

Interview with Ida Brilz (IB)

Conducted by Brother Placid Gross (PG)

January 8, 2000

Richardton, North Dakota

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PG: Today is January 8, 2000. This is Brother Placid Gross and I am at the house of Ida Brilz at Richardton, North Dakota. We're going to talk about old times. Okay, what is your name?

IB: Ida Johanna Brilz.

PG: And your date of birth?

IB: 11/1/17... November the 1st, 1917.

PG: And you were born at Richardton, huh?

IB: Yes.

PG: What was your father's name?

IB: Rochus [? 011].

PG: Rochus Brilz.

IB: Rochus Rochus.

PG: I know the German name.

IB: It's Rochus Rochus.

PG: Oh, Rochus Rochus.

IB: Yes, because his dad was Rochus too, and then his second name was Rochus too. I said, "Well how in Heaven's name could they do that?" "Well," he says, "you know my dad was the auditor in church. He kept all the records, so that's what he put down. That's what it was." In the Catholic church. He had the Bishop's territory. He kept all the names, kept a record of everybody down there.

PG: Your dad kept the records?

IB: My grandfather.

PG: Your grandfather kept the records. That was in Russia?

IB: In Landau.

PG: Oh. So when did your father come over here? Your father was Rochus and he was born in Russia.

IB: In Russia.

- PG:** Then his father, that was Rochus. Do you know his mother? Do you know your dad's mother?
- IB:** She died before I was born. She was Johanna Hauff [? 026].
- PG:** Johanna Hough [? 027]. Did your grandpa Rochus come over here too?
- IB:** No. He was only 49 years old when he died in the old country. And my grandmother was only 49 when she died. I think, the way my dad explained it, my grandfather had ulcers. Very bad, because he threw up blood something terrible. And he died from that. What were they to do those days? 90 years ago. It was better than 90.
- PG:** Maybe he had stomach cancer.
- IB:** He probably had stomach cancer too.
- PG:** Then your dad got married over there in Russia?
- IB:** Here.
- PG:** Oh, he got married over here.
- IB:** Yes.
- PG:** Did your dad's brothers and sisters all come over here?
- IB:** Yes.
- PG:** Do you know your dad's brothers and sisters?
- IB:** Yes. You know Anna. Anna Brilz.
- PG:** Oh, Anna Brilz, yes I know her.
- IB:** She was my dad's sister. She's a proud woman that never changed the size of her shoes. And her feet hurt so bad because her shoes were too small. That's why when got theirs, we were always stocking-footed.
- PG:** Who are the other brothers and sisters?
- IB:** There was Adolph, and Mark, and Margaret. That was Father Mark's mother. And she died... how old was she? 40... not very old. Then was Anna, then Amelia, then Eleanor. They had just come over the 4th of July in 1914 when his little sister... I think she was born after Grandpa died... got very, very ill. And they claimed she got sick on the train from drinking ice water and eating pears. She had a ruptured appendix, from the way they explained it to me. That her abdomen was so sore you couldn't touch it. I think that was most likely a ruptured appendix. What would they know to do in those days? It was in 1914.
- PG:** And then she died?
- IB:** She died.
- PG:** Is she buried in Richardton?

- IB:** She is buried up here. I know my dad always painted... she has an iron cross marker for her grave, and of course it rusts. So my dad went up there and he took sandpaper and he sanded all the old paint and rust off, and repainted it. It was just not too long before Anna died, she was up there and she painted it too. She said it had rust spots again. I suppose now it has rust spots too.
- PG:** Is it a home-made iron cross?
- IB:** I guess they bought them.
- PG:** Some are bought.
- IB:** Yes.
- PG:** Some of those.
- IB:** Well, in 1914, that's a long time ago.
- PG:** But they do... there are some that are home-made.
- IB:** Yes they do.
- PG:** Those real antique ones.
- IB:** Oh yes, they have a lot of home-made ones. Like Paul Hough's [? 169] father. He saw to it. He had us come over. He went to the priest and arranged everything. Paul Hough's [?] father and that Frank Hough [?]. His wife was just buried yesterday. They went up and arranged it. They were her brothers. For the funeral.
- PG:** Now, did you mother's parents come over here?
- IB:** They came over in '11.
- PG:** What was their name?
- IB:** Renner.
- PG:** What was their first names?
- IB:** Pius and Margaret.
- PG:** Okay, that's Grandpa and Grandma.
- IB:** Yes.
- PG:** Did any of their brothers and sisters come over?
- IB:** None of Grandma's brothers or sisters came over, but Grandpa's one brother and two sisters came. One was Jacob Renner, and the other one was Pauline Berger, and the last one was Monica Schaff.
- PG:** What was your mother's mother's name? She married a Renner.
- IB:** She was a Herner. But not related to these HERNERS.

- PG:** No?
- IB:** But my grandfather's sister married a Herner.
- PG:** What was your grandma's first name?
- IB:** Margaret. At one time there were four Margaret Renners.
- PG:** Oh yes?
- IB:** You know they had to name them after... like one family... my dad, oh was he upset. Because my grandmother's name... my great-grandmother's name was Regina, and my grandmother didn't name any of her girls Regina. When they came over and this one uncle jumped Dad, "Why don't you have a sister named Regina?" He said, "Go and talk to my mother about that." Well, sure, wouldn't you do the same thing?
- PG:** Yes, they always named them after the parent or the grandparent.
- IB:** Or the Godparent, or uncle, or whatnot.
- PG:** Did your parents get married over in Landau?
- IB:** No, they got married in Richardton, up here.
- PG:** Oh, your parents got married here.
- IB:** In 1916.
- PG:** How old was your dad when he came over here?
- IB:** Oh, he would have been about... 14. About 24 or 26.
- PG:** So your mother came with her parents. She was not married.
- IB:** No, they didn't come together.
- PG:** She was not married yet. She was still at home with her parents. How many brothers and sisters did you have? How many children did your parents have?
- IB:** Eight.
- PG:** Eight. Can you name them?
- IB:** Well, I'm the oldest, then was Elda, the one that died in '96, then was my sister Elvera Sholt [? 119] in Dickinson, then was Edward, then George, the Eleanor... she died many years ago, in '56 already, then was Eugene, and Arnold.
- PG:** Eugene Brilz is the one who went to Russia, right? Your brother.
- IB:** Yes, he did.
- PG:** Your name is Ida. Were you named after anybody?

