**Nancy:** My name is Nancy Dulet and I'm speaking with Sam Auspitz on Thursday September 19th, 1985. We're going to begin this interview number 037 at 11:40 am and I'm about to interview Mr. Auspitz about his immigration from Czechoslovakia in 1920.

I'd like to start back at the beginning. Could you tell me where and when you were born?

**Sam:** I was born in a small town in Hungary in February 3rd 1906.

**Nancy:** What was the name of that small town?

**Sam:** In Hungarian it was called Sant Miklos that’s Holy Miklos.

**Nancy:** Could you spell that?

**Sam:** Sant would be S-A-N-T. Miklos would be M-I-K-L-O-S.

**Nancy:** Can you tell me a bit about your family? How big was your family?

**Sam:** My father was in America for quite number of years and the family existed of my mother, 3 brothers and 2 sisters and of course I'll start from before the war, so you have an idea what we went through and what motivated us to come to America.

During our King Franz Joseph the Jews had it very very good, he was very democratic and we didn't know anything about anti-Semitism or anything of the sort and we loved our country, then came the war and the whole thing changed.

The war was a horrible horrible experience besides we went through what we had to. We had to run from one place to another because we were afraid, see the war was very close to us. We lived in town where it was located near the Carpathian Mountains where the war had a big part in there and we had canons and the guns all day and all night and when we heard that the Russians are moving closer running we run.

While we run, we run [chuckle] into the woods. We had a couple of friends that lived in the tiny, hamlet in the wooden area down there and we thought that was safe for us because it was in the woods but of course it was just the opposite, the woods was the place to go to.

**Nancy:** Did everyone in the family go together, leave your home at that point?

**Sam:** Yes, we all went together. The oldest in the family was 18 years old was my brother and of course the war was a horrible thing to go through with the hunger and we didn't know what to eat and the fear of the war and of course school stopped, we were in very very bad shape and of course with us it was worse because we had no father and our means of making a living was in all in older brother who was a tailor, not the fancy kind of tailor but he tailored for the peasantry you see.

**Nancy:** Had your father been a tailor too?

**Sam:** No, my father was in America in the shoe business.

**Nancy:** Oh, he had already come to America.

**Sam:** Yes, he was in America quite a long time.

**Nancy:** You know what year it was that he came to this country?

**Sam:** I don’t' know.

**Nancy:** Before you were born?

**Sam:** Before yeah but when I was born, now it should have been about 1905 and I had to be born with somebody [laughter]. Well anyway, lucky my brother had a tailor shop and he do a living and my mother was sort of a seamstress also for the peasantry and she worked and we didn't work for the money because money was not needed but we needed to get some flour or some few potatoes or a couple pieces for wood and things you stay alive.

That was the main object, just to stay alive and of course we are needless to say that we're hungry but this happened in 1914 by the meantime I did go to school and I was lucky that I even graduated public school in Hungary and I had a good Hungarian education because the school down there was the system that 6th grade school was like in America 8th grade, we had the same on and I got good Jewish education.

First of all through the Judaism and then our king as I said before he was very liberal and we were forced to go to Hebrew school too. We had one day in a week, Sunday that this government supplied teachers and taught us Hebrew just as well as Hungarian.

**Nancy:** So you were fluent in both languages then?

**Sam:** Yes.

**Nancy:** Hungarian

**Sam:** Hungarian and Jewish. Yes, I knew both languages and of course my father used to send us money before the war and it was wonderful, we didn't have no problem but came the war and of course our trouble started all around.

**Nancy:** No contact with your father.

**Sam:** No contact with my father and no ways of having in for the money if you couldn't get no merchandise, the only way you could get because the peasantry because when they work in the field the stuff they brought home they saved with us for the things that we could give them and then my sister grew up and she was a kid of probably 16 years old and--

**Nancy:** Way back home? You were telling me about your sister.

**Sam:** My sister grew up, I mean ripe age of probably 15 and she also took sewing up and so it wasn't too bad for us. Well the war came to an end and right away my father was in touch with us and of course he sent us money and we had no problem then and then we decided that we're going to America.

