

**KM-66**

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**PORT: ELLIS ISLAND**

**RESIDENCES: RUPERT, IDAHO**

**SHOSHONE, IDAHO**

**OCATELLO, IDAHO**

MOORE: Good evening this is Kate Moore for the National Park Service and today is the 12<sup>th</sup> of July 1994 and I'm in Pocatello, Idaho at the home of Charles Christ who came to the United States from Greece in 1919 when he was four years old. Why don't you begin by giving us your full name and date of birth please?

CHRIST: My full name is Charles H. Christ I was born April 16<sup>th</sup> 1915.

MOORE: What does the 'H' stand for?

CHRIST: Harry.

MOORE: Harry.—Um-- what was your original name you mentioned it had been changed?

CHRIST: My original name was Chris Halamandaris.

MOORE: How do you spell that please?

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CHRIST: H-A-L-A-M-A-N-D-A-R-I-S

MOORE: --Alright, and – um-- what size town---. Where were you born exactly?

CHRIST: I was born in –uh—in the country of Greece on the island of Lemnos in the town of Kondia

MOORE: Lemnos and Kondia could you –could you uh—spell those please?

CHRIST: Lemnos is L-E-M-N-O-S and K-O-N-D-I-A

MOORE: And how big was Kondia?

CHRIST: It's a small town I doubt that there were over a hundred and twenty people there.

MOORE: And what'd the town look like do you remember?

CHRIST: It was on a hillside more or less had a church, it had a restaurant, it had –a— (long gap) a cemetery, it had a few streets that were very narrow there was no –ahh—no, no cement or tar it was all gravel and dirt.

MOORE: --mhm hmm—and –um—what was the major industry of that town?

CHRIST: I don't remember really but it must have been something like farming because it was in a valley that stretched out from the town. And –uh not—it was not too far from a bay where they did some fishing so, so fishing might have been a second a...

MOORE: Industry.

CHRIST: Industry yeah but

MOORE: What was your father's name? Do you remember?

CHRIST: My father's name was Harry Halamandaris and he had to change his –of course—to Harry Christ.

MOORE: Mhm hmm. Why did he pick Christ?

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CHRIST: He picked Christ because Halamandaris, when came here to the United States when he came to the port of entry they told him that Halamandaris was too long and how to you spell it and naturally my dad was not a speaking English so he thought --uh--he would change it to a shorter name and he thought of his father whose name was Chris so he just said Christ so his name became Harry Christ.

MOORE: --Mhmm—and what was his occupation back in Greece?

CHRIST: I don't know.

MOORE: Ok.

CHRIST: I don't know he was telling me once that he did do a little clerking in the grocery store and that—uh-- the owner would put nickels and dimes here and there and if a if my father swept the floor and he didn't pick them up and give them to the owner then-- he would-- the owner would know that he put them in his pocket and he would naturally be fired for doing that (laughs).

MOORE: --wh—What --haa, um—Remember what your father looked like? Could you describe him?

CHRIST: --uh—My father was five foot eight about a hundred and ninety pounds he was very strong when he came to the United States—uh-- he would take a, a spike about seven inches long and half inch or three --eighths inches thick and he would put it in his two hands and bend it, to a 'U'.

MOORE: Wow.

CHRIST: No kidding he was strong.

MOORE: (laughs) What about his personality and temperament?

CHRIST: Yeah, it was very --uh—his personality was very level he never did get angry except that he would cuss me out when I came in after nine o'clock in the evening (laughs).

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MOORE: (laughs).

CHRIST: he said nine o'clock was it and when I came in a little late he'd bang me one (laughs) and say "Get to bed!"(laughs).

MOORE: Is there a story about your father that you associate with your childhood?

CHRIST: --Ah—Not really, no.

MOORE: What about your Mom? What was your mother's name?

CHRIST: My mother's name was Elizabeth –her first name—and she was about five foot four and weighed about a hundred and thirty-five pounds. –Uh—she was very kind. She was very helpful. She was very neat. She loved to crochet.

MOORE: And –umm—what was her maiden name?—your mother's maiden name--.

CHRIST: Bourids.

MOORE: How do you spell that?

CHRIST: B-O-U-R-I-D-S

MOORE: Alright. –And umm—what were her chores or what was her occupation your mother?

CHRIST: Just housekeeping.

MOORE: And what were her chores around the house then? You mentioned she liked to cook.

CHRIST: Oh yeah, she liked to cook. I had to do most of the washing.