- IB:** I think that was my mother's mother. I'm not sure, but I think my dad had a cousin named Ida. I'm not sure.
- PG:** How did they say it in German?
- IB:** Eee-daugh.
- PG:** Eee-daugh?
- IB:** It's I-D-A, and it's Eee-daugh.
- PG:** Sometimes they say...
- IB:** Like Eugenia.
- PG:** There's another name.
- IB:** Aldenia
- PG:** Aldenia?
- IB:** It was Eugenia, and they called them Ida because they didn't know Eugenia... how do you do that?
- PG:** With the English. I know I have some relatives named [? 136]. But Edith, that's a common name. Did they get their homestead? No? Your...
- IB:** Grandparents? No. They bought a place. They bought a place and my mother was absolutely horrified of fires, and that winter somebody started a grass fire. The first winter they were here, and she says it rained so much the year they came, just rained and rained, so the grass was like this year I supposed. And she said they never knew they had that many rocks until the fire went over and burned the grass. She said there were so many rocks in the pasture, which they had taken out of the fields and dumped into the pasture. Now I guess they use it for embankments, to keep soil from washing [away.]
- PG:** Where your mother grew up... is that still a farm?
- IB:** Where she grew up? She was 18 when she came here. She was born in Spire [? 155].
- PG:** Spire? Oh. Okay, where her parents lived.
- IB:** Yes.
- PG:** Okay, whose farm is that now?
- IB:** Gosh, I don't know if it's Don Hauk's [? 159] or Ray Siegel's [? 160].
- PG:** Maybe Ray Siegel [?]. And your dad's?
- IB:** That was divided up.
- PG:** Where did the Brilzes live? Is that still a farm?
- IB:** It was, but it was such a small place, it was bought by several people and I don't know who all has it. There was an Erhardt that had part of it.

- PG:** Then where you grew up, where your parents lived. Was that somebody's farm before?
- IB:** Oh yes, there were some people by the name of Stein, and then when I was eight years old, we moved to a place where Dad's uncle owned it. It was Grandpa's farm, but my uncle bought it, and we rented it. Then he rented another one from him, then he bought his own farm. In '43.
- PG:** In 1943?
- IB:** In 1943 Dad bought his own farm.
- PG:** That was a good time go buy farms.
- IB:** Oh gosh, yes. \$7 an acre at that time.
- PG:** The prices were good too. The wheat prices...
- IB:** The wheat prices were wonderful.
- PG:** The land was cheap and that was a good time to buy.
- IB:** That was when my dad bought that farm. And my mom, I think she was in Seventh Heaven when Dad bought that place. She could plant perennials and everything then. Nobody would tell her, "Don't plant that here. That's not your land." I gave them strawberry plants. 25, and they could water so well there. They lived right by the river, and my dad just loved strawberries. So the second year and the third year, did they ever produce. He says, "You know, I'd get up as soon as day break, and I'd go out and I'd take a pail along out. And before long the pail was full." Oh he loved strawberries. And asparagus. I bought them some asparagus plants.
- PG:** Asparagus? You had asparagus already, way back then? I thought it was something new.
- IB:** In '43... in '44 I think, I bought the asparagus. They were expensive, because there were so few. It was just new, and so I bought them 12 plants. They grew like all get out. My mother canned sometimes, canned 600 quarts of stuff.
- PG:** Oh my.
- IB:** Meat and... before the freezers came. Boy, after the freezers came, she says, "Now I'm through canning meat and strawberries too," she says, "I'm going to freeze those." And the asparagus she froze too.
- PG:** Did your mother talk about the old country?
- IB:** Yes. See they first lived in Spire [? 211] and then when she was a young girl, I don't know how old she was, she would tell when they moved out into the country where they could have much, much more land. But then, by that time, the Bolsheviks came. She said things were different. And as soon as they came, Grandpa said, "Let's get us out of here." But he had some relatives, some brothers and some sisters that had married such wealthy people. Like Fred Herner's grandmother. They were too wealthy to come over here. We'd lose all our money, and they would not have lost it. In 1910. She starved to death. Because they didn't care about the old people. She was in her late 70s.
- PG:** You don't know when she died?

- IB:** I don't know.
- PG:** In 1923 a lot of people starved.
- IB:** All they wrote is told them that she died, but they did not give the date, as far as I was told. Because I had talked, Mom had talked, and my ears were kind of big, and I could hear a lot of things that were said.
- PG:** How about your dad... did your dad talk about Russia?
- IB:** Yes. My dad did. About them going out. They'd leave on Monday morning to go out into the fields to work, and my grandmother would fix them some coffee... a gallon of coffee she'd send out for them, for maybe the whole week. And she put sugar and cream in there, and he said, "Boy was that good!" So after we got a refrigerator, my dad made himself iced coffee like he had out when he was in the field. He said that was just like in the olden days. I could never stand sugar or cream in coffee.
- PG:** Did they used to stay in the field all week?
- IB:** They stayed all week, until they were through seeding.
- PG:** Because it was so far to go?
- IB:** It was far. It was out in the country Dad said. But they had very good land, and it was theirs. But when the Bolsheviks came in, or Communism, everything... their money lost its value. Your folks came from the Russia country too?
- PG:** Well, my parents were just born over here, right after the grandparents came.
- IB:** Oh.
- PG:** They were a little bit younger, I guess.
- IB:** Well, some came over in the 1880s, or in the late '80s. They were the ones that did good.
- PG:** Do you know anything else? Did they have weddings over there in Russia? Did they talk about that?
- IB:** Oh yes. Some of them walked for seven miles to a wedding. That's an awful walk.
- PG:** I'll bet they had to stay overnight.
- IB:** Well, yes. She said everybody slept on floors, or they had a little pack with them. With a blanket, I suppose, or something, and they slept on the floors. They said it was not as cold as it is here. Another thing my dad... where did they live, by the Black Sea? He said it rained so terrible there, and he said when it rained you had to put something over your face, if it was a real hard rain; otherwise you'd have drowned, standing up.
- PG:** Yes, they had good soil there.
- IB:** Very good soil.
- PG:** They had good crops.

