

Interview with Martha Vetter Moch (MM)

Conducted by Brother Placid Gross (BG)

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BG: Do you pronounce your name [moke] or do you say [mock]?

MM: We say [mock] M-O-C-H. Moch

BG: Her mother was Mary Vetter, and she was married to Bernard Vetter. What do you remember about your mother? I mean she was adopted, right? How old was she when she was adopted?

MM: Six years old.

BG: And she was adopted by who?

MM: Valentine and Francisca Vetter.

BG: Do you know where your mother came from before she was adopted?

MM: Well, there we should get the Vetter book out.

BG: Do you think it's in there?

MM: Oh yes, oh yes. To me it sounds...like towards south, or what should I say?

BG: Eureka?

[she searches through a book]

MM: Here I could read this to you. "The girl who was six years old had the [name of] Mary. The Vettors already had a Mary who was sixteen so they called one big Mary and the other little Mary. The name stuck and to this day they are known to the great nieces and nephews as the little Aunt Mary and big Aunt Mary in compliance to their names: little Mary is a short woman while big Mary is quite tall."

BG: Do know how many brothers and sisters your mother had?

MM: She had three brothers. That's what I found out from those people that were here last fall. She had three brothers. And Sisters? All I knew was mom, [who was] Mary, one was Betty, and one was Ann. What was the other one? There must have been four with her. Then the [3] brothers, that was 7. That is what I found out from them people that were here. I didn't know that ma had any more brothers than one and about three sisters. That is what they brought in.

BG: When you say Betty, you mean was it Elizabeth?

MM: Yeah.

- BG:** So say those names again. So Mary would have been your mother.
- MM:** Yeah. Elizabeth, well that would be Betty, and then one was Ann. What was the other one? Was it...I thought she talked about Katie.
- BG:** Were they all adopted out?
- MM:** They were all adopted out. They didn't know where...Betty might say she was in like Redfield. When her husband or somebody died, Tony and Helena, my brother, took ma down there and then that's all. When dad died, them are ones that did come; otherwise, we don't know nothing.
- BG:** When your dad died, someone came from South Dakota?
- MM:** Yeah, South Dakota. We had such a trouble [finding] where they were from. Well, here it was that [reading from a book now] "Mary got married to Bernard Vetter who was a nephew of her foster parents. Bernard was born in Russia, a son of John and Martha Vetter. John's wife died in Russia, so he came to America with his son Joe, and settled west of Linton, North Dakota. One of the things he remembers about John is he weaved large baskets." Now I was looking for ma. I thought I had something about ma.
- BG:** Way up at the top maybe, way at the beginning here.
- MM:** It must be right here. I guess I should read this: "Mary was born at Aberdeen, South Dakota, a daughter of John and Magdalena Peetsch. John and Magdalena died two years apart, leaving six or seven children. Maggie Peetsch..." Peetsch is written in all different ways. Everybody writes it different. P-E-E-T-S-C-H, but we only write it P-E-S-C-T-H or shorter or whatever, we didn't know what was right or wrong. "A brother of John and friend of Valentine and Francisca took the two youngest children, both girls" But that was not Valentine? That was John...
- BG:** No, Mathias Peetsch took the two girls.
- MM:** [reading] "Mathias Peetsch had children of their own and was poor, so the Wiess family from Zeeland took one girl named Ann, and the Vettters took Mary. The girls never met again until they were grown up and married, even after then they had heard and connected with each other and with the other children of the family." So, they didn't.
- BG:** See we have it on here Wiess family. See that Wiess is not spelled right here either. So if anybody goes by that it's probably not spelled right either. That's the way Aunt Julia Baumstarck wrote it, but it's probably not spelled right.
- MM:** Yeah, well like it says in her last [name], we always didn't...
- BG:** See this word here, Wiess. That's probably not spelled right, but we didn't know how to spell it. So your mother never talked about her brothers or sisters?
- MM:** Nothing. Not a word.
- BG:** Do you think they came from Russia too? Were her original parents German Russians?