**Nancy:** Had your father ever thought about going anywhere else besides America?

**Sam:** No, my father loved America very very much and he was quite successful and that was the country he picked for us and of course we didn't know any different and when we started - actually my father wanted for us to come over before the war but my mother decided too you know she was afraid to travel by herself.

First of all she had a big family of 5, they were all small and second of all she's a small town woman, she never travelled her life, she didn't know how to do it so she postponed and postponed and the war came and that was the end of that.

**Nancy:** Do you remember getting letters from your father and what he would say about America? Do you have any records?

**Sam:** Oh yes, he always praised America very very much, he loved America. After war you know my father got in touch with us of course and he insisted we should right away leave Czechoslovakia which was that time and to come to America. He send us the tickets you know and the money and our [unclear 00:09:11] was about the early part of 1920 and of course needless to say that was not an easy trip because the train accommodation was not the finest and we did not go 1st class and actually we went 3rd class but finally finally we came to the capital of Czechoslovakia Prague.

Now there we stood couple of days to finalize our passport you know with the visas and so on and then we went to Germany and we landed in Holland. In Holland that’s where our boat went from, it was Holland blind and it came to Amsterdam and of course we came in 3rd class which was a big mistake and my father he didn't realize that bad pressure 3rd class was. He was able to send us 1st class but he just decided to send us 3rd class but he didn't realize 3rd class meant actually the steerage but I'm going too far ahead.

First of all what we went through in Holland. In Holland they put us in a big big room in a hotel with so many many more immigrants and because we came 3rd class the ones in 1st class they gave them special rooms in a special tub but that 3rd class they treated us like a bunch of animals and we prepared ourselves for the main event for the boat.

That was big preparation because first of all in order to be allowed to land in America the most important thing- you had two things that was important, the one your head had to be clean without any louse you know I mean and so on and your eyes had to be perfect. Well of course our eyes are perfect but the head we had to take care of.

In other words we had to wash and scrub our heads you know what I mean to make sure there's not a spot in it and of course we were with so many people and we accumulate a lot of friends and they were in the same position as we were and we didn't have so bad because at least it was a friendly atmosphere and the main food that they gave us was being in Holland and Holland is a fish country was blotters you know [unclear 00:12:18].

**Nancy:** Blotters.

**Sam:**  Yeah, that’s a fish you know in the [unclear 00:12:23] and instead of butter they gave us margarine and of course it was not the greatest food but we didn't mind.

**Nancy:** Now this where your whole family is together?

**Sam:** Whole family except my oldest brother. My oldest brother was in the army and of course they wouldn't release him from the army. That’s a chapter all by itself. Well, I might as well tell you about my oldest brother.

My oldest brother was in the army and we all left you know and my sister was an exceptionally beautiful beautiful girl- my older sister and the police lieutant fell madly in love with her and of course he was Gentile, so it’s not in America you know there's no question of marrying a man a gentile boy and although he was everything. She was in love with him and he was in love with her but there was a religious thing coming in the picture but he was so much in love with her.

Now, remember we're in America the story I'm telling you now and deserted the army and changed the name and lieutenant transferred and took them over across the border which meant death to both of them if they were caught but the lieutenant was so much in love with my sister that he jeopardized his life to have the race in their eyes and my brother came over to America so we were all together thank God.

Now I'm going to tell you about the boats which is really is a class all by itself. The boat was a very very small boat, it was called the Rindam.

**Nancy:** How do you spell that? Do you know?

**Sam:** R-I-N-D-A-M, Rindam. It’s a very tiny boat, in fact it was so small that in 1936 I took a trip to Europe and I went into Nomadie and I compared the life boats you know to that boat [chuckle] it was such a small difference you can imagine how small it was so the boat was just shaking just like a row boat.

**Nancy:** What time of year was it?

**Sam:** Time of year- that must have been around June or July. No, no it was later than that September I think because we wound up in America in December, see early part of December so it must have been something like it but we weren't in the boat that long. I'm talking about how long it took us from Holland over there and Holland we were a long time.

**Nancy:** How long were you in Holland before you got on the boat? How long did you journey take from the time you left home?

