G: This is January 29, 1979 [ed. Glen Barbaras interviewing his mother, Eleanora Falk Barbaras]. Family Questions. Do you remember why did your mother and father decide to come to America?

E: Yes, because they felt they could make a better living here. They were working for a farmer, out there in Europe, and didn't earn much money of any kind so some of the cousins came here.

G: Had they already come earlier?

E: Yes, they had already come earlier. And so he followed, they wrote to him [ed. Alvin Falk, Pomerania, Prussia] and said he should come down, it was much better in America than home where they lived.

G: That was your dad's cousins.

E: Yes

G: Then what about your mother? [ed. Bertha Wilke, Pomerania, Prussia. Note that it was discovered in 2023 via DNA that Eleanora's birth mother was Bertha Wilke's younger sister, Wilhelminne]

E: It was about the same with the mother too. Her brother [ed. Hermann Wilke b. 1861] first came over [ed. early 1884], grandma's [ed. Glen's grandmother, Bertha Wilke] brother the older one. He didn't want to go in the army and he'd rather come to America so the mother prepared him and they had a friend in the police force or some such and he helped him get over the border because he was really of the age when he had to go into the army and he didn't care to do that so he got him to America and he got a job and then he earned money and sent it to the sister, my mother [ed. Bertha Wilke]. And she came over [ed. 15 Nov 1884]. Then the two went to work. She did house work and he was a forester he had learned the forestry trade and sent for the rest of the family. Then they sold what little things they had, like a couple of pigs and chickens and so on and brought the family over here. And mother worked. She landed in, um, what was that name, Pittsburgh…

G: No, Philadelphia

E: No, Pittsburgh and she couldn't talk English

G: Well, she didn't land there, on the boat.

E: No, not on the boat, that's right. But I mean settled in Pittsburgh, yes, and did housework. [ed. she arrived in Baltimore 15 Nov 1884]

G: Did her brother go with her then, to Pittsburgh?

E: He was already there, see he had…

G: Oh, he was in Pittsburgh, so then she came to Pittsburgh

E: Right. And they earned money and then she had met my father [ed. Alvin Falk] on the boat.

G: On the boat

E: And he was going direct to Milwaukee. His cousins had landed in Milwaukee and they wrote to him that he should come directly to Milwaukee because there was a lot of work to be gotten. And then he wrote to my mother and told her to, in Pittsburgh, when she was in Pittsburgh, and told her to come to Milwaukee. The city was more or less German and she would have no trouble getting any jobs or anything and that's what she and the brother then did. Went to Milwaukee and she got a job with some rich people on the East Side, mother did, and did the housework there. And he, I guess, went on with his forestry because he fell out of a, was it some fruit tree he was trimming and broke his arm and it wasn't set right and peritonitis set in and he died.
[ed. Alvin Falk and Bertha Wilke met each other on the ship Hermann which sailed from Bremen and arrived in Baltimore 15 Nov 1884. Next to Bertha in the single women's exit line was Mathilde Falk, Alvin's 17 y.o. sister]

G: Gee, how old was he then do you suppose? He was still a young man. [ed. He was 24]

E: He was still a young man, yes, in the twenties or so and by the, I don't really recall now whether mother and the rest of the family got here and the father got a job, ah, in the building line, bringing cement up for the builders, you know, for the…

G: For the bricklayers? [ed. Albert Wilke, the father, listed as a mason in the 1886 Milwaukee directory]

E: For the bricklayers and so on. He fell backwards on an iron picket fence and he died. So then they struggled on and got work here in Milwaukee and went on from there as little as, you know, just very very poorly. But they made it, they stayed here, and they made it and they bought these small little houses [ed. West Medford Ave.] and two families lived in one place, you know. So, I don't know…
[ed. The 5-Jul-1890 issue of The Weekly Wisconsin reports that he was overcome by the heat while working on a new building on Jackson St. and fell off 4th floor scaffolding to the pavement. Died of skull fracture.]

G: But, all the time your father was still, stayed in Milwaukee or was he

E: Ya, no, he was in Milwaukee then and I don't know if, when they got married or anything. It was very very small, not much of a wedding or anything like that in them days, you know. Until Aunt Emma [ed. Emma Wilke, married Gutknecht] and Aunt Ida [ed. Ida Wilke married August Raddatz], the Raddatzes and Gutknechts, they got married. And her sister, Ida, married her cousin, her own cousin.

[5:49]
G: Well, did they and Emma and Ida, were they part of the family that came over?

E: Yes.

G: They were the cousins, then. They were your mother's…

E: No, they my mother's sisters.

G: And Emma was your mother's sister.

E: And Ida too.

G: Ya. And, so they were part of the family they wrote to come over, they all came over and they all came to Milwaukee.

E: Right. And these rich people gave my mother a lot of household utensils, and we have that white high chair, we have the little potty chair, and we have the white, the kitchen chairs that the, ah, Liz has in her basement now, the seats are about this thick. You couldn't wear them out if you tried

G: Solid wooden chairs.

E: Ya. And a lot of dishes and little things, odds and ends that a family would need. And that's how they started up the, those rich people let them live in the basement of their house until they became settled and got a place to live, some little house, on Medford Ave. where our house stood, too, you know. And, slowly they, you know, worked their way up.

G: Well, when did they, ah… OK, they got married but then, when you were born, were they living in their own house then? Or were, do you remember?

E: I can't even, I don't even know.

G: So, you don't know when they bought the house on that picture?

E: No, no. Then we went to Zion's Church, I remember. From there, Nazareth was built and we were, we were divided.

G: The congregation was divided, ya.

E: The two churches. That's all I…

G: And Zion, has Zion had a church school too?

E: Yes.

G: And then Nazareth, did they had a church school when they were built?

E: Ya.

G: And then you went, the whole family went there?

E: At first, I went to Elm Street school until those schools were built. Now, I don't know what year or when that was. I always had my pictures and stuff, you know, but now, with moving, everything has been thrown away

G: But then you transferred from Elm Street school to Nazareth

E: To parochial school, ya. After it was finished.

G: And then you went through, what, sixth grade or seventh grade? How…

E: I imagine sixth grade, maybe seventh, maybe I would say seventh. I doubt it, though. I had very little school.

G: They had no junior high schools…

[8:40]
E: No

G: …Lutheran schools at that time. That was the…

E: They had mostly, ah, parochial schools, you know. Until way later when they built more schools. But then I went to Nazareth and was confirmed from there. And I think that you only had to be fourteen years in order to get a job. And, for the most part, the German people worked for the rich that came over here, you know. Like Miss Muth [ed. Wilhelmina Wilke, Eleanora's biological mother and younger sister of Bertha Wilke, her adoptive mother] that was mother's, my mother's sister also. And she worked for, I can't think of the name now even. I can't think of the name, I knew it… [ed. This is the pivotal information that led to the identification of Wilhelmina's pre-marriage partner and the Macks, the East Side family that employed them]

G: But it was a local rich person. What did she do for them? Household…?

E: Just household work

G: Cleaning? Cooking?