- MM:** This I would not know neither. It's not written no place, and all of what it says here that they were all in Zeeland. What family took them and this and that is all I know, and I just cannot understand that she was like in Aberdeen or Zeeland. This is what I can't figure.
- BG:** Ok, let's go to your Grandpa Bernard's parents, Bernard Vetter's parents.
- MM:** Yeah, they are here. This is written here.
- BG:** Your mother never talked anything about her past life or her brothers and sisters or parents?
- MM:** No, because she didn't know nobody.
- BG:** And she forgot it, if she was six years old, and she forgot it.
- MM:** What you think when they get to someplace now adopted, what do they know about six years old, huh? Maybe some little things that get stuck to them, but...
- BG:** Ok, Bernard Vetter, his parents. Do you know anything about his parents?
- MM:** No, I don't know neither. Just what I read; he came back, and then he weaved baskets for all his sons. I knew my dad's brothers all, because they all kind of settled around beside one. See, then he didn't like it, and he went back again.
- BG:** He went back to Russia.
- MM:** Yeah.
- BG:** But you never saw him?
- MM:** No.
- BG:** Did you know your grandpa went back to Russia? Did your dad tell you that?
- MM:** No. Now where did we get it? I mean in this book I guess. We got it that he come and weaved baskets, and then he didn't like it so then he went back again.
- BG:** I think Aunt Julia Baumstarck told me that.
- MM:** I think she done a lot. I always said we should go to her or to your ma. To your ma or to her. I mean I can't drive and where are you going to visit and talk? We visited Mrs. Baumstarck when she was in Linton a few times. Well, we were by your folks when they were in Napoleon when they filed income tax. Two years we visited your folks and had dinner and blachenda with your folks.
- BG:** I was going to ask you about your dad, but you don't remember too much about that either.
- MM:** No.
- BG:** Your Grandma Vetter, you never knew here either?
- MM:** No.
- BG:** Her name was Martha right?
- MM:** Yeah.

- BG:** I don't think it's in here. I don't think it's in this book.
- MM:** You mean my dad's...
- BG:** Your dad's mother.
- MM:** No. Now did she die and he come in, and then he went back again?
- BG:** I think so.
- MM:** That's what I understood. So with me you can't get back very far because they didn't say nothing. When they come they pushed the living room door shut.
- BG:** Pushed the living room door shut, yeah that's about it. (Laughter) Where is your dad and mother buried?
- MM:** In Linton.
- BG:** When your dad died, were they living...
- MM:** They lived in town already a long time, in Linton.
- BG:** How about your dad's brothers?
- MM:** Well, they're old, you might say old. Two lived out there where we lived west of Linton. One lived one direction, Ole, and Joe lived the other direction. And two were across the river in Shields, and that was John and George. So that's four, that's five and the one we don't know is Thomas. Thomas lives in Oregon some place. We never knew him; we didn't see him.
- BG:** You never saw him?
- MM:** No. He left. When he come or what was before we kids knew something, but later years some of their boys that were across [the river] came across in the winter time, just to visit. And now they had two Vetter reunions. From them two families just one Vetter [A147] had the reunions, two of them. The other Vettters wouldn't side in because they were all on the outs—now isn't that nice?
- BG:** You had the Vetter reunion on your dad's side?
- MM:** Yeah, that was two of dad's brothers. They had a reunion over there for...it was supposed to be the two Vetter's, John and George's kids, but one of them, I don't know which ones, but one of the brother's kids didn't go along. They always fought I guess; they were over there by the Indians. So they had it twice and that was all. We were over there once. It wasn't bad; I couldn't see nothing wrong; they had it kind of set up nice.
- BG:** How about your dad's sisters, did you know them?
- MM:** Oh yeah, [A162]. One is married to a [A163 Doscher], a sister. They were out there too...I don't know if you'd know where St. Bernard's church was out there?
- BG:** I know.
- MM:** Ok. They lived out there. He died in the flu. That was a long time ago. But she raised her kids there. The other one is Martha, she married a Houn. H-O-U-N, I think that's what it was. Houn. Ma and dad had her

come over from Russia. [They] had her come over and two of the kids. How the other two or three come over I don't know, but ma and dad had two of the kids and raised them until they could go on their own.

BG: Of Martha's...

MM: Of Martha Houn's children. She had more than two. She must have had three more, but then how did they come over? Did they come over by themselves? That I don't know, but I always hear that they had them come over and they kept them and sent them to school.

BG: Was that Houn, Martha's husband, was he over here?

MM: I don't know what I should say to you on this because I remember when she died; we were in the funeral; we were young yet. She lived in town, but she had no husband. Did she die already before? Maybe he died before her? No, I don't think he was over here. He maybe was dead because the folks had her and two of the kids come over here.

BG: If your folks had paid for her to come over, maybe her husband was already dead in Russia.

