

KM-055

VALENTINE KALAN

BIRTH DATE: FEBRUARY 12, 1907

INTERVIEW DATE: JULY 2, 1994

RUNNING TIME: 1:05:16

INTERVIEWER: KATE MOORE

RECORDING ENGINEER: DR. KRISTA VARANTOLA

INTERVIEW LOCATION: ROCK SPRINGS, WY

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY: NANCY VEGA, 9/1994

TRANSCRIPT REVIEWED BY: PAUL SIGRIST and PETER HOM, 10/1994

SLOVENIA (YUGOSLAVIA), 1920

AGE 13

SHIP RECALLED AS *ULYSSES GRANT*

MOORE: Good morning. This is Kate Moore for the National Park Service. Today is the 2nd of July, 1994, and I'm in Rock Spring, Wyoming, at the home of Valentine Kalan, who came from Slovenia to the United States in 1920 when he was thirteen years old. Would you begin, please, by giving me your full name and date of birth?

KALAN: I was born 1907, and I was baptized on the 13th.

MOORE: The 13th?

KALAN: Right after I was born.

MOORE: What day were you born?

KALAN:February 12th.

MOORE:February 12, 1907. And what is your full name?

KALAN:Valentine, right here.

MOORE:Valentine?

KALAN:Let's see where. Here.

MOORE:Valentine Kalan. Okay. And where were you born, what town?

KALAN:In Skofja Loka.

MOORE:Skofja Loka.

KALAN:On here, right here is the town.

MOORE:Okay, and how do you spell that?

KALAN:Skofja Loka.

MRS. KALAN:K-O-F . . .

MOORE:S-K-O-F . . .

MRS. KALAN:Y-J . . .

KALAN:Y-A, and you put the what you call it over there.

MOORE:S-K-O-F-J-O . . .

KALAN:A.

MOORE:J-A-L-O-K-A.

KALAN:Right.

MOORE:Okay. And what does that town look like? What type of town was it?

KALAN:Well, it's the northern part of the (?), about twenty kilometers.

MOORE:And what was the major industry of that town?

KALAN:Well, it was textiles.

MOORE:Textiles. What kind of textiles was it?

KALAN:Making the what you call, the goods for the clothing and that all, and army blankets.

MOORE:Army blankets. And what was your father's name?

KALAN:Gregor.

MOORE:Gregor. All right. G-R-E-G-O-R.

KALAN:Right.

MOORE:And what was his occupation?

KALAN:Well, helper.

MOORE:Helper of what?

KALAN:Well, he would do anything good. I'd go with him and do all kinds of work.

MOORE:Was that farm work?

KALAN:Town work. It was in town, though.

MOORE:In town, okay. And what did your father look like? Do you remember?

KALAN:Well . . . (he laughs)

MRS. KALAN:Do you mean now?

MOORE:No, then. How tall was he, about, your father?

KALAN:Well, he was a little taller than I am.

MOORE:What are you? How tall are you?

KALAN:About six foot seven.

MOORE:Five foot seven.

KALAN:No, five foot seven.

MOORE:Five foot seven. And then what color eyes did he have? Do

you remember?

KALAN:My God, I should have.

MRS. KALAN:Dark brown.

KALAN:My God, if I should have a picture.

MOORE:Dark brown, your wife says.

MRS. KALAN:Almost black.

MOORE:Okay. And what color hair did he have?

KALAN:Brown, like I did. He didn't have much hair. He was kind
of bald-headed.

MOORE:He was bald-headed. What about his personality and
temperament? Do you remember your father?

KALAN:Well, it seemed like he was pretty good for not having education
and that. He didn't have, he never seen the inside of
the school at all.

MOORE:He never saw the inside of a school?

KALAN:No.

MOORE:And what about, was he, what type of personality did he have?

KALAN:He was getting along with the people good. He was one of the best people in town.

MOORE:And is there a story about your father that you remember, that you associate with your childhood? Do you remember any story about your dad?

KALAN:Well, from what they told me he was awful proud of me when I was born because he had two daughters before this, and now the third one I was finally born. (he laughs) So a lady, she used to live, oh, about three or four doors from us in the old country, she came to live in the United States, too. She told me how proud was my father, she remembers that. (he laughs)

MOORE:When you were born. (Mr. Kalan laughs)

MRS. KALAN:When he was born, his mother got the first glass of wine, because they were so proud that they got a boy.

MOORE:Your mother, when you were born, your wife said had her first glass of wine?

KALAN:That's what they say.

MOORE:Because you were a boy.

KALAN:Yes. (he laughs)

MOORE:And what was your mother's name?

KALAN:Lucija.

MOORE:Lucija. All right. L-U-C-I-J-A.

KALAN:Bernik.

MOORE:Maiden name is Bernik, B-E-R-N-I-K.

KALAN:Right.

MOORE:And what was her occupation, your mother?

KALAN:She did all kinds of work. Taking care of the house, and do housework out, like out in the field, do the laundry for the people, you know, things like that.

MOORE:So she took in work? She did work for other people, and she did the whole housework.

KALAN:Right.

MOORE:Uh-huh. And what did your mother look like? If you can describe her for me, you can describe her on tape.

KALAN:She had a nice personality though, yeah.

MOORE:What did she look like? How tall was she?

KALAN:She was a little taller than me. Her sister was taller. In fact, everybody in the family was tall people.

MOORE:So she was taller than your father?

KALAN:Oh, yeah.

MOORE:And what color hair did she have?

KALAN:I don't know. I would say brown.

MOORE:Brown, brown, okay. And what color eyes did she have?

KALAN:Brown, I think.

MOORE:Brown, okay. And what about her personality and temperament? What do you think about your mother? What do you remember?

KALAN:Well, she's like, she's pretty good at that, though.

MOORE:Pretty good at raising a family?

KALAN:For as much education as she had, just enough education so she could write and read.

MOORE:And is there a story about your mother that you remember as a child, anything, any funny story or anything that, when you were a child, about your mother?

KALAN:Well, I don't remember much of that.

MOORE:Okay. What about your brothers and sisters? How many brothers and sisters did you have?

KALAN:Two brothers. One was born in the states. This is my youngest brother right here. He was about six months old when our father left the old country. That was back in 1912.

MOORE:Okay. So your older sister was named what?

KALAN:Julia.

MOORE:Julia. How much older than you was she?

KALAN:She was born in 1903. I remember that.

MOORE:In 1903, okay. And then came who?

KALAN:Annie. That's the one right here. She was born in 1905. She will be ninety years old this coming July, I mean, this coming month sometime.

MOORE:Okay. Then came you.

KALAN:Right.

MOORE:In 19 . . .

KALAN:In 1907.

MOORE:1907. Okay. Then came, after you . . .

KALAN:There was this one here, Antonia.

MOORE:Antonia.

KALAN:I believe she was born in 1910, yeah.

MOORE:1910. Okay. And then came . . .

KALAN:Louie.

MOORE:Louie.

KALAN:He was born June the 12th, June the 12th, 1912. I remember
that because that's the . . .

MOORE:1912. Okay. And then you had another brother. Did you . . .

KALAN:He was born here.

MOORE:What is his name?

KALAN:John.

MOORE:John. And when was he born?

KALAN:Up at Keliance, June the 24th, 1924.

MOORE:1924, whoa. What about your house back home in Slovenia?

Describe your house? What did it look like? What kind of house did you live in?

KALAN:Well, it was an old-fashioned house. We didn't have electricity or anything like that, no running water.

MOORE:What was it made of, your house?

KALAN:Rock, stone.

MOORE:It was a stone house, right. And how large was it?

KALAN:Well, there were the rooms upstairs. Some ladies lived upstairs, and there was rooms at the end of the yard, a couple ladies, old ladies, living back in there, and we had the front. We had the, a kitchen and a bedroom. And a little country.

