**Elisa:** This is Elisa Madsen for the National Park Service. Today is Tuesday the 13th of September 1994. I’m in a Jewish home for the aging with Mrs. Gladys Julian and she came from Australia in … Why don’t you tell me the year?

**Gladys:** I was six.

**Female:** 1906, you were born in 1900.

**Gladys:** Yeah 1906, I was born 1900.

**Elisa:** I’m here with Peter Ham who is doing the recording and that was [inaudible 00:00:35].

**Female:** The niece.

**Elisa:** The niece of Mrs. Julian and Mrs. Julian. Why don’t you begin by telling me your full name and your date of birth?

**Gladys:** Gladys R. for Rose, initial. What was my name?

**Female:** Cohen.

**Gladys:** Cohen, C-O-H-E-N, mmy father’s name.

**Elisa:** That was your maiden name?

**Gladys:** Yes, Gladys Cohen …

**Elisa:** Your name now?

**Gladys:** Gladys Rose Cohen, what?

**Elisa:** What’s your name now for the tape?

**Female:** Julian, Gladys Julian.

**Gladys:** I married a gentleman of the name of Albert Julian, J-U-L-I-A-N, but he died unfortunately, recently.

**Elisa:** What was the name of your town that you came from in Australia?

**Gladys:** Perth that was the capital wasn’t it?

**Female:** I don’t know.

**Gladys:** I think, no? It was a big city.

**Elisa:** Do you remember? Can you describe it for me? Tell me a little bit about what it looked like.

**Gladys:** No, very vague. I remember my father was interested in finding gold. We lived in a district near the gold mines, very crude, the house was made out of tin.

The aborigines were only a few miles away. We would hear them with their drums and their musical instruments. My mother warned. I had four brothers, not to antagonize them with stones or anything. Just pretend that they are not there, but one brother, age eight, was a bad boy and he threw a stone.

The next thing my mother heard was a thud in this tin house. It could have killed my brother had he not quickly rushed into the house. I remember that as young as I was.

**Elisa:** Which brother?

**Gladys:** Louis.

**Elisa:** Oh my gosh. Okay.

**Gladys:** There were four boys and we were four girls.

**Elisa:** Can you tell me what your father’s name?

**Gladys:** Meyer, M-E-Y-E-R, Meyer Cohen.

**Elisa:** His occupation?

**Gladys:** He was a jeweler, he made jewelry and he repaired jewelry. Then he got this mania about finding tons of gold and becoming very rich.

**Elisa:** What did he look like?

**Gladys:** He wore a beard, a small beard. That’s all I can remember.

**Elisa:** How tall was he?

**Gladys:** Pardon?

**Elisa:** How tall was he?

**Gladys:** He wasn’t too tall; I think 5’7” maybe.

**Elisa:** What would you say about his personality? What was he like?

**Gladys:** Who?

**Elisa:** Your father.

**Gladys:** We were so young at the time. The marriage was arranged through my mother’s rabbi. Meyer Cohen had a store, a shop in Perth, no not Perth …

**Female:** In Turkey.

**Gladys:** No.

**Elisa:** Your father was from Turkey and your mother was from Turkey?

**Gladys:** Yes, but I mean the store was in Australia, wasn’t it?

**Female:** I don’t think so.

**Gladys:** Well whatever. He repaired and designed jewelry. His passion was to become a multi-millionaire and find mountains of gold, so he was absent a lot of the time. Mother had to struggle, but he dolly well saw to it that she had nine pregnancies.

The first child was born dead she didn’t survive, and the other eight did. I was the oldest of the five youngest, Eddie, Dally, Ruth, Harry and then me, I was the fifth. My father didn’t send any money, he was very selfish and didn’t care, I’m sure.

Mother would teach she’d teach English to foreigners privately and French to the rich ladies in New York. Do you know New York? Ever been down by the side drive of Fifth Avenue?

**Elisa:** Yes. Now where did your mother learn all of these languages?

**Gladys:** From [inaudible 00:05:13] where she was born. Besides their mother tongue, they had to learn two languages that was a must. Mother picked French, which she always liked and what was the other language? French and English I guess.

