**Kate:** Good afternoon, this is Kate Moore for the National Park Service. Today is the 19th of July 1994. I’m in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania at the home of Mary Kravich who came from Austria in 1923 when she was 16 years old.

**Mary:** That’s right.

**Kate:** Why don’t you begin by giving us your full name and date of birth please?

**Mary:** My name now is Mary Kravich. The date of birth was August of 4th 1907.

**Kate:** All right. What was your maiden name?

**Mary:** My maiden name was Diwaritsch.

**Kate:** Here you have it spelled D-I-W-A-R-I-T-S-C-H.

**Mary:** D-I-W-A-R-I-T-S-C-H, that’s right.

**Kate:** All right. Where were you born?

**Mary:** I was born in Zelting, Austria.

**Kate:** How do you spell Zelting?

**Mary:** Z-E-L-T-I-N-G.

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

**Mary:** That was a town with five villages. The town’s name was Radkersburg. That is where I went to school and our church was there.

**Kate:** How do you spell that particular town’s name?

**Mary:** Radkersburg, R-A-D-K-E-R-S-B-U-R-G.

**Kate:** You say there were five villages?

**Mary:** Yes.

**Kate:** Together?

**Mary:** That’s right.

**Kate:** What was the major industry of those villages would you say?

**Mary:** We were farmers.

**Kate:** Farmers?

**Mary:** Yes. Mostly farmers, farmland.

**Kate:** You grew up, and your house was in one of those villages?

**Mary:** Villages, its name was Zelting.

**Kate:** Yeah Zelting?

**Mary:** Yeah.

**Kate:** What was your small village known for? The same thing? Farming?

**Mary:** Yes. That’s all I know of.

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

**Mary:** My father’s name was Joseph Sedonia.

**Kate:** How do you spell Sedonia?

**Mary:** S-E-D-O-N-I-A.

**Kate:** What was his occupation?

**Mary:** He was a farmer.

**Kate:** Could you describe what your father looked like?

**Mary:** Tall, just an ordinary person.

**Kate:** How tall would you say is tall?

**Mary:** I guess 5’5”, 5’6” maybe as me. He was a loving person. That’s all I can tell you. He left in 1907 when I was born.

**Kate:** You knew him later in life?

**Mary:** I only left him when I was 16.

**Kate:** Was the first time. When you knew him later in life, how would you describe his personality? If nobody knew him, what would you say?

**Mary:** He was a very nice person and helpful. What can I say about him?

**Kate:** Was he a disciplinarian or?

**Mary:** No, no, no, not him. When he gets angry, he just walked out. That’s all.

**Kate:** Is there a story about your father that you associate with his life? Anything that you remember that he did?

**Mary:** I had troubles when we came here. I was raised with my uncle and aunt and my mother was there as a maid. Then my mother, so she was attacked by my uncle. I think that she was supposed to, but she was pregnant. That’s how my father got into it. He didn’t know about it. My father didn’t know anything till the uncle wrote, I don't know how true it is, this all happened before my time. He wrote to Europe. He said, “She’s not your daughter. Why do you want to take her? She’s mine.” That was the trouble a little bit.

**Kate:** Did your father accept you?

**Mary:** He accepted me. I was here, later I was married. I met a nice man from Yugoslavia, a very loving person. He was willing to take my mother and father with me when I got married.

**Kate:** We’ll get to that in a moment. Your father basically, you had to make amends with him and such or?

**Mary:** No, I was working. He was very nice. He was very nice to me. He was a loving person. He lived with me for 20 years and I closed his eyes. I remember he was with me. He lived with me for 20 years and never …

**Kate:** What was your mother’s name?

**Mary:** Louise.

**Kate:** Louise?

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

**Kate:** What was her maiden name?

**Mary:** Diwaritsch.

**Kate:** Yes, all right.

**Mary:**  I carried my mother’s maiden name up until I come here to America. Then I took Sedonia only for about a year. Then I took Kravich.

**Kate:** You said you mentioned your mother worked for your uncle and aunt?

**Mary:** As a maid.

**Kate:** As a maid? Right.

**Mary:** In Europe.

**Kate:** How would you describe what your mother looked like?

**Mary:** She was a loving person, everybody liked her very much. She loved roses. That, I can prove that in my yard. Then yeah, she was working helping my aunt.

**Kate:** How did she look? How tall was she about would you say?

**Mary:** No, she was a little shorter than I am.

**Kate:** You’re how tall?

**Mary:** About 5’4”, my mother must have been 5’1” mother was. She was [unclear 00:06:40]. Though she was thin when I came but she got heavier since.

**Kate:** How about her eye color and her hair color?

**Mary:** I think she had grey hair, grey hair. White hair and grey eyes.

**Kate:** When she was younger, what color was her hair, do you remember?

**Mary:** Nice black.

**Kate:** Dark hair?

**Mary:** Dark brown [unclear 00:06:57].

**Kate:** Do you have a story that you associate with your mom when you were a child?

**Mary:** I always went with her when she went to graft roses. She was grafting roses. Mother would go all over the neighborhood or in the woods and would find a wild rose and she would graft it. That’s what her hobby is.

**Kate:** Was gardening also a hobby?

**Mary:** Yes.

**Kate:** Did you have a garden at home?

**Mary:** Yes I do.

**Kate:** Did you have one also back home in Austria?

**Mary:** Oh yeah, mm-hmm (affirmative).

**Kate:** What did you grow in your garden?

**Mary:** We had two gardens. In front of the house there was one with multiple flowers, roses and flowers. In the back, there was a great vegetable yard. Here, we were growing just the vegetables.

**Kate:** What type of vegetables did you grow?

**Mary:** Lettuce and turnip, not turnip is field. I can’t think of it right now. I know we had plenty of lettuce and carrots. Now it’s simple. Tomatoes came in the latest years before I left. I didn’t like them. They smell too much.

**Kate:** Tomatoes weren’t in before that?

**Mary:** Yes. I think about a couple of days before I left, yeah.

**Kate:** Now, what do you remember about your house at home in Austria? Could you tell me a little bit about it, how big was it and where was it?

**Mary:** It was a bungalow house. It has two bedrooms, a kitchen, a big kitchen.

**Kate:** How many rooms altogether?

**Mary:** Excuse me. Great, and it was growing from our house at the edge over the roof, now the edging of the border roof, you know what I mean? Down. I found that when I went to Europe in 1981, I found the same, same herb. Of course, they cut it down but it still keeps growing. There is a tree, a marvel tree in front. This I climbed all the time when I was a kid. That was still there in 1991. That was a very …

**Kate:** 1981 or ’91?

**Mary:** ’91.

**Kate:** ’91?

**Mary:** No, no, ’81, ’81.

**Kate:** ’81? Okay.

**Mary:** ’81.

**Kate:** All right. You found the plant your family was growing?

**Mary:** Yes, uh-huh (affirmative).

**Kate:** You said the house was, you said it was, how big was the bungalow again? How many rooms?

**Mary:** It really has two bedrooms, two big bedrooms and a big kitchen. There is an attic. To date, there’s a great, big attic, a little bit was in the bedroom, one bedroom and the rest was, it was used for flower and grain and stuff like this.

**Kate:** Now, how did you heat your house back home in Austria? What heating did you use?

**Mary:** Wood.

**Kate:** Wood and what?

**Mary:** Wood. I tell you, it must have been awfully cold because when I was a child my feet and my toes froze when I was a little child. Then I had trouble for that for years. We only had, just a little potbelly stove in one of the bedrooms.