MOORE:And how was it heated?

KALAN:With the wood.

MOORE:A wood stove, or a wood fireplace?

KALAN:The stove.

MOORE:A stove.

KALAN:It had one of those old kind of stoves that you fire up. Oh,

what would you call it, the gangway or something like that, to heat the house. What they call it, a farmer's brick stove, though.

MOORE:Oh, I see. A farmer's brick stove. Okay. And what, was there a garden?

KALAN:We had another garden, yes.

MOORE:And what did you grow in that garden?

KALAN:Beans and, it was a small patch beans and lettuce and things like that.

MOORE:And did you keep animals?

KALAN:Just rabbits, that's about all.

MOORE:And how far from, was this house in or out of town?

KALAN:It was in the middle of town.

MOORE:Right in the middle of town. And you said old ladies, were they related to you, the people who lived in the building besides you?

KALAN:No.

MOORE:No. Did you know them?

KALAN:Oh, yeah. We talked to them almost every day, yeah.

MOORE:And what furniture did you have in your house?

KALAN:(he laughs) Not much for furniture, though. We couldn't afford very much. I think we had beds and a couple of dressers and a table.

MOORE:And were they homemade or store-bought, the furniture?

KALAN:It was home-bought.

MOORE:They were bought.

KALAN:But the table, the dining table for us kids, that was homemade. I remember that.

MOORE:And who did the cooking in the family?

KALAN:My mother and me. My mother, she was out working in the field.

MOORE:So you cooked.

KALAN:Yeah, what we had. WE didn't have much, though.

MOORE:And what was your favorite food as a child?

KALAN:Whatever I could get a hold of. Potatoes.

MOORE:Describe that kitchen again. How was the kitchen set up in

your old house in Slovenia? What was in the kitchen?

KALAN:Well, there was, you remember we had a table, the, what you call it, just like this picnic table in one corner, and one of us gets to sit on it. And over on that side we had a kitchen stove, and it had a water tank on it, though.

MOORE:Yeah. On the side of the stove was a water tank.

KALAN:On top of it.

MOORE:On top of it, sorry.

KALAN:It stick through the chimney.

MOORE:Oh, I see. And so you had hot water?

KALAN:Uh-huh.

MOORE:And what was that hot water used for?

KALAN:To wash dishes, and to wash your face in that.

MOORE:Okay.

KALAN:Once a week, though.

MOORE:Once a week. (Mr. Kalan laughs) And what was mealtime like?

Did you eat together, or separately? How many meals a day did you eat, and how would you eat them?

KALAN:Well, when dad sent money we had quite a bit. WE ate together, though.

MOORE:You ate together.

KALAN:After the United States declared war on Germany, everything stopped. There was no support coming from this country at all. So we ate just whatever we had, I think most of it, though.

MOORE:And were there other families living near, family members living nearby, your grandparents, for example. Where did . . .

KALAN:No.

MOORE:No.

KALAN:No.

MOORE:Do you remember either grandparents?

KALAN:I know my mother's grandparents. Yes, I know them.

MOORE:Mother's grandparents, or mother's mother?

KALAN:Mother's mother, though, and her father.

MOORE:And where did they live?

KALAN:They lived, let's see, about fifteen minutes away from us.

MOORE:On foot? Walking?

KALAN:On foot, yeah.

MOORE:And were you especially close to anyone in the family? Who were you close to? Who was the person that you felt closest to in the family?

KALAN:Well, my sister Annie, my sister, we got close to each other, and my brother-in-law, yeah.

MOORE>Your sister Annie and which brother?

KALAN:This one here, Louie.

MOORE:Louie. Okay. And do you have any stories about your brothers and sisters that happened when you were a child? Anything funny?

KALAN:Well, I don't want to talk about it. (he laughs)

MOORE:It can be something pleasant. It doesn't have to be something bad. We like bad things too, though.

KALAN:Well, we didn't have much fun because . . .

MOORE:Yeah, because of the times.

KALAN:The times, yes.

MOORE:What about religious life?

KALAN:Oh, we were strong, my mother was strongly religious. Roman Catholic.

MOORE:Roman Catholic, okay. And was there a church nearby?

KALAN:Oh, yeah. It was in the picture there.

MOORE:How close was the church?

KALAN:Oh, maybe about ten minutes' walk.

MOORE:Ten minutes' walk. And what did the church look like? Do you remember the church?

KALAN:Well, why don't you get a picture?

MRS. KALAN:She wants to know, tell her what it looks like.

MOORE:You can tell us, because they can't see on the tape.

KALAN:Oh. It was a stone church with a steeple.

MOORE:A steeple. And how many people would fit inside?

KALAN:Oh, it was a big church.

MOORE:A couple of hundred, you think? Or . . .

KALAN:Oh, yeah.

MOORE:All right. And how did you practice your religion in your home? How often did you go to church? Did the children go?

KALAN:Every Sunday.

MOORE:Every Sunday? Did you say prayers at the table, or grace?

KALAN:Yes.

MOORE:You said prayers before you ate.

KALAN:You had the, what you call, said the rosary every night.

MOORE:And you said the rosary every night. Did you have prayers, too?

KALAN:No. My mother, she was religious.

MOORE:And were you ever, did you ever experience any prejudice or persecution for being Catholic?

KALAN:No.

MOORE:No.

KALAN:Because this was a strong Catholic, yeah.

MOORE:The whole region?

KALAN:No, there was no other religion around.

MOORE:Okay. All right. What about, what was your holiday celebrations, what were your favorite holidays?

KALAN:Well, Easter and Christmas. And, when was it? The Saint James Day, 24th, 26th of July, and St. Anne, the 24th of July. St. Anne day was on 26th of July.

MOORE:And why were they fun? Why were they important?

KALAN:Well, a regular holiday, absent from the work. (he laughs)

MOORE:And what about, how did you celebrate Christmas? How did, what was Christmas like at your house?

KALAN:It wasn't like it over here, yeah. We were fortunate enough to get a Christmas tree and we had a candle lights and put some biscuits on it, but no other decorations.

MOORE:Did you give gifts?

KALAN:No.

MOORE:No Christmas gifts.

KALAN:Oh, no.

MOORE:And did you eat a big dinner at Christmas?

KALAN:Yeah, we did certain things like that, yeah.

MOORE:What was, tell me what you would eat at Christmas. Say the
foods that you would eat at Christmas.

KALAN:Ratitza. That was something special.

MOORE:What was that?

KALAN:Pardon?

MRS. KALAN:A walnut bread.

MOORE:A walnut bread?

MRS. KALAN:A Slovenian dish, it's pastry.

KALAN:A special thing they baked for the holidays.

MOORE:And what would you eat for your main meal?

KALAN:Well, like on Christmas, if you could afford to, we had soup,
soup and ratitza. Homemade soup.

MOORE:And Easter? What did you do for Easter?

KALAN:If you had eggs, you colored the eggs. Then if you had fortune enough to buy some ham we had a ham and horseradish.
(he laughs)

MOORE:Ham and horseradish. And did you go to church on Christmas and Easter?

KALAN:Oh, yeah! Midnight Mass. That was a real priority.

MOORE:And, okay. What about school life? Do you remember school in Slovenia, in your town?

KALAN:Yeah.

MOORE:And where did you go to school? Where was the school?

KALAN:I went to the kindergarten, and the teacher was by nuns there.

MOORE:By nuns, right. And where was your school?

KALAN:Just a short distance from where we lived.

MOORE:Do you remember the name of your school? Do you remember the name?

KALAN:I don't think we had any name, no.

MOORE:Okay. And do you remember any teachers or playmates at school?

