

Interview with Alita Heyne (AH)

Conducted by Michael M. Miller (MM)

November 10, 1993

Hosmer, South Dakota

Transcription by Eleanor Haas

MM: This is Michael Miller the Germans from Russia bibliographer at North Dakota State University in Fargo. It's November 10, 1993 and I'm at the Senior Center in Hosmer, South Dakota with Alita Heyne. Alita, I wonder if you would tell me your full name.

AH: Well, really my name is Christina Alita Crischkowsky.

MM: And your family name was?

AH: Crischkowsky.

MM: How do you spell that?

AH: C-r-i-s-c-h-k-o-w-s-k-y.

MM: When were you born Alita?

AH: December 22, 1904.

MM: You were born in 1904 – where were you born?

AH: In Neusatz, in the Crimea in Russia.

MM: In the Crimea.

AH: Crimea.

MM: In the Neusatz, how do you spell that?

AH: N-e-u-s-a-t-z.

MM: In 1904 you were born. What was the name of your father?

AH: Crischkowsky.

MM: The father's first name.

AH: John, Johann.

MM: And your Mother's name with her family name.

AH: Katrina Schuler. Schuler was her family name.

MM: And the village in Crimea was of course a German village?

AH: Yah.

- MM:** Were there other nationalities there or only German?
- AH:** I don't think there any other nationalities.
- MM:** Other than just German.
- AH:** In every place there seemed to be Jews there used to be Jews they'd have stores, just a few Jews.
- MM:** How many were there in your family? How many brothers and sisters?
- AH:** Just my family? We were 12 sisters and brothers.
- MM:** Twelve sisters and brothers?
- AH:** I lost one brother. Yah.
- MM:** When you were growing up in the village, how old were you when you left?
- AH:** I was 4 years old.
- MM:** You were 4 years old when you left? Do you remember anything about the village?
- AH:** I don't remember (nothing) anything.
- MM:** Did your folks talk much about it?
- AH:** No.
- MM:** They didn't speak too much about the village?
- AH:** They didn't say too much, only I guess it was nice there. It was nice country -you know things like grapes and fruit grew there. It wasn't as cold as here my mother would say. They had snow too, they'd get snow in the winter but it would warm up much earlier in the spring would start earlier than it does here in South Dakota.
- MM:** Your mother and father came to the Hosmer area?
- AH:** Yah, when we came with the ship. I don't know the name of the ship. We came to New York and from there we traveled by train to Roscoe. My mother had a sister there. And that's as far as we came to Roscoe to my Aunt, to my Mother's sister. Weidemeyer was her name.
- MM:** And how many children came along on the ship? How many came over with your parents?
- AH:** Three of us. I was four and my brother was two and a baby sister. She was a baby yet. Three of us came along.
- MM:** And the other members of the family were born over here?
- AH:** Yes. They were all born over here.
- MM:** And your grandparents, did they stay over there or did they come along?
- AH:** No, nobody came as grandparents. I don't know any of my grandparents. Never learned to know them.

- MM:** So when you came to South Dakota and settled here, of course there were many more brothers and sisters that were born.
- AH:** Yes. It was a large family.
- MM:** And you lived on a farm?
- AH:** No, we never lived on a farm. We came to Roscoe and there my Dad worked on the Railroad. There was a time we moved to Loyalton, there was a man who needed a housekeeper and a man to work, so he hired us - the whole family. You, know my mother and father and us kids. He had no more wife and we were there at Loyalton about two years and then we came back to Roscoe. From then on my Dad worked on the RR and then he got a job as in Hosmer not just a worker, RR master. I don't know what to call it but over the others he could hire men to work for him when he was here in Hosmer.
- MM:** Did your folks build a house right away in Hosmer?
- AH:** No, not right away. But they did build a house.
- MM:** Do you remember what you lived in those early days?
- AH:** Well, at first we lived in the section house. The RR had houses where the people that worked like that - section house hatte mir gesag. And that's where we lived. And then later they built a house.
- MM:** And the section house was built out of wood?
- AH:** Yah. That was moved to some other place.
- MM:** So when you became six years old you went off to school?
- AH:** Yah.
- MM:** Where did you go to school?
- AH:** First at Roscoe and then at Loyalton. Then we moved to Hosmer in 1914 and then I went to school here until I got through the 8th grade. That's as far as I got.
- MM:** When you went to school, were you speaking only German yet?
- AH:** Yah. German, we talked German.
- MM:** So in school were all the other children German?
- AH:** Oh, yes. Yah, Hosmer was a complete German town. Except the teachers maybe that taught school were not German.
- MM:** So what did you do in the school when the teachers would speak English?
- AH:** Well that's how we learned too we had to learn to read and we'd have to answer in English. She wouldn't ask to much but we'd get along I guess.
- MM:** Did your folks ever talk about where their folks came from? Anything like that in Russia back in the Crimea?

