

## Interview with Christina Gross Jundt (CJ)

Conducted by Brother Placid Gross (PG)

October 14, 1998

Rugby, North Dakota

Transcription by Joy Bass Stefan

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**PG:** What is today's date?

**CJ:** Today is the 14th.

**PG:** October 14, 1998, and your name is Christina Gross Jundt.

**CJ:** Yes.

**PG:** Your address?

**CJ:** 410 Fourth Street, SE.

**PG:** In Rugby. Your phone number?

**CJ:** 776-5665.

**PG:** 776-5665. And your birth date?

**CJ:** November 10, 1909.

**PG:** Where were you born? I suppose Pierce County.

**CJ:** Yes, Pierce County, out on the farm.

**PG:** And your husband's name?

**CJ:** Thomas.

**PG:** Thomas Jundt. Your date of marriage?

**CJ:** I forgot. [Laughter]

**PG:** Okay, let's go to the father's name. Your father's name?

**CJ:** Clemens Gross.

**PG:** It says your father's birth date. We can write that in later. Your mother's maiden name?

**CJ:** Katherine Leier.

**PG:** How old were you when you started talking English?

**CJ:** About five; four or five.

- PG:** When your dad go married, did they move up here right away, or?
- CJ:** No, see Caroline was born down there, then they moved up to Blumenfeld, north of Orrin, and Joe and Walter were born there. Then they bought the farm here in Pierce County.
- PG:** So the oldest child was born down in Logan County, then they moved to Blumenfeld, then to Pierce County, then to south of Rugby.
- CJ:** Yes.
- PG:** Do you know where they lived at Napoleon? Do you know if anybody lives there now, or do you know anybody's farm, or do you know where they lived?
- CJ:** No I don't.
- PG:** Did they live with his parents?
- CJ:** No, they lived alone.
- PG:** They lived alone, not with her parents and not with his parents.
- CJ:** No.
- PG:** I wonder if anybody lives there now. Do you know when and where your father died? Where did your father die?
- CJ:** Here in Rugby.
- PG:** He died in the hospital in Rugby?
- CJ:** No, he died at home at Caroline's house.
- PG:** At Joe Schmaltz's house?
- CJ:** Yes.
- PG:** And he is buried...
- CJ:** In Balta Cemetery.
- PG:** Buried in Balta. Where did your mother die?
- CJ:** Here in our hospital.
- PG:** In Rugby. And she is also buried at Balta?
- CJ:** Yes.
- PG:** Do you know when she died?
- CJ:** In '31.
- PG:** 1931. Who are your brothers and sisters? Just start with the oldest one.
- CJ:** Okay, that's Caroline.

- PG:** Married to Joe Schmaltz.
- CJ:** Yes. And Joe.
- PG:** He's buried in Rugby.
- CJ:** Yes.
- PG:** Okay, and then who?
- CJ:** Walter. He's buried in Balta.
- PG:** Okay.
- CJ:** Then John.
- PG:** John is buried. ..
- CJ:** Here in Rugby. Then I was next after John, and then was Mary. Mary died in California. She is buried out there.
- PG:** How long ago did she die? It wasn't so long ago.
- CJ:** About five years.
- PG:** So you're the only one left.
- CJ:** Yes.
- PG:** And you're going to be buried in Rugby?
- CJ:** In Rugby, I hope.
- PG:** Your husband is buried in Rugby.
- CJ:** Yes.
- PG:** Do you remember anything that your mother talked about the old country? Did she ever say anything about the old country, about Russia?
- CJ:** Well, she was only 12 when she came over here, but she remembered one thing that bothered her was that we could not have a nice place to go swimming. She said in Russia where she grew up it was almost a sin if the children couldn't go swimming, and she missed that a lot.
- PG:** Oh yes, they lived right by the water.
- CJ:** Yes. Then she talked about how they had to lock up everything, how people were stealing horses and such. And they had quite an experience coming over here. Their ship got hit by an iceberg. It had a big hole in it, and in those days they couldn't wire for help or anything. So they just kind of floated along, and everybody could hold a pail had to help bailout water. They had all received the last rites and they sang and prayed. They were all prepared to die. They knew they were dying, and then after about ten days of that, a small fishing vessel came by and they said, "We can't pull you unless you can throw over everything you can possibly spare. Make the ship as light as you can, and we'll do what we can." And they pulled them to shore.

- PG:** That would be scary.
- CJ:** She said that was scary .She said there were enough tears by that time to fill the ocean.
- PG:** That would be scary to have to bailout the water .
- CJ:** Yes, yes. She said she was 12 and she was one of the bailers too. Everybody who could handle a pail had to help bailout water.
- D?:** Did any of them die?
- CJ:** No.
- PG:** It would be interesting if we knew what ship they came over on. Then we could check this out.
- CJ:** Oh yes. I don't know the name of the ship.
- PG:** You would not know when they came over, I'm sure you wouldn't know that. But you said she was 12 years old. That could be found somewhere. Did your dad talk anything about the old country?
- CJ:** Nothing spectacular, just about how they worked. You know they all lived in town and they went out to the fields and camped for two weeks, three weeks at a time. That's the way they farmed. People didn't live on the farms.
- PG:** The land was too far away so they stayed all week.
- CJ:** Yes.
- PG:** Stayed out in the field all week. Usually, I think they went home on Saturday night.
- CJ:** Yes, I suppose.
- PG:** To change clothes and bring food along for the rest of the week. But your dad really never talked much about Russia. It's too bad we didn't ask questions then.
- CJ:** Yes, too bad. He remembered who their neighbors were. He remembered how the houses were built.
- PG:** Did your parents or grandparents mention anything else about the villages in the old country? Your grandpa never talked about it either?
- CJ:** Grandpa John? He talked about how they had all kinds of fruit trees. Fruit didn't mean anything. They at all they could and they threw away a lot. They didn't can or freeze or anything in those days. It wasn't fun to go and pick fruit on your own trees, so they'd go to the neighbors? and snatch the fruit.
- PG:** Yes, they had a lot of fruit trees. Then when they came over here, they had nothing.
- CJ:** Yes, right. And he said they were very sociable. If one neighbor had to build something, all the neighbors were there, and they'd get together on Sunday afternoons and all chip in and buy a keg of beer or something. He said they did a lot of entertaining.
- PG:** Oh really? They probably did a lot of singing, huh?
- CJ:** I'll bet they did.

- PG:** Did your grandparents talk about gossip or scandals that happened in Russia in the old villages?
- CJ:** Not that I remember. My mother used to talk about...they had Jewish neighbors and they did not believe in the Blessed Virgin, and my uncle grabbed one of those 12-year-old Jewish boys and held him under the water. And he said, "You say the Hail Mary with me." He wouldn't do it. So finally he thought he was getting drowned, so he said, "I'll pray, I'll pray your prayer." He made him pray the Hail Mary. [Laughter]
- PG:** Made him believe whether he wanted to or not! What stories do you remember from your childhood which you can still repeat in your German dialect? Do you know any German poems?
- CJ:** No, I don't think I do. I like reading the ones you put in the Germans from Russia book once in awhile.
- PG:** Oh, you are still a member of the Germans from Russia, huh?
- CJ:** Yes.
- PG:** So you get that Heritage Review.
- CJ:** Yes.
- PG:** But you don't remember anything on your own.
- CJ:** No, I don't think I do.
- PG:** Okay, did your parents wish that they were back in Russia? Would they wish that they were back at home in Russia?
- CJ:** No. My mother said many times, "That's the best thing that ever happened in my life, that we left Russia."
- PG:** Did they ever talk about being homesick? So they were not really homesick. Were they homesick?
- CJ:** No, they just said they didn't miss it. They said it was awfully hard coming here and there were no roads or anything at that time, no electric lights, but she said going through all of that was better than living in Russia.
- PG:** Why would it be better?
- CJ:** She said they had that inner fear of the Russians, and there were so many gypsies over there.
- PG:** How about your grandmother? Do you remember Grandma Gross too?
- CJ:** Very little. She was an invalid all the while I knew her. I'd get down maybe once a year because only a few of us could go along every time the folks went. I remember her laying in bed. She had a shelf above her bed with two gallon jars full of candy. Grandpa kept them full for her, so she could give the kids candy.
- PG:** What kind of candy did they have? Or where did they get it from?
- CJ:** He went to town. They lived 12 miles south of Napoleon and Grandpa would go to town often with his horse and buggy. This is the name of the candy she had, and for many years I missed this candy. I used

to think, if only I could get some candy like Grandma Gross used to give us, and now there is some here. It's kind of a butter- flavored hard candy.

**PG:** It's a hard candy wrapped in tin foil. Do you remember receiving letters from the old country?

**CJ:** No, no I don't.

**PG:** Your grandparents did not get letters that you know of. But your grandpa's parents were still living over there. They must have still been alive when your grandpa left.

**CJ:** I don't know.

**PG:** It's strange that he never talked about his parents. Did your family wait for news from relatives that stayed in Russia?

**CJ:** Yes. I know during the war is when the folks received letters from over there. There was a Jacob Gross and a Peter Gross, and we sent them a lot of clothes and food.

**PG:** Oh?

**CJ:** Was it Peter's wife that came over here, that was Bassle Matlin? I think that her husband was Peter. Then Jacob was an older man, and we sent them a lot of clothes. The priest we had, he educated us how to do it. He said, "If you want send them, like towels. They would give anything for a towel. They use rags. Don't buy nice towels and send them. If you have to buy the towels, make them wet like you were washing them, and let them dry in a pile so they look ugly. Then the people will get them. If you send nice new ones, the guys will take them before they give them to the people." We sent them coats and sweaters. Tom had a suit he had worn for many years, a suit he got married in, and he said, "Send them my suit too." So we got a nice letter back, and they said their oldest son was the talk of the community because he got married in the suit that we sent over, and the other boys had all been getting married in patched overalls. So they said it was the best they had. And one time I was making a big box to send over, and Tom said, "It'll be about Christmas when they get that. Why don't we splurge and get a couple of boxes of Hershey bars and some walnuts and things like that, and stick it in between the towels and clothes." When they got that, they were so excited and they had a 12-year-old girl and she jumped up on the chair and said,--- and she jumped so hard that she went through the chair. It must have been kind of a woven chair or something. And she came to Napoleon, this same girl. We were down for somebody's wedding anniversary, and she was there. Everybody introduced her, as she came from Germany. I listened awhile, and something sounds familiar, so I went over and asked her if she remembers that her folks once got a package that had walnuts and chocolate candy. She said, "Yes, the chocolate!" And I said we were the people who sent that. She hugged and hugged and hugged me. She said, "That was the greatest thing you could have done." We needed clothes and we needed food, but when we saw that chocolate, it was just...