KALAN:Well, there's nuns, you know. You couldn't talk to them, because they're awfully religious.

MOORE:And what was your favorite subject in school? What did you like best about school?

KALAN:Write.

MOORE:You like to write.

KALAN:Yeah.

MOORE:School was different there. From the kindergarten, we went to first grade, yeah. It was for boys school only. The girls had a separate school, yeah. The teachers at the girls' school were nuns, but the teachers at the boys' school was men and women, women teachers.

MOORE:And how many grades did you go?

KALAN:Five.

MOORE:Five grades. Uh-huh. Did you learn any English before coming to the United States?

KALAN:No.

MOORE:No. And what language did you speak at home?

KALAN:Slovenian.

MOORE:Slovenian. Did you speak any other language?

KALAN:Well, they start, in the third grade they start teaching us German, till the war time. In the war time when the Germans, Austria declared war on Serbia, and that way they eliminate the German language.

MOORE:All right. So you had some German before coming here.

KALAN:Yeah.

MOORE:And what did you do for entertainment as a child? What games did you play?

KALAN:Oh, I don't know. We didn't play baseball, I know that. Football, and running. (he laughs)

MOORE:Did you have any other games at all, you remember?

KALAN:No.

MOORE:Okay. Now how, who decided to come to the United States? Who was the first one to decide?

KALAN:My father.

MOORE:And why did he come here? Do you know?

KALAN:Well, from what he told me, there was some women here from Rock Springs. Mrs. Noltor, that was her name, though.

And they were already here, though. And she went back, and she hollered at him, "Why did you go to America? Why did you slave over here when you can go to America and make good money in that?" So he took her word for it.

MOORE:And what was her name again? Mrs. Who?

KALAN:Mrs. Noltor.

MOORE:Noltor. And she was Slovenian. From the same village?

KALAN:Just, to me, just a short distance away from it.

MOORE:And she came back and told everybody good things.

KALAN:(he laughs) Go to America.

MOORE:What was good about America, did she say?

KALAN:A better living.

MOORE:A better living.

KALAN:A little more money, yeah. Which was still scarce, too, at the time, but lots more than what they had over there.

MOORE:And when she came back, did she dress differently than people?

Did she look like she had a good life?

KALAN:Well, I couldn't tell you. I was just a small kid.

(he laughs)

MOORE:Okay. So your father, do you remember your father talking to your mother about leaving?

KALAN:I never had much of a talk, but he don't know, he told her he was going to go to America, he was going to try to go, yeah.

MOORE:And what did your mother think about that, do you know?

KALAN:She said, "Go ahead." Yeah.

MOORE:And so what year did he go?

KALAN:1912, October.

MOORE:October 1912. And how did he get the money to come here?

KALAN:That I don't know, whether he borrowed the money, or he saved enough money to come.

MOORE:And where did he come to? Where did he go?

KALAN:He came to Rock Springs.

MOORE:He came here to Rock Springs. Do you know if anybody sponsored

him? Anybody, how did he, did that woman in your village, did she sponsor him?

KALAN:That I don't know.

MOORE:Okay. Do you remember your father getting ready to go?

KALAN:Yeah.

MOORE:And what did he take with him? Do you remember what he took?

KALAN:Well, I don't know where it took him because I think he packed up his suitcase. In the morning we were still in bed, though, as far as I know. He went to near the town, what they call the (?). That's where he got his passport and his visa and all those things, yeah. When he come back to the train, and we went to the train and met him on the train. He never did come back home any more.

MOORE:I see. He went to the train.

KALAN:He just said, "Hello." And waved goodbye. Nothing, the train pulled out. That's the last we seen until 1920, for eight years.

MOORE:And did, what was your mother's reaction to all this?

KALAN:Well, she was crying, and that's about it. She had five

children to support.

MOORE: So you didn't see him for eight years. Now, did he write home?

Did he write to you?

KALAN: He write as much as he could. Of course, he didn't know how to write or read, though.

MOORE: Yeah. So did you receive any word about him during those eight years?

KALAN: Well, before the war, like I said, before 1917, the mail come regularly and support come regularly. He sent money quite often.

MOORE: When he sent money did he put the money in the envelope?

KALAN: Uh-huh.

MOORE: He put it right in an envelope?

KALAN: Some of it, a small amount. But some of it was, it was an agency back in New York. In fact, there was a couple of agencies like English and Slovenias and the different letters. They had different representatives in New York, and they contact these people back north to send the money, which they took so much off of it for their time, their trouble, in that, yeah.

MOORE:So sometimes you got envelopes with a little bit of money in it.

KALAN:Well, maybe a couple of dollars, and that was a twenty dollar bill.

MOORE:And sometimes you got money through an agency.

KALAN:Yes.

MOORE:And how regularly did that money come? Was that money ever stolen, do you know?

KALAN:No.

MOORE:And how often did that come, that money? Was it . . .

KALAN:Oh, once a month maybe. Once a month.

MOORE:And was it enough for you to live on?

KALAN:Comfortably.

MOORE:Comfortably, okay. And, now, how did you and your mother and your family go to America? What happened that you decided to go? How did you join your father? What happened?

KALAN:Well, there was a fellow, you probably know (?). When his father come back to the old country after the war, though,

and he looked just like what you see across the street from us over there. And my mother, and he told her how things, he seen how things were bad over in the old country, and my mother beg him to write my father a letter not to come over. He was planning to come over. And my mother asked this man to write him a letter to send for us.

MOORE:And that's what happened?

KALAN:That's what happened.

MOORE:So your father got a message through . . .

KALAN:Mr. Rometzo.

MOORE:Mr. Rometzo. Okay. And so then what happened? Your father got the message, and what happened?

KALAN:Well, as far as I remember, he wrote back and got everything ready. I think he got in contact some of these travel agencies here in the Rock Spring. Back in New York there was a representative, Mr. Talcher here in Rock Spring, and some other people. They do that kind of work for the people that weren't able to do themselves. Like Father Shifka. He was a priest there at the North Side Church. And he was a Slovenian, well-known man. And he lived with the people and helped the people out who came over

here, yeah.

MOORE: So you think that it was arranged through an agency, and was it arranged through a priest, too? Did the priest help?

KALAN: Some of them, yes.

MOORE: Yeah, okay. Now, so, what happened then? So you got your tickets, or what happened?

KALAN: To get the tickets my mother, she had to go back and forth to the Ljubljana to get her passport and get her, what you call, her passport, yeah. Just like, something like this.

MOORE: The papers. The papers to get on.

KALAN: The papers to go.

MOORE: Where did she have to go to? Oh, I see. Here, yes.

KALAN: To Crine and Ljubljana. Ljubljana's the capital.

MOORE: And so . . .

KALAN: We have a picture taken, they're going to put it on the passport, yeah.

MOORE: The picture you have, yeah. I see it. And so then what

happened? She got the papers, and what did you have to do? Do you remember packing?

KALAN:Well, we packed. It only took a couple of months, yeah.
Before we got all the papers together, yeah.

MOORE:It took a couple of months to get the papers.

KALAN:If I remember, on the passport, my mother, she went to Graz in September. If I'd known this here yesterday before two o'clock or something, I would go down to the bank which had the passport, which had everything on it.

MOORE:That's okay. You're doing a good job. You're doing a good job. It's all right. So it took a couple of months to get the papers.

KALAN:Right.

MOORE:And in the meantime, while you're waiting for the papers, did you do anything? Did you sell things? Did you, do you remember selling anything?

KALAN:We didn't have much to sell. Just beds and the things like that. We didn't have nothing to sell. We didn't own nothing, yeah.

MOORE:Okay. What about what did you pack? What did you pack to

go?

KALAN:Clothes and things like that.

MOORE:And did you bring anything special from the old country?