- IB:** Now it's a mess over there.
- PG:** Yes. Did your parents have nicknames?
- IB:** No.
- PG:** Did any of the old-timers have nicknames?
- IB:** No. Some places they did, but my parents did not.
- PG:** Did your parents ever say they wished they were back in Russia?
- IB:** No. My mother said... no. And my dad said, well, after things got so bad... well my mother remembered these relatives of theirs. They were wealthy people, and they had adopted a little girl. She was just like a foster child, and when she says, when the Communists come, when Grandpa says, "We are getting out of here right now." The Communists came in and they killed the whole family. The baby they took by the legs and cracked her head against the wheels and killed her.
- PG:** Was this your grandparents?
- IB:** No, it was a relative.
- PG:** Oh, a relative.
- IB:** It was somebody else.
- PG:** Why did they kill them?
- IB:** They wanted money. But by then they didn't have it.
- PG:** Did your parents get letters from Russia?
- IB:** No, not until after the Second World War. They got letters from people that had been prisoners of war. But they did not live very long after the war. Well, they were probably elderly already. I know my dad sent some glasses to some of them. Some of his old glasses. They wanted the old glasses that my dad had.
- PG:** For reading... eyeglasses.
- IB:** Eyeglasses. Every now and then they'd send them a little money, but they said they were well fed. Wherever they were, I don't know. See, those Steins that came over here... they were relatives of my dad's. Both him and her.
- PG:** Oh really?
- IB:** She was related through my grandmother and he through my grandfather.
- PG:** Because she was a Hough, huh?
- IB:** No, she was a Schmaltz.
- PG:** But they were related to the Houghs.

- IB:** Yes, I suppose they were, through some of the Schmaltzes and Houghs. They were a great relationship out there, just like here.
- PG:** What else can we ask about Russia?
- IB:** Well, my dad went to night school. Over at the high school, until he had to do all the work, after Grandpa was gone. He said you never left home without a pitchfork at night, because the stealing over there, the thievery was terrible. He said everybody had three or four mean dogs, so they wouldn't get into their yards to steal their horses or their cows or even chickens. So when he went to school, he said he would take his pitchfork along. They'd take them into the schoolroom. I don't know.
- PG:** What kind of school was he learning?
- IB:** Well, math... he learned math, and a few other things. It was in Latin, most of it. So this is where he caught his English. When he came over here, he could speak some of those words already. He said he took the English, the Latin letters and put them together and it came out pretty good.
- PG:** But he also farmed. When he came over here he was a farmer. He would have had enough education...
- IB:** He would have had enough education, and he was not... my dad wanted to be by himself. He couldn't work with anybody else. He just had to work by himself, and so he was a farmer when he came over here. But my mom's family always said to my mother, "He is too fussy about farming. Everything has to be just so. If he sees a weed in there, he goes and pulls it out."
- PG:** Did you speak German when you were growing up?
- IB:** Oh, yes.
- PG:** All the time?
- IB:** All the time. Until we were through teenagers. Then Father Peter told my dad to let us speak English, because he said, "This is a country where you speak English." And my mom, she learned that English in just nothing flat. She read English, of course the printing. She had never taken it in school. But she read it because we were reading to her, and then she would take the book and see what we were reading about. Pretty soon she could read it too.
- PG:** When you went to school, did you have any German? Did you learn any German in school?
- IB:** No, no. Just one part of one year, I learned German. But I can read German in the English print. I don't have any trouble at all. But of course, some of those words, we did not use in our language because our language is a mixture.
- PG:** Did you have catechism in the summertime?
- IB:** In the wintertime. We had Catholic teachers. We had an extra hour.
- PG:** Out in the country school?
- IB:** Country school.
- PG:** But you had catechism in your country school, huh?

- IB:** Yes. Because we had mostly Catholic teachers. But not the last ones. Of course, then, when the old... well, my third grade I did not have a Catholic teacher, but she was the most wonderful teacher I've ever had. She never said anything about religion, that she was against it or anything. She was the tiniest person, and all those big teenage boys that were in school there. They could not get a teacher until they finally got her. Some of those parents said, "What are those big boys going to do to her?" They just adored her. They were so good. They minded her, never had any problem. Then we got a man teacher and he was no good. He was too dominating. He stood by the desk. You know those desks had nice hardwood tops, and he took that brass bell and he banged it and, "You dumb jack-asses!" he'd say. Oh, my God! The teacher said that to us and we went home and told. All the kids there went home and told their parents what the teacher said. So the parents all went to him and told him he didn't dare say that anymore. Because the kids could not understand what a jackass was.
- PG:** Where did the teachers come from?
- IB:** Some of them... this one was from in the neighborhood. The first teacher I had. She was a convert and she was good. The second teacher was from town here. He was born and raised around here. Maybe, maybe he was born in the old country, but he was a good teacher. A Catholic, and he taught us religion. Because all the kids in the school were Catholic. Then after the noon meal, we had catechism. And we had prayers too.
- PG:** So you didn't have summer schools. Catechism in the summer.
- IB:** No, we did not. I boarded with the Nuns for the first two years, for catechism. For one year. And then my grandfather moved to town and I stayed with him. The rest of the family stayed with Grandpa until he died. Too soon, then. But then they had summer school. The younger kids had summer school. Three of them. Two of them had summer school.
- PG:** Did you learn any poems in German?
- IB:** No.
- PG:** You didn't, like [? 444].
- IB:** Oh, yes. My grandfather taught us that.
- PG:** Do you remember any of those?
- IB:** No, not anymore, because Grandpa died when I was just a kid.
- PG:** If somebody would repeat it, if somebody would say it first, then you would say, "I remember that."
- IB:** Yes, I would. My grandfather was the most wonderful person. He was so kind. We'd come home from going to school up here and he would help us with catechism. He'd tell us in German. But we could already understand by then what the German and the English was. And always, when we got home, when he saw us come, he got the bread and sliced the homemade bread and gave us jelly bread. That was a treat.
- PG:** That was a treat. It's good when you're hungry.

- IB:** Yes.
- PG:** That's about all we had was jelly bread.
- IB:** When you went to school.
- PG:** Well, I went to a country school.
- IB:** I did too. And we had jelly bread sandwiches, and it leaked through.
- PG:** What else did you have for lunch for school?
- IB:** Well, towards the last, the teachers began... we had those great big coal ranges, coal heaters. Then they'd cook a kettle of soup, or they would put the potatoes into the ashes when it was fine, and we'd have baked potatoes and gravy, with sausages and things like that. It kind of smelled good after awhile.
- PG:** I'm sure. Did you have to walk to school?
- IB:** Well, sometimes. Sometimes we had a buggy and we had one horse. We drove then, when my brothers got so they could handle the horses.
- PG:** When you were growing up, what is some of the work that you did not like to do?
- IB:** I did not like to milk. But I had to. Oh, I hated that.
- PG:** Why did you hate milking?
- IB:** Because I was deathly afraid of the cows kicking.
- PG:** And sometimes they'd kick.
- IB:** Sometimes they did.
- PG:** Sometimes they stepped on your toes.
- IB:** Yes.
- PG:** And in the summertime they'd switch their tails.
- IB:** At the flies.
- PG:** And the tail would go in your face.
- IB:** Yes.
- PG:** Sometimes in the wintertime the tail was dirty and it would go in your face.
- IB:** Yes.
- PG:** And when you went to school you smelled from manure.
- IB:** No, we had to clean up. Boy, oh boy, did we have to clean. We seldom milked in the morning. That was my dad's job to milk in the morning. He said no, if you had to go to school, you don't milk. So he went out. In the evening we did the milking.