- AH:** No, no and I wish they would have talked. They must have come from Germany. My Dad's name is Polish. He claims--his way-way-- grandparents came from Poland. That's all I know that he said. And my Mother at some time must have immigrated into Russia from Germany because it's an absolutely German name, Schuler. But that's all I know.
- MM:** Your parents of course raising such a large family, it wasn't easy at times.
- AH:** Oh, I guess not!
- MM:** Was there always enough clothing and everything for all the children?
- AH:** Yes, we got along. It was so bad in Russia you know, we even took some clothes and sent them over. You know everybody in town, as the church collected clothes you know to send over there. And we even had clothes to send along. My mother had made Dad a shirt and it was embroidered - and I wish I'd have that shirt. And she sent it to Russia -she hoped that maybe Dad's brothers would, or somebody would get it but we don't know who got it.
- MM:** So some of the brothers and sisters of your parents were left behind?
- AH:** Yes.
- MM:** And of course their parents stayed. And did anyone else ever come over? From the family?
- AH:** Well, not on my Dad's side only a cousin of Dad's -Peter Crischkowsky. It was my Dad's cousin, he came with us when we came on that ship. And he went to Idaho right away because he had a sister living in Idaho. But our folks came to Roscoe and from there they got jobs right away. They knew these people in Russia already -Gornitz (sp?) who lived on the farm west or some place out of Roscoe. And that's where my folks went right away. They wrote letters and they knew and they came from the same territory there I guess where my folks came from and so that first year we anyhow-- that first summer we came on June 9th in 1909. We went out to Gornitz and stayed there that summer and then we came to town to Roscoe and that's where my Dad started Railroad working.
- MM:** In the Heyne home of course growing up with so many children there wasn't too much play time but when you did have some play time or singing in the family, was there much singing in the family?
- AH:** Well, yah, my mother loved to sing and Dad had a wonderful good voice but we didn't really sing so much until after we kids got to Sunday School and then we'd sing German songs and we had that little hymnal and but not really too much singing but still my mother had strosselieder(sp) they called them - not hymns but Lied(e) that they sang. Dad called them strosselieder. Do you understand German?
- MM:** I understand German. What were some of those special strosselieder--do you remember any of them?
- AH:** Well, eins was from Strasburg. That is the only one I can just think of now.
- MM:** In the Heyne home, was religion important?
- AH:** Well, now you see what I was telling you was Crischkowsky family you know.
- MM:** Oh, yes I see.
- AH:** Heyne was my husband. I got married at 18.