E: Cooking and cleaning. And, you know, they had these houses on the East Side, you know. I don't know how they got back and forth. They had horse, I was very very small when we had horse cars here in Milwaukee. I can't seem to remember so I must have been very small when that was taking place. And, later on, they had the other, little by little they got the other street cars and so on and so forth. But most people walked to work regardless of how far because they could walk faster than the horse cars could take them to their places, you know, to their job. Well, of course, the girls, they couldn't go home very often. They had to sleep in. And stay there. I mean, I don't know whether they could get home maybe once a month or what, to just visit home, that's all. [*ed. In the 1900 census, Emma is listed as a servant at 2220 Fond du Lac and Ida is listed as a servant in the home of Bernard Stern at 545 Astor Street*]

G: Otherwise, they just lived with the people they were working for.

E: Ya, they just lived there, yes. [ed. Wilhelmina Wilke, Eleanora's biological mother, probably worked for the Mack family at 543 Marshall St. Henry McCrory, recently widowed, also worked there as the live-in coachman and is Eleanora's biological father. Bertha Wilke, 10 years older than Wilhelmina, and husband, Alvin Falk, already had two boys, they quietly adopted Eleanora. No father is listed on the birth certificate]

G: But then, how did the men get to their jobs, they would just walk?

E: Everybody just more or less just walked when they were young like that. They walked to work. Of course, that was a little bit before my time. By that time, when I

got to work then they had the street cars already. But we walked. We didn't have the money.

[11:18]

G: You probably didn't have that many street cars and…

E: No, we didn't have that money to…

G: So, unless you went a long distance across town, why, then you walked.

E: Right so far away I can't even think…

[Break]

G: Ah, what did grandpa do, your father then, what kind of work did he start doing? Did you say once he started to work in a brewery, before he was an ironworker?

E: I don't know if he worked in a brewery first or if he started his iron work right away, that I can't, I can't answer that either. I just don't know which job he did first but I know that he worked for a time in the brewery and then he did all this oriental… [*ed. He is listed as a brewer in the 1902 directory after which he reverts to his previous iron worker status*]

G: Ornamental

E: Ornamental, right

G: Iron work

E: Iron work, which he had learned for four years out in the old country, out in…

G: Germany

E: It seemed like every man had to go and learn some kind of a trade, out in Germany for four years before you could really get a decent job. In the bigger city or so on

G: Well, ya, did they have the apprentice program? You had to be an apprentice or a helper probably, a learner

E: Yes, right, a learner

G: For four years

E: Right

G: And then you could practice your trade, I suppose

E: Yes, then you could go out and practice your trade and later on when he did this ornamental iron work and he worked closer by where we lived, on 30th Street, he worked for schools after he didn't work in the brewery anymore. Then he did all the

other iron work, too, in buildings like I think setting up the buildings, you know, the framework and so on, not just all the ornamental work.

G: You said he did a lot of, did some work on fancy gates

E: Fancy gates and iron work, the fences around, because all those rich people had their places fenced in, in tall fences. And they had a nice fancy gate in front, and so on. And those are the things that he helped make. He could bend most any iron to any kind of a, whatever he wanted to make, you know. He knew how to bend the different irons and get them hot and then calm them and so on. Then he was a, he was a blacksmith also, when he moved to the neighborhood where we lived on 21st, by Sears, across the street. There was a great big blacksmith shop and he worked there. [*ed. The 1910 map shows a fence & iron work shop and a wagon shop on the other side of North Ave. between 21st and 20th streets.*] I remember very well that I was a lot, I was older already when a horse had kicked him in the, in his jaw. Oh, that was terrible, but everything healed up well. And from then, from the blacksmith shop he went to schools and did the iron work on buildings when they set them up, you know. And he worked there until, until he retired. He was, yes, he worked for schools all the while.

[14:55]
G: Then after he retired you don't know how old he was when he, when he retired?

E: That's it, I don't know how old he was

G: But, then he…

E: I don't know whether he had to retire and then he did a little janitor work in the church.

G: Ya, he was a janitor at

E: Yes

G: At Nazareth Church

E: He couldn't work in the shop like that anymore

G: Was his, his health was still alright then, though. Did he know that he had diabetes by that time?

E: No, no, he didn't know until his foot became infected. That I don't know what year that was anymore

G: Well, that was after I was born because I remember even the first, when the first one was his big toe and it got infected and then I remember the second one, the second leg

E: The second one I guess he was seventy-two when that was taken off or was that the first one? I can't remember that now, either. And then he lived until, until he was eighty-two. Right? He was, or almost eighty-two when he died. My gosh. See, there wasn't too much doing those days. Everything was very quiet. People had to get up

very early in the morning because they had to walk to work and life was not a bed of roses really, it was really hard hard work.

G: Well, what, when you were a little girl what do you remember besides going to school. What kinds of things did you do?

E: Well…

G: Just play games or

E: Various, well, minor games, you know, like, in German, of course, the [Alten sass im ledenstein er kämmtes sich ihr goldenes Haar] and somebody would comb, you know, and comb, what do you really call that when, when you repeat after anyone or so? And such kind of things or you played, Pum Pum Pullaway or you played [alle alle in tern] going through the alleys you had to hide things and then you had to go around and look for them. We didn't have many play things at that time.

G; There weren't, what about playgrounds, there probably weren't many playgrounds

E: No there were no play, no playgrounds, ya. There were no playgrounds, no.

G: Were the streets, do you remember were they paved at that time or were they just kind of gravel?

E: No, they had many cobblestone streets, many of them. Like the main streets where the street car tracks would be running, that was cobblestones they had made. Later on they had these wooden blocks, I don't know what they called them. They had those for, for, to lay their tracks.

G: No asphalt or cement in those days.

E: No, no.

G: Then the street in front of your house, do you remember was that just a dirt street.

E: Ya, ya, that was just a dirt street.

G: And the when did, when did Aunt Emma move over next door to you? Or did they all buy those houses?

[18:28]

E: Well, after, after grandpa [ed. Alvin Falk and his brother Bill] had bought that house then his brother from Chicago, Bill, you know, he built a house next door, where Florence [ed. Gutknecht, no. 2422] lived. And we rented that and then we could plant in the two lots like corn, potatoes, and everything like that for our vegetables. And, later on, when Aunt Emma [ed. Emma Wilke married Herman Gutknecht; Florence was their child] got married then she bought that house from Bill, lived in Chicago.

G: Right, he, Bill built the house when you say that we rented it you mean the whole family or other members of the family moved in, like was Aunt Emma living before she was married?

E: No, no, she lived further down the block where the Muths lived [ed. The Wilke family grew up at 2408; after they all moved out Jacob Muth and wife, Minnie Wilke, moved in. Unknown to all is that Minnie Wilke was Eleanora's biological mother] .

G: Oh.

E: She lived, the grandma [ed. Wilhelmina Wilke, Eleanora's grandmother] in the front part of the house and the Muths lived in the back part. I don't know how many rooms they had, maybe one or two bedrooms or so on. And they had only, I guess, one bedroom. I don't know where the boys, they must have been home. I can't imagine where they were, where they else were. And then they lived for rent, Aunt Emma, and after a while my uncle started, he wanted to sell that house. And then they bought it. And I think that they paid $1700 for it. Those houses were…

G: This was after they were married?

