**Kate**: Good afternoon this is Kate Moore for the National Park Service. Today is the 16th of January 1994. And I am in Santa Monica California at the home of Joseph Katz who came from Austria in 1914 when he was four and half years old. Why don’t you begin by giving us your full name and date of birth please?

**Joseph**: Well Joseph Katz. My date of birth is September 1st 1909. Actually I have no birth certificate but I found out that I was born on the 17th because I was born on a Jewish holiday. I looked up in the calendar-I know I was born in the month of September but I use 1st for convenience.

**Kate** Where were you born?

**Joseph**: In town named Mieletz. M-I-E-L-E-T-Z. Austria. It was near the polish border.

**Kate**: What size town was that?

**Joseph**: That I don’t know.

**Kate**: Do you ember what the town looked like? Do you have any recollection?

**Joseph**: The only thing I remember is we lived in a house that was a wood house and had to walk up over five steps. There was grass encroached porch. There was no paved street around there was dirt. And it was [unclear 00:01:18] and I remember chickens running around.

**Kate**: Do you remember the major industry did they talk about it in the family?

**Joseph**: No.

**Kate**: What’s was your father's name?

**Joseph**: Kalman. KALMAN.

**Kate**: And what was his occupation?

**Joseph**: He made hats-you know hats for-

**Kate**: [unclear 00:01:35]

**Joseph**: [unclear 00:01:36] and he also made hats for-like this you know fancy-for very fame like [unclear 00:01:45] I don’t know whether you know them.

**Kate**: Do you know how to spell [unclear 00:01:48]?

**Joseph**: KLUSSIVIAT they were fame world renowned [unclear 00:01:55]

**Kate**: And what about your father what’s done he looks like?

**Joseph**: Well he was a man of about 5'5 and he was built wide. And-you know I have no pictures of him.

**Kate**: Light hair dark hair?

**Joseph**: Dark.

**Kate**: Color of eyes?

**Joseph**: Brown I guess.

**Kate**: What about his personality and temperament? How would you describe him?

**Joseph**: He was a very easy going man, very religious man. Observe the Sabbath. Very strict. My parents were very strict.

**Kate**: And is there a story about your father you associate with your childhood?

**Joseph**: No not much you see. One reason is-there was seven of us and my mother was a very outgoing person. And she went to American first. She was like the strong one in our family who established a foot here. In those days people were poor.

Everyone was poor. And there used to be borders. Most likely she had a place to sleep and she worked. And then about it-I don’t remember my mother much.

Then my father went came here a little later maybe I was two-three I am just guessing. So I don’t remember much about them.

**Kate**: What was your mother[s name by the way?

**Joseph**: Celia. CELIA.

**Kate**: And what was her maiden name?

**Joseph**: Herman. HERMAN.

**Kate**: And what was her occupation?

**Joseph**: She was a house wife. But she also worked as a seamstress when she came here.

**Kate**: And what did she look like do you remember?

**Joseph**: She was small woman maybe a little 5'2 and what’s do you want me to say? Like brown hair brown eyes.

**Kate**: And do you know anything about her personality and her temperament?

**Joseph**: Very strict and tough, couldn’t get away with it. She is very sharp. If you made a remark about her she would come right back. She was very fast.

She was a-I never had much contact with my parents. Because I didn’t know my parents till I was maybe four and a half when I they let me-no five and a half when they let me out of jail [laughter]. And-

**Kate**: What do you mean jail?

**Joseph**: Well I was at a sort of jail.

**Kate**: Oh I see.

**Joseph**: I was a kid there. There is going to take me busy I used to have a ball I was a good ball player [unclear 00:04:48]

**Kate**: Lets back up-what about your brothers and sisters how many did you have?

**Joseph**: Well I had three brothers. One is still alive and he was 93 yesterday. But one died when he was young and one died when he was about 80. You know I had-

**Kate**: What were their names?

**Joseph**: Well my eldest brother was Sam. the next-the oldest was Jacob but Sam was the oldest. Then Jacob he died when he was in his teens and my brother George who is 93 now. Then you want to know about my sisters?

**Kate**: Mmmh.

**Joseph**: Well I had a sister that came-my sister took care of me. Her name was [unclear 00:05:33]. And I came out of with [Unclear 00:05:38], George, Shelly Rose and me. The five of us came. My parents were already here. Then two were born here.

