

Interview with Rosa Hochstein Kuntz

Conducted by Michael M. Miller

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Transcription by Lena Paris

MM: It's December 27, 1993 and this is Michael Miller the Germans from Russia Bibliographer at North Dakota State University in Fargo. I'm in Bismarck, North Dakota at the Marillac Retirement Center and I am with Rosa (Hochstein) Kuntz. And Rosa we are going to talk a little about your life and what you recall what you folks used to do your childhood and so forth. First of all I wonder if you could tell me, Rosa, when you were born?

RK: February 23, 1901.

MM: 1901, and where did you grow up?

RK: In Canada.

MM: Oh you grew up in Canada.

RK: Saskatchewan, Canada.

MM: Where in Saskatchewan?

RK: Mariental.

MM: Mariental.

RK: That was just a post office and a church there. Amber was our closest town. We lived 4 miles from the boundary (boundy).

MM: Um hum, what was the name of your father?

RK: Frank Hochstein.

MM: Frank Hochstein.

RK: Yes.

MM: And your mother?

RK: Elizabeth Schieller.

MM: Now your parents are Elizabeth and Frank.

RK: We come to Estevan, Saskatchewan, that's where we landed.

MM: Now you were born in Russia.

- RK:** In Robusafuta (013) that's a little village out of Landau that's where my dad worked for a millionaire there, Adleman they called him.
- MM:** Um hum, what was his name?
- RK:** Adleman he was in that little village Robusfuta (015) they called it. I don't know if I pronounce it right or not, and I found out through my birth certificate I had it in Russia and Father Aberlee translated it in English in 1962. So that's I was baptized in Landau.
- MM:** In Landau. Yes that's interesting, of course in the Ukraine it was a Catholic Black Sea German Colony.
- RK:** Yah.
- MM:** Now let me ask you, your father and mother had how many children?
- RK:** They had 12 children.
- MM:** Twelve children and were they all born over in Russia?
- RK:** No.
- MM:** When they came to Canada how many children were there?
- RK:** I was the smallest when they come. I had two sisters before that but I lost a brother the night before we went on the ship. This is one thing I remember from Russia, two soldiers come and picked him up he died that night the morning he was suppose to go on the ship. We had to leave him back.
- MM:** How old was he then?
- RK:** About six months.
- MM:** Only six months um hum. Now you were two years old when you left the German village.
- RK:** This is what I remembered, and I always wondered if it was really so if it was a dream what I remember when two soldiers come and took him in a little box and took him away. That is just the one thing I remember from Russia. My first remembrance and then I asked my mother and she said, "Yes that's so."
- MM:** Um hum.
- RK:** Then we had a shipwreck on the way over. My oldest sister she just died last January in Estevan and she was 97 years old, and they thought that was land already. It was a ship for rescue us. She said how they went over on the ladders on the other ships and stuff. And I don't know how many they were in the ocean pretty long to come across because they were transferred from one ship to another.
- MM:** Right, you were only two years old so you only remember what they would tell you.
- RK:** Yah, what my sister had seen in her history. She wrote her history in Estevan.
- MM:** Oh! um hum.
- RK:** And then I don't remember anything until around Christmas time we come to Estevan and the lady had white hair and that's the first person I guess I seen with white hair. Her name was Carolyn that's all I

remember then from then on. And we lived dad worked in the brick yard in Estevan and mother used to go and scrub floors and stuff. Then 1905 we moved out to a homestead to Mariental.

MM: Um hum.

RK: We farmed there on the farm and mother died on childbirth. A brother after the last one we lost my brother died before the last one was born. The last one was two weeks old when mother died.

MM: Um, how old were you then?

RK: I was eight.

MM: So you remember that yet.

RK: Oh I remember everything.

MM: So there was 12 children in the family.

RK: But they died, those other infants.

MM: Oh.

RK: I had five brothers and they all died as infants.

MM: Um hum.

RK: In January I start a year and then the second was Katie she died in 1969, she was older than I a year. Then a sister, younger than me, she died in 1916. She was married to my husband's brother (Jake), and then I had to work out. The only schooling I got I went about two summers to parochial school, we had four miles to go. In wintertime we could never get to a school the winters. They were too severe. And dad took care of us for three and a half years and my grandmother then, that was my dad's mother, that's the only grandma we knew. My mother's mother was still in Russia, and then mother died the 25 of September and grandma died the 1st of November of the same year. Then my uncle and aunt took my little sister baby and they raised her for three years and then dad got married then we took her home and she's still living.

MM: How old is she today?

RK: She was 80 years old on her last birthday.