MOORE: And is there a story about your mother that you associate with your childhood?

CHRIST: Not really (sigh) no. Except that she was just a kind woman.

MOORE: What about brothers and sisters? Did you have brothers and sisters?

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CHRIST: I had two sisters.

MOORE: Older or younger?

CHRIST: They were younger.

MOORE: How much younger?

CHRIST: --Uh--, six and eight years.

MOORE: And what were their names?

(tape skip)

CHRIST: My older sister --was-- is Ellen and my younger sister was Mary.

MOORE: --Mhm hmm—and --um—you came over here very young. Do you remember anything about your house in Greece?

CHRIST: Yes, it --uh—it was a two story home it had a nice big --uh—front room and dining room I recall that --uh—I --was—I would sleep up stairs in the bedroom and then I would come down stairs. And I recall that there was a window there by the stair way and that—the-- as you went outside there was a nice big tree where I would take a chair and sit under the shade of the tree there.

MOORE: And how was the house light when you were a child? Do you remember?

CHRIST: Yes, we had coal oil lamps (laughs).

MOORE: And how was it heated? Was it heated?

CHRIST: I don't think we had any heat but I really don't remember

MOORE: And what about --um—running water --where did—what was your water source?

CHRIST: We had to go to a --a—fountain to pick up water in buckets.

MOORE: And how far was that fountain from the house?

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CHRIST: Not too far it was about two blocks I think.

MOORE: Mhm hmm and...

CHRIST: It was over there by the cemetery then. Yeah.

MOORE: And what was the house made of itself in construction?

CHRIST: We had a very good home it was built with rocks and --uh-- cement and its still standing it was that well built and my first cousin Stella lives in there with her husband.

MOORE: --and umm is, was-- ha—How far from the town was the house? Was it in or out of town?

CHRIST: It was in --in--town. Mhm hmm.

MOORE: And did you keep animals at all?

CHRIST: No, uh.

MOORE: Did you --uh-- have a garden?

CHRIST: No we --ne--never had a garden.

MOORE: --Did--what about furniture? Do you remember anything about the furniture?

CHRIST: Well no, except that it was wooden.

MOORE: Was it homemade or store bought?

CHRIST: It was probably store boughten. But it was all wooden there was none that was made of steel or plastic or anything like that.

MOORE: Now --what was your favorite--who did the cooking in the family? What was your favorite food as a child?

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CHRIST: As a child I don't remember (laughs). But I --I-- know that --uh--I did like spaghetti with burnt butter over it and cheese.

MOORE: --and uh--What about the kitchen? Do you remember the kitchen very much?

CHRIST: No. I don't recall the kitchen at all.

MOORE: --um--Well meal times. Do you remember how you ate meals with family?

CHRIST: Not very good except that --uh--except that there was an oblong table and before I went to bed my Mother would go into the --uh--sort of a cellar where we had great big barrels of wine and I'm sure that the barrels stood eight foot because that was clear up to the ceiling and I would go in that and say "chrrr" right there where the spicket was and my mother would fill up a glass of wine and I'd take it to the table and drink it practically every night (laughs)

MOORE: (laughs) (long gap) .

PENNY: [inaudible] You didn't tell them that you were

CHRIST: I remember playmates too

MOORE: Alright, do you remember any playmates?

CHRIST: Yes I remember two playmates I had one playmate was a --from Turk-- boy and he was from Turkey and then there was another little girl and she was practically next door and --uh--we would play outside we'd dig up like youngsters like to do, run across nails and pieces of --uh--wood and this and that.

MOORE: And what about your grandparents? Were you particularly close to your grandparents?

CHRIST: No

MOORE: Did they live near by? Do you know?

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CHRIST: I don't think I had any Grandparents.

MOORE: Now what about religious life then, did you go to church as a child?

CHRIST: --Not—Yes, I did --uh—my mother and I would go to church [not understood] she would ask --I remember that—she would ask me to pick up a --a—stone and she would pick up a stone and we'd walk up the hillside to the church and then she'd tell me to throw it down into this sort of a ravine and I asked her why we did that and she said that --they—the people of that town wanted the ravine to be filled so that --uh-- it would give them a little more space near the church.(laughs)

MOORE: (laughs) --and uh—did you learn prayers at home before you went to sleep?

CHRIST: Yes, my mother --my mother—would always have me say some little prayer before I went to bed.

MOORE: How about before meals?

CHRIST: Well, I imagine that I really don't recall that.