- PG:** How many cows did each person have to milk?
- IB:** Well, sometimes there were four, five. In those days the cows did not give as much milk as they do now and they did not have the breeds that give milk.
- PG:** What kind of cows did you have?
- IB:** Just anything. We did have a couple of Holsteins. They gave a bucket of milk each. That was fine.
- PG:** Those were the cows that were red, huh? Red cows?
- IB:** They were black and white. The Holsteins. But then we had a red one that my dad was the only one that could milk that cow. She'd give a bucket full of milk, but if any woman got near her, she kicked. He could go in there and she never kicked him.
- PG:** What was some of the work that you liked to do?
- IB:** Oh, I loved to cook, and I loved to iron, but I don't anymore. But I did then. And I loved to go out and take care of the chickens. And the garden work was my heaven.
- PG:** Oh yes?
- IB:** And we raised a garden. My mother canned and canned and canned. I remember that one year we had hail in June. Four times we had hail that June, and her tomatoes were gone. Where we planted the beans and the peas, that you could replant. And the onions came again. But the tomatoes were gone, and the cabbage. She seeded cabbage and got fairly good heads, with all of July and August and September. Oh, we made sauerkraut that year. And she came to town and this one woman said, "I hear you got hail. I've got a bunch of tomato plants you can have." "Okay," my mom said. She brought them home. I remember, I was about ten years old and helped her plant them. And we picked tomatoes in the wash tubs full. She made catsup, she canned tomatoes, and she even pickled them. Have you ever eaten pickled tomatoes?
- PG:** I don't think so.
- IB:** They're made almost like they make dill pickles. There is dill in there. I had to go out, I remember, in the garden. In the dark. I had to take the lantern and get dill, because she needed it. And she canned those in a crock. Do you remember having those crocks?
- PG:** Yes.
- IB:** We sold one of them. Oh, my cousin wanted that so badly. And when it got to be \$85, she said, "No, I don't want it anymore." But imagine those Redwing crocks. \$85.
- PG:** Well, they are collectors' items. Did you make pickled cucumbers?
- IB:** Everything. Everything. She pickled everything imaginable.
- PG:** That was in a jar, huh? Or was it in a barrel?
- IB:** A lot of it in the jar, and if we didn't have anymore jars, it went into the barrel.

PG: Did you make pickled watermelons?

IB: Watermelons. Those we had in the jars. One time, I'll bet you she had 700 or 800 jars of stuff, and a lot of them were half-gallon jars. I remember that one time we butchered a cow, and that cow was enormous. We canned for two days and two nights. We got 500 jars of meat from that cow. That was a good one. During the Depression years we never were without good food, because my mom saw to it that we had it.

PG: Did you have enough shelves for all those jars?

IB: My dad made them in the basement. He made them. Sometimes we had to have a chair to go and get them down, but they were up there and they were about this deep. You know, you can put a lot in there.

PG: Oh yes.

IB: And then some of them were on the floor. Then all the potatoes and the carrots, they were in the cooler part.

PG: Did you work in the fields too?

IB: I didn't. I was so terribly allergic to grain dust. And I was supposed to go out and help shock and help drive header box, and I could not walk home I had such a terrible attack. I had to lay down. I've been so allergic to grain dust all my life. So, you don't do that then.

PG: Did you have a tractor right away? Do you remember when you got your first tractor?

IB: See, I started to work in the hospital in 1937, and they did not have a tractor until '43. We worked with horses. My dad was a horse man.

PG: So you remember when you got the first tractor, then.

IB: Oh, gosh, yes. I was working in the hospital and my mother came. "Oh," she says, "we finally got a tractor."

PG: What did they call it in German? Did they say the [? 638]?

IB: [? 639] she says.

PG: [repeats the word]

IB: [repeat]

PG: So you remember the headering too, you can remember when they headered.

IB: Oh, gosh, yes.

PG: It was hard work.

IB: Oh, I was ten years old and I had to get up at 5:00 to help my mother fix breakfast for those guys that came. Because she had just had a baby before, not very long before. And he cried so much. Well, there were so many guys came for breakfast we had to put up another table, and they put it right against the

door to get into the living room. And the baby cried and cried. And one of the men says, "I'm going to get that baby. I'm going to get that baby." And he went in and got the baby. He couldn't stand the crying. He just went in and then he got it.

PG: Did you go to high school?

IB: Three months. That was the worst thing in the world, not to finish school. Because I loved school. That was just... for me it was just a joy to learn so many things, especially... those days they called it Literature or Grammar. I don't know what they call it now.

PG: I don't know. Well then what? You went back home and helped on the farm?

IB: Yes. Not very long. Then I went to take care of sick people. I wasn't 15 years old yet when I started that.

PG: Oh?

IB: That was too young.

PG: You were hired out.

IB: Yes. At Father Mark. She was my dad's sister and he was my mother's brother... Father Mark's parents. So there I worked. His mother was an asthmatic so bad. So I worked there, in there with the five Renner kids and they [had] a little girl, an uncle's child, they both died. Well Sister Marshall's parents, they both died within three months of each other. And there were six girls there. 13 down to three, down to one-and-a-half.

PG: How did you get into nursing, then?

IB: I started to work at the hospital in '37.

PG: Did they have a hospital here in Richardton then already?

IB: Yes. But I never did graduate from nurse's training. The nurses and the doctor helped me all the time. They got me books and I could read like all get out, and I could comprehend it very easily. So, I could do anything and they told me about medication and all of that. But I never did pay \$8.50 a pill!

PG: So you never got a degree. You were not...

IB: My sister that died in '56, she had a degree in nursing. I saw to it that she got there because I could help her. She had cancer, a form of cancer. She had Hodgkin's disease. Now they do so much for Hodgkin's. Her oldest son had it and he's in remission for several years already.

PG: Back to the grade school. Where did the teachers stay?

IB: In the neighborhood. Whoever would take them. Whoever had a big enough place so they could have a room for themselves.

PG: They boarded with somebody.

IB: They boarded and roomed with someone.

PG: The hospital that was in Richardton, that was just a small house, right?

IB: It was just a house.

PG: Is it still standing?

IB: Yes.

PG: It's a wooden house, not a brick house.

IB: It's a wooden house.