**Kate**: So you were the youngest when you came?

**Joseph**: Yeah I was the youngest I was born in Europe.

**Kate**: In Europe. Describe your house as you remember it. What do you remember about that house that you lived in Austria?

**Joseph**: Not very well it must have been [unclear 00:006:13] maybe a couple of beds and a place to eat a table. That’s all I would remember now.

**Kate**: Do you remember how it was lit? What’s type of lights?

**Joseph**: It must have been gas light or something I am just guessing.

**Kate**: What about heat? Do you remember-?

**Joseph**: It was a coal burner. It was an oven. When we came here-I don’t know whether you know much about 1914. I lived in Manhattan in the lower east side and we had living in the fourth floor in the rear house and the toilets were down stairs in the back yard. Then we had a little bit more means we moved to another place. All heat by coal burners.

**Kate**: We will get to that in a moment we are going to walk you right through from childhood all the way up. So do you remember how you went to the bathroom in your old house when you were a child?

**Joseph**: Well-

**Kate**: Was there plumbing?

**Joseph**: No. the only water we had in the house was cold water. At night time you want to urinate we had pots.

**Kate**: In Austria?

**Joseph**: In here.

**Kate**: No I am talking about back then?

**Joseph**: I don’t remember.

**Kate**: You don’t remember. Then let’s say did you keep any animals when you were a child? Did you have a garden?

**Joseph**: We have a cat once in a while.

**Kate**: Okay this is in Austria now right?

**Joseph**: No, no here.

**Kate**: We are still in Austria.

**Joseph**: Austria I don’t remember.

**Kate**: Do you remember having a garden in Austria?

**Joseph**: No. I know we had date they might have planted I don’t know.

**Kate**: In Austria who did the cooking in the family?

**Joseph**: My sister.

**Kate**: Rifka?

**Joseph**: Rifka.

**Kate**: What was your favorite when you were small?

**Joseph**: Well we ate soup mainly.

**Kate**: Did you have anything special you liked to eat?

**Joseph**: No I had soup I never liked meat. I couldn’t eat meat. It had to be very, very extremely dry. Even today there is a slight trace of fat I can’t -I won’t eat it.

**Kate**: Do you remember what the kitchen looked like in that house in Austria?

**Joseph**: NO.

**Kate**: Do you remember any meal times?

**Joseph**: I guess we ate something in the morning maybe in the middle of the day. I know back-not there very well.

**Kate**: Okay where any other family member living by in Austria?

**Joseph**: No. oh yeah we must have had a lot of cousins in the area.

**Kate**: Do you remember any of them?

**Joseph**: No

**Kate**: Alright do you have any anecdotes about your sister when she took care of you?

**Joseph**: Not very well-I understand I don’t remember much of her. She was a very good person. She died soon as she came here. Because they say she got sick because they wanted to send me back.

**Kate**: Oh so she was so sad.

**Joseph**: She took it-yeah.

**Kate**: And who was your closest family member at that’s time was it her?

**Joseph**: I guess it was her.

**Kate**: So she was very close to you. What was religious life like in Austria do you remember?

**Joseph**: Well we are Jewish and very strict. My parents were.

**Kate**: Did you keep Porsha and all

**Joseph**: Yes definitely.

**Kate**: And did you go to synagogue?

**Joseph**: Synagogue yeah. My father did. My family did of course I was too young.

**Kate**: Do you remember them going to the synagogue?

**Joseph**: No

**Kate**: Did you know of any-did your family experience in Austria any religious persecution?

**Joseph**: Oh yes. That’s one reason why they came here.

**Kate**: What do you know that happened?

**Joseph**: Well I know around Easter time they used to be poor grounds they used to get this polish [unclear 00:10:19] they used to ride with the horses and just with their saws they would kill people. That the reason most of the Jewish people came to this country. To get away from the-around Easter time was a very bad time.

**Kate**: Did anything specific ever happened to any family member?

**Joseph**: No.

**Kate**: Did your family ever have to hide?

**Joseph**: That I don’t know.

**Kate**: What about holiday celebrations do you remember any in Austria?

**Joseph**: Oh yes we observed the all like Passover and Roshashana which is our new year. And all the Jewish holiday we observed.