KALAN:Well, some antiques and things like that.

MOORE:Like what? Antique what?

KALAN:I think there was an old clock. We brought it over, (?) in the morning. And some of the dishes that were, what you call, they were in the family for a long time.

MOORE:Did they come, did they survive the voyage, the dishes?

KALAN:Yeah.

MOORE:So you brought an old clock and dishes. Anything religious? Did you bring anything, like a Bible, a rosary, anything?

KALAN:Oh, yeah. I got a Bible, what you call a small Bible with me. But I can't, I know it's somewhere's in the house but I can't place it, yeah.

MOORE:So you brought your own Bible, right?

KALAN:Oh, yeah.

MOORE:And any other things that are religious? Did you bring

anything, everybody brought a Bible?

KALAN:I think ours was about the only one that had that small Bible.

I had it for my confirmation gift.

MOORE:And did you bring any food with you? Did you take any food?

KALAN:Well, just what we could use. We didn't have no, what you call, any smoked meat or anything.

MOORE:Did you bring bread or anything like that with you?

KALAN:Well, for the time being, yeah. For the short distance.

MOORE:And did, all right. So, you got the papers, and do you remember, what was the, your mother's, what was your mother's mood while she was packing? Was she optimistic, or was she sad, or what was she?

KALAN:Oh, she was happy, yeah.

MOORE:She was happy. And what did you know about, what did you expect about America?

KALAN:Well, that was something strange, yeah. (he laughs)

MOORE:It was something strange? What did you know about America?

KALAN:Just whatever, just what Mr. Rometzo told us about it.

MOORE:And did you really think that this was a place of great opportunity? Is that what you were thinking?

KALAN:Well, I was thinking about that, yeah.

MOORE:Okay. So tell me how, what happened. You packed your bags, and where did you go first?

KALAN:To the train station.

MOORE:How did you get to the train station?

KALAN:My mother, she hired somebody to take, to take our luggage to the train station which was about, uh, I'd say, oh, about a mile away from over there, a kilometer.

MOORE:And how, you hired someone to take you in, to take the luggage in what? What did you hire?

KALAN:The fellow with the wagon.

MOORE:A wagon? And how was that . . .

KALAN:And a horse!

MOORE:A horse, a horse and wagon.

KALAN:There was more horses than wagons.

MOORE:(she laughs) Okay. So then they took the things to the

train station. How did you get to the train station?

KALAN:Walked.

MOORE:You walked. So the family walked.

KALAN:Yes.

MOORE:And the luggage went on a horse and wagon.

KALAN:Yeah.

MOORE:Okay. So the train went from, what was the name of the city
the train went from?

KALAN:Skofja Loka.

MOORE:Skofja Loka, okay. And where did the train go from there?

KALAN:To Ljubljana.

MOORE:To Ljubljana. And from there?

KALAN:To Trieste.

MOORE:To Trieste. Okay.

KALAN:Well, let me tell you. We got to Ljubljana. We never was
notified before. We got to Ljubljana, the agent told us
in Ljubljana the ship didn't come in and it was delayed

five more days, so we went back home.

MOORE:Oh, so you had to go back home.

KALAN:In other words, we couldn't stay in Ljubljana. That's what the agent told us, that the best thing to do is to go back home.

MOORE:So you went home.

KALAN:Yeah. And it was a good thing the people that Mama sold the bedroom, all the furniture, we had, they hadn't taken it out yet. (he laughs)

MOORE:So you had a place to sleep.

KALAN:Yeah.

MOORE:So after five days, you started again.

KALAN:Started again. The same thing over.

MOORE:The same thing over again. And they came with the carriage, I mean, with the wagon.

KALAN:Yeah.

MOORE:And you went on. Okay. So, how far is it from that to the port? What port . . .

KALAN:Sixty kilometers.

MOORE:By train.

KALAN:yeah.

MOORE:And what was the name of the port?

KALAN:Trieste.

MOORE:All right, Trieste. Do you remember seeing the ship for the
first time?

KALAN:Yeah, the big ship.

MOORE:The big ship. What was the name of that ship?

KALAN:Grant, Ulysses Grant.

MOORE:Grant, okay. Did you stay overnight there before you left
on the boat? Did you have to stay overnight for the boat?
Did you wait?

KALAN:I, no. I think we got everybody on the boat, and the boat
started to leave some time after midnight, yeah.

MOORE:After midnight, okay. Now, tell me about your accommodations
on the boat?

KALAN:Poor. I don't want to talk very much about them, yeah.

MOORE:It was poor? What do you mean? First, second or third class?

KALAN:Third class. In fact, my father sent it for the second class, that's what you call, they had a cabins. Each family had their own cabin, yeah. We didn't have, yeah. It was wide open.

END OF SIDE ONE, TAPE ONE

BEGINNING OF SIDE TWO, TAPE ONE

MOORE:To back up a bit, before you left for the United States, did anybody give you a party? Did you have a party before you came?

KALAN:Oh, no. (he laughs) There was no such a thing as a party.
(he laughs)

MOORE:Okay.

KALAN:Nobody know about parties. (they laugh)

MOORE:Okay. So you left Italy, and we were talking about the boat accommodations. You said you were supposed to have second class.

KALAN:Right.

MOORE:But what did you really get?

KALAN:We were in third class down the deck, yeah.

MOORE:Below the deck. And what was that like? Explain how it was arranged.

KALAN:Well, they had bunks on the wall, and they had little tables at the bottom right there. I don't know, I guess it was, there were five of us. My mother, she'd sleep on the bottom bunk, and us kids up on the bunks, two rows of bunks, though.

MOORE:And you were with other people?

KALAN:We just had a curtain between.

MOORE:You had a curtain between you and the other people.

KALAN:Right.

MOORE:And what about the food? What was the food like?

KALAN:Rotten macaroni and fish. (he laughs)

MOORE:Macaroni and fish. How long was the voyage? How long was that trip?

KALAN:Well, we left October, the Trieste, October the 20th. We didn't get to New York till the 15th of November, 14th

or 15th of November.

MOORE:So it was a long trip. What about, okay. So you say, how did you eat your meals? What was the place that you ate your meals? Where was it?

KALAN:We had a hall.

MOORE:You had a hall.

KALAN:You had to go up the hall with all of the family, the one with the big pan, and had to show him a card, how many persons, and you get so much food for each person down there.

MOORE:And so you ate downstairs, then.

KALAN:Then you eat upstairs.

MOORE:Oh, upstairs.

KALAN:Like a dining room.

MOORE:And so you went, one person went for the family, for the whole family. Okay. Were there other, what nationalities were other people?

KALAN:You name it.

MOORE:Really?

KALAN:Slovenia, Croatia, and I think Italians too, yeah.

MOORE:Okay. Were you allowed on deck at all? Were you able to go on deck?

KALAN:Oh, yes.

MOORE:And what was that like? Was that where you played, or . . .

KALAN:A big deck. There was no playgrounds or anything like that down there.

MOORE:All right. And, I'm trying to think of here. What about the voyage? What were the conditions of the voyage? Was it smooth or rough or what?

KALAN:Well, after we left Gibraltar, it got kind of rough, yeah.

MOORE:And how rough? Were you sick?

KALAN:Oh, yes. Everybody was sick down there. (he laughs)

MOORE:Was your mother sick?

KALAN:Oh, yes.

MOORE:And . . .

KALAN:Seasick.

MOORE:Seasick, yeah. Do you remember anything about the voyage you

can tell a story, anything that happened on the boat?
Was there anything you saw for the first time or . . .

KALAN:Well, I seen when they buried the people.

MOORE:What people?

KALAN:People died.

MOORE:And how did they bury them?

