**Kate:** Good afternoon. This is Kate Moore for the National Park Service. Today is the fourth of December 1993. I’m in Southfield at the home of Joseph Leichtman who came from Hungary in 1913 when he was seven years old.

Why don’t you begin by giving me your full name and date of birth please?

**Joseph:** Joseph Louis Leichtman, February the 1st 1906.

**Kate:** Could you spell your last name please.

**Joseph:** L-E-I-C-H-T-M-A-N.

**Kate:** Where were you born?

**Joseph:** I was born in Hungary.

**Kate:** What city was that?

**Joseph:** Csikszereda. Don’t ask me how to spell it.

**Kate:** The next question was, "Spell it please." What size town was that?

**Joseph:** Maybe 20, 30,000.

**Kate:** Could you describe what the town looked like?

**Joseph:** That was before my time but it’s still there and two of my nieces went to visit there. The funniest thing is they took pictures throughout the town and there was my father’s old store, dry goods store and that’s right by the Catholic Church.

**Kate:** What type of store was it?

**Joseph:** A dry goods store.

**Kate:** What was the major industry of that town then?

**Joseph:** To tell you the truth, I don’t know.

**Kate:** Your father had a dry good [inaudible 00:01:32]?

**Joseph:** No, my grandfather was a liquor merchant, he manufactured liquor.

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

**Joseph:** Beithold.

**Kate:** Could you just spell that, do you mind?

**Joseph:** B-E-I-T-H-O-L-D.

**Kate:** What was his occupation?

**Joseph:** He was a merchant, he had stores throughout Hungary. The only thing is in 1913 the army was already recruiting and my father found about it and he didn’t want his sons to be gun father. It’s the right word isn’t it?

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

**Joseph:** He packed up everything and we came out here, seven children, my father and mother, all at one time.

**Kate:** What did your father look like? Could you describe him?

**Joseph:** He looked like a real Hungarian with a [inaudible 00:02:50] moustache, a nice looking man. He was about 5’8”, weighed about 150 pounds but he had a gift of gab and he spoke about seven or eight languages. Well educated man.

**Kate:** Describe his temperament, what would you say his personality.

**Joseph:** He could charm a cow, a calf out of a cow, but when he got mad, don’t be around.

**Kate:** Is there a story that you associate with your father from your childhood? Any particular story you can talk about.

**Joseph:** He was a good man. If anybody came to him for help he would believe, loan them money, whether he got it back or not it didn’t make any difference. He was well liked. I wish I had his personality.

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

**Joseph:** Rose.

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

**Joseph:** Schwartz, S-C-H-W-A-R-T-Z.

**Kate:** What was her occupation, if she had one?

**Joseph:** She was a housewife.

**Kate:** What did she look like?

**Joseph:** I wish we would have taken this in the other apartment. I have pictures there and everything.

**Kate:** How would you describe her if you could?

**Joseph:** She was a very nice person, but don’t cross her.

**Kate:** What type of hair did she have?

**Joseph:** Brown.

**Kate:** Brown?

**Joseph:** Yes.

**Kate:** Eyes?

**Joseph:** Incidentally my father was a blonde, I would say a reddish blonde and he had blue eyes, blue size [inaudible 00:04:42].

**Kate:** Your mother?

**Joseph:** My mother had brown eyes.

**Kate:** Describe her personality?

**Joseph:** She was a very nice person.

**Kate:** What were her chores around the house?

**Joseph:** She cooked, she baked, she washed and in Europe she didn’t do all those things but here she had to.

**Kate:** Is there a story you would associate with your mother from your childhood?

**Joseph:** All she had was 12 children, I’m number 12. In those days, infants didn’t do very well.

**Kate:** This is a little sadistic, but could you name all your brothers and sisters please since you [inaudible 00:05:35]?