**Elisa:** English

**Female:** Turkish. She spoke eight languages when she came here, that’s what you told me …

**Gladys:** How many?

**Female:** You told me, I’ve heard it, eight languages.

**Gladys:** Eight, yeah.

**Female:** She came with eight children, spoke eight languages and she was [inaudible 00:05:42].

**Gladys:** We had to come third class, but when the captain met my mother and she helped him to translate for the steerage passengers who spoke other languages. He promoted us from the third class to the second.

**Elisa:** What did your mother look like?

**Gladys:** She was [inaudible 00:06:09]. She had to be, pregnant all those times. She had a lovely beatific expression, like an angel. Besides her own eight, she would help every neighbor to coach the children if they were backward. She was just an angel.

I was the fifth, when mother when I myself was only about, was I 12 or younger? I had prepared supper. There was a market thing and my brothers would come with me with their little wagons to push the vegetables and the meat and whatever and …

**Elisa:** What would you make?

**Gladys:** What?

**Elisa:** What food would you make? Do you remember what you’d make for supper?

**Gladys:** The supper was nourishing because it had all the vegetables and meat bones and marrow bones I remember. Then we would have, I guess for dessert, stewed fruit. We’d call it [inaudible 00:07:16], I guess that’s French, is it? I think.

I had to take care of the five younger ones. The brother, Edward, who’s now a brilliant lawyer in New York, very successful, very rich, I had to take care of him, and mother him, and be sure that I gave him his bottle of the milk and his cereal. I can remember that very distinctly.

**Elisa:** Do you remember your grandparents at all? Did you know your grandparents?

**Gladys:** Yes. My grandmother took turns in living with her different daughters; I think they were five or six. When she lived with us, because she spoke Jewish which we learned, and I think she spoke a little French.

In Europe, the Jewish women had to wear wigs. I said to my mother, “Why?” Because the first thing a man would notice in a woman, would be her hair. For religious reasons, the women all wore wigs, but when they got home they could take them off.

My mother’s hair and my grandmother’s hair came down to the hem of her skirt. It was so rich and so beautiful. That goes way back.

**Elisa:** Do you remember what religion was like? Can you tell me a little bit about religion in your family?

**Gladys:** You had to have separate dishes for your meat and your milk products. When Easter came you had to be very strict, no bread, just [inaudible 00:09:03]. Whenever grandma lived with us, she took turns. She’d stay maybe a couple of years with us. She had five more daughters I think, so she’d divide the time.

**Elisa:** Do you remember any holidays? Can you remember a holiday celebration in your house any time?

**Gladys:** When grandmother lived, she’d say her prayers Friday night, very religious, and my mother did too. You had to keep your meat dishes separate from your milk dishes, it was called [inaudible 00:09:43] and [inaudible 00:09:44] was meat and [inaudible 00:09:46] was milk.

When my mother went out to teach I was, was I 12? No, I was younger, I’d take my brothers and we do the marketing in heavy patent leather bags I remember. I’d peel the vegetables and get the soup going and the meat in it. That was the boiled beef.

I had to reprimand when they had to be, because the boys would go for the jelly. They wanted those jars and jelly, so they could eat all they wanted. I hid them under the bed, but it didn’t take long before they found them.

Then I’d scold and I’d say, “I’m going to tell mother when she comes home, because it wasn’t right, you had no right to do it.” I was gentle, but I was strict, I had to be.

**Elisa:** You were almost a mother to them?

**Gladys:** Yeah, and so young to have a responsibility.

**Elisa:** Did you go to school in Australia before you came to?

**Gladys:** Did I go?

**Elisa:** Did you go to school or were you too young?

**Gladys:** I think I did. No, I was six years old when I came, wasn’t I?

**Elisa:** Yes.

**Gladys:** I couldn’t have done too much, maybe just …

**Elisa:** Do you remember school in the United States?

**Gladys:** Yes.

**Elisa:** Can you tell me a little about school?

**Gladys:** First of all, I don’t know why, but I was [inaudible 00:11:21] chosen president of the class. They liked my English accent which I cannot, I can’t say can’t, it beats on my ears and my nerves.

I’d help financially by coaching children that were recommended to me to help them with their studies, because they were battling. At an early age, I was a small provider, but I got paid I think a dollar or a dollar and a half for, I don’t know, two or three hours. I drummed into their heads what they had to learn, but I liked it.