**PG:** What language did you speak as a child; was it German?

**CJ:** It was German. Half German and half English. We didn't talk too much German because most all of our neighbors were Norwegian. My mother couldn't talk Norwegian and the neighbor lady could not talk German, but the two could sit down and have a big conversation together. They were well-to-do. It was, but they did not want their girls to have anything better than what we had. So before school started, she

would come down with the catalogues and my mother would say what she was going to get us to go to school in, and then she would get the same.

**PG:** Did you order your clothes from the catalogue?

**CJ:** Mostly.

**PG:** What catalogue?

**CJ:** Montgomery Wards and and Sears and Roebuck, too. , they quit, when I was maybe about ten years old or so. I don't know if they went bankrupt or what.

**PG:** Could you go to town to buy stuff?

**CJ:** Yes, but it was much easier to sit down and do it with the catalogue. You went to town, you wanted to try everything on, and I think it was cheaper too, getting it out of the catalogue.

**PG:** Did you write out a check?

**CJ:** Yes.

**PG:** So your dad had money in the bank already, and he wrote out the check.

**CJ:** Yes, yes.

**PG:** Can you still speak the German language?

**CJ:** Yes.

**PG:** So you can still speak it very well.

**CJ:** I don't think a person ever forgets it. Sometimes you have to think a little harder, you know, but it's there.

**PG:** Do you make an effort to teach German phrases to your children or grandchildren?

**CJ:** Yes, pretty much. The oldest boy, he gets thing twisted a little, but he can talk to people.

**PG:** When you had Norwegian neighbors, where was that? That was at Blumenfeld?

**CJ:** No, that was over in Pierce County.

**PG:** When you had Norwegian neighbors. I thought everybody was German-Russian. What are some of the childhood chores which you enjoyed doing?

**CJ:** I think I pretty much enjoyed everything except the barn cleaning. The chicken house. That was usually my job to clean the chicken house and I hated it.

**PG:** Why did you hate the chicken house?

**CJ:** Well, it didn't smell good, and sometimes there was some chicken lice too.

**PG:** Maybe that's why you didn't like it, was because it was your job and not the others.

**CJ:** Yes.

- PG:** If you did not do the work that you had to do, what happened to you?
- CJ:** Nothing much.
- PG:** Did you get a scolding? Or a spanking?
- CJ:** No, we never got spanked. I got hit like this [a slap] one time. They were butchering and I pretended I was sick and stayed home from school. My dad was very fussy with meat. He was grinding the cooked head meat, and I reached over and took a dip, and he went [slap]. So I went upstairs and cried until he felt sorry for me, and he came up and gave me a candy bar .
- PG:** What do you remember about school? How many years did you go to school?
- CJ:** Let's see. ..eighth grade, and a year and a half of high school. So it would be 9-1/2 terms.
- PG:** Oh. When you went to school, did you go to school for nine months, or did you stay for the whole school year?
- CJ:** Eight months.
- PG:** Eight months at that time. Did you have to stay home to help work a lot of time or could you go all the time?
- CJ:** Very seldom had to stay home.
- PG:** What are some special memories about childhood school? Was there anything special about the school?
- CJ:** No, I don't think so.
- PG:** Were there students of other nationalities in the same class, in the same school?
- CJ:** Yes, there were Norwegians.
- PG:** Nobody else.
- CJ:** Once in awhile, an Irish family.
- PG:** But German-Russian or Norwegian, mostly. What kind of games did you play at school?
- CJ:** Ball games, and then we had a game named "Nip." You had a small stick and a big stick, and you dug a little hole and laid the small stick over it, then you threw it with the big stick. We played that too.
- PG:** Was that to see how far you could throw the small stick?
- CJ:** Yes. You had markers and you tried to throw it to those markers. And we played a lot of baseball. What else did we play? We dropped the handkerchief, Farmer in the Dell, made angels in the snow.
- PG:** Fox and the Goose?
- CJ:** Yes.
- PG:** You'd do a lot of running there. How did you go to school?
- CJ:** The big brother or our dad would haul us to school with the sleigh in the winter, and when it was nice, we walked.



- PG:** How far was it?
- CJ:** A little over a mile. One day we thought it was spring and we didn't want to wear our jackets. Mother made us wear our jackets. So we went half ways, and there was the neighbor's pasture. So we took our jackets off and hung them over their fence. It so happened that Dad drove that road that day and recognized our jackets and took them home. When we came home and had a little lunch after school, Dad said, "I don't know what we're going to do. We haven't got that much money. ---wants paid for his cows." And my mother said, "Yes, I figured he would want to get paid." They talked so serious. And Dad said, "Somebody put some jackets on the fence, and his cows ate it and three of them died, and now he wants us to pay for them because he thinks it was our jackets." So Johnny and Mary and I, we all three left the table and cried. The next morning, there were our jackets. [laughter]
- PG:** What about the teachers. Do you remember the teachers?
- CJ:** Some of them, yes.
- PG:** Were they Germans? Could they speak German?
- CJ:** No, not as long as I went to school. One was a neighbor lady. Their mother had died when the kids were little, and the oldest girl took over and raised the others. Then she became a school teacher, and her uncle was on the school board. He didn't want to hire her because he said that would be her brothers and sisters going to that school, and chances are that she'd favor them. And my dad felt so sorry for them, he went down and said, "Either you hire Katherine or I will find some way to report you that you are the worst school caretaker there ever was." So he hired her, and she was a very good teacher.
- PG:** Was she Norwegian?
- CJ:** Yes. Norwegian. The mother had died and the dad was an alcoholic.
- PG:** She had enough education so she could be a teacher.
- CJ:** Yes, I think in those days they could teach right out of high school.
- PG:** The other teachers, where did they come from? Were they local people or did they come from...
- CJ:** No, they were local. My first teacher lived in Silva. She just died a few years ago. They were all not too far out of the community.
- PG:** But they were mostly Norwegians. They were not German-Russians.
- CJ:** No, there were not. And then the little time I went to high school, I went to St. James in Grand Forks. I went a year and a half and then I stayed home because my mother was very sick.
- PG:** Where did you stay up there? Where did you board?
- CJ:** At the school. It was a boarding school.
- PG:** Oh, was it a Sisters? school?
- CJ:** Yes. St. James Academy.
- PG:** Where were the Sisters from? You don't know? The Sisters were from Hankinson, or...

- CJ:** No, they were not. I don't know where they were from, but they were a different order. St. Joseph? Something like that.
- PG:** Was it a boys? and girls? school, or just girls?
- CJ:** Boys could come by the day. They did not stay there. They did not board there. They came from the town.
- PG:** But the girls boarded.
- CJ:** The girls boarded there. And of course we had a lot of fun there. In the spring we got rhubarb, morning, noon and night. We got tired of it, so one day when the nuns were in the prayer hour, we snuck out and we tore out all the rhubarb and threw it over the fence. And just a little bit on the other side there was a Lutheran Sisters? school. They wore gray. So when they saw that rhubarb destroyed, we had to go to the chapel and pray for the Lutheran kids because they were so mean and ruined our rhubarb. [laughter]
- PG:** But you didn't tell them it was the Catholics who had done it?
- CJ:** Oh, we prayed so sincerely!
- PG:** Do you remember the teachers, most of the teachers, were they good teachers?
- CJ:** Oh yes.
- PG:** At the country school.
- CJ:** Oh yes, they were good.
- PG:** How many kids were in the school?
- CJ:** Twenty some.
- PG:** Was there a discipline problem? If you did not behave in the school, how were you punished? Did they hit you with the ruler?
- CJ:** No, no. We never had a teacher that hit anybody. They would make us change our seats. There was one boy I liked, and one time for punishment she made him and me sit together in the back double seat. Well, that was what we wanted. [laughter]
- PG:** So that was not too much punishment. Was there a difference between the farm school and the town school? Were the town kids smarter than the farm kids?
- CJ:** No, I don't think so.
- PG:** Now I guess we'll get to the church part. In what way was religion and church education important in your family? I suppose you went to church a lot.
- CJ:** Yes. We prayed the rosary a lot. Had to say our night prayers before we could go to bed.
- PG:** Was family prayer an important part of your daily life, or was the Bible an important part? They did not read the Bible too much.
- CJ:** No. We had a Bible, but it just wasn't used.

- PG:** But still the family prayer was important.
- CJ:** Very important, yes .
- PG:** What language was used in those prayers when you prayed at home? What language did you pray? German?
- CJ:** No.
- PG:** When you prayed at home, was that German?
- CJ:** No, it usually wasn't. We had to learn the German Our Father and all the small prayers, but we prayed in English. I don't know why.
- PG:** How about in church? Was the church in German?
- CJ:** It was pretty much half and half. The priest would preach a short sermon in German and then a short sermon in English.
- PG:** Do you remember when it switched to all English? When they changed from German to English?
- CJ:** Yes, I can remember when it was done.
- PG:** But you really don't remember what year.
- CJ:** No, I don't.
- PG:** Where did you go to church when you were still at home?
- CJ:** In Balta. When I was very little, the country church was shut down and they built a church at Balta.
- PG:** What was the country church? Where was that?
- CJ:** It was north. ..you know where Clem Schmaltz's farm is? It was just a little bit south of there.
- PG:** Do you know the name of the church?
- CJ:** No.
- PG:** Is there a cemetery there?
- CJ:** Seven graves. And after the church was established in Balta, people could dig out their deceased people and move them to the Balta cemetery.
- PG:** This one farmer was plowing over it, maybe 10 or 15 years ago, and they were really upset, so they had to put a fence around it. At that time they said there were seven graves. But the fence is still there.
- CJ:** My brothers helped a lot, Joe and Walter, to dig out people and move them to Balta. We had a baby, and my aunt knew she was dying, so my aunt gave the baby to my mother. To us, it was something great. I was maybe about eight years old, and Mary was a little younger. That was just like having a doll. My mother took care of all the babies in the community when they had convulsions. I don't know why babies had it so much then, and I think Joe was the one that had it in our family. Dr. Tollofson taught my mother how to take care of it, because he said, "I can't handle it all." And she took care of everybody's babies. But when little Britchie got it, this was our baby and she said, "I'm not going to chance it. Let's

get her to the doctor." They brought her in and Dr. Cull gave her a shot, and just like that, she was gone. So she was buried in that country cemetery and the boys dug her out. They couldn't help themselves; they opened the coffin. They said they waited until all the other people were gone, and then opened it, and they said she was just a living doll. It was many years, and she was still laying in her coffin perfect.