MM: Yeah, that's what I think. Then the two kids ma and dad kept to learn; they could send them to school. So that's about all I know about them. That's all the sisters he had, but he had enough brothers.

BG: He had two sisters, a [A191 Doscher] and a Houn. What was the [Doscher's] first name?

MM: Katherine.

BG: Katherine, and the other one was Martha Houn. When this Martha Houn worked for my great grandparents, she took care of...let's see, when Francisca was sick, this Martha Houn lived there and helped take care of her.

MM: Really! See I didn't...[know that]. We just may didn't get informed of that, but I know she lived in Linton; one day she come over.

BG: So you were named after her?

MM: I suppose. After her or...I guess so.

BG: Because her name is Martha.

MM: And dad's is Martha too though, isn't it? My dad's mother? Didn't I read that John and Martha was his folks? Or was that ma's folks? What did I read?

BG: Oh yeah, that's right, the son of John and Martha Vetter. Your dad's parents was John and Martha.

MM: That's what I thought. I have been reading this so many times, but I sometimes get confused.

BG: So your dad came from the old country too?

MM: Yeah.

BG: Do you know when or how old he was or anything?

MM: I guess he was 19 years old and they....did they all or most sneaked off, I think that's what I hear. Sneaked away.

- BG:** Some did. Did your dad ever talk about Russia?
- MM:** No. He didn't visit with us kids. That's what I told you. I says that makes it bad. No, he didn't say nothing. I said our kids, they would at least know a little bit, that you talk about something. But they didn't let nothing out. I can't see [why]; it was no secret, was it? Didn't they care to talk about it or whatever?
- BG:** The kids didn't ask and the parent's didn't...
- MM:** Well, what could you ask if you didn't know what to ask? [Laughter] I guess [A220]. Our dad didn't talk that much.
- BG:** That's right, when you know nothing and then you can't ask. That's about it. So we can't really talk about Russia. So where did your dad and ma live? They got married and then where did they live?
- MM:** Well, the home place they lived in down by the hill, they had built a sod house. That's where they lived.
- BG:** Where? West of Linton?
- MM:** Yeah, 14 miles west of Linton.
- BG:** Is anybody living there now?
- MM:** No, Tony and Helena, he was the youngest. They moved to a house in town.
- BG:** So Tony was the last one to live there?
- MM:** Yeah. He farmed from town and drove back and forth. That was a sad thing by them too, I can't see why, but.
- BG:** So you went to which church?
- MM:** St. Bernard's.
- BG:** How far was it from St. Bernard's.
- MM:** We had about 10-12 miles, all of that.
- BG:** Is there any of your family buried there?
- MM:** All I can say I guess is they had a little girl, 10 days old, that is buried out there in that cemetery.
- BG:** I was just going to ask you if your parents had any more children than the ones that are on here or if this is correct. Oh, I think, Katherine that's on here died in 1916.
- MM:** Yeah.
- BG:** So that was the only infant that died; the others grew up. How many of your brothers and sisters are still living?
- MM:** There's nobody no more besides me, and I got my youngest sister; she's in Springfield, Oregon.
- BG:** Springfield, Oregon.
- MM:** Yeah, Mary.

- BG:** Does she ever come home?
- MM:** She didn't for a long time, but then they had her come home when we had my 80th birthday. She was home last on my 80th birthday.
- BG:** How many children does she have?
- MM:** She's got three, two girls and one boy.
- BG:** And Anton, Tony, is he still living?
- MM:** No, but he's not the youngest of all the boys.
- BG:** Francis, was second youngest. Mary Ann and then Francis and then Tony...
- MM:** Yeah. He [Francis] died...it was two years in January. He moved to town...she lived in town too, but they moved in by that time. He was up here; I invited him every time for my birthday because, you know, they weren't together. He was pretty weak already, his lungs, coughing and this and that. He was going to walk across the street, and then people always waited for him to come for supper. Then he didn't come that night, and they thought he went some other place, you know. Then the next morning some school kids found him; he was froze to death in front of his house. Must have slipped and fell, and was weak, and it was snow. So that's all we know. It was sad, but. It was a sad situation.
- BG:** When you were young did you get to visit your aunts and uncles? Did they ever take you along?
- MM:** Oh, yes. When they went back to the Vetter reunion, some of us, too, were always along. I know this place inside and out. Who lived here, who lived there and this and that. I guess I know best than most of the other ones. One of the other girls got [to go] along. We always got [to go] along, one or two [of us]. They took us along.
- BG:** Did you go to your ma's relatives more than to your dad's relatives.
- MM:** No we didn't because we didn't know any. [Laughter]
- BG:** I mean...what, you didn't know any of your dad's relatives? No, I meant to the Vetter's.
- MM:** Yeah, that's what I say we always got to go along. They only drove back there maybe twice a year. So we always got to go along.
- BG:** Did they go over there to Vetterville—to Valentine, the adopting parents—more than they went to your dad's family?
- MM:** No, I guess they were there, but at night, I don't know if they stayed over night or they maybe went over to John Vetter and [A314] then they were there, so then I don't know because when we come back there, Baumstarck's kids come over and I had to go over and sleep with Anna Mary, the oldest girl, married to that Miller. Then we had to go back there, some of us kids. They divide us up, two for a night.
- BG:** Well, they had to divide you up because there was not room for everybody. So when you were young you didn't hear anything about Russia. Nobody, I mean your aunts and uncles didn't talk about it either, huh?
- MM:** No.