E: Ya. They were only all half-built. They had no good foundation, just a wooden foundation. It was very, how should I say, very poorly built. And the people just kept on remodeling and remodeling until they finally got it the way they wanted it, you know. And then after that came this era where, of segregation and all that came in and the neighborhood became bad.

G: But the house you lived in, the house your father lived in, was already, had already been built by somebody else.

E: Yes

G: They bought that, he didn't build that.

E: No, that, it was just a small house, though. And my mother said that the people had kept chickens in the bedroom. And every morning when they woke up they were so full of chicken lice that they couldn't stand it so then they bought white wash. I don't know how that's made, whether it's made with water or what and they white-washed the whole inside. I don't how many rooms there were in there at all. I have no idea because we had our kitchen in the basement so that we had the sleeping rooms upstairs first. Later on, they built a room way upstairs for the boys.

G: Well, now what, there was no second floor there, at first?

E: No, just the attic.

G: Just an attic

E: And there was that little house across the street from us, if you remember, towards the corner. His father had owned, had owned the house that we built, that we bought. And I know that was so funny later on. His father-in-law built, bought that house, that flat facing us and then he built himself that little house on the corner, if you remember that little house.

G: Ya, ya.

E: And that's what's now burned down by the colored people. Three houses were burned down in our block right after…

G: After you moved. Well, OK then you raised, you had a vegetable garden…

E: Ya

G: …in the backyard and did you still chickens at that time?

E: Chickens, ducks, geese.

G: All in the backyard?

E: Ya. And rabbits, was a very good meat food.

G: Cause where did you, did they have stores in the, when you were a little girl, in the area? Or did you mostly raise your own food

E: Ya, mostly. And when I was a bigger girl already then Steinmeyer's* had a store on 3rd St. and if you called them up and gave them a, well, a number of things to bring, then they'd come with the horse and wagon and bring it on a certain day when they came in the neighborhood

[* Ed. http://content.mpl.org/cdm4/item_viewer.php?CISOROOT=/RememberWhe&CISOPTR=454&CISOBOX=1&REC=6]

G: Alright you called you didn't have a telephone yet when you were a little girl.

E: I don't know how they did that.

G: Well, maybe they told them, stopped down there and told them but you couldn't carry it back home.

E: That could be. Well, you see they bought their things in big quantities like flour in a hundred or two hundred pounds, sugar a hundred pounds, they bought in large quantities when you bought.

G: And then where'd you keep that, in the basement or where, did you just

E: I suppose upstairs, the people didn't have hardly no furniture, you know, just the little odds and ends that maybe somebody gave them or so on and so forth. It's really funny, it used to be so easy for me to remember the whole thing and now it seems…

G: Ya, it's a long time ago.

E: Ya, now it seems to be just…

G: But then Steinmeyer's had a wagon or something and they would just bring the sugar and the flour.

E: All those big heavy pieces

G: Things like that. What about like lard, how did you get that 'cause you didn't have, did you get that from the farm?

E: Things like lard we had, always had a farmer bring us a half a pig and a side of beef and then they made sausage, you know. Liver sausage and all this that and the other. My goodness.

G: That, you kept that, you smoked that and kept that for the winter then

E: Yes, kept that for the winter. Isn't that something.

G: That was your, that was probably your whole meat supply then, was the sausage.

E: it seems like we were always eating sausage

G: Or smoked meat or something

E: Yes.

G: Did you smoke the meat, too?

E: Yes, the shanks and the breast of the geese were smoked. And, what else did we have? There were smoked, I can't think of what else we had now. But that was a delicatessen, you can't buy that now, though.

G: Ya.

[25:25]
E: Steinmeyer's was, and Usinger's [ed. http://www.usinger.com/] were the only people who prepared it yet, I don't think they ever prepare it anymore. Nobody could buy it, it was just too expensive. I haven't heard about it for I don't know when. But we always made the, the geese were at, oh, when you have the harvest festival, what do you call that day?

G: Thanksgiving

E: Yes. Then you kill a geese, all the geese and the ducks and that then you made certain pieces of meat together and the [wiessetschlup], in German, of the neck of the geese, there's something in there and they cleaned that out and they, they cleaned it with salt, rubbed it

G: This is the neck, the throat

E: Ya, what's in the throat. And that you wound around there and tied it and that meat was always boiled later on when you wanted to eat it. They put it in great big stone jars. How they ever kept it, well, I suppose the winters were cold

G: But they saw that it was heavily salted, did you say, they put a lot of salt on it?

E: No, when they cleaned it, the stuff in there

G: Ya

E: They cleaned it with salt and then, of course, washed it after a while. And then wrapped it up and then put it in these big enamel crocks, what we used to make the beer and stuff in. And that also, they also took the sides of the…

G: The beef or pork

E: The pork and the beef and they smoked that and I think our meats were mostly boiled meats, years ago, if I can remember. We didn't do fried but, then again, like the ducks and the geese and all that, you used all that lard, you ate that. See, that was your butter, there was no butter.

G: You spread that on, the chicken fat and the goose fat on the bread

E: The [side] over it, ya. And you fixed the sides of the bacon, you know, so that you can put, slice that and fry it in a pan like they do now. I don't know how they preserved it. I forgot now. My god, was that terrible.

G: You were always saying, then you had potatoes, of course, from the garden

E: And when Fats would come home, later on, I guess when he gone working or something, I don't know, he was somewhere. And the minute he smelled that meat boiling then he turned away, he could not eat that meat, you know, it began to smell later on

G: But they boiled it to kill the bacteria

E: To kill the bacteria, ya

G: The growth on it, and then you ate it.

E: Oh my, when I think of it.

G: But it really got bad enough to smell

E: Yes. It must have been getting towards spring, or what, you know, otherwise it was always getting frozen. You had no basements that you could go into or live into or anything, that was just ground floor. There was no foundations of any kind.

G: When you said you cooked, you had your kitchen in the basement

E: Later on.

G: Oh.

E: See, when we're standing in front of that door on that picture that you have that was the door that we went in from the front. Well, we got upstairs. Later on, my father bought a large tin bathtub and he sheeted off the basement and there was, I guess the water came in or something like that. And then we could take our bath in that big tub. And they put a lamp up in there. Oh, my god, was that something.

G: Where did you, did you have a well and a pump for water, a pump in the back yard

E: Ya, outside, ya, and we had a well or a rain barrel in the basement, too, you know, where you get all the rainwater.

G: From the roof when it drains…

[30:06]
E: I don't know what we did with all, how we got all the water and stuff I don't really know. Oh, that was really primitive when I think of it now. I hadn't thought of it for a long long time. I only think now it's bad but it must have certainly been bad then and people had five, six, seven, eight children. Oh, I don't know how they all lived.

G: Then, when you got through with school then you went

E: Went back to work!

G: What did you do first then?