**PG:** That was your sister?

**CJ:** Well, it was our adopted baby.

**PG:** Who was the mother? That mother died?

**CJ:** Yes. She died. It was my mother's brother. Mike Leier.

**PG:** Oh, Mike Leer's wife.

**CJ:** Yes. She gave the baby to my mother. She was a tiny baby, maybe a couple of weeks old. And she died when she was six months old, then.

**PG:** You don't remember the name of that church out there? You don't remember either?

**CJ:** No, I don't. I remember Dad talking about it, but I don't remember the name of the church.

**PG:** You don't know how far from Balta that would be.

**CJ:** It's about a mile west and a mile and a fourth north.

**PG:** A mile west and 1-1/4 mile north of...

**CJ:** On the left-hand side of the road.

**PG:** On the left-hand side of the road, from Balta, that was.

**CJ:** And there was a fence around it, just a few years ago, yet.

**PG:** Okay. There's a fence around it.

**CJ:** I remember when they were building the church at Balta, my folks took down the kerosene stove. They took down almost all the dishes we had, the kettles, and said, "We'll get along for awhile." They fed the workers there, to keep them there. It was all volunteer work. And that weekend we got two carloads of people from Napoleon, and we had to go to the neighbors and borrow kettles and dishes. [laughter]

**PG:** Say that again. You gave the dishes to who?

**CJ:** They borrowed them to Balta, to cook and feed the workers that were building the church.

**PG:** Oh, I see, so your mother didn't have any kettles at home.

**CJ:** Yes, just enough for the family.

**PG:** Then you had company and you had to go...

**CJ:** To the neighbors and borrow kettles and dishes. And our closest neighbors, they were Norwegian people, and they could tell when we got company, then she would come sneaking around the back with

a cake or two. When my mother knew they were getting company, she would make an extra batch of bread and we had to take the bread over, sneak it in the back door.

- PG:** When they switched from German to English, how did your parents feel about that? When they switched from German to English in the church.
- CJ:** They had nothing against it. They thought it was okay. They kind of went gradually, you know. First it was half and half.
- PG:** How about confirmation. Was that a big thing when you had confirmation? Was that a big event?
- CJ:** No, it was just something added to the Mass.
- PG:** Did you get dressed up specially for that?
- CJ:** Oh yes, we got new dresses for that. The boys got new trousers and white shirts.
- PG:** Do you remember who was your confirmation sponsor?
- CJ:** Yes. It was a Mrs. Scheet. A neighbor. Johanna.
- PG:** Her husband's name?
- CJ:** Her husband's? Sofer Xavier. We called him Sofer.
- PG:** Yes, there were a lot of people by that name, Xavier. Who was your baptism sponsors?
- CJ:** Mike Schall and Aunt Pauline, my mother's sister. Mike Schall was a neighbor.
- PG:** And your Aunt Pauline. What was your Aunt Pauline's last name?
- CJ:** Haman. I think she was for most of us because she would come and help.
- PG:** If there was a baptism, did you have a celebration at home? Did you get together in the home?
- CJ:** Not that I can remember.
- CJ:** [not sure of words or exact context here] That German word that you said.
- PG:** It was not
- CJ:** St. John from?
- PG:** From. Whatever that means, we don't know for sure. Then they built the new church and then there were five babies?
- CJ:** Five little boys, yes.
- PG:** Were born. And they had to wait for the baptism.
- CJ:** Until the church was finished. There was a St. John's church and the priest was Father John, and they all named all the little boys Joe. It took me many years to find out why. It's because they were baptized on St. Joseph's Day.

- PG:** Oh, I see. I thought they named them after the church. The church was John, but the babies were named Joseph.
- CJ:** They were all named Joseph.
- ??:** One was her brother, or my dad.
- PG:** One was Christine's brother, Joe Gross, was one of those five babies that were baptized that same day. When somebody died; did anybody ever die in your family? How did they do it when somebody died? Did they have the body in the house, or...
- CJ:** They had the body in the house. In those days the wake was three days, and people would come and bring a lot of food and everybody that came stayed long enough to pray a rosary. Then they expected lunch, I think, because we gave everybody lunch. The neighbors would bring a lot of food.
- PG:** Did they stay up all night?
- CJ:** Yes, somebody stayed up all night. Some would sleep an hour or two, then the others would sleep and they would take over.
- PG:** Why did they stay up all night?
- CJ:** I don't know. They said that Jesus suffered three days and three nights, so the wake had to be three days and three nights.
- PG:** Did they sometimes think the dead person might not be dead and might come alive, might wake up?
- CJ:** I don't know. I never heard anybody say anything like that, but it did happen way back. My folks knew a person that when they were getting ready to go to church, ready to close the coffin, this person had known all the while...it was a lady and she knew when they were saying the rosary and everything. She could not give them a sign, and then when they were getting ready to close the coffin and go to church, she managed to move one little finger, and somebody saw it. Then they called the doctor and the priest in and she came around. She lived quite a long time yet. When I went to school at Grand Forks, one of the Sisters often mentioned that her mother was almost buried alive, because she was in a coma and they thought she was dead. It happened too, at the last day of the wake. I think she opened her eyes. She lived quite a long time after that.
- PG:** You hear stories about that, that sometimes they buried them alive. I mean buried them and they were not dead.
- CJ:** Yes. They were in a coma and people thought they were dead. I think in those days they didn't bleed the dead people. Now it can't happen because they take all the blood out.
- PG:** Your brother Walter... how old was he when he died?
- CJ:** 26.
- PG:** Oh, so he was not living at home anymore.
- CJ:** He was home at the time. He was married and they lived in California about a year or so, maybe a little longer. They came home during the summer and my mother knew things were going to happen before

they happened. We were cleaning the yard, and she said, "We have to hurry and get it done today because we want to be all done when Walter comes home." We said, "Ma, don't get that in your head. Walter isn't coming home. You saw the letter he wrote. He is vacationing in Mexico." She said, "Go on. I know him. I know his tricks too." So she insisted he was coming home that day. My dad bought and sold cattle. So when he came home with a truck load of cattle, we could all guess how much they weighed and how much he paid for them, and the one that got the closest got like a show ticket or something. So we were out doing that, and this black car drove by and honked the horn. My mother said, "That was Walter and Mabel, and they didn't stop." She had a heart condition, so we worried about her, and I said, "Mom, don't get like that. You're going to make yourself sick again." She said, "Well I don't know why he would come home and drive by here." I said, "Walter drives a yellow car." She said, "He did when he left here, but maybe he changed, because that was him." He drove south about a half a mile, turned around and came back, and said, "Hi, I fooled you, didn't I?" She said, "You fooled somebody, but you didn't fool me. I knew it was you." Then they stayed home for the summer. They were going to Florida. And they got as far as Iowa. That's where her brother lived. And she said whatever she did. Walter tried to sneak away from her. She thought, "What in the world is going on?" So she told her brother. "If I follow him, he will know it. You dress a little different and you follow him and see what he's up to." So they caught him going to a doctor's office. Then he admitted it to his wife and her brother that he had a bad heart. He had a little leakage of the heart. He had rheumatic fever when he was a small child. And the doctors didn't find it. So they talked a little while and he got some medication and he started to Florida. They drove a ways and he said, "Mabel, we're going home. I can't drive any further. No matter how I drive. My mother is hanging in front of the car, pushing it back. I see her there. And I can't take it. You drive and turn around. We're going home." So they came home and went up to the room where they were before. And we woke up in the morning and said, "Looks like Walter is home. His suitcase is sitting in the kitchen." So we asked them what was wrong and he said, "Oh I missed you all here. You're such nice kids. I missed you. I couldn't leave you." Then Mabel told me on the sly. "Walter's heart is bad." Then, when my mother died. He could never cry. Walter couldn't cry. When he cried, it sounded like he was laughing out loud. He couldn't cry at her funeral. He went home and went to bed. We tried everything possible. His wife gave him a pint of blood; I gave him a pint of blood. And we had doctors come down from Minot and everything. They just couldn't do anything. One morning he came downstairs and he grabbed my dad and he hugged him and said, "I can't see you anymore Dad. This is it. I'm going." He went to bed. And in about two days he was dead.

**PG:** He just had a bad heart from having rheumatic fever.

**CJ:** The doctor from Minot said his heart got a little leakage from when he had this rheumatic fever. And he was a goof. He was so goofy. He got by with everything. Joe got a lot of letters from girls. And Walter would pay me nickels and dimes to watch for the mailman and grab Joe's letters. Then when we were eating dinner. Walter would say, "Dad, you've got a big job. Your son, number one, got letters more than he can read. He'd like to have you read them for him." And Joe could have wrung his neck! [laughter] Then he got a job patrolling the highway they had built. No.3. then. He didn't want to work, but for his board and room the folks thought this isn't fair. So they said, "You have to do part of the work around the place for your board and room."

**PG:** This was Walter?

- CJ:** Yes. So he had to milk five cows. So one Sunday he came and gave me a five dollar bill and said. "Here, you're a good kid. You'll milk my cows and then this is yours." So I was pretty proud. When Mom came home I said. "Look what Walter gave me just for milking his cows." She said. "Don't you know Walter better than that" You know where you put it, because it isn't going to be long before he asks for it." Sure enough. That was on a Sunday. On Tuesday he came and said. "Have you still got that money kid? I need it so bad." Joe would always wake up and make us kids get up, but he wouldn't holler at Walter. I said one time. "How come you never make him get up? You make us get up and start milking cows and stuff." He said. "Oh. Walter isn't as strong as we are. Let him sleep mornings." He got by with everything.
- PG:** Was Walter his real name, or was his name Valentine?
- CJ:** Valentine. But I don't know why the folks never called him Valentine. He went as Walter.
- PG:** That's because Valentine is more of a Russian name, and Germans could name him Valentine, but when they became Americans. Then they changed it to Walter. Walter is like an English version.
- CJ:** On his marker; he is buried right next to my folks and to Grandpa John; on the stone they put Valentine.
- PG:** What about his wife? Where did she go then?
- CJ:** She lived around here for a long time. She got married to one of the neighbor boys, a Norwegian, and they had two nice girls. Later on, she and her husband moved to Minneapolis, and she said she was bored sitting around. So she took a job working part-time in an old people's home. One day she came home from work and said, "Something smells good." He said, "Yes, I cooked a good supper because I figured you were tired when you come home." She said, "I am very tired," and walked into the bathroom and dropped dead.
- PG:** Oh? Do you know who she got married to?
- CJ:** Yes. His name was Alfred. He lived just a mile west of our place.
- PG:** Did they have children; did Walter have children?
- CJ:** No. Walter didn't have any, but with her second husband she had two girls. One girl has died; the other one lives in Minneapolis.
- PG:** So she got buried in Minneapolis somewhere.
- CJ:** Yes, she is buried down there. Mabel. She was a very nice girl.
- PG:** Originally, where was she from? Mabel, was she from around here?
- CJ:** She was from around here. She lived right north of Schmaltz's place, a few miles.
- PG:** Oh. Was she a German-Russian too?
- CJ:** No, she was Norwegian.
- PG:** So Walter died at home.
- CJ:** Yes.