MM: I see, lets go back a little bit to a life in Russia. I know you don't remember because you were only two, but did your dad and your mother of course you were only eight when your mother died but did they talk much about life in Russia?

RK: Oh yes, they always talked about how nice fruits and stuff they could raise there and that stuff.

MM: What did your father do for a living there in Russia?

RK: He was a hired man, he was the head man in the hired man, but then they had four to five men under him working. And grandpa, that's my dad's mother she remarried her husband died she married a Faul, and he paid the fare over that's what I found out when my sister wrote her history.

MM: Um hum.

RK: And then the Faul's and Uncle Adam that was my dads real brother we lived just not far from Mariental there on the farm. And then after my mother died, dad remarried in 1912 or 1913 he married again and then she had a family of six but only one lived with us he was just a year older than I, one is still in Russia and one was a carchidena, now you know what that is?

MM: What was that?

RK: Carchidena, he could play music and had a schooling teacher.

MM: Oh I see, he was a choir director.

RK: Yah.

MM: And what was his name?

RK: Phelix Wisegerber

MM: Phelix Wisegerber.

RK: Wisegerber.

MM: This what we are talking about in Canada.

RK: No, that was in Mariental that was on the farm.

MM: How far was that from Estevan?

RK: Twenty-five miles northwest.

MM: I see, um hum.

RK: And then I took three months of German school.

MM: Out in the country school?

RK: In the houses we had school, my uncles place we had it.

MM: Who was the teacher that taught the German?

RK: Phelix.

MM: Oh he taught it too then.

RK: He was a music teacher and he was all we studied was Bible and Catechism and arithmetic.

MM: Well when you grew up, Rose, as a child you know before you left Russia coming on the ship and so forth, what language did you speak?

RK: German.

MM: German then.

RK: We couldn't hardly speak English when my dad died. It was pretty hard when we had to start to work out, and the first place he hired me out to a Boneajuski.

- MM:** What was the name? That was the family name?
- RK:** Yes, she gave birth to a baby that was the third child I was there a month.
- MM:** How old were you then?
- RK:** 15 going on 16.
- MM:** So at 15 your dad thought it was time for you to go out and work, and so he hired you out.
- RK:** Dad was dead by then. Dad died in January and in March I was working out already.
- MM:** Um hum.
- RK:** And then from there when she just got me for a month until she got out of bed, and then he hired me out to a priest Father Jakob Wilhelm.
- MM:** Um hum.
- RK:** And he came over in 1912 too.
- MM:** From Russia too?
- RK:** Yes, and our parish was the first parish he had. He was always gone a lot and he was sick and he had a big house I think it was 12 rooms and I was there alone.
- MM:** You were only 16 then.
- RK:** I never knew housework all I done was help out in the yard you know horses and stuff. Well he helped me he said he was going to help me but he was never home.
- MM:** What was the name of the church?
- RK:** Calakudas.
- MM:** What was the name of it?
- RK:** Calakudas church, I can give you the (101).
- MM:** Calakudas, ah huh interesting, and then you worked for the priest the house for how long?
- RK:** Well that was in March until April and then I got blood poison in my hand.
- MM:** This was in 1912?
- RK:** No, that was in 1915.
- MM:** Oh 1915.
- RK:** And then I got sick I couldn't work anymore for a while. Then I had few jobs here and there baby sitting. And then in 1916 I got a job from a party come up from Crosby and hired me.
- MM:** Crosby, North Dakota.

- RK:** Yes, and then I worked there for a whole year.
- MM:** At their family home, but could you speak English by then?
- RK:** Well I could speak some but we got along.
- MM:** It was limited.
- RK:** He was German, Holzer was their name.
- MM:** Oh I see.
- RK:** He had a butcher shop there in Crosby. And then in August I got so sick I couldn't go to work, I never went out or anything. So I went out to Uncle Adam, I wanted to go to the German confession. Then I got a job right away.
- MM:** So you went back home to Canada again from Crosby.
- RK:** No, that was out to the farm Mariental.
- MM:** Oh up in Saskatchewan again.
- RK:** Yes, I was still in Saskatchewan then. And then I worked for John Frank. Then my sister, she was 16, she come down I had an uncle in Solen, North Dakota.
- MM:** What was his name?
- RK:** Schwartz, Jacob Schwartz.
- MM:** Jacob Schwartz, so you came down to North Dakota then to Solen?
- RK:** No, I didn't came down later I come.
- MM:** But your sister came.
- RK:** My sister came down she was my mother's sister Mrs. Schwartz.
- MM:** What was your sisters name?
- RK:** My sister, Katie.
- MM:** Katie, um hum.
- RK:** She was the second one from the family. He married off right away in two weeks he married the Christ Witich from Solen.
- MM:** When your sister got married, well how long did she know this man?
- RK:** She didn't know him at all they were just brought together.
- MM:** Oh! what do they call that again?
- RK:** Well I don't know, they brought them.