E: Housework, like all the other German people did. You went and you did housework. You got about, I guess I had two dollars a week. Or, a dollar and a half a week, that's how it was! We helped with the wash and the, and they had children, you know. That I can't understand it, I did so much crying in those days 'cause it was so hard, to rub on the boards so much, and there was no washing machine, oh my god. My father sort of made a kind of a washing machine. And I know you had to turn, there was a big wheel on it and you had to turn, you know, the wheel, to make the machine go. Isn't that something when I think of it!

E: And how did you, then you learned to be a seamstress.

E: Yes.

G: Where did you, did you go to school for that or where did you learn that?

E: Yes. You had, you went to a lady's house. She did all the sewing for Paula Euhlein [ed. See web refs]. No, that was the second place I worked. She did for rich people, too. On 21st St., 21st and Meinecke. Went to work. I guess that's where I earned two dollars after I had, no, I learned the trade right there. Six months it required.

G: You just, you worked with her and she showed you how to do the things.

E: Right.

G: And then you kept, then you kept working there but then earned money after you learned…

E: But I know, they paid so little. I went on 10th and North Avenue and they sewed for the rich people but they paid no money to their help and then Rice and Friedman were there. And Ida worked there and then I said to my mother, they always said that it was not good for the girls to work in factories with all the men and everybody together, although the men were downstairs. You never know what happens. But then I begged my mother, I wanted to go to Rice and Friedman, too. And then first

you had to button the shirts and throw them together and fold them. Then, after a while, I sewed on the machines. I sewed the collars for the, different collars for the shirts.

G: So, they were, they were a shirt factory. Did they…

E: Ya, shirts and coats

G: Just shirts?

E: No, coats and those heavy pants for the men to wear in the winter time and so on and so forth. Well, that's where I worked when I got married. That's where I still worked, at Rice and Friedman.

G: Then how did you meet, where did you meet Dad and how did you meet him?

E: Well, the Muths decided they would go rent their house and then Gerhardt [*ed. Valentine Gerhardt, 2318 Fond du Lac*] had a butcher shop on, between 26st, 25th and 26st and he said the tavern next door to him was going to be vacant. So, Jake was driving a, the wagon…

G: The beer wagon? [*ed. listed as "teamster" in 1904 directory*]

E: The wagon for Waukesha, at that time. Jake Muth

G: The Waukesha brewery

E: The Waukesha brewery and they were selling water. The few people who bought it

[tape 35:00]

G: And Jake Muth was the husband of…

E: Minnie. Minnie was my mother's, his wife was my mother's sister. Ya. And so it was so cold in winter to go on that high wagon and Gerhard said you can have a business and you can make an easier living. But he almost went broke in that place completely.

G: In a tavern.

E: Ya, next door to their butcher shop. So, then he sold them. He got all the meat trade and everything from him. Because they had twelve borders.

G: The Muths had twelve borders?

E: and they cooked. They had meat and potatoes for breakfast. And they, I had to make all them lunches, for them, those were carpenters and all, you know, common trades and…

G: Where did they live? In the front houses?

E: Upstairs, there was an upstairs and then the Muths lived, they lived upstairs. There were about three rooms, bedrooms. But then they had a third floor and there were some rooms up there.

G: This was the big house on the front of the lot then.

E: This was on Vliet St. now.

G: Oh, oh oh.

E: On Vliet St. between 25th and 26th.

G: Oh, and the people stayed above the tavern.

E: Ya.

G: And the Muths lived there, they moved then into the tavern.

E: Ya.

G: Well, who lived in their house, then? Did…

E: They rented it.

G: They rented their own, OK

E: Cheap Busch or something like that lived in there until, didn't live in there too long but the two girls were, I don't know just how big they were but they were big already

G: They probably had help with the cooking then, for the borders

E: Ya and I went, that was before I learned the dressmaking trade. They started that tavern later. And I didn't like it no more, I just couldn't stand it. Ida, the one from West Bend, Ida Schmidt, she was there, too, the two of us, were doing the work in the store, in the kitchen. Like…

G: The cooking and the making of the lunches and all of the…

E: I had to sit and pick a peck of spinach at one sitting. Oh my, how terrible that was, how could I do all that? And then Ida went home and got married to Westland and I wanted to go back to the, to the factory. And I went back to the factory after a while, to the Rice's. And then the Muths battled on with their two daughters. I don't know how many, how many guys they had, you know. Oh, my god

G: But, then where does dad come into the picture?

E: He was working on the boats and he came back home and his father was remodeling the little rear house and they had no room for him to sleep so he came over there and asked for a room. And there was a room right downstairs next to the kitchen so they rented that room to him and he was doing steam fitting work. He worked for, I forget his name now. [Knar, Frank Knar]. His little shop was in the

village of Wauwatosa, all this while, yet I think it's still there. Or is it, or did they take it down. That's the oldest, one of the oldest landmarks. So…

[39:11]
G: So then you, so that's how you met him then.

E: Ya, that's how I met him.

G: Then what, well what did you…

E: Well then, after his father got that room upstairs, I've never even been in there, had that room done and everything then he went home, stayed home, you know, and went to work. And from there is where I married him and I was working at Rice's.

G: But he, then he, after he went to school. I remember he said he went to, was it Brown St. School?

E: Ya..

G: And where did he, did he go through, did they have up to eighth grade? Or was there only sixth or seventh grade

E: No, I don't think he had eighth. I don't remember, I don't remember but…

G: But just grade school.

E: Ya, just to grade school

G: And then did he go, when did he go on the boats then? Did he go on the boats right after that?

E: Before. He had been on the boats before.

G: Ya, but after he got through with grade school he must have been, what did he do then? Did he start to work as a boy?

E: He learned a trade then. But where did he learn it, I don't know.

G: But then he didn't practice the trade, he went on, on the boats. So, he was a young man, a very young man then

E: Ya, and then when he came back he went and practiced his trade, steam-fitting, you know.

G: And then you, what year was that when you were married, you were, you were about?

E: 17, 1917.

G: 1917, June 30th?

E: June 30th, 1917. Oh, god.

G: So, you were 23.

E: 23. And he was almost seven years older than I.

G: And he was almost thirty.

E: Ya.

G: Well then, OK, you got married, then where did you live?

E: Oh, then we, wait a minute, ah, oh, then grandpa had a friend, a carpenter, and he raised the roof upstairs and built those rooms upstairs. And grandma and grandpa moved up there and we moved in downstairs. That's what, we just had a stove heat, you know, a coal stove heat, there was no heating or anything for us poor people in them days.

G: But that was your first, that was the first place you lived.

E: Ya, that's the first place where we lived when we got married. Oh my, oh my, oh my. You know, you don't think of all those things that, anymore, and there's so much more to it that you can't remember all, you know.

G: Ya, but this is very interesting 'cause you never write that out.

G: OK, well, let's start again. You were going to talk about the farms and where you got milk

E: And that's where we got the milk. The farmer usually had a small farm, not too large, had cattle, and then often times you would walk out there and get your milk. It was not inspected or anything like that you just came up there to get it, you got a fresh pail of milk for maybe five cents a quart, or more than a quart, you know, a beer pail full, like that. And that's what we did everyday. That's how we go our milk from those people that farmed.

G: And there were farms, where were the farms, right there?