- PG:** And you had a wake service right at home, and everything was right at home?
- CJ:** Yes. Right at home.
- PG:** You did not have an undertaker. They did not get, like embalmed?
- CJ:** The undertaker came out. I don't know what he did. I don't think they embalmed in those days.
- PG:** Did you buy a coffin?
- CJ:** Yes.
- PG:** You bought the coffin; nobody made it.
- CJ:** No. Just bought coffins.
- PG:** Were there any special songs for the funeral? Traditional funeral songs. I suppose that means in church. You did not sing at home.
- CJ:** No.
- PG:** Do you remember those iron crosses, those old iron crosses?
- CJ:** Yes. Grandpa John has an old iron cross.
- PG:** Do you know who made it?
- CJ:** Yes, it was a man who lived in Balta. His name was John Krim.
- PG:** Okay, he made the cross for your grandpa, John Gross.
- CJ:** And Walter first had a cross, and then I don't know... it kind of bothered me and I said to the other kids- "Let's do something for Walter. Let's give him a tombstone." We thought that was more modern. And now I kind of wish we had left the iron cross.
- PG:** Do you know anything about iron crosses, the various shapes? Did they mean anything, how it was made, or, the guy who made them. John Krim. You did not tell him how to make it, huh?
- CJ:** He had pictures drawn of certain designs he makes, and then we could pick one.
- PG:** Oh, so you picked out what you wanted.
- CJ:** Yes.
- PG:** I didn't know that. Did your family have a special design?
- CJ:** No.
- PG:** You didn't have any special design. Who picked it out, say for your dad? Does your dad have an iron cross?
- CJ:** No, no. My folks have a big stone. A real tall stone.
- PG:** When Grandpa John died, who picked it out; who decided what design they wanted?

- CJ:** I suppose my dad did. Nowadays, Grandma Gross is buried down at Napoleon and Grandpa here. I don't think anybody had money enough to take Grandpa down or, I don't know, Dad said Grandpa was up here; he's ours, and we're going to bury him.
- PG:** Well he lived a long time after Grandma died. There was a lot of years before he died.
- CJ:** When Grandma Gross died, somebody made the coffin and it cost \$9. I don't know, I think a hundred times Grandpa Gross told me that when he was up here. "Now Grandma's coffin cost \$9. Don't you dare give me anything better than what Grandma had." Well, when Grandpa died, I think the coffin was \$400 or something around that. He would have looked funny with a \$9 coffin. There wasn't such a thing anymore.
- PG:** You would have had to have paid for a box from the grocery store.
- CJ:** But he was quite a grandpa! He had no money at all, you know. My dad, every once in awhile, he'd reach in his pocket and take out all the change and put it on Grandpa's dresser. Because he just loved that, to find money and then give it to the children when they'd come. He'd say to me,---
- PG:** I know you should repeat that in English. It's good to say it in German, but it would be good to know what was said when he gave you that money.
- CJ:** Yes. Well, my dad always emptied the change out of his pockets and laid it on Grandpa's dresser. Then Grandpa liked to find it there and give the children money when they'd come. He'd say, "There's a guy around here who is dumb enough to lay his money on my dresser. Then I take it!"
- PG:** Does your family cherish any heirlooms or objects of sentimental value that you have handed down to your generation? Do you have any old things that you got from your grandpa, that you still have? Any souvenirs or anything like that?
- CJ:** Yes, I have a statue that Grandpa John gave me. I'll have to get that and show it to you.
- PG:** Now we have to get back to the heirlooms. We were in the bedroom and looked at that thing you got from your grandpa...that statue. The statue of Mary with Bernadette. It is from Lourdes, in France. This statue is about 12 or 14 inches high. Okay, now tell us why you got that, or when did you get that statue?
- CJ:** I got it from Grandpa John for staying home with him when the other kids went to the Minot Fair. It so happened that a salesman came around, and they must have liked him because he entertained them and they sold it to him for very little.
- PG:** Because Bernadette's head was broken off and then you glued it back on.
- CJ:** Yes.
- PG:** When was that? About when did you get that? Were you married already?
- CJ:** No, no. I was still home. That was, oh I'd say, about in '32. It was that year after my mother had died.
- PG:** And that other thing we looked at was two candles and a crucifix with a holy water fountain in front of the crucifix. You got that from your mother. Your mother bought it somewhere.

- CJ:** Yes.
- PG:** So those are the heirlooms that you have. Have you got any other old things that you got from Grandpa?
- CJ:** No.
- PG:** You have a picture of your uncle there, when he was in the Russian Army.
- CJ:** Yes. You can see I value that.
- PG:** Yes, that's nice. That's my grandpa.
- CJ:** Oh, that's your grandpa. One time we went down, Ann and Grandpa and I; Ann and my dad and I, to Napoleon and we stopped at some cousin's place. He came up to the car and said, "I don't know you, but you've got to be my grandpa's brother." He said, "Yes, you are right."
- PG:** They look a lot alike. Did you have anything that came from Russia, that your brother and sisters have, that your parents or grandparents brought from Russia?
- CJ:** I don't remember anything. I don't remember the folks ever having anything.
- PG:** Did your grandma have a shawl?
- CJ:** Yes, Grandma had a shawl.
- PG:** With long fringes on it?
- CJ:** With long fringes. It was gray.
- PG:** And that came from Russia.
- CJ:** Yes. That was from Russia.
- PG:** Where did that go? Who has that now?
- CJ:** I hate to think about where it went. That witch that my dad married later took it.
- PG:** Okay, how was the? How was Christmas celebrated? How did you celebrate Christmas when you were a young girl?
- CJ:** Well, we went to Midnight Mass, rain or shine. We went with the horse and sleigh to Balta for Midnight Mass. And of course, Santa Claus came when we were gone. He usually brought each one a shoe box full of goodies.
- PG:** What was in the shoe box?
- CJ:** Nuts and candy, and maybe an orange and an apple. Then everybody got presents. The boys would get new shirts and ties, as a rule, and the girls probably got...well I was kind of big already, still got a big doll. And we'd get a purse or something.
- PG:** Did you get a hanky? Did you have a Santa Claus, or did you have...
- CJ:** A Christkindl. Yes. With a donkey.
- PG:** Did you ever see the Christkindl?

- CJ:** Oh yes. We kind of guessed who it was, but we didn't say anything.
- PG:** Did you have the Christkindl before you went to Midnight Mass or afterwards?
- CJ:** Before. Right around supper time, they usually came. Then one year Belzenickel came, and he said we had been kind of meari. And he chased us all over the house. Johnny went upstairs and crawled under the bed. Then pretty soon, Johnny kept saying, --- He thought that was our hired man. [laughter] And he had a little twig off a tree, and...
- PG:** Oh, it was
- CJ:** Yes, it was. He had Dad's big sheepskin coat on inside out, and a chain like a small log chain, and he kept rattling that. We thought it was Sylvester, and yet we were scared.
- PG:** So the Christkindl brought the presents.
- CJ:** Yes, but first the Belzenickel came that year.
- PG:** That's the way we had it when the Belzenickel came.
- CJ:** Christkindl dressed up in old curtains and things.
- PG:** So while you were in church, nobody brought the gifts, while you were gone, because the Christkindl had brought them earlier.
- CJ:** Yes, yes.
- PG:** Wasn't that something when you got an orange?
- CJ:** Oh, that was something, you bet.
- PG:** Wasn't that something special, and now we have them all the time?
- CJ:** One year we had a boy staying with us. It was Uncle Mike's wife's brother. Just before we left to go to Midnight Mass, Christkindl was kind of late that year. So my mother said, "Set it in, and we' 11 look at it when we get home from church." So we got from Midnight Mass and this guy sat down and ate everything, it was a shoe box full, before he went to bed. That was Joe Meier, you remember him.
- PG:** He ate the whole thing. The poor guy was hungry. [laughter] When you came home from Midnight Mass, did you have anything special?
- CJ:** We had a big lunch then. Probably a ham, and all kinds of potato salad and stuff.
- PG:** It was the same every year? Every year you had the same lunch, like a ham.
- CJ:** Yes, pretty much, yes.
- PG:** We always had a ham and fresh baked bread.
- CJ:** Yes.
- PG:** It was the same every year. We had a ham. That was the tradition. I think we ate the whole thing. We had a big family.

- CJ:** Yes, it was a big family. I don't know why, but you are very hungry when you get home from Midnight Mass.
- PG:** Do you know how far it was from your house to the church, how far that was?
- CJ:** Six miles.
- PG:** But you went with the horses. You had to.
- CJ:** Yes, yes.
- PG:** You didn't have a car. Or there was too much snow.
- CJ:** One year we went with the car .Three or four cars would follow each other. The first one, all the men would go out and push that car through, and then they would shovel awhile and then the other cars would follow. But we made it down and back.
- PG:** What about church? Was there anything special in the church, for the Midnight Mass?
- CJ:** Yes, they had special singing and a big Christmas tree. Then later years they had little bags of goodies for the children. After Mass the children could come up and Father would give them each a little bag of goodies.
- PG:** Did the children have to do anything? Did the children have to sing a song or a poem?
- CJ:** No, not when I was younger.
- PG:** You didn't have to go up there.
- CJ:** No.
- PG:** At home, did you have a Christmas tree at home?
- CJ:** Yes.
- PG:** Where did you get the Christmas tree?
- CJ:** Sometimes Dad and the boys would go and cut one. There was a grove south of your place, the place. There was nobody living there. It was just an old grove and people could go and cut a tree there. Then later we had an artificial tree.
- PG:** What kind of decorations did you have?
- CJ:** Candles. Then we had a lot of those trims. I think if you just thought about them, some of them broke.
- PG:** They were so fragile. Did you have those balls that you put the string through them?
- CJ:** Yes.
- PG:** That's what we had. They were real thin, but they were on a string. Sometimes the string broke and if they fell down, they broke.
- CJ:** Oh, yes.
- PG:** But we still have a few at home. My brother has a few of them.