**Kate**: Do you remember any specific one when-before you came here?

**Joseph**: No

**Kate**: Did you go to school at all in Austria?

**Joseph**: No.

**Kate**: What did you do as a small boy do you remember for entertainment in Austria?

**Joseph**: That I don’t know I was maybe four I guess what any four year old would do.

**Kate**: Okay now do you remember coming to America?

**Joseph**: Yes.

**Kate**: DO you remember who decided you said your mother decided?

**Joseph**: Well my mother came here maybe when I was one or two. My father maybe when I was three and then we came. They came to accumulate some money.

So my mother came first and then my father and then the rest of the family came. One of my brothers Sam-the other ones couldn’t come because he was in the army they wouldn’t realize him.

**Kate**: But eventually came?

**Joseph**: Yeah eventually he came. He came maybe about 1930 something like that.

**Kate**: Did you mother knows anyone in America already?

**Joseph**: Oh yeah we had a lot of relatives cousins.

**Kate**: Did anyone pay for her voyage here?

**Joseph**: That I don’t know.

**Kate**: Do you remember saying goodbye to your mother?

**Joseph**: No.

**Kate**: Do you remember saying goodbye to your father?

**Joseph**: No.

**Kate**: Do you remember living Austria on the boat.

**Joseph**: That I remember that I have a vivid recollection.

**Kate**: Tell us anything you remember about [unclear 00:12:40]-

**Joseph**: What I know we went to Hamburg and then we went on a boat. The next thing I remember I woke up one morning and I was asleep and the rest there was no here we were all the ways down in the hole of the ship all the way down.

And I remember climbing upstairs until I find-you have it climb quite a bit of stairs I saw a foot hole where I could see he waves.

**Kate**: So you traveled-you left from which port Hamburg?

**Joseph**: Hamburg.

**Kate**: Do you remember getting from Hamburg and some sort of transportation?

**Joseph**: No how we got there I don’t know.

**Kate**: Do you remember the night before you left they gave you a party or anybody hugging you they say goodbye?

**Joseph**: No.

**Kate**: Okay so you remember being alone in the boat and waking up and trying to see where you were?

**Joseph**: Yeah. And then I went up and I met my brother and sisters.

**Kate**: I was going to ask you don’t put your hand in intron of your mouth-

**Joseph**: Oh okay.

**Kate**: Do you remember taking anything special with you any toys or anything?

**Joseph**: No.

**Kate**: So you remember that point in the boat when you went up and looking in the waves what else do you remember on the boat anything?

**Joseph**: That’s about it.

**Kate**: How about eating?

**Joseph**: Well I don’t remember any particular meals. I don’t remember any particular meals.

**Kate**: Do you remember the boat trip being smooth or rough?

**Joseph**: No that I don’t know.

**Kate**: Was anyone sick? Where you sick?

**Joseph**: No I don’t know.

**Kate**: Okay. What was the name of the ship do you know?

**Joseph**: The Caesar and Wilhelm.

**Kate**: And do you know the day that you took off?

**Joseph**: We landed here April 14 in 1914. When we took off I don’t know. I have a log of the-my niece got a copy of the log.

**Kate**: Alright do you remember arriving or seeing land for the first time?

**Joseph**: No. the only thing is I remember being in Ellis Island.

**Kate**: Do you remember the statue of liberty?

**Joseph**: Oh yes.

**Kate**: What happened then?

**Joseph:**  That’s the first thing you see.

**Kate**: And so you remember that?

**Joseph**: Yeah.

**Kate**: And what was the atmosphere on both then what do you remember about that?

**Joseph**: I don’t know.

**Kate**: But do you remember the image?

**Joseph**: Oh yeah. I remember seeing the statue.

**Kate**: And what were your brothers and sisters doing then?

**Joseph**: I really don’t know.

**Kate**: Now do you remember how the boat got to Ellis Island? Did you go on another boat?

**Joseph**: No we went-

**Kate**: You came right into Ellis?

**Joseph**: Oh I think I really don’t know. Most likely they put us on the smaller boat.

**Kate**: You don’t remember?

**Joseph**: No.

**Kate**: Okay what you remember about Ellis Island tell everything you remember. Walk me through it.

**Joseph**: Well when I came here to Ellis Island they examined us. And i have two-the reasons they want to send me back I had no nail here no nail here. That’s why the stupid actors want to send me-

**Kate**: Thumb on your left hand and thumb on your right hand-

**Joseph**: They told me when they take it-they examine hold your hands this way-

**Kate**: Hold your hand straight out with your palm up?

**Joseph**: Yeah. And they said I did this. But if I did this I think the doctor-what they knew in those days would turn my hands do to see anyway. And for that reason they wanted to send me back.

