and they liked him, and they took him there, and he sang there for the holidays. Wherever, wherever he got the position for the holidays, he went to sing there.

MOORE:Well . . .

HOLTZ:But otherwise my mother was the one that made a living from the little suits that she used to design.

MOORE:And did you ever suffer any bigotry or persecution here in the States for being Jewish?

HOLTZ:No.

MOORE:Okay. And could you tell us what your family members did for entertainment when you came here, when you were younger.

HOLTZ:We used to, I used to play the piano, and people used to come around and sing. And we used to have, all my mother's friends used to come around and they used to talk and sing, and we had a, we had really a nice life, I would say.

MOORE:Did your parents, your parents came because your father was in a bit of a trouble, in a bit of trouble in Russia. Did they ever have any desire to go back, or talk about

possibly ever going back?

HOLTZ:Never. Never, never, it wasn't mentioned, not ever.

MOORE:And do you think that they were relatively happy with their choice in immigration?

HOLTZ:Absolutely.

MOORE:When they first started out, was their life noticeably different in standard of living here when they first got here than in Russia?

HOLTZ:Didn't seem, my mother never complained. My mother . . .
(a telephone rings) You answer, Maurice. (break in tape)

MOORE:So would you say that your family was satisfied or dissatisfied with their decision to come here?

HOLTZ:They were very happy to come here. They were very happy.

MOORE:Did they ever say so verbally?

HOLTZ:Pardon?

MOORE:Did they ever tell you so?

HOLTZ:No, I knew it. I knew the way they acted, I knew how they

felt. They never complained when they came to America.

When they came to Rochester, New York, they never complained, not a moment, not a day. They were the happiest people that they came here, they were very happy.

Even though they worked hard and did everything, Mother worked very hard, and my father did, too, and my mother worked very hard, but she never complained. She was very happy. She used to make our meals, and the table was set beautifully from A to Z, you know. She was a wonderful cook.

MOORE:Well . . .

HOLTZ:And a baker, too.

MOORE:Did you, how did your parents learn English?

HOLTZ:Well, my mother didn't learn so fast, so much. She understood everything, and she said a few words, but she didn't, she wasn't interested. Maybe she didn't have time, but she wasn't interested. My father learned a little bit more than my mother did. But my mother understood everything.

She understood everything, whatever we talked. She understood everything. But she didn't speak to us in English. she spoke to us in Jewish, or sometimes in Russian. It all depends, you know, where we were or what

we did.

MOORE:How about homesickness? Were they homesick at all for their . . .

HOLTZ:Never.

MOORE:How about for their parents?

HOLTZ:Uh, they weren't homesick because they used to write to each other, and as long as they were alive my mother was happy.

MOORE:And what about, did any family tragedy occur during the years following your coming to America? Did anything in your family happen that was a tragedy?

HOLTZ:Well, years later we lost a brother. It was quite a few years later, after we were here quite a while.

MOORE:And the brother, how did the brother die?

HOLTZ:I really, he was, I don't remember. I really don't remember.

MOORE:Okay. Tell us a little bit about your life now, when you went through school, about what happened to you, and how you got to this point right now. What did you, what was your life like?

HOLTZ:I went to school and, in Rochester, New York. And then, after

that, we moved to Boston. I think we moved to Boston from Rochester, and in Boston I went to school, too. And in Boston I had several boys, college boys, were running after me.

MOORE:How long did you live in Boston?

HOLTZ:How long we lived in Boston? About two or three years. Two or three years. And that's the time when I was a teenager, you know. And I have so many, I was such a beautiful girl. I've got to show you the picture here. You'll see it later. And I was really, everybody was running after me. They wanted me to wait for them till they finished college. But, you know, things happened that you can't wait. You can't wait, if things happen, life happens so differently than what we want. And I liked a few of the boys, I did. But some, there was a neighbor of ours that lived next door, a couple, an older couple, who had children and grandchildren in Oakland. And they had grandchildren, young boys, young men, young boys around in their twenties, and both of them were in business. They came here when they were teenagers also. And they worked themselves up because their family were all in the men's furnishing business. So they went into it too after a while, after they had a bad time doing the same thing

with their, what their uncles did. Their uncles used to sell vegetables in a wagon with the horse and wagon when they first came here years and years ago. So they said, "What's good for, what was good for us is good for you too, guys." And so they made them sell vegetables in Oakland, and they went for about a year or so and they made enough money to open up stores like they had, like their uncles had. And men's furnishing stores in Oakland, and that's what my husband was, in the men's furnishing stores.