- MM:** They arranged the marriage.
- RK:** Yes, they arranged it and she was married three months and then he died of double pneumonia.
- MM:** Um
- RK:** And she was pregnant when he died and then there was a Geiger down here he was married to Kuntz from Solen His wife, they lived out in Montana that Geiger and he had one child and she died in Solen and the baby died there she has such a heart.
- MM:** Who's that now?
- RK:** That's Mrs. Geiger.
- MM:** She died.
- RK:** She died and then they brought them two together again.
- MM:** Your sister Katie.
- RK:** My sister Kate and Geiger, they got married.
- MM:** Oh another arrangement.
- RK:** Yes.
- MM:** Oh that was interesting.
- RK:** Yes, that was that arrangement those days.
- MM:** Those days they had a lot of marriage arrangements.
- RK:** Yes, and then that Geiger had one child then it was about two years old a little girl that was the four child they all died at childbirth.
- MM:** Um hum.
- RK:** And then two years after that they come up to Canada and I come along with my brother-in-law and sister to Glendive.
- MM:** How old were you then?
- RK:** Going on 17.
- MM:** Uh huh.
- RK:** And from there I worked for the Geiger from the 4th of July until November. There they got a sister, Mrs. Geiger was a Kuntz and they came down they came down to Richardton for the wedding and they brought Jake, my husband. They live south of Richardton. He was born there and raised there south of Richardton. My husbands name was Jake, and they brought him up and I didn't know him that's the way I got to know him.
- MM:** Oh! So you also had a marriage arrangement

- RK:** Yes.
- MM:** So I mean it was just decided and they thought that man was good for you, then it was all arranged huh.
- RK:** It was all arranged.
- MM:** So how long did you court your husband?
- RK:** I only knew him a week.
- MM:** Oh, really!
- RK:** I didn't want to get married but I wanted a home.
- MM:** I see you wanted to find a home so you could start a family.
- RK:** Well, not I just want you to know we had no home just an orphan from one place to another. There was no home to go to.
- MM:** Oh yah, and you were tired of that you wanted a stable place.
- RK:** Yes, I wanted.
- MM:** You were how old then when you got married?
- RK:** I was 19.
- MM:** You were 19, uh huh.
- RK:** Not quite I was two months late.
- MM:** Did you feel, Rosa, when you were living of course in Canada when you came to North Dakota, did you feel like it was a different country going to a different place?
- RK:** I liked north Montana and I still like Montana.
- MM:** No, but I mean what about Saskatchewan?
- RK:** Well Saskatchewan was all right too but I like this country, Montana is my favorite
- MM:** I see ah huh, but when you were back home on the farm, did you have to do a lot of farm work?
- RK:** We done everything when I worked for that Frank he moved down to Raleigh now too. I still got some wages coming from him.
- MM:** Um hum, he never paid you?
- RK:** He paid half of it what I had coming that's the way it was.
- MM:** Oh I see interesting, but you were only eight years old when your mother died. By then you didn't learn much cooking yet.
- RK:** No, I do any of the housework because we was always helping Dad.

- MM:** There were no boys in the family.
- RK:** No, my little the boy died. That's why dad wanted to come to America to get land you know for the boy and he died that night when they wanted to go on the ship.
- MM:** Yes.
- RK:** And then we had another sister in Estevan she died and then when he got to the farm there was a little boy born, Jake, and he died six months so we had no boys.
- MM:** So you learned to cook later when you were a teenager?
- RK:** Well, the priest helped me cook (165) you know what that is?
- MM:** Yes, what were those?
- RK:** (166)
- MM:** Knipfla. Did you make a lot of cheese buttons and things like that too?
- RK:** Oh yes.
- MM:** Ah huh a lot of noodles.
- RK:** And then he wouldn't stay alone the priest, he had a little boy with him about six years old. He wouldn't stay alone. And then he showed me how to make I knew how to strain them and stuff like that and he put bacon in and I hate fat up to this day I can't tolerate fat.
- MM:** Ah huh.
- RK:** And he balled us out right away the first tune U was there.
- MM:** You were still a young girl then too yet.
- RK:** Well I didn't know anything and he said he was going to teach me when he said, "You came to America, all you want to eat is pie and cake."
- MM:** So you grew up in a quite a religious home I suspect? Religion was very important in your home singing and a lot. Did you do a lot of singing?
- RK:** Oh yes.
- MM:** Did they have an organ or any instrument in the home?
- RK:** My sister took lessons from Phelix, my step-brother, and I was signed up after Christmas. I was going to take lessons but I never got to. Dad died January. It's a hard life all the way through.
- MM:** What about your life up there in Saskatchewan and then you came down to North Dakota and you lived here ever since, so you lived on a farm in North Dakota?
- RK:** We lived in Hettinger County Madison township 25 miles to Mott, that was the county seat and Regent was the closest that was 14 miles.