KALAN:In the ocean. Wrap them up in burlap, and threw them out in
the ocean.

MOORE:And how often did that happen?

KALAN:Regular, whenever somebody died. In fact, it was a ruling,
that's what I heard, though, that it's three days before
the port, before the ship docked, and that's why they kept
the person there, the body. But if it was more than that,
why, they dumped them out in the ocean. Feed the sharks.
(he laughs)

MOORE:Feed the sharks. How many people were buried?

KALAN:That I don't know.

MOORE:You actually saw this.

KALAN:Yes.

MOORE:And did you go watch it?

KALAN:Well, yeah. They set a plank out, and got the men, the sailors,
and they carried the body out and dumped it over the side
there.

MOORE:And was there a priest or anybody there, or just . . .

KALAN:Just regular, there was a priest, yes.

MOORE:There was a priest.

KALAN:Yeah. There was a priest traveling with us, yeah.

MOORE:There was a priest traveling with you.

KALAN:Uh-huh.

MOORE:In the same cabin?

KALAN:No. I don't know where, he lived somewhere's back east.

MOORE:Oh. But he was from . . .

KALAN:He was a Catholic priest, yeah.

MOORE:A Catholic priest from your town?

KALAN:No.

MOORE:No. Okay. So you remember them burying the dead.

KALAN:Uh-huh.

MOORE:And did you ever, were you ever frightened on that trip? Was your mother frightened by that boat trip?

KALAN:Well, when the sea got rough, though, I was kind of frightened.

MOORE:Were people praying, were people praying out loud?

KALAN:Not that I know.

MOORE:All right. Tell me about seeing land for the first time.

Do you remember seeing land or the Statue of Liberty?

Do you remember when you saw New York?

KALAN:Yeah.

MOORE:Where were you when you approached land?

KALAN:Uh, New York Harbor. Then we got transferred to a small ship that took us over to Ellis Island.

MOORE:All right. Before . . .

KALAN:That's what you're seeing the Statue of Liberty, though.

MOORE:All right. What happened? Do you remember the boat going

toward land and the news that you were in New York? Do you remember them telling you, "We're landing."?

MOORE:Yeah. There was about four or five tugboats pushing into the harbor down there.

KALAN:Oh. So as you came toward the harbor you had little tugboats taking you in.

MOORE:Yes.

KALAN:And where was, where were the people? Were they down below, or did they go up on deck?

KALAN:They went up on the deck, though. There's so many allowed at a time, though.

MOORE:Oh, you have so many go on at a time.

KALAN:Right.

MOORE:And what did you see when you came into the harbor? What did you see? When you were a little boy, and you were on the boat, here comes New York, what did you see?

KALAN:Well, first I see, I remember the agents and that, oh, I would say, patrol.

MOORE:There are a lot of agents and patrollers.

KALAN:Yeah.

MOORE:I see.

KALAN:Guardians, though. So nobody jumped over the ship, though.

MOORE:Oh, I see. There was a lot of, there was a lot of escorting.

KALAN:Right.

MOORE:With patrol. Now, what did the Statue of Liberty, what was that like, seeing that?

KALAN:Well, it was something big. Something I'd never seen before. But I couldn't really comprehend it.

MOORE:It didn't mean much.

KALAN:No.

MOORE:What about the New York skylines? Do you remember seeing the buildings in New York at all? Could you see the buildings on the shore?

KALAN:Just around the port, not much.

MOORE:Okay. So you said that you were escorted by tugboats.

KALAN:Right.

MOORE:In front. You got to Ellis Island.

KALAN:Right.

MOORE:And then what happened?

KALAN:We went through the examination and that.

MOORE:When you were back in Slovenia, did you have a medical examination ever? Before you left to go to America, did you have to have a doctor's examination?

KALAN:I don't know. But I know, but I know we have it at Ellis Island.

MOORE:So you had one at Ellis Island. Okay. So you got out . . .

KALAN:A doctor examination, especially eyes.

MOORE:Especially eyes. Okay. So you're on the boat, and there was a small boat.

KALAN:Right.

MOORE:And how was that? Was it crowded? How many people, could the whole boat get into that little boat?

KALAN:Oh, no, no.

MOORE:So it went many times.

KALAN:Right.

MOORE:Right to Ellis Island.

KALAN:That's right.

MOORE:And when you got off the boat, when you get off the boat, what do you remember, that little boat?

KALAN:They put us through the procedures.

MOORE:Just hold on. (there is a background disturbance)
(addressing another person in the room) It will be for posterity on the tape. (she laughs)

KALAN:We went through the procedures, check our passports and everything.

MOORE:And where was that done?

KALAN:On Ellis Island now, inside the building.

MOORE:And what did the building look like?

KALAN:Oh, big room, though. Yeah. They had the kind of gates, you know, to sort the people.

MOORE:Big rooms and gates. And when you went through those gates, was there any fear ever that you'd be sent back? Did you

think that you might be . . .

KALAN:Well, yeah. There was a lot of, in fact, the Slovenian people,
the Island of Tears.

MOORE:They called it the Island of Tears.

KALAN:A lot of them got sent back, though.

MOORE:Did your mother, was your mother frightened of being sent back?

KALAN:No, no.

MOORE:Okay. So they looked at your passport and your papers.

KALAN:Yes.

MOORE:And then what happened?

KALAN:Then they put us in a room. They were waiting for the agency
to put us on a train, though. The agents, somehow we got
delayed there.

MOORE:And what about that medical examination? What about that?

KALAN:I remember the doctor, he poked my eye. That's, I remember
that, and my throat. (he laughs)

MOORE:And your throat. Did they have you take your clothes off?

KALAN:No, no.

MOORE:No. Okay. So mainly your eyes and your throat.

KALAN:Right.

MOORE:Were they nice to you?

KALAN:Yeah, it seems like it. It was kind of scary, the first time
I went through something like that, yeah.

MOORE:And did they speak Slovenian, too?

KALAN:No.

MOORE:No. So did your mother understand any English?

KALAN:No.

MOORE:No. Okay. Did you eat on Ellis Island? Did you eat at all?

KALAN:Yeah, they fed us there. Of course, we slept overnight. We
were delayed one night.

MOORE:Oh, because the agency. So you were delayed. Where did you
sleep?

KALAN:On the floor.

MOORE:On the floor.

KALAN:Yes.

MOORE:Where?

KALAN:On Ellis Island, in the big hall.

MOORE:You slept on the floor?

KALAN:Yes.

MOORE:You didn't get a bed?

KALAN:No.

MOORE:Wow. The whole family?

KALAN:Yeah. Ladies in the family in one corner, and the men in another corner. And, in fact, those that got in there first, there was a few tables, they slept on the table. I know, I remember that as if it had happened yesterday.

MOORE:So you slept on the floor.

KALAN:Right.

MOORE:And did other people have beds?

KALAN:I didn't see any.

MOORE:Uh-huh. All right. And so, okay. You waited overnight.

KALAN:My brother had some cots way over there. Of course, it was a big hall there. You couldn't see. There was so many people in there.

MOORE:Yeah. And what type of food did you eat? Was it good? What type of food? Do you remember?

KALAN:Well, I remember the first time I ate eggs, poached eggs, poached eggs or fried eggs. (he laughs)

MOORE:So you had fried eggs.

KALAN:And oatmeal. I didn't know what was it. I remember that food.

MOORE:So you ate oatmeal and fried eggs. Anything else? Any of the fruit?

KALAN:And coffee, though.

MOORE:And coffee, yeah. Any fruit? Did they give you fruit?

KALAN:I don't remember that.

MOORE:Okay. And was there any entertainment on Ellis Island at that time?

KALAN:A picture show. (he laughs)

KALAN:There was a picture show?