**Kate:** A potbelly stove in there?

**Mary:** Yeah. A little potbelly stove in one bedroom. The other one was heated by an oven from the kitchen for brick …

**Kate:** Baking brick?

**Mary:** Yes, for baking.

**Kate:** How about lighting? What did you use for lights?

**Mary:** Lamps.

**Kate:** What kind of lamps did you have?

**Mary:** Kerosene lamps.

**Kate:** Kerosene lamps?

**Mary:** Yes, kerosene lamps.

**Kate:** What about water? What was your source of water?

**Mary:** Yes. We had a beautiful, we had a wonderful pump right in front of the house. We had to carry water from the pump into the kitchen. Another pump, now they have it. They have a pump in now. But at that time, we had a carrier. We had a great, big bucket, not bucket, two handles. We carried water in the kitchen that way.

**Kate:** How did you take baths then?

**Mary:** In the middle of the kitchen floor.

**Kate:** In the middle of the kitchen?

**Mary:** In a big tap, a laundry tap.

**Kate:** Where was that laundry tap kept?

**Mary:** I don't know where they keep it till today. We have to use it for washing floors. The same tap we use for the baths.

**Kate:** You didn’t wash clothes and take a bath at the same time? Did you?

**Mary:** No, oh no. No.

**Kate:** Somebody had a story about that.

**Mary:** No, no, no, we didn’t.

**Kate:** How about plumbing? What about toilet facilities? How were they?

**Mary:** Outdoor.

**Kate:** Outdoor?

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

**Kate:** What type of furniture did you have in the house? Do you remember the furniture?

**Mary:** The furniture is just a bed and a dresser, and the tables and chairs.

**Kate:** Were they homemade or store bought?

**Mary:** I wouldn’t know. I really don’t know. That, I couldn’t tell you.

**Kate:** Now, did you keep animals at all?

**Mary:** Yes. We had cows. We had a horse. We had one horse. We had all these dairy milking cows and the little ones. We had pigs. That’s how it was.

**Kate:** Did you have any chickens or?

**Mary:** We had chicken, oh yes, chicken but no other fowl.

**Kate:** Who lived in your house with you then?

**Mary:** There was my aunt and uncle. It was their house. My mother was there. The reason mother was there is my mother’s father was a widower and he got married. That was my aunt’s brother. On the wedding day, she said, “There’s no bride set to, this is my first child in this house.” Of course meaning me. My aunt couldn’t stand that. She took me on her shoulder and took me to her house. That was my mother’s not me. That’s meaning me, mother and mother was four years old. She took mother to her. She raised her, Mother stayed there. That’s how I come in.

**Kate:** This was where your mother had grown up too?

**Mary:** Yes.

**Kate:** Same house?

**Mary:** Yes.

**Kate:** How far was your house from the center of the village?

**Mary:** One hour walk. That’s all I can tell. Now, the village wasn’t, it was surrounding a village. We have all around us houses in a circle.

**Kate:** In a circle?

**Mary:** Uh-huh (affirmative). There was a very big center.

**Kate:** What was the largest town that was nearby?

**Mary:** Radkersburg.

**Kate:** How far was that?

**Mary:** That’s where the church and school is and that is about one hour walk.

**Kate:** One hour walk? When you went to school, did you walk an hour?

**Mary:** Yes.

**Kate:** There and back?

**Mary:** And back.

**Kate:** Even in the winter?

**Mary:** Even in the winter.

**Kate:** Let’s get back to the house a bit. We’ll talk about school in a moment. Tell me about the kitchen, you said it was a big kitchen. What was in your kitchen?

**Mary:** There was a big table, a table and two benches. Then beside the brick oven, there was another [unclear 00:15:49], a stove like we have here, they call it in German [unclear 00:15:57]. That was there every day.

**Kate:** Who did the cooking in your family?

**Mary:** My aunt.

**Kate:** Your aunt did the cooking?

**Mary:** Yes.

**Kate:** Did your mother help?

**Mary:** No, my mother was outside working. She was obviously on the other side of the field [unclear 00:16:14] field.

**Kate:** All right. What was your favorite food as a child?

**Mary:** I don't know. I just couldn’t tell you. We had chicken soup every weekend I know. I did get a pair, just the legs of the chicken not the thighs. It was just the legs.

**Kate:** You got the legs?

**Mary:** Yes.

**Kate:** Did you like them?

**Mary:** I have no other choice.

**Kate:** Was that your favorite food then?

**Mary:** No, no. I couldn’t tell you what kind of foods we had. I couldn’t tell you but …

**Kate:** Did you help cook at all?

**Mary:** Nope.

**Kate:** Now, how did you organize your meals? How did you eat the meals at home? Did everyone eat together or separately?

**Mary:** Yes, all together always. We always had it on the dining table, always.

**Kate:** How many meals a day did you eat together?

**Mary:** Not breakfast of course but once a day, at 8:00, 9 o’clock, we had supper.

**Kate:** At 9:00?

**Mary:** There was always something with soup and rice and something. We didn’t have meat too much.

**Kate:** Now, what about other family members? What about your grandparents? How far away did they live?

**Mary:** Grandparents, my grandmother died when I was four years old. I don't know what …

**Kate:** Whose mother was that?

**Mary:** That would be my aunt’s mother. My aunt’s mother, that’s where they lived for generations.

**Kate:** Who were you closest to in your family?

**Mary:** When I was a youngster?

**Kate:** Yeah.

**Mary:** Mother.

**Kate:** Your mother?

**Mary:** My mother. We’re obviously here.

**Kate:** What about religious life? Were you religious?

**Mary:** Yes, very much so.

**Kate:** What denomination were you?

**Mary:** Catholic.

**Kate:** You were Catholic?

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

**Kate:** Was there a church nearby?

**Mary:** Yes, about one hour. My aunt went every day to church every day and we have to go on Sundays. We’re very religious people.

**Kate:** Did you go to church every day?

**Mary:** Not every day but every week.

**Kate:** Every week?

**Mary:** Yes. The church was next to school, next door to school so I could stop in.

**Kate:** Did you say grace before meals?

**Mary:** Oh yes, always. Always, always.

**Kate:** Always?

**Mary:** Always.

**Kate:** Even before breakfast?

**Mary:** Yes we did.

**Kate:** What about prayers at night?

**Mary:** Mother taught me.

**Kate:** Taught you prayers?

**Mary:** Yeah.

**Kate:** Do you remember any of those prayers in German?

**Mary:** Now, no, I don't think I can. I’m sorry.

**Kate:** That’s all right. Did you ever experience any religious persecution at all?

**Mary:** No.

**Kate:** No?

**Mary:** No.

**Kate:** What was your favorite holiday as a child?

**Mary:** Christmas I suppose and Easter. Those two holidays, because with Easter, the Saturday, we went to [unclear 00:19:27] and that’s you have to go Saturday when the Lord get up. Then that’s a big day. Then after Christmas, we went to midnight mass. There was no gifts or anything like that.

**Kate:** How about special foods at Christmas? Anything?

**Mary:** Oh yes, we have baked stuff, a lot of baked goods, a lot of baked goods. Loved them.

**Kate:** Who did the cooking for Christmas?

**Mary:** My aunt and my mother. Mother helped.

**Kate:** At Christmas?

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

**Kate:** What about Easter? Do you have any special foods at Easter?

**Mary:** Jelly ham.

**Kate:** You had ham at Easter?

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

**Kate:** You said there was no gift giving?

**Mary:** No.

**Kate:** Did you decorate your house at Christmas at all?

**Mary:** No, we didn’t decorate. Yes, we had Christmas tree. We made a Christmas tree. That had to stay till the second of February.