**Kate**: Because your nails?

**Joseph**: Yeah.

**Kate**: Now did you speak any English before you came?

**Joseph**: NO I speak Yiddish only.

**Kate**: You spoke Yiddish only. And did your brothers and sisters speak any English?

**Joseph**: No.

**Kate**: Did you know why they wanted to send you back?

**Joseph**: Yeah on account of the two nails.

**Kate**: They told you then?

**Joseph**: yeah.

**Kate**: They pointed to them.

**Joseph**: Yeah that’s what my family tells me.

**Kate**: And so what happened then?

**Joseph**: Well they held me for a while there and then some of my relatives here I understand they went to see some congressman or something. They finally agreed to let them stay here in quarantine see what happens.

**Kate**: Okay so wait a minute. You were with your brother and sisters and you were medically examined. Do you remember the examination?

**Joseph**: No

**Kate**: You don’t remember that. Do you remember them separating you from your brothers and sisters?

**Joseph**: No I don’t really all I know is that they kept me there. They went.

**Kate**: Your brother and sisters went on ahead?

**Joseph**: Yeah.

**Kate**: And you were alone?

**Joseph**: Yeah.

**Kate**: Do you remember how you felt?

**Joseph**: No I really don’t.

**Kate**: So you were-do you remember where you were kept? Do you remember what it looks like?

**Joseph**: Well it was like-like in a dorm. It was beds here and there.

**Kate**: Bunk beds?

**Joseph**: No not bunk beds separate beds. And I don’t know any better I didn’t see my parents much when I was a child, when I was very young. And I know I was kept there. While I was kept there they-at times selected me. They didn’t do a good job because they had to do it twice more subsequent years. They didn’t know much in those days.

**Kate**: Do you remember other children there?

**Joseph**: Oh yeah. I used to play with some of the kids.

**Kate**: What did you speak when you played with them?

**Joseph**: I guess Yiddish it might have been.

**Kate**: Did they speak Yiddish too? Do you know?

**Joseph**: That I really don’t remember. But I think I was alone most of the time. But they kept me occupied I loved to throw a ball across the building and catch it. And that kept me busy. And I thought I would be a professional ball player.

I played high school baseball. And but that was a saver I was perfectly inclined all the time. I always liked anything that takes running, playing ball. That’s what kept me busy.

**Kate**: Do you remember any fear or any sadness or anything?

**Joseph**: Oh one kid might have got a complaint tot his mother. And they told me they were going to put me in a rat cellar. And I was afraid of that.

**Kate**: Where was this?

**Joseph**: In Ellis Island.

**Kate**: You got in trouble?

**Joseph**: Well the mother complained that I was-maybe-I don’t think I hit the kid. I am not a violent person. And he said something his mother complained. They said' oh put in down in the cellar there is rats there [laughter]

**Kate**: And do you remember anything more? What doctors? Having the tonsillectomy do you remember that/

**Joseph**: I remember them putting me in a-I think it was an ambulance. And I know riding I remember the surgeon I remember them putting the mask over my face.

And then the next morning I couldn’t swallow the typical thing. And they gave me bread and butter and I put the butter on and I wasn’t smart enough to hold the bread. Then [unclear 00:19:56]. Then I finally get smart.

That’s about all I remember there. But I remember there being snow and I remember warmth. So when my niece got me the papers, I guess I was there close to 9-10months.

**Kate**: And what-how did your family react to this then?

**Joseph**: Well they only one who came visit me was my father occasionally.

**Kate**: And do you remember that?

**Joseph**: yeah.

**Kate**: Do you remember your dad coming to see you?

**Joseph**: Yeah he used to come he brought me the ball. And he wasn’t vertically inclined he bounced it and showed me how the ball bounces.