**Joseph:** I’ll start with my oldest sister Lily, my oldest brother Alex. Next oldest is Andrew, then Mick. I left out Margaret, Margaret comes after Lillian, Andrew and then Mick, my sister Helen, and I’m the last one.

**Kate:** Describe your house, what kind of dwelling did you live in?

**Joseph:** In Europe or here?

**Kate:** In Hungary.

**Joseph:** It was a stone house or a brick house.

**Kate:** How large was it?

**Joseph:** There were a lot of children so it had be a large house.

**Kate:** How many rooms were there?

**Joseph:** I don’t recall. How old was I then? All I do I remember going to kindergarten there and the first grade and it was a very liberal country. They would have priests and ministers on certain days. They would have the rabbi on Fridays in a public school.

It was compulsory to go to school there in Hungary, of course in the large cities. In the small towns they didn’t enforce it. Usually what they had in those small towns there is a Catholic Church or a Protestant or a Baptist.

**Kate:** Back to the house for a second, how was it heated your house?

**Joseph:** They were built in wood stove.

**Kate:** Was there a garden? Do you remember?

**Joseph:** Yes, there was a garden and we had outside cooking, inside cooking.

**Kate:** What did you grow in the garden? Do you remember?

**Joseph:** No.

**Kate:** What kind of furniture did you have in your house?

**Joseph:** Typical, whatever went with the region.

**Kate:** Was the …

**Joseph:** Heavy furniture, mahogany furniture.

**Kate:** Was this house inside or outside of town?

**Joseph:** I think it was inside of town.

**Kate:** Did you keep animals?

**Joseph:** We always had a dog or two. My father liked animals, so we’d have cats.

**Kate:** No domestic animals though? Cows or …?

**Joseph:** No, we were city people.

**Kate:** Who else lived in the building? Just your family or?

**Joseph:** Just the family.

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

**Joseph:** We had cooks.

**Kate:** What was your favorite food?

**Joseph:** I’m Hungarian, so chicken paprikash, Hungarian goulash. Are you Hungarian?

**Male:** No I’m Polish.

**Joseph:** Stuffed cabbage, palacsinta, you know what that is? Crepes [Inaudible 00:09:09].

**Kate:** Oh yeah.

**Joseph:** Doboh torte, on holidays and we had noodles that we would put nuts on or nuts and noodles, a lot of good food.

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

**Joseph:** No. If I would do that here I could save myself a lot of money. I don’t know how to cook. I don’t know how to take care of myself.

**Kate:** The kitchen… what was meal like time at home then?

**Joseph:** Pardon me.

**Kate:** What was meal time like at home?

**Joseph:** We would all sit down together.

**Kate:** You were served by someone.

**Joseph:** Yeah.

**Kate:** Were there other families who lived nearby? Family members?

**Joseph:** Oh sure, we always had my grandmother who at that time in 18 was something like 90 years old or 94.

**Kate:** What were their names? Do you remember their names, your grandparents?

**Joseph:** You got me. See, I never knew them. The only one that I knew was my mother’s mother.

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

**Joseph:** Grandma, yeah that’s about it.

**Kate:** You saw them often your grandparents before you left?

**Joseph:** Yes, when she used to live with us.

**Kate:** Who are you particularly close to in the family, especially close to?

**Joseph:** My son. Incidentally my son is a professor at the University of Michigan Medical School. He got a fellowship at Harvard and he’s a nephrologist, if you know what that is. Kidney man- a very kind, caring person.

He has three youngsters. He has a 10 year old that does nine grade maths and he has a six year old boy who’s a scoundrel, but bright and pretty handsome and then a four-year-old daughter that can converse with you like a grownup.

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

**Joseph:** I had a sister Helen, who was up to something all the time. My oldest sister Lillian, they used to call her Steve, she was a tomboy. She had a rooster that used to follow her all over.

**Kate:** You’re laughing. Do you have any other anecdotes about Helen or your older sister or your brothers?

**Joseph:** Helen was a sort of girl, she was attractive, but I wouldn’t say she was pretty. If she would walk into a room with six men in it and there were three other women, everybody would be around Helen.