KALAN:I think it was a Charlie Chaplin. After we come over here,
I went to show the same thing, so I kind of think it was
Charlie Chaplin.

MOORE:On Ellis Island, a picture show.

KALAN:Yeah, in the hall. (he laughs)

MOORE:They were showing movies.

KALAN:In the night.

MOORE:Oh, yeah. Okay. And what were, where did you go after Ellis
Island? What happened after, you woke up after sleeping
on the floor.

KALAN:Yeah.

MOORE:What happened after that?

KALAN:Well, the next day some women come. I think a representative
from this agency that my father sent the tickets to us.
And she escorted us to the train.

MOORE:And the train was going where?

KALAN:West, to Rock Springs.

MOORE:To Rock Springs. Okay. All right. So how, describe that

train trip. What was that like?

KALAN:Well, it was wooden chairs, I know that. It was old-time chairs there. But I think after we come from Chicago, we switched trains in Chicago, then it was what you call soft cushions on the train.

MOORE:Where did you sleep on the train?

KALAN:On the chair.

MOORE:On the chair. So you sat up, basically.

KALAN:Yeah. (he laughs)

MOORE:All right. And what did you eat on the train?

KALAN:Coffee. My mother, she didn't know anything, didn't know how to buy anything. A boy that come around with food and everything, she didn't know what to buy. She had the money.

MOORE:But she couldn't talk.

KALAN:She couldn't talk.

MOORE:She couldn't point?

KALAN:Yeah. She pointed at some sandwiches and things like that,

though.

MOORE:So she pointed to the food?

KALAN:To the food.

MOORE:And so you ate something on the train.

KALAN:Oh, yeah, yeah. We ate something. Not much, though, but something.

MOORE:And coffee.

KALAN:And coffee. Yeah.

MOORE:And so, was there anything you'd never seen before when you were on that train?

KALAN:Bananas. (he laughs)

MOORE:You'd never seen bananas?

KALAN:No.

MOORE:And what happened? Did you eat one?

KALAN:No. (he laughs) We didn't know what it was.

MOORE:And what else? Anything else? How about the scenery? What was the scenery?

KALAN:The scenery was good.

MOORE:And so how long was that train trip, actually?

KALAN:Three days and two nights.

MOORE:Three days and two nights. And where did the train end up?

KALAN:Rock Springs.

MOORE:So you came right to Rock Springs.

KALAN:Yes.

MOORE:Did you change trains to Chicago?

KALAN:Chicago that I know, yeah.

MOORE:Yeah. And where else? Anywhere else?

KALAN:Not that I know. Or maybe Omaha. I don't know. I know we
changed twice, but I don't know.

MOORE:Were any of the children sick on the train voyage?

KALAN:No.

MOORE:Was your mother okay?

KALAN:Oh, yeah.

MOORE: Tell me what happened once you got to Rock Springs then. What happened when you got here? Was your dad . . .

KALAN: Well, my dad wasn't there. In fact, he wasted all afternoon to make things good. It was twenty people coming to Rock Springs at the same time on the same boat.

MOORE: I see. So . . .

KALAN: Almost from the same town. In fact, we were almost neighbors.

MOORE: So twenty people in that boat were coming to Rock Springs.

KALAN: Uh-huh.

MOORE: Were you all in the same car on the train?

KALAN: No, we didn't go on the train. They got, somehow they went on the train earlier than we did, though.

MOORE: I see. They got out there.

KALAN: As soon as they got through the Ellis Island, that's when they put them on the train, though.

MOORE: So you were delayed.

KALAN: We were delayed, though. Our agent didn't show up, or the woman, where she was.

MOORE:Yeah. So you got, so what happened? You got to Rock Springs train station, and what happened?

KALAN:Well, my father wasn't there. He was waiting all day long for the train to come in I think around seven o'clock, and that's why he started walking home up to Reliance, seven miles.

MOORE:It was seven miles from the train station to the home.

KALAN:That's where he lived, up in Reliance.

MOORE:Did your mother know where he lived?

KALAN:No, no. (he laughs) She didn't know nothing.

MOORE:So where . . .

KALAN:There's two men, at the depot, were Slovenian. You probably remember Mr. Messina.

MOORE:Mr. Messina. I don't know him, but okay.

KALAN:He was a policeman at one time, you know, in Rock Springs. And a fellow by the name of John Hafner.

MOORE:John Hafner, yeah.

KALAN:And they were both single at that time. They were just walking

around town, and they happened to be in the train depot.

And that, my mother, she started talking Slovenian and they heard, she was talking Slovenian, so they come and talk to my mother, who we are, though. So Mr. Messina, he made arrangements with John Kashushnik, he had a garage on M Street. He made arrangements to hire a car and load us up and took us up to Reliance, yeah.

MOORE:And was that your first car trip?

KALAN:Yes, ma'am. (he laughs)

MOORE:What type of car was it? What type of car was it, do you remember?

KALAN:A Studebaker. I remember that, because I seen it after that, though. (he laughs)

MOORE:They took the whole family in a Studebaker.

KALAN:Yeah. It was a seven-passenger car. In those years they had cars with a jump seat, though.

MOORE:Oh, yes, a jump seat. Who sat in the jump seat?

MOORE:Us kids. (he laughs)

KALAN:And I think we took some of the luggage that we could. Some

of it was left in town, though.

MOORE:Some was left in town, at the train station.

KALAN:Right.

MOORE:And some you took with you.

KALAN:Yeah.

MOORE:And did you make it home before your father? Was he at home when you got there?

KALAN:He was at the neighbor's house yet, about a mile away from it. He was on the way home, but he stopped at his place, though.

MOORE:Yeah. So you got home, and were you there before your father?

KALAN:No. The man that took us up, John Kashushnik took us up there, and I think Mr. Messina went along with him, and he told John Kashushnik, the father of this John Kashushnik, what was it, John and, what was the other name, that died there?

MRS. KALAN:John Kashushnik and, uh . . .

KALAN:They've got that . . .

MRS. KALAN:I know, the two boys living here yet. Yeah.

KALAN:The two living here. That was his father.

MOORE:So they stopped at that house, the neighbor's house, before?

KALAN:His dad there?

KALAN:Opposite. Yeah, okay. And so, and so . . .

MOORE:We stopped at this Mr. Parenta's house at the (?) store. We thought maybe he might be there yet, though, on the way home. There he was, though. (he laughs)

MOORE:And so what was that like?

KALAN:Oh, it was a surprise for him, a surprise for everybody, with hugging and kissing. We were separated for eight years.

MOORE:Yeah. Did you know what your, did your little ones ever see their father? I mean, did your smallest one, Louie, did he remember his father?

KALAN:I don't think he did. He was about six months old.

MOORE:Yeah. And so he was, it was the first time he really saw your father.

KALAN:Yeah.

MOORE:Okay. And then what happened?

KALAN:Well, he took us up to his place where he had a place up there.

MOORE:And what was the place? What was the address?

KALAN:Didn't have no address. There was just a box number.

MRS. KALAN:Reliance, Wyoming.

MOORE:Reliance, Wyoming.

KALAN:Yeah. A box number.

MOORE:Reliance, Wyoming. And that was how far from Rock Springs?

KALAN:I think it was about seven miles to the, or six miles to the
post office, though. And it was a mile, a little more
than a mile from the post office to our place.

MOORE:Okay. And so what type of house or place did he live in?

KALAN:It wasn't much of a place there.

MOORE:What was it?

KALAN:Three rooms made out of rock.

MOORE:Stone?

KALAN:Stone, yeah.

MOORE:Three rooms. So what three rooms were there?

KALAN:There was a kitchen, a dining room and a bedroom.

MOORE:A kitchen, dining room and bedroom.

KALAN:No, four rooms.

