**Janet:** This is Janet Levine for the National Park Service. I'm here with Mr. Angelus Cotsidus and Mrs. Cotsidus in Worcester, Massachusetts. It is August 11th, 1993 and Mr. Cotsidus came from Greece in 1920 when he was 18 years old. I'm sorry to have to start again but did you say again please your birth date and the town you were born in for the tape?

**Angelus:** Yes, I'm born in Plesio, 1900.

**Janet:** March 15th.

**Angelus:** March 15th.

**Janet:** And you were saying that Plesio was under the Turks until you were 13.

**Angelus:** Until 1913 and then we got the freedom.

**Janet:** Tell me now the differences.

**Angelus:** And then I went to high school in Corfu Island for four years. When I came back I came home, I didn't know what to do, so I say to myself, "I think I'm going to go-" A lot of my people was coming here, a lot of Greeks was coming to America. I said to myself, "It must be golden place there to go." Good place to go, so that’s why I came here 1920.

In the boat, while I was coming here in the end of the boat when we stayed 31 days in the line, the boat there. I was with two doctors, who would go out to come to New York, was two doctors there watching you. So they look in my eyes, he says, "You got trachoma." So they put a chalk on me and told me to go back to Greece.

I went out, I looked out and they're busy, I put the chalk out I went with most people going. So I say the guy, "Where are you going?" He says, "To Worcester." "I'm coming with you to Worcester." I was supposed to go to Boston, I had a cousin there who was in Boston but I lost his address. I left my little values I had there.

When he come he told me to go back I lose the hell with the values, I will try to go with the others to America because in this line its only five guys going in this line. One guy maybe go here you know they found the trachoma, they was looking just in the eyes, see trachoma and [unclear 00:02:25].

He says to me, "You're going back, you got trachoma," he put a chalk on me, so I went through the line I look them. They’re busy [unclear 00:02:34]. I'm going to go with the crowd, so I came with the line here. I was supposed to go at the Boston but I didn't go to Boston because I left my address with my values, so I asked that guy, "Where are you going?" He says, "To Worcester," I said to myself, "I'll go to Worcester too."

**Janet:** So you just took the chalk mark off.

**Angelus:** Off yeah because we had to cut off. So I came here, then guys were busy, the doctors busy with the others. They won't look at me after they look at me, he says, "Go this way." I went this way and then I went with the others. That’s how I came, I say, "Where you go?" He says, "To Worcester," I say to myself, "I'm coming to Worcester too."

**Janet:** So you came to Worcester and you would never have gone to Worcester before.

**Angelus:** No.

**Janet:** Let’s go back a little bit.

**Angelus:** And then I came to Worcester and in the station there.

**Janet:** Union Street.

**Angelus:** Union station. That’s where we came from New York. So I say to that guy, there was couple other guys, triple guys there. I say, "Where are you going?" "Worcester to [unclear 00:03:45]." I say to myself, "I'm going to [unclear 00:03:48]."

So from the union station I came to [unclear 00:03:51] a mechanistry. So I came there, there was a big market there owned by the [unclear 00:03:58], the Greeks there. I say to him where my people from home town live. He says, "I'll give you my driver to take you there." So the driver took me and he brought me with some people of my home town. They were here, so I went there, they glad to see me anyways but I was supposed to go to Boston, I had a cousin in Boston.

**Janet:** Did you know these people from you hometown?

**Angelus:** No, but I heard about them, they were here. I was young while they left and they came here. So I go on in the house then they took me in the house there, they give me dinner and then I start talking with them I say, "Where's my cousin?" “Your cousin,” he says, “Is in Boston,” he says.

We don't know and many Greeks in Boston. “We don't know," he says, "Any from my hometown, no just him." I say to myself, "I'm going to stay here with these people here that come from my hometown." So that’s why I stayed there and I say to myself, I call my cousin I tell him to call my cousin.

I call my cousin, he says, "I'm going to come to Worcester." He came, that was Thursday, he came on Sunday. He says to me- he was mad, "Why didn't you come to me, you come to these people here?" They didn't get along together with these people there. Well he says, "I don't want an explanation," He says, "Goodbye." He left me and gone, he got mad.

I say to myself, "What can I do? I got to stay here now, I can't go to him." So I say to these guys, "Any work?" One guy from the [unclear 00:05:48] market works [unclear 00:05:51], it was a screw shop, "Maybe take you and get a job there." After I stay about a month without any work.

I went to [unclear 00:06:04] market and I say to the guy, his name was Peter [unclear 00:06:07], I say, "Peter, you're working in the [00:06:11]?" He was four five brothers and a father there at the [unclear 00:06:13] market are mechanics there. I say, "Can you get me a job in [unclear 00:06:19] company?" "I'm going to try," he says. "Come with me," so he took me, I went there. They gave me a job so the next morning I started working [unclear 00:06:27].

**Janet:** What did you do there?

**Angelus:** There was some machine that making the screws and you watched the machine if it goes that way, you have to oil it once in a while and the foreman was coming every 10 minutes watching you there. I had a little machine there making little screws, that’s the way I started.

**Janet:** How long did you work there?

**Angelus:** I worked there almost three months. It was week of Christmas and you know the trouble with me I was smoking every five minutes, three packets a day, so they caught me smoking. He says, "Look, if I find you again, out you go." I said to myself, [unclear 00:07:24]. I'll go five ten minutes, I smoke again. I used to smoke three packets a day like crazy.

When I want so much through all these stuff, that’s why I smoked so much. I was thinking all the time what to do next, what to do next and smoking, smoking, smoking. I was my [unclear 00:07:45] smoke but anyways. "I'll give you till Christmas, if you don't stop smoking, out you go." I say to myself, "This guy means business." I went one day without smoking, I almost died, almost died, says, "To hell with this job, they kick me out I'm not going to stop smoking."

The next time he comes in he says, "Out you go, not now," he says, "I'll wait till Christmas, I don't want to through you out now," he says, "Because I feel sorry for you. I'll give you a chance up to Christmas, if you stop smoking I'm going to hire you again, if you don't out you go." He caught me back again smoking so he throw me right out.

Then I stay with these people there, for a while I was doing the cooking for them. They was working, I didn't have a job so after a while this guy that was from my hometown he had a business, he had a bread business. I said to myself- he had two three drivers delivering Greek bread and Italian bread to Greek people and Italian people.

I went with the driver to help him out, I didn't want no money but he gave me a lunch noon time that’s all. I worked with him 12 hours a day, 10 hours a day but I learned the route there, so then I went to get a license and drive the cars so that I can get a job there.

I went, I got my license. I went to Y.M.C.A, they taught me how to drive and they taught all the questions they're going to ask me there, I think could ask most questions than this when you drive a car.

**Janet:** Did you speak very well at that time?

**Angelus:** On the boat while I was those 31 days, I was reading because I went through high school. I know a little bit French. I didn't know English but I know French and then I had books there and I was studying while I was coming here for 31 days. Almost understand much a little bit.

I could find my way if I got stuck someplace, I would ask somebody where to go and which street to go. I could do all that because I know pretty good French because I went four years in high school there and we took French not English but French then.

Now they take English, no French anymore. That’s why I could read the streets and everything else because I studied for all these 31 days. I was working day and night to learn the English language. The early I could understand when I came here, practice.

**Janet:** Wonderful. You got your license then.

**Angelus:** I got my license and I say to him, "How much are you paying the guys?" He says, "$45." "Pay me anything," I say "I want a job there."