- MM:** Oh, yes I have to remember that. Yes we were talking about the Crischkowsky family of course. In the Crischkowsky family was religion stressed?
- AH:** Yes.
- MM:** What religion were they?
- AH:** We were Lutheran.
- MM:** And so there were prayers in the evening?
- AH:** Not always, we kids always had to say our prayers. And on Sunday mornings I'll admit that we didn't have too much prayer. Always too busy but it shouldn't be that way too busy. But on Sunday morning we all had to stay at the table and Dad and he wasn't a good reader but he read out of a "Gebet" book -a prayer book. He'd read before we could go to Sunday School. That's about all the devotions we'd have.
- MM:** What about Christmas?
- AH:** Oh, Christmas we celebrated great. Oh, there that was very nice, We always had a tree and my Dad it had to be such just a shape. He'd bought it himself and fix it up.
- MM:** What kind of a tree was it?
- AH:** Like we have now -these fir trees.
- MM:** So they had them already?
- AH:** Yah. Oh yah you could buy them in the stores. And Christmas we celebrated.
- MM:** How did they decorate the tree?
- AH:** Well, we didn't have the decorations they have now but you could get a few and then we'd have candles -those real wax candles you know we'd pinch on and there was candle holders, and I don't know what else we put nice pictures I guess. Nice pictures and we'd string the" on there. We didn't decorate too much as we didn't have too much.
- MM:** And were there some gifts?
- AH:** Yah, not a lot, not like now. Not like the kids get gifts now. The girls, I got a doll and my sister got a doll and the next year sometimes it was the same doll only it had new clothes.
- MM:** Oh.
- AH:** And the boys, I don't remember what George--see there was only this one boy for now. I don't remember what he'd get. But we really celebrated Christmas.
- MM:** Did you do much celebrating at New Years?
- AH:** Well, yah we all had to learn a New Year poem. Mama would give it out of the hymnal New Years poems or verses. And we'd all stand in a row and each one had his poem to say and then Dad would greet us - good night - well we said that first "Glückliches neues Jahr" and then he would too and he'd give us money - a dime or something. That was our New Year.

MM: You don't remember any of those poems?

AH: Well, they'd be in the hymnal I think, I'd find them in there. They were just poems that we sang. They were other they weren't those songs, I could find them in my hymnal I think yet if I'd look them up - in my song book. Now what else was I going to say?

MM: About New Years.

AH: Yah, well that wasn't done but my Dad would go too sometimes around to the different places in town and stand by the window and they'd say a nice New Years poem a nice big, long poem. I read it once. And then they'd shoot -you know they had guns and they'd shoot. That I remember.

MM: Remember all those guns going off.

AH: Yah.

MM: Scare the kids a little bit.

AH: Yah. They did that for a long time in Hosmer. Young boys, not young but boys, not married.

MM: Teen age boys. They would celebrate a little bit.

AH: Yah. And then the people would ask them into the house. They'd serve something they'd usually have food ready, give them food and drinks. And sometimes by the time they'd get to the last place I guess some were drunk.

MM: Of course you were pretty young yet.

AH: Yah, then I was young yet.

MM: This custom continued on a long time in Hosmer.

AH: Yah, maybe not longer than when I was about twelve, I don't think they did it after that. But they'd ring the church bell, and then they'd shoot I don't know how many shots. First they'd shoot, then the bells would ring and then they'd shoot again. First was for the old year and then for the new year. And we'd always stay up that night just to hear those bells. All the church bells would ring, that sounded so nice.

MM: You can still hear them I bet?

AH: We out on the farm when I was married we'd go out and see if we could hear them and sometimes we could hear them, depending on how the wind was. We lived out 2 1/2 miles east of town, with my husband.

MM: So New Years was big, how about Easter?

AH: Oh, sure that was celebrated too, have to dye eggs. The first eggs we dyed we didn't have dye you have now. My mother would use onion shells that you take off of the onion, it would be brown and she would cook that and give a color. That would make it sort of tan or brown and that was the only color we had. It didn't take long and we could get different colors.

MM: Was there any celebration for the 4th of July?