- BG:** So we're not going to find out much about there.
- MM:** No, I guess not.
- BG:** Can you still talk German?
- MM:** Just about better than English.
- BG:** Do you know any poems in German? Do you know like [A333]?
- MM:** I guess so, yeah. [Laughter]
- BG:** How does that go?
- MM:** You know I get confused on some of this now too you know.
- BG:** Do you know some other poems? Do you know [A340 hopa hopa roce, badish dida schloss]?
- MM:** Yeah, some of them things I can say...when the kids asked me once to pray "Our Father" or some of this stuff once and awhile. Because George's kids—you know this is my son lives here—they got three kids, but they can't talk German, but she is from Strasburg; she's just as much German as I was. So then with the kids, my daughter's married to a guy who can't talk German; they're English. So that's when you lose it, most.
- BG:** How many grandchildren do you have?
- MM:** Three.
- BG:** No, George has three...
- MM:** Yeah, that's all.
- BG:** Your daughter has...
- MM:** My daughter ain't got no kids.
- BG:** Oh.
- MM:** She lives in Turtle Lake.
- BG:** Turtle Lake.
- MM:** It's just north from Bismarck.
- BG:** What's her married name?
- MM:** Hayes. H-A-Y-E-S. Hayes.
- BG:** Can you say the "Our Father" in German?
- MM:** Not much no more. I had to forget it; when the kids went to catechism, I had to learn everything in English. Because that time church was not in English when we grewed up. This was hard then; sometimes I wondered why a person goes to church if you don't understand English. But you lost it, you know, the German. Had to learn the kids and then.

BG: What about school then. Where did you go to school?

MM: A farm school just a mile from home. And that was good in German, too, I'll tell you.

BG: It was good what?

MM: It was German. The teacher, whenever we kids...we couldn't talk English, so when she stood out in the entry way and when we played and she heard us talk German, why we had to go in and take our seat.

BG: So then you were punished?

MM: Well, yeah.

BG: You were punished when you would talk German.

MM: Yeah, but then what could you expect from us, you know? Not that I care, but who learned us when neither ma and dad couldn't talk English?

BG: Exactly. How many years did you go to school?

MM: Till the 8th grade. It's not very high, is it? [Laughter]

BG: Well, it's high enough.

MM: That time...

BG: That time that's all you needed.

MM: We only had school until March. It started maybe October or so.

[End side A] - [Begin side B]

MM: Then that guy was on board when their kids went home and tattled and then their dad come and told the teacher, "You get out or be out by tomorrow morning." So sometimes we had two teachers a year. Well, do you think that helped a lot?

BG: What kind of teachers did you have? Or where did the teachers come from? Were they from far away?

MM: Good God, what should I say. I can't even really ask that much. There were people who took them in. Then they were 2 miles south there was a [B7 teacherage]. The woman teached down there and the men drove up here that 2 miles. So that's about where they stayed, and sometimes the neighbors took them in.

BG: Was everybody German Russian in this school, all the children, or did they have others?

MM: No, they were all Germans like we were.

BG: All Germans. What kind of games did they play?

MM: Andy Andy Over...the barn. [Laughter] Played tag.

BG: Were the teachers mean if you did not know your lesson? Did they spank you?

MM: No, they didn't spank, but you maybe had to make it up in recess or stay in recess till you get it done.