E: Right close by our house, 27th St. They were smaller farms, they were not farms like the people have now, two hundred or so many acres, they probably just had an acre or two and there they put a cattle and maybe a couple goats. You could get goat milk too. You can still get that on the South Side which they say is very good when an infant has that, not emphysema, eczema. Gertie Eckard across the street had to raise both of her children on goat milk. She would get it on the South Side. And she says that she puts it in the refrigerator otherwise the kids won't eat it, it smells so. It has that aftertaste, you know. And, then, a little further up was this park where we could go on a Sunday and listen to the band playing, too. And if they had like a butcher's meeting or something like that then they would do some killing. A []. See who was the prize killer who could do it best and so on, you know, they'd give out prizes for that. I don't know who furnished the cattle.

CD 2

G: Your wedding, where were you married?

E: We were married in the house that we, that my mother bought there. They moved upstairs. They built out upstairs, you know. We had a bedroom upstairs, one, the front room, and then they built this other little, another bedroom, a dining room and a kitchen. And bath. And mother and father moved upstairs and I moved downstairs and I was then able, she was always a very sick woman and I was then able to give her a hand, you know, all during her lifetime to the end. And that's where we were married then, in the front room. So, just a small family wedding, brothers and sisters and that's about all. Minnie and her two sisters, they helped, you know, with the table and Aunt Emma helped do the cooking, I don't remember what we had for, maybe chicken or whatever, I don't remember from…

G: Your brother Bill and Minnie were already married then before you were?

E: No, not Fats, he got married…

G: No, but Bill.

E: Bill, ya, ya.

G: He was already married. Then the service, the wedding service was all in German?

E: Ya. I don't know where my business, my what do you call that…

G: Marriage license, birth certificate

E: I don't know, with all this moving, everything just became lost and what have you

G: But this was the minister from Nazareth Church

E: Ya.

G: And were all the services in German?

E: Yes, at that time they were, ya.

G: Not English

E: Until later on, then they… when the school was finished I then transferred from Elm St. School which is still there today but they added rooms to it, you know. And I went from there, I must have been in second grade, 'cause I was in that school picture, that is lost. Everything just went, got lost. And then we transferred over, ah parish people were required to send their children to the parochial school. They had to pay a fee, a very small fee, I don't know just how much that was, years ago. In later years they paid I guess if you had two children you got the two children, two for five a month and then the third child was free in the parochial school.

G: But your mother and father had been Lutheran?

E: Ya, out in the old country, ya. So…

G: But, now what was, what was dad's religion, was his, did his father go to any church, did he go to any church?

E: Ya, in the Lutheran, too, but a more not so dominated one, it must have been, how should I say…

G: More liberal?

E: Liberal, ya, whatever it was I don't know. When they came over here they didn't go, they didn't go to church when they came here.

G: So, he, dad never went to any church.

E: Oh, he went… No

G: Your… Harry.

[ed. Notes on David Barbaras side]

E: He went when he was a child. See, his mother died, in childbirth with Atti [ed. Harry's brother Arthur]. And then, later on, he married a neighbor lady. She had never had children and he figured they won't ever have children and immediately they had Fritz and Freda. And then she went to Bethlehem's church on Cold Spring Ave. and 26st. His mother, his second mother.

G: His stepmother.

E: I don't know where his first mother went to. But she was a very good zither player and also, I guess they called them mandolins that time they had around. [Noah] didn't have her own [] and it was late, Harold got that. I don't know what they ever did with it. It was inlaid with mother of pearl. That was her instrument that she played and I don't know what became

G: Where had she learned, had she come. Also come from Germany?

E: No, grandpa told us that was all a bunch of, a big lie that she did not come from Germany. She was born and raised in Watertown. The grandma Barbaras, his wife.

G: The second, the second wife. Now, what about my dad's mother? Did she come from Germany? My grandmother, on dad's side. I had always understood she was German.

E: Yes, they were all German. That's true, they were all German.

G: But then his stepmother was also going to, was that a Lutheran church on Cold Spring?

E: Yes, that's our denomination.

G: And then did she take the kids with her at that time?

E: No, it became very hectic. There were these children and new ones, Atti and them coming, and she couldn't tend it all that way and grandpa wouldn't give them a dime, you know, to go to church so Harry went with his boyfriend because he could pump the organ. They had one of these organs you had to pump. And he always went with his boyfriend, I don't know, it was somewhere on Vliet St. And then he would help pump the organ.

G: You don't know what kind of a church was that?

E: No, maybe a Baptist or whatever or something like that. Whatever it was, I don't know. But I think that the right mother, I think, I have a vague memory that she was of Catholic stock. I don't remember anymore but ah, it seems that way to me.

G: But they didn't, they really didn't go to church then.

E: No.

G: In this country.

E: No, they did not, they did not go to church. And that [poor franklin] never went, you know I just left him. He didn't bother me or anything and I could do and sent the children wherever I wanted to. Get a certain amount, a couple of pennies. And he never stopped me or anything, so, I don't know.

G: Well, then we get, you were married in June…

E: 30th

G: 1917. And that was during World War One and, but dad never had to go to World War One.

E: He was supposed to go! He was being mustered out now, he was ready to go the next week, when Armistice was signed, was declared, you know, that the war was over. And so he got dismissed after that, you know, the papers were…

G: But Armistice wasn't until 1918, in November.

E: Ya.

G: But, in between that time he had not been drafted.

E: No, he had, I don't know just when he was drafted but that came to an end when the war was declared over.

G: Ya. And your brother Bill didn't, wasn't in the war, either?

E: No, he either and Fat, he went to World War II?

G: No, World War I

E: No, it must have been World War I. But he never got out of America. He just was in camp. I guess he was only gone about six months. That's about the most. And then he was mustered out, you know. They got rid of all these people. They didn't want to pay all those pensions and things, you know.

G: Well, had they taken the younger people? See, they were in their later twenties by this time.

E: Ya

G: It sounds like they may have drafted the younger people first.

E: That could be, I just don't, that could be: that when they ran short that they took the older ones.

G; Well then what was, do you remember World War I? What was it like, in this country during World War I?

E: Bad. Ya, it was bad. So many boys were shipped back with, you know, arms off, legs off, everything. Then they took them out to the soldier's home. Out there, that's were the Civil War veterans were. It wasn't that big but then they added buildings on. But now I don't know what they're going to do with those buildings.

G: Then what was it, did, were there food shortages or other problems, do you remember?

E: People never made that much of food. You had to eat what was there because you couldn't want this and want that. What was on the table, you ate. If you didn't want it, you left it, ate what was there and that was it.

G: So, most people were satisfied with what they had or accepted what they had. They didn't feel they were being deprived.

E: There wasn't that much, no we didn't have those big stores and stuff so we didn't know, we didn't miss…

G: And were, did, were there shortages of other things?

E: Well, sugar…

G: Household things, sugar?

E: Ya, that was in World War I wasn't it. Sugar. Sugar shortage, flour shortage, ya You have to stand in line to get your allotment, maybe a pound or so. Oh, you had to stand in line for so long. Then, they had those little bitty things that you got, to buy sugar with and so on.