- MM:** And how big a family did you raise, Rosa?
- RK:** I had 13 children.
- MM:** Oh, you had 13 children, um hum. So your first child was born when you were how old about 20.
- RK:** 20, she's a nun.
- MM:** What is her name?
- RK:** Sister Mary Noel.
- MM:** And where does she live?
- RK:** She is down in Mexico, Albuquerque. Their mother house is in Aberdeen, South Dakota.
- MM:** Oh she's in Albuquerque, New Mexico um hum.
- RK:** Presentation.
- MM:** Right, so you lived a full life and your children of course you had 13 children and then you lived on the farm.
- RK:** We had a small farm.
- MM:** Now I forgot to ask you up in Saskachewan what kind of farm, was it a wood house you had?
- RK:** Yes, we had a wood house but a sod barn.
- MM:** You had a sod barn, ah huh. Do you remember that yet?
- RK:** Oh yes I remember that.
- MM:** How was that built?
- RK:** That was built with sod and we had a roof on with straw and stuff and the winters was so severe we couldn't see the barn from the house. We had steps going over the snow bank over this and down the barn the cattle just slid down. When we moved to the farm we moved out with two oxen that's all we had and a wagon.
- MM:** And there was, of course, no electricity.
- RK:** Oh no there was no didn't have electricity on our farm until late 50's.
- MM:** What about for heat, what did you use for heat out on the farm when you were growing up?
- RK:** Coal.
- MM:** You had coal already then?
- RK:** Oh yes, we got it from Estevan, but we had coal there was no wood or windmill or anything.
- MM:** So you used coal already then, you didn't use manure for heat?

- RK:** Yes, we used summertime we used manure. That was precious, the manure you know later we had more stock they was put in the fence overnight and that was spaded out with blocks. Just like then it was first was bladed then we put them up this way and then was just like sharps you know it was dry.
- MM:** Did you have a summer kitchen?
- RK:** No.
- MM:** No outside oven or anything like that.
- RK:** But my grandpa had a outside oven with rocks built I remember that.
- MM:** You mean back in Russia?
- RK:** No, in Marinetal.
- MM:** Oh in Mariental. Oh he did oh yes.
- RK:** I remember that.
- MM:** So your grandpa came over on your father's father.
- RK:** He was the step-father to my dad.
- MM:** I see.
- RK:** The grandfather we know.
- MM:** Did he come over with the ship the same came over together?
- RK:** Yes, the same ship.
- MM:** Now did anybody, Rosa, stay over there did they all come over?
- RK:** No, one of them stayed back. His clothes was in the ship too the last minute he backed out.
- MM:** Now you mean your father's brother?
- RK:** Yes, Joseph was his name.
- MM:** Joseph, what was his last name?
- RK:** Hochstein.
- MM:** Joseph Hochstein he decided not to come.
- RK:** Ya he backed out his clothes came across.
- MM:** Why did he back out?
- RK:** I don't know he just got tired was scared or something backed out the last minute.
- MM:** Uh huh, do you remember when you were only two years old but you kinda remember a little bit leaving the village?

- RK:** No I don't.
- MM:** Don't remember that how they went.
- RK:** The only thing I remember is when they took my brother, that's the only thing I remember from Russia. And I don't remember anything from the trip until we got to Estevan.
- MM:** Did your mother get homesick you think?
- RK:** Oh I suppose they were homesick, but they had no way of getting back.
- MM:** Uh huh and of course as we talked earlier they talked about the old country.
- RK:** Oh yes, they talked a lot about the old country.
- MM:** Did they ever sing any songs like they sang in the old country?
- RK:** Yes.
- MM:** What were some of those songs do you remember?
- RK:** [German Dialogue] (231)
- MM:** Why don't you sing that one that would be interesting. Say that again.
- RK:** [German Dialogue] (233). I know so many German songs you'd be surprised.
- MM:** Oh, is that right. Do you know them by heart or do you have to have notes?
- RK:** No, we sing by heart. Well we sing by notes too but we sang a lot.
- MM:** What was that one that you just mentioned?
- RK:** [German Dialogue - singing the song that her parents sang in the old country] (240).
- MM:** Oh that's beautiful I have heard that song. There was lots of singing huh.
- RK:** Yes, and the ones I remember I sing it yet is when my oldest sister when the communion we had no church in Mariental- there yet we had mass in the Stephen Wanner's house.
- MM:** In whose house?
- RK:** Stephen Wanner and had the river was so high we couldn't cross. Then we went across with the boat and on the other side we went up the west end. We was on the west and the south side and the river and we had to cross over to the west side. We were on the east side and then they had ranged before the river was so high Zimmerman picked us up and the other and I just remember I was only about five, I guess when that happened or six. And they had a little row boat there and we was over with the row boat you know and I had my hands down in the river. I thought that was fun.
- MM:** Ah yes ah huh and off you went.
- RK:** Off we went and they would sing. (She sings a German song that they sung down the river.)
- MM:** Beautiful! Of course when we talk about singing we always have to remember weddings, right?