- AH:** Not too much, it was celebrated in town and there was something going on, well then of course they had speaker here and we'd have drills, girls would learn it before that we'd have to learn to march, a whole bunch of girls. Oh, she was a teacher, she drilled us several days before, and then there was bigger men, no auxiliary yet, men who had been in the war. Men marching too before us, oh yah, band. Hosmer had a band already and they marched for the 4th of July. They'd march. I'd have a book here that would even show that -the marchers.
- MM:** There was a little singing and dancing too?
- AH:** Oh, yah they had boweries and dance and you know what that means a bowery on the street.
- MM:** Yah.
- AH:** They had dances and stands where they'd sell ice cream, pop, lemonade.
- MM:** And you of course were living in town so you could just walk to the celebration. As you grew up to be a teenager living in town, of course you went to school through the 8th grade, but did you get to go to some of the dances?
- AH:** I didn't go to the dances, I wasn't good at, I didn't dance. But we went, some of us girls went just to watch.
- MM:** At the dances, who do you remember playing here? Did Lawrence Welk come down here?
- AH:** They said so but I never saw him. See, I didn't go to dances much. He came to Hosmer, not often I don't think. But he had come.
- MM:** And so after you finished the 8th grade how long did you stay at home?
- AH:** I worked for other people since I was 9 years old. You know when I was that young it was mostly baby sitting you know, taking care of the children. Or just helping, one time I worked for a doctor at Roscoe and she just wanted help in the house with the dishes and things. I worked there and that what I was called a "Haus Magd" .
- MM:** What was that called?
- AH:** Yah, a Haus Magd or maid.
- MM:** And you started at what age?
- AH:** At nine.
- MM:** At nine years already you started.
- AH:** That was the people just had two children, had a dairy and they had to go sell milk and I'd have to stay with the children.
- MM:** And how old were you then?
- AH:** I got married when I was 18. Every summer I always worked, I worked on the farms too and I helped with the milking and that.
- MM:** Did you ever have to work out in the fields?

- AH:** Yah, a little but when we were married I worked in the field. You see I married a farmer. Then I worked out in the field.
- MM:** So at the age of 18 you got married, and who did you marry?
- AH:** August Heyne. And live 2 ½ miles east of Hosmer.
- MM:** What were his parent's names?
- AH:** Heyne, George Heyne.
- MM:** And her name, the mother?
- AH:** Christina Heyne.
- MM:** Do you remember the family name?
- AH:** Dockter. She was a Dockter from down here.
- MM:** So then you got married. Was there a big wedding?
- AH:** No.
- MM:** Not much of a wedding.
- AH:** Just at the house for immediate family.
- MM:** Did you receive anything from you parents for the wedding?
- AH:** Well after I got bedding, household things, and things like that. The day after I was married we came to town and we went to the hardware store and all the things we need to keep house.
- MM:** And so you moved on the farm right away?
- AH:** Yah, that was our honeymoon.
- MM:** Your honeymoon was going to the farm to work.
- AH:** Yah, that was going to the farm. We got married April 8, 1923.
- MM:** And right away you went on the farm, but how did you find land right away?
- AH:** Well he had land – that was August's parent's farm, the homesteaded that place. So August, we lived on the home place. But they had built a new house already, a lumber house, they did have a sod house first.
- MM:** The Heyne's.
- AH:** Yah, the Heyne's.
- MM:** Do you remember the sod house?
- AH:** No, that was all gone. They didn't keep it up. The sod from rain – all I saw was stones and stuff.
- MM:** But your husband was born in the sod house?