**Kate:** Second of February?

**Mary:** February. That’s Candlemas Day, Candlemas Day. That’s when the Christmas tree gets thrown away. Any cookies that’s left, I could eat it.

**Kate:** Left from what? The tree?

**Mary:** The tree.

**Kate:** What did you decorate the tree with?

**Mary:** Baked cookies, and nuts, with golden and silver nuts. We made it, covered them with silver paper and gold paper.

**Kate:** And put that on the tree as well?

**Mary:** Yeah, that’s what we did.

**Kate:** Did you put anything on top of the tree at all?

**Mary:** I imagined you’ve got a little angel or something like that up there. I remember myself dusting and every time I can dust around it, the stand, the stand, a table or a dresser where it was, I was looking if any cookies came down. I could eat that one.

**Kate:** You said you went to school?

**Mary:** Yes.

**Kate:** You walked to school?

**Mary:** Yes.

**Kate:** Tell me about your school a little bit, where you went to school.

**Mary:** We had a religious, at the same time we have the priest come twice a week for two hours for religious instruction. The school was a regular schools except it was a discipline, believe me a discipline. You could hear a pin drop when the school was in session.

**Kate:** Were you ever punished in school at all?

**Mary:** Yeah I was.

**Kate:** For what?

**Mary:** I guess I was talking. I just have to put my hand out and get …

**Kate:** They hit your hand?

**Mary:** Hit my hand.

**Kate:** With what?

**Mary:** With a nice little stick.

**Kate:** With a nice little stick, all right. Who taught you? Were they regular teachers or were they nuns?

**Mary:** No, no, no, regular teachers.

**Kate:** Regular teachers?

**Mary:** Yeah, not nuns.

**Kate:** How many students were per class and how did they arrange it?

**Mary:** I don't know that. I imagine it would be at least 40 to 50 a class, with lessons.

**Kate:** The school itself had how many rooms? Do you know? Was it a large school?

**Mary:** Five grades.

**Kate:** Five grades?

**Mary:** Yeah.

**Kate:** You walked every day?

**Mary:** Every day.

**Kate:** Did you ever miss school for reasons of the weather at all?

**Mary:** I don't remember that I missed school.

**Kate:** What was your favorite subject in school?

**Mary:** Geography.

**Kate:** Geography? Do you remember any school teachers’ names or playmates’ names from school time?

**Mary:** I remember a teacher and I can’t think, his name is Hellen, something like that. He was a disciplinarian. He was wonderful. We have to listen to it because if you don’t, they ask me one in Geography. I will never forget it. I was supposed to talk about Napoleon and I got somewhat stuck. He hit me on my face. Give me a slap on the face. Then I was so scared.

**Kate:** You mean you were talking about Napoleon and he slapped you on the face?

**Mary:** Yeah. He slapped me because I got stuck. I didn’t know the next paragraph I guess. Then he gave me another slap then I was, my mouth, again I couldn’t talk.

**Kate:** This school, was it a special school? Was it for any particular?

**Mary:** No.

**Kate:** Was it an agricultural school?

**Mary:** No. It was a regular school, regular elementary school.

**Kate:** An elementary school?

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

**Kate:** Now, did you go on to other schooling?

**Mary:** I went to high school.

**Kate:** High school?

**Mary:** Yeah.

**Kate:** Now, was that a special school?

**Mary:** Yeah. That was a privilege to go there.

**Kate:** A privilege to go there?

**Mary:** Yeah.

**Kate:** Why?

**Mary:** Because a lot of people didn’t go. They go to the elementary school and then they quit but I went to the high school.

**Kate:** Was that an agricultural school?

**Mary:** No.

**Kate:** Regular high school?

**Mary:** Regular high school. I didn’t take English that time. I took French like a dummy.

**Kate:** You took French?

**Mary:** Yes.

**Kate:** Did you know any English before you came here?

**Mary:** No, not a word.

**Kate:** At that time, did you think you’re going to come to the United States?

**Mary:** No, no, never did.

**Kate:** You took French?

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

**Kate:** What about the high school? How far did you go through the high school?

**Mary:** It was in town. Downtown, same thing.

**Kate:** Downtown?

**Mary:** Yeah.

**Kate:** Then how long did you go to high school?

**Mary:** I think about three years I think. I think yeah.

**Kate:** You graduated?

**Mary:** Yes, I graduated.

**Kate:** What was your favorite subject in high school?

**Mary:** Jeez, I don't know.

**Kate:** Not Napoleon?

**Mary:** No. That was in grade school, elementary. I was in grade school. I’ll never forget that.

**Kate:** Did you finish school before you came to the United States?

**Mary:** Yes, yes, yes, yes, yes. I graduated. I went to a school, it’s not agriculture, after it cost my mother a lot of hard work and a lot of, she was working for bricklayers to make money to send me to this particular school.

**Kate:** What was that school?

**Mary:** That was a school in Linz. That was a school that gave us six weeks of agriculture, six weeks of cooking, six weeks of canning and house cleaning. That was like a course there. Just yesterday she showed me that I got the [unclear 00:26:58] that …

**Kate:** Report card?

**Mary:** Report card.

**Kate:** What did your mother do for the bricklayer to earn money?

**Mary:** She was carrying the bricks out.

**Kate:** She carried the bricks?

**Mary:** Carried the bricks to the bricklayers.

**Kate:** This was besides her other job?

**Mary:** Yes, it was beside. Her spare time, she worked so I can get associate by the equipment that she was providing for me to go to that school. That’s why I loved her so much.

**Kate:** Do you remember when you went to school, do you remember any school mates in that class or any of your school mates names?

**Mary:** No, I don't remember. I met one living in, when I was in 1981, she was still living. I think 1981, she was still living.

**Kate:** How did you find her?

**Mary:** We went there. Cecilia took me to Austria in 1981 and 1985. In 1988, we went to Yugoslavia.

**Kate:** You had the desire to go back?

**Mary:** Yes. I had to wait till my mother died. Mother didn’t want no part of Europe because she didn’t Europe was nice for her. I don’t blame her.

**Kate:** How did you get to the United States? Tell me the story what led up to that? You were 16.

**Mary:** My father was, when I was a child five years old, from the time I was, he stayed single for five years because he want us to come but my mother will not come over the ocean. She was afraid. Titanic was in 1912.

**Kate:** Right.

**Mary:** She was afraid of she’s going to lose her daughter. He even got himself married over here. In 1919, his wife died and he thought of us. He said, I’ll never forget when I sent the first letter to them, to me. I got it through the postman. I ran to the inner field and I ran to the field and I says, “Mother, there is a letter from father.” I said, “Mother,” obviously father was in America. They started talking, writing together and that’s how it came. He decided to bring us here.

**Kate:** What did you know about the United States before you came? What did your mother know?

**Mary:** Nothing except it was a wonderful place. It’s just, because it was for a new start. That means that was …

**Kate:** United States?

**Mary:** United States yeah. There was a good place to flee. There’s no wars or nothing like over there.

**Kate:** When your mother got that letter, was that one of the first letters she’s had?

**Mary:** Yes, the first letter. That’s the first letter she had from him.

**Kate:** Did your father invite you then to come?

**Mary:** Yes. I think probably there was letters back and forth. Then probably one of them they made arrangement. We were supposed to come in 1922 but the quarter was filled up. We couldn’t come in.

**Kate:** All right. Wait. Hold on. We’re going to take a break here. All right. Your mother got the letter in the field?

**Mary:** Yes.

**Kate:** What was the delay to the quarter?

**Mary:** The quarter in America was filled and we were late. We were supposed to come in 1922. Due to that, we have to wait till 1923.