**Sam:** Holland we were about a couple of weeks.

**Nancy:** Waiting to [crosstalk 00:15:33].

**Sam:** I think the whole thing took us about 2 months, the whole trip. Finally we got into the boat, on the boat actually we came in the steerage 3rd class was plain steerage you know what I mean. They piled us up probably either 10 people in one cabin see and the food needless to say was the worst could be the worst ever.

Like I said before the main thing was hairing business because Holland was very rich in hairing and lucky I was Jew so my hairing because I was used to that and it was of course it was not 100% in our favor you know what I mean there was a lot of sick people and you know they want to particular whatever they did done so it was not the normal [unclear 00:16:55] for sure.

**Nancy:** And how long was that crossing, how long did that take?

**Sam:** You know I think it was about 9 days I think if I'm not mistaken. I'm not positive but I think it was about 9 days. Finally finally we came to the Promised Land, the Statue of Liberty, beautiful beautiful woman [chuckle]. I think the only one beautiful woman that was more beautiful than her was my wife.

So on the Ellis Island again they put us in a tremendous tremendous big warehouse you know where they store the ships I mean. All over the stuff from far lands in the same room, so you can imagine how big and of course the sleeping quarters you know you know we couldn't find room you know what I mean, the floors backs I mean whatever it was.

**Nancy:** Were you examined when you came over?

**Sam:** Oh yes I must tell you that. The examination was very very strict. They took every look in the head you know what I mean you don't have any louse you know what I mean, you don't have any kind of sickness in the head and our eyes of course was the most important thing. Thank God lucky enough we all passed with flying colors, we had no problem in that department but I must tell you a little episode.

While I was in the room you know as I said before there was lot of stuff you know it was a warehouse and I was a kid of about 13 years old 12 years old. There was a box open and there on top of the box was a beautiful little sewing basket of course to me as a kid it was very very tempting and of course I was very tempted and I had a big battle with the devil you know what I mean where I should steal or I shouldn't steal it.

Well the devil won and I stole it but when I walked a few yards from it, with it my mother [unclear 00:19:23] not physically but spiritually and said to me, "Suleiman, you know better than that. I thought that you're better not to take anything that don't belong to you," and with a heavy heart I put it back again and up to day I'm very happy and grateful that my mother taught me well. God knows what would have happen if I ever gotten caught with it.

They looked to any kind little excuse to send you back, anything was good enough to send you back but anyway I overcame the devil and I put it back and of course I'm very very grateful every time I ever think. To me that was the first fight I had with the devil but finally I won that.

**Nancy:** Tell me about what you had come with, tell me what your mother packed up from home and brought with you. Do you remember?

**Sam:** Like what? Oh what.

**Nancy:** Yeah, do you remember what she brought from home.

**Sam:** Mainly religious things. She brought the candles and I mean the one you use Friday night, she brought the bibles, she brought things that were dear dear to her of course it couldn't be too much you know clothing. Clothing so to speak and things that were near and dear to us we brought, which was not very important too anybody but to us it brought back memories.

Now we pass by the Statue of Liberty we knew we're in America, of course I was too young to appreciate what happened but I realized pretty what it was and then they stopped near probably for us to [unclear 00:21:23] and my father came in a small boat to greet us, he couldn't take us off you know what I mean but just to greet us and we had a good cry [chuckle], I'm going to cry now too so don't mind me and the first time I saw my father.

**Nancy:** So you were on the boat and he was on the ferry boat with your whole family.

**Sam:** He was on the boat yes you know and all he could do was wave and throw us some kisses, that’s right all. Finally finally we got off the boat and my father of course he was Americanized, he was a big shot you know what I mean he knew exactly what’s right. He took us to the restaurant, we had the first American food and we're very very thrilled and excited you know what I mean it was very very good.

Now we had to take the trolley car to go to the Pennsylvania station and I've never seen a trolley car in my life. In fact the only automobile I saw was one of the [unclear 00:22:38] had an automobile you know the one government big shots you know he had an automobile but it was the only automobile in our town you know and I remember a time when I see [unclear 00:22:54] when he travelled through the town of course all the kids gather you all need to see the big wonder and he was very very big hearted that threw a handful of candy in the mud for us to grab.