**Elisa:** Do you remember games that you played when you were a child?

**Gladys:** When I was about five or six we played jacks. Do you know what a jack is?

**Elisa:** Mm-hmm (affirmative).

**Gladys:** I became pretty good at it because with a lot of practice you’re fast, very fast. You can make some money I think; whatever was in the ring was yours.

After school I earned a little money by helping children who were backward. Their mothers had heard about me and recommended me.

Then I’d have to rush home and do the marketing with the boys when my mother was out teaching. There was nice cooperation. If they weren’t I got very bossy.

**Elisa:** When you decided to come to America, who decided to come to America?

**Gladys:** My mother, because her sisters and her mother had come to America first. Then when things in Australia were very hard for my mother and my selfish father didn’t care how many times he got her pregnant. She had nine.

The first one, the little girl was born dead. The eight she raised and gave us a pretty good education. It was a happy home, always laughter and games.

I was the one that had to bathe the children; we had a big tab in the living room which we filled with water from the kitchen. I was the one that had to bathe the children in the same water, but I’d get a kettle of fresh water to rinse them. I remember that.

**Elisa:** Do you remember the ship that you came on?

**Gladys:** Yes, one was the Schinhorst, S-C-H-I-N-H-O-R-S-T. That didn’t go from New York, we had to all get off the boat and change for a ship that came to the New York harbor.

**Elisa:** That’s where your mother’s sisters were, in New York already?

**Gladys:** Yes she has one brother, he remained in France. He was an officer in the French army. Across the corridor was a Gentile girl who also was in the army. She wanted to marry my uncle and my grandmother said, “No, on no condition, unless you convert.” She converted.

When my grandma was 60 years old, in New York, in America I mean, the family made a big party for her. They sent for the son to come, and that was the first time we children had met our uncle. The wife was converted and she was a nice person, but also in the army. That’s about all I can remember.

**Elisa:** Was that Uncle Albert?

**Gladys:** What darling?

**Elisa:** Uncle Albert?

**Gladys:** No.

**Elisa:** That wasn’t Uncle Albert? Was that the doctor?

**Gladys:** No, the doctor who married my aunt [inaudible 00:15:41] the Robert [unclear 00:15:42].

**Elisa:** How about your voyage?

**Gladys:** What?

**Elisa:** The voyage? Do you remember were you sea sick on the boat? Was it sunny or cold or?

**Gladys:** We were very popular because mother spoke so many languages. She would interpret for the steerage. Because of that, they raised our room to a second class. Anyway it was a promotion for comfort.

**Elisa:** Do you remember eating?

**Gladys:** What darling?

**Elisa:** Do you remember having food? Eating on the ship what you would have? Where you would go to eat your meal?

**Gladys:** I think they had one big dining room, long tables and benches.

**Elisa:** Do you remember what you had to eat?

**Gladys:** Not really, vegetables, and fruits, and a little meat.

**Elisa:** What time of year was it when you …?

**Gladys:** When we arrived, it was in the winter of December I think.

**Elisa:** It was cold during this trip?

**Gladys:** Then we saw snow for the first time and those north winds. Mother sisters all contributed children’s clothing from their children, because it was a struggle.

**Elisa:** Do you remember meeting anyone? Making friends on the boat? Any other children or?

**Gladys:** No we were five of us ourselves.

**Elisa:** How long were you on [inaudible 00:17:22]?

**Gladys:** It’s a possible eight weeks. We had to change because our boat didn’t go directly to New York we had to get off.

**Elisa:** Do you know where you got off?

**Gladys:** In England I think, I don’t know, London is not a seaboard, is it? No, it’s in the interior isn’t it?

**Elisa:** Liverpool?

**Gladys:** Liverpool I guess.

**Elisa:** Do you remember seeing the Statue of Liberty?

**Gladys:** When my aunt and her husband came from Paris to visit grandma on her 60th birthday, of course we wanted her to see. I was the one to take her. I think I got as far as the 13th floor, I couldn’t take another step.

**Elisa:** That’s a lot of steps.

**Gladys:** It’s very tiring.

**Elisa:** Yes.

**Gladys:** Have you been there?

**Elisa:** Yes. Do you remember seeing it for the first time when you came into the port of New York?

**Gladys:** From a distance you saw it, because the light I think was always lit with a red lamp or something at the top, vaguely.