**Janet:** This was $45 a week in 1920.

**Angelus:** '20, this guy was making. He says, "I start you with $12 a week," "Okay, start me with $12 a week, I don't care, I have got nothing." That’s where I started, we opened another route, we're selling Greek bread to the Greeks and Italians and then I say to him, "What do you say if you go to the Albanians? I'll go and sell this business with the Albanians," I say so, give me a route I got my license."

He gave me a car so I went to solicit business, I start with the Albanians. I got all the Albanians. They wanted Greek bread and Italian bread. That’s the way I started and we had a farm in west Boston, we're selling all the stale bread there. All he stale bread we have we used to sell it to the farm there, they had the chickens.

One afternoon, the boss, myself, I drove him to go to the farm there. Going straight I was going 30 miles an hour 35, [unclear 00:12:21] he says, I chimed the car, a truck tipped over. I say, "You’re living?" He says, "I'm living too," He says. I [unclear 00:12:36] station, the sister of the guy I tipped over, "Will you come and help us?"

Gets few guys there to lift the truck, they're coming and lift the truck. It had a flat tire, they fixed the tire, we went and gave the stale bread and come back again tonight. All night I couldn't sleep anymore, I was so excited, so I said, "I’m not going to drive no more car," and all this and that but the next morning, I went back again. I like to drive the car so that’s the way I started.

**Janet:** Let’s go back to Greece again and tell me- because there's part of the story to fill in.

**Angelus:** Okay.

**Janet:** Let’s say the town you were born in was what?

**Angelus:** March, 15.

**Janet:** No, the town.

**Angelus:** Plesio.

**Janet:** Plesio, in Plesio tell me what it looked like, the town?

**Angelus:** It was about 2-3,000 population, it was all Greek town. We had Albanian- Turkish towns and we had Greek towns. Our town was all Greeks of Christian Greeks. The next town was Albanian Turks, the next town Albanian Turks because all them towns were Greek but the Albanian took it over 18something.

**Janet:** I see, was it an agricultural town, Plesio?

**Angelus:** Yes.

**Janet:** You grew...what was the..?

**Angelus:** Wheat and all that stuff.

**Janet:** Olive trees?

**Angelus:** Olive trees, we had plenty of olive trees. No, in the beginning we had grape vines. So the wine wasn't so high so we took all the vines and we pull all the trees there. I was small but I remember all these.

**Janet:** What did your father do?

**Angelus:** My father was a merchant and he was getting the skins of the foxes and all kinds of skins.

**Janet:** Fur.

**Angelus:** Fur and skins and they dry them up and they send them to Austria. They used to sell them in Austria. It was making dresses and that stuff with the skins there, making the leather, skins and all the stuff but we get all the unfinished hides, we send them to Austria.

**Janet:** How would he get the animals?

**Angelus:** We killed the animals and we get the meats out of it and lot of hunters they kill the wild animals.

**Janet:** Then they would bring that to your father.

**Angelus:** They'd bring that to my father, my father was drying them up and then make big packages after two- three- four months he had plenty of packages and then we sent them to Austria.

**Janet:** What was your father's name?

**Angelus:** Nicholas. My son is Nicholas too.

**Janet:** And your mother? What was her name?

**Angelus:** Alexandra.

**Janet:** And her maiden name?

**Angelus:** Ninos, N-I-N-O-S.

**Janet:** What was your mother like?

**Angelus:** My mother looked a little bit like me but better looking than me, a little better looking than me.

**Janet:** Do you remember any experiences?

**Angelus:** She had light eyes, I got brown eyes, she had very light eyes. Her color like very light blue eyes but I had black eyes I think after my father. My mother had a different, all of us we didn't take her eyes at all, we took all fathers’ eyes.

**Janet:** How many children in the family?

**Angelus:** Three boys and a girl.

**Janet:** What were their names?

**Angelus:** First one was John. The next one is Peter, myself Angelus and sister Paraskevy, Friday you call it in English. Friday is Paraskevy.

**Janet:** Could you spell Paraskevy?

**Angelus:** Yes, P-A-R-A-S-K-E-V-Y.

**Janet:** Were you closest to any particular family member?

**Angelus:** Well over there? Yeah, we had a lot of cousins there.

**Janet:** Did you have grandparents?

**Angelus:** I didn't see my grandparents. They didn't live when I knew something. I remember something about them but not too much.

**Janet:** Were you a religious family.

**Angelus:** Yeah, we were Catholics.

**Janet:** Do you remember any celebrations, religious observances?

**Angelus:** Well, we used to have every week one. A lot of holidays in Greece.

**Janet:** Do you remember any like ceremonies or any kind of customs that revolved around these holidays?

**Angelus:** And my name was to a holiday, was big holiday.

**Janet:** Angelus.

**Angelus:** Angelus.

**Janet:** It was the holiday, what holiday was it? The independence of Greece?

**Angelus:** No, we had a lot of holidays. We had a holiday for my name, a holiday for Paraskevy's name, a holiday for John's name, holiday for Peter's name. We don't work. We don't do nothing them days. They don't keep them here.

**Janet:** How did you get to have that name day? I mean how did you get a name day?

**Angelus:** Saint John, or Saint Nicholas or Saint something, that’s how we got the name.

**Janet:** Because you were born on that day or you were what, baptized on that day?

**Angelus:** Baptized on that day, baptized after three days to seven days but my mother would tell me I was baptized in three days because I was kind of sick. They baptized me before I die, they had to baptize right away when you're sick because they're afraid you die without a name.

Kind of get a Christian name before you die, so they can bury otherwise they won't bury if you're not baptized. They can't bury you there. You’re going to go with the Turks. You're not Christian.

**Janet:** What’s the difference?

**Angelus:** We're Christians, the others they're not Christian.

**Janet:** I see, so you would be buried in a different place if you were baptized?

**Angelus:** They bury, they don't me in the town, you got to go in the mountains and throw me somewhere there because I wasn't Christian [laughter].

**Janet:** Tell me more about how you celebrated the name day.

**Angelus:** We celebrated like Sundays here. We visit every name we know. My name they visit me, I visit you first had that name, with the name they had when you were child. Saint John they celebrate you visit house to house and give us some drinks and some sweets.

**Janet:** Was it for girls too? Did girls have name days?

**Angelus:** The girls sure they have name days, sure.

**Janet:** Do you remember any other ceremonies or rituals or customs that were observed in your town?

**Angelus:** We have [unclear 00:20:56] and then we had Easter, we had three four big holidays the whole town celebrates.

**Janet:** Was there anything special that you did on Easter that maybe we don't do here? Anything you did in Greece for Easter?

**Angelus:** Us boys we had that red eggs and we hit each other and if I break you I take the egg away from you. That was it. That was the system there.

**Janet:** So you colored the eggs red?

**Angelus:** Colors the eggs red and we visit the house on Easter they give us red eggs in every house we went and then we go out, the boys together and hit each other. Some they're getting all the eggs, they had strong eggs, some had artificial eggs and we didn't know about [laughter], so they [unclear 00:21:53] all the eggs.