G: Coupons. Now, you're not talking about World War II 'cause we had that rationing in World War II.

E: Ya, that was in World War II. Now this is World War I.

G: It sounds like you probably didn't feel much…

E: No

G: ….effect other than the wounded people

E: I don't remember much about it all.

G: Were any of your relatives in the army?

E: Otto. Otto Wilke went all through the war and []. And Bill, see Bill was married then. If they could avoid it, they didn't take the married people. See, that meant taking care of the families. In those days people had at least four children, if not more, you know, and the government would have had to lay out a lot of money. So they avoided wherever they could.

[12:06]
G: Anything else you remember special about World War I?

E: I can't…

G: You weren't really involved that, since dad didn't have to go.

E: But no, I can't think of anything

G: Well, then after that came the depression.

E: Ya.

G: Well, what do you remember most about that?

E: Ya, what do I remember of the depression? I don't even know.

G: I don't remember that we ever had any problem. What about food? We always ate.

E: Ya, we always had food. Well, the people baked, you know. You had flour which was cheaper and the yeast and then you would bake. You never went to the bakery and got, and bought at the bakery. You had to bake yourself, you know. Get the Red Star yeast, or what have you, and then bake from scratch: bake coffee cake and biscuits, oh, when I think of it. It took all day long on a Saturday to bake. And when we had apple trees in the garden so then we'd make apple cake or we'd bake, we'd make applesauce and all. The people had to work so hard. It was so hard canning pickles. Everything that you had in the garden, you had to can or you didn't have anything. First in the early times when we started, then you put the pickles in a crock, you know, you always took them out of there and then we would, we would can pickles. Many pickles. Couple a hundred pickles. And the people would take that as a vegetable, see, you didn't have all, you didn't have any of that vegetable. There was no canned goods or not that much, various…

G: What about meat? Then when did the butcher shop, Honroths, when did he get established ever?

E: There was a butcher shop in there. They, the father had a meat market further down on 17th and Fond du Lac. Then the son which is now the [Bobke] generation there, they are now in the painting business. The daughter was married to this Bobke, he was a painter. And then they started the butcher and they sold out to Honroths later on. They were real butcher people, you know, real cutting meat and so on and so forth. And then after a while when the old, when her father died then he started that meat market, see her husband. And got away from, from the, no, the paint, he got away from the meat market business, sold to Honroths, and started the paint store, on Lisbon Avenue, and the store is still there. They go big and wide. The girls got married, I don't know if they're men are painters or were painters or what but they stayed in the business. See they must be quite old now too, like Florence. They must be that age, if they're living, I don't even know. But they still go by the name of Bobke.

G: But were you able to get meat during the depression, do you remember?

E: I don't remember because they bought meat in large, you know in the winter time. And then summer, then you ate chickens, and geese, and rabbits, and all this kind of stuff so I don't. I don't… I think we always had some meat to eat. Maybe not as much as we wanted to eat but we always got a little.

G: But you don't ever remember feeling a real shortage.

E: No, no.

G: That you were really deprived of meat or…

E: No

G: Or really anything else.

E: No, you just ate what they gave you. You knew there was nothing else.

G: How did you stretch the money then, for the expenses, when there wasn't any money coming in?

E: Well, our clothes were made one from the other. If you could get old pants or anything, and I even made all your clothes from Fats' army clothes. Why, they wore like iron, you know they had knickers up to here and I sewed overcoats and everything. Oh my…

G: They just made over or used the material…

E: Yes

G: Until it literally wore out.

E: Ya, you actually bought no blazers or anything, you made them, from any old cloth. If one end didn't reach then you put an end on another end and that didn't show. If you knew how to do the things you take, you had an iron which you put in a cold stove or whatever and then you'd add an end on and you press it out nice. And you lined it and all. Oh, God in heaven, I forgot how terrible that all was. Is it a wonder they always say you never went anywhere? How could you go anywhere?

You were so rundown with work: cooking, canning, sewing, you had no time to go. If you ever had walked up to the park, it was two blocks or three, that's about all. Why, we couldn't even go to Washington Park, not when the kids were so little, they were, they had to walk and you can't, you couldn't walk, we didn't have car fare to go. There was some car fare. When Aunt Emma got here, then the horse cars were still running. But those girls they didn't want to sit in there, they won't. I don't forget where she worked. Yes, she worked somewhere further downtown. They had a couple factories, shops, and so on, you know. I don't even know what she was doing.

[18:44]
G: How much, how much during the depression, how much of the time did dad work? Did he get jobs from time to time?

E: Yes, and he was laid off many times. And he got $12 a week by Scollies.

G: As a steamfitter.

E: Yes, when he worked there later on. And I would carry the dinner [tam]

G: I'm talking about my dad, you're talking about your dad.

E: Oh

G: No, I was talking about during the depression.

E: Oh, yes, he was home five years.

G: Five years.

E: Five years.

G: But did he work part of, did he get odd jobs part of that time?

E: No, sir, no sir. Not a job. And we had started a $50 building and loan. Building and loans were coming so, and we wanted to, then maybe get a different kind of a house, or what have you and I don't know how much money we had in there, evidently not too much but it reached up to $500. And that they kept for eleven years. We just got that, oh, it wasn't, I can't think this one. They held that all those years.

G: That was after the banks went…

E: Ya, they gave us $25 a month. $25 a month, ya, they must have. And then, up to $500, that they kept and we didn't get anything. Where did grandpa… oh, then he started to do odd jobs. He started to do work for [Kalisse], extra odd jobs until he got into, at Wauwatosa there, Frank Miller, you know, when he got in there. And, from there, where did he go then? He didn't retire from Frank Miller.

G: No, he went to the South Side

E: Oh, right, Gruno

G: Gruno.

E: If he, see what a big shop that is? I wonder who's still living there. Maybe, maybe just, no, Richard died and the other, Paul, died. It must be the girls, husband, or so on that they, they got the biggest shop! Well, I say in all history but this said something else. I forget how they said. They got the biggest shop there is in the line of air conditioning, heating, and plumbing, and all that. And they got all the big buildings they're doing.

G: Well, they went, when dad was working for them they already were doing work on big buildings rather than houses.

E: Yes, they were always doing the big building. Then the boy, Paul, learned, what do you call that, engineering. Then, and the other one too, Richard. And then Paul's son is, when I last heard, is the head one, Paul's son. And Paul was dead, too, already. I don't know who's running the place but they sure went over big. Sure, that money, them $500, they just gave us, my god, it was terr… That's why I just couldn't see building and loans anymore. If you couldn't get your money…

G: But, what about the banks? People didn't get their money out of many of the banks when they closed.

E: No, they closed up, too. And there went the whole darn works

G: You used to say that you couldn't get welfare, groceries and that sort of thing because you didn't own a house. Was that true?

E: Yes. Our Bill got WPA work. He didn't earn much be he went to work everyday. They worked by the river, they were throwing stones down and that and dad had to stay home. He didn't, he had to first use up the money. Now these, now Uncle Bill had debts on his house, see, so they always gave them work that they could pay their taxes when tax time came. And the people that didn't own any they just had to, I don't know what we'd have done if we hadn't been by grandma. She owned the house then. After a while, of course, we took over but she then owned the house. That's right, I forgot all about that.