MOORE:Four rooms. All right. And did you have, how was it heated?
(birds can be heard chirping in the background) What
type of heating did that place have?

KALAN:Coal, coal stove.

MOORE:Coal stove. And did it have indoor toilets?

KALAN:No, oh, no. (he laughs)

MOORE:Outside.

KALAN:There was none in, the whole Reliance they didn't have any.
(Mrs. Kalan laughs)

MOORE:And how was light, what type of lighting?

KALAN:Kerosene.

MOORE:Kerosene lamps. Uh-huh. Okay. So you went on to Reliance,
and how long did you live there?

KALAN:Twenty-eight years.

MOORE:Twenty-eight years still. And what did your dad do when he
was . . .

KALAN:A coal miner.

MOORE:He was a coal miner. And what were the conditions of a coal
miner here? Were they good?

KALAN:Well, there was, it wasn't what you call like it is now, the
coal mining. It was rough coal mining.

MOORE:Rough coal mining. And so you lived up in Reliance for
twenty-eight years.

KALAN:Yeah, I did, yeah.

MOORE:You did, yeah. And what type of furniture was in that house?

KALAN:Well, there was a table, a couple of dressers, and a stove.
(he laughs) Washtubs.

MOORE:Washtubs. And were they bought, bought furniture, or made?

KALAN:The dresser was made, though, but the table was made.

MOORE:I see. Okay, now, how did you get back and forth, your father
get to work every day from Reliance?

KALAN:Walk!

MOORE:You walked.

KALAN:Just a short distance.

MOORE:How far was the mine from Reliance?

KALAN:Oh, maybe five minutes' walk.

MOORE:Oh, so the mine . . .

KALAN:Everybody goes to the mine down there.

MOORE:I see. So he chose to live down there. Now, did he own that
house or did he rent it?

KALAN:He owned it, he built it.

MOORE:He built it.

KALAN:Him and some other guys, they built it, yeah. (he laughs)

MOORE:And what type of roof did it have?

KALAN:Uh, what you call it, tar paper.

MOORE:Tar paper, okay. All right. Now, did you go to school right
away?

KALAN:Around Christmas time, yeah.

MOORE:What was that like, going to school in America?

KALAN:Three-room house.

MOORE:Schoolhouse? Three-room schoolhouse?

KALAN:Yes.

MOORE:How far from home?

KALAN>About a mile-and-a-half, a mile from the home.

MOORE:And did you walk?

KALAN:Oh, yeah. This was transportation.

MOORE:And what were, how did your mother adjust to life here? How did she adjust? Did she take to life here? Did she like it?

KALAN:Oh, she liked it. Some of the ladies, there were ladies, some Slovenian ladies, and they come and show you how to do things, how to bake bread, and how to cook, and how to use the coal stove and things like that.

MOORE:Were there other Slovenians living around you?

KALAN:There were two Slovenian women living just a short distance from us, maybe a few minutes' walk. In fact, they could

almost holler to each other. (he laughs)

MOORE:And so you lived, could you say that you lived in a Slovenian neighborhood?

KALAN:Well, there was. Yes, it was.

MOORE:So Reliance had a lot of Slovenians working in the mines?

KALAN:In fact, as I recall back, start figuring back, what I remember, that was seven Slovenian families living up there.

MOORE:All right. Now, how were you treated in school, when you went to school?

KALAN:Like a foreigner, a greenhorn.

MOORE:They called you, did anybody call you a greenhorn?

KALAN:No, they didn't. They teacher didn't, but the kids did.

MOORE:The kids did. Good thing the teacher didn't. Were the teachers nice to you? The teachers?

KALAN:They were nice. They tried to do their best. But she didn't understand my language, and I didn't understand her, though. (he laughs)

MOORE:Were there other children in the same, in the same situation? Were there any other Slovenian children who didn't

understand . . .

KALAN:They were Slovenian, but they know how to speak English. In fact, some of them were born here.

MOORE:I see. Some were born here who were Slovenian. Okay. How did you learn English?

KALAN:Through school.

MOORE:Through school. Do you remember, what it difficult for you?

KALAN:Yes, it was.

MOORE:It was. And did you understand, when they called you greenhorn, did you understand what that meant?

KALAN:No, I didn't, not for a while, though, till later on.

MOORE:And were you ever persecuted for being born, were you ever treated badly? Was your family ever treated badly for being . . .

KALAN:Not that I know, but it seemed sometimes there was a friction between American and the foreigners, though. Of course, there was a lot of foreigners up there. Don't let me tell you that. There's, like a League of Nations up there in Reliance. (he laughs)

MOORE:League of Nations. And on that boat that you came over, you said there were twenty people coming to Rock Springs.

KALAN:Right.

MOORE:Were any up there in Reliance with you? Did any end up in Reliance?

KALAN:No.

MOORE:Okay.

KALAN:Some, a couple of families come before that, though, from Reliance.

MOORE:Okay. Now, how about your mother? Did she ever learn English?

KALAN:Very little, though.

MOORE:Very little. Your father, did he know English?

KALAN:Not much though.

MOORE:Not much. What did he use in the mine? What language did he use?

KALAN:Slovenian. Whatever he knew.

MOORE:And are there any stories about your mother and father learning

English or you learning English that you remember, any things that you did?

KALAN:I don't remember much of that.

MOORE:Okay. What about religious life? You said your mother was very religious.

KALAN:Oh, yes.

MOORE:Did she stay religious in the United States?

KALAN:Oh, yeah.

MOORE:Where, what church did you go to?

KALAN:Same thing as I told you. Northside Catholic Church.

MOORE:Northside Catholic Church. When you were in Reliance, where did you go to church?

KALAN:We came to Rock Springs, yeah.

MOORE:You came to Rock Springs. How did you get to Rock Springs?

KALAN:Well, we didn't come the first couple of years till my father bought a car in 1920.

MOORE:Your father bought a car. What kind of car did he buy?

KALAN:A Chevrolet.

MOORE:A Chevrolet in 1920. And then you started to go to church.

KALAN:Right.

MOORE:But did you say your prayers and rosaries here in, right away?

KALAN:Yeah, we did.

MOORE:So you continued to be religious?

KALAN:Oh, yeah.

MOORE:Okay.

KALAN:Not as often as I did in the old country, though. Because
my father, he kind of broke away from the church.
(he laughs)

MOORE:So your father wasn't as religious as your mother.

KALAN:Well, he didn't, he was religious, but he didn't go every day
and that.

MOORE:And so you did a little bit less than back home.

KALAN:Right.

MOORE:Okay. What did you do for entertainment? How did your family

have fun in those days?

KALAN:Visiting each other.

MOORE:Visiting each other.

KALAN:Yeah.

MOORE:So you visited . . .

KALAN:Families, yeah.

MOORE:Yeah. And what did you do when you visited?

KALAN:Well, they talked.

MOORE:And did you eat?

KALAN:Well, wine, they served wine, that's one thing. (he laughs)

MOORE:Did you sing at those visitings? Did you sing in (??)?

KALAN:Yeah, the older people there, but us kids, we didn't sing.

MOORE:What did they sing?

KALAN:Slovenian songs.

MOORE:Yeah. And what type of music? Did they have any instruments they played?

KALAN:Well, some of them, they come to Reliance, but that was later on, though. Like the Jupens were here, harmonica, and a fellow by the name of Jack Dautcher here had a harmonia, and they played that.

MOORE:Harmonica, you mean, oh, you mean an accordion.

KALAN:Accordion, yeah. We call it harmonica.

MOORE:All right. Well, did your mother and father ever want to go back to Slovenia to live?

KALAN:Well, my father wanted to, but my mother discouraged him after that, Mr. Rometzo wrote him that letter not to come down.