- AH:** Yah, he was born in the sod house.
- MM:** And so you lived on the farm and how of a family did you have? How many children did you have?
- AH:** We had five girls.
- MM:** And they or course grew up on the farm. Did your children grow up speaking German?
- AH:** Yah, we spoke German till they went to school they learned English.
- MM:** But as the children were growing up you always spoke German in the home?
- AH:** Yah, yah.
- MM:** Your mother, with such a large family, had to a lot of cooking.
- AH:** Well, you see I got married so young, was 18 already, my mother had children after I was married. So really when I was home we were not more than six to eight children, I guess. See all together we were 12 sister and brothers. So some of my – I have two sisters that are younger than my daughters. That's the way it is.
- MM:** Did you learn to cook from your mother.
- AH:** No, I learned more because I worked at other places.
- MM:** Were they German people too where you worked?
- AH:** Yah. Not all, there I worked in Roscoe couple years and they were English people.
- MM:** What did you learn to cook that you remember most when you were younger, that you learned to cook that you still make today?
- AH:** Well, Strudel, I make yet.
- MM:** How are they made?
- AH:** Oh for goodness sakes. Take some dough, make dough, then you rollout, put grease on it, pull, and it gets real big and roll it up and cut it in pieces.
- MM:** Do you put anything inside it?
- AH:** No, but you could. I tried some different things once. You could put hamburger in or cheese.
- MM:** So you made Strudel and what else did you make?
- AH:** Knepfla.
- MM:** Do you still make those today?
- AH:** Well, I did, I don't anymore. I don't have to cook.
- MM:** Right. What else did you make - any kind of special meats? Did you do a lot?
- AH:** Well my folks butchered themselves every year. People would butcher in the fall. They'd butcher a pig and make sausage, liver sausage, head cheese, and they'd have hams - we had good meat.

MM: How did they store this meat for winter?

AH: Well, after it was smoked they put it in salt brine. They had great big crocks, and there they'd put that meat in with salt. And after it salted good that would keep. Then they'd smoke it, put it in smokehouse and smoke it. Then nice hams and we'd have ham. During the summer we could get a ham and cut slices and fry. That was such good meat.

MM: Where did they store it?

AH: I don't remember. I don't know how my folks stored it but on the farm we just hung it in the granary. After it is smoked, if it's smoked real good, it keeps. And it is salted through and through. One time I remember - I don't know why that happened, that was the first year we were married! guess, we had some spoil on us because it wasn't salted good enough. But we learned. Had to keep it in salt water long enough and smoke them real good.

MM: Your mother had to do a lot of sewing?

AH: Yah, she sewed for us kids too.

MM: Of course you learned how to sew?

AH: Oh yes, I started sewing my own clothes when I was 15 I sewed already. I sewed already for my younger sisters. I joined 4-H club, we had a 4- H club in town--that's where I learned to sew.

MM: You were about 15 then?

AH: Yah, about 14, or 15 years. My mother was a good sewer.

MM: When you think back sometimes now at the center - to those early years, think about what it was like when your parents came over with those children and so forth, what are your memories sometimes that we haven't talked about? Do you think of anything else that you think about-the old days, the good old days.

AH: Well, some of my best days that! remember is when we the lived in Loyalton. I was young yet but we lived on a farm as! said my folks worked for this man you know. And da, I liked it there. I liked to be all by myself. Of course! had my brother and my sister. And then there were neighbors about 2 1/2 miles or so. And one time we celebrated Christmas, at those neighbors. My mother, there was no church in Loyalton we would have had to go to Roscoe to church; so we got the neighbor kids together one time, my mother did and gave each one a poem to learn for Christmas, a German poem. Then there was this other lady, those people spoke more English though. And at Christmas time we all went over to those neighbors you know. Christmas eve we drove over with a sled, I remember that so plain, it was just so beautiful. And over there we were in their house - I don't know if it was bigger. Anyway they had several children, I guess about 4 children too. And that was a Christmas we celebrated over there. They had a big Christmas tree and Santa Claus even came.

MM: Really!

AH: Something new you know--that was the first time! had seen Santa Claus. He had a great big sack and then he give gifts.

MM: Did they call him Santa Claus?