**Kate:** What was the religious life? Turning to your religious life like?

**Joseph:** I was never religious. I always knew there was a God, I believe in God but I was never religious.

**Kate:** Were your parents?

**Joseph:** My father, yes. I got something to tell you, this is going to be very funny. My mother used to buy expensive French hats and in those days if you paid $25 for a hat, it’s like 250 now or more. My father always had cats in the house, I told you that, so mother was hiding a hat from my father and she put it under the bed for safekeeping in a box. There’s a holiday my mother wanted to get dressed up to go to the synagogue so she puts the hat on and …

**Kate:** There were kittens in the hat?

**Joseph:** My father said, “Regardless of what that cost you, I’ll pay you double.” He got such a big kick out of it. You wanted an anecdote, that’s different.

**Kate:** The synagogue, how close was it to your house? Do you remember it? Was it very close?

**Joseph:** In Detroit here, I would say four or five blocks. Are we being timed?

**Male:** No just [inaudible 00:14:20].

**Kate:** Is it all right? Could you describe the synagogue? Do you remember at all the [inaudible 00:14:35] …?

**Joseph:** It was small.

**Kate:** Very small?

**Joseph:** Yeah, it was small. It was a house originally and then what they did they built on to it and it was [inaudible 00:14:47] street in Delray, Michigan.

**Kate:** Could you describe how you practiced religion in your house? Did it change when you came to the States?

**Joseph:** No. My father wasn’t particularly a religious man but he knew all the right things and he belonged to a synagogue all the time.

**Kate:** Did you experience any religious persecution or prejudice of any sort?

**Joseph:** You always get that but they weren’t bad in Delray.

**Kate:** Describe a holiday celebration in your family, the take on food, music.

**Joseph:** My mother was an excellent cook and baker. Music, we used to go Hungarian Village and listen to the gypsy bands. Ever hear of the Hungarian Village?

**Kate:** Yes. Do you have any religious holidays that you celebrated?

**Joseph:** Yes, there was several which I still celebrate.

**Kate:** Which ones do you celebrate now?

**Joseph:** Yom Kippur, Rosh Hashanah.

**Kate:** When your family would get together for Yom Kippur, what would you do?

**Joseph:** We’d have a nice big meal and we’d get together.

**Kate:** Were there any rituals that you’d go through?

**Joseph:** Yes, like any religion. The only thing is in our religion I think they’re a little simpler.

**Kate:** What about your school life, did you go to school?

**Joseph:** Yes, high school.

**Kate:** Where was that school?

**Joseph:** South Western High School.

**Kate:** But when you were back in Hungary did you go to school?

**Joseph:** I went till the first grade.

**Kate:** Till the first grade in Hungary?

**Joseph:** Yes.

**Kate:** Where was that school?

**Joseph:** In Budapest.

**Kate:** Was it crowded at the school?

**Joseph:** Yes. I told you it was compulsory to go to school in Hungary. It’s the first country in the world.

**Kate:** Do you remember any specific teachers or playmates in Hungary?

**Joseph:** No, that was so long ago.

**Kate:** Did you learn English before coming to the United States?

**Joseph:** No.

**Kate:** Still back in Hungary, what did you do for entertainment as a child in Hungary? Do you remember anything?

**Joseph:** We would go to shows. There was always picnics and there was musicals in a park, you know the band Poison? This is city life, country life is something else.

**Kate:** You have any favorite childhood story before coming to the States? Anything you remember back then?

**Joseph:** I read a couple of poems in Hungary kindergarten, I guess.

**Kate:** About coming to America, who decided to come to the United States?

**Joseph:** My father.

**Kate:** Did you already know someone who was here before you came?

**Joseph:** He had friends and he had a brother here in Nashville, Tennessee, David Leichtman and his sister also.

**Kate:** Did they send money for you to come?

**Joseph:** No.

**Kate:** Do you remember getting for and getting ready the papers and all the preparation to come?

**Joseph:** Yes.

**Kate:** Could you describe that, do you think?

**Joseph:** It’s pretty hard. It was over 70 years ago. I know we were pretty busy, what to take, what not to take, what to give away, what to sell.

