

Narrator: Ms. Gertrude Lochner  
Date of Interview: November 10, 1978  
Place of Interview: Narrator's home, located at  
6724 Dempster Street, Morton Grove  
Interviewer: Denise Rossmann Christopoulos  
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## INTRODUCTION

Gertrude Lochner's grandfather came to this area (not yet known as Morton Grove) about 1846 and settled near other friends from Germany, the Gabel and Dilg families. Gertrude's father moved to a new house located on the north side of Dempster Street after marrying her mother, Gertrude Witty of Niles Center (now Skokie). This original homestead was located where the Prairie View Community Center is today and was later moved to its present location at 6734 Dempster Street (alongside of the Lochner's Greenhouse).

On this property, Ms. Lochner's parents farmed, and in the interview she talks of onions being grown as their main crop contracted to Vaughn's and their pickles being sold to Henning's Pickle Company. The farm consisted of thirty acres.

The Lochners also ran a vegetable stand off of Dempster (before their house was moved down) and Gertrude remembers working at the stand with her sister and her brothers. Next to the vegetable stand, the family also had a refreshment stand known as the "Rest A Bit" where they sold hamburgers, hot dogs and ice cream.

After the Lochner farm had been sold, there was only approximately five or six acres left. Since the Lochners could not farm on this any longer, Gertrude's two brothers came up with the idea of the greenhouse. They felt the only way they could build the greenhouses was to do the work themselves and they did it in the height of the Depression. The Lochners have been in business for more than fifty years and throughout the majority of that time, Gertrude ran the store end of the greenhouse business.

GL: Gertrude Lochner

Q: Question asked by interviewer, Denise Rossmann Christopoulos

TAPE ONE, SIDE A

Q: Could you tell me your grandparents' names?

GL: Okay, now my grandparents' names on my father's side was Michael Lochner and then Theresa Baumann was the maiden name of my grandmother on my father's side.

Q: And on your mother's side?

GL: On my mother's side it was Witty. Peter Witty was her father's name, and her mother's name was Gertrude Loch, L-O-C-H, before she was married. (laughs)

Q: How interesting.

GL: Sort of a coincidence, of course.

Q: What were your parents' names?

GL: Now my father's name was Michael Lochner also, and my mother's name was Gertrude. Gertrude Witty before she was married.

Q: Do you know why your grandparents came over to the Unites States?

GL: I know why my mother's parents came over. They didn't want their sons to be, as they said, under the Kaiser's [Wilhelm] rule. You know, the Kaiser at that time was a pretty bad actor, I guess. Pretty strict guy, you know. (laughter) And that's why they really came -- to get away from that military thing in Germany.

Q: It was more or less a political thing?

GL: Yes. He didn't like that his son should be, you know, whatever they had to do in the Army or however they handled it.

Q: Were there any financial reasons? Maybe they were not doing so well?

GL: Oh, no, they were doing very well. They had a grocery and meat market over there. They had a business. And they were doing very well. In fact, my grandmother had eight thousand dollars sewed in her skirt when she came over. That was a lot of money in those days.

Q: Yes.

GL: You know how they wore those great big woolen skirts? She had all this money sewed in her skirt -- thought it would be protected, you know. (laughs)

Q: Did they ever pass down any stories about the boat trip over here? How long it took them?

GL: I think it took them six weeks.

Q: Do you know where they landed when they got over here?

GL: Well, I believe they landed in Columbus, Ohio. I think that's the first place they lived -- Columbus, Ohio.

Q: Then they moved on down this way.

GL: That's my mother's parents.

Q: Okay.

GL: And then they moved into Chicago. After they left Columbus, they farmed in the "Baumanville" area, which is now Lincoln, Lawrence, Western there.

Q: Your mother was born here, though?

GL: No, no. My mother was born in Germany.

Q: Oh, so she came over with them?

GL: Yes, she was about eight years old when she came over.

Q: How about your father's parents.

GL: My father's parents, they came, well . . . now my grandfather was born September the 5<sup>th</sup>, and he was eight years old when he came here, so that was 1836 about? Is

that how that would figure out? I think he was about ten years old when he came. That is my father, my father's father, Michael Lochner. Grandpa Lochner, he was eight years old when he came here.

Q: And you don't know why they left?