**Janet:** Did you all say you would hit the eggs together and then whatever broke...

**Angelus:** If I broke you, I take the egg away from you [laughter].

**Janet:** You do that here too?

**Angelus:** No, over there. We don't do here outside.

**Janet:** What else?

**Angelus:** We're Americanized here now.

**Janet:** What about birth? Anyone, were there any kind of customs around when somebody was born?

**Angelus:** Somebody was born, it was nice for the family but after they baptize it’s the time to celebrate the name.

**Janet:** I see and how about other occasions like weddings? Were the weddings any different than they are?

**Angelus:** We celebrated the weddings very much.

**Janet:** What did you do?

**Angelus:** We get an orchestra, we sing. We go and get the bride from the other house, all our friends singing and dancing go to the other house to get the bride, to get the bride again. Singing and dancing, celebrate for three days for that bride.

**Janet:** What about the groom? Was the groom with the other guys going to get the bride?

**Angelus:** That’s right, the groom was ahead with the other guys to go and get the bride. Big celebrations went three days lasting.

**Janet:** How about funerals? Were there any particular observances about that that were different than here?

**Angelus:** We kept it more there than here you know for a week nobody eats meat or anything like that and we'd been crying and all the home town visits you in the house.

**Janet:** And it’s like the casket is in the house and everybody goes?

**Angelus:**  No, the casket is buried but for 40 days they come and visit you to say my deepest sympathize.

**Janet:** For 40 days?

**Angelus:** Yeah, the whole town is coming and 40 days you come today, somebody comes today for the 40 days they're coming. They got the right to come and visit you and feel that they're sorry.

**Janet:** Wow, did you go to school at all in your town?

**Angelus:** My home town? I went up to four grade.

**Janet:** What was school like?

**Angelus:** We had two schools, one for the girls and one for us. We had two big rooms and a place to go out. One to go outside and the other go to the bathroom and two teaching rooms there. One for the grammar school one for the higher grammar school. One for the beginners, one for the higher and then we go to Corfu Islands for high school.

We didn't have no high school, we have in Yannena which is Epirus in my hometown but it’s far away that day, we didn't have no roads we go with the horse. It took two days to go there, so we go to Corfu Island because it was closer.

**Janet:** Were there any automobiles in your town?

**Angelus:** No, no automobiles, we were riding horses.

**Janet:** Horses, did most families have a horse?

**Angelus:** Practically every house had a horse. We couldn't do without a horse and you have to go for distance you know. The roads we didn't have no. I remember we didn't have no trains. We have nothing like that and this.

**Janet:** How about in the homes, was there running water in those days?

**Angelus:** No, we go and get the water. We had a place where the water comes about 10 minutes from the house.

**Janet:** When you were a young boy would you go and get water and bring it to your house?

**Angelus:** The women go and get the water not the men then.

**Janet:** What did they get it in? What did they carry in?

**Angelus:** They got little bottles to carry in the back.

**Janet:** Like around their neck?

**Angelus:** Yeah.

**Janet:** They have and then two barrels. Who would go? Would your sisters go? Would your mother go?

**Angelus:** My mother goes, my sister goes but the men don't go for water. Men do the other stuff in the fields.

**Janet:** Tell me what jobs the women had and what the jobs the men had.

**Angelus:** The women had to take care of the house, that’s all. No other jobs. They are not supposed to go outside and work, it was a shame. A woman should stay at home, not to go out looking for job.

**Janet:** How did somebody feel? I mean what was the feeling about like say your mother wanted to go out to work?

**Angelus:** It was a shame to go to work. We wouldn't let them to go to work. My father works harder but never let my mother work outside the house. It was a terrible thing to see a woman go outside.

**Janet:** Yeah, it would be embarrassing. What about a woman who didn't have a man to provide for her?

**Angelus:** Everybody help her. We used to help everybody.

**Janet:** Okay, so the men would go out to the fields, the women would take care of the house?

**Angelus:** That’s right.

**Janet:** How about washing clothes?

**Angelus:** The woman do that.

**Janet:** Where? How?

**Angelus:** [unclear 00:27:33] and then they go to the fountains and clean them up.

**Janet:** Oh so at the fountains the women would come with their clothes to wash?

**Angelus:** Yeah, we had four fountains in one part of the city and four fountains in another city and two fountains in another place. We had a lot of water.

**Janet:** In other words the fountains were man made, they built this fountains just for that reason.

**Angelus:** Yeah, for that reason. It was four five forceps in each round and they're bringing their clothes and rinsing there.

**Janet:** Would the women get together? Was it like a social occasion?

**Angelus:** Oh sure, they get social.

**Janet:** When they would go wash the clothes?

**Angelus:** Oh yes, sure. They stayed there for hours talking [laughter].

**Janet:** What would the men do when they got together, the social lives? Where would they go?

**Angelus:** They sing, they dance they do everything like that. Families get together and celebrate.

**Janet:** Did people play instruments very often?

**Angelus:** Oh yes. Some people played instruments too. Mandolin, guitars and banjo, violins. We had a lot of guys from our home town playing there but we have to pay them when they come to play for us unless he was with us in our crowd but if he wasn't in our crowd we have to pay him small money.

**Janet:** What did you do as a young boy for fun besides- what games did you play? Do you remember?

**Angelus:** Played a lot of games.

**Janet:** What?

**Angelus:** With the ball, played a lot of ball. I remember in my days, guy came from Romania and show us how to play lot of games.

**Janet:** Ball games.

**Angelus:** Ball games, it was nice.

**Janet:** How about your sisters? What did they play?

**Angelus:** My sisters, they wouldn't go out of the house, I told you. They're supposed to stay in.

**Janet:** They wouldn't go out?

**Angelus:** No, the woman is supposed to stay at home, not to go outside and look for work or anything like that.

**Janet:** No, but when they were little and they were playing, can they go out and play?

**Angelus:** Oh yes, they go to the girls school till they're finished grammar school and then they had to go out of town to get education, if you could afford it.

**Janet:** How about your sisters? Did they have dolls? Do you remember what games they would play?

**Angelus:** Oh sure, they have dolls, they get the [unclear 00:30:09], all the little girls sing and play and do a lot of things together. Girls with girls and boys with boys, no not together.

**Janet:** They didn't play together?

**Angelus:** Never, not allowed that. They wouldn't allow us to do that.

**Janet:** In other words you wouldn't even play with your sisters in the house?

**Angelus:** I can play with my sister but not with strangers [laughter]. Unless she was a first cousin, it was like a sister but farther down. I couldn't do it or mix. Couldn't mix.

**Janet:** Were girls treated differently than boys growing up? I mean were there certain things a boy [crosstalk 00:30:53]?

**Angelus:** Oh yes, with girls it was just teaching to take care of the house when outside us we go to work when he was even 8-10 years old and after a father or somebody else learnt some kind of a trade either tailor or carpenter or something like that, we all do something to be something tomorrow.

**Janet:** Did you learn a trade when you were little?

**Angelus:** I had to go to school.

**Janet:** Oh if you went to school then you didn't.

**Angelus:** I didn't no. I couldn't work, no. I had a lot of work in school. When I went to high school in koffel I stayed four years there. Boy I had sick child work in the house, they'd kill us.

**Janet:** You mean home work from school?

**Angelus:** Homework, they'd kill you there homework.

**Janet:** Really?

**Angelus:** When it was holiday they give you to write about almost a book so they keep you from through work. That’s why they give us a lot of work when we went for holidays not to hang around.

**Janet:** How many boys in your class, in Corfu?

**Angelus:** In Corfu, they came from a lot of places there, well about 500 guys. 140 guys in first class.

**Janet:** What’s a first class? What does that mean?

**Angelus:** You know high school had four classes, first, second, third and fourth class. After that you go to college, you kind of go to Athens for college but I didn't go to college. I went through high school but not. I came here after.