[unclear 00:23:12] the border health didn't mind you know and we jumped one on top of the other one to grab a piece of that fortune, a piece of candy and he got a big kick out of it.

So I did not know anything about traffic, I didn't know anything about cars, naturally I didn't know how the traffic laws were and I got off trolley car and I run across to get a pavement you know I didn't wait till somebody see it. I was the first one you know just like a wild kid. First thing that happened I was greeted by an automobile, an automobile ran me over and broke my left leg.

**Nancy:** This is right after you stepped off Ellis Island.

**Sam:** Yes, right to when we took trolley car to go to [laughter] [unclear 00:24:14]. I broke my leg and they took me to the [unclear 00:24:19] hospital in New York you know that was a city hospital there I was no language, a kid, no experience, green as green could be, didn't know anything about it not even people.

I didn't even know people the only people I knew was in my town, I was far away from my town and of course I was lucky I was very cute kid, that I was. I was a good looking boy and I was pretty smart too for my age and the people took a liking to me and there was 3 nurses I remember 2 are gentile 1 was Jewish, Ms. Viklaski, Ms. Mcoly and Ms. Bernstein and they did everything possible to make it easy for me and of course pap came over every once in a while, mum came over every once in a while because they couldn't afford to go on a hotel and travel and so they just came and visit me.

I had pain, I cried in Hungarian, the Hungarian cry you why why yoi and I kept on yoing [chuckle] and the people got the biggest kick out of it and they named me kid yoi, that was my name but as I said before I was a cute little boy and I mean I was handsome and they liked me and Christmas came and they showered me with all kinds of toys which I never had, they showered me with candies and lots of love.

The Jews and the gentiles, that’s the first time in my life I knew that the gentiles can be good too. It’s hard in your country in those days, I'm not talking one of those days to realize that they're really are good gentiles still you see but in America they surely showed that they are because the gentiles you know it’s Christmas, so they brought me everything everything possibly, food and everything and I loved it and to tell you the truth I loved to be in the hospital [chuckle]. Time came to go, I made myself sick not to have to go home [laughter].

**Nancy:** Did you learn some English from these nurses?

**Sam:** Oh yeah. The only thing there was an Italian man you know. There was Italian man on one side and there was a Jewish actor was on the other side of my bed you know that was a big room and the beds were next to me and Italian fellow taught me English according to Italian pronunciation. The Jewish fellow he was an actor, he used the right pronunciation so he says, "Don't listen to him, he's not teaching your right. I'll teach you." but they both tried hard to do the right thing by me.

So I was there for 6 weeks, the time came to go home and as I said I didn't feel like going home because I had it so good down there. They really didn't know what to do with me but I was yoi that was my name, the green Yoi [chuckle].

So they brought me home in my uncle’s house because pap he bought a home but it was not ready so they took me to my uncle’s house who was a tailor in Manayunk. Now that was an old fashioned house and excuse my expression and the yard house was in the yard and it was not [unclear 00:28:32].

**Nancy:** So your parents had come right to Philadelphia?

**Sam:** Yeah, my parents come, yeah they come to Philadelphia and we stayed here ever since. We never get anywhere else and finally finally our house was ready and we moved on 8th street [unclear 00:28:55].

**Nancy:** [inaudible 00:28:55].

**Sam:** No, [unclear 00:28:59] that side of the city.

**Nancy:** Oh here.

**Sam:** That was our own home. Now time came for me to go to school of course they had the wagon come down for the kids that came and were not able to walk but for me it was too close. I was on 8th street and the school was in 5th street so it was too close so I used to walk with my crutches to school and they put me in Jefferson’s school and they put me in the 3rd grade.

So I was now 13 year old boy, put me in the 3A you can imagine. Not a word of English, there was a couple of words but nothing to talk about but lucky of course I was a public school graduate so I knew things but I couldn't speak it.

I never heard of a baseball game in my life, not I never seen one and never heard of one and the kids who were about tiny kids and I was a bigger boy and they made captain of the baseball club.