- BG:** How did you go school? Did you have to walk?
- MM:** We walked and then one of the neighbors—that's one of my dad's brothers, they had about four of them—drove with the sled and then we just walked out on the road and drove along. Lots of times we walked. They didn't get hauled like today.
- BG:** Did you go to church a lot?
- MM:** Well, yeah, we...I don't know if we always had church every Sunday or every other Sunday because he stayed in Krassna church. So the most was over there. Like I says, most of us all got married over there [in Krassna] in that church.
- BG:** In Krassna, because St. Bernard's never had a parish house. They never had a priest living there.
- MM:** No.
- BG:** So you were north from St. Bernard's?
- MM:** Yeah, I think more west.
- BG:** So the sermon was in German?
- MM:** Yeah, for a long time I should say.
- BG:** Do you know anything about those iron crosses that were used in the cemeteries? Those iron crosses, homemade iron crosses?
- MM:** I understand what you mean, but....You mean out there in St. Bernard's?
- BG:** Or did none of your relatives have them?
- MM:** No.
- BG:** Your little sister that died, where is she buried?
- MM:** Out there at St. Bernard's.
- BG:** Is there a cross there?
- MM:** Yeah, there was I'm sure. We were going to drive there once, but it was such a bad road. That was a few years ago, and then we just couldn't get up there. But I think they take care of the cemetery nice there, yet. Then they built a basement and a few years ago they were going to build on top and it never did happen. Then they moved away from the direction where that was. The church was just on top of the hill. When you walked down to the cemetery, it went just down. I mean so dumb where they built that church up so high, and they had such a high step. Then a little ways they had a store, a grocery store. There was a grocery store there.
- BG:** A grocery store out there, really? Pretty nice, get some things there.
- MM:** Yeah, but then I guess they never had enough people to go to church, so they divided them up to Strasburg or Linton, or wherever.
- BG:** How did you celebrate Christmas? Did you have a Christkindel?

- MM:** No, you mean here?
- BG:** No, at home when you were growing up. Did you have a Christkindel?
- MM:** No, or a Santa Claus. But when we were pretty young, well, dad was the Santa Claus. [Laughter]
- BG:** Did you see him?
- MM:** Well, we weren't that dumb that we didn't know it was him I guess.
- BG:** But you saw him. How was he dressed?
- MM:** With this old...what they say, that coat that had that hair inside out; years ago they had those insulated coats.
- BG:** So that was the Belzenickel, really, huh?
- MM:** Yeah, well he was Belzenickel.
- BB:** Not the Santa Claus, not the red...
- MM:** No, not the red one. [Laughter]
- BB:** Did you get any gifts?
- MM:** Not when we were young at home, no. We just got...ma packed a sack. They bought a lot of stuff; you could buy everything cheap them years, you know, cookies and candy and oranges and everything. Ma made a sack for each one. No, we didn't get no gifts just from our [B60 giddle].
- BG:** Who was your [B61 giddle]? Your Godmother.
- MM:** She was a Zahn. What was her name? Elizabeth, I guess, something like that.
- BG:** How about your Godfather?
- MM:** That's the one that died in the flu—that [B65 Doscher]—so we were just barely old enough to know. I know I could see this all, but we didn't know too much.
- BG:** What was [B67 Doscher's] first name?
- MM:** Conrad [Kunrud].
- BG:** Did you get a [B69]?
- MM:** Yeah, we got them. [Laughter] That was something new at that time. We even ate the peelings [B69]. Them kids now don't have to eat the peelings.
- BG:** You ate the peelings?
- MM:** We ate the peelings. Or ate what's on there a little yet, you know, that white; I mean it's to laugh, but I mean with them kids do now they got them everyday. They don't know how hard we had it.
- BG:** No, for sure not.
- MM:** No.

BG: Did you ever get any gifts?

MM: Well, from our [B75 giddle and fiddle], you know, sponsors.

BG: Well, yeah, but I mean not just candy and peanuts, but I mean a gift, a doll or something?

MM: Yeah, you could buy a pack of nice four hankies in a box. What else, I wasn't forget that, something else I mean a quarter for which you pay 6-7\$ now.

BG: A quarter, what?

MM: Well, I says there was three hankies, nice hankies, in a box; that's what we sometimes got from the godparents, and like I say now, what you have to pay? 10\$?

BG: Right.

MM: We got married in '36 and we had tough going too.

BG: In '36 was pretty tough?

MM: '36. No crops...and we wasn't fussy, we go through.

BG: So what did you eat in '36?