**Janet:** Were you the only one in your family who went to Corfu for high school?

**Angelus:** Yeah, I'm the only one.

**Janet:** How come you got to go and others didn’t?

**Angelus:** They didn't want to go.

**Janet:** They didn't want to.

**Angelus:** I want to go and they didn’t' want to go.

**Janet:** Did you like school?

**Angelus:** I did but all those brothers didn't like school. My sister liked school but she couldn’t' go out of town because she was a girl. They wouldn't let her go out of town. She had to stay at home so she learned all she could there. Here's my hometown too, that’s where I born.

**Janet:** So it was hills all around?

**Angelus:** All hills around.

**Janet:** That’s beautiful. Your sister, did she come here? Your sister who didn't go to...

**Angelus:** No, nobody came here from my family. No, she marrying and she staying in Athens.

**Janet:** I see. Did you learn any kind of a trade before you left Greece?

**Angelus:** No, I was in high school. I left high school then I came here.

**Janet:** But you learned how to make shoes?

**Angelus:** No, but my home town knew how to make shoes. The whole town was making shoes but I didn’t' go to that because I was busy with high school and from the high school I came here.

**Janet:** Yeah, tell me how would most people get their shoes? In other words, how often would people have shoes?

**Angelus:** Every Easter we had brand new shoes everybody. You won't go out unless you have a good shoe, you see what I mean. It was a style there to have good shoes to go out and good dress.

**Janet:** On Easter?

**Angelus:** On Easter.

**Janet:** Everybody got a new outfit.

**Angelus:** A new outfit on Easter. Everybody was crying for that and saying for that. Easter was something.

**Janet:** What would you do? You'd go to a shoe maker and you have your shoes done and would you go to a tailor or would you get ready made clothing?

**Angelus:** No, no you have to go to a tailor and you have to go to shoes to take measures. They make your shoes. We didn't have everything ready then. No, no such thing. You have to go to the tailor, you have to go to shoe maker to make your shoes.

**Janet:** Would you have like a hat? Would you buy hats?

**Angelus:** Yeah, we buy some kind of a hat but we used to have the Turkish hats, there called the Fez. It was a red thing, all reds or all whites. Either red or white. The Christians wear more red. The Turks wear the white hat. No white hat because the Turks get the white while we had the red [laughter].

**Janet:** Did you know any Turks? Were they like around? Did you have anything to do with them?

**Angelus:** It wasn't in my hometown but I know them from the next town when every Thursday from the all towns- 72 towns were coming to the town there, they call it Filiates and there was big business there. You sell shoes, somebody sells this, somebody sells the other. Like we got bazaars here.

**Janet:** So that would be in your town every Thursday?

**Angelus:** Every Friday.

**Janet:** People would come from all over?

**Angelus:** People come from other towns there and they buy stuff and they bring stuff to sell and [unclear 00:36:08], big business that day.

**Janet:** Would your father have any buying and selling when [crosstalk 00:36:14]?

**Angelus:** My father no, my father was in a different business. He was picking up all the wool and all the skins from there. They used to send them to Europe. It was a kind of merchants like. Most of my people was making shoes.

We had about 25 shoe stores there and every Thursday we go to next town when 72 towns were coming and then we sell the products we had. If you sell dress, I sell shoes, you sell something else or some [unclear 00:36:54] but we couldn't sell them in our own town in our people but we were next town. With 72 towns from the whole thing was coming every Thursday, big business there and you sell whatever you've got.

Somebody sells shoes, someone dresses [unclear 00:37:07], someone onions, somebody sells oranges and so forth. That’s why big business in that town which was not a Greek town it was Turkish town but that’s the biggest place. Everybody was coming on Thursday.

We had a little but on Saturdays in my hometown but not many people was coming. Thursday in that town there everybody from 72 towns be there on Thursday, big business. Whatever you want to sell and buy you got to go there.

**Janet:** Do you remember the house you lived in?

**Angelus:** Who me?

**Janet:** Yeah.

**Angelus:** Sure, you want to see it. The German burned my hometown and my father rebuilt it again my hometown with someone else, somebody else too. It’s about 1/3 built now in my hometown. The rest of them they didn’t' bother, they went away.

**Janet:** How big a house was it?

**Angelus:** Here, that’s the house is.

**Janet:** So they made out of stone?

**Angelus:** Stone and ceramic.

**Janet:** Stone and what?

**Angelus:** Stone and on top with ceramic.

**Janet:** The roof?

**Angelus:** See all stones. We got a lot of stones there. See all the mountains, a lot of stones there. We go into the mountains and take the stones out.

**Janet:** What did your mother cook on?

**Angelus:** Cook on? Meat and everything else, we had a lot of stuff. Like the meats, we had meat every day.

**Janet:** What kind of a stove did she have?

**Angelus:** Stove?

**Janet:** How did she cook?

**Angelus:** We didn't have no stove, we had a fire place. She had a thing with three things there and she was putting the stove on top of that.

**Janet:** What did you burn, wood?

**Angelus:** All wood and coal. Mostly wood though, we had a lot of wood there.

**Janet:** Of course there was no refrigeration?

**Angelus:** No. We keep fresh every day, not tomorrow. We buy meat today, cook it today.

**Janet:** Did you have any chores in the family. You had to do every day?

**Angelus:** Yeah, I had to go to the store everyday myself. My sister had other chores to do.

**Janet:** What would you do? Would you buy the food you mean?

**Angelus:** I go in the store and buy anything they need in the house. It’s my chores.

**Janet:** Did your father have sheep?

**Angelus:** Yes, we had about 300, 3-400.

**Janet:** Did you have to work?

**Angelus:** No, we had guys who- that guy we used to pay him. 4-5 guys had sheep.250 you have 200 then another 50 or so. One guy takes them in the mountains and feed them in the morning and brings them back at night. We pay him anyways and we pay for the food the animals eat too, we have to pay for that, for the grass they eat outside.

**Janet:** How did Corfu differ from the town you came from?

**Angelus:** The town we came usually 3,000 population Corfu was 25-30. It has schools, it had gymnasium, we had everything. We only had a grammar school there.

**Janet:** Did you like being in Corfu?

**Angelus:** I loved it, beautiful island there but one thing I was missing my mother and father all the time you know I was young but I like the school there and the people.

**Janet:** Were there other kids that you knew? Young men that you knew from..?

**Angelus:** Very few I know.

**Janet:** So it was unusual for you to go to Corfu, to high school?

**Angelus:** No.

**Janet:** No, a lot of people.

**Angelus:** Some go to Athens, some go to Corfu, some go to Patras, different cities. Some go to Yannena in the same day which was a couple days away with the horse. Some go to Corfu, some go to Yannena, some go to Patras and so forth and so on in Athens.

**Janet:** So when you went to Corfu you stayed there? You just stayed there for a long period of time before you would come home and visit?

**Angelus:** Yes, stay on holidays coming back holidays that’s all. The rest of the time I stay there in Corfu. I pay rent in a house- private homes. They gave me a room there and food and I pay so much every month.

**Janet:** You finished and you graduated?

**Angelus:** I graduated from high school and then you had to go to Athens for big education but I came here instead.

**Janet:** Did you go back home for a little while?

**Angelus:** Oh yes, I used to go on all the holidays home.

**Janet:** What made you decide then..?

**Angelus:** On myself. I hear over here there's plenty of jobs and they make good money. At that time it went to eight hours. I hear you work only eight hours here before it was 10 and 12 but afterwards when they became eight hours, the whole Europe knew about it, everybody wants to come here. Here to work.