**Kate**: Did you talk to him much?

**Joseph**: I guess I did.

**Kate**: Your brothers and sisters did not come?

**Joseph**: No my mother brothers and sister never came.

**Kate**: Back up a bit before you had your medical examination do you’re remember going into a great hall or lots of people or anything? Was it crowded?

**Joseph**: I don’t know most likely I did come into a great big space.

**Kate**: You don’t remember any of this?

**Joseph**: No.

**Kate**: Okay let’s go back. So you remember the day you were let out?

**Joseph**: Not that I don’t know.

**Kate**: You don’t remember someone coming in and finally getting you and leaving?

**Joseph**: That I don’t know but I know the next day I was taken to a house the first place we lived in was on the lower east side of Manhattan. And 6th street nears the land sea. Just a few doors. I remember there was a loniam store down stairs. In the front building and-

**Kate**: Do you remember anything new you saw for the first time?

**Joseph**: Not necessarily. I know I remember the house we lived in. way up stairs. Missed the plan and straightened some old man came by and he asked me if I was Jewish do you go to Hebrew school I asked no. so I went to Hebrew school before I went to elementary school.

**Kate**: He got you into Hebrew school the old man.

**Joseph**: Yeah. He saw my parents and he [unclear 00:22:21] so finally I went there taught you how to read.

**Kate**: How old were you?

**Joseph**: Less than five-that was before I started public school.

**Kate**: So you went you Hebrew school when you lived at which street?

**Joseph**: S six.

**Kate**: S six okay at five years old right after.

**Joseph**: Yeah five.

**Kate**: And did you learn when did you start learning English?

**Joseph**: I guess is when I went to school.

**Kate**: In Kindergarten?

**Joseph**: No I went right away when I-we had no kindergarten in our school.

**Kate**: Which school did you go to?

**Joseph**: It was Ps 130.

**Kate**: Ps 130. And do you remember the other children reaction to you when you didn’t know English?

**Joseph**: No there must be a lot of kids who-no I don’t really know.

**Kate**: And did anybody ever call you names in school for being foreign?

**Joseph**: No.

**Kate**: So basically you adjusted quickly.

**Joseph**: Yeah.

**Kate**: Did you continue to speak Yiddish at home?

**Joseph**: Yes at home Yiddish.

**Kate**: And did your mother and father ever learn English?

**Joseph**: Not very well, broken English.

**Kate**: And did you live in a Yiddish neighborhood-near a Jewish neighborhood?

**Joseph**: yes yeah.

**Kate**: And did you always live in a Jewish neighborhood moving on?

**Joseph**: Most of the time we had the tied in polish. Now we had-that wasn’t true about what I said about all this Jews we had a mixture. We-it was polish, Italian, Irish and I like the Irish kids. So I asked them if I could be Irish.

So they said yeah come-so it was on Sunday. So I went to church with them. When they opened the door and I saw the crucifix I got scared and I said I would remain Jewish [laughter].

**Kate**: What about religious life once you got to the states?

**Joseph**: Well as I told you my parents were very religious. They were very strict. Never worked Saturday and never would light, never a lot of light.

Not even allowed to open the refrigerator door you would have to unscrew the bone. Not riding even in the elevator. No they were very religious Jews.

**Kate**: And they continued to be so in the states?

**Joseph**: Until they died yes.

**Kate**: And describe your partner what you remember of it that day on s six streets?

**Joseph**: Ohh yes [unclear 00:24:52] they was a kitchen and the rest was a bedrooms.

**Kate**: Was there-how was it lit?

**Joseph**: Gas?

**Kate**: Gas lamps?

**Joseph**: It was a picture and then went a little- later someone came out a gadget like a cotton thing you put it over the-used to be just a flame. But then [unclear 00:25:13] and it would glow but we had gas lighting no electricity.

**Kate**: What about plumbing?

**Joseph**: The only plumbing we had in the house was cold water. There no hot water. And I tell you the toilet was downstairs in the back. Later on when they accumulated some money we went to another building.

Upwards on the floor it was six apartments on the floor. And they had a toilet on each floor and each one shared that. But you had to go out in the hall.

**Kate**: How many people lived in S six street apartment when you went there?

**Joseph**: There was my brother father mother me two sisters-that’s six.

**Kate**: So and how was it furnished the house?

**Joseph**: It was very plain. We had beds they were fold up for night time. Every place was occupied with beds that are where you slept. It’s different today.