- AH:** Well, I guess those people did. Christ Kindle we said. But he was dressed like a Christ Kindle--that was something different again. Christ Kindle was supposed to be dressed in white. And the Belz Nickel- -they used to say. They'd come together -that was something different again.
- MM:** You hadn't seen that before?
- AH:** Belz Nickel was supposed to ask kids if they were good and! remember our daughter when we were in my Dad's place and the Belz Nickel and the Christ Kindle came there and then he asked 'war borsht'? and then my daughter, she got up and "Alsie mole" she said. She was so scared.
- MM:** Then what happened?
- AH:** Well, they didn't do anything they didn't even give a gift or anything, that was dumb! thought that time. For Belz Nickel to come like that, Christmas should be you know different you know like Christ Kindle she should have given a gift or something, I didn't like that at all.
- MM:** You were how old then?
- AH:** That was when I was married, when I had my own daughter you know. I remember how scared she was. You know, she understood that what he said but she was honest, she said, "Nett immer" und "Alsie Mole" .Yah, she was only 5 or 6 years old.
- MM:** Now in the Hosmer area were they primarily people of the Lutheran faith.
- AH:** Well I think the Lutherans were the most but there were a lot of Catholics. There was a Catholic Church. I think there was a lot of Catholic. Then there was Congregational, and Reformed.
- MM:** And they all seemed to get along pretty good?
- AH:** Oh Yah, we got along. We had Catholic neighbors where we lived in Roscoe and in Hosmer and we got along real good. Mrs Schmidt, she was such a good lady.
- MM:** What about marriage, usually they tried to make it so they kept the same religion?
- AH:** Oh, yah that was strict. No, we had these Catholic neighbors. Of course we went back and forth. I knew those boys real good. And I had no intention but I know they were strict with that. They didn't want us to enter. To go with Catholics. But I did one time anyhow. I had a Catholic boy friend but I had to give him up because they didn't like it.
- MM:** How long did you court your husband before you got married? A year. A year?
- AH:** Just one year and a day maybe.
- MM:** And then you went home and asked your parents if that was okay?
- AH:** He came to the house and he asked for me, wasn't that nice? I couldn't believe he came and asked them if they would give me to be his wife. They knew I was going with him and all that but -he was decent I think. The right way to do it.
- MM:** Any other memories, Alita, of those early years? Of course you had some good times and some rough times.

- AH:** Oh, I don't know if I had so many rough times. Whenever I was working at a place well you had to work but that was okay, I didn't have to work too hard. Not more than--I was always was treated good wherever I worked. I can't say that anybody was -I worked at many different places usually where a baby was born. Where the mother couldn't work, you know cook and then I'd work there. But then I worked on the farms too--milking and but not on the field. I just helped when the harvest was done, I'd help shocking -shocking corn or shocking whatever or headering you know. Do you know what headering is?
- MM:** Throughout your young life at a young age as you mentioned earlier at nine years old you were already working for other people.
- AH:** Uh huh. In the summers and at the fall but I never started school when it did start, I was still working and I always never was at the end of school either I'd always have to go work before school was out you know. (That I'd be with the rest of school was out.) So I was a working girl.
- MM:** Did you get to keep all the money you earned?
- AH:** Well, my folks got it.
- MM:** I see.
- AH:** Until the last year I could keep it, the money that I earned. I always had enough, you know when I worked at other places, I didn't need except clothes of course. I'd earn enough to buy to send for my dresses or my ma would make them or whatever.
- MM:** Remember ordering dresses?
- AH:** Well, I don't think we ordered dresses for me. One time I remember getting a midi that was a style when they had these midi blouses with a sailor collar. I got that - that was ordered. The other things I think my mother sewed for me, my clothes.
- MM:** Of course when you grew up in those real early years there wasn't even a radio in the house was there?
- AH:** No. Oh, no. My dad got a organ at one time at a sale, he bought a organ. Well, I wished they would have let me taken lessons, but we didn't. My folks were poor but still they could have invested some things maybe. So I didn't learn to play by notes.
- MM:** Did you learn to play by ear?
- AH:** Yah. A little bit.
- MM:** So when you were you already married by the time you had a radio?
- AH:** Oh, yes, we got our first radio I think in 1928 and that was battery. Had to have it charged you know and my husband made a windmill or whatever charger that would charge the battery. Yah, that's the first.
- MM:** So I bet a lot of people when that first time they heard a radio they thought what in the world is this?
- AH:** Oh, boy, we even when you know somebody that had a radio, I remember one time some neighbors of ours they had a radio and we went there to hear that radio. There was a special -this Yankton came in...
- MM:** WNAX?