- CJ:** Sometimes we'd put popcorn balls and cookies on the tree.
- PG:** If you put cookies on there, when did you eat the cookies? Or did you not eat them?
- CJ:** It was when the neighbors came and had children. We'd let the children each take one off, like that.
- PG:** Did you light those candles?
- CJ:** Yes.
- PG:** Well, did you ever start a fire?
- CJ:** No. Somebody had to stay in the room all the time and keep an eye on them. When they put them up, they tried not to get the flame too close to the branches.
- PG:** How about during the '30s. Now you got married, what, 1932?
- CJ:** [19]31.
- PG:** You got married in 1931. Then there were the [19]30s, the dry, Depression years. Did you have Christmas things then, during the Depression? Did you have money to celebrate Christmas?
- CJ:** Not really. Well, we went to the World's Fair in Chicago. And we lived in Chicago a few months, and then we went up to Milwaukee. We knew a few couples there, and we stayed there almost a year.
- PG:** Which year did you go to the World's Fair?
- CJ:** Let's see... when was the World's Fair, [19]31?
- PG:** Sometime in the [19]30s.
- CJ:** Yes, it was in the first part of the [19]30s. [19]32 I think.
- PG:** You didn't have any children yet then.
- CJ:** No. We went to the fair two weeks straight. Quite early in the morning, and then about suppertime we went home and took showers and cleaned up a little bit and went back up and stayed until midnight. We still hadn't seen everything.
- PG:** Did you have enough money to go to the fair?
- CJ:** It didn't take much. We paid a dollar to get in, and that was a pass. We could go back and forth all day. Even at the fairgrounds, everything was a dollar and less, I guess. It's surprising how little money it took.
- PG:** And then when did you come back to North Dakota?
- CJ:** Late in the Fall, that same Fall. Tom got lonesome. Well, it was hard to find work, and then he finally found a job. The people we knew down there, we told them one day, "We're going to get all the beer you want, and we'll have food and everything. Come on over and celebrate with us because we're leaving Monday morning. We're going home." They said, "No, you're not going home. We'll help you find a job." Each couple had a few little children. So they taught those kids to say Mamma and Daddy to Tom and me, and put them over with us. When the guys came to investigate us, well, Tom needed a job real bad because we had a family. So Tom got hired by some outfit named A.O. Schmitts. They made car

bodies. It was a hard job. He worked nights and he'd come home just soaking wet. He had to put iron in this big furnace, and I don't think he liked it so well. He didn't say. We had a grocery store right across the street, and I know Tom said he'd eat anything, but no lamb or mutton. And I just loved lamb. So, I'd go over there. They had lamb, neck bones, \$2.50 a pound, chops, 10-cents a pound, and I bought and cooked them. He ate them and said, "Gosh, my mother never cooked meat that was that good. What is it anyway?" I said, "Didn't you recognize it?" It was veal. "Oh, yes, I like veal, but my mother didn't cook it this good." So I waited about an hour after supper and I said, "Tom, would you eat lamb if I cooked it?" "No!" So I said, "I've got news for you. You just enjoyed a big meal of lamb." [laughter] He said, "If that was lamb, let's have it often." It was fun living there. We paid \$7 a month for our room. We lived in one big room on the third floor, waiting for a first floor apartment to get empty. All the other guys living up there were on welfare and they got so much more groceries than they needed. Sometimes they'd rap at the door and here they had groceries piled high. "We want to move in." They'd give us all those groceries. It was easy living. Tom wanted to come home. He missed the chickens. "Now they got little pigs on the farm. Now I could have my chickens." One day I said, "You want to go home, don't you?" "I sure do." So we packed up and came home.

**PG:** Otherwise you would have stayed in Chicago.

**CJ:** Yes, in Milwaukee. I didn't like Chicago. I called it dirty. This old guy sitting out on the street, "Hello sweetheart. Come let me give you a hug." And the butcher right next door, almost. We had just moved in and I needed groceries, and I bought about \$12 worth, which was a lot those days. He said, "You don't have to pay for this. Just tell me what hours your husband works." I said, "You dirty son of a bitch!" I left it lay and walked out.

**PG:** What about Easter celebrations, when you were little. Did you have Easter eggs?

**CJ:** Yes, we dyed a lot of Easter eggs, and in those days you bought a lot of nice Easter candy. They don't make them like that anymore. We had a lot of them. My mother bought a lot of that and we had neighbors, Clem Schaan's grandparents, old people, and they always came down. They were old people. He was deaf, and they came walking down. I think it must have been two miles. Then for Easter, they'd come and bring us all kinds of this stuff. I used to have a big box full under my bed so Johnny wouldn't snitch it. We had a lot of candy and Easter eggs.

**PG:** How did you color the Easter eggs? Did you buy coloring or did you make it yourselves?

**CJ:** My mother made a lot of it. She made with onion peelings, and with that crinkled paper they used to make flowers with.

**PG:** Crepe paper?

**CJ:** Crepe paper. Then later they started selling it and we bought it.

**PG:** Did the Easter Rabbit bring the Easter eggs, or...

**CJ:** Yes, when we were quite big already, we still made little nests out around the back door. Then the Easter Bunny would put something in during the night.

**PG:** Did you play games with the Easter eggs, with the neighbors, to see who could get the most eggs, or roll the eggs, to see how far you could roll them or something?

- CJ:** I don't think we did that.
- PG:** What about church during Easter?
- CJ:** Yes, there was a lot of church going on.
- PG:** A lot of church. How about marriage? Let's talk about weddings for awhile. Where did you get married?
- CJ:** Balta.
- PG:** Did you have a white dress? Did you have a veil?
- CJ:** Not a veil. Just the dress. A white dress.
- PG:** Did you buy it or make it?
- CJ:** It was bought.
- PG:** Did you go to town and buy it?
- CJ:** Yes.
- PG:** How much did it cost?
- CJ:** About \$8. [laughter]
- PG:** Instead of \$800.
- CJ:** Yes, right.
- PG:** How about your husband. Did he have a new suit?
- CJ:** Yes. Blue with white pencil stripes. That's the one we sent to Germany to Jack Grosses.
- PG:** How about bridesmaids. How many bridesmaids did you have?
- CJ:** Two.
- PG:** Do you remember who your bridesmaids were?
- CJ:** One was Tom's cousin and one was my cousin.
- PG:** Which one was your cousin; what was her name?
- CJ:** Francis Ripplinger.
- PG:** Who was your best man? Do you remember her name?
- CJ:** Francis Yolk
- PG:** Francis Yolk
- CJ:** He was Joe Yolk
- PG:** Mrs. Joe Yolk
- CJ:** Yes.



- PG:** Do you know any German songs that they sang at other weddings besides your own?
- CJ:** No, I don't know any.
- PG:** You don't know any German poems that they recited at the weddings?
- CJ:** No.
- PG:** Special foods, special cured meats or a wedding cake? Did you have a wedding cake when you got married?
- CJ:** No.
- PG:** Hochzeit schnapps?
- CJ:** No schnapps.
- PG:** Homemade beer? No homemade beer. Did you make flowers for the wedding?
- CJ:** No.
- PG:** How about wedding kuchen? You didn't have the wedding kuchen either.
- CJ:** No, no. We just got married and took off.
- PG:** So you did not have photographs? You did not have a photograph there did you?
- CJ:** No.
- PG:** Did you take a picture dressed up in your wedding dress?
- CJ:** I don't think we did.
- PG:** How did you meet your husband? Were you neighbors?
- CJ:** Yes.
- PG:** That was your dad.
- CJ:** No, that was Tom and I. Dad bought the farm too. He did not homestead.
- PG:** Did you work outside?
- CJ:** Yes.
- PG:** When you were still at home, did you work out in the fields?
- CJ:** Yes, I helped. I raked a lot of hay and I helped shock.
- PG:** Did you wear a dress when you were out raking the hay, or did you wear pants?
- CJ:** I wore jeans. Coveralls a lot of times.
- PG:** You were allowed to wear pants then.
- CJ:** Yes.

- PG:** Many of the women just wore dresses.
- CJ:** Oh, my dad, if he needed help, he'd whistle. You could hear it a quarter of a mile. And he'd say, "Put on your overalls and come out!" I loved to work out in the field.
- PG:** So, did you do a lot of milking? Let's say, when you were still at home. Did you milk a lot?
- CJ:** Yes, we generally milked. He bought and sold. Maybe in the morning we'd milk 15 cows, and in the evening there would be 10 left. It just varied from day to day.
- PG:** Did they give a lot of milk?
- CJ:** Yes.
- PG:** Did you do headering too?
- CJ:** Yes, I drove the header box.
- PG:** Oh? Then later on did you have to set the stacks?
- CJ:** No, I don't think I ever did that.
- PG:** Who set the stacks... When you drove the header box, who was on the stack then?
- CJ:** Mostly Dad was on the stack. And Joe ran the header.
- PG:** This was with the horses?
- CJ:** Yes.
- PG:** How about the garden. Did you work in the garden?
- CJ:** Yes, the garden and the potato patch. For many years we had three gardens. We had one for us, one for the neighbors because their mother had died, and one to give vegetables to the hospital.
- PG:** Oh really? So you had three different places?
- CJ:** Yes.
- PG:** So you didn't take the vegetables from your garden for the hospital.
- CJ:** They had their special garden.
- PG:** Where was the hospital?
- CJ:** In Rugby.
- PG:** Was that a Catholic hospital?
- CJ:** No. It wasn't, but my folks felt like it was our hospital. My mother was sick a lot and had to go the hospital. She had a heart condition. My dad used to say, "I already own at least one doorknob of the hospital."
- PG:** Did you do a lot of canning? Did you have canned vegetables?