**Kate:** Now, who was paying for your voyage over?

**Mary:** Father.

**Kate:** Your father?

**Mary:** My father did everything down to the food. He even on our way from New York to Pittsburgh, we got a box lunch.

**Kate:** A box lunch?

**Mary:** I saw bananas, I threw them out the window.

**Kate:** You threw the banana out the window?

**Mary:** Because I didn’t know what was banana.

**Kate:** Now, back in Austria, did you ever go hungry ever?

**Mary:** Not really, not really. I worked in Graz for a while. That was such a nice place for the elderly people. I was a housekeeper. I was a housekeeper.

**Kate:** In Austria?

**Mary:** In Austria, I was 15 years old, I was a housekeeper.

**Kate:** You became a housekeeper after you went through school?

**Mary:** After I went to high school.

**Kate:** Why was that not a nice place to work?

**Mary:** Because I had to prepare meals for them and they eat everything, nothing for me leftover. That’s why.

**Kate:** I see. You lived with them?

**Mary:** Yeah. I lived with them yes.

**Kate:** What was the name of that family?

**Mary:** I wouldn’t know it, I’m sorry.

**Kate:** Was that in town or out of?

**Mary:** Yes. It was in Graz. That was a big, big town.

**Kate:** You left home to work there?

**Mary:** Yes, uh-huh (affirmative).

**Kate:** How much were you given as pay for that? Do you remember?

**Mary:** I got paid but I don't know what. I wouldn’t know. I don't remember that.

**Kate:** All right. You were there from when you were 15. You came to the United States when you were 16?

**Mary:** From there, from that place that I worked, that I was a housekeeper, I went on a boat.

**Kate:** How did you know it was time to go on the boat? Who notified you about the quarters as to being open?

**Mary:** Evidently, probably mother didn’t know the traveling date. We were supposed to leave, we were supposed to come in Hamburg on the 5th of [inaudible 00:33:22].

**Kate:** Remember, what did your mother have to do to prepare?

**Mary:** Pack, pack and pack.

**Kate:** Did she have to sell anything?

**Mary:** No, no, no, mother had, no, nothing. We left everything what mother had, she was prepared to open, to hoping that father is going to come over to Europe someday. She was always preparing for that. She was living with her aunt. When it reversed that we can’t live there and came over here, she left everything there for a man and her children to take and her son to take it. Then the Russian took everything anyway.

**Kate:** Now, when you said your mother was waiting for your father possibly to come to Europe. What was she going to do? What were her plans if he came?

**Mary:** She was planning, she hoped if she ever buy a home and this house, it was enough like America but he didn’t want to come back.

**Kate:** Now, okay. When you packed you said, what did you pack actually?

**Mary:** Clothes.

**Kate:** Clothes?

**Mary:** That’s all.

**Kate:** What did you wear when you left? Do you remember?

**Mary:** A suit. I remember that.

**Kate:** What color suit?

**Mary:** Oh goodness. That is going too far. I wouldn’t know. I think a grey suit.

**Kate:** Now, was it a new suit or?

**Mary:** Grey, a grey suit I had. The new dresses.

**Kate:** Did you bring anything special with you? Anything religious, any photos, anything from home?

**Mary:** No.

**Kate:** Do you have anything surviving at all from Austria?

**Mary:** I really don’t.

**Kate:** You had just your clothing?

**Mary:** I just had my clothing.

**Kate:** Food, did you bring any food?

**Mary:** No, no, no. You weren’t allowed anyway.

**Kate:** Now, did you have a medical examination before you came?

**Mary:** No, not America but I had to have some kind of papers to let me that I was in German, that I’m a tolerable person mother and I both were.

**Kate:** That you had a good reputation where you came from?

**Mary:** Yeah, that’s all.

**Kate:** You had those papers?

**Mary:** Yeah.

**Kate:** Now, who arranged the passports for you?

**Mary:** Everything my mother did probably.

**Kate:** All right. You were working in the other city at that time?

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

**Kate:** All right. The day came to leave, where did you leave from? Home?

**Mary:** No. I came from the place where I was a housekeeper.

**Kate:** What was their reaction to you leaving?

**Mary:** They didn’t like the idea of me going because I was cheap labor. I was allowed to get out because I just was hungry. I was a grown girl and I needed a lot of food.

**Kate:** You left right from there?

**Mary:** Yeah.

**Kate:** Where did you meet your mother then?

**Mary:** My mother met me in Graz.

**Kate:** How did she come from home to Graz?

**Mary:** By train.

**Kate:** By train?

**Mary:** Uh-huh (affirmative). Then we had to go to Germany.

**Kate:** How did you get to Germany?

**Mary:** On a train. I’ll never forget it because there was no place for us to sit. We were sitting on a suitcase. No, there was nowhere to sit.

**Kate:** On your own suitcase?

**Mary:** Yeah, on your own suitcase.

**Kate:** How long was that trip then from home to Hamburg?

**Mary:** I think it was only a day.

**Kate:** A day?

**Mary:** I think so.

**Kate:** What did you eat on the way?

**Mary:** I don't know. We didn’t eat anything.

**Kate:** It’s okay. You got to Hamburg?

**Mary:** Yes.

**Kate:** Do you remember seeing the boat for the first time?

**Mary:** Yeah. When I walked on, that’s when I find that out. I’d never seen the sea before.

**Kate:** You had never seen the sea?

**Mary:** The sea before.

**Kate:** What’s the biggest body of water you had seen before that?

**Mary:** Moore. That’s like a river here.

**Kate:** Did you have to stay overnight before you left Hamburg? Did you stay overnight?

**Mary:** No, I don't think. I don’t remember. I don’t think we did.

**Kate:** You got on the boat?

**Mary:** Yeah.

**Kate:** Tell me about this boat, what was its name?

**Mary:** Albert Ballin. It’s a German and new one. Albert Ballin.

**Kate:** Albert Ballin?

**Mary:** Uh-huh (affirmative).

**Kate:** That’s spelled?

**Mary:** B-A-L-L-I-N.

**Kate:** I-N?

**Mary:** I-N, Ballin, yeah.

**Kate:** Yeah, I have here B-A-L-L-I-N. Now, on your application, you said here that this was a wonderful trip.

**Mary:** It was.

**Kate:** This is one of the first times I’ve heard this. Why don’t you tell me why it was wonderful? Tell me about the boat.

**Mary:** It was a new one. You smelled the paint. Everything was just new. The people who were on it was all German people of course. That was a nice.

**Kate:** Were they going to the United States for the same reasons you were?

**Mary:** Yes. They all camped yeah. A man that I was sitting along much with, we went to Milwaukee I remember that. A man, his …

**Kate:** Where did you stay in the boat? What class did you travel on?

**Mary:** The third class.

**Kate:** Third class?

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

**Kate:** Tell me about your accommodations, what were they like?

**Mary:** It was a little cube and it has double beds.

**Kate:** A cabin? Did you have your own cabin?

**Mary:** Yes. We had our own cabin.

**Kate:** Was that open? It was a cabin?

**Mary:** It was a cabin.

**Kate:** With your own bunk beds?

**Mary:** With our own bunk beds.

**Kate:** Did they provide sheets and linens?

**Mary:** Yes, yes.

**Kate:** Who was in your cabin with you?

**Mary:** Mother. Mother was on the bottom and I was on the top.

**Kate:** You were the only two in there?

**Mary:** The only two. The only ones.

**Kate:** You were third class?

**Mary:** Yes.

**Kate:** Now, did you have any friends from the same town who came?

**Mary:** No. No. No way. I don't think very many from Austria came here.

**Kate:** But Germans?

**Mary:** Yeah, because lots of the people I guess they’re pleased where they are.

**Kate:** What about the food on the boat?

**Mary:** It was delicious, delicious. I never felt, every day we have a dessert which was Jell-O. It has sauce on top of it. I never found out what they used to this day.