RK: Yah.

MM: I bet you remember some of those wedding days too huh? When you got married did you have a big-wedding?

RK: We had a well we had a double wedding.

MM: Oh!

RK: His sister got married the same time and was out on the farm sout (south) nine miles south of Richardson.

MM: Was the wedding right on the farm?

RK: Yes, but we had that was November the 4th, 1919 and it was the biggest storm you wanted to see.

MM: But usually how many days did they have a celebration of the wedding?

RK: Well we just had a one day wedding.

MM: Not the three day celebration.

RK: No, no.

MM: What about the time of the holidays of course we just celebrated Christmas?

RK: That was celebrated Christmas.

MM: How did you celebrate Christmas do you remember?

RK: Well we had the Christkindle and the das Belzenickel.

MM: That was even up in Canada you had that.

RK: Oh yes, and even when on the farm when I was married we didn't had a Santa Claus the first year. Years later years we made always Christkindle about two or three times myself.

MM: You remember that of course when you were a child.

RK: Oh yes, yes.

MM: And there was a lot of Christmas singing too?

RK: Yes, they had beautiful songs.

MM: In German too of course.

RK: In German.

MM: And then of course at that time you had no little church yet, so you had church right in the home?

RK: No, well they build I guess my mother was living yet when they build the church. We couldnt take her in the church because the blood poison was running already. I was out beside her bed all the time, but the two older ones helped Dad in September. We didn't had the threshers yet, we had some shocks yet.

- MM:** Everything was done with the horses yet wasn't it?
- RK:** First we had oxen for two years we had oxen.
- MM:** How many did you have?
- RK:** Two oxen two big oxen and a horse.
- MM:** One horse?
- RK:** Bill and Frank and Pete.
- MM:** That's's what you called them Bill, Frank and Pete huh. What was the horses name?
- RK:** Pete.
- MM:** And the two oxen were Bill and Frank.
- RK:** Bill and Frank I never seen such huge oxen and steer since they sold them. They were huge.
- MM:** Um hum so you of course then later on you had some machinery.
- RK:** Oh yes, and we threshed I know the cutting I don know how they cut the first crop, but when we put the first crop out with the two oxen and the walking plow dad sowed by hand.
- MM:** Sowed by hand.
- RK:** Yes.
- MM:** Of course this land was never been used before.
- RK:** No, it was just prairie.
- MM:** A lot of rocks too then.
- RK:** We had a lot of rocks and prairie.
- MM:** Do you remember that when that was cut the first time?
- RK:** Oh yes, I remember that.
- MM:** The grass and then sod had to be cut that was tough wasn't it?
- RK:** And when we first put the walking plow us kids took the shoes off and followed the fur, you know, that was nice and soft.
- MM:** How old were you then?
- RK:** Oh well I was five going on eight when we moved to the farm. I remember that but with thresh they went to grandpa Is house for threshing. They had a great big place and they had just the ground and that was slick. And then they put the grain there and uncle had horses and one was in the middle and the horses went around and they lift the grain you know turn it. Then we kids run around on there and that all helped to thresh out.