MOORE: Okay, and the --the—domination what religion were you?

CHRIST: We were Greek Orthodox and we always made our cross just before we ate all three meals and also prayed and made our cross when we went to bed.

MOORE: What was your favorite holiday?

CHRIST: I don't remember.

MOORE: What about school life? Did you go to school? Your too young?

CHRIST: I didn't go to school until I came to the United States.

MOORE: Okay, do you remember any games that you played in Greece as a child?

CHRIST: No, I don't know, I was too small.

MOORE: Okay, now let's talk about how you got to the United States who came first?

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CHRIST: Okay, my father came to the United States about 1906. He landed in Pittsburgh he worked there for a while and then he came to Idaho and he and his brother started farming and then—uh-- in 1912 my father took off he went to Greece and he fought in the Turkish war when Greece —uh—liberated itself from Turkey. They were under Turkish rule for some four hundred years until that war. And then my father —uh—came home after the war to Lemnos he married my mother he lived there for six or seven months and then he came back to the United States. My uncle in Lemnos at the same time when I was born he baptized me when I was three days old and then he came to the United States to join my father and he went into the —a-- farming business and my father became a section foreman —and—in 1919 I came to the United States with my mother, my aunt, and my cousin, four of us.

MOORE: To go back a bit, what did you father do in Pittsburgh? What work did he first find in the United States?

CHRIST: He worked in a steel mill.

MOORE: In Pittsburgh?

CHRIST: In steel mill in Pittsburgh.

MOORE: Do you know what he did in —in-- the steel mill?

CHRIST: No, no I don't.

MOORE: Alright so, leading up to this when you came over your father then came here came home married your mother came back to Idaho

CHRIST: Mhm hmm.

MOORE: Okay, so do you remember packing to come to the United States?

CHRIST: I don't remember packing I guess my mother did all the packing. The only thing I remember on the way to the United States was that my mother and I

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rode on a donkey and we were going, walking on a path going to the harbor to get onto the ship.

MOORE: And do you know what the ships name was?

CHRIST: (laughs) No (laughs).

MOORE: Alright, do you know what month it was?

CHRIST: No I don't --I don't--.

MOORE: Okay, so your mother and you went on a donkey and you walked to the harbor?

CHRIST: Yeah, we were --we were--on the donkey and --and--we rode to the harbor. We got onto the ship and took off.

MOORE: Do you remember the ship what it looked like?

CHRIST: No, I don't. I don't remember the ship. But...

MOORE: Do you remember being on the ship?

CHRIST: Okay, --uh--I remember one thing and that is that when we were on the second ship after leaving Athens --we were on the second ship--a German submarine came up and --uh--the captain of that German ship --submarine-- called us, called --th-- our captain of the ship and said that what we were --he asked--what we were loaded with and the captain told him we had nothing but passengers who were going to the United States the German captain said no you must have ammunition you must have guns and things like that. And our captain answered him that the world war had ended and that he should go back home.. And the German did not believe him. And he sent a torpedo and hit our ship. And I recall --I recall--that everybody was screaming and yelling and running around.

And they would get into the lifeboats they'd take these axes instead of lowering the lifeboats down. They would take and chop at the ropes naturally

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one side of the ship would go down first and everybody would fall out of the boats into the ocean and my mother saw that so she told my aunt she said “now lets not get into a –a—lifeboats until either the captain or some of his crew get into the boat and we’ll go with them. So that’s what we did. We entered the boat and we –we were—lowered safely down and then another ship had come along and picked us up. And I remember that I was on the shoulders of a man and we were climbing this big rope ladder up into this other ship.

MOORE: And..

CHRIST: And then –w—then we continued from there on with our trip to the United States. I recall that the voyage was not –was not—very peaceful. We had a few days –three or four days—where the ocean was real rough and everybody was sea sick but when the ocean did settle down this one day I looked out and the ocean was –as—and there were dolphins six or eight foot tall – I mean long—and they were making –they were jumping--. They would make big eight or ten foot jumps up –up—in the air and come down and as far as I could look around there were that many dolphins just thousands of them when we came into the port of entry in Ellis Island.

MOORE: Hold on for a second. We go back..

CHRIST: Ok alright.

MOORE: And you had the German incident.

CHRIST: Alright.

MOORE: Where was that?

CHRIST: It was in the Mediterranean Ocean.