**Kate:** Had you ever eaten Jell-O before?

**Mary:** I had eaten Jell-O but I don't know what kind of sauce they used on them. They put on it.

**Kate:** Was there a dining room?

**Mary:** There was a dining room.

**Kate:** What was it like?

**Mary:** It was a beautiful dining room and good stewards, wonderful.

**Kate:** Now, the dining room, how was it arranged and the dining table?

**Mary:** It was a long table. It was a long table. You just sit down and not real table. It was a long table.

**Kate:** How did you get your food?

**Mary:** They bring us.

**Kate:** You were served?

**Mary:** You’re served yes.

**Kate:** The tables, what did you eat off of?

**Mary:** Plates.

**Kate:** Were they plate plates, were they tin or glass?

**Mary:** No, no, it was plate plates. It was ceramic.

**Kate:** Ceramic?

**Mary:** Yes.

**Kate:** Did you have tablecloth?

**Mary:** I think there was yeah.

**Kate:** It was rather well done.

**Mary:** Nicely, really.

**Kate:** What about the voyage? Was the voyage rough or smooth or the conditions were the same?

**Mary:** It was nice up to the middle. Then we had a little storm at one time. The water comes up to the deck. Then of course, I didn’t have no time to think of the water.

**Kate:** You didn’t have any time to think of the water?

**Mary:** To think of the water on the deck.

**Kate:** Why not?

**Mary:** Because I had a good time, going to see the boats, see the whole ship.

**Kate:** You had a good time seeing the whole ship?

**Mary:** Yeah.

**Kate:** With who?

**Mary:** Two sailors.

**Kate:** Two sailors, you didn’t have to think about the water?

**Mary:** No.

**Kate:** Where was mother at this time?

**Mary:** She was in the cabin.

**Kate:** Why?

**Mary:** She was sick.

**Kate:** She was sick?

**Mary:** She was sick, uh-huh (affirmative).

**Kate:** These two sailors …

**Mary:** They took me from the top of the boat, the top to the bottom, I mean from the front to the back. I see the machine was making by the mechanics. I just see the whole thing and the bedrooms, the sailors the bedrooms too.

**Kate:** You saw the sailors’ bedrooms too?

**Mary:** Yes.

**Kate:** All right. Did they take you to any social activities?

**Mary:** Yes. We went to a concert.

**Kate:** You went to a concert?

**Mary:** Uh-huh (affirmative), one evening.

**Kate:** What did your mother think about this?

**Mary:** Mother loved it. She said, “Go ahead and go and enjoy it.”

**Kate:** Did they ask permission or anything?

**Mary:** Yes they did. They asked if they were allowed to take me. She says, “Go ahead and take her.” You can’t go wrong in a place like that. It was nice. It was really, really nice.

**Kate:** You went to a concert and what was playing?

**Mary:** That, I don't remember.

**Kate:** All right. How long was the Voyage?

**Mary:** 11 days.

**Kate:** 11 days?

**Mary:** Uh-huh (affirmative), 11 days. Like I said, we came Saturday to the dock, to America on Saturday. Then we had to wait for Sunday and stay in. All I was doing was walking around. Then I looked at Ellis Island that I’d never seen.

**Kate:** Let’s back up just a little bit now. Now, you had 11 days of fun?

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

**Kate:** Were you sick at all if there was a storm?

**Mary:** Yes. I got sick. I got sick one day but it didn’t bother me. I just passed it up. I had too much good time to think of, not think of being sick.

**Kate:** Now, was your mother sick then?

**Mary:** Yes, my mother was sick.

**Kate:** How long was she sick?

**Mary:** She was pretty ill and in the cabin most of the time.

**Kate:** Who did you eat your meals with if your mom was sick?

**Mary:** I just eat it with a lot of people.

**Kate:** Did you ever eat in other classes, like first or second?

**Mary:** No. No, no, no. We got called by bells. They ring one bell and two bells and three bells. We have to go to two bells or third one.

**Kate:** Was there anything that you hadn’t ever eaten before that you liked that was on the boat served?

**Mary:** I can’t remember that. It was not good.

**Kate:** Do you remember anything? Did you ever get to see the ocean at all? Do you remember anything different like?

**Mary:** When it’s fun to be in the middle of the ocean, you don’t see nothing but the heaven and the water.

**Kate:** Were you on deck very much?

**Mary:** Yes I was. We had the music there in the afternoon too.

**Kate:** Music?

**Mary:** Then we also had lunches.

**Kate:** Did you have any dancing?

**Mary:** No, I don't remember that. I don't think. I don't remember about dancing.

**Kate:** Were you happy to see the land?

**Mary:** Yes I was, very much.

**Kate:** What was the first thing you remember?

**Mary:** I don't know what I could tell you except that we went to Ellis Island there.

**Kate:** Did you see the Statue of Liberty?

**Mary:** Yes we did. We was looking at it all day Sunday.

**Kate:** As the boat pulled into the harbor, what was the first thing you saw? Was it Statue of Liberty?

**Mary:** Yeah. That’s the first thing you see.

**Kate:** What was the reaction on the boat to that? Did it mean anything to you?

**Mary:** Yeah, it’s liberty, freedom.

**Kate:** You stayed right there?

**Mary:** We stayed on the boat all day and then we went all day long and that’s all I can say. We just looked around. There was nothing to see except the Statue of Liberty, that’s all you can see and nothing but a lot of buildings. Then when the Monday morning we get off, then we get to Ellis Island.

**Kate:** How did you get from the boat to Ellis Island?

**Mary:** The small little …

**Kate:** A little boat?

**Mary:** A little small thing.

**Kate:** How many people were put in the boat do you think?

**Mary:** I think it’s about five, six.

**Kate:** The small boat went …

**Mary:** Small, very small boat.

**Kate:** As you went to Ellis Island, what do you remember?

**Mary:** I don't know. Immediately we go in and there was partitions that we went in to register.

**Kate:** Did you ever have any feeling that you might be rejected at all?

**Mary:** Not till examination, not till that.

**Kate:** What about?

**Mary:** This is when we had this row and be examined.

**Kate:** You had to take your clothes off?

**Mary:** All of it and put them in the back.

**Kate:** Everything?

**Mary:** Everything, everything.

**Kate:** Shoes?

**Mary:** Shoes, yes. Everything went in a duffle bag with a name on and it went to be sterilized. That’s the reason I thought America was perfect.

**Kate:** Because you thought you had to be perfect before you got there?

**Mary:** Yeah. We had to be examined by two doctors.

**Kate:** Now, had you ever been without clothes in front of people before?

**Mary:** No. No.

**Kate:** At home had you ever been?

**Mary:** No, never. Never.

**Kate:** What was that like?

**Mary:** It was terrible, embarrassing. Like I said, they give you a little bit of tiny towel. You don’t where you put it. The best way would be to put the eyes.

**Kate:** To put the towel over the eyes?

**Mary:** Yeah. You can’t see because it was so small and you have to go in front of doctors and was embarrassed. Never was, never the doctor, naked in front of a doctor or anybody.