**Janet:** How did you get your ticket?

**Angelus:** How? I wrote to my cousins here, I had two cousins here. They send me the money, they send me two tickets. One I sent back and the other one I took it. When I came here, I pay them back.

**Janet:** Did anybody [unclear 00:43:09] in your family? Want to go to the United States?

**Angelus:** No, my oldest brother didn’t' want to go. My youngest brother, he was young, so I'm the only one. My younger brother come in and visit me and I went back and visit them too and in '32 I went back again. I visit them.

**Janet:** In other words like your sisters, they wouldn't have even considered going?

**Angelus:** No, the girls wouldn't left the house unless they get married.

**Janet:** You were sent the tickets for- what was the name of the ship?

**Angelus:** Adeline.

**Janet:** Adeline. You were sent tickets for Adeline?

**Angelus:** No.

**Janet:** No.

**Angelus:** They send me the money and with the money I buy the tickets. When I went to Patras there to come here.

**Janet:** That’s where you left from.

**Angelus:** Yeah, Patras was getting the boats at that time not from Epirus Athens. We used to get it from Patras, the only place all the ocean lines was coming in Patras. So it’s the place I took. So on Patras again, I had my own people. I had some people there in Patras. When they hear I go to United States, the Italian he says- I came with Italian passport. I was Italian citizen I didn't come from a Greek citizen because I had to go in the army. Get the idea?

**Janet:** No, tell me.

**Angelus:** I didn't have Greek passport to come here, I had an Italian passport. I had a guy in Corfu Island who went to school with me. His father who was in the thing there, I say, "If I make the papers, will you have your father sign it?" "Sure," he says. I'll go and put the stamp there and give it to you.

So the boy he took the paper. I make the paper to come in this country and he took and put the Italian there. I came as Italian citizen Corfu Island. In Corfu Island a lot of Italians live there too, they go back and forth. They're rich guys. They got two homes, one in Italy, one in Corfu Island. Corfu Island is the most beautiful island in the world, it is.

**Janet:** Now, you wouldn't have been able to get it for a long time if you had tried to get it as a Greek citizen?

**Angelus:** What?

**Janet:** Tell me about going in the army.

**Angelus:** That’s why I came here. I didn't want to go in the army.

**Janet:** I see, so you would have had to go in the army if you stayed?

**Angelus:** That’s why I make Italian passport. Greek passport they get me in the army first and then you come here. So I was smart to go Italian passport from Corfu Island. All Corfu Islands was slightly Italians living there back and forth you know. So I came with Italian passport from Corfu Island, not from the Greeks. I was a Greek. I came as Italian citizen here.

**Janet:** Tell about the blackmail, somebody who tried to black mail you?

**Angelus:** Yeah, in Patras there, they tried to blackmail me.

**Janet:** What happened?

**Angelus:** So I gave them some money.

**Janet:** What did they say to you?

**Angelus:** "We're going to go to the police and tell them that you're going to America with some other different passport not Greek passport." I said, "What do you want?" I had to take two tickets you know, somebody send me two tickets, one I used and the other one I didn't use. I pay all these cash in Patras so they let me go.

So the last minute I was going to go, a guy come in and he says, "I got my wife sick," he says, "And my sister sick, you're got to give me some money." I said to myself, “I had $30 to show here." You had to show $30 when you're coming to this country, I got $30 I said, "Take it, I'm going work in the boat."

So I gave him the money there and I went in the boat, the last minute or two. I had the $30 to show here. I went in the boat, I asked the captain to give me a job, so he gave me a job. Get up 3 O'clock in the morning and clean them boats, cleaned all the surface in the boat. From 3O'clock up to 7O'clock every day I do that.

So my shoes gone from the sea water. I didn't have no shoes. I found a sailor there, I said, "You got any extra pair of shoes guys?" "For how much do you want?" "$10." I give a $10, I got a pair of shoes, sea kind of shoes and I came here with good shoes otherwise all gone my shoes from the salt water.

**Janet:** You earned enough money on the boat to get to show when you came?

**Angelus:** Yeah, get here? Sure, I make $50 in the boat.

**Janet:** So you paid $10 for shoes.

**Angelus:** I paid $10 for shoes and I have $40 left, I show them here.

**Janet:** And plus you were learning English on the boat. You were learning English as well.

**Angelus:** That’s all I was doing. I had a book there and I was studying Greek and English.

**Janet:** Wow, you got up at 3 in the morning and how long did you have to work on the...?

**Angelus:** Four hours, up to 7 O'clock. 7 O' clock people come in there so I stopped but I clean everything.

**Janet:** Tell me about the Adeline, what kind of a ship was that?

**Angelus:** It was a freighter.

**Janet:** What were they carrying, do you know?

**Angelus:** Carrying soldiers.

**Janet:** Oh soldiers.

**Angelus:** Yeah, from America to France.

**Janet:** I see. Did it stop in a lot of places? Is that why it took 31 days?

**Angelus:** Yeah, it stopped in a lot of places, in Italy, Portugal everywhere.

**Janet:** Were there a lot of people who were immigrating on the boat?

**Angelus:** Four.

**Janet:** Four, and were you in what they call steerage, were you down in the bottom, in the hold of the ship, where you were sleeping?

**Angelus:** No, it wasn't third class, that’s second.

**Janet:** You had a little cabin.

**Angelus:** No, everybody had open beds, hanging beds and everybody sleeping in their beds like 30-40 guys. I was third class.

**Janet:** How was the food? Do you remember anything about that?

**Angelus:** The food was terrible, you know what they eat? Bread and cheese every day. I couldn't eat the food, terrible. The food was terrible. I don't want to taste the food anymore, I hated so much. Bread and cheese is all we eat, nothing else. The food was terrible.

**Janet:** Anything else happen on the ship that you remember?

**Angelus:** Yeah, we stop in some place in Portugal and the boat got fire. So a lot of them jumped and it was far away too. A lot of them jumped and about 10 guys died because they didn't know how to swim. I stayed up on the top there waiting the last minute waiting to jump. I didn't jump, I almost jumped but I didn't jump. I waited the last minute.

They put the fire out so the fire is out otherwise I was going to jump. I don't want to burn I might as well die in the sea. It was far thing the damn thing. It was too deep and I didn't know how to swim. It was terrible then, I got scared I tell you. I got so scared you got no idea.

**Janet:** How did you feel when you arrived in the United States? What were you thinking?

**Angelus:** I feel like a million dollars, like I was in heaven, is the way that I felt about it.

**Janet:** Did you see the Statue of Liberty when you came in?

**Angelus:** Sure I saw the Statue of Liberty, sure. I stayed in Ellis Island overnight and they call your clothes, they clean them before you come in this country so you don't bring disease in. You got to take a shower and baths and all that junk there. Took a couple days we would stay there, clean us up everything, even the shoes went through the laundry, everything. To come here you got to be up to date so you won't no disease, see what I mean?

**Janet:** What was Ellis Island like? How did..?

**Angelus:** Geez I don't remember much about it. We were closed in the room there we did not know so much about it. We didn't see too much about it.

**Janet:** And you had a physical exam?

**Angelus:** Showers, physical exam and showers. They called the clothes to be...

**Janet:** Fumigated or..?

**Angelus:** Fumigated, you're right that’s what I was going to say. All fumigated before we wear them. They give us robes. I do a good job there.