**Kate**: No what-how was your house heated?

**Joseph**: By the coal stove.

**Kate**: Coal stove. Was the S six apartment?

**Joseph**: S Six.

**Kate**: Did any other family members live nearby?

**Joseph**: Yeah we had cousins.

**Kate**: In the same neighborhood?

**Joseph**: Yeah in the area.

**Kate**: And did you get along well with you neighbors, your parents everybody?

**Joseph**: Yes.

**Kate**: What job did your father have at that time?

**Joseph**: Well he always made this [unclear 00:26:55] that’s all he ever did.

**Kate**: He continued the same line of work in the states?

**Joseph**: Yeah always.

**Kate**: Who was supporting the family at that time then?

**Joseph**: He-well my father. I think my mother went out to work. My oldest brother was 93 I got to give a lot of credit. He didn’t finish elementary school. He had to go to work when he was around 12-13. And my father also did fur business] my brother did fur business

**Kate**: Fur?

**Joseph**: Fur. And my brother was 18. He went into the business and he became very successful.

**Kate**: In which business fur business?

**Joseph**: In the fur business. Extremely. And that’s why I have a great belief in manager training. I'd match him with anyone with a master degree. I believe he went down to three hours with a good newspaper reading. Read that’s an education.

**Kate**: And when you went to school do you remember any fellow students that were your playmates?

**Joseph**: Yeah.

**Kate**: Names and-

**Joseph**: Well I remember one kid Camplin. He was very rich. His father owned an automobile agency. But most of us were just-just get by.

**Kate**: What about your teachers do you remember any of your teacher that were particularly kind to you or?

**Joseph**: oh yes. I was a very good student. I have a very sharp memory. I can always remember to read something and repeat it and I can see the last word was this and so forth and so on. I went two years to high school.

Those my parents thought that I-then we were financially better off. But my mother thought that since my brother went to work that I had enough schooling. So I finished up my high school and I went two years to City College at night.

And you don’t learn much at night. And that’s the extent of my education. But the rest of it I-[unclear 00:29:15] say business. [Unclear 00; 29:17] I am very good at organizing.

And I organize the office where we could find things and we had information at hand. Then I got into my own business.

**Kate**: Did you experience during this time any bigotry or persecution at all?

**Joseph**: Well there was always anti-Semitism.

**Kate**: Where?

**Joseph**: In the lower east side it was always-

**Kate**: Like how?-

**Joseph**: Well they call you Jew this and Jew that. I know I played with-what saved me is I was good athlete. Then I played on baseball teams.

And the Christian kids accepted me on account of my ability but there the ones who would say, “What do you hang out with him for he is Jewish.

**Kate**: Well would they do the same thing if someone was Italian they call him a Diego or something?

**Joseph**: Some they would.

**Kate**: Was it same people saying the same things?

**Joseph**: No but i think the Jew got the worst of it.

**Kate**: Let me think-in your family who was more religious your mother or father in general?

**Joseph**: Both, both the same.

**Kate**: And did you have a synagogue nearby that you went to?

**Joseph**: Yes we could walk to it.

**Kate**: And do you remember the name of it?

**Joseph**: One was the 'Ravington Street'. [Unclear 00:30:45] you go to Columbia. Ravington Street is two blocks away from [unclear 00:30:52]. I forget the next name.

That was the famous synagogue you had the great [unclear 00:31:01] used to come there. My father loved to go to [unclear 00:31:06] I didn’t.

Because the services would start say at 8.30 and finish in the-smaller synagogues-and finish in two hours because the canter would sing and sing and sing and go back. And we would wind up 2oclock.

**Kate**: In the morning?

**Joseph**: No, no.

**Kate**: In the afternoon?

**Joseph**: In the afternoon instead of being out by 11oclock.

**Kate**: What about-too long for you for being small? Do you feel that your family members-how do you feel that your family members felt about coming to the United States? Did they think it was a-

**Joseph**: Oh I thought it was beneficial.

**Kate**: Did everyone in your family feel that way?

**Joseph**: Oh yeah.

**Kate**: Did anyone ever consider going back?

**Joseph**: No

**Kate**: Do you know anyone in your family that tried to go back?

**Joseph**: No.

**Kate**: Did they ever talk about this about the origin decision?

**Joseph**: No.

**Kate**: And so you feel confident that they thought it was a good decision?

**Joseph**: Oh that’s why they came here. Because life was-I guess life here was much better than being over there. I think where we lived it became Poland and then it went back to Austria.