I was small enough to wriggle my way through. Too as a captain and I did a pretty good job and school of course the same year they put me in the 5th grade and in a year and half’s time [chuckle] and I graduated this school in America. From there they put me to [unclear 00:30:32] school which is a 6th grade school and there I graduated. So was not so bad.

**Nancy:** Let’s take a break and we'll switch the tape over.

**Sam:** Sure.

**Nancy:** This is the end of side one of tape 037. This is the beginning of side 2 of interview 037 with Mr. Sam Auspitz. Tell me about the neighborhood [crosstalk 00:31:09].

**Sam:** Let me tell you a little bit about going through business or you want to go tell neighbor first and then about me going to business, whichever way you want.

**Nancy:** Tell me about the business.

**Sam:** The business. Now my brother Harry who was next to me when he come to this country he worked in [unclear 00:31:35] and he for $12 hours a week he worked to 70-75 hours a week for $12 a week and of course he learned the business and after 2 years and they 3 of them in the store, I mean 3 clerks, so they decided to go to business themselves and they run the business right across the street from where they worked and they were in business.

Now I was enchanted with that type of business, I loved it. I loved the business and while I went to high school I helped out my brother especially on Sundays. I worked behind the counters and I learned the business. I was a nice boy as I said before and the sales people and the suppliers liked me.

I was 18 years old after finished school I did not want to go to college and that time they could afford to send me to college and father money you know those days every Jewish wanted a doctor or a lawyer in the family. That was a prestige thing in the family.

**Nancy:** Don't they still?

**Sam:** Well not as bad [laughter] as it used to be but those days if you had a doctor or a lawyer in the family I mean you are on top of the list and I was not all A student, I was pretty good and I couldn't have gone to college but I did not want.

I only wanted business of course I did not have a cent to my name, not a cent. How do you go in business so I went to one wholesale house and I told him the story, "I want to go in business but I have no money will you back me with merchandise?" I went to the other one and I bought an old dilapidated [unclear 00:33:40] on Carlie street that’s near between 30 and 34th New York street and they supplied me with merchandise all I wanted and I [unclear 00:33:55] but it was an old dilapidated store.

Next corner there was a beautiful beautiful property with a beautiful store, it belonged to a German fellow with the name Lipki and this Lipki didn't have no children and he adopted me, he liked me. He just liked me because his wife didn’t because the wife was outspoken anti-Semite, she was but he was a liberal man I mean he liked me or [unclear 00:34:20]. He was a carpenter by trade.

He says to me, "You move over to my store I will fix it up for you real nice it won't cost you anything and I'll charge you the rent very cheap and you will thank me for it someday." Now, where I'm going to get money for fixtures? So I went to a fixture guy, I said, "Mr. [unclear 00:34:49] I have no money but I have ambition and I'm a nice boy, would you put the fixtures in I'll pay you off?" He says, "Sure with pleasure."

So I moved on and moved at the beautiful store Mr. Lipki charged me $75 a month rent and a beautiful beautiful store and that store was a tremendous tremendous success, big success.

Now my brother when he came over here he worked as a tailor in the pent shop and he fell in love with a beautiful American girl and she fell in love with him, there was one problem- he was a tailor and a girl an Americanized girl- American girl that is not going to marry a green horn but a tailor but he was a very handsome man, she loved him.

So I was smart, the baby I mean I say, “Lou, you come with me I'll teach you the business and you'll be a business man then you'll see what’s going to happen." It worked like a charm, come into business with me and she was very anxious to marry him and they got married and they lived happy ever after and I prospered very very well in fact I was considered when these stores [unclear 00:36:18] at that time.

It was all Jewish section so [unclear 00:36:22], all the Jews lived there and I did very well. Now my brother Harry as I said before he had 2 more partners you know, so he figured he had 3 good brothers, one thing my mother and I'll say a family togetherness. We were very very much together as a family and we decided we'll pay off those 2 boys and we'll go business together. Exactly what happened, we paid off the 2 partners and we go on business together so we had 2 stores.

We did very well and time came for us to expand, so this store, this neighborhood I know of course you don't remember that, this neighborhood was all Jewish neighborhood.