- AH:** Yah. And there was good programs, I don't remember the names. Johnny and some fellows, they sing so nice. But then the news you know, we'd get the news. But we first had our first radio in 1928.
- MM:** Did your folks subscribe to any newspapers? Any German newspapers?
- AH:** Yes, oh yah, they had the *Frei Presse*.
- MM:** *Dakota Frei Presse*.
- AH:** Yah.
- MM:** Any others?
- AH:** No, I think that was the only one they had.
- MM:** And then as you got married and so forth, did you get some of those newspapers too?
- AH:** We didn't have a paper right away but later on got the Aberdeen paper.
- MM:** But no German paper?
- AH:** Not no German paper.
- MM:** The time when you were on the farm, of course, you were raised in a family too, and for entertainment did you get to town once in awhile for dances? You and your husband or what did you do? Visit other people?
- AH:** Yah, we went visiting. On Sunday afternoon or we'd get company on Sunday afternoons or evenings. No we didn't go to dances, my husband was a good dancer but I wasn't. So we just didn't go to dances.
- MM:** So you didn't get to many barn dances?
- AH:** No, we were at one barn dance that I know but that's the only barn dance, I think.
- MM:** Did they play a lot of cards?
- AH:** No, we didn't even do that, a little bit at a time, one time my brother stayed with us one winter and then my brother George and August would play cards. Or sometimes some other guys would come there and play cards. But I didn't learn to play cards. I wish I would but I said often that's a waste of time I'd sit and crochet you know or
- MM:** Oh.
- AH:** And then our first baby was born just a year after we were married and then I had to take care of her and I'd sit, we had a cradle and I'd sit and rock the cradle with my foot and let them play cards and I'd crochet.
- MM:** You did a lot of craft work?
- AH:** Yah, I liked crocheting. I did a little of bit of tatting and later on I learned to knit and did some knitting.
- MM:** Any other memories of those early years?
- AH:** Well.

MM: Remember any thing special about the school days?

AH: Oh, my school days?

MM: Yes.

AH: Oh, well when we lived in Loyalton it was a mile and a half to school, it was a town school I never went to a country school. Always had to go to a town school where ever we lived. And that was a mile and a half where I had to walk, but in the winter time this man had a buggy and two ponies and his boys they would drive and then I could go with them to school. And then let's see. The rest of the time you know we lived I walked to school in Roscoe, we lived a half mile out of town and then I walked, had to cross the RR tracks to get to school -that was about 1/2 mile.

MM: Was it always a treat to get to a bigger town, go to the stores, bazaar?

AH: Well, I don't know when I first was in Aberdeen, I was -well I wasn't so young, so old, or whatever - because my Dad worked on the RR he got free tickets to go on the train. And we did too, we kids.

MM: Today when you think about going to other towns and now you're here and so forth--through all those years were you able to keep up a little bit about our German heritage? Did you do a little reading on it?

AH: No, can't say that I did. We heard about it -heard about it after we were married about this and I would have liked to have joined it you know; go up to Bismarck sometime and see what it's like and that but August wasn't interested in it so we never did go there. But you asked about going to different towns. Yah I got to go to Aberdeen one time with my Dad on the train because it was free because we got free tickets. But that was just on Saturday -we went in on Saturday nights and then Sunday mornings we came back again. And the first time, I was at Eureka one time there was something a college or academy up at Eureka and there was a girl friend of mine she went to school up there and there was doings up there. I think it was a time when they had graduation or something. And they took me along and that was first time I was at Eureka.

MM: I bet that was a big treat.

AH: Yah. That was a treat. There was some people we knew them, my Dad and he was section foreman and this other man, Teske, they knew each other because he came down on the railroad track on the railroad and they met each other see, Dad had to go up as far as Hillsvieiw and the Eureka man had to come down (tape ended so cut off) .