- MM:** Oh stamping it down to make it even.
- RK:** And then they had to move it and then after wards they put it up you know and the wind would push the grain out and the straw they put in the Shares and that's the way the clean it then they had six, I remember all this.
- MM:** Oh yes, how they used to do that.
- RK:** Ya, I remember that.
- MM:** You had to help with that too then huh?
- RK:** Well we was always with them, family was always with them when they worked only when...
- MM:** What about butchering you must remember butchering was pretty big too wasn't it?
- RK:** It was pretty big.
- MM:** Had to get all that meat ready for the winter months too.
- RK:** That was all cut by hand. I got sick every time we butchered, I couldn't take that smell.
- MM:** Did they make a lot of sausage too?
- RK:** Oh yes.
- MM:** What kind of sausage did they make?
- RK:** Broat vorscht (328) liver vorscht and swarta maga. And my did in the fall he was the main butcher there all he done was stab the pigs and then clean the casings and mix the sausage. They would get him from one place to another.
- MM:** He was that good huh.
- RK:** He was excellent.
- MM:** Did he learn that at home in Russia?
- RK:** He was a good bread baker. He took care of us he helped bake and helped us he cooked after mother was dead and everything, sewed, helped us learned us to patch clothes and stuff.
- MM:** Your dad had to do everything huh, you learned all that that was interesting. So of course when you'd have a wedding was very important but also was sad I am sure when there was a funeral in the home.
- RK:** That was sad, there was always home. I seen my dad die at home my mother died at home and my grandmother and my brother died at home. I was playing with him all day long, my little brother, on the floor and ma and dad put some paper on the ceiling. It was in the summer time and ma had some pillows under the table where they were working and I was playing with the child all day long. In the morning when we got up he was dead.
- MM:** Interesting, and when there was a funeral was there some singing then too.
- RK:** Oh yah the, [German singing, Das Sheckstal].

- MM:** Can you sing that a little bit? Try that once, Rosa.
- RK:** Das shecksal wird kinen forshohnen. I would have to see the words.
- MM:** Do you have the words handy?
- RK:** I have when I was sick I was laid up in Montana when I broke my hip and they come in and cleaned house and they removed everything that I had and I don't know where everything is.
- MM:** Uh huh they got things mixed up for you. Well have to do that sometime and sing that.
- RK:** That was sad always when they sang that song and then they buried them and you know when they start covering up then they that was so sad it hit you just like that.
- MM:** And there was a lot of prayers, of course, everything was German then yet, wasn't it?
- RK:** Yes, we had German church. our church was German in the 30's we still had German in St. Michael Church.
- MM:** In North Dakota, now did you receive any German newspapers in Canada?
- RK:** "The Herald".
- MM:** That was in North Dakota, but not in Canada of course.
- RK:** In Canada they got it too.
- MM:** "The North Dakota Herald".
- RK:** Oh yes they had and the "Shtats Ansieger" they had. And they had another one it started with Career I don't know.
- MM:** Career, Deutsch Career maybe and that was from Canada.
- RK:** Yah.
- MM:** And that paper people would wait for that paper I bet every week.
- RK:** Oh yes, and then they had those them Kanons it was stories, they would hand stories from one end farmer to the other they was always exchanging.
- MM:** Written stories.
- RK:** Yes.
- MM:** Now where did those stories come from?
- RK:** Well somebody got em and then when they had read them you know when they got together.
- MM:** And then they would pass those stories on.
- RK:** Ya uh hum.
- MM:** What about for entertainment, what did you do as a child?

- RK:** Well we played a lot when the winter time when they were together the sunflower seeds was the main thing.
- MM:** Oh you ate a lot of sunflower seeds, oh yes uh huh.
- RK:** Every evening when they come they know those big pans there was roasted and we sat and played with those shells and the bigger ones was playing cards and stuff. And sometimes they made tricks. There was a lot of tricks made years ago.
- MM:** And then, of course, later on as you became a teenager you had different kinds of fun. And you'd go to dances I am sure too wouldn't you?
- RK:** Just in the house.
- MM:** Not too much outside. Did they have an accordion?
- RK:** My dad played accordion.
- MM:** He did, oh yes.
- RK:** My sister could play pretty good too.
- MM:** The accordion too, so you had music in the house then.
- RK:** We sang a lot and played a lot.
- MM:** Do you remember the first time when you had the radio?
- RK:** I remember the first radio we had it was in 1937.
- MM:** Here in North Dakota already then. You were married raising a family.
- RK:** Yes, I was married I was in the hospital I lost a baby and it was just a home where they had the Richardton hospital it was just small. I missed that music so much and that helped me to come back to my senses again. I was so sick run down and then I had about 80 turkeys.
- MM:** You had 80 turkeys on the farm oh you raised turkeys huh?
- RK:** We raised turkeys and geese and everything and then when I come home, "I said I go and get a radio with the turkey money". He said, "No we have to get shoes". I said, "I don't care I said we get shoes some place else." And then we got a radio, and the children enjoyed it I tell you .They had such a ball they went around we had a bigger house later. I was so sick laying on the chest of drawers. They were singing going around the dinning room table holding hands and singing and dancing.
- MM:** They all wanted that radio was so glad to hear that radio.
- RK:** Oh yes, that was something.
- MM:** What were some of those early programs, do you remember some of those?
- RK:** "Ma Perkins" I don't know any more so long you forget when you get older.
- MM:** Do you remember, Rosa, ah ever getting WNAX where you could hear Lawrence Welk?