G: So, you didn't have to pay rent or you just paid a little bit.

E: $12 we paid, a month. Rent.

[ed. Notes on David Barbaras side]

G: Then Uncle Fred, I remember, didn't he actually go on welfare?

E: Welfare, ya.

G: They didn't give him a job, WPA?

E: No, no.

G: But he actually ran out of money then.

E: Ya. He had to get his food from, go downtown, walk down, take a gunny sack and drag his food home. Maybe a link of sausage, which is, which is plenty expensive

now. Link of sausage, maybe a little rice and beans. And then he always got angry! He always thought we should help him. And we didn't have anything ourself, we were glad we were living by grandma. I don't know what would have happened to us! I couldn't help him out. When he always kept saying, I never forgot that, that hurt me so, he always kept saying "I know what I'll do, I'll sit on my nickels, too". Yes, they [worries], he did quite a bit of drinking at that time yet. Fred did. And we couldn't afford to go in taverns and so on but he went every Saturday. He went on his own in the taverns.

G: And he was already living in grandpa Barbaras' house. [ed. Fred, wife Clara, daughter Edith living at 454 N. 29th St with David, in 1930 census]

E: Ya, but grandpa Barbaras made him pay after a while, made him pay the rent. And they were mad because somebody got something free, I forget, from grandpa's there. After a while, she sold all the three properties and nobody got nothin'. Nobody knows where that money stayed, 'course the properties weren't very expensive, you know. They were just…

G: This was after grandpa died you're talking about now.

E: Before he died! He gave her power of attorney. She had an attorney come, she was taking care of him and, you know, he said "ya, ya ,ya" and he signed the papers and she had, from then on she had the thing in her hands. That was where one got it all and the other one got nothin', too.

G: Larry was asking about the Barbaras name and grandpa Barbaras and I had part of that story in the little story I wrote but I never knew how much of that was in the little book I wrote 'cause I talked to Aunt Lou. But I could never get much information out of grandpa himself.

E: No, no.

G: But I, so I don't know how much of that story was true.

E: He lived, they lived in Alsace Lorraine when it belonged to, French, I think 1870 or something like that. And, when the war was, his brother had to go to war, he was older than he. He was only fourteen years, they tell me, when the mother sent him over. Alone! Because the other brother was killed already and she didn't want him to get into the war so she, I guess, knew some kind of a man, not Gestapo or whatever, just like my mother's mother, she sent that boy over. He didn't want to go into the army, either. And then they established themself here. He got here and he right away got into the brewery.

G: Even at fourteen?

E: See, you could start to work at fourteen.

G: In Milwaukee, he came right to Milwaukee?

E: Ya. And then he went to the brewery. And the brewery was pensioning that man and he wouldn't take it. When Fred got there and grandpa was already dead, then this fellow who was the head one, and taking people around showing the big head ones the kettles and all this and that. He always had a uniform on and he told Fred

that. He said "you had the damnedest father I ever saw". Schlitz wanted to give him a pension and he wouldn't take it. He wouldn't take it, can you feature that?!! He wouldn't take the pension, he says he had [mein eigenes geld, steckt der das in]

G: Well, what did he do at the brewery when, do you know some of the jobs he had?

E: He was, he worked in the barrel shop and filled barrels, you know, and it was very wet there. But then after a while he was the "kalt im stein bedeckt" in German. That means a bag that dishes out the beer… All the men got beer. They had to have their little copper kettles and they all got beer at noon. And he was behind the bar. Oh, Fred had the picture. He could carry six of those great big glasses with the handles on, at one time. He could sling them over the counters. My [husband] said that time and they had the pictures of him. He had, he was dressed with a light shirt on and he had a white apron on and dished out the beer to the people that came there and wanted to see the brewery and the working men that worked, they worked different shifts until they became bigger and built their things. I suppose that's what you've got on your. Have you got that?

G: I have some notes about that, ya. But then there was always a lot of confusion about the name and when it was changed.

E: Ya, that was terrible, that confusion with that name, god.

G: And he, as far as I know he never told me this story, Aunt Lou did and I could never be sure how much of that was true and how much of that she was making up.

E: Ya, that's it.

G: But, did my dad every talk to you about that? Have you ever talked to his dad about the name?

E: No, his dad wouldn't answer, I don't know if he had, you just never asked any questions, they didn't get no answers. The majority of them, you know. You just never asked him a question, you let it lay. Let them battle with it.

G: As I remember that was the problem I had 'cause we used to go visit grandpa on Sundays. Dad and I would walk over there and when I was writing this story I was asking all kinds of questions but I could never get any answers from grandpa.

E: No, that's right.

G: And then, Aunt Lou gave me the only ones I had but I could never be sure. Did you say grandpa Barbaras had relatives or friends in Milwaukee? How come he came directly to Milwaukee from France?

E: Well, it seemed like, I think that Milwaukee and Chicago got many people. He preferred Milwaukee because it was more German and grandpa talked French, of course, and German. He was, he could talk good. He never practiced anymore when he came here.

G: What do you mean, never practiced?

E: The French language.

G: Oh.

E: He only talked German.

G: Did he ever try, get in contact with other members of his family or did…

E: No, never again.

G: Then, never wrote to them or anything?

E: Never again.

G: And no other members of the family that you know of every came over.

E: No.

G: So, he was, came all by himself and stayed all by himself.

E: All by himself, ya.

G: You don't know what his, my grandfather's father did in Alsace Lorraine?

E: No, no, I don't know.

G: I have no information about that, either.

E: I just…

G: Was he on a farm, or what?

E: He was supposed to take care of his brother, I don't know which one or how old he was. And there was a little brook of some kind running through their land. And he didn't take care of him so he drowned.

G: His younger brother.

E: I don't know how old or anything. He never told you the complete story, you know, you just never could piece it together. And then the kids weren't that, well, so what, then you didn't care. What did you care you, all you always had to think about, you never get there anyways so why bother? Who ever thought that a middle people could travel like they do now? Never. You once were here, you stayed, you couldn't get back. Unless you suddenly became rich and they didn't. He was the only one that had a little money, I mean it was so tight he didn't even give their kids their correct food.

G: Did he build those houses that you lived in?

E: That one flat he had built. Well, in them days it didn't cost so much to, I have no idea what it cost, not that little…

G: But he bought that little house in the back first, when he moved in.

E: Ya

G: But you don't know..

E: I don't even know how the rooms are upstairs, I've never been up there, in that little house. See, the boys all slept up there, like [Atti] and Harry and Fred. I never was in the upstairs there, never. First, they slept in the attic, he told me. They had know how much of rooms they had up there or how they, never got up there. You got in there in the house and that's where you stayed and then you come down to get a sandwich in the kitchen downstairs.

G: That was in the basement.

E: Ya. And you never questioned it. You just, that's…

G: But you don't know where dad's, my dad's mother came from. You said she was, she was German. Grandpa Barbaras' first wife.

E: Ya. From Watertown.

G: Oh, from Watertown.