MOORE:How did you meet your husband?

HOLTZ:I met my husband through his grandfather. His grandfather was our neighbor, and he said to my mother and father, "I want you to meet my grandsons. Your daughter is going to love them." My grandsons! (she laughs) So he sent for one of his grandsons, and the younger one came first, and I didn't somehow care for the younger one. He, I didn't even want to go out with him because he was a little bit on the harsh side. He was very demanding, telling, you know, which I didn't like. I wanted a person that was easy to talk to.

MOORE:How old were you then?

HOLTZ:About sixteen, seventeen. (to her brothers) What's the matter?

MOORE:That's all right. Sixteen or seventeen. Don't worry about that. And so, all right. So . . .

HOLTZ:I'm telling the way it was.

MOORE:All right. So you met your husband through the grandfather.

HOLTZ:Through the grandfather, yes. So the second one, the second brother came over, and I, and within three days we got engaged. Yeah. Within three days we were engaged, and he saw me on the third day and he says, "We're engaged, I'm going to send you a ring," because he lived in Oakland, and after that I was away with my father in Chicago or some place that I went, my father had a place where he had to sing somewhere, he had a concert to give, and I went with him, and my husband was furious. He didn't see me. He was crazy. (she laughs) He was losing his mind. And finally I came back and we got married after a while.

MOORE:And so we were, you were married, and what about the rest of your life. Tell us about the rest of your life now.

HOLTZ:We were married, and I got settled in Oakland, where my husband had to, where my husband and his brother had, we had two

stores. Each one had a store, but they were in partners.

And they were men's furnishing stores. And so we lived in Oakland for about two years or, something like that, two or three years, and then we moved to San Francisco.

We opened a place in San Francisco because business was getting very bad, so they had to sell the business and open up a place in San Francisco, on Market Street.

MOORE:And did you, can you tell us briefly about the rest of your life in terms of, did you have children? Did you, your own profession, did you stay home, or what did you do?

HOLTZ:I had my old, my older son I had about a year-and-a-half later, or two years later, and then about three years later I had another son which passed away since then. He was only seven years old or so when he died. And, but we, after that we moved from Oakland to San Francisco. That's how we stayed in San Francisco. Most of my life I've lived in San Francisco.

MOORE:And when, how old were you when you were married then, exactly?

You were . . .

HOLTZ>About eighteen.

MOORE>About eighteen. And now when you look back on your life, in

the course of your life, how do you view your parents' immigration?

HOLTZ:How do you mean?

MOORE:What's your attitude towards it? Are you happy . . .

HOLTZ:It was like you see in the movies, very exciting and very different. It's just like you see something in the movies that you're just sitting on edge. That's the way it was at that time.

MOORE:And do you think that your parents were able to make a life for themselves that was in any way comparable to what went on in Russia before?

HOLTZ:Uh, my mother worked very hard, but we weren't, we were not complaining, she never complained, and my father was, we were, we never complained. My father never complained, my mother never complained. We were doing the best we could, and from whatever we had we worked ourselves up a little bit more and more. And the children of course, you know, little by little bit got married, and life went on.

MOORE:We'd like to thank you on behalf of Ellis Island for helping us and giving us this interview of your life.

HOLTZ:Thank you.

MOORE:And we'll send you a copy of this interview, too, for your own record, and it will be on record with us. And this is Kate Moore in San Diego, California, signing off for the Ellis Island Oral History Project.

HOLTZ:Oh, that was nice. Thank you.