**Janet:** Was the food any better?

**Angelus:** The food was terrible.

**Janet:** Also there it was terrible?

**Angelus:** Even here I didn't like it in the beginning but casually I went to the Greek restaurants I need here. I learned the Greek restaurants, I couldn't afford to go in the beginning but when I got a job I went to the restaurants and eat.

**Janet:** So you showed your money and then did anybody meet you?

**Angelus:** No, I told you I was supposed to go to Boston. I left my values there because my eyes were told me to go back. So I followed the guy and I say, "Where are you going?" He says, "To Worcester." I say to myself, "I'm going to Worcester." but I know of some people from my home town here, so when I came here, Union station. The taxi took us and brought us where you want to go to [unclear 00:53:22], I wrote there my thing, he brought me to [unclear 00:53:23] and a mechanist stayed here [unclear 00:53:27].

I went there, he says to me, "You're going to live with your own people?" I say, "Sure." there was some people from my home town here. I didn't know them but I say, "I'll know them." I know who they were here and what their names, he said everything but I never remember them. I was young when they left, they came here.

**Janet:** First you worked in the screw factory, then you got the route for the...

**Angelus:** And then they throw me out on account of smoking and then I worked for this guy here for the driver. He was giving me 50 cents a day to work with him, so I was helping him out delivering Greek bread to houses. I learned all the routes and everything else. Three months later or two months later I got a license and I got a job there too. Delivering bread.

**Janet:** Then you got the route for the Albanians to sell the bread.

**Angelus:** And I got the route- I started the route for the Albanians.

**Janet:** What did you do after that?

**Angelus:** The first day I went out by truck, I tipped over, I tipped over. I told you about it, so they helped me out and I was alright. My truck was alright, it had one flat tire they fixed it, we went alright. After that, I said to myself, "I'm not going to drive anymore," but take it or lied to myself, "What else can I do?" I might as well make your mind and drive carefully, so I started driving carefully but when the snow started, that time I had an awful time. I was going this way. All of a sudden I turn this way. Lot of ice, we had the goddamn car tracks.

**Janet:** The what?

**Angelus:** Car tracks [unclear 00:55:35]. What a time we had, it was slippery like anything there on top them on winter times especially when the ice was coming. It was terrible, I tipped over.

**Janet:** So what did you do after you did that for work? After you drove the truck what did you do?

**Angelus:** They gave me a job there selling bread, deliver bread. Inside was another guy working for this guy, he was delivering bread too. I got together with him and says, "We're crazy working for this guy, what do you say you and I just open a pastry shop, selling American stuff not Greek stuff?" I say, “We can sell to all Americans."

It was about 230 Greek restaurants here in Worcester them days. Selling American food, so I say to him, "What do you say we make pastry and sell them to the restaurants business to begin, I know all the guys too," because when I was in the bread business, working for the bread I used to go every Sunday house to house to collect the money for the bread they took all week.

You get the idea? I leave in your house three breads away and you had to cut them and mark them down see and [unclear 00:56:52] every Sundays I go and collect the money so I knew all these guys had the restaurants.

I say, "What do you say you and I start in the pie business, pastry pie business?" He says, "You think we can do it?" "I know every Greek," I say, "Yeah they got a restaurant, the stores," I say,” I know them all. I think they're all going to buy from me." He says, "How are you sure?" I say, "I know because they like me." I was young. I was the youngest Greek here. So everybody feel sorry for me, they felt sorry for me so I knew I knew I could do it. So that’s the way I started in the pastry business and pie business.

**Janet:** Who made the pies? How did you get all set up?

**Angelus:** Him and I.

**Janet:** You made them?

**Angelus:** We made them and sell them. He goes to the stores, I go to the restaurants. Make them and deliver. We start 1 O'clock in the afternoon and I worked till 8 O'clock and I go home. He works up to 10 O'clock to finish the whole stuff. I started in the restaurants 3 O'clock in the morning 4 and he starts in the stores 8 O'clock, 7 O'clock in the morning. He goes to the stores and I got to the restaurants. That’s the way we started.

**Janet:** Did you know how to bake? Was that something you knew before?

**Angelus:** No, we hired one baker, hired one baker. So in a month I'm [unclear 00:58:28] learn to do the inside and I stayed outside. Inside outside after weeks. I go all the outside, he goes all the inside and had a little help there give them a couple of dollars a week.

**Janet:** So when you began, how many pies were you selling about?

**Angelus:** At the beginning I didn't make no pies, I make just pastry. I went with the pastry you know turnover it clears all the stuff. All pastry and then [unclear 00:59:05], all the young guys went in the army. All the young guys went in the army, what do you do? Throw all the pastry out, sell on pies only.

We went to Connecticut, there was a place in Connecticut there, we bought some pie machines there and we started the pie business. The little ones we sell it for a nickel and the 8 inch and the 10 inch pie for the restaurants. It’s the way I started in the business and sold my business for $20 million.

**Janet:** Why did you start with pies only when the young men went in the army?

**Angelus:** Because the pastry requires a lot of handiwork while the pies, we bought a couple of machines and it was going straight line. You put the plate there, the [unclear 01:00:01] comes you put it down and then you put the filling then goes to the conveyer, cooling off up and down then you bring them down put them in the package and put them in the trucks.

We make a straight line operation after we lost all the girls. We stay just in pies nothing else. No pastry, nothing. Pies which was making easy you know two guys making, three guys run the machine. I bought a machine, straight line machine and three four guys was to run the machine making over 1,000 pies an hour, see what I mean.

**Janet:** Okay, we'll pause here for a minute. I want to change the tape.

**Angelus:** Okay, sure.

**Janet:** We resume now on tape two. I'm speaking with Angelus Cotsidus in Worcester, Mass and its august 11th, 1993. Mr. Cotsidus is 93 now.

**Angelus:** Right.

**Janet:** Tell me, we were saying that you were really very ambitious?

**Angelus:** Very ambitious to be somebody, to get somewhere.

**Janet:** Do you know where you got that from?

**Angelus:** With who? It was coming to me [laughter]. Everybody goes to coffee house, I was going to coffee house, I study English. Even when I was here I had time, I went to school when [unclear 01:01:28] says, "Go home." I fall asleep there because that’s time it was 85-90 I don't know, Palmer Street so the teacher come in and says, "Go home and sleep in your house." I say, "Thank you." I left home, I say, "no school because I fall asleep."

I start getting the books and started reading myself. Although I could understand very good because all the month 31 days, that’s all I was doing, working and studying in the boat. Sleeping six seven hours that’s all, all was working in the morning and then studying in the afternoon, lay down a couple hours I feel sleepy and the I get up and I start again.

I got my method there, [unclear 01:02:14] but I was pretty good because I went through high school, I wasn't dumb, I knew something. I know French.

**Janet:** In high school you learnt French.

**Angelus:** Yeah but that time French was the international language but after that it went off.

**Janet:** How did you meet your wife?

**Angelus:** How I met my wife, I don't even know how I met my wife [laughter]. How I meet you wife? You tell them [laughter]. You tell the story.

**Janet:** Why don't you say it for the tape?

**Eva:** A friend of ours you know how you meet people and they introduced us. I didn't know if I was going to ever see him again but then it developed that I did. I admired him because he was really working hard. 3 O'clock in the morning until whatever time he finished, it didn't matter.