E: That's what grandpa told me, himself. She came from Watertown, she didn't come from the old country.

G: And that was his first wife or his second?

E: The first wife.

G: The first wife.

E: Well, the first…

G: Dad's mother, in other words.

E: I don't know, ya, dad's mother. Ya, she was German and was raised in Watertown. Well, once you were stuck in one of them little towns you couldn't get out. You couldn't, you couldn't go nowhere.

G: But I wonder how, I wonder how grandpa met her then if she was, she must have come to Milwaukee or he must have been to Watertown. Never heard that story? [ed. David Barbaras was working at Blatz 1874-75 and lived across the street from the Reichert saloon. Carolina presumably worked there for her father]

E: Never heard.

CD 3

G: Now, you're going to tell me about your grandmother, what you remember about her. [ed. Bertha Winter Falk, living with her daughter, Augusta, when she died in 1908].

E: She was, she would tell us children's stories until our mother would come back from church. And father. It would be about Germany and there were, how would you say, myth? You know these stories that wind up like the dog was going through the woods at night and had no head. They're made from myths. They made a lot of spooky stories up, you know. Now I call them spooky I don't, in them days I thought they were really real, see. And mother had to cross, when she'd go home she had to cross through the woods. And then a dog always walked next to her without a head on and she didn't dare look from side to side she had to walk straight ahead for fear something would happen to her. And all these, these different stories, you know. Not many but that's all we did, we never had nothin' to play with.

G: Well, where did she, where did your grandmother live? In the same house you did?

E: Ya. No, we lived in her house but she lived in Miss [Moocher's]

G: Oh, that's right, yes.

E: And, people moved together, see. Now, like the Dalli family [ed. Lived next to the Muths], their people moved in the next block, their aunts, and they're on 24th St. And they just settled in a block that [] developed and them with help one another out 'cause it was needful, you know. So…

G: And then you were telling me about your grandmother, when she died

E: Oh, the funeral. She died from a hernia. Her hernia came forward and it was so big that the inside that it tangled her intestines or whatever they call it, I don't know.

G: Strangulated

E: Strangled, ya, and something burst and that killed her. See, they had nothing to cure them at that time yet, we didn't have that many doctors. Dr. [Bernly] lived on Fond du Lac Ave. and all that. He was just a young doctor, not very, and he came but he couldn't push this back, you know, so in four days she had passed away. So then she was laid out…

G: How old was she then?

E: Sixty-two. She was laid out in the house and then she went to church. They had a church funeral. The church was very small at that time, you didn't have the large churches yet. And the children were all dressed in white and they had black ribbon sashes on and black ribbon in their hair. It was very customary to, how should I say…

G: Have mourning clothes?

E: Ya, to wear mourning clothes and to mourn at least a year, keep wearing those kinds of clothes. If they didn't have them they would die they with a little die of some kind, blacken them.

G: Well, what did the men wear then? Did they do the black band on the arm?

E: Yes, right, they wore a black band on the arm, that's right. I had forgotten that.

G: Then they all, I remember when I was small they used to put a sash or something on the door

E: Ya, it was a big flower thing. Ya, they would put that on the door and you would always know that someone had passed away there, at the house. Ya, that's why they put that on, oh my, yes.

G: How long did they leave that on then just…?

E: Until the funeral, walk to the cemetery, right. Maybe 2-3 days. I think they had trouble in those days confirming that the party was actually there. I don't know, they used to tell stories so much, that so many people were buried alive and came alive after a while, I don't know, about this, I don't know, you know.

G: What do you, do you remember anything about your grandfather?

E: No, I did not know him. He died very soon when they came over. I was too small. Either one of them I didn't know. My grandmother came. She lived with Al's mother. And she lived up some, close to Wisconsin Ave. and she often came visiting, you know, after, saw his children and went back home again. They lived upstairs in some rooms. Aunt Lou [ed. Louise, sister of Harry] was working for a doctor, you know, cleaning up his place and so on and so forth. No, [] didn't…

G: I always wondered, I remember when I was young. We never had first, a radio, because we went next door to Aunt Emma's and used to listen for the barn dance on Saturday nights.

E: Ya.

G: Remember the whole family gathered together. But, how come we never had a radio?

E: I don't know.

G: Were we poorer than they were? We, you had the player piano

E: No! We had the, they got their radio, was that a radio, right?

G: A radio.

E: I don't know why we didn't have a radio, I can't figure that out.

G: And we never had a telephone, they had a telephone next door.

E: Ya. Because Uncle Herman [ed. Gutknecht, husband of Emma] was called Friedman by []. He worked nights, you know. And sometimes they needed him in the daytime and they would call him so they had to put that phone in. And we felt, well, we didn't have no need for a phone and those were all extra payments you had to make which money you didn't have.

G: The same with the car, you never had a car.

E: No.

G: The only one that had a car then was Fat. Bill never had a car either, right?

E: No.

G: Your brother Bill?

E: No.

G: And Uncle Fred is the only one on dad's side that had a car. Well, the Burroughs did after a while.

E: Ya, he always had a car, Burroughs had a car.

G: But Emily never had a car, my Aunt Emily.

E: No. I just don't know why we didn't have a radio at the same time they had one. We had that…

G: You were talking about the Victrola though, or phonograph.

E: Ya, that round

G: tin…

E: That was given to us as a gift for buying the dining room set.

G: You said dad used to play that a lot.

E: Oh, my god did he play that thing

G: What kind of music did he like especially?

E: Very loud!

G: Anything? Marches, dance music, or what?

E: Ya. Dances and marches. I can't even say what he liked best.

G: And how come you bought the piano, when did you buy that? I remember [] was very small…

E: He bought that! He wanted it! And this piano, I don't know, he came from grandpa's house and he saw the ad and he paid $300 for it. Which we did, which we shouldn't have

G: This was second hand? Used?

E: Ya. Right.

G: Then you had to buy all the piano rolls?

E: Ya, right, right.

G: How many of those did you have, do you think at one time?

E: God..

G: A hundred?

E: Oh, we had more than that, maybe about two hundred. We had two big boxes. And he burned them all, I wasn't home one day and he burned them all. Burnt all those rec, those rolls.

G: Was that after you got rid of the piano or when you still had…

E: Ya, when we got rid of it. All we got for it was $25. They didn't even want to move them out of your house, pianos, they had no use for them.

G: Now they are valuable again.

E: Oh, my god.

G: But he liked music then?

E: Yes, he liked music, very much so.

G: Did he hear any live music or was that mainly the way you got it?

E: Outside of the concerts in the parks, or so, I don't remember that we ever went to, pay for tickets to go to a regular fancy thing.

G: But he never played, he never played any musical instrument?

E: No.

G: Then did you?

E: No.

G: Did either of you sing in any choirs or anything?

E: I did for a while once at the church but not too long. Well, you had to go to work, what do you do, you can't, you had even had to work on Sundays sometimes, you know. And the choirs at that time were not much of anything, you know. I guess they weren't that gifted at the time or what, I don't know. We just all sang, got together.

G: But you had that piano already, I guess, probably when I was born.

E: Ya

G: Cause I remember as a very [tape ends]