RK: Yes.

MM: Remember that.

RK: You know we played for Lawrence Welk in Dickinson. We had a "Happy Time Band" I and my husband was the leader.

MM: Oh, you played in it too.

RK: Yes.

MM: What did you play?

RK: Kazoc, my husband played the accordion.

MM: And then what, tell me a little about that about Lawrence and how that all happened?

RK: Well we were out in the parade and then pretty soon they had to stop and Lawrence Welk come and gave us a trophy.

MM: This was what year?

RK: I don't know it was in the 60's.

MM: Oh in the 60's it was later on then.

RK: That was see we was on the farm 35 miles south of Dickinson. In 1962 we moved to Dickinson and we lived in Dickinson 18 years. From then on we had more recreation than when on the farm we always have to work and the milking and cows and stuff couldn't leave. And when the first one was through grade school we had four schools in the district. My sister, that Katie Geiger, she came down and she said there is all kinds of work in Montana in Glendive. And Dickinson was always poor in the wages was always lower than Montana. Baby sitting was 25 cents an hour and the same way in the hotels and stuff they just didn't pay anything. And then she took my daughter along to Glendive and she started to work in the NP hospital and she wanted to be a nurse. And from there she went in nurses training in Miles City. We didn't know Miles City existed, but through Glendive she got. Then when my other children we couldn't afford to send them to boarding school and I wanted them to go to the Catholic School and the Holy Rosary Hospital in Miles City they had sometimes 20 school kids going to school. They had to work four hours a day and then they got the work and go to school. That's where most of my family lives now in Montana.

MM: Oh, I see so you lived out in Glendive then for a while?

RK: No, we didn't live in Glendive. We lived on the farm yet.

MM: Oh, you stayed but the children went out there to the boarding school.

RK: Yah.

MM: Oh, I see. Then you moved to Dickenson and how old were you then when you moved to Dickinson?

RK: I was 62.

- MM:** So you lived in Dickinson you got to know Dickinson quite a while and that's where you got to know Monsignor Aberle?
- RK:** Yes.
- MM:** He was a wonderful man. He did a lot of work for our German-Russian people.
- RK:** Yah he done he always had German school churches and stuff. And then in 1980 we moved down here because most of the children were up in Montana and we figured it out from a we could take the plane here and between the time schedule you know the time change an two hour time we was up in Bowsman, Montana. Now if I want to go to Bowsman I have to go to Minneapolis.
- MM:** Yes, now it's different of course.
- RK:** Minneapolis to Salt Lake City for an hour layover and then I get up there at six.
- MM:** When you think back, Rosa, to your time when you were a child of course. A person never forgets about those early years. What do you think when you look back and think of those early years what do you think? Mainly when you look back on the farm and so forth.
- RK:** I think that people were more cooperate worked together. If one had something to do they was always work neighbors they call it wasn't they built homes and stuff and barns and they helped each other more than now.
- MM:** I know it was tough for your dad you know and it wasn't easy. You all had to go out and work at such a early age and then you had to go out and work for other families and so forth. Still you always had there was always a little some good memories wasn't there?
- RK:** Oh yes, I enjoyed my youth. It was sad after my folks was dead that was the hard if you are an orphan and have no home I tell you its pretty rough.
- MM:** How old were you when you were an orphan?
- RK:** Well, my dad died when I was 15 going on 16.
- MM:** So then you, of course, had to go and live with someone else then.
- RK:** And work.
- MM:** And, of course, your dad was a farmer.
- RK:** And he died of a heart attack, and another thing my older sister was getting married in January. Everything was done, they were called off three times, announcement and they had the (523) bought. They didn't have it at home but they had it ordered. Dad bought some lumber to make a shed beside the house for the wedding and the wedding was suppose to be the 16th of January and my dad died the 7th of January. So that marriage was canceled.
- MM:** Uh huh did they get married later on then?
- RK:** No, she got married to another guy.
- MM:** Oh, she didn't get married to him then.