**Elisa:** Not sure about time, but it would have been lit I think. What do you remember about seeing New York the first time that you saw New York?

**Gladys:** We lived in Brooklyn. They call them tenement houses, they were apartments. They were cold flats, no steam heat. Did we have radiators? I think so.

**Elisa:** How about Ellis Island, do you remember coming to Ellis Island? How can you describe …

**Gladys:** How old was I then? I guess I was six.

**Elisa:** Six years old.

**Gladys:** I’m guessing it was pretty exciting. I had to be responsible for the younger one. Mother carried the baby, that’s Eddie, the successful New York lawyer who’s a millionaire now. He handles all the big shows.

**Elisa:** Do you remember what you were wearing when you came?

**Gladys:** What I was wearing?

**Elisa:** Yeah.

**Gladys:** We came in the winter.

**Elisa:** Heavier clothes.

**Gladys:** I don’t know where mother got them or they were contributed, I don’t remember.

**Elisa:** How about medical examinations, do you remember seeing any doctors while you were on Ellis Island?

**Gladys:** Yes, they were strict about -Because if you had any sign of sickness you were deported at once. Our boat didn’t go to New York it went to Liverpool, is Liverpool a port in England? Then we had a change, mother had to take the eight of us and change to another boat. I’ve forgotten the name, I used to remember it. Right now I can’t think.

**Elisa:** That’s okay. Medical examinations, did they examine you when you were on Ellis Island?

**Gladys:** Everybody had to. If you had any sign of sickness that was contagious you were deported at once, very particular.

**Elisa:** Do you remember seeing anything at Ellis Island that sticks in your mind, people?

**Gladys:** Pardon?

**Elisa:** What do you remember seeing when you were at Ellis Island?

**Gladys:** We saw people of all nationalities. The captain was very attracted to my mother because she would translate the steerage passengers who couldn’t speak English.

**Elisa:** What was her name your mother?

**Gladys:** Belina, B-E-L-I-N-A, Belina.

**Elisa:** Did you stay at Ellis Island? Were you detained there when you went to Ellis Island?

**Gladys:** I think until an uncle came who swore that we would not be a burden financially. That the family would see to it that we had help.

**Elisa:** How long do you think that was? Was it overnight, did you stay overnight?

**Gladys:** Yeah, a couple of nights I think.

**Elisa:** Do you remember where you slept? Do you remember where you slept at Ellis Island when you stayed there?

**Gladys:** My mother had to have a couple of rooms. We were crowded, about two or three in the bed. Mother took care of the brother who’s a lawyer, he was an infant then. My sister, the next, was two years of age, and the next, I guess, four, and the next, five. Then I came, six, and then my brother, eight, and then another brother nine, and the oldest sister.

**Elisa:** This uncle who came to meet you at Ellis Island, what was his name?

**Female:** [Inaudible 00:22:37] husband? Was he the dentist?

**Gladys:** I don’t know [inaudible 00:22:41] wasn’t he? I’ve forgotten.

**Female:** Whatever, and [inaudible 00:22:43] husband and [inaudible 00:22:45]

**Elisa:** Just his name I wonder. His name, you’re not sure what his name was? That’s okay. We’ll go on. What were your expectations when you came to America? What did you think it would be like? Did you think about that?

**Gladys:** No, you don’t have any idea. When you’re six years old, you’re not taught in school. Every day was exciting and I had to be responsible for the four younger.

**Elisa:** Were you scared?

**Gladys:** What darling?

**Elisa:** Do you remember being scared?

**Gladys:** No, never. I was a brave and little thing. I knew I had responsibly, and I had to take care of the younger brother, the successful lawyer. I remember mother had cooked a huge pot of prunes, stewed prunes. When I came into the room there was a whole tray of -What do you call it?

**Elisa:** Peach.

**Gladys:** Peach. The toilets were out in the yard. We didn’t have modern plumbing; we couldn’t afford an expensive place. I remember I had to clean up the mess that he made, all those prune.

We laugh about it now, today he’s a millionaire. He’s a very outstanding attorney in New York, handles the biggest shows. He married his secretary who was Catholic, who converted to Judaism, for my grandmother’s sake.

**Elisa:** Do you remember your neighborhood where you lived when you first came to New York? Who lived in your neighborhood? Do you remember people?