That is basically Jews you know [unclear 00:37:22] outside along the line was a parking place see if you want to bargain and if you want have fan to feel all the tomatoes and it’s all around the merchandise [unclear 00:37:37] was the place but anyway we took over the store for the this was also bankrupt store you know see the guy bankrupt, we took over the store, we threw out everything in there and we build one of the most beautiful store in Philadelphia because in those days there was no chain stores I mean to speak of.

There was no [unclear 00:37:58] there was no [unclear 00:37:58] but we in our way we had a very beautiful store and it was also big success. So we had 3 stores and then we had a sister you know as I told you we were very close family, my brother in law worked for [unclear 00:38:20] as a driver and he was an able man so we decided we're going to buy another store and put him in it. That was [unclear 00:38:29] and he did very well down there. Finally we give him over the store, just gave it to him. So we're one happy family and then I was a bachelor talk about years later.

See I was a bachelor, talk about years later and my brother ahead was a bachelor and I decided to take a trip to Europe. I took a 2 month trip to Europe and I saw a little girl down there that she was very very sweet very nice so when I came home that was when they're starting with the Hitler business and whoever had a chance to run away run away from wherever they could.

So that little girl went to Lord Wedgewood in England saw her one time I mean the town and she gave him a basket of bouquet of flowers so she reminded of it and she went there and he kept her with open arms. So she landed in Wedgewood palace.

When I saw her of course I saw in [unclear 00:39:47] that was in the town where she lived and I came back to America she in the meantime went to England. I said to my brother Harry, "It’s about time for you to get married, take the first boat and you go to England, go to Lord Wedgewood house and you will see that little girl and I'm sure that you will marry her."

He took the first boat and went to England and he met that little girl and he knew from before from your country and then two weeks they were married but he could not bring over because she had to have the papers, so he came back to America and through a congressman and lawyers and so forth it took no time and she was here and they lived happy ever after.

In the meantime I fell in love with a very very beautiful girl and I'm not bragging but she was one of the most beautiful girls ever. I think Frank knew her, she was everything, an exception person and after 8 years of struggle she finally finally decided she'll marry me.

See it wasn't so easy but I was well to do and I was not a bad looking guy and I was not too damn [chuckle] and I knew to get her although she was engaged to a doctor twice. She broke off a doctor even she come to [unclear 00:41:35] I was took her out even when she was engaged. She liked me as her big brother but she don’t love me as a husband, needless as I told you for a doctor but a doctor was a damn jerk, he didn't know how to handle her [laughter[.

First of all he didn't have the money I had and he didn't have the brains you know how to handle her because he was a doctor after all and I did just the opposite. I showered her with everything, on her birthday she had an aunt in Philadelphia she came to Philadelphia on her birthday. She came into our flower garden and whenever I took her out I took her out to the best, she never experienced anything like it, the best shows and everything else.

I must tell you a little story, she expressed one desire that she never seen an opera, she would like to see an opera. Those days Philadelphia didn't have an opera but 4 times a year the New York opera came to Philadelphia but that was on subscription only and the subscription was that time $100 ticket for 4 but now I heard that she wants to see an opera. I went to my friend Abraham [unclear 00:43:08], he was the manager of the [unclear 00:43:11] theatre on the 9th on Walnut.

**Nancy:** Walnut street Philadelphia?

**Sam:** Walnut street yeah, he was the manager down there. I said, "I want 2 tickets for the opera [laughter]." I said, "What the hell you ask me for that’s for the opera for when she asked me, you want golden carriage or something else you can get." I spoke I said, “I did not tell you how I want it, I want it." He was laughing, a couple of days later he calls me and says, "Sam, there's a guy."- By there was 2 shows left. "There was a guy that was called away in a hurry and he wants to sell his 2 tickets," but he says, "You have to pay him the full price for it." Full price $100 a piece you know those days. I go back 50 years now.

I say, "Price is no object, I want those 2 tickets." I got the 2 tickets and killed her with kindness. Finally she succumbed but I just knew how to handle her, whatever he did I did just the opposite. He was a doctor but he was a damn doctor thank God [laughter] and we lived very happy for 25 years and then she died a horrible death from cancer- that’s another story.