**Kate:** You were how old at that time? Six or seven?

**Joseph:** Seven years old.

**Kate:** Did you want to come to the States? Do you remember how you felt?

**Joseph:** I suppose so, yes.

**Kate:** What was the family’s feeling about coming? Was it [crosstalk 00:19:40] …?

**Joseph:** Anything new is good.

**Kate:** What did you know about America before you came?

**Joseph:** It was a big country, a free country and they used to say that gold grew on the streets.

**Kate:** How did your mother feel about leaving? Do you remember?

**Joseph:** My mother was in this country one time before. She came to visit some relatives and then went back to Hungary. She knew a few words of English. Of course she didn’t stay here very long.

**Kate:** How did your father feel about coming?

**Joseph:** He wanted to save his boys, so he wanted to come.

**Kate:** What do you mean by save his boys?

**Joseph:** They were recruiting for the army already. They were getting ready for a war.

**Kate:** Your father was trying to prevent his sons from going?

**Joseph:** That’s right, from being soldiers.

**Kate:** Did anyone give you a goodbye party before you left?

**Joseph:** I think some cousins did.

**Kate:** Do you remember very much about that at all?

**Joseph:** Not too much. My cousin who was eight, nine or 10 years older than I, we brought him out from the old country. He used to remind us of his parents, his family. He used to live in Windsor. He’d come across and tell us about his family. They were well educated people. One fellow was a professor I think he gave classes in 10 or 11 languages, including Armenian.

**Kate:** When you go back to this time do you remember what luggage you packed or the family packed?

**Joseph:** We had suitcases, big ones, and we had a steamer trunk. We packed all our clothes and a few valuables.

**Kate:** What valuables did you take for example?

**Joseph:** [Inaudible 00:22:08], mortar, what else comes with a mortar? Candlesticks and mortar, I think that’s it, isn’t it? In the old days?

**Kate:** As a small child did you remember what you took?

**Joseph:** Maybe a toy of some kind.

**Kate:** You don’t have it still, do you?

**Joseph:** No.

**Kate:** What did you leave behind?

**Joseph:** We left our furniture behind, we left clothes behind. We left pictures behind but I think you would have been interested in some of the pictures that I had -That I have, but they’re not over here yet.

**Kate:** You just got here?

**Joseph:** Yes.

**Kate:** Did you take any food with you?

**Joseph:** You always took food in the old days because restaurants weren’t around the corner. You always had some biscuits of some kind or I know hard boiled eggs was a big past time in those days. You travelled, you took hard boiled eggs.

**Kate:** Did you take any special belongings? Do you have anything you still had then?

**Joseph:** Yeah we have the mortar, the candlesticks and the powder.

**Kate:** Who came to America with you? The entire family or…?

**Joseph:** Entire family.

**Kate:** 12 children?

**Joseph:** No, seven. There were only seven left by then because the infant mortality in those days was very big, especially if you didn’t live in the city.Anything else you want to ask?

**Kate:** What port did you leave from? To get to the voyage now, what port did you …?

**Joseph:** Italy [inaudible 00:24:17].

**Kate:** I think we have it here actually from the …

**Joseph:** Trieste.

**Kate:** Yes.

**Joseph:** Is it?

**Kate:** Yeah, Trieste or Fiume.

**Joseph:** Fiume.

**Kate:** You went to Italy first then, is that it?

**Joseph:** Yes.

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

**Joseph:** Went by train. You see at that time Austria-Hungary owned Trieste and Fiume, it was their port.

**Kate:** What was the journey like, that train trip? Do you remember anything of that?

**Joseph:** It was a little more [inaudible 00:24:58] than you would get today, but it was nice. Our whole family, we always had something to do.