**Gladys:** Yeah tenement houses. There were no elevators you had to walk up steps. We landed on the ground floor, which is very [inaudible 00:24:40]. Then there was a vacancy on the third floor, but you had to walk up all those steps.

My mother was always a little ample and she did a market thing. It was a chore to carry two market baskets; they were patent leather, pretty big ones. Then my brothers would come down and help.

There was wonderful collaboration. I was the boss and heaven help them if they disobeyed or they went for the jar of jam and I said, “Nothing doing, you can’t have more than your share.” We got along; we loved each other. That was important.

**Elisa:** The neighbors that lived around you, do you remember what nationalities, where they were from?

**Gladys:** Yeah they were Jewish and most of them ignorant. They envied my mother because we children got high marks. Mother said, “I’ll be glad to coach the children.” They said, “Well we can’t afford to pay much.” Mother says, “Whatever you can afford will be perfectly all right.” She helped. With her own eight, she took on the responsibility of the children that needed help. That I remember.

**Elisa:** How long did you live there?

**Gladys:** Pardon?

**Elisa:** How long did you live in those tenement houses in New York? Do you remember moving to another area?

**Gladys:** Yes, as soon as we could afford it we moved. Then gradually as my mother taught English to foreigners, I think she got a dollar and a half or two dollars a lesson. She was so conscientious, always envied her because her children, meaning her eight, always got good marks and were head of the class.

**Elisa:** Where was your next house that you lived in? Do you remember where it was?

**Gladys:** After that tenement? Yes we moved to a street that had some expensive brown stone houses, but we didn’t live there. We lived around the corner which was a commercial street, where the street car went. The exit or the entrance was on the ninth street, 10th street, don’t remember the name.

I remember my brother Eddie was all of, maybe four. I said when my teacher comes by Ed; I wanted you to make a dollar and say, “Good afternoon this morning.” He wacked himself so hard, that he wounded himself.

Then I got frightened and the teacher said, “Don’t worry Gladys, he’ll be all right. He just has to take some deep breaths.” Everything was all right. That’s a very vivid picture.

**Elisa:** Did you stay in that area for a long time?

**Gladys:** I don’t remember. No, pretty soon my mother begun to teach and was a little more income. The boys worked for a florist, two older brothers, and they got a little income. Then what I got for coaching children. We managed very nicely.

**Elisa:** How long did you live in New York before you came to California? Was that something you did later in life or?

**Gladys:** How we landed in California? …

**Female:** You were married for I don’t know how many years.

**Gladys:** [Inaudible 00:28:22]?

**Female:** No, when you came to California how old were you?

**Gladys:** I was just in the first grade, I think I was six.

**Female:** When you came from New York to California, remember Aunt Dally came with John and Uncle [inaudible 00:28:41], and then you came. Were you in your 20s or your 30s?

**Gladys:** I don’t remember, I guess in my 30s.

**Female:** You came before the Second World War or after the Second World War?

**Gladys:** During.

**Female:** That’s what I thought.

**Elisa:** It was during the war. What could you tell me about what it was like to live in America during the war? Could you get an apartment easy? How was it as far as living?

**Gladys:** We managed. We being overcrowded because we couldn’t afford more than a limited amount. My grandmother was living with us at first and then she moved. Then my mother would take the two youngest and have them sleep with her. I slept with my oldest sister. [Inaudible 00:29:51], and the boys bunked together. We managed. I was the boss, oh heaven help them if they [inaudible 00:30:04] their duty, they’d get it.

**Elisa:** Your husband, can you tell me a little about him. Did he serve in any of the wars?

**Gladys:** Pardon?

**Elisa:** Your husband?

**Gladys:** No, let’s see, he was a [inaudible 00:30:25], that was his profession.

**Elisa:** Why don’t you tell me a little bit about him, how did you meet him?

**Gladys:** A flirtation. My oldest sister worked for a secretary, she was very capable, for the president, the vice president of AT&T, American Telephone and Telephone Company.

My husband, he wasn’t my husband then, his cousin was a secretary also. It was her birthday. My husband invited her and me to go to the Russian Tearoom for lunch.

First he kissed her and then I very softly I said, “And where is my kiss?” He said, “Never mind young lady you’ll get plenty.” We had a very happy life, except that unfortunately he had a heart attack and he died from that. Then I was widowed and I never remarried.