He would deliver one pie in the afternoon, I worked for him for a while that’s why I saw how wonderful he was to his customers, no wonder they liked him. He was called and he answered them if you needed pie and he'd make one pie delivery to all these places and continued [inaudible 01:03:36].

**Angelus:** I was good to them, they were to me you know I had to be good to them.

**Eva:** They stood by him when his pies were not perfect and when he finally hired a man they said nothing but fresh because his partner didn't know how to make things. They were using Chinese eggs and this and that so the minute that man said...

**Angelus:** I'll tell you how it is. The staff who was making, it was [unclear 01:04:11] we didn't know what the hell was the trouble, accidently one day we left something, we forgot something to put in the dough and the dough came perfectly [laughter].

I say to my partner, "Come here," he says,” Somebody brought you some new flour." and I tried across there and I don't think we [unclear 01:04:37]. I say, "I got it," he says, "What?" "I forgot to put that stuff inside." And that helped to [unclear 01:04:47]. Since then the cross rising in the oven and bake right through before it was staying together and just get a color and it was doughy.

Since I got that business one, I didn't have enough money to buy trucks so fast, business come on. Finally the secret that little stuff that I forgot to put in the dough.

**Janet:** Was it like baking powder or..?

**Angelus:** Something like that yes, something like that.

**Janet:** How long were you selling the pies before you discovered that?

**Angelus:** I was selling most pastry little pies, not much pies but after that I used to leave 10 pies and they come short calling all the 10, before I leave 10 pies they sell one. We couldn't sell. That cross saved my life. It became crispy right away. You put the pie in the oven that was melting in your mouth. Then I say to myself, "That’s the secret."

**Janet:** Pies.

**Angelus:** Then the pies went. I sold for $20 million six years later. Everybody called me, even out of town [unclear 01:06:00] to Boston, my pie was the top. Nobody could make pie like that across, it was crispy crispy.

**Janet:** Did you make all flavors?

**Angelus:** All flavors, the 26 flavors.

**Janet:** Tell me about Worcester, when you first came here. What was it like as a town?

**Angelus:** I like it because I live in Corfu Island for four years there and then in Athens I stayed about a month and it was before I came here. I know a lot about cities, when I came here it looked small compared to Athens that I was lately but anyways I liked the city here because it was quite and I got the job there delivering and I say to myself, "I'm going to get a license here and I think I'm going to stay here."

I was supposed to go to Boston, I had a cousin there and I come to Ellis Island I left my values there, I follow the guy and I come to Worcester. So my cousin come in on Sunday to visit me. I call him up that I couldn't make it there because I told him all the story, he come in and he got mad on me and he says, "Why you didn’t' come to me as is the hell with you." Left with [unclear 01:07:24]. I say, " Wait till I tell you what’s happened?" He had a lot of money, was independent guy, he says, "The hell with you," I say to myself, "If you feel like that I'm going to make my own."

**Janet:** Do you think you would have gotten into the pie business if you'd gone to Boston?

**Angelus:** Oh no, if I'd gone to Boston I'd be a waiter. It’s all he was, a waiter there. There was a lot of money waiting business but I didn't like that business, waiting the customers, no. I hate that business even now because people tell you why you didn't do this or you didn't do that. I don't like that at all.

**Janet:** Yeah, do you think there are some ideas or values that your mother and father had that they passed along to you?

**Angelus:** My father was a good merchant you know, he was making big money too but he bought another house in [unclear 01:08:30] there. We had a small house and then we grow up we were almost on top of the others so he had to buy the next house. So of course a lot of money that pull guy there.

That’s why I left high school and I came, he was supposed to send me in Athens. I went to Athens and I went Resarios School they called it but there 90% they make priests there so when I saw I'm making priest there I said to myself, "I can’t stay in Athens to be a priest." I say to myself, "I'm going to come to Corfu Island to high school there. I'm not going to be a priest."

I was afraid they're forced me to be a priest if I get through but it wasn't so, I didn't know that. In the fourth year you could leave the school and go do another school but I didn't know that time I was afraid they forced me to be a priest and I didn't want to be a priest.

**Janet:** Did you know what you wanted to be?

**Angelus:** I didn't want to be priest anyways, anything else but priest [laughter].

**Janet:** Why were you so upset [crosstalk 01:09:40]?

**Angelus:** I didn't care for priests, I didn't care. I was afraid of them and I didn’t care for them. I was far away from priest, I never go near a priest, I don't know them days the minute I saw priest I go the other way, I don't know why.

**Janet:** Now you like priests, right?

**Angelus:** Oh I love them now [laughter]. I understand they're not bad. I used to see them bury people you know a lot of people that’s why I hated. That gave me that thing that priest is to bury people. That’s what I thought [laughter].

**Janet:** Are there any customs that you keep that you hold on to that are from Greece?

**Angelus:** The dancing, I do good even my knows how to Greek too.

**Eva:** He’s a good dancer.

**Janet:** Why did you like your wife? Why do you think you..?

**Angelus:** She likes me I like her [laughter].

**Janet:** I'm sure there were a lot of girls who liked you but how come you chose your wife?

**Angelus:** Well, I'll tell you at that time the Greeks come here alone they don't bring no wives till they make some money and then get a house and they live in the [unclear 01:11:09] trying to make some money and then bring their wives down.

When I came in this Worcester here, only three guys had wives, everyone else was single. They stay five six years make some money, go in the old country, stay a year or two back again. That’s all they were doing till after the war, World War 2 then we settled here. Wherever you was you stay wherever, they don't come any more like they used to come.

**Janet:** So did you think you would go back to Greece? You would stay here a while..?

**Angelus:** I went 1932 back to Greece. I came 1920, 1932 I went there to see my folks. I had a hernia and he told me to stay for six weeks, so instead to stay here I might as well go to Greece see my folks. I had little money. I had about $10,000 made already. So I went to Greece there, I knew my wife, I was engaged with you, wasn't I? I told her that I'm going to go see my folks and I count this and I'll be back and marry. I don't know if she believed or not but anyways that’s the way I talk.

**Eva:** [inaudible 01:12:47].

**Angelus:** The minute I went the ship people was with me there, this lady they show me the picture of her niece. I looked at her careful my mind was on her anyways.

**Janet:** Somebody wanted to match you up when you were on the ship going back?

**Angelus:** Yeah.

**Eva:** And I was with him talking to him [inaudible 01:13:10].

**Janet:** So here is your wife, who was then your girlfriend and she's with you waiting for you to go on the ship and someone shows you a picture to match you up?

**Angelus:** Yeah, a friend of my wife, friend of her. She wasn't my wife then.

**Eva:** [inaudible 01:13:26].

**Angelus:** So when you go down, he says, "You see this," and he says, "Her niece there or something." So I went there I stayed three months there. I really enjoyed there. I saw my father and mother.

**Eva:** [inaudible 01:13:42].

**Angelus:** I can't understand what you're saying, go ahead talk.

**Janet:** Yeah, go ahead.

**Eva:** Tell her about Friday night when you got to Greece, Holy week and you asked your father for some money. This is interesting.

**Angelus:** I went home big Saturday, holy Saturday. I was supposed to go to church 12 O'clock, it was about 11 o'clock. Bom bom the things were really, I say to my father, "I'm going to church you got any money?" He says, "Yeah, five drachmas. Drachma it was $60- $1 was 100 drachmas. No, $1 before I left Greece came here was $5 and this time when I went there a dollar was a 100 drachmas see the difference with the Greek money was down to nothing. So $1 it was 100 drachmas, $100 in Greek.