MM: What did we eat? I never forget that. I made a cake from scratch, and then we had canned tomatoes and that was our Sunday dinner. But, otherwise, we bought like the Corn Flakes for 8 cents a box. But if you ain't got nothing to buy with we couldn't even hardly buy that. We only milked three cows, we just start. When the car broke down, why you had to let the car set and first buy groceries. I mean it was tough, for at least five years. Then we moved over here; then we were lucky, had a lot of cattle, milked a lot of cows, and then it was going pretty good.

BG: So how did you did you celebrate Easter?

MM: Suppose when it started from Thursday go to church, Good Friday go to church, Easter Sunday go to church and then well we [B97] over to mom and dad.

BG: When you were young, did you get Easter eggs?

MM: The littler ones, ma surprised them. We older ones could stay up, but the little ones had to go to bed you know. It's a laugh and a half, isn't it? [Laughter] You don't fool them now anymore.

BG: How did you color the Easter eggs?

MM: Well, ma bought them. You could buy them in a little paper, they were little round just like a candy and then you put it in hot water.

BG: When you got married in '36, did you have a big wedding?

MM: No, not too big, because he worked in Fort Peck dam, and so when he come back—he come on a Wednesday and on Saturday we were married; you don't find that all over, do you? [Laughter] At that time you're not supposed to get married until, you know, three months announced in church. So he has to be back by Monday in his job, so well he did it. Because he was a father; he was pretty good; I told you.

- BG:** Did you have a white wedding dress?
- MM:** No. My other sister that was older than I am didn't have one either. The oldest one...don't you know Johnny Wald?
- BG:** I used to know them, yeah.
- MM:** His wife was my oldest sister. You know that don't ya? Well, she had a white dress, and I guess most all had a white dress, but I and one of them—she was married too a Moch too, Maggie. We had to have just nice light green dresses on and a veil. Well, then we had invited his brothers and sisters all and a few neighbors, and we had a dance in the basement in the house, but not that much.
- BG:** What kind of dances did they do in them days?
- MM:** Well, I guess just a waltz. I guess, what do they call it, the fox trot or something like that? They didn't have that many. Of course I can't dance now anyway. They just jump anyway, don't they?
- BG:** How about the polka? Did they dance the polkas then already?
- MM:** Well, once and a while they did, years ago. That's when I [B131].
- BG:** Did they sing any German songs at the wedding?
- MM:** Not in our wedding, but in Johnny Wald's, because he sent Schimdt and her and then there was Joe Vetter, the old Joe Vetter. They were all out and they sang quite a few. Some got stormed out there; it was the 26th of December. They got stormed out there. They stayed over night. They sang.
- BG:** Well if they were stormed out, they could sing all night long.
- MM:** All night long, yeah, because we didn't have enough room to go to bed anyway.[Laughter]
- BG:** Did you take a picture when you got married?
- MM:** No. There was some like that, there was none I guess. There was very few that got a picture when they got married. There was maybe Tony and Helen. I don't think there is nobody else.
- BG:** In your family did you sing a lot at home? Was there music?
- MM:** Yeah, we did; I mean just us girls together for the heck of it, you know.
- BG:** Did anybody play the accordion in your family?
- MM:** No. Dad bought, what do you call it?...an organ. A pretty organ, but they didn't learn. Dad thought they could learn with out having something to learn about. Then they had it and they had it and I suppose when we were all gone they had the school teacher out there, ma and dad and Francis was home yet and then they sold it. I mean it doesn't do any good if you...Dad thought we could learn when we got an organ.
- BG:** Did they have barn dances in them days?
- MM:** Not them days. but we had barn dances.
- BG:** Later on you had barn dances.

MM: Later already, [but] before we was married. We didn't go to a town dance neither. We had one for the 4th of July; they had one at this neighbor or that neighbor and that's where the dances was. There was nothing in town.

BG: Ok, now another topic. Did you have home remedies for healing people when somebody got sick?

[Break in tape]

BG: Was there Brauche?

MM: Yeah.

BG: Do you remember if you went to somebody?

MM: Not me, but I know like my brother, they had the little girl and she had the colic, and they took her to Wishek. But I thought it was ridiculous when they used them crock pots, 8 gallon, and then they put pretty cold water in there. Then they were supposed to put her down and up, down and up and that kid hollered. That was ridiculous. That was Brauche! [Laughter] Oh, creepers!

BG: Was too cold for the kid.