**Elisa:** Children? Do you have any children?

**Gladys:** No, my husband said, “The world is overpopulated, why add? And I don’t want you to have to go through it.” My sister, who was a lot younger than I, had a certain surgery. What do they call it? There’s a medical name for it. I adore children. I would get all my neighbors children and sing with them and teach them how to do little dances and how to play a game.

**Elisa:** What game was that?

**Gladys:** You made a circle and divide it into sections and made a 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60, 70, 80 and 100 was the center. You’d blindfold them and they say, “Tick tock toe, round I go, if I miss I go in this.” Then we [inaudible 00:32:27] and I had to keep a record. The child that had the most would get an extra piece of cake or some chocolate.

**Elisa:** These were neighborhood children?

**Gladys:** Pardon?

**Elisa:** These were neighborhood children who lived near you?

**Gladys:** I adored them and they adored me. If they were mine I couldn’t have loved them more and they couldn’t have loved me. They rather be in our house with me and my sister Ruth, than to stay in their own with their games and their, what did they call it? Not [inaudible 00:33:00] what the children had, they look through this kaleidoscope I think.

Then my sister and I would volunteer to go to the children’s hospital. We got permission to talk to the children and sing to them and tell them stories [inaudible 00:33:26]. I remember that.

**Elisa:** Are you happy that you came to America?

**Gladys:** Yes. It was exciting, and we knew it would be a different life. My mother would see her sisters, they had all come and grandma. We looked forward to it and we liked it.

**Elisa:** Your mother was happy too?

**Gladys:** Very. With knowing so many languages, that’s how she earned a living. She taught French to the elegant ladies on Fifth Avenue. Do you know New York?

**Elisa:** Yes.

**Gladys:** Riverside Drive. English to foreigners, I think she got a dollar and a half a lesson, very little.

**Elisa:** Can you tell me a little bit about her background, how did she get to Australia? Why was she living in Australia? She was from Europe?

**Gladys:** [Inaudible 00:34:25] my father had a jewelry store where he made jewelry and repaired. My mother’s father was a rabbi, and he thought, that would make a good match for my Belina, because the man had a profession. That’s how he became our father.

**Elisa:** How did they move to Australia? Why did they move there?

**Gladys:** Let’s see.

**Elisa:** Did they just get married and then move to Australia? How long were they in?

**Gladys:** I wish I can remember.

**Elisa:** Any sisters or brothers born in Turkey?

**Gladys:** What darling?

**Elisa:** Were any of your sisters and brothers born in Turkey?

**Gladys:** No, just [inaudible 00:35:10]. The one uncle, he was born in France. My grandmother had one son in the French army and six daughters I think, my mother being one. [Inaudible 00:35:29] was my eldest brother wasn’t he?

**Elisa:** What was his name?

**Gladys:** My oldest brother, what?

**Elisa:** What was his name?

**Gladys:** Maurice, French M-A-U-R-I-C-E. He was a good tennis player. What else did he do? Tennis and ice skating. There was a high school, girls’ high school, where we lived in Brooklyn.

In the summer they had vacation, my brothers would lease their tennis court and make a commercial thing out of it. We all worked very hard, I was cashier for certain hours and the others took turns.

Then the winter we found a man from Norway or Sweden who couldn’t mind the cold he was used to it. He’d stand outside all night and flood the tennis court, the nets were taken away. That’s how they made some money, a little income.

I’d be a cashier till 10 o’clock and then my mother made them send me home, because I had to go to school the next day. We all got along beautifully.

**Elisa:** It sounds like that.

**Gladys:** Are you one of many in your family?

**Elisa:** My family, no.

**Gladys:** An only child?

**Elisa:** We’re a very small family.

**Gladys:** What?

**Elisa:** Only one sister. Mrs. Julian I want to thank you for doing this interview with me. I appreciate it.

**Gladys:** Did I give you enough information?

**Elisa:** Yes you did.

**Gladys:** I wonder in your records years ago here, I was interviewed for the paper, the class school paper. They published what I told them, but not in as much detail as I’m telling you.

**Elisa:** This is Elisa Madsen signing off with the Ellis Island Oral History Project. It is the 13th of September 1994, Tuesday and we are in California. Thank you very much Mrs. Julian.

**Gladys:** You are welcome; I’m very pleased to do it.