- RK:** Well he backed out he said he was scared that he would have to carry the family you know.
- MM:** Really that's interesting. How old was your sister then?
- RK:** She was 19.
- MM:** She was gonna get married at 19. In your family whose still living now today, Rosa?
- RK:** Only my youngest sister and I. She was 80 on her last birthday. She lives in Glendive, they moved down from Canada in 1942, that's all I got left.
- MM:** So you became an American citizen.
- RK:** Through marriage.
- MM:** You lived most of your life here in North Dakota.
- RK:** In Crosby, North Dakota.
- MM:** You had mentioned that. Of course when you think about back home you were pretty young yet, but did they have a lot of crafts? Did they do a lot of crocheting and things like that?
- RK:** Oh yes, they does a lot.
- MM:** You learned some of that from others?
- RK:** No, I learned when I worked for Mrs. Halter in Crosby. She showed me how to crochet and stuff. We was always out dad had never hired man we was always out I bindered, I cut hay and I mowed hay.
- MM:** And do all those kind of things, milk the cows and everything.
- RK:** Milk the cows and I love cows, even when we got married I was out in the field a lot. I used to like farm work, but after I got played out I got enough.
- MM:** And now you are here in the Marillac Center here in Bismarck, North Dakota and, of course, there is a lot of other German people here.
- RK:** Oh yes, there is quite a few.
- MM:** Do you talk German once in a while here?
- RK:** Talk German a lot, only they got a different dialogue (dialect) here.
- MM:** They have a different dialect huh you notice that huh.
- RK:** Oh yes, well we had some the same in our parish we had from Gerumania and the same where they come from they got speak the same.
- MM:** They speak that some of them are these Bessarabian Germans uh huh and they speak a little bit of different German. Do you listen once in a while to any German music?
- RK:** Oh yes, I pray always in German most of the time.
- MM:** You still pray in German, what prayer do you say in German usually?

- RK:** The Our Father, the Hail Mary [lists German prayers (014)] all those prayers.
- MM:** Ah huh, all in German the Rosary too in German?
- RK:** Oh yes.
- MM:** Oh yes, wonderful.
- RK:** And I lead the Rosary out here at two o'clock the scripture Rosary every day.
- MM:** In English though, do your children speak German?
- RK:** They all spoke German every one of them. None of the grandchildren speak German.
- MM:** But your children can still speak German.
- RK:** Oh yes.
- MM:** That's very important that we pass some of those traditions down to the next generations.
- RK:** Now they are sorry.
- MM:** The grandchildren.
- RK:** The grandchildren and even the parents we know my children now their kids are sorry because they didn't taught them German. My kids all spoke German.
- MM:** How many times are you a grandmother, you can tell me?
- RK:** 45 grand children and 60 great grand children.
- MM:** 60, 45 grand children and how many great grand children do you have?
- RK:** 60, I think its now I just become there are some more coming they are just getting married now the grand children.
- MM:** But you're not a great-great-grandmother yet?
- RK:** Yes twice.
- MM:** Twice; so its 45 grand children 60 great grand children and 2 great-great-grand children. Oh my, wonderful I bet they've taken a few pictures with you on all of those.
- RK:** Oh yes.
- MM:** Uh huh did you keep any pictures way back. After we're finished with our conversation. Do you have pictures, Rosa, from back in Saskatchewan or your folks or anything like?
- RK:** Yes, I got pictures from my father and mother.
- MM:** Ah huh, we'll have to take a look at those. Anything else you would like to say? We are going to close our conversation today on the 27th of December 1993. Anything else you'd like to leave a little message for us, Rosa, for these next generations when they hear our conversation today?

RK: Well I hope they keep up the mother's language, that's my advice, for them teach their children their mother's language.

MM: Which is German.

RK: German.

MM: Ah huh.

RK: And they never regret it and I wish 'em all luck. And don't forget our God. He is our creator and redeemer. Without God you can't make it.

MM: Um hum, live a good Christian life.

RK: Yes, I got a lot of healing they don't believe it, but I got a lot of healing that's what keep me going.

MM: Um hum, and we're so glad that you're in such good at 92 years old and had such a wonderful visit today.

RK: I done all my work yet up to this day, no medicine nothing.

MM: You don't take any medicine?

RK: Except Mylanta.

MM: Oh that's not too bad if that's all you take. Wonderful, do you watch a lot of TV?

RK: Oh I got the "Mother Angelical" program on.

MM: Do you watch the Lawrence Welk show on Sunday nights?

RK: Yes.

MM: Well let's close our conversation once again and I want to thank Rosa Hochstein Kuntz, who grew up near Estevan, Saskatchewan. Then, of course, settled down here in North Dakota in Hettinger County near Mott and Regent.

RK: In 1962 we moved to Stark County in Dickinson.

MM: So you know a lot of our Dickinson people too, then a lot of our German-Russian people out at Dickinson.

RK: Then in 1980 we moved down in July in 1981 in January he died the last day in January.

MM: Ah Huh, thanks so much for our visit during this beautiful Christmas Season.

RK: Thank you.