**Kate:** Where was your mother during all this?

**Mary:** Mother was about four or five back of us. She wouldn’t be with me.

**Kate:** Why not?

**Mary:** I think she was embarrassed. I imagine.

**Kate:** Were they female or male doctors?

**Mary:** Male. Young male doctors.

**Kate:** Young male doctors?

**Mary:** Two young male doctors.

**Kate:** Did they speak English?

**Mary:** No.

**Kate:** No? German?

**Mary:** German.

**Kate:** Now, did they speak German or English?

**Mary:** No. English, English yeah.

**Kate:** English?

**Mary:** Yeah.

**Kate:** You didn’t speak any English?

**Mary:** Nothing, nothing.

**Kate:** The doctor spoke English to you?

**Mary:** Yes. They were talking together. When they came to me they examined me. Then they both said, “Let’s put her outside.” Then my mother saw me that I was put out of the row, put them on the side there.

**Kate:** They put you on the side?

**Mary:** Yeah.

**Kate:** Did they explain to you why?

**Mary:** No. No, something was wrong with me neck.

**Kate:** Did you understand them?

**Mary:** Something was wrong with my neck, I don't know. No, I don’t. Then my mother naturally started to cry. Then the doctor, the other doctor looked over and he says, “No, let’s get her to go ahead.” That’s it, yeah.

**Kate:** When you said something wrong with your neck, what do you think it was?

**Mary:** The goiter, that’s what it was, yeah.

**Kate:** Thyroid?

**Mary:** Thyroid, the problem that’s what they said.

**Kate:** You had a thyroid problem?

**Mary:** Uh-huh (affirmative).

**Kate:** Did you know that immediately?

**Mary:** No, never had any troubles.

**Kate:** Did they have a translator at all for you? Did anybody translate?

**Mary:** I don't remember that. I remember that they were looking at the neck and examining when they [unclear 00:50:23].

**Kate:** At that point, did you feel fearful that you’d be rejected?

**Mary:** Yes I was.

**Kate:** Was your mother?

**Mary:** Yes, very much. She started crying [unclear 00:50:34].

**Kate:** Yeah. Did she get through easily?

**Mary:** Yeah. She went very, very nice.

**Kate:** Once the second doctor said everything was all right. What happened then?

**Mary:** I got in a row, go back in my row where I belong.

**Kate:** With no clothes on?

**Mary:** Without clothes on, uh-huh (affirmative). I had to wait till the clothes comes. Today we have to go. We have to go into a cabin to find our clothes.

**Kate:** How many people were in this room waiting for the doctor would you say?

**Mary:** Oh my God, it was hundreds.

**Kate:** Hundreds of nude people?

**Mary:** I imagine that. It must have been children and girls and then women.

**Kate:** Now, you went back and got your clothes?

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

**Kate:** Did you see any people rejected at all?

**Mary:** No.

**Kate:** Were there people crying or anything?

**Mary:** No.

**Kate:** No?

**Mary:** No.

**Kate:** You were the only one taken aside?

**Mary:** Yeah, the only one that I remember that they had put me aside.

**Kate:** Were the doctors polite to you?

**Mary:** Yes. They were just like doctors.

**Kate:** Except very young.

**Mary:** Yeah.

**Kate:** All right. You went back to get your clothes? What happened then?

**Mary:** I don't know. I don't remember. That was next morning that was on Monday. That was Monday. Then Tuesday morning, get up and we get dressed and we go wherever you have to go, some nation, wherever you have to go.

**Kate:** You stayed overnight at Ellis Island?

**Mary:** Yes, we stayed overnight.

**Kate:** Do you know why you stayed overnight?

**Mary:** I don't know. We all stayed there overnight.

**Kate:** All the other passengers in third class?

**Mary:** I think we did. The third class yes.

**Kate:** Where did you sleep?

**Mary:** Bunk beds.

**Kate:** You had bunk beds?

**Mary:** Mm-hmm (affirmative). There was a row, a row of bunk beds.

**Kate:** How many people were in a room?

**Mary:** Oh my goodness. The whole side of the boat in a room, there was just bunk beds after another.

**Kate:** Did you get anything to sleep in?

**Mary:** I imagine that those are the blankets, it was hot summer and everything. No blankets is hot in summer in June. I remember just going to bed and get up in the morning.

**Kate:** Did you eat there?

**Mary:** Yes I did probably, I don't remember mainly about food. I can somehow in the end of it that [inaudible 00:53:28].

**Kate:** Did you have any conversations or meet any other Austrians there?

**Mary:** No. Unfortunately no.

**Kate:** You got up the next day and you’re waiting to go to your port of destination. What happened then the next morning?

**Mary:** We have to report and then where we have to go after they gave us a lunch box and we were on a train. They had to because nobody-

**Kate:** Did you have to be identified at all?

**Mary:** Yes.

**Kate:** Did they give you any tags?

**Mary:** Yes. We all had tags on.

**Kate:** Name tags?

**Mary:** Name tags and then destination.

**Kate:** Your name tag and your destination on you?

**Mary:** Uh-huh (affirmative).

**Kate:** A box lunch?

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

**Kate:** Was your father waiting for you somewhere?

**Mary:** No. That’s the trouble. They were looking. Nowhere with anybody come to get us. He arranged to take us to Pittsburgh on a train. He came to Peale and I was to Pennsylvania.

**Kate:** He came to the wrong place?

**Mary:** Yes.

**Kate:** What do you remember about that? Now, before we talk about the train trip out there, what’s your overall impression of Ellis Island when you look back on that whole experience at Ellis Island? How would you describe it?

**Mary:** It wasn’t too bad to me at least. The only thing I didn’t like it, being nude. All the rest was fine. I would put up with everything else but that they could omit.

**Kate:** You and your mom were bound for what town?

**Mary:** Pittsburgh.

**Kate:** Pittsburgh?

**Mary:** Mm-hmm (affirmative). Then that’s what the girls, whoever at this train, they arranged, they put us on Pennsylvania Station. They put us because we didn’t know. When we got into Pittsburgh here, then they help me get a taxi cab and get me home.

**Kate:** What was your impression of the train trip?

**Mary:** It wasn’t bad. It was all right.

**Kate:** Were you with your mother?

**Mary:** Yes, uh-huh (affirmative). Train trip in Europe is always train. I’m sorry.

**Kate:** You got into the cab to go home, what was your first impression about your new home in Pittsburgh?

**Mary:** You want truthful?

**Kate:** Yeah, I want truth.

**Mary:** Not a bit nice. I was very disappointed. We come into the rural house, rural houses. I’d never seen a rural house before except in the cities that I’ve seen this, but I never seen a rural house before. I would call it a barn. Then once there, I was very disappointed.

**Kate:** Did you feel that where you came from were better conditions?

**Mary:** Yes, absolutely.

**Kate:** You mentioned earlier you wrote home to Austria about this, how did you describe where you live?

**Mary:** I described it that animals live better, in the nicer places than we are.

**Kate:** The animals live better in Austria?

**Mary:** Yeah, because really I was so disappointed to be in the rural house. I’d never seen it in my life.

**Kate:** Did you tell this to your father?

**Mary:** No, no. I accepted. I accepted anything. I was glad that I was here. I vowed then that no matter what happens, I’m going to pray for him as long as I live for he gave me the privilege to come to America.

**Kate:** What was his reaction?

**Mary:** He was very nice. He was disappointed because he couldn’t meet us. That I had to get home on a taxi cab but he was very nice. I had [inaudible 00:57:46] that evening he took me to the store and got me, I don't know what and we came in the afternoon. He bought me some clothes. He didn’t like the clothes I had. He told me, “Next morning, there is a [unclear 00:58:09] around the corner. It was time for berries, to clean berries.” He said, “A lady is going to take you to work.”