MOORE: Alright, that was in the Mediterranean Ocean. So you were saved

CHRIST: The two –between—Athens and the Rock of Gibraltar somewhere.

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MOORE: Okay, so that happened there. The rescue ship came and got you and that ship went on to New York.

CHRIST: Right.

MOORE: And –wha—what were the accommodations that you and your –your— mother –you were travelling with you, your mother....

CHRIST: My aunt and my cousin.

MOORE: Where were your sisters?

CHRIST: Oh, they weren't born yet.

MOORE: Oh, I see. Okay. Alright, so you (laughs) so you, your aunt, your cousin, and your mother where in your boat did you have accommodations what class?

CHRIST: I don't know.

MOORE: Do you remember how you slept that would give us an indication? Did you have bunk beds –or regular – do you remember any of that?

CHRIST: No, but I think we had bunk beds. I think we had bunk beds but –uh—the only—we had to go down from (skips) deck into the kitchen or the dining area to have our meals. Other than that I just don't remember anything about beds.

MOORE: You remember the food? What about the food?

CHRIST: No, I don't remember the food either. Must've been pretty good (laughs) or..

MOORE: Or you'd remember (laughs).

CHRIST: (laughs).

MOORE: Alright so, --um—alright so, you got into New York – your getting into Ne— you saw the dolphins it was calmer before that were you sick or anybody else sick in your party, from seasickness?

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CHRIST: Well yes, we were –my cousin and I—well we were just sicker than [ not understood]

MOORE: (laughs)

CHRIST: and my mother had a blanket out on the deck and we were lying on deck under the blanket –uh-- we were using the blanket for shade and oh we were sick.(laughs)

MOORE: Did you get to play on deck ever? Were there any times when it was fun?

CHRIST: I don't recall.

MOORE: (laughs) Alright now, you said you were coming in –you came—into New York. What was the first time –thing—you remember after the dolphins?

CHRIST: (long gap) –uh—coming into New York I remember that –uh—we came into New York but I don't remember anything about Ellis Island the only thing I remember was the train. We got onto the train and we headed out west for Rupert. Rupert, Idaho.

MOORE: Okay now, do you remember the Statue of Liberty?

CHRIST: No.

MOORE: And you don't remember anything about the—um-- the processing of –e-uh—customs, in Ellis Island? You know you went through Ellis Island?

CHRIST: Yeah.

MOORE: Cause your mom said so.

CHRIST: Because my mother said so and –uh—we naturally had to go through Ellis Island at that time.

MOORE: Right.

CHRIST: Everybody came through Ellis Island.

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MOORE: Right, so you remember the train and you were bound for where?

CHRIST: Rupert, Idaho.

MOORE: And

CHRIST: I—I—don't remember the train except that we were on it. And we were supposed to have gotten off at Minidoka, Idaho and instead we stayed on the train because my mother didn't know anything about where she should change trains. Naturally she didn't know—how--the English language at all. So the conductor came back and he noticed that we were still on the train so he let us ride until we came to a little town (skips) Bliss, Idaho. And he asked us then—gotta get off the train—(skips) so we got off at Bliss we went—entered the depot—and we sat down on the bench, in the depot. And my mother began to cry.

They—uh—freight agent in Bliss there walks up to her and he started talking to her and I imagine she answered him in Greek and it happened that he was Italian and he knew Greek quite well. So he spoke to her that—uh—she should not cry that he had his family upstairs and that we were welcome to come up and spend the night and have food with us—with them—and that—uh—the—next morning he would send a telegram to my father that we were here and that we would be on this other train that would go to Rupert, Idaho and to meet us there. So this all happened. We got onto the train the next morning. We got to Rupert. We got off and then I remember that my father had a hayrack with a team of horse and—uh—my mother and I were sitting on—on—a big trunk and he was upfront. And I asked my mother I said “Who's that man?” and she says that's your father. That was the first time I had seen my father.

MOORE: Now was your aunt and your cousin were they with you at this time?

CHRIST: No, my cousin happened to get chicken pox and they were held over in New York for a couple of weeks and they came over—came back—later.

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MOORE: Held over where in New York?

CHRIST: I don't know.

MOORE: When did she get chicken pox on the voyage?

CHRIST: Mhm hmm.

MOORE: So was she held in Ellis Island?

CHRIST: No, -- he-- my cousin.

MOORE: He sorry. Was he held in Ellis Island then?

CHRIST: I don't know. Except that they were not allowed to leave New York.

MOORE: Alright and what were..