PG: The Vandersoots [? 750] lived in there at one time.

IB: Yes. [? 752]. And the [? 755] lived in there. We did too, when my mom had a stroke. We lived in there several years until she passed away. Then [? 758] moved in there and then [? 760] bought it.

PG: So was that a town hospital or who owned it?

IB: Well, the doctor did. Dr. Chris [? 764].

[End of Side One]

IB: Something was wrong with it and they told him to bring it in. They would check it. It was just overnight and then it burned.

PG: The building didn't burn down though.

IB: Yes. In 1919. They had that terrible fire in Richardton.

PG: Oh. Oh, I see, when the town burned down.

IB: Yes. I don't remember it because I was...

PG: You were two years old. Or 1-1/2.

IB: 1-1/2, because my birthday is in the end of the year. Like my mother's, it was the 24th of December.

PG: Oh, I see. When you were young, was the church in English or in German?

IB: German. We had two sermons, one in German and one in English. Then when they quit giving it in German, one old guy says, "If they would give German sermons, the kids wouldn't be so mean." And my dad says, "Huh? Will you tell me how they could understand it? None of those kids can speak German anymore."

PG: Father Gregory used to preach in German.

IB: Father Gregory and Father Julius. But Father Julius was so hard to hear. He gave good sermons, very good topics, but you couldn't understand it.

PG: Oh?

IB: Because his voice was so low. Father Peter in German and in English too.

PG: When they switched to English, were the people mad?

- IB:** A lot of them were. A lot of those old old-timers. And I said, "Wait a minute." Just like this fellow in Hebron. They were not Catholic. They were Congregational. They were over here 60 years, they were here in the United States already and their minister could not give a German sermon. And his name was German he said. Yes, he says, "My father's name was German, but my mother was born in England." During the services they went up and corrected him, and really were mad at him because he did not give a German sermon. And I said, "After they were in the United States for 60 years, and could not understand an English sermon? Forget it!" I know this one man and his wife, they were a brother and sister-in-law, and daughter-in-law of the people that went up there to complain. And he said, "If the floor would have opened, we'd have both gone down through it." They felt they were so ashamed of their relatives going up there and bawling out the minister because he didn't give a German sermon.
- PG:** It was hard for some of them. For the non-Catholics it was harder than for the Catholics.
- IB:** Yes it was.
- PG:** They had a harder time. How did you celebrate Christmas when you were little?
- IB:** Oh, we really celebrated. My dad would read to us or we'd read... and we always got to Mass on Christmas.
- PG:** Midnight Mass, you mean?
- IB:** Sometimes we got to Midnight Mass. Because a neighbor lady was a convert and she was a good convert. She lived there about seven years and she would pick us all up. If we went to sleep in church, she'd poke us. Wake up.
- PG:** Pay attention. Did you have a Christkindel?
- IB:** A few years we did. But then things went bad during the Depression. There was no... there was very little Christmas. We got a handkerchief or a bag of candy or something my mother had made. Or an orange. Oh, oranges were gorgeous in those days.
- PG:** Yes, they were good, weren't they?
- IB:** Oh, and apples. We had so many apples in school. My dad would call me to go to town and buy apples, and then we'd put them in a barrel in the basement. We had to check them every so often to see if they were bad.
- PG:** When the Christkindel came, what did it look like?
- IB:** She had my mother's wedding dress on, and a veil over her face. It was Anna.
- PG:** Your aunt.
- IB:** Yes.
- PG:** Did she have a whip?
- IB:** No, this is something my parents never did, have a whip. Anybody else... nobody could discipline us but my parents.

- PG:** Did you have the Belzenickel too?
- IB:** No. Never had a Belzenickel. In school, I guess they did. Before I went to school, but after that had ended.
- PG:** Did you get anything for the Feast of St. Nicholas?
- IB:** No.
- PG:** Some people did.
- IB:** Yes, I know. This one woman was always telling how they put their shoes out for St. Nicholas. One year they all got coal in theirs.
- PG:** How did you celebrate Easter? Did you get Easter eggs?
- IB:** Oh, did we get Easter eggs!
- PG:** Did the Easter rabbit hide them for you?
- IB:** No. We all put our nests in certain spots in the house. One behind the end table, the corner table, under the bed or whatever we... and we all knew where ours was. We all got the same amount of candy and eggs. So we didn't have to fight.
- PG:** How did you make the nests?
- IB:** Little boxes. It was always a shoe box or something.
- PG:** Did you get straw, or what did you put in there?
- IB:** Nothing. Sometimes we put a little grass if we had it, if there was any. But we never did put straw in. Hay we put in.
- PG:** Hay?
- IB:** Yes. I think my mother did not like straw in the house.
- PG:** Did you celebrate the 4th of July?
- IB:** Yes. The neighbors and us. The neighborhood was really for the 4th of July and every 4th of July we had homemade ice cream.
- PG:** Where did you get the ice?
- IB:** We had an ice house.
- PG:** Oh?
- IB:** Under the summer kitchen.
- PG:** Did you go swimming, probably?

- IB:** Never. I never went swimming. My dad said he could swim real well in Russia, but he was afraid to let us kids go swimming in the creeks. Afraid we'd drown. Well, of course, we had quicksand. And he didn't want us to go near that one spot at all, where there was the quicksand.
- PG:** Did you have firecrackers?
- IB:** No.
- PG:** You did not have money to buy firecrackers.
- IB:** The neighbors had a shotgun and they went out and puffed it a couple of times, and that was it. Up in the air. That was the 4th of July.
- PG:** Did you have music in your house?
- IB:** No. Nothing.
- PG:** Did you have a crank up phonograph?
- IB:** No. All the other relatives did, but we did not because our house was a little bit too small to hold anything else but us.
- PG:** Did you have a radio?
- IB:** Not until later. Till the war time. And I loved to listen to the news and stuff. When my parents got that radio they were in Seventh Heaven. My mother... oh!
- PG:** Was it a big box?
- IB:** It was just a little bitty thing.
- PG:** Did you buy batteries for it?
- IB:** Had to buy batteries for it.
- PG:** Did you get to go to dances?
- IB:** Very seldom. My dad didn't like dancing. They didn't take us. My mother loved to dance, but my dad, huh-uh.
- PG:** I wonder if they danced in the old country.
- IB:** Yes, they did. Mom said they did.
- PG:** Did they dance waltzes, or...
- IB:** I suppose. I don't think they danced the polka in those days. I don't know. Maybe. Oh, yes, the polka has been for years. For a long, long time.
- PG:** I suppose they had barn dances.
- IB:** Yes, they had a lot of barn dances.