GL: No. I guess some of their friends were here already. Some of their friends were already in this area. In this immediate area, and I think it was the Gabels and the Dilgs -- they were his friends. And then he came right here to Morton Grove. That's my Great-Grandpa Lochner.

Q: He knew the Dilgs and the Gabels from Germany?

GL: Yes, oh, yes. They were their friends from Germany, and they came right here to Morton Grove, which wasn't Morton Grove then, of course.

Q: Right.

GL: Now this is my great-grandpa I'm talking about, you know. That far back. Yes.

Q: So the name Michael tends to be in the family?

GL: The name? Oh, we got a lot. We got so many I can't even count them. (laughter)

Q: As we go along, if you say Michael Lochner, maybe be specific about which one ...

GL: Yes, I'll tell you which Michael. (laughter)

Q: How did your mother and father meet?

GL: Well, after my mother left this "Baumanville" area, then they settled over at what was Tessville then. And she used to see him in church at St. Peter's Church.

Q: Catholic Church?

GL: St. Peter's Catholic Church. She saw him in church and she liked him just from seeing him. (laughter)

Q: Love at first sight.

GL: Then when she really met him was at the church picnic. He took her for a ride up the river here, the Morton Grove River, the North Branch River. A boat ride.  
(laughs)

Q: How romantic. Then jumping back just a little bit, once they were married, what did your parents do?

GL: They farmed.

Q: Both of them. Did your mother do anything on the side? Sewing or anything?

GL: Oh, well, everybody done their own sewing for the family. Yes, sure. All your own sewing, your own canning.

Q: But she didn't have another job or career other than on the farm?

GL: Oh, no. no, just on the farm. That's all.

Q: Could you tell me the names of your sisters and brothers?

GL: My sister was the oldest. Her name was Helen. Helen Hoffman -- that's Evelyn Permer's mother. Then was I. Then my brother, Michael, and then Richard, my partner here in business. Richard. That's us. (laughs)

Q: Did your father's brothers also come over here?

GL: Oh, they were all born here. My father was born right down here. They had thirteen acres right down here where that bicycle path is. That's where their home was.

Q: Maybe you could give me boundaries of what you owned?

GL: I really don't know. That part I don't remember. No. I know they had this here. This was always in the family -- these thirty acres here. And then those thirteen acres down there, you know, where the bicycle path is. And then they had some land once upon a time in the old part of Morton Grove, but I don't know, I don't remember anything about that. I just know that he had some there once.



Q: Okay, then a little personal data on yourself. If you could tell me when your birthdate is?

GL: Yes. My birthday is May the 28<sup>th</sup>. Would you like to know the year? (laughs)

Q: It's up to you.

GL: Oh, I don't care. It's so easy to remember, I'll tell you -- 1900.

Q: That is easy to remember. (laughter) And where was your birthplace?

GL: In Buffalo Grove. My grandfather also owned a farm out in Buffalo Grove at that time, and our folks thought they'd like to go into different farms. There was more cattle, so they moved out there for about seven years, and that's where I happened to be born. And then they moved back here. They didn't like that kind of farming anyway.

Q: It's funny. I really thought you were born in Morton Grove.

GL: Yes, well, because everybody does, and rather than make it complicated, I tell them I was. (laughs)

Q: So then when you moved back here from Buffalo Grove, where did you live?

GL: Well, right here always.

Q: This was your family homestead?

GL: This is the home. Yes.

Q: I was just going to ask you what you remember about the physical aspects of the home, but we're sitting right here. (laughs)

GL: Well, it's been remodeled twice. But the main part is there. Like those -- what do you call those things that hold it up? Beams or what do you call that?

Q: Foundation basically.

GL: The foundation part is still the original. The wood trim here -- no. Well, that isn't the original. That was changed when we remodeled about forty years ago or more -- fifty or whatever.

Q: Moving from your early childhood throughout the years, what were your household chores here? Just in the house, not on the farm.

GL: Well, just in the house? Oh, well, we had to do all things like help with the dishes and, then I had to help raise Richard, my brother. (laughs)

Q: Was there anything in particular that was Gertrude's job? (laughter)

GL: I had to push him around in the buggy, you know. Stuff like that there. (laughs)

Q: I hope he's been grateful ever since.

GL: Oh, yes. Yes, he's been quite a guy.

Q: When you moved back here to Morton Grove, do you know what year it was?