- CJ:** Yes. A lot.
- PG:** Did you have jars?
- CJ:** Yes, in those days we didn't have a freezer, and everything you wanted to save had to be canned. My mother made a lot of pickles for the business people in town. They'd come out and order them, and she would put up a lot of them.
- PG:** How did you make the pickles?
- CJ:** Dill pickles.
- PG:** Was that in jars?
- CJ:** A lot of times it was in little kegs. I don't know where they got the kegs. They were little kegs, maybe 5-gallon kegs or something like that. She made a lot of those.
- PG:** Did it have to be sealed on top, air tight?
- CJ:** Yes, they were sealed. When they were all full, she waited a few days, I suppose to start them fermenting or something, and then Dad would help her put the top on, so it would fit real tight.
- PG:** How did you seal it?
- CJ:** Just by working it. It had a groove that the cover would fit into that groove. You had to work it in.
- PG:** I thought maybe you poured wax on it or something.
- CJ:** No, not that I can remember.
- PG:** What word did you used...a keg. Maybe it was that where you bought sausage in it or you bought fish in those kegs, or. ..I'm just wondering where you got the kegs.
- CJ:** They would bring them out. I don't know where they got them from, if they bought them, or if they came with...
- PG:** Maybe there was pickled fish in it when you bought it.
- CJ:** It could possibly be. Then we had a chum. One of those thumpers. I wish I had all the butter I made with one of them. My mother sold butter.
- PG:** Oh, your mother sold butter?
- CJ:** To people in town, yes. About every other day we had to make a big chum full of butter because the people would come out and get it.
- PG:** Did you put a lot of salt into the butter?
- CJ:** A little, not too much. We had to wash it and wash it and wash it until the water stayed clear.
- PG:** What kind of German foods did your mother make?
- CJ:** Not a lot. My dad did not want anything made out of dough, like noodles or...
- PG:** No?

- CJ:** No. He said he worked for some people for three years and he remembered eating meat about twice while he worked there. The rest was dough stuff. He said, "I don't want anything on my table."
- PG:** He didn't want anymore noodles. Do you still make German foods?
- CJ:** Yes, I make some.
- PG:** Do you make borscht?
- CJ:** Borscht and blachinda. Kuchen.
- PG:** What kind of kuchen do you make? Yeast kuchen?
- CJ:** I make cheese once in a great while. Usually it's just sugar kuchen.
- PG:** How about halupsie?
- CJ:** Yes, I make that.
- PG:** How do you make it? What is halupsie?
- CJ:** You know what it is, it's pigs in the blanket. You wrap your rice and hamburger in cabbage leaves. And I make...
- PG:** I don't know what is. What is that?
- CJ:** Little biscuits with garlic on them. Didn't your mother make those?
- PG:** No.
- CJ:** Oh, you don't know what you missed.
- PG:** Garlic on the inside, or what?
- CJ:** No, on the outside. When they are baked, you toss them in a little oil and salt and garlic. I take two loaves of frozen bread and make them into and send them out to the farm. If I send them out one evening, the next evening either my son or grandson calls and says, "Mom you were just so good again." I say, "What do you mean? They were supposed to last you a week." "No, they're gone."
- PG:** They ate them all.
- CJ:** I make golodets.
- PG:** Golodets? Yes? You still make that?
- CJ:** Yes.
- PG:** How do you make that?
- CJ:** Cook your pig's feet until the meat falls off the bones, then you take that juice and put in some spices and season it good, and then you put it in a bread tin until it sets like Jell-O does. Then you slice it and eat it that way.
- PG:** Oh, that thick stuff, like a Jell-O stuff. Does that come out of the pig feet, or do you buy that?

- CJ:** No, that comes out of the bones.
- PG:** I always liked to eat it, but I had no idea how it's made. I know nothing about cooking, absolutely nothing. I've never cooked anything except left-overs. Have those recipes been passed down to the next generation?
- CJ:** No.
- PG:** Your grandchildren like to eat it, but they really don't know how to make it.
- CJ:** Right.
- PG:** Was there music in your home when you were little? Did you have music and entertainment in the house?
- CJ:** We had an organ and we had a crank phonograph.
- PG:** Did somebody play the organ?
- CJ:** We fooled around with it.
- PG:** My dad learned how to play the organ. He was a good musician.
- CJ:** Who was that?
- PG:** My dad.
- CJ:** Oh, your dad. Yes.
- PG:** He was the church organist, so he had music lessons when he was little. That was about 1910 or so, he got music lessons.
- CJ:** His dad was really advanced. I always said he was a generation ahead of himself.
- PG:** Did anybody sing? Did you sing a lot in your family?
- CJ:** My folks did, and Joe and Mary did. They sang in the choir, and they were always practicing. That's when they played the organ too. And Walter and I would go lock the front room door, lock them in. [laughter]
- PG:** You got tired of them singing?
- CJ:** Yes.
- PG:** Was anybody in your family encouraged to play music, play the organ or anything?
- CJ:** I don't think they really cared whether we did or not. But when I went to school at Grand Forks, my dad came through, coming home from shipping cattle, so he paid for music lessons and for typing. I was supposed to practice both, but I stopped by the music room and then the typing room, and did that double.
- PG:** So you learned how to type?
- CJ:** Yes.
- PG:** Can you still type?

- CJ:** Not very good anymore. My fingers won't.
- PG:** Can you sing anything in German?
- CJ:** No.
- PG:** You're not a German singer. How about dances?
- CJ:** I didn't care much for dancing. I only went because the other kids went. I had more fun shooting gophers or something like that.
- PG:** What did you have for shooting gophers? Did you have a rifle?
- CJ:** Yes.
- PG:** Were you able to buy bullets?
- CJ:** Yes, yes. You could buy the shells.
- PG:** Did you have enough money to buy the shells?
- CJ:** Yes, they weren't much at that time.
- PG:** Did you have a bow and arrow or a sling shot?
- CJ:** We had sling shots, but I liked the rifle.
- PG:** What kind of dances did they do?
- CJ:** Polka, Fox Trot, square dance.
- PG:** Did you have waltzes?
- CJ:** Yes.
- PG:** Maybe more waltzes than the Fox Trot.
- CJ:** Yes, I think so.
- PG:** Were there any special dances from Russia? Traditional dances.
- CJ:** No, I can't remember having any of those.
- PG:** Where did they have dances? Was there a hall?
- CJ:** Every town had dance halls, every little town. Balta had one up the stairs from the bar, and if there was a good crowd it would go [swaying floor], and my dad was always waiting for it to collapse.
- PG:** Back and forth... the whole building went back and forth.
- CJ:** Yes. [laughter]
- PG:** How much did it cost to go to the dances?
- CJ:** About a dollar a person a lot of times.

- PG:** That much? How about the older people, how did they feel when the young people went dancing? Did they agree to let the young people go dancing, or were they against dancing?
- CJ:** No, they thought it was okay.
- PG:** Did you have barn dances in the barns?
- CJ:** Yes, we had some barn dances.
- PG:** If there was a new barn, maybe.
- CJ:** Yes.
- PG:** When the barn was still clean.
- CJ:** Even some wedding dances were held with a barn dance.
- PG:** Grain bins? Did you have any grain bin dances?
- CJ:** Yes, this one family had one once in awhile in the grain bin.
- PG:** What kind of games did you play? I guess we talked about that already with the school games. Did you play games at home?
- CJ:** We played a lot of baseball.
- PG:** Baseball. Did you have puzzles at home? I don't know what kind of puzzles that would be. At home, did you have any games in the house at home?
- CJ:** Well, cards. Cards were played a lot.
- PG:** What were your favorite childhood stories? I don't know what that means, childhood stories.
- CJ:** Like The Three Bears and Goldilocks and all that stuff?
- PG:** Yes, something like that. Do you remember any favorite ones?
- CJ:** I think I liked them all.
- PG:** Any fairy tales? I suppose that would be like the Goldilocks one.
- CJ:** Yes, I imagine so.
- PG:** How about scary stories. Did they have stories just to scare you?
- CJ:** I didn't like those. I still don't.
- PG:** How about superstitions. Did they talk about superstitions?
- CJ:** Oh yes. I don't think anybody in my family took it seriously. We laughed about it, like black cats and all that stuff.
- PG:** How about spiders, if there was a spider? Were you scared of spiders?
- CJ:** No.

- PG:** There was nothing special. Was it good luck if you had a spider in the house? Was that bad luck or was it good luck?
- CJ:** I think some people believed it one way and some the other way.
- PG:** Do you know what they believed? Do you remember?
- CJ:** If you caught a spider and threw it over your left shoulder, you were going to have good luck.
- PG:** For many people, spiders were good luck. If you saw a spider in the house that meant good luck. So for you, it would be throwing it over the left shoulder that was good luck. How about the boogie man?
- CJ:** I don't know. When I was five I babysat for the neighbor's baby. I had to rock him when he cried, or give him a bottle, and I think sometimes that milk was sour. But I gave it to him anyway. What did I know? I was five years old. And she'd come home and do chores, and it would be pitch dark, and then I had to run home. It was a quarter of a mile, I suppose. Then she'd always say, "Now run fast so he doesn't get you." And I was scared. I think that's where I learned to run.
- PG:** So they scared you, which was not a good thing to do, but. ..How about brauche? Do you remember brauche?
- CJ:** Yes, I heard about it.
- PG:** Do you remember brauche?
- CJ:** No.
- PG:** Healing, faith healing.
- CJ:** Faith healing.
- PG:** What kind of stories do you remember? Did anybody get cured from the brauche?
- CJ:** Not that I know. I just remember the old folks talking about the brauche.
- PG:** One of the easy things they did was like for ringworm. You'd go to some man or lady and they'd pray over you and mumble something, or put something on it, and the ringworm would go away.
- CJ:** Daniel's brother, they lived in Yakima for a short time. That was Ralph Koenig, a son to Simon and Lena Koenig, and he got ringworm in his hair. They were living in Yakima, and they had taken him to many, many doctors, and they didn't know what they were going to do. Then the neighbor lady said she knows of a lady that makes a salve, and she made up this salve, and they rubbed his hair, and they wrapped it. It was just like a crust where the whole thing came off, and he was saved. They were really scared of his life. Mrs. Joe, I have her recipe. She made ringworm salve. It worked; it healed.
- PG:** Was it a real strong smelling stuff?
- CJ:** Yes. You put sulphur in it.
- PG:** Sulphur .That's what I was thinking.
- CJ:** She used sulphur and egg and I forget just what. But it worked.



**PG:** You have the recipe still?

**CJ:** Yes.

**PG:** I'd like to get that recipe.

**CJ:** I'll look it up and I'll send it to you.

**PG:** Why don't you send it to me? And tell me what they used it for. I remember that strong smell, that sulphur smell. I remember that.

**CJ:** They used to put sulphur in the middle of the chicken house after I had it all cleaned, and light it. That sulphur would kind of smolder away, and that took care of the chicken lice.