- PG:** So your dad didn't like dancing.
- IB:** No.
- PG:** Well, was there a place where the people could get together for socializing or visiting?
- IB:** Yes, it was with the neighbors. I'll never forget. One winter night it was kind of nasty already when they came, and there must have been about six or eight couples that came. And they played cards. It stormed so bad they couldn't go home. And they brought their kids. And my mother... well, they all had... they came with teams most of the time because there was a lot of snow on the ground. They went out and got the stuff. We had an enormous house at that time and they made beds for the kids all over the floors. The older people slept in the beds and us kids on the floor.
- PG:** How long did they have to stay at your place then?
- IB:** Until the next afternoon. It kind of settled. They all got their horses out of the barns and harnessed the horses and got them hitched up to their wagons or sleds, whatever they came with, and left.
- PG:** Did you celebrate Name Days?
- IB:** Sometimes we celebrated Names Day.
- PG:** Did they celebrate [? 150]?
- IB:** Yes, which was in July sometimes, they figured.
- PG:** Oh, in July.
- IB:** And my mother's was in June. Mine they didn't know.
- PG:** So July would be a bad time for celebrating.
- IB:** Yes.
- PG:** Because usually Names Days were in the wintertime.
- IB:** Yes. They celebrated them. But my mother's was in June. And my dad's was in August.
- PG:** What kind of games did you play when you were little?
- IB:** Hide and Seek, Pump Pump Pull Away, Tag, and what was the other one? I cannot remember what the other one was. Oh, we did play ball.
- PG:** In the wintertime you could play Fox and the Goose.
- IB:** Yes.
- PG:** Do you know any superstitions?
- IB:** Very few. My mother did not. She said, "No, that isn't so." So it wasn't. A neighbor lady was so superstitious, she hailed everybody's illness.
- PG:** She made the sign of the cross over them?

- IB:** She was not Catholic. She would touch the forehead.
- PG:** They called it Brauche.
- IB:** Yes. That's what she did. Brauche.
- PG:** And it worked.
- IB:** Well, not always.
- PG:** Did you know how she did it? Do you know what she did?
- IB:** No, I don't know.
- PG:** So, when you got sick, did anybody go to the doctor?
- IB:** Very seldom.
- PG:** Well, you had a doctor in Richardton, so you could go if it was necessary.
- IB:** Oh, yes.
- PG:** Did your mother have home cure remedies?
- IB:** Yes, I think she did. I don't know... mustard plaster or something.
- PG:** She must have rubbed it in.
- IB:** Oh, did she ever. And mentholatum was her cure-all. And years later, Vicks. Oh, my dad and my mother, they used Vicks like it was the best thing in the world.
- PG:** Vicks Vapo-rub. Well, I think it worked.
- IB:** It worked, yes.
- PG:** If you rubbed it in until it got warm, then wrap it up good.
- IB:** Yes.
- PG:** Did you use goose fat? Did you cook your goose and use the fat for...
- IB:** For cooking. We butchered a lot of geese in our days.
- PG:** Some people used the goose fat for remedies.
- IB:** They put camphor and mixed camphor and goose grease and they said that was so good. I don't know.
- PG:** Did they have different sicknesses than we have now days? Or did they have the same ones already?
- IB:** Pardon?
- PG:** Did they have the same sicknesses?

- IB:** Well, yes. But some of them they don't have anymore. Like measles, smallpox. But they still have diphtheria... no! Pneumonia. See, Dad lost two brothers within a few days, just before Christmas with diphtheria.
- PG:** Oh?
- IB:** In those days there was no vaccine for anything.
- PG:** Were they little yet, those two that died?
- IB:** I think they were three and four or three and five.
- PG:** So they were your dad's brothers?
- IB:** Yes.
- PG:** And they are buried out here in Richardton, huh?
- IB:** In Russia.
- PG:** Oh, they're buried in Russia.
- IB:** They were born right after Dad.
- PG:** How do you say diphtheria in German?
- IB:** [? 211- different from what Edna Bentz's book says] they called it.
- PG:** [repeats the word].
- IB:** Yes.
- PG:** Did they have midwives? Do you remember midwives?
- IB:** Yes, they did. My mother never had a midwife, but a lot of the women did.
- PG:** For your mother they called the doctor?
- IB:** Yes.
- PG:** Did your parents get German newspapers?
- IB:** For awhile, a very short time. They got the Nord Dakota Herold that was printed in German. And what was that other one? I don't know.
- PG:** Der Staatsanzeiger?
- IB:** That they got for awhile.
- PG:** I don't remember Der Staatsanzeiger.
- IB:** My dad would go up to the abbey and get those great big books in German. They were about this thick, and at 4 o'clock in the morning he was still reading by the kerosene lamp.

- PG:** Oh yes? He liked to read, huh?
- IB:** Oh, he loved to read. I do too. But it's getting to be a little on the hard side for me to see some of it. I have to have new glasses.
- PG:** Did you have any comics to read? Any funnies?
- IB:** No.
- PG:** No, I don't think so.
- IB:** In those days, oh, that was a waste of money.
- PG:** When you were working in town, did you stay in town?
- IB:** Oh yes.
- PG:** Then you weren't out on the farm then.
- IB:** No.
- PG:** So in town they already had electricity.
- IB:** Oh yes. They had electricity years and years ago. My grandfather and grandmother, when they came in here in '27, they already had electricity. '26.
- PG:** So you don't remember when you got the first electricity, because when you came to town you had it.
- IB:** Oh, they had it.
- PG:** How about windmills? Did you have a windmill when you were young?
- IB:** Oh yes. I know my dad had to go up there and get my brother. He was just a little bird. He crawled up and he couldn't get down. My dad had to go up there and get him.
- PG:** Who did you admire most in your life? Your grandfathers, grandmothers, mother, father...
- IB:** I did not know my grandmothers.
- PG:** Neither one?
- IB:** No.
- PG:** Oh.
- IB:** I wasn't a year old yet when my mother's mother died, and I wasn't born yet when my dad's mother died.
- PG:** Oh. When you lived in town you stayed with your grandpa?
- IB:** Yes.
- PG:** He was a bachelor then?