CHRIST: They were quarantined.

MOORE: Yes, they --they--were quarantined and its likely they were at Ellis Island.

CHRIST: Mhm-hmm.

MOORE: One question I have though, just out of --uh--curiosity back on that boat trip you had: was anybody hurt during the torpedoing? Did anybody drown? Did anybody get killed?

CHRIST: There were a lot of people that drowned, there was just one torpedo and it --uh--went into the hull of the ship and it just loaded up with water and sank.

MOORE: So that ship sank?

CHRIST: Mhm hmm.

MOORE: Okay, I just wonder cause your --through the narration--of what happened. So you were lucky? You were one of the lucky ones?

CHRIST: Yeah, yep.

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MOORE: Okay, so —here—now your father had a team of horse. Where was —what was—the address that you were going to? Do you know?

CHRIST: (coughs) I don't believe that farms have addresses (laughs).

MOORE: (laughs) Okay, --umm-- you are going to a farm. Do you remember what the farm was like —what the—what the conditions?

CHRIST: Forty acre farm it had a —a—lot of sand on it and my father he didn't really like to stay there and —and—farm it so he —he—left —uh-- about as soon as my mother —uh—mother and I were settled why he took off and went to work on the railroads as a section foreman.

MOORE: Now why did your father originally come here anyway? Why —what—was his intent in coming to the United States?

CHRIST: Well I don't imagine —you see—Greece is —uh— is very mountainous and occupations there is —are—very minimal its probably either farming or working in a grocery store or café —things like that—and those are not very —uh-- profitable unless you have a lot of money and a lot of clientele. And my father being in Kondia, which is a small town and an island which is not very prosperous, he wanted to get out where he could make some money and a future for himself.

MOORE: --Mhm hmm—now when your mother came her and your father came here tell me how they adjusted. Did they learn English?

CHRIST: My father learned English quite well because he became a section foreman and every night he had to make out a report so he could write and read English. Very difficult time learning to speak English because my father —uh—had just become a foreman and he had no seniority to speak of so he had to take these sections which were out in the sticks like —uh—well like —Melner (sp.) and Kamima (sp.) and Contact, Nevada and little town and —uh-- little places Novene, Idaho.

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MOORE: Okay. We're gonna take a break and change the tape right now.

CHRIST: Oh, Okay. (coughs)

CHRIST: Okay.

MOORE: Before the break we ---um—we had gotten to --we had gotten to—the house the farm you had mentioned the farm that you came to.

CHRIST: Yes.

MOORE: Could you tell me about the conditions on the farm --uh--um—wh—what was the house made of? What about water and plumbing and ....

CHRIST: Okay, the farm was a forty acre farm and the house was a little two room home made of wood. We had a well that you had to pump by hand to get the water up and we had an out house with two holes in it and a Montgomery Ward Catalog in it (laughs). Other than that I don't remember except that --uh-- we also had a horse and a couple cows and I think my uncle had a couple sheep too because he never did with out sheep and naturally we had chickens.

MOORE: And what about lighting? What type of lighting did you have?

CHRIST: Good old coal oil with a regular chimney that you put on top of the lamps.

MOORE: And what about --um—heating in the house?

CHRIST: We had a --in the kitchen—we had a regular cooking majestic cooking stove but in the other room we had a pot bellied stove that had a chimney going straight up and --uh—they would --my uncle—would use that mostly in the winter time to keep the old place warm.

MOORE: And did you uncle live with you?

CHRIST: Yes.

MOORE: Ok --uh--..

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CHRIST: We did for one year.

MOORE: For one year, yeah.

CHRIST: Uh-huh.

MOORE: And what was your uncle working as?

CHRIST: On the farm.

MOORE: On the farm.

CHRIST: Mhm hmm

MOORE: Alright now –um—what language did you speak at home the whole time?

CHRIST: We always spoke Greek.

MOORE: Mhm hmm.

CHRIST: My cousin was naturally came there too and he and I would always speak Greek. My uncle, my dad, my mother, my aunt, everybody was speaking nothing but Greek.

MOORE: Mhmm hmm. What about neighbors were there any Greeks near by?

CHRIST: Well if they were they were about a half a mile or at least a quarter of a mile away and we didn't walk that far (laughs).

MOORE: Um, (long gap) how bout –um—did—when did—did you go—When you went to school did you speak English at all?