**PG:** Oh. Was that a powder?

**CJ:** Yes.

**PG:** Did you chase the chickens out? Did you put the chickens outside first?

**CJ:** No, we left them in, because the chickens had lice too if there was lice in the chicken house. We left the chickens in. Then it would kill the lice that was on them too.

**PG:** Oh. I remember that strong smell in the chicken barn, but I don't remember what it was. I remember that strong smell.

**CJ:** After we were married and were on the farm, Tom had some wheat that he couldn't sell because it was too skinny. So he got a thousand or 1200 egg incubator. We had about a thousand chickens each year for three years, and we had to clean up after them.

**PG:** So what did you do with the chickens?

**CJ:** Sold them. We had a creamery here that they bought chickens and butchered them here and shipped them out. The first year we farmed, we had a pretty nice crop. And the day he went out with the binder, we got completely wiped out. Hailstorm. So all we had was those, maybe a thousand chickens. And we had charged everything from then on. The fuel, the gas, whatever we needed, from the store at Silva. So Tom went in and said, "I'm sorry we're not going to be able to pay our bill. But we have about a thousand chickens. We want to keep at least a hundred for wintering and butchering, and we'll give you the rest, or else we have five cows. We will give you every other cream check and pay it that way." And he said, "I'll think about it two days." So he came out and said, "Tom, I'll take the chickens." So Tom said, "Under one condition. I know what we owe you, and I'd like to know what you get for the chickens." So we had beat them out of \$6. So Tom said, "You were good enough to help us. I won't settle for that. We don't want to beat you out of those \$6. We'll pay you with cream money." And he said, "No, I got a different idea. You invite my wife and me out for Sunday night supper." So I said, "Well if that's all you want, you can come out for supper more than once. You just come out whenever you feel like it." So we settled with him that way. We paid for what we had charged during the summer with the chickens.

- PG:** When somebody was sick, how did they heal people at that time? Did you had home remedies for healing, for pneumonia, or. . .
- CJ:** For almost everything, yes. You had mustard plaster and you had Kamillentee [Chamomile tea].
- PG:** Kamillentee was for everything. No matter what happened, you drank Kamillentee.
- CJ:** Yes. That was the first thing you did. My folks were great. If we got hurt or something, we tried to hide it from them, because we had to go to the doctor if they found out that we got hurt. If we fell on something, cut your forehead open, anything. But Tom's folks never took a kid to a doctor. She just believed if God wants him to live, he'll live, and that's it.
- PG:** The mustard plaster. What was that used for?
- CJ:** For any kind of a cold. They'd make the mustard plaster and rub it on the chest, then put flannel on it to keep it warm. I know it helped, it worked.
- PG:** What was mustard plaster?
- CJ:** You took mustard. I don't know how to make it. Mustard and flour, and did you put anything else in? I'm not sure. You mixed that with hot water, and then you rubbed it on the chest. My mother didn't use that a lot. She used goose fat instead. Rubbed goose fat on the chest and then kept it warm with flannel.
- PG:** So when you butchered geese, you kept the fat?
- CJ:** Yes.
- PG:** You rendered the goose fat and kept it so you could rub it on.
- CJ:** Yes.
- PG:** Did you ever use skunk fat?
- CJ:** Yes, the boys did once in awhile. They claimed that was a good medicine.
- PG:** Did that stink?
- CJ:** No. We had neighbors that ate skunk. They loved it.
- PG:** They ate it?
- CJ:** Yes. The boys, the Salines. The boys would set the traps and if they had anything caught, they would get their mother, and she knew how to pick them up so they didn't spray. They ate skunk all winter long. Then they always had skunk fat.
- PG:** I never heard of eating skunk.
- CJ:** Yes, I've got recipes for it. I have a cookbook from Alaska. There are all kinds of recipes, and a couple for how to prepare skunk.
- PG:** Did you eat a lot of rabbits, the wild rabbits?
- CJ:** Yes. We ate quite a few.

- PG:** My mother said they ate a lot of jackrabbits.
- CJ:** Then later in years it came out that you shouldn't eat them because they have a disease.
- PG:** They got sick and then you couldn't eat them anymore.
- CJ:** That's Jessica coming home. That's that Louie Gross that was our hired man.
- PG:** That's the man?
- CJ:** Yes.
- PG:** That you talked about.
- CJ:** Yes. They lived down the street and every evening, all last year, and now they started this year again, they go out to the school and wait for Jessica and then they bring her home.
- PG:** Really? Well that's a nice thing. Jessica is the granddaughter.
- CJ:** My great-granddaughter. She's the one that got the braces put on today.
- PG:** Is she going to stay here?
- CJ:** She stays here until her mother gets through working. Then she picks her up and they go home. They live in Silva.
- PG:** Do you think they have different sicknesses today than they used to have? Do they have the same sicknesses, or are they different sicknesses?
- CJ:** I think it's pretty much the same sicknesses, but they didn't know what it was, you know. Like they'd say a man had to sit up in the chair all night and couldn't lay down because he couldn't get breath. Well, the man had emphysema.
- PG:** Do you recall any home remedies? We already talked about the mustard plaster and Kamillentee, and what else?
- CJ:** Ringworm salve.
- PG:** Did they make a steam to inhale? If you had something in your lungs, did you have to inhale like moist water?
- CJ:** I don't know if they did that or not.
- PG:** Did you ever inhale vinegar? When I had tonsillitis, we put vinegar on the stove and had to inhale it. Had to go over and inhale it. That really felt good.
- CJ:** We do that now, but not with vinegar. Just plain water, and we put in mentholatum or Vicks, and go over to the stove and really clear ourselves. We did that years ago.
- PG:** Mentholatum. How about midwives? When you were young, were there midwives for when babies were born?
- CJ:** Yes, oh yes.

- PG:** Who were the midwives? Do you remember the names of them?
- CJ:** Mrs. delivered me. Well no, my dad and Uncle Johnny Gross, because they couldn't get her over in time. There was a big snowstorm. I was born in 1932 on the 12th day of February, and they played out horses because it was storming so bad, and they were going to get the midwife, so my dad and Uncle Johnny stayed back with my mom. And I was born before the midwife got there. That was Mrs. Fred Heilman. Mrs. John Heilman. DK: Mrs. John Heilman.
- PG:** So were the midwives better than the doctor?
- CJ:** There was a Grandma Zacher. She delivered many, many children around the Balta area.
- PG:** And the midwife always came to the house.
- CJ:** Yes.
- PG:** How were the midwives paid? How did you pay them?
- CJ:** I think they got a certain amount of money. I was midwife for one baby.
- PG:** Was that planned or was that by accident?
- CJ:** No, that was an accident. They had a regular midwife ordered, and they couldn't come. It was storming, and I happened to be there at the right time and I did what I could.
- PG:** Were you scared?
- CJ:** Yes, I was worried that I wasn't doing things quite right.
- PG:** Did you get any German newspapers in your house?
- CJ:** Yes, the Staatsanzeiger. That is, my dad did.
- PG:** Where did that come from?
- CJ:** Bismarck. Brandt was the printer's name.
- PG:** Did you learn to read that newspaper? Did you read German?
- CJ:** Yes.
- PG:** You maybe just learned it on your own, or did you learn it from a teacher?
- CJ:** Well, I pretty much learned it by reading it with Dad, and then when I went to school at Grand Forks, I took German and I learned to do it better. I even wrote a few letters to Grandpa John. But now I don't know the alphabet anymore. And he was so proud because he got letters from a young person, that were written in German.
- PG:** What kind of information did you get from the newspaper? What kind of news was in there?
- CJ:** A lot of news from the old country .That's what my dad enjoyed reading .
- PG:** So people from the old country wrote letters to the editor and then...
- CJ:** Yes, right. And there was another paper, the...

- PG:** The---?
- CJ:** Yes.
- PG:** A German paper?
- CJ:** Yes. I don't know where that was printed. 11 was a smaller paper than the Staatsanzeiger.
- PG:** Was there funnies in the paper? The comics, or the funnies, like we have now?
- CJ:** Yes, there was. The Katz ?n Jammers, and Buster.
- PG:** The Katz ?n Jammers really means the Katz and Yammer, which would be the howling of the cats.
- CJ:** Oh yes, that makes sense.
- PG:** You know, when somebody complained a lot, or grumbled a lot and said he was sick, you'd say, "Katz and Yammer." Like the howling of the cats. I don't remember those funnies, the kind in German. Yes, later on. I said too, "Katz and Jammer."
- CJ:** Then there were two kids that were always in mischief.
- PG:** But you were allowed to read them. Your parents didn't care if you read them.
- CJ:** Oh no, no.
- PG:** How about when you first got a telephone. Did you have a telephone when you were little?
- CJ:** Yes, we had a country line. All the neighbors got together.
- PG:** Did you listen in on the neighbors? Telephone calls?
- CJ:** Oh yes, sometimes. My dad had two friends. One lived east and one lived south, and they'd call my dad, and they all three talked and talked. One of the boys wanted to use the phone, and he got mad and he called them, he said, "I can't even use the phone because the three kings are always talking!"
- PG:** How about your first car. Do you remember when your dad got his first car?
- CJ:** Yes. That was, I think, in 1914 he came home with a car. And Joe got in and drove it right away. And I wanted a ride, so I was riding with him and he said, "Do you think you could drive it?" I said, "Yes, if you'd let me." He said, "Well, what is the first thing you would do?" And I pulled the gas pedal down, and we almost ditched it.
- PG:** Oh you went too fast then? [laughter]
- CJ:** That car burned then, one Easter morning, early. My mother woke up and she thought she saw a fire, and the whole garage burned with the car in it, and a buggy in it. All kinds of stuff you would store in a garage all went.
- PG:** Do you remember what the name of the car was?
- CJ:** It was a Ford
- PG:** Was it a coupe?