- IB:** No, he married some woman that did not like females. She did not like her daughters. Her son was... the sun rose and sat on him, he was wonderful, but her daughters...
- PG:** Did your mother have to work in the field too?
- IB:** Yes.
- PG:** Did she go out for headering I suppose?
- IB:** Yes.
- PG:** Did she go up in the stacks? Set the haystacks?
- IB:** Yes.
- PG:** Usually it was the women who stacked the stacks.
- IB:** Yes.
- PG:** And your mother did the milking?
- IB:** We all did. I think I was five years old, six year old when I started. I think that's what scared the life out of me. I got kicked the first time I think, and I was scared after that. I hated to go near a cow.
- PG:** Did your mother bake a lot of bread I suppose?
- IB:** Cripe, yes. I remember baking that big bread raiser for her. I paid \$3 for it, and when we sold it at the auction sale, I think we got \$18 and it had been used and used and used.
- PG:** What was that? A bread what did you say?
- IB:** A bread raiser. You mix the bread in it... it's a bread pan.
- PG:** Oh, a big bread pan.
- IB:** Yes, you mix...
- PG:** [? 279]
- IB:** Yes. [same word again.] Yes, I bought that for her. I paid \$3 for it and years... 40-some years later sold it for \$18. It was then an antique. It was something that wasn't around anymore.
- PG:** Did your mother make borscht?
- IB:** Yes.
- PG:** How about halupsy?
- IB:** Yes.
- PG:** Do you still make halupsy?

- IB:** I have never cared too much for it, but I make it. Borscht I just love. They get it down at the senior citizens now once in a great while. Sometimes it's not up to par. It doesn't have the kind of vegetables in it my mother put in.
- PG:** Did your mother do sewing too?
- IB:** Everything. She sewed everything we wore.
- PG:** Oh yes? So she had a sewing machine then?
- IB:** She had a sewing machine.
- PG:** And pedaled it with the foot.
- IB:** Yes.
- PG:** Where did you get the cloth to make the clothes?
- IB:** Wherever she could get it. Wherever at the store. They used to have a lot of it in Richardton here.
- PG:** Oh, in Richardton.
- IB:** She bought it. And she made an awful lot of made-overs that we had gotten from other people. We had to rip it apart and she sewed it then. Coats and shirts and dresses and pants for the boys. A lot of that stuff.
- PG:** She made pants too?
- IB:** Yes.
- PG:** Oh yes? That was kind of hard to make them.
- IB:** Yes. The front part was very hard to do. But outside of that, she did it.
- PG:** Did the men wear neckties when you were young? Did your dad wear a necktie?
- IB:** Oh, my dad... oh, a necktie. A lot of times when he went to town he had a work shirt on and a necktie.
- PG:** He used to wear work shirts and neckties, then the suitcoat and the bib overalls, huh?
- IB:** Yes. And a vest was his choice. Oh, he loved vests.
- PG:** He loved vests.
- IB:** Yes. Those too.
- PG:** How about shoes. They never made their own shoes, huh?
- IB:** No, they never, never did. My dad had a small foot for a man. I have a big foot for a woman.
- PG:** My dad always just bought one kind of shoe. He bought it and wore it on Sundays until it was bad, then wear it for work.
- IB:** Then for work.

- PG:** Then bought another pair for Sundays.
- IB:** Yes, that's the way they did it.
- PG:** So we had Sunday shoes and everyday shoes.
- IB:** Yes.
- PG:** Is there anybody in your family who is working on family history?
- IB:** Yes. Eugene is.
- PG:** Oh, Eugene.
- IB:** See, that's why he went to Russia.
- PG:** Why he went to Russia last year.
- IB:** Yes.
- PG:** Now, what would you like people to remember you for?
- IB:** Oh, gee, I don't know. Many things.
- PG:** You started working in town when you were 20 years old?
- IB:** 17.
- PG:** 17.
- IB:** Oh, 18. Yes, I was 18 when I started to work.
- PG:** Then you worked in town all the time after that?
- IB:** Yes.
- PG:** You worked in Richardton, or did you work other places?
- IB:** I worked for a short time in Dickinson. Until my mother had a stroke and I had to come home.
- PG:** You worked in the hospital all the time though?
- IB:** Yes. Yes.
- PG:** A nurse, or a nurse's aid, or what?
- IB:** A nurse's aid.
- PG:** A nurse's aid. So when your mother got sick you stopped working in the hospital?
- IB:** I took care of her. Then she died. By that time my sister already had cancer, so I went out there, went to Bismarck and took care of her and her family. Then my dad got sick. But he recovered again. I came home and helped take care of him. Then I just did about anything on the farm that could be done. Took

care and helped... every time my sister needed help in Dickinson, I helped. My dad did not want to be alone. Oh... so, I had to stay there.

PG: So when did you move out to the farm with your brother?

IB: When my sister died. '56. Mom died in '55, so it was in '56.

PG: You didn't work in town anymore after that?

IB: No. I did farm work then. Raised chickens. Did the garden work.

PG: During the war, were the people scared to talk German?

IB: Not around here, because you know... it should have been because we have Norwegians, and some even from Finland. But they talked. I think the Norwegians talked a lot of Norwegian and the Germans talked our German.

PG: Oh?

IB: But in the big cities, the German people never talked German. They changed.

PG: Yes, they were scared to talk German.

IB: Oh, yes. My sister-in-law's father came over after the First World War and they were scared to death to talk German. They learned English right away he said, because they didn't want to talk German.

PG: When your parents met each other, did they meet each other alone, or did somebody get them together?

IB: I have no idea.

PG: Did somebody get them together?

IB: See, when Uncle Mike, my mother's brother, married my dad's sister, I think that's where they met.

PG: Oh, the other couple was older.

IB: Yes. They were married in '15 and the folks were married in '16, then.

PG: They were neighbors too, I suppose?

IB: No. They lived about ten miles apart. In those days anybody that lived ten miles away, they weren't very close, were they?

PG: They were not. But maybe in church.

IB: Yes. That's the only place.

PG: In the old days, did the women help make any of the decisions, or did the men make all the decisions?

IB: I think most of the men made the decisions. Some of the women tried to get their words in edgewise, but it didn't do any good.

- PG:** Do you have anything else that you'd like to talk about?
- IB:** No, I don't think I do.
- PG:** Germans were not very affectionate, were they?
- IB:** No, they were not.
- PG:** They didn't give a lot of hugs like we do now days.
- IB:** No, they did not. That was not in my dad's family whatsoever.
- PG:** Did your dad make homemade wine?
- IB:** No. Wine once that I can remember. My mother made chokecherry wine but my dad made grape wine.
- PG:** So you made chokecherry wine whenever there were...
- IB:** Chokecherries, yes.
- PG:** But not every year.
- IB:** Not every year, but some years they were in abundance.
- PG:** And you were able to. When did you drink the wine? Were the kids allowed to drink the wine?
- IB:** Seldom. A little bit, but not to excess.
- PG:** When you got company?
- IB:** Yes, or before the meal.
- PG:** Did you pick a lot of chokecherries if there were chokecherries?
- IB:** Oh, many.
- PG:** So did you go to town and buy sugar?
- IB:** Yes. We saved the eggs so we could have money to buy the sugar.
- PG:** Did they buy coffee?
- IB:** Coffee, sugar, salt and flour. Cream of Wheat and oatmeal.
- PG:** Did they buy... what's that other thing instead of coffee?
- IB:** Tea?
- PG:** Tea, but they had another one. It was... chicory.
- IB:** Chicory! Yes. My dad had that. He loved his coffee strong, and my grandfather did too.
- PG:** Did they mix chicory with the coffee or...