MOORE:Okay. So originally your father wanted to go back to Slovenia, but once you all got here, your whole family . . .

KALAN:No, no.

MOORE:Was your mother homesick ever?

KALAN:Well, she was kind of homesick for a while until she got adjusted to the living.

MOORE:And was your father homesick?

KALAN:Well, after eight years, well, he didn't get homesick, yeah.

MOORE: So after eight years he wasn't. All right. Was your family, your father was a miner, and mining was a hard life. Was he very satisfied or dissatisfied with life in America? What do you think his attitude was towards his job and his life here?

KALAN: Well, he liked it better because he had more money to spend, a better living.

MOORE: He felt he had a better living here.

KALAN: Better living.

MOORE: How about your mom?

KALAN: Too, she had a better living.

MOORE: Did any family tragedy occur during the time that you came to the United States? Did any tragedy happen?

KALAN: No.

MOORE: No. Did any tragedy happen in the mines to anybody you know? Did any accidents happen?

KALAN: Not, not to me or my father it never happened.

MOORE: No. But did any one of your friends, anything happen?

KALAN:Let's see. Well, one fellow, I remember him. He had a broken leg.

MOORE:All right. Okay. So what happened after that happened? Describe how you met your wife and what happened?

KALAN:(Slovenian) (he laughs)

MOORE:(Slovenian) Is that a dance?

KALAN:A dance.

MOORE:And what was your occupation, then, as you grew up?

KALAN:Coal miner.

MOORE:You went to the coal mines. And you worked in the coal mines how many years?

KALAN:Thirty-three years.

MOORE:Thirty-three years. And how old were you when you met your wife?

KALAN:Twenty-four.

MOORE:Twenty-four.

KALAN:She was twenty-four.

MOORE:And how did you meet her, at the dance?

KALAN:At the dance, yeah.

MOORE:And what happened?

KALAN:We started getting together, very good.

MOORE:Did you date anybody before that? Did you have any
girlfriends?

KALAN:No.

MOORE:She's your first?

KALAN:Yeah, first. First and last. (he laughs)

MOORE:So you saw her at the dance. And did you know right away that
she would be your wife?

KALAN:No, no, no.

MRS. KALAN:Can I say something?

MOORE:Sure, sure.

MRS. KALAN:Will it be on there?

MOORE:Yes.

MRS. KALAN:But when he met me at the dance, at that time, my mother,

old folks went to the dance with us. You know, we weren't allowed to go alone. And it was a benefit dance for some strikers in Pennsylvania, and my mother says, "It's time to go home." And I wasn't ready to go home. So he says, "I'll bring her home."

(a telephone rings) That's all right, let it ring. Did you shut it off now? (break in tape) He says, "I'll bring her home." Oh, that was fine, because it was Valentine Kalan, you know, he was going to bring me home. Well, I come home with somebody else.

I didn't like Valentine Kalan. I didn't want to come home with him. But my mother, the next day, for two weeks I couldn't live with her, she was so mad because I come home with a John Parento. I should have come with Valentine Kalan. So after that he kept coming around. My mother just thought there was nobody like him. (she laughs)

MOORE:So her mother liked you.

KALAN:Oh, yeah.

MOORE:Right away.

KALAN:Yeah. (he laughs) I guess I appealed to her. (he laughs)

MOORE:And so how long did you court her, your wife? How long?

MRS. KALAN:Two years.

MOORE:Two years?

KALAN:Yeah. I tried to raise a little money so we could have went
on a honeymoon.

MOORE:And did you go on a honeymoon?

KALAN:Yes, ma'am.

MOORE:Where did you go?

KALAN:Denver.

MOORE:Denver, Colorado.

KALAN:Yeah.

MRS. KALAN:We used to go to Denver them days, that was something.
You know, I could have went to California or Denver.
He gave me a choice.

MOORE:You gave her a choice of where you're going to go on your
honeymoon?

KALAN:Yeah.

MOORE:What was the choice?

KALAN:Denver was closer. I didn't have enough money.

MRS. KALAN:Yeah, or California.

MOORE:Or California? Was that another choice? How was Denver?
That was a big deal, going?

KALAN:Oh, yeah, oh, yeah.

MRS. KALAN:Oh, yeah, we were talk, we were rich. We had the money,
he had the money.

MOORE:You saved your money for two years to take your bride to Denver.

KALAN:Yeah. I think I saved five hundred dollars, which was a lot
of money at that time, like ten thousand dollars today.

MOORE:So you had fun in Denver after all. (she laughs) Was it
worth it? (they laugh)

MRS. KALAN:We went to Denver. I work at the hospital, that hospital
that's right up above us here in the dining kitchen
for five years before I got married, and we went to
Denver and there were things, I had more money saved
working at the hospital than he had. I had more money
when we got married than he had.

KM-055/KALAN

END OF SIDE TWO, TAPE ONE

BEGINNING OF SIDE ONE, TAPE TWO

MOORE:Okay. So you got to Denver. What happened after Denver?

KALAN:We went to a hotel, then. (they laugh)

MOORE:No, I mean, where did you get married? Where did your marriage
take place?

KALAN:At Northside Church there.

MOORE:Northside Church in Rock Springs.

KALAN:Yeah.

MOORE:Okay. And then you went to Denver and you went to a hotel.
Okay. And after Denver, you came back here to live where?

KALAN:Reliance.

MOORE:In Reliance.

KALAN:There was no houses.

MRS. KALAN:I lived with him.

MOORE:She lived with your family?

KALAN:Yeah, for the time being, yeah.

MOORE: So you lived together with your parents?

KALAN: Yeah, in separate rooms, yeah.

MOORE: And you had your room in the house.

KALAN: Yeah.

MRS. KALAN: I want to . . .

KALAN: You couldn't get a place to rent on a single room, though.

MRS. KALAN: Can I tell about when we got married?

MOORE: Yeah.

MRS. KALAN: When we got married here in the church, we had a big wedding, considering, at that time. Then when we had our fiftieth anniversary we had a big party, and the same minister, same priest, that married us fifty years ago, remarried us. My sister was bridesmaid. The best man had passed away but the whole other wedding party was all there. It was the first time in the diocese and the last time that I can remember being (?).

MOORE: So you got remarried in fifty years?

MRS. KALAN: We went through the whole ceremony.

MOORE:At fifty years you went through the whole ceremony again?

MRS. KALAN:When I got married the first time I cried, but when I got married fifty years later I didn't. I figured I know what I'm into, but he sniffled all day long. (they laugh) And my daughter, when we walked in the church, they were waiting for us, she says, "Dad, I didn't think you'd be crazy enough to do it the second time." (they laugh)

MOORE:Now, wait a minute. Now, tell me, you had children. Did you have children?

KALAN:We had one daughter living.

MOORE:A daughter. And what's her name?

KALAN:Rosemarie.

MOORE:Rosemarie. All right. And so, Rosemarie, now, did she speak Slovenian with you at home?

KALAN:She understands a little, but she doesn't speak or anything like that.

MOORE:And what is her profession? What does she do?

MRS. KALAN:X-ray technician.

KALAN:X-ray technician.

MOORE:She's an x-ray technician. Okay. Now, when you look back on your life now, you came, you lived in two countries, how do you think, what do you think about your family's decision to come here?

KALAN:Good.

MOORE:Good? Do you have any regrets at all?

KALAN:No, not at all.

MOORE:Okay. And do you think that the life that you have here is what you expected?

KALAN:Much better.

MOORE:Much better.

KALAN:I enjoy my life here, though.

MOORE:I'd like to thank you on behalf of the Ellis Island Oral History Project for giving us a chance, and we'll send you a copy of this for your family. This is Kate Moore on July 2, 1994 signing off for the Ellis Island Oral History Project.