- CJ:** No. It was a two-seated one. It had a top that you could fold down.
- PG:** We'd call it a convertible. Did your dad learn to drive the car?
- CJ:** Yes, he bought it and drove it home.
- PG:** And that was in 1914. He didn't drive into the haystack or...
- CJ:** No, he didn't.
- PG:** Did he say, "Whoa, whoa, whoa, when he wanted to stop?" That's what a lot of guys did when they drove home. [laughter] How about windmills. Did you always have windmills around?
- CJ:** Yes, we had a homemade windmill. Dad got timbers by the river and he made this wooden windmill. It was kind of high, but not too high. Then years later, I was maybe about 12, this was a duck well. Then he got a well drilled and he bought a regular windmill.
- PG:** Do you remember when you pulled water out of the well with a rope? Did you have something you pulled it out with before you got a windmill?
- CJ:** I don't remember it, but I remember my folks talking about it, how they thought it was so swell when they had a dug well and a windmill pump on it.
- PG:** How about wind chargers. Did you have a wind charger to make electricity?
- CJ:** At home we didn't, but Tom and I had one on the house.
- PG:** So you never had electric lights when you were at home. After you were married your home had electric lights.
- CJ:** Yes.
- PG:** Do you remember when the first radio got invented?
- CJ:** Yes. Dad came home and had bought one. It was about this wide and about this high.
- PG:** This high from the floor you mean.
- CJ:** No, from the table.
- PG:** About 20 inches high.
- CJ:** And we sat up all night listening to the music. Mom would holler from the bedroom, "I think it's time to go to bed." "Yes, we'll go after awhile." Pretty soon it was morning and we hadn't gone to bed.
- PG:** Do you remember how old you were, what year?
- CJ:** No, I don't know. I was maybe about 14.
- PG:** That would be exciting to get a radio. Old people thought there was a man sitting in that radio, talking. They couldn't figure out where that comes from. What were some favorite radio programs? Did you have any favorite ones?
- CJ:** I don't know.

- PG:** Could you listen all day and all night? Was something coming in on the radio when you turned it on?
- CJ:** Yes, yes.
- PG:** Like, when TV came out, it wasn't on all night.
- CJ:** No. It was on until midnight, I think.
- PG:** Was there anyone in your family with a special talent or a special craft?
- CJ:** No.
- PG:** There was no special artist or anything. What about sewing? Did you do a lot of sewing; did you make your own clothing?
- CJ:** Yes, I could make my own, and Caroline was very good at sewing, tatting, crocheting, knitting. My mother too. I didn't have time, because the boys always needed an extra one to play baseball. But I could make my own clothes.
- PG:** Did any of you make rugs?
- CJ:** Yes, I made hook rugs, they called them. Cut up old nylons or any soft material, and then you had a deal you went and hooked. I made quite a few big rugs.
- PG:** You didn't make baskets. Did your dad make baskets?
- CJ:** No.
- PG:** Scherenschnitte? That's cutting out nice things with scissors. They fold the paper and then cut out, then you pull it apart.
- CJ:** Oh, yes. We played with that a lot.
- PG:** So you played with scherenschnitte. That's what they call scherenschnitte, scissor cutting, paper cut-outs. You do remember that.
- CJ:** Yes, yes. We cut little men and little ladies.
- PG:** Did your mother get store dresses, town dresses, or did your mother make her own clothes?
- CJ:** She made most of them. Once in a great while she'd buy one, but mostly she made them.
- PG:** And she mostly had dark clothes, I suppose, black or blue? Dark ones.
- CJ:** Yes, pretty dark. Gray and light green and blue.
- PG:** Where did you get the fabrics?
- CJ:** In Rugby in the store. We had a pretty nice store in Rugby.
- PG:** Was it a Jewish store? A Yiddish store?
- CJ:** No, not that I can remember. I remember Jews coming around peddling it. We bought some from them sometimes.

- PG:** A lot of little towns had a Yiddish store.
- CJ:** I remember that word, hearing Mom and Dad talk about that.
- PG:** I think every town had one. Not more than one, but they had one. How about old clothing, let's say when you were very little. Old clothing. Did you save old clothing for rags?
- CJ:** Yes.
- PG:** For making rugs and stuff. Did your mother make quilts?
- CJ:** Yes. All of our quilts were handmade. She made them.
- PG:** Did you sleep on straw when you were young? Did you have strossa?
- CJ:** We had cornhusks.
- PG:** They put them in a big sack?
- CJ:** Yes.
- PG:** How did you do that? Did it break up and you had to get new
- CJ:** As a rule, every year or every other year, you changed the. It would crumble during the year. It was kind of hard. And when you got the new you couldn't wait until it was time to go to bed because the mattress was this high and you bounced it.
- PG:** So it was 12 inches high or 20 inches high and you could lay in it, so soft, huh?
- CJ:** Yes.
- PG:** That would be something. I don't remember sleeping on the. And it was like a big sack?
- CJ:** Yes, you sewed it together the shape of a mattress and stuffed it full.
- PG:** How about the pillows?
- CJ:** Pillows were all feathers. We raised ducks and geese and saved every feather.
- PG:** Did you get farm magazines or the Dakota Farmer?
- CJ:** Yes. Two of them. One was the Dakota Farmer, and one was just The Farmer. It just said The Farmer.
- PG:** And you got recipes out of there?
- CJ:** Oh yes.
- PG:** What member of your family do you remember best? Let's say your brothers and sisters. Which one do you remember the best?
- CJ:** I think I'd have to say Joe. He was here the longest.
- PG:** Which one do you admire the most? Who did you look up to and admire?
- CJ:** Both Joe and Caroline. One like the other.



- PG:** Mainly because they were older. How about your grandfather, grandmother, father, mother, uncle, aunt. ..was there any favorite ones?
- CJ:** Well, Grandpa John, because he lived with us the last few years. My mother's grandmother, I never got to know and Grandma Gross was an invalid, and I saw her maybe once a year.
- PG:** She lived at Napoleon and you lived at Rugby, so you really didn't get to see her.
- CJ:** Yes.
- PG:** Is there anything which we did not cover that you would like to talk about?
- CJ:** I can't think of anything.
- PG:** What important insights or observations would you like to share? What would you like your grandchildren to know, let's say, 50 years from now? What would you like them to know? What are important insights that you would like to share? It's a hard question.
- CJ:** Yes.
- PG:** Jessica, what would you like to know 50 years from now, when your grandma is not here anymore, what would you like to know from her?
- CJ:** I gave her something that I hope she will treasure. I had a real beautiful crucifix. It was about this high, right? And it's black and the...
- PG:** This is the second tape, side two. What skills, character qualities, or achievements do you want to be remembered by, by the next generation? That you were a good cook, or that. ..
- CJ:** I could say things from Christina that we should remember her by. All her kindness and concern and her care that she always has for all of us. And her desire for cooking. Just the inspiration she gives us for all her canning and her gardening. Just her happiness and her positive attitude about things, and the way she helped my mom and dad the last few years. I'll just never forget her, for all her goodness she did.
- PG:** That was Delores talking.
- CJ:** The oldest daughter of Joe Gross.
- PG:** The oldest daughter of Joe and Elisabeth Gross. Now another question: How is your family history passed on? How is your family history passed on to the next generation? You know how that is. If they listen, then you tell them.
- CJ:** And through pictures.
- PG:** Through pictures. Now we have a little story that she told us yesterday, so I asked her to say it again so that we get it on the recording. We had talked about stuff like this last night. What year was that?
- CJ:** Between five and six years ago.
- PG:** So you would have been about what, 82 or 83 years old?
- CJ:** Yes. I was quite sick. I got sicker and sicker as the night went on. So when I got worried, I didn't go back to bed. I just laid across the bed and was wishing it was morning. All of a sudden, I felt like there was

somebody in the room, so I looked up, and there I saw my sister standing, who had died five years earlier. I was shocked, and I said, "Caroline, how did you get here?" And she said, "I came to tell you don't wait until morning. It will be too late. Get to the doctor." So I don't know what I said; I think I started saying something else, and I looked up and she was gone. So I thought a minute and then I called my neighbor and said, "Will you please take me to Emergency? I think I need help." By the time I got in to the hospital, I was kind of faded out. They said all I did, they tried to ask me questions, I didn't answer them. I just made goofy noises. So they put me to bed and started putting tubes on me and wondering what to do. Pretty soon the doctor and two nurses came running and I heard them say, "Oh, she's sleeping." I said, "Yes, I wish you'd have left me sleeping. It didn't hurt so bad when I was sleeping." She said, "We came to you out. We thought you were running around the room and acting silly. Now your heart is bad enough we have to give you a pacemaker. You were at the verge of a heart attack." Then the next morning I said to the doctor, "Doctor, did I act real goofy when I came in?" She said, "You are just lucky you came in. About 10 or 15 minutes later would have been too late. You'd have had your heart attack."

**PG:** Then they gave you your pacemaker.

**CJ:** Yes. And it's working fine. I had it checked this week.

**PG:** And the doctors said you're not supposed to work in the garden?

**CJ:** Yes. That doctor I had then said, "No more garden work. Not even a plant in front of the house. Just forget." It

**PG:** But you still do it, though.

**CJ:** Yes, well I told my neighbor, "You can have most of my garden. I'll keep one strip." Because I just couldn't see myself without a garden. So now she moved to Oklahoma, and I have a different doctor. At one time this doctor lived a couple of houses east, and when I first went to him, he said, "When we were your neighbors, I always admired your beautiful garden. Do you still have it?" I said, "I have just a small part of it now." He said, "Good. Hang onto it, just as long as you can walk. Because that's the best thing old people can do."

**PG:** Oh really? And the other doctor told you not to do it.

**CJ:** Yes, yes.

**PG:** I would think it's the best thing. Exercise and...

**CJ:** I still put in the garden. She's a good helper. I lay the ropes and she puts in the seed for me.

**PG:** I didn't give my name in the beginning. I am Brother Placid Gross from Richardton and my dad is a first cousin to Christina Jundt, the one we interviewed here.

**CJ:** Max Warren. He was the grocery store man from Balta.

**PG:** The grocery store man from Balta. He was not a Gennan, huh? Was he a German?

**CJ:** Yes, yes. That's when we were going to the World's Fair. At the last minute we decided we should be married when we went to the World's Fair.

**PG:** Did you have invitations?

**CJ:** No.

**PG:** You didn't send out invitations.

**CJ:** No.

**PG:** Did you have a big wedding, or what did you do? Did you have a big meal?

**CJ:** We went to Grand Forks, and there my mother had an aunt living in East Grand Forks. We took her along and went out for supper.

**PG:** Didn't you have a dance at home?

**CJ:** No.

**PG:** How about a big meal at home?

**CJ:** No. Nothing.

**PG:** Did you have a car to drive to Grand Forks?

**CJ:** Yes. Tom had a new car. What did he call this... a one-seated car.

**PG:** A coupe?

**CJ:** Yes, a coupe.

**PG:** So you didn't have a three-day wedding?

**CJ:** No.

**PG:** You didn't have a dance or accordion music?

**CJ:** Nothing. No music. And we stayed overnight with my mother's aunt at Grand Forks, and we helped her make a patch quilt. She wanted to donate it to the church and she didn't think she could get it done.

**PG:** This was your mother's aunt?

**CJ:** Yes.