CHRIST: No, I didn't when my –when I became—six years old my father had gotten a little section by the name of Schiller which is about eighteen miles West of Pocatello and I went school there. Our school was about three miles out from our section house and we had to go by a team of horses pulling a buggy which had a sort of a platform on it because it took about eight or nine children on it to the school. My first day the teacher gave me a piece of

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paper and wrote —she wrote—something on it and she asked me to, to write. I didn't — I didn't—know how to write this and that so I didn't do anything so she came along about when school was over with and she noticed that I hadn't written anything and she asked me to stay in after school. Well the buggy came along the kids took off, got onto the — the-- buggy and I started crying and the teacher saw that I was crying so she motioned for me to go and boy did I run. I caught that buggy and went home. That evening the — uh—other children told my father what had happened —that-- so he wrote a note to the teacher asking her to let me attend school so that I could learn to speak the English language and that's what happened. I went to school the first year learning the English language.

MOORE: Okay and —and—did you ever get—were you ever teased for being Greek? Did anyone ever say anything?

CHRIST: No, no, no. No, I was never —I was never-- teased for being Greek. I was taken in as any other youth.

MOORE: And what was your favorite subject in school then finally?

CHRIST: Geography.

MOORE: Geography.

CHRIST: --Uh—and history was quite interesting too.

MOORE: Mhm hmm, and —um—do you remember any teachers at all? Favorite teachers?

CHRIST: yeah, there was Tyson in Kamima that taught me when I was in the sixth grade and there was—uh—Mrs. Yurnol or —ya—I don't recall her name she taught me when I was in the seventh and eighth grade and then from Kamima (sp?) we moved to ShoShone. And I entered Shoshone there —uh—

MOORE: Is Shoshone in Idaho?

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CHRIST: In Idaho its North of Twin Falls. South of Sun Valley. And –uh—I –uh--- I think it was right after Christmas when we moved to Shoshone and I was in the eighth grade and our teacher then was Mrs. Weatherall. In order to –a-- graduate from the eighth grade and enter high school at that time we had to take a state examination and because I was going to a –sm—small school where we had eight grades in one class room with one teacher we didn't learn too much so Mrs. Weatherall was a very concerned about me she thought maybe I would not be able to pass so that I wouldn't graduate. But after taking the exam and the –ah—grades came out I came out with an eighty-seven which was one of the higher grades and she –uh—couldn't believe it. (laughs).

MOORE: (laughs)

CHRIST: Yeah.

MOORE: Well –um—when you said your father worked –uh—for the railroad did you say?

CHRIST: Mhm hmm.

MOORE: --Umm—And he had –um— he had assignments where he had housing that came with his job?

CHRIST: Yes.

MOORE: When you moved was it because of –the—his job that you moved?

CHRIST: Well he always tried to better himself –eh--he would go from like Shiller was right out into the sticks naturally but –uh—Pocatello was not to far away but he never had an automobile he never did drive. And then he moved to Contact, Nevada and naturally that was still worse but he thought that he was –im--improving himself but he wasn't. From there he moved to Milner. Miner, Idaho which is between Burly and Twin Falls. They have a dam they have a

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nice little school where I attended school in the third and fourth grade. And then (sigh).

MOORE: What exactly did he do though when you say that he was working at a railroad what was his chores – what were his tasks--?

CHRIST: Well he –he—was a section foremen and he had –uh—in the winter time he would have –but—maybe four laborers working for him. In the summer time he would have as many as eight. And their job was to change railroad ties to see that the railroad-- that the rails were-- level that they were even. That is certain width that they were even in width and that they were level. And –uh- - in the winter time they didn't have too much work to do except keep the switches clean. Keep the ol' snow and ice from the switches because the switches meant that the either the trains would go or they would be derailed or stopped.

MOORE: Mhm hmm. Now did you always follow your father where ever his –his— assignment was?

CHRIST: Yes.

MOORE: And how did this affect your –your—background in terms of...?

CHRIST: Well, it didn't really affect my background much except that it –it—did bother my mother every time we moved from one section to another section we had section houses on the railroad and often times a section houses would be quite dirty. They were -- the floors-- would be filthy they'd be black and often times these same homes had bed bugs and we had to clean everything up and get rid of the bed bugs and (sigh) it affected my mother in that –uh-- eventually she got sick and –uh—she was –uh—going to Ogden, Utah for seven years having surgery and I don't really remember just why but...

MOORE: Did your mother or father ever consider going back to Greece? Did they talk about it?

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CHRIST: No, no, no, never.