**Nancy:** Had she come to this country from--?

**Sam:** Oh no, she was American. First of all she was a child when I courted her. She was 9 years younger than I was or 10 years younger that I was. She was only a kid in high school. So we all got married, we all were happy and prospered you know we did very well then the horrible thing came and my wife passed away and I was left so to speak alone and finally after 9 years I met this one I'm married her now.

I was going to bring her over now and she just couldn't make it. I wish to God she would be here, she's an unbelievable wonderful person. One day I hope you meet her and I get married again. Now back to- where do you want, back to Ellis Island?

**Nancy:** Yeah, back to Ellis Island. Alright, what was I going to ask? Let me just think, what have we not gone over? Tell me about when you were on Ellis Island. You mentioned coming into the harbor and seeing the statue of liberty, once you landed and before you broke your leg on the trolley.

Tell me what happened there? You had already gone through the examination on the boat, the medical exam but what can you tell me about the Ellis Island building?

**Sam:** As I said it was an enormous enormous warehouse where they stuck the merchandise that came on the boat from foreign countries and they had lot of men and women come in [unclear 00:46:32], coming with different merchandise like cakes and different toys and different [unclear 00:46:38] to make a few bucks there which they did.

See everybody had money because when they got [unclear 00:46:43] their relatives send them money because America that time was rich. Everybody had money and they send money to those people that came over, so money we had and when these guys came over to sell us the merchandise we bought.

They did very well, I'll never forget those cakes they had and to me that was an eye opener, I've never seen all kinds of cakes in my life and my mother as I said during the war of course forget about cake, we're glad to had not the red or white bread we had corn bread.

So we eat, the only time we had a little bit of white bread was for [unclear 00:47:36], for the ceremony and I mean Friday night we had what’s called a Jewish aloha. So when we came here everything was so lavish, so rich with so many things especially to a kid like me you know what I mean. Probably I thought I was in heaven, I didn't want to pinch myself you know and wake up.

**Nancy:** Your mother didn't speak English at that point.

**Sam:** Of course, none of us did.

**Nancy:** So how did you get through whatever exams you had to go through on the island? Did someone look at your papers at that point [crosstalk 00:48:15]?

**Sam:** Oh yeah sure. They lined us up you know we stood in line and they came in, there was two doctors examining us.

**Nancy:** Were they speaking English the doctors?

**Sam:** Yes sure.

**Nancy:** So you couldn't understand what they were...?

**Sam:** No, I didn't have to. All I know thank God they give me a little shove you know and go for it I knew I was in [chuckle]. I didn't talk to them, they didn't talk to me. I would have been surprised we were those God's chosen people you know probably [unclear 00:48:46], so many Jewish do you know, who knows but that part was fear more than anything else more than anything else, the fear not to go through that line was a horrible experience because they picked the least little thing on you and back you went.

See they didn't like you for any reason you went back, it didn't need no special reason and then they stamp you you're okay, you're on luck. God forbid there was something wrong with your eyes or with your head, I don't know why they didn't examine the rest of your body [laughter], it didn't count. As long as your eyes was good and your head was clean that’s all that counted.

**Nancy:** Were you off Ellis Island in a matter of hours or I thought before you said you were there for 2 days.

**Sam:** No, no we were there couple of days but it was 2 or 3 positively.

**Nancy:** So you weren't kept for any reason other than there were so many people.

**Sam:** No, no because so many people had to go through the thing.

**Nancy:** So you saw your father just from the boat and then did you get to see him again?

**Sam:** No, I got to see him again when I got off the boat, he was waiting for us to take us to the train.

**Nancy:** So do you remember where you spent the night those few days?

**Sam:** In that warehouse, the same place spend the night. This was no bad so we slept wherever you could, on our bags, in one of those caskets, bags on the floor, wherever there was room you know to lay down you lay down.

So no big deal and don’t think the food was not gourmet food either believe me but let’s say we were glad to be here it didn't matter when you see a beautiful future ahead of you so those things don't matter but the minute we stepped our foot in America, thank God we never ever had one bad day in our lives, never.

I mean we never knew anything about poverty, we never knew anything about problems and here my father had a beautiful house for us and we had to [unclear 00:51:10], those days neighborhoods was everything for you, the neighbors was everything you knew, they were your recreation, they were your friends, they were your helpers, they were everything.