**Kate:** Do you have any stories about that process at all?

**Joseph:** All I know is it took us 28 days.

**Kate:** To get from the train trip to the boat?

**Joseph:** No.

**Kate:** Across the ocean, once you got there?

**Joseph:** Yeah.

**Kate:** What was the name of the ship?

**Joseph:** Ultonia.

**Kate:** Could you just spell that, you think?

**Joseph:** U-L-T-O-N-I-A, I might be wrong, but it’s close enough.

**Kate:** When you got to the port did you have to wait for the boat? Do you remember?

**Joseph:** Yes.

**Kate:** How long did you have to wait?

**Joseph:** Two, three days.

**Kate:** Where did you stay then that time?

**Joseph:** I think it was a hotel.

**Kate:** With whom?

**Joseph:** All of us.

**Kate:** You stayed three days?

**Joseph:** Yes.

**Kate:** How was that, waiting for the boat?

**Joseph:** I guess we were anxious to get to America.

**Kate:** Did any family members come with you to see you off?

**Joseph:** No. They all stayed in Hungary. Now they had a depression at that time, that’s why they were starting a war.

**Kate:** When did the ship depart? Do you remember the month and year when the ship left?

**Joseph:** We arrived here in June or July in 1913. I guess when the [inaudible 00:26:39], I think the trip took us one month completely.

**Kate:** Going back to the ship now, what was it like on the ship? What type of accommodations did you have?

**Joseph:** We were divided in different classes. We had good accommodations.

**Kate:** What class did you travel in? Do you remember?

**Joseph:** No, I don’t.

**Kate:** Could you describe the dining room or where you slept in that?

**Joseph:** The dining room was big, it had long benches. Every nationality usually stuck together, the Italians, the Hungarians. I think the boat came from Russia, they went along the coast. All I know is that Ultonia was sunk. Was a British ship, by the Germans in 1913 or 14 or 15.

**Kate:** Not while you were on it obviously?

**Joseph:** No.

**Kate:** What was the food like? Do you remember?

**Joseph:** The food?

**Kate:** Do you remember anything about the food on that ship?

**Joseph:** I don’t remember much. I know they gave you adequate food.

**Kate:** Were you allowed on deck at all?

**Joseph:** Sure.

**Kate:** What did you see or hear or smell at that time? Do you remember the deck? Being on the deck of the boat?

**Joseph:** None of those boats smelled good, I can tell you that much.

**Kate:** Was it rough or smooth?

**Joseph:** Rough.

**Kate:** Do you remember anyone being ill, any of your family?

**Joseph:** I think my mother and I might have been, because I was the youngest.

**Kate:** Of that whole experience on the boat, do you remember anything, a story that sticks out in your mind about that trip?

**Joseph:** All of the women that came to say goodbye to their families, all they wanted my mother to do is take care of their sons. See that he scores a wife, he was eating right.

**Kate:** These were boys without families then?

**Joseph:** Yeah, without families.

**Kate:** Was that moving? Was it a very moving or a tearful time or?

**Joseph:** It is all the time when you say goodbye.

**Kate:** Were there any activities on the boat?

**Joseph:** Yes, they had music and singing.

**Kate:** Did you play any games or?

**Joseph:** Kid games.

**Kate:** Were there many children?

**Joseph:** I guess so.

**Kate:** How long you said the voyage was?

**Joseph:** I think the whole trip took us 28 days.

**Kate:** When you got to sea, do you remember seeing land for the first time?

**Joseph:** Yes, it’s an experience.

**Kate:** How was it?

**Joseph:** Everybody was, “Hooray”, cheering, “We’re here.”

**Kate:** Where were you when they first sighted it? Were you inside the boat?

**Joseph:** I was on deck.

**Kate:** Do you remember seeing the Statue of Liberty for the first time?

**Joseph:** Yes I do.

**Kate:** What was it like?

**Joseph:** It was heaven, new experience.

**Kate:** Did everyone on the boat have a similar reaction?

**Joseph:** Yeah. They didn’t want the boat to tip over, so they told people to get on one side of the boat or the other.