MM: But that was the remedy. I don't know how good it helped or not.

BG: Do you remember any games that you played? Do you remember playing [B176]?

MM: When one's got the button and then you went around?

BG: Button, button who's got the button? You have to guess who had the button.

MM: Played that one too.

BG: [B180] was with the broom stick.

MM: Yeah, yeah I remember that too, yeah. But I just don't know by heart how that goes, but I remember we did that too.

BG: I'm trying to remember how that went, and I just don't remember.

MM: You neither. Well you see I know it.

BG: [B185]

MM: Otherwise that one I really don't know. I just don't. Them old things, you forget some of them.

BG: How about the [B188]? When you had to lay on the floor, the little kids had to close their eyes and then somebody said.

MM: What was that then? How did we play that then?

BG: You said [B191-194]

MM: [Laughter] You know a little more about that than then I do on this one.

BG: Do you know any ghost stories?

- MM:** I don't think so.
- BG:** Did you ever hear when somebody died that you knew about it, that there was a knock on the wall or did a crucifix fall off the wall?
- MM:** No, no.
- BG:** Well did your mother rub you in with goose fat? Did they take the goose fat and rub you in?
- MM:** I think ma saved some of that that I hear. They even talked about skunk fat is supposed to be real good too.
- BG:** But you don't remember that?
- MM:** Well they didn't do that, but did she use that for lard for baking, the goose fat?
- BG:** Maybe.
- MM:** I was sure she saved some, but I think for baking maybe.
- BG:** I don't know why not. Well did you have to make all your clothes or did you buy your clothes?
- MM:** What should I say? Well as long as we were small, ma made them, yeah. Then later on we made a little bit. We learned to sew a little bit our own too. We didn't get that many clothes that time.
- BG:** Did you have a sewing machine?
- MM:** Yeah.
- BG:** Did your ma have a sewing machine?
- MM:** Yeah. She sewed some stuff.
- BG:** Where did you get the material to make clothes?
- MM:** Well I guess she bought it in town when we were small, and when we were older you got some dresses cheap. That's what we got. She bought us then the dresses. But before, why, she made them. I can't see how she made them, I mean, she had no pattern.
- BG:** Did you use the flour sacks?
- MM:** No I don't think so. They made the dishtowels to wipe the dishes from the flour sacks.
- BG:** Sometimes you got the chicken feed in the flour sacks?
- MM:** Yeah, I guess so. Towards the last day they even had nice prints on the flour sacks, too. They looked real nice. You could make a blouse or something; they were real nice, you know, the flour sacks.
- BG:** Did you get any newspapers when you were little? Did you get any mail?
- MM:** Very, very little. It's not like today I tell you.
- BG:** So you never learned how to read German, or did you learn to read German?

- MM:** No, I did a little bit. We had a church book in German. We did, some of us, we did, but because we had learned catechism in German you know so we learned a little bit, but I forgot in a hurry, but I could read a little bit and learn the younger ones.
- BG:** So you don't remember getting the German newspapers?
- MM:** We never got no newspapers when we were at home. There was nothing like that.
- BG:** Did you have the radio when you were little?
- MM:** No, nothing.
- BG:** No even radio?
- MM:** No.
- BG:** Do you remember when the first radios came? When you first heard the radio, do you remember that?
- MM:** Well I should say we never had nothing; I guess when we were home, if I'm not mistaken when we were married and lived in Kintyre we had a battery radio. That's all. I mean from home, no. We didn't even have no cards in the house. Dad could play cards and they played cards when they went visiting, but we never had no cards in the house.
- BG:** Why didn't you?
- MM:** Well I don't know. Dad never bought any, but he liked to play when he was some place, but we hadn't any. Well I should say when my oldest brother John, his wife could play and then they bought some. But then we got pretty older already and then we learned a little bit Wist and that was all we could play. Well they didn't play when somebody come. Ma couldn't play cards at all. But he liked to play, but he never had any in the house, but when they went visiting he played cards. But that didn't bother us that much, I guess.
- BG:** Well what did you do at home besides work?
- MM:** Well, we done our homework. [All] Sit at the table and doing the same thing. There was quite a few of us.
- BG:** But later on when you were out of grade school until you got married?
- MM:** Well what did we do? Help. Go out help set the haystack and haul hay in, and we were two, three, my brother and my sister that was older than I, we were out and picked up the hay and hauled in the hay. During the summer we had to raise beans, hoe them and pick them. Sunflowers—you asked what we did? Raised sunflowers that had to be cut off and cleaned, beans and I says God what that next?
- BG:** What did you do with the sunflowers?
- MM:** Well there was tame sunflowers to eat. Then in the winter time we sit and [makes spitting sound].
- BG:** Like the old Russians.
- MM:** Oh, Dad was just wild on sunflowers. That's all he done; he'd just sit there. I don't why we don't eat any now, but Pete liked them too, but we didn't spit them out. We'd lay them in a tray. But dad just sit there

and [spitting sounds] like you could sweep every minute. But we didn't say nothing. We didn't say nothing to our dad. That was dad. [Laughter]