See you didn't run to movies all the time, we used to get together at night and sat on the doorstep, we used to use the cables and we used to talk and criticize everybody so that was our recreation and then Sunday came along and you're still hire a big truck and the whole family got together and we used to take what’s called [unclear 00:51:50], that’s a cutlery that you cook tea in and pots and pans and I mean we went to serve our mansion, got 3 tables together, 4 tables together and it was a picnic, see we used to cook there and everything else, really it was beautiful.

Coming to think of it now, it was this neighborly thing was a wonderful wonderful thing, today who cares what? Who knows anything about neighbors? If you see some gossiped but those days it was everything with the neighbors. If you were sick they were there to help you, they needed each other and they didn't know anything about Jew or gentiles, well blacks was not too, even blacks everybody was together you know what I mean. It was really something to remember.

**Nancy:** Tell me about what these papers are? I see they have a photograph of you.

**Sam:** Oh yes, this is the German, this is the Holland and this is Czechoslovakian papers. You go to consular and these are stamps, they stamped it and Holland we had to pay $10, here we had to pay $2 then we had to wait in line for days and days and days before we got to it.

**Nancy:** So this is your actual visa from Holland?

**Sam:** That’s yeah, that was the last thing to get and of course on the other side if you cannot see that tells you my whole history you know when I was born and my education and so on and so forth on the other side but I say see there the stamps took us a long time before, 2 days before we had a chance to get to the guys that stamped us so it wasn't so easy.

**Nancy:** And then when did you become a citizen? How many years after you came?

**Sam:** I became a citizen the day when I come over because my father was a citizen and I was that age, I was young enough to become a citizen right away on my father's papers.

**Nancy:** Did you ever go back and visit Ellis Island?

**Sam:** No, I became a lifelong member, I have the papers. I sent them $100 when they built.

**Nancy:** For the renovation.

**Sam:** Yeah, renovation. I have the papers that made me a life member and there among more I'll send them more.

**Nancy:** Well I'm glad your story is going to be part of the Ellis Island museum.

**Sam:** What else can I tell you about Ellis Island?

**Nancy:**  Anything else you can remember about just the physical details? It must have been one of the largest buildings you had seen?

**Sam:** Yeah positively it was the largest building and then all that stuff in that warehouse that fascinated me. See I was too young actually to appreciate what happened, to realize that I did walk into a port of gold you know to gold land but one thing I will say that I was treated beautiful all around.

Every part where I went I was treated wonderful and America has been very very good to me, not only financially but it made a man out of me. I got my education and I got my business and I got the respect of being treated like a human being those things doesn't happen to the human being- the average person.

That happens to the rich, of course I'm not talking now, I don't know now. I've been away down there for 65 years so I don't know what’s going on.

**Nancy:** You haven't visited.

**Sam:** I did, I told you I visited. I visited for 2 months I visited all over Europe. I was in of course France and Germany and Czechoslovakia and Switzerland. I did a lot of travelling those 2 months.

**Nancy:** Did you visit any of the people that you had known when you were [crosstalk 00:56:28].

**Sam:** Oh my God, they sure received me with their open arms. I went to synagogue the called me to read the scroll and I donated to them towards- see they have this here what’s called the ritual bath and I donated to them you know they had issue renewed the whole thing.

I don't remember how much it cost me, a few hundred dollars and that was the biggest thing ever happened there but the whole thing was if you're smart enough you could have lots of fun but if you're not you were miserable.

The worst part of it was the train, that was the worst part of it, they treated you like dogs, first of all Europe is small [unclear 00:57:28], so they used to wake you up in the middle of the night to examine your packages, if you want to buy something you have to change your money and that happened all the time whenever you came to a different country, so it was not pleasant. Of course today it’s different, I think I don't know.

**Nancy:** Okay, I think I've heard everything.

**Sam:** Was it interesting enough for you to come.

**Nancy:** Fascinating yeah.

**Sam:** I didn't want to drag you down here for... [Chuckle].

**Nancy:** Thank you that’s the end of interview number 037 side 2.