**Kate:** Because they were rushing on deck?

**Joseph:** Yeah.

**Kate:** Everyone was basically very happy?

**Joseph:** Yes.

**Kate:** What was your first impressions of seeing New York City from the boat?

**Joseph:** Busy.

**Kate:** Did you see the skyscraper?

**Joseph:** Yes. Skyscrapers, the tall buildings, that’s the same thing. Traffic.

**Kate:** When you arrived at Ellis Island, how did you get from the ship to Ellis Island? Do you remember?

**Joseph:** I think they had- what do they call those boats that go between?

**Kate:** A shuttle back and forth?

**Joseph:** Shuttle, yeah.

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

**Joseph:** Yes.

**Kate:** What did you see?

**Joseph:** I saw a great big building and lots of big buildings. It was very busy, people were going this way and that way, some people were getting off the island, some were coming on. It’s a big city.

**Kate:** Remember Ellis Island, do you remember inside the building at all when you got in there?

**Joseph:** Yeah. They had cages just separations. They had the immigration inspectors, agents talking to people. It’s funny how they combine names. If the other guy was Corn and they just had a Corn and they couldn’t pronounce a name, they’d put that down Corn for the …

**Kate:** How did you feel when you saw those cages as a young child? What was your impression of those cages?

**Joseph:** I was well protected, I had my family there and I had my mother. I had a security blanket.

**Kate:** Were you excited?

**Joseph:** Yes, I wanted to see my dad.

**Kate:** He was waiting there?

**Joseph:** Yeah.

**Kate:** Your dad didn’t come on the voyage with you?

**Joseph:** No, he was already here. He came here three months before.

**Kate:** He sent for his family?

**Joseph:** Yeah.

**Kate:** I see.

**Joseph:** There is something that we have to correct. We had a big flat, he bought furniture. We had a great big meal when we arrived at our house. New York City, I forget whether it was 78 or 79 or 84th Street in First Avenue from First Avenue and Avenue Way.

Here’s something that I want to tell you. My father, who never worked for anybody in his life, got a job for $8 a week working for a dry goods store. He was with them for about a year and he bought his own place. He bought a store in 64th street in First Avenue. Do you know the section?

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

**Joseph:** It’s very expensive there right now. He had a dry goods store that was doing all right, we made a living but he had a friend in Detroit so he came to visit his friend. After my father saw how many Hungarians there were in Delray, he didn’t even go back to New York. All he had us do was pack everything up and he rented a store in Delray and we were successful there.

**Kate:** Back a little bit to-there’s some questions they’ve asked me to say. When you were at the Ellis Island, do you remember what everybody was wearing then? What were the cloths at the time?

**Joseph:** It was what everybody wore. They had suits, some of them with little belts, men suits. They had corduroy trousers. It’s according to what country they came from.

**Kate:** What was your family wearing at that time?

**Joseph:** Pants and jackets.

**Kate:** When you got into Ellis Island did they dress up to get into Ellis Island or?

**Joseph:** You put on your best suit.

**Kate:** Was it crowded when you got in?

**Joseph:** Yes.

**Kate:** Was it clean?

**Joseph:** For those times it was clean, nowadays, I wouldn’t say it would be clean.

**Kate:** How were you treated by the staff there?

**Joseph:** We were treated nicely.

**Kate:** Were they polite?

**Joseph:** Yes. Let me tell you something, they were much more polite than they are today.

**Kate:** What about medical examination? Did you get a medical examination?

**Joseph:** Yes otherwise they wouldn’t let you into the country.

**Kate:** What do they do?

**Joseph:** They inspect you for diseases, lung disease, if you had any scabs. They did a lot of things.

**Kate:** Where did they do this examination?

**Joseph:** They had a place that was squatted off.

**Kate:** Did everybody have the same examination?

**Joseph:** Yes.

**Kate:** Describe any of the people, the things that you saw at Ellis Island when you were there, do you remember?

**Joseph:** Some people were not allowed to come into the country, they were shipped back. There was a lot of crying and howling and it was confusion.