So my father gave me five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, fourteen, fifty, no. I looked at my mother sixty, seventy, eighty, hundred. Looked at my mother again, "No," I say, "Not enough, 100 drachma’s," $1. I say, "I'm not going to throw $1 thereafter I'd been so long, I got to give at least $10 but like a full myself, what the hell I want the church money, I could give American money. I didn't think of it either [laughter].

He gave me about $10 in Greek money, Christ I took all his money and then he disappointed. He didn't know if I got any money or not. That’s why I was looking at my mother to give to me or not to give to me. Anyways, I gave him $50 dollar bills, cash me balances. 50 American money, he opened his eyes like this [laughter].

So I wasn't broke. He thought I didn't have any money. When I gave the money there the man is changed day and night. I thought to myself what money does.

**Janet:** Well, he must have been proud of you then.

**Angelus:** Then yeah.

**Janet:** Tell me what you're most proud of that you've done in your life.

**Angelus:** Most proud, I marry my wife [laughter].

**Eva:** That’s lovely.

**Angelus:** Yeah, I married a nice wife. Nice partner.

**Janet:** Tell me your wife's name and maiden name for the tape.

**Angelus:** Now, first name Eva.

**Janet:** Her maiden name?

**Angelus:** Bigoga.

**Janet:** Could you spell that?

**Angelus:** Bigoga.

**Janet:** B-I-G….

**Angelus:** G-O-G-A, Bigoga.

**Janet:** Do you have children?

**Angelus:** I have a son.

**Janet:** And his name.

**Angelus:** Nicholas and a daughter Valerie, in Greek they call her Viselike and another Alexandra died, she got killed.

**Janet:** Does your daughter Viselike have a married name? Papas, her married name.

**Angelus:** Yes.

**Janet:** So you have grandchildren?

**Angelus:** I have three and a girl four and from the boy we've got two.

**Eva:** No, we have seven in all, three from Nicholas and four from Valerie.

**Janet:** How's this phase of your life? How is this phase of your life? Are you older, you're retired?

**Angelus:** Always we were happy and always had a lot of money. I had everything I wanted.

**Eva:** [inaudible 01:18:29].

**Janet:** What makes you happy now?

**Angelus:** Because I got my health, that’s why, my wife has got the health, what else I want. My son is alright, my daughter is okay. Everything is perfect, God gave me everything. I'm very happy.

**Janet:** Good, is there anything you can say about coming here as an immigrant and starting a new life and making your life here. Is there anything?

**Angelus:** Well, it was hard in the beginning, you know I wanted to go home all the time, I want to go home, I want to go home. I made passport two three times and again I didn't. I didn't want to go home again because I didn't know what to do there if I go. If I couldn’t go through college what else could I do [unclear 01:19:19] high school, what kind of work do you do? Nothing while over here you got the factories and then the one in the bread business.

I become a good sales man and then I become the boss, start the pastry business and then the pie business. I had a good leg in my life because I started this and I continued. I never stop any, I never lost, all was unto the other. I won't stop I had to work I had to do something, I had to be somebody. I didn't want to be nothing on the base but I want people to say, "He's Mr. Cotsidus," I want to say, "He's another bum."

I was proud of my family and she was a good wife. In the beginning we worked together, she worked too so that’s why we make it. I live in off Diamond Street, what do you call the street? Cathleen Street of Diamond Street, I lived there for a while and then I build this house. 1920 I build this house myself and [unclear 01:20:33]. '94 I come in here in this house.

**Janet:** This is sort of a big question but how has the country changed, the United States?

**Angelus:** I love the United States from the beginning to the end because if you work you got everything you want here but in Greece you couldn't find no work to do and if you get the work you get nothing to amount to anything but over here you're getting dollars.

**Eva:** There’s more opportunities.

**Angelus:** Big opportunities here, if you want to work and if you want to be somebody who could do it. I could see that, I could see that because I wasn't dumb, I was through high school and I knew something about life. I read too much, I was reading all the time.

Never stopped reading because I know the only you better [unclear 01:21:37], she throw me out because I fall asleep. I get up 3 O’clock in the morning I couldn't help till 7:31, I fall asleep then it was 85 inside the school building. So she says, "Go home and sleep." “Thank you," I say to myself.

Well I'm crazy as going spend the time there when I can spend the time myself. I wrote in New York, I got all kinds of books and I started working by myself every night 2-3 hours, 4hours, 5 hours 6 hours in the house.

**Janet:** Still on English?

**Angelus:** On English sure. I wanted to learn the language because I wanted to go someplace without language who wins? Nobody wins.

**Janet:** Did you become a citizen?

**Angelus:** I become a citizen when I was four years here, after four years.

**Janet:** Was that a happy day for you?

**Angelus:** Beautiful day, I'll never forget it. I feel like I'll go to another life, to have American citizen. I was proud, very proud.

**Janet:** Do you remember any historic events that happened while you were here in this country that made a difference?

**Eva:** He was involved in building the church.

**Angelus:** I build the church here with my partner and for six months I go house to house and collect money for the church. I want to pay cash but not to have any mortgage, that’s why I built the church here [unclear 01:23:18]. Since building the church, it’s not the two of us and another couple of other guys, four of us. We did it and I was out every night six months house to house collecting money and we paid cash for that house we live in, no mortgage for the church.

**Eva:** [inaudible 01:23:44].

**Angelus:** Some doctor had the property and we were friends with that American doctor, so he had the building there and all the [unclear 01:24:00]. We bought it for $35,000. He gave it to us for $35,000. We throw all that down and we build the church and later we build the other house. What do you call it?

**Janet:** Community center.

**Eva:** He was a good sales man.

**Angelus:** But I worked hard though, I worked very hard though.

**Eva:** He had the customers.

**Angelus:** But nobody refused me. I remember going I exchanged it, it was two Greek places. This fella there he says to me he says he isn’t got nothing. I pass by and the other, "Hi" he says, "Come out." "What’s the matter?" “I want to put a brick in our house too," he says, "Come on in."

He gave me $200. I was surprised, I wasn't going to bother with him and I know he didn't have any but the bald guy I want to pull a brick in the house tools. So I seat there until she asked me what’s so good. So I say to myself, "You gave me a lot of courage then," then I went house to house and collect for them and a guy to see if he had money then I go and I get something. I was foolish to say this guy has gone and this gone, everybody had money so then house to house. Whatever Greek was there was going and get money, six months I got the money to build the church.

**Janet:** Well, wonderful. Is there anything else you can think of that you'd like to say? Maybe advise to immigrants coming in to this country now.

**Angelus:** They live better now in Europe, they don't have to come here. Not many coming now except Chinese and Japanese that’s all but Greeks don't come anymore here unless they come for visit but they got everything there now. In Greece, they got the factories, they got everything. They don't come anymore over here.

**Janet:** I want to thank you very much.

**Angelus:** You're welcome dear.

**Janet:** This is a wonderful story and I'm happy that it will be preserved now in Ellis Island as part of our collection.

**Eva:** It’s nice that we'll be recorded anyway.

**Janet:** Yes, it is and then I'll send you a copy. So this is Janet Levine for the national park service. I've been speaking with Angelus Cotsidus and his wife Eva Cotsidus and we're here in Worstern Massachusetts and its august 11th, 1993. Mr. Cotsidus is 93