MOORE: So, did they get homesick at all?

CHRIST: I don't think so because my mother and father – I don't know whether—my mother did but my father I don't think had a grandfather living at that time

MOORE: And –um—do you think that the life here in this country was what your parents had expected before they left?

CHRIST: Well my father came here –bef—the first time and I imagine he liked it, it was very –uh—good for him and he came back to it so I imagine he –he—was happy to be here.

MOORE: Now was there any. How about your sisters that were born here –um—did they speak Greek at home too?

CHRIST: Yes.

MOORE: So that was the family language the entire time?

CHRIST: Mhm hmm.

MOORE: Because of your mother primarily?

CHRIST: My mothers yes.

MOORE: And –uh—tell me what happened with your life. You got into high school you got an eighty-seven on your eighth grade examination.

CHRIST: Mhm hmm.

MOORE: And what happened in your life in terms of your profession?

CHRIST: Terms in –My profession?—

MOORE: Yeah, did you finish high school?

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CHRIST: Oh, yeah. Yes I went to high school. –ah--I was –uh—very interested in sports. I wanted to go out for football that fall and my dad said no you're too small your not even a hundred and fifty pounds he says so why go out for football when you have fellows out there a hundred sixty, seventy, eighty. (laughs). So he didn't let me go out for football and –in—in my freshman year. In my sophomore year however I went out for football and I played –ah- - in the first game and I. In high school I played –uh-- all three years I had never seen a basketball game-- I mean a basketball--I nor a football as far as that goes until I did get into high school –uh—.In my sophomore year I started playing basketball in my senior year I made—made-- the team and we got along pretty good we –we-- beat Boise which was a –a—big school and Shoshone was only—uh –the student body—was only a hundred twenty-four students in the four grades. So –uh—beating Boise was quite an accomplishment and we also played Boise football that one year and they – they--beat the heck out of us thirty-two to six and I was the only one that made the touch down and I was a –a—tackle. (laughs).

MOORE: Well then you finished high school , did you?

CHRIST: Yes, I finished high school. And I came –came—to Pocatello in 1934. That fall I came to Pocatello. And I've been here practically every –ever—since except for (long gap) I don't know what she's trying to tell me.

PENNY: [unaudible]

CHRIST: Ready?

CHRIST: Okay, came to Pocatello in the fall of 1934. I entered college my father wanted me to become an auto mechanic. Well, to satisfy him I took auto mechanics that year. I didn't like them.

MOORE: What school did you go to?

CHRIST: Here at Idaho State.

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MOORE: Mhm-hmm

CHRIST: At that time it was called University of Idaho-Southern Branch. I went out for sports there too but I didn't do very well I was too -too—light so I just dropped them. In my sophomore year I met Penny at -at—church and ---uh—I met her along with two or three other girls that were there and we shook hands and introduced our selves and (long gap)/

MOORE: How did you – what happened after that? — And how long did you date?

CHRIST: Well we really didn't date much because from thirty five until 1940 when we were married we -uh—we just meet once and a while and see each other we didn't date because her folks were very strict. Matter of fact one day I came – went over—to her home and we took a little walk up to the University and back and her father didn't like the idea of my taking his daughter out for a walk (laughs).

MOORE: So how did you know -sh-- she was the one you were gonna marry?

CHRIST: Well I really didn't know but -uh—(sigh) (phone rings) I knew that she was a fine women and that -uh—(phone rings) – she was a fine gal and that ---uh— I liked her and she seemed to be interested in me (laughs).

MOORE: So you graduated? What did you major in --in --college?

CHRIST: --uh—in book keeping.

MOORE: In bookkeeping.

CHRIST: In business.

MOORE: Mhm-hmm.

CHRIST: Business, in business law. One day -uh—one day I -uh—took a business law book home to study and a friend of mine said lets go over to my father in laws and we'll go over there and -uh—or rather my brother-in-laws and we'll: go over there and have a glass of wine. I said "Okay." So we went over to –

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to—his home, and his brother-in-law's wife brings out a gallon of wine sets it on the table and the three of us: this friend of mine and his brother in law George Sakalaris began talking and drinking and we drank that whole wine. Well I didn't get to study any —any—law book went to bed I was feeling pretty good --went to bed-- next morning I woke up my mouth was dry as cotton and I took a glass of water. I drank it and I was drunk all over again (laughs). Went to college and we took a —we took this—business law test. There was one student that got a higher grade than I. He got ninety-seven —no he got ninety-one—and I got eighty-nine. There were other grades that the teacher was reading off they were as low as fourteen, nineteen, twenty-one. And I just couldn't believe that I had done that well (laughs) but I never tried getting drunk again before an exam (laughs). I went —ta—I went to college for two years and —uh—I did little boxing I entered AAU went to Ogden did a little boxing there.