**Kate:** Were any of you frightened you’d be rejected?

**Joseph:** No.

**Kate:** Were you detained at Ellis Island?

**Joseph:** No.

**Kate:** Were you entertained at all while you were at Ellis Island?

**Joseph:** No,

**Kate:** It wasn’t …

**Joseph:** They gave us a meal or two.

**Kate:** Who came to meet you?

**Joseph:** I think my father and his friend.

**Kate:** How did you leave Ellis Island? Do you remember?

**Joseph:** Subway, I think so.

**Kate:** You took a boat to the subway?

**Joseph:** Yeah.

**Kate:** What were your expectations about America before you came? You were a child so …

**Joseph:** I was interested in seeing other children.

**Kate:** When you left where did you go after Ellis Island then? When your father came to greet you where did he take you?

**Joseph:** He took us to our apartment.

**Kate:** How many rooms were in that apartment?

**Joseph:** It was big, big cold water flat.

**Kate:** How many people were living in it?

**Joseph:** There were seven children, my father and mother.

**Kate:** How was it furnished? Do you remember?

**Joseph:** Old fashion, lot of sofas.

**Kate:** How was it lit?

**Joseph:** A gas light.

**Kate:** How was it heated?

**Joseph:** I guess the coal stove in the kitchen.

**Kate:** Was there indoor plumbing?

**Joseph:** Yes, absolutely.

**Kate:** What about the neighborhood at that time? How was it?

**Joseph:** It was all right.

**Kate:** Describe it a bit.

**Joseph:** As I told you before, most of these people they were ethnic. All the Hungarians would be with the Hungarians, the Russians would be with the Russians. They got along. They all had their own miseries.