- IB:** With the coffee. You broke a piece off. The thing was, I think about this big and about this long and you broke a piece off and put it in.
- PG:** Where did they buy that?
- IB:** At the grocery store.
- PG:** Where did that come from?
- IB:** I haven't the slightest idea.
- PG:** Was it a plant?
- IB:** It's a plant. Yes, it is a plant.
- PG:** I just barely remember that.
- IB:** Well, same here, because my dad, after awhile he decided... he got ulcers and he was absolutely denied it. Then they did without it.
- PG:** Did your dad put a lot of milk into the coffee?
- IB:** Cream.
- PG:** Oh, cream. They liked their coffee strong, but then put cream in it.
- IB:** Cream.
- PG:** Did the Germans and the Norwegians get along with each other when they were neighbors?
- IB:** Well, yes. They minded their own business and never interrupted anybody else's religious deal or anything. That was the right way to do.
- PG:** Were you ever teased because you were German? Did they make fun of you?
- IB:** Just once.
- PG:** Did they say dirty words or something?
- IB:** Yes. Just that one time, and the teacher heard it and that was it.
- PG:** In some places that used to be a real problem.
- IB:** That used to be terrible.
- PG:** Did the rest of your brothers and sisters get to go to high school?
- IB:** Four of them did.
- PG:** The younger ones, huh?
- IB:** The younger ones.
- PG:** How many went to college?

- IB:** Two.
- PG:** Two went to college.
- IB:** My two youngest brothers. One was a linotype operator and one was in electrical deals. Radio and...
- PG:** When was your youngest brother born?
- IB:** 1930.
- PG:** Were your parents interested in politics?
- IB:** My dad was, but my mother didn't care. To her meant not as much. In those days I don't think the women were supposed to be doing anything like that.
- PG:** Did they work with... what party was he, Republican or Democrat, or was it non-partisan, do you think?
- IB:** It was whoever my dad thought was the most sufficient, you know, the most... had the most... way, the best way of doing things. The one he liked the best I think.
- PG:** Do you remember Prohibition?
- IB:** To some extent I do, because one of the nuns was talking about it. This man, his wife had medication and there was some alcohol in it, and he was arrested. She was so upset about that. It was a relative of hers. Then the doctor explained that the woman had to have it. That's why he gave it to her. How did they find out that she was on that medication that had alcohol in it?
- PG:** On the farm you were always close to neighbors, you always had close neighbors?
- IB:** Oh, yes.
- PG:** So you could visit over there and...
- IB:** Well, in those days you shared your things. Like your meat grinder, your sausage stuffers, or that. You shared it with the neighbors.
- PG:** Oh. Yes, I guess there's not that much of that anymore.
- IB:** There are so few people making their own sausage and things. They take it to town and have it made.
- PG:** What did you do with your land? Do you still own your land?
- IB:** We sold it and we don't own it anymore but we still get paid.
- PG:** Oh, you still get payments for it. Did Leroy Schwartz buy that, or...
- IB:** No, [? 581] bought it in Dickinson.
- PG:** [? 582] ?
- IB:** Leroy Schwartz is living there now.
- PG:** Oh.

- IB:** Because a son came back.
- PG:** Oh, he's just living there. He doesn't own that land.
- IB:** No. No.
- PG:** Okay. Did you have a [? 591] ?
- IB:** Yes, I'll never forget. We had one one time when we had so many watermelons. My two youngest brothers were just kids and my dad overheard them one time. You should have seen the knees of their pants. They cracked the watermelon on the knees and their knees were just tough. One of my brothers... said my dad says he was just banging on it and says, "Aren't you ever going to break?"
- PG:** When you worked for other people, what did you have to do?
- IB:** Everything. Milk, everything there was to do. Take care of kids and milk, do the housework, washing and...
- PG:** It was work all day long.
- IB:** It was work all day long.
- PG:** Was it with long dresses? Did you wear pants then?
- IB:** Oh, no. We wore dresses in those days. You didn't wear pants.
- PG:** So it was harder to do the work, like milking was harder.
- IB:** Well, sometimes in the cold you put pants on when you went out to milk, because otherwise it would be too cold to sit out there and milk.
- PG:** Then you had to do the cooking too?
- IB:** Yes.
- PG:** Carry in the...
- IB:** Carry in the water and carry out the...
- PG:** Carry in the water.
- IB:** Carry out the wash water and carry out what they called the slop pail.
- PG:** Do you remember the dry manure, burning cow chips?
- IB:** Yes, I do. I'll never forget this. You went out with the wheelbarrow and socks and you put it in a shed and then when you needed it, you quick went out and got some.
- PG:** You picked up the dry stuff out in the pasture.
- IB:** The dry stuff in the pasture. And if you found a stick of wood, that you took along, because that burned too.

- PG:** Do you remember making the manure blocks?
- IB:** No, my dad was telling about in the old country when they made them, and he was also telling about making those blocks they would build houses with. What they called them, sod houses. I don't know what they called them in German.
- PG:** [? 650]. What kind of house did they have over here?
- IB:** We lived in one one time.
- PG:** A sod house?
- IB:** A sod house. It was made out of blocks.
- PG:** Oh, it was dried.
- IB:** It was sod though.
- PG:** It was sun dried though. It was sun dried bricks.
- IB:** Yes.
- PG:** Bricks and they dried them in the sun.
- IB:** Yes. But that house, part of it was sod and part of it was the blocks that they'd cut.
- PG:** What kind of roof did they have?
- IB:** Well, the roof was wood and about this much ground on top.
- PG:** A foot and a half of dirt on the roof.
- IB:** On the roof. The grass grew on there.
- PG:** Oh. I suppose it would.
- IB:** When it rained.
- PG:** Well, I see that our tape is getting close to being full, so Ida, I thank you very much for a very enjoyable conversation on this Sunday afternoon. Ida Brilz still has her maiden name because she was never married and she does not have any children.