BG: That's how it was. Did you have to work in the field too?

MM: Well not in the spring, but I was out and helped ma when they thrash them stacks, help her.

BG: So your ma worked in the field?

MM: Yeah, when we were real young yet she was out with dad and helped dad, but later on she didn't when more the boys were home. There was two boys older and went out. We were out, dad mowed the hay and raked it and we were out with the header box and hauled everything in. When they thrashed that stack from the thrasher machine we hauled all the straw in. We didn't have that much hay land as the people got now. The cows had to eat straw too, and oats.

BG: When you worked in the field what did you wear? Did you wear pants or go out with the dresses?

MM: No, ma did, but we didn't. We wore some of the boys' pants, we never wore slacks that time yet. Put the boys' half pants on and put the pin and out you go. But Ma would go out with a dress. Ma never had no slacks on.

BG: She worked outside with a dress on.

MM: Yeah, in the field yeah, well she never had any slacks.

BG: Did you raise a lot of chickens?

MM: At home?

BG: Yeah, at home.

MM: Yeah, we raised quite a few.

BG: Did you have ducks and turkeys?

MM: Ducks we had but no turkeys. At that time we had no turkeys. But we raised pigs.

BG: A lot of pigs?

MM: Quite a few pigs, yeah.

BG: They ran all over; they were running around the yard, right?

MM: No, ours we had a special fence with barbwire so they didn't run around then. Nope, we didn't have that.

BG: What kind of food did you eat when you were young? Did you eat borscht, halupsi?

MM: Yeah, we still make them.

BG: Do you? Do you still know how to make halupsi?

MM: Oh yeah. I can make all the old-fashioned meals.

BG: Kuchen?

- MM:** Yeah, we quite that. When we quite milking we quite that. Well then we made some once a year, but I don't even care anymore; we had it so much that we don't care anymore about it.
- BG:** Did you do embroidering?
- MM:** At home I did, yeah and when I was married at first oh for a mighty long time then I crocheted. I was a big crocheter.
- BG:** You crocheted?
- MM:** Oh God did I crochet. And I made about 30 afghans. Gave them all to the kids. Divided doilies out and I got enough yet. But I got glaucoma so bad that I quit. I quit.
- BG:** Glaucoma?
- MM:** Oh I got it bad.
- BG:** Then you can't see anymore?
- MM:** I could see, but then I do it a little while and they get watery. So I just couldn't get over it that's why I got a no pass time. Makes me mad. You know, what can I do?
- BG:** Well what do you do now for pass time?
- MM:** Make my meals. Then I go in lay down a while, maybe lay 10 minutes, get up and do this some then go back lay down again; makes me mad. Then at night I walk over there when I'm done eating supper then I walk over there. I don't think I've missed very many since he's gone.
- BG:** You walk to your son's place?
- MM:** Yeah.
- BG:** What do you do over there?
- MM:** Just be with them. Sit out there; I don't use my TV at home, but when I'm over there, why, when I sit in the kitchen, they got it in the living room—I don't go in, I see it better from far—so I watch that or we visit some. She's in school and he's out so then we visit what was the day once and a while. 9:30-10 o'clock I go home and go to bed.
- BG:** In the winter time you can't do that.
- MM:** No, when it storming or what I don't go. I don't go over there if it's bad weather.
- BG:** Do they mind? Are they happy when you come over?
- MM:** I didn't ask them yet. When I don't come over, why, George calls, "Ma aren't you going out [B386 venture]?" I says, "I don't know." Then I walk over anyway.
- BG:** Well it's good that they can live close by.
- MM:** Sure, yeah, I won't be here neither at this place if they wouldn't be here.
- BG:** In your family did your mother make the decisions or did the dad make the decisions?

MM: I think father made the decisions. You didn't here that neither, nothing.