**Kate:** Did you have any family members living nearby besides?

**Joseph:** My father had some cousins. They came and stayed with us.

**Kate:** Did you get along well with the neighborhood?

**Joseph:** Yes.

**Kate:** What types of jobs did your family members get when they got here?

**Joseph:** They were clerks. Then when my father went into business they’d work for my father.

**Kate:** You were too young to work when you got there?

**Joseph:** Yes.

**Kate:** Did you go to school then immediately?

**Joseph:** Yes.

**Kate:** Which school? Which building class were you in?

**Joseph:** It’s something that I hadn’t talked about in 65, 70 years.

**Kate:** You don’t remember the school [inaudible 00:41:14]?

**Joseph:** No. I went to the neighborhood schools wherever we lived.

**Kate:** Did you remember it feeling that it was a good experience when you came here?

**Joseph:** Yes, very good experience.

**Kate:** Do you remember any of the teachers at that time?

**Joseph:** No, but I remember some people who were nice to us.

**Kate:** Who were they?

**Joseph:** A butcher that my mother went to, the grocery store that my mother went to, they were real nice to us.

**Kate:** You felt welcome when you got here?

**Joseph:** Yes.

**Kate:** How did you learn English?

**Joseph:** By going to school.

**Kate:** You remember first not understanding at all?

**Joseph:** You learn fast.

**Kate:** At that age, yeah.

**Joseph:** I had a neighbor. He didn’t know how to ask to go to the bathroom so he did it in his pants.

**Kate:** Was it a difficult time learning English for you?

**Joseph:** I don’t think so.

**Kate:** How about your family members, how did they learn?

**Joseph:** By going to night school.

**Kate:** Is there any stories that you associate with learning English in the family?

**Joseph:** Yeah, I can tell you one but it isn’t nice.

**Kate:** It isn’t nice? That’s all right, doesn’t need to be nice.

**Joseph:** I don’t know what else to tell you.

**Kate:** Did you experience any bigotry or persecution?

**Joseph:** You do that every neighborhood you go to, you have to or roll with the times.

**Kate:** What about religious life here? Did your religious life change when you came to America?

**Joseph:** No.

**Kate:** Did you live near a synagogue here?

**Joseph:** In Detroit?

**Kate:** Yeah.

**Joseph:** Yeah, there was a synagogue in Delray.

**Kate:** Who was more religious your mother or your father?

**Joseph:** My mother.

**Kate:** Here?

**Joseph:** Yeah.

**Kate:** Your father was in Hungary more religious?

**Joseph:** Yes.

**Kate:** But here your mother was?

**Joseph:** Yes.

**Kate:** What year did you move from the New York address to the Delray one? Do you remember what that year was?

**Joseph:** 16.

**Kate:** 1916. How long did you live in Delray then, your family?

**Joseph:** From 16 to 32 or 33, it’s about 16 years.

**Kate:** What was the address there in Delray? Do you remember?

**Joseph:** 7918 or 7924 West Jefferson Avenue.

**Kate:** What did you do for entertainment back then when you lived in Delray?

**Joseph:** We had the Hungarian Village, we had shows, there were football games.

**Kate:** How did your family members, your father, your mother, your brothers and sisters, how did they adjust to life in America?

**Joseph:** Pretty well.

**Kate:** Was it relatively easy for them?

**Joseph:** Yes. When there’s a large family, one helps the other.

**Kate:** Did anyone return to live in their country? Go back to Hungary, did anyone?

**Joseph:** No.

**Kate:** Was your family satisfied or dissatisfied with America?

**Joseph:** No, they weren’t.

**Kate:** They weren’t what?

**Joseph:** Dissatisfied.

**Kate:** Your father and mother, did they adjust to life differently?

**Joseph:** They all do. In those days the man was the strong one.

**Kate:** Did you have any family tragedies during those years in Delray?

**Joseph:** Every family has a tragedy. It’s something that I rather not talk about.

**Kate:** Can you talk about your life here in America, what happened, if you got married, if you have children …?

**Joseph:** I got married. I have one son that I told you about and he’s a very nice gentleman. You can’t beat him for a son.

**Kate:** Was your wife Hungarian?

**Joseph:** No, she was of Russian descent.

**Kate:** How did you meet?

**Joseph:** A friend of mine had a boat on Detroit River. The girl that I took, he married, and the girl that he brought I married.

**Kate:** You had one son, did he speak Hungarian?

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

**Kate:** Did he ever go back to Hungary to see where you’re from?

**Joseph:** No.

**Kate:** Basically he’s very American?

**Joseph:** Yes.

**Kate:** Are you happy you came to America?

**Joseph:** Sure, where would I be today? I wouldn’t be alive I’m sure.

**Kate:** Were your parents or brothers and sisters were they all happy or how did they feel about coming to America?

**Joseph:** They were all happy.

**Kate:** Is there anything else you’d like to say? Anything about your experience living in America as a young man or as a …?

**Joseph:** All I can tell you is this is the most wonderful country in the world. I wish everybody had it as easy as we Americans have it here even with hard work, laboring all hours of the day. It is much better to be here under stressful times than it is to be in Europe on the good times.

**Kate:** That’s a good place to end this interview. I want to thank you for taking time to come out …

**Joseph:** Now what happens to this? Just file it and that’s all?

**Kate:** No, wait. We’ll talk about that and what we’ll do with the interview. We just want to say on behalf of the archives, we appreciate this. What I have to say is... this is Kate Moore signing off with Joseph Leichtman on December 4th 1993 for the Ellis Island Oral History Project.