**Kate:** You had work arranged for the very next day?

**Mary:** Next day. That’s in the holiday.

**Kate:** What did he buy you for clothes?

**Mary:** To go to work.

**Kate:** He bought you work clothes?

**Mary:** Work clothes, that’s right.

**Kate:** He took you right out to buy work clothes?

**Mary:** That’s it. Let’s leave it.

**Kate:** What type of a place? Was that a factory was it?

**Mary:** Yeah, it was a factory, a [unclear 00:58:44] pickle factory

**Kate:** It was a pickle factory?

**Mary:** Uh-huh (affirmative).

**Kate:** What were you doing in the pickle factory?

**Mary:** They had strawberries in there.

**Kate:** Jelly?

**Mary:** Jellies, they made jellies.

**Kate:** Jelly factory?

**Mary:** Yeah.

**Kate:** Jelly and pickles? Okay.

**Mary:** Yeah, but then it was a strawberry season. See, that they bring the strawberries to make jelly out of it. What we had to do is get the greens of the strawberries.

**Kate:** You picked the green part from the strawberry?

**Mary:** Yeah, strawberries, all day long. They got us paid the day’s work.

**Kate:** You got paid per strawberry?

**Mary:** No, per how many boxes you emptied.

**Kate:** How many boxes?

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

**Kate:** How did they explain this to you? Did you speak any English?

**Mary:** No. I happen to have a German boss. He could tell me. He didn’t want to talk. He says, “You have to learn English.” He tried to talk English but he also tried to, I didn’t understand so he had to go to the German.

**Kate:** Did anybody make fun of you for being German?

**Mary:** How did you ask me that? How did you ask me? Yes. There were some boys there, young boys. They thought they’re going to have the fun. They called me and then they said, “All you can understand is kiss. Give me a kiss.” I understand that.

**Kate:** What [inaudible 01:00:12]?

**Mary:** I didn’t know. They told me. They hollered at me. I said to the girl that I knew that she was Slovak but I could understand a little Slovak. She said, “Tell him mind your own business.”

**Kate:** That was the first thing you learned?

**Mary:** Yes. The first thing I learned was mind-

**Kate:** The first phrase was mind your own business?

**Mary:** Mind your own business. I was afraid to say the own. See? I was saying, “Mind your business.”

**Kate:** Mind your business?

**Mary:** Yeah. I was afraid to put the own in because I didn’t think that would sound good.

**Kate:** Mind your business is your first?

**Mary:** That was my first [inaudible 01:00:54].

**Kate:** Did they ever call you any names?

**Mary:** No.

**Kate:** No?

**Mary:** No.

**Kate:** You learned mind your business and then from then on you learned [inaudible 01:01:02].

**Mary:** I went to school. Then in October there was a night school not far away from us at Manchester. I went and entered right away to learn the English language.

**Kate:** To get back to the rural house you lived in, what was the address of that rural house?

**Mary:** Roller Street, I don't remember the number no more, but I remember it’s Roller Street. That’s right.

**Kate:** Roller Street?

**Mary:** Roller, uh-huh (affirmative).

**Kate:** Explain to me about the inside of that house a bit. How were the conditions in that rural house?

**Mary:** All the houses were the same. There was a living room and a kitchen and two bedroom upstairs and that’s it. It’s over.

**Kate:** How was it lit the house?

**Mary:** With electricity.

**Kate:** You had electricity?

**Mary:** Yeah, yeah, yeah.

**Kate:** Okay, we take a little break and go to the next thing. All right now, this rural house, how about plumbing? What about the plumbing?

**Mary:** Outside.

**Kate:** Outside toilet?

**Mary:** Outside plumbing, yes.

**Kate:** What about water? Was there running water?

**Mary:** There was running water, uh-huh (affirmative). We didn’t have no bathroom. We have to get the, wash like the old ways in a tap.

**Kate:** What was your father doing at that time?

**Mary:** Girl, my father was working the lumberyards.

**Kate:** What was he doing at the lumberyards?

**Mary:** He was a laborer in a lumberyard. He was working with, I think 32 years, I think he was for Brackman and that was out of Williamson. Anyway, that was close. People this time didn’t want to go over, they want to go far away from work. That’s why they work in and they live in Roller Street. He worked there.

**Kate:** Now, did your mother go to work?

**Mary:** Yes. She went to pickles, [unclear 01:03:05] pickle factory.

**Kate:** You went together?

**Mary:** We went together.

**Kate:** Did she learn any English there?

**Mary:** Yeah. She did pretty good in English before she died. She really was really pretty good.

**Kate:** How did your father adjust to life here in the United States? Did he adjust?

**Mary:** I tell you. He adjusted himself good because he got married before his wife died and I said that before.

**Kate:** Was his wife American?

**Mary:** Yeah. She was Croatian.

**Kate:** She was Croatian?

**Mary:** Mm-hmm (affirmative). When she died, he moved with his wife’s sister and her husband. Here, she had a daughter, Anna. She was seven years old when I was coming from Europe. They lived there with their sister-in-law and worked. Everybody was paying worse there just pay once a month or once a week, I don't know exactly how they did it. He wanted us to stay there. The only way to get him out of the clutches of hers, I have to get married. I found a wonderful man.

**Kate:** Now, how did you meet your husband?

**Mary:** He was sitting across the street. There were three guys there. I point out and I said to my, “The one in the middle I like him.”

**Kate:** Who did you say that to?

**Mary:** To my little sister. She was seven years old at that time.

**Kate:** You said you looked at three men across the street and you said, “I like the one in the middle”?

**Mary:** In the middle.

**Kate:** How did you know that?

**Mary:** I don't know. It’s destiny. He came, he met me. He was moving by their friends.

**Kate:** Have a little drink there for a second. It’s okay.

**Mary:** He was moving at a friend’s house, at their friend’s house and we went there. That’s when I met him and right away it picked off. Later on he came to my favor when I was at work and asked him if he can keep company with me. Father says, “Well, it’s up to her. It’s up to her.” Naturally, I met him and we went together for about nine months. We were not allowed we stay out late, 9 o’clock you have to be at home.

**Kate:** You had to be home at?

**Mary:** 5:00.

**Kate:** When did you get out at 5:00 or 9:00?

**Mary:** No, you have to eat supper.

**Kate:** Between 5:00 and 9:00?

**Mary:** No, you have to eat supper.

**Kate:** You had to come home for supper too?

**Mary:** Yeah.

**Kate:** You came home you ate supper and then you had a few hours?

**Mary:** Yeah, I was allowed to go out.

**Kate:** What was he doing at that time?

**Mary:** Who? My husband?

**Kate:** Yes.

**Mary:** He was in Standard Sanitary. He was a foreman in the Standard Sanitary. That’s going on till now.

**Kate:** Now, what was his name? Your husband’s name?

**Mary:** John. John Kravich.

**Kate:** John? And his family background was?

**Mary:** He came from Europe also, from Croatia.

**Kate:** He was first in this country?

**Mary:** Yeah, he came I think in 9/11 I think.

**Kate:** Was he older than you?

**Mary:** Yes. He was 10 years older than I am. He was a wonderful man. He was a father, how do you call it?

**Kate:**  Figure?

**Mary:** Figure to me.

**Kate:** He took care of you?

**Mary:** He had a girl that he married before I came here. They were engaged. They were looking for apartments. Then I came in and he changed his mind.

**Kate:** How did you do that?

**Mary:** I don't know. I don't think that he was into the other girl. He was obvious friends with the parents and they were always so nice. They weren’t unfriendly or anything but he just changed his mind and he just want me.