I remember we had a statue of the emperor of France joseph and they say we kept that statute of his bust in the house. They say he was an extremely nice person, very compassionate.

**Kate**: Well did you feel that your mother and father adjusted to life in United States?

**Joseph**: Oh yes.

**Kate**: And same with all your brothers and sisters?

**Joseph**: We are glad we came here.

**Kate**: Did any family tragedy occur once you got to the states?

**Joseph**: No. my sister died I think within about a week or two after she came to Ellis Island.

**Kate**: And what was the reason for her death-they said it’s because she missed you-

**Joseph**: I really don’t know. They say it was heartbroken. Then I had later on some said she contracted meningitis. But I am not really sure.

**Kate**: Any other things happen that was tragic that were related to your stay here in the states?

**Joseph**: After we came we were fairly successful. We-on account of my brother George being such a hard worker and he made money. And in 1925 we moved to Brooklyn. And we bought a little three family house. Things were getting a little better.

**Kate**: What year was that?

**Joseph**: That was in 1925.

**Kate**: What happened during the depression then?

**Joseph**: We lived fairly well because my brother mainly and my sisters were working. And then when I was working we all contributed to the house. So after about 1924-25 we were in pretty good straights.

**Kate**: Briefly describe your life? If your married or had children your occupation? What happened to you then? What is your life story in terms of that-?

**Joseph**: Well I went to work for my brothers I didn’t like it.

**Kate**: Where?

**Joseph**: In the fur business. And I subsequently got into the real estate business. I married when I was 21 and from there on everything started to go up.

**Kate**: When you married was your wife also a Jewish?

**Joseph**: Yeah.

**Kate**: Was she from Austria?

**Joseph**: No she was born here. Her parents were from Russia also very religious people.

**Kate**: Did you speak what did you speak to her?

**Joseph**: English.

**Kate**: Did you ever speak Yiddish together?

**Joseph**: yeah we all speak Yiddish.

**Kate**: And then after you were married did you all have children?

**Joseph**: Yes three sons. The first one you know is a physician.

**Kate**: Born?

**Joseph**: He was born 1932.and he was at Columbia. He was a full professor at 38. He is an anesthesiologist. And he supposed to-there must be thousands of good ones-but he is supposed to be one of the great ones.

And he was chief of staff at UCLA and chairman of department. And his invented some gadget to prevent overdose of anstethesia.my middle boy was an engineer he went to public relations.

My youngest son is a psychologist. And his wife is an associate professor of philosophy in New York. So we did rather well. Coming from a very-that’s why I tell people it a wonderful country if you work hard you can amount to something.

**Kate**: What about-d o you have any anecdotes about meeting your wife how you met your wife?

**Joseph**: Yeah I met her at a dance. My friend met her at a dance but he had to go home early. So he said would you take her home? So I took her home and that’s how I got to go with her.

**Kate**: You took her home and then you married her?

**Joseph**: Yeah [laughter].We is married 62-will be 63 years this June.

**Kate**: And your wife is alive now?

**Joseph**: Yeah. She is working.

**Kate**: And-

**Joseph**: She is not partially sided she [unclear 00:26:48] the generation about three years goes. But she still manages she- very tough.

**Kate**: When you look back on your life are you happy you came to the United States?

**Joseph**: Definitely.

**Kate**: And do you have any other anecdotes about your life you think that you could add that would help us understand your adjustment to this country?

**Joseph**: Well I learned being here-because seeing what happens in other countries in the world. How fortunate we are to live here. And I cannot see how young people today get in trouble.

I can see how people start to take drugs. I hate to take an aspirin. And they take drugs they know what happens they read. They read people die they go crazy. I can’t understand them.

**Kate**: We would like to thank you on behalf of the Ellis Island Oral histories project for helping us in giving us this interview.

**Joseph**: It was nice talking to you.

**Kate**: And we will send you a copy of this. And probably summer time in the sometime you will receive it. And this is Kate Moore signing off on the 16th of January 1994 with Joseph Katz in Santa Monica California for the Ellis Island Oral History project.