**Levine**: This is Janet Levine for the National Park Service. It’s Monday November 22nd-

**Spiro**: 21.

**Levine**: 21st sorry. Okay it’s the 21st of November 1994 and I am here with Mariolla Spiro, who lives in Worcester, Massachusetts. Mrs. Spiro came from Albania when she was 16 years old in 1932.

So I am looking forward to everything you can remember and I am very happy to be here. We’ll start at the beginning if you would just say your birth day?

**Spiro**: My birth day is August 16- I am sorry August 15th 1916.

**Levine**: Okay and where were you born?

**Spiro**: I was born in Korcha Albania.

**Levine**: Did you live in Korcha up until the time you left?

**Spiro**: I lived in Korcha till the time I came in this country.

**Levine**: And when you think about Korcha at least at that time when you were growing up-

**Spiro**: Korcha is a city and it was pretty but kind poor because lots of wars were before and they leave the country poor and people like the mans, the man of the house, they used to go and work. There wasn’t much over there so they have to go on other countries like Greece and especially mostly in America.

**Levine**: So would you say that the men-

**Spiro**: The men then, after the men sent us even in America and other countries-but mostly in America-then they take their wives and their children and they bring them in America.

**Levine**: And was that going on the whole time when you were growing up?

**Spiro**: Yes. Mostly like for instance me, my father was here because like I say was any work to keep the families and then after he brought me here.

**Levine**: When did your father leave?

**Spiro**: Well I was born like 1916. My father had left before. Then he went and he got married and he left my mother there pregnant with me and he came back in America and my mother had passed away after I was born.

I don’t remember my mother I must have been one year old. Then after that my father was here. He got married the second time because my mother passed away and he got married here. He had two girls. The wife passed away, the second wife. So he got married the third time then he brought me here with the third wife.

**Levine**: I see, by then you were 16 years old?

**Spiro**: I was 16. Then-

**Levine**: Well let me pause here just for a second. Okay we are resuming now turned off the coffee pot, so you were 16 so with whom did you live when your father was in America?

**Spiro**: I lived with my uncle- my father's brother and my grandmother-my father's mother. They raised me.

**Levine**: Oh, and were there other children in the home?

**Spiro**: My uncle's children. There were three of them. Me four and the grandmother and my uncle and his wife. They raised me, my father was here. He wasn’t sending much for me and we have a little bit- “Why don’t he take you in America with you and why we live you here? We can’t raise you because we got our own.

Finally- he wasn’t citizen so it was kind of hard for them to bring children when you weren’t citizen that time probably. Maybe now it’s different. So finally he brought me here.

**Levine**: So what was you uncle doing for work?

**Spiro**: Not much. He was working like in mills, factories, restaurants.

**Levine**: What kind of mills were there?

**Spiro**: The flour. How you call it?

**Levine**: Like a [unclear 00:05:15]?

**Spiro**: When they make the wheat the flour. And- I don’t know what to say--

**Levine**: I know what you mean. Okay, so he was doing a little of this and that?

**Spiro**: Yeah. And there want much pay and it was big family and he was kind angry with my father. “Why don’t he take you?” But I think that time it was depression year too in 1930, so probably wasn’t working good here and he couldn’t send over there much.

**Levine**: What idea did you have about your father? Because you had never seen him?

**Spiro**: I didn’t see my father. I don’t know my mother either. Well I wanted to come to my father but I was picturing America different. I don’t know I was young. I wanted to go in America you know.

**Levine**: When you were picturing it in Albania do you remember what you pictured it being like?

**Spiro**: Oh big things. Oh I go in America and I dressed up like this. Like we used to see some movies and some pictures on the magazines and things like that. But when I came here, I have a little hard time with my step mother-

**Levine**: Okay, let’s first keep talking about Albania and we'll go sort of in order of things. What was your uncle's name?

**Spiro**: Christa

**Levine**: And your grandmother?

**Spiro**: The name?

**Levine**: Yeah.

**Spiro**: Alexandra.

**Levine**: And do you remember things you did with your grandmother?

**Spiro**: Oh yes. I used to love her and she used to take me every place because like I didn’t have mother and I was you know there all the time. When she go someplace she used to take me too [laughter].

**Levine**: So she sort of watched after you?

**Spiro**: Oh yeah, yes and the aunt, my uncle's wife. She raised me too because I was in same house-