**Kate:** You got married then within a year?

**Mary:** Within a year, I came in July the 17 and following June I got married the 7th.

**Kate:** What year was that, 1924?

**Mary:** 24.

**Kate:** 1924. Then what happened? You had children?

**Mary:** One year later.

**Kate:** One year later you had a child? His child?

**Mary:** Yeah his child, yeah.

**Kate:** What are your children’s names?

**Mary:** Cecilia, she was first. Then after six years Marcella, and after 13 years I had John.

**Kate:** Same father?

**Mary:** Yes.

**Kate:** You stayed married?

**Mary:** I never had nobody. I don’t want nobody. If I can’t have my husband who died, I don't want nobody.

**Kate:** How long were you married?

**Mary:** 33 years.

**Kate:** Did he stay?

**Mary:** He had a heart attack. He had a heart problem.

**Kate:** Was he working at the same place?

**Mary:** Yes, he was working at Standard. They closed. When they closed, did he get a job at United, I don't know what, I can’t think of it right now.

**Kate:** Kirby?

**Mary:** No. No, United … In a Butler Street somewhere, I can’t think of it right now.

**Kate:** That’s all right. Now, you mentioned later that your mother came to live with you but how did she adjust to life here your mom? Did she learn English well?

**Mary:** She learned English well and she worked all her life.

**Kate:** She worked where?

**Mary:** She was working at [unclear 01:09:47] close to 16 years. Then she went to restaurant work.

**Kate:** To where?

**Mary:** Restaurant.

**Kate:** Restaurant work?

**Mary:** Downtown. She worked in restaurant for five years for one and for 14 years another one.

**Kate:** What did she do in the restaurant?

**Mary:** Salad. She was always a salad person.

**Kate:** Salad?

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

**Kate:** She worked and then she lived …

**Mary:** She was 75 when they [inaudible 01:10:15].

**Kate:** 75 years old?

**Mary:** 75 years old. Then she lived there. We thought it’s going to be the end of her because she worked all her life. That’s all she did is work and garden. That was her hobby and crocheting. That was her hobby.

**Kate:** Now, do you think that your father and mother, did they ever want to go back to live in Europe?

**Mary:** No.

**Kate:** Either of them?

**Mary:** Mother. Mother didn’t want to even think about it. She didn’t want to go over there. I couldn’t afford it anyway.

**Kate:** What language did you speak with your mother when you came here?

**Mary:** We were Croatian. Slovenian sort of. Now we go back again to Europe where we are so close to cross the border to Slovenia, Yugoslavia now. At that time it was Slovenia. We spoke it a lot. I spoke the Slovenian before I talked in German because the schools and the church was German. I think that at home we talked Slovenian.

**Kate:** You talked Slovenian to your mother?

**Mary:** Yes.

**Kate:** To your father?

**Mary:** Yes.

**Kate:** Slovenian?

**Mary:** Yes.

**Kate:** What about to your children, what did you speak?

**Mary:** They didn’t want to learn how to speak, they just wanted to talk English so I can understand.

**Kate:** Did you ever talk Slovenian?

**Mary:** I wish they would but they don’t want.

**Kate:** Did you ever talk with your husband?

**Mary:** All that time, mm-hmm (affirmative).

**Kate:** Slovenian?

**Mary:** Yes.

**Kate:** Did you speak when you didn’t want the children to understand?

**Mary:** Yeah. I tell you, the trouble is I needed to learn English. He didn’t want to. He used too much of the Slovenia and English because I needed the English. I was working very hard when I went to school. I used to take paper and read it. I didn’t know what I was reading but I was reading.

**Kate:** When you had children, did you go back to work ever?

**Mary:** No. No, I never went. I always take care of the house till my husband had a heart attack and then I had to go to work.

**Kate:** Where did you go to work?

**Mary:** I started out housework for a while. Then I went to a night school, applied for nursing and I took nursing up. Then about 16 years were all nursing. After that, I went to 12 and a half years as a housemother at the same hospital, as a housemother for nurses where both of them graduated.

**Kate:** Now, you went back to school to be a nurse?

**Mary:** Yes.

**Kate:** How old were you then?

**Mary:** I was 45.

**Kate:** You graduated the same time as your daughter then in nursing?

**Mary:** In fact, I think it was either Marcella or Cecilia, one of them, that’s Marcella I think. She graduated, I had to make my own test the day before because I had to go to graduation the same day that they graduate nurses.

**Kate:** You were graduating the same time as your daughters?

**Mary:** Yes.

**Kate:** Your daughters are nurses?

**Mary:** Both of them. Yes, they are.

**Kate:** Your son?

**Mary:** He is in food service.

**Kate:** Now, when you look back on your life, how do you feel about your original decision to come to this country?

**Mary:** Oh, it was a good one. I thank God every day that I am here.

**Kate:** You wanted to go back to see it?

**Mary:** To see it but I don’t want it.

**Kate:** When you see it, what do you see when you go back? What does it feel like?

**Mary:** The first time I was there, I left in 1923 and the first time I came is 1981. I was disappointed. I see riches, the cousins, their children, cousins, we were cousins and their children. They have money. They have a nursery. I don't know how many other houses they have.

**Kate:** You mean things that you left?

**Mary:** When I left, there was nothing.

**Kate:** When you went back they were prosperous?

**Mary:** They were prosperous, very much.

**Kate:** The area was as beautiful as you remember it?

**Mary:** Yeah but older, the trees were bigger and the house was same.

**Kate:** You never wanted to go back though?

**Mary:** No. I go to see it and visit but I don’t want to be part of it.

**Kate:** How do you feel yourself as a nationality? You think of yourself? What nationality do you feel?

**Mary:** I don't know what you mean.

**Kate:** Do you feel still that you’re Austrian or do you feel that you’re American or you feel you’re both?

**Mary:** I’m American by all means. I like Austria, it’s nice but I like this country. I do love it because it really brought me, I got home over my roof. You know what I mean?

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

**Mary:** I got three lovely children. I don't know if I would have this over there or not.

**Kate:** Then you think your mother, how did your mother feel about that decision?

**Mary:** My mother did like it because I took care of her, mother. See, mother always stayed with me. As I said before, when I got married, I said to my boyfriend at that time when he asked me to marry him. I said to him, “The only way I marry you if you take my mother and father with us.” He was willing. He says, “I don’t have my parents. I’ll be glad to have yours.” We lived together 20 years. Then father died and then my husband died 10 years later and my mother died.

**Kate:** You think your mother is happy?

**Mary:** She was. I think she was very, she was happy. I know she was happy because I took care of her. I’d wash her clothes. When she was in a restaurant in Oakland, I let her work there. She worked there. She got herself a job as a salad girl. Every week we’d bring her home, every weekend she spent here. She enjoyed the little time we had. She got the garden. As long as she had a garden and she got it, she was happy.

**Kate:** Have your children expressed any interest in learning about where you came from?

**Mary:** I think so. Cecilia does. I know and Mercy too. They want to know more about it. Of course, Cecilia, if it wasn’t for Cecilia, I wouldn’t have a chance to go to Europe. She went in 1980 with her school in college went to Europe, to Salzburg, to Austria. She told me, come back and she says, “Mother, we’re going to go each year.” I says, “Oh, you’re kidding.” Like that, she worked it out and we went next in 1981. I says, “I want to go see [inaudible 01:18:40] place.” We did that.

**Kate:** I’d like to thank you on behalf of Ellis Island for helping us and sharing your story with us. We’ll send you a copy as well for your family.

**Mary:** Thank you. Thank you.

**Kate:** This is Kate Moore signing off on July 19th 1994 with Mary Kravich in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania for the Ellis Island Oral History Project.

**Mary:** Thank you.