MM: I'd just like to ask you if you'd like to leave any other message about your life and when you reminisce about growing up as a young girl at four years old coming to America and then your family having such a large family and then your having to go out to work at such a young age and then raising wonderful family and still in such good health, what do you think those early days what it must have been like for your folks having to leave this Crimea and coming to America.

AH: I know my Dad said right away if he'd had the money he'd have gone back right away.

MM: He talked about that?

AH: Yah, he didn't like the united States. Well, that was just when he came in he -later on I guess he learned to--he had a good job here and then I guess and then there was people that we knew, there was my

mama's, my mother's sister, living here and then some others-- these Gornetz that we went to--you know so by time he got settled and he didn't have to go back anymore I guess and while how bad it got in Russia, then he was glad we that he did come over. It got so bad in Russia when these Bolsheviks - what was that in 1914 or something, and I guess in his family -my mother's family she didn't know, but Dad's family was sent to Siberia I guess from what his brothers or something. Anyway we lost track of them, no more -that's what they thought they probably were sent to Siberia or something happened to them.

MM: So all through those years there wasn't any correspondence?

AH: For a long time there was no correspondence, no.

MM: Until when was there correspondence again?

AH: Well, after the war after the second world war--(un hah)--my Dad had his sister, they escaped from Russia into Germany, escaped somehow, you know. So he had this sister in Germany and she got they got together somehow they found out our address and we corresponded with them, with her. Then my mother had a brother, the reason how he got to Germany was he was a prisoner -see Russia and Germany were fighting each other and he was a prisoner of stadium ??? Actually I guess he was -he had to be in the hospital -he was shot I suppose and then he was in the hospital. Then he stayed there and he got married to his nurse. Yah.

MM: And up to this day have you had correspondence anyone in the family having correspondence with any relatives?

AH: Yah, we had with my Dad's sister. We had a long time but she's passed on but now her daughter, I'm still writing to Elsa. And she married a Haushild? what's his name -and he wrote such nice -he had the nicest handwriting you know he'd write in German script first but later he'd have this other English script and we wrote each other and then it was so bad, in Germany and then we sent a lot of packages to them a lot of packages.

MM: After WW II?

AH: Yah, yah. We got a letter from them and they said they don't have anything except dark bread and potatoes to eat. So we started sending packages, different things and coffee that was something that was something wonderful to them. And coffee wasn't so expensive at that time. And I'd send a -buy a box, you know, it used to be in round cans like that and different foods you know different things like that, that you could send over in a package, flour we sent a 10 pound of flour one time and sugar in a bag you know. And then they sent a picture one time -he'd of course he'd always write back that he got it. I'd always make a list of what I'd sent and put it in the package and I kept a list so they'd always know what I put in, only one time something was taken out. Other time they said everything that was listed it was in. But one time they'd bring the packages but they'd open them before they'd give to the people there.

MM: Oh?

AH: And then that one time something that I don't know what it was was taken out.

MM: And there have correspondence today?

AH: Yah, not too much anymore, with Elsa. That would be like my niece.

MM: And she lives in Germany?

AH: She's in Germany, yah.

MM: But as far as you know, might there be some relatives in the former Soviet Union, in Russia or Siberia yet?

AH: I wouldn't know that. Elsa's never said anything about that -No.

MM: In her letters?

AH: No.

MM: Un huh.

AH: See her mother passed away too, and I suppose, see they escaped so I don't know that was a scary thing to do I guess and well I don't know how to answer that.

MM: It would be something interesting to find out if she has corresponded if you write to her we would be interested in knowing about that at the University because we want to interview those people, that have returned from Siberia and Kazakhstan who might be relatives with relatives in North Dakota or South Dakota like yourself--so if you have her address sometime I'd like to write to her. We can visit about that after our conversation. But let's close our conversation today, it's November 10, 1993, and it was a pleasure for me to be in Hosmer, South Dakota visiting with you. I want to thank you for wonderful conversation.

AH: You're welcome and thank you too.