MOORE: And you married in 1940?

CHRIST: I got married in 1940.

MOORE: And what were you working as after college?

CHRIST: --Mhmm—what was I working as? Oh, a I was working at Pacific Fruits and Produce I was a night foreman there and we would put up grocery orders and vegetables and fruits and loading the trucks so that they could deliver it to the stores in moo —in the daytime—in the morning. And we had a —a—truck and trailer that we had to load out twice a week which would go to as far North as Salmon from Black Foot I don't remember the towns but there was Challace (sp?) and Mackey (sp?) and ... (superimposed).

MOORE: We get back to —we get back to your wedding you've convinced the family that you were the right person for your wife then?

CHRIST: --ah--- I didn't convince anyone. I think that (long gap) got it shut off.

KM-66 CHRIST

MOORE: That's right keep it going. You said you didn't have to convince —err—you said her father was pretty strict so..

CHRIST: Penny's father was yes, uh-huh.

MOORE: Okay, how did you propose to your wife? -We're having a little note here passed between us -- how did you propose to her?

CHRIST: (long gap) (laughs) we —uh—

MOORE: (laughs) we're getting notes here passed from family members alright. For those that don't know what's going on the tape alright. How did you propose for your wife?

CHRIST: We —uh-- had a car full of kids—uh—her brothers and her two brothers and three sisters I think and we took a drive out in the country we came to a —a— steep hill and Penny and I climbed this hill and while we were on top of the hill I proposed to her there.

MOORE: What hill was that?

CHRIST: Knob Hill. (laughs).

MOORE: Did you ever go back?

CHRIST: It was South of town here.

MOORE: Have you ever gone back?

CHRIST: No I don't think we ever went back. No.

MOORE: And okay. So you proposed she accepted I guess, she's sitting right here.

CHRIST: Yes, she accepted (laughs).

MOORE: And, what happened then did you have —you married—you have children. Did you have children?

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CHRIST: Yes we —uh— we were married July 21<sup>st</sup> 1940 we had a —a— son in 41' a daughter in 43' and another son in 45'? ---44' or 45'--.

MOORE: And what are their names your son's name?

CHRIST: Our older son is Harry. Our daughter is Patricia. And our younger son is Alex.

MOORE: Mhm-hmm. And what was your profession after then you —uh— were first married what did you settle into for a profession?

CHRIST: Uh, I worked at the Navel Ordinance Plant as a machinist for nine years. And then I learned that they were going to close up so I put my application in with Farmer's Insurance Group. To become the —uh— the supply supervisor. We had to take a test and at that time Penny's brother also took a test right along with me and he became a —uh— underwriter and I was likely to —uh— out do two other fellows who had experiences supply supervisors. I beat them out and I became the supply supervisor for Farmer's Insurance at the regional office. Farmer's Insurance has —uh— some two-hundred seventy-five employees. Three-hundred and twenty-five employees they also have a bunch of district managers and agents they service the three states of Utah, Idaho, and Montana.

MOORE: Well when you look back on your life

CHRIST: Mhm-hmm

MOORE: in terms of your profession and your family how do you feel about your father's original decision to come here?

CHRIST: I think he did the right thing (laughs).

MOORE: Have you ever considered going back?

CHRIST: He never did and neither did I, but then Penny and I have taken trips in Europe and gone to Greece and all over.

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MOORE: How do you consider yourself to be as a nationality do you think of yourself as American or as Greek? Or as both?

CHRIST: Well both. You can't help but —uh—consider being Greek because you have other Greek people here that speak Greek and —uh—they go to —uh—the Greek Orthodox Church the same as I and I'm in the United States I'm a naturalized citizen. I vote and I think more —most of—for my government and one thing another.

MOORE: Alright, well I'd like to thank you on behalf of Ellis Island for allowing us to take the opportunity to speak with you and —uh-- we'll: send you a copy of this as well.

CHRIST: Okay, very good.

MOORE: This is Kate Moore signing off on July 12<sup>th</sup> 1994 from Pocatello, Idaho for the Ellis Island Oral History Project.

CHRIST: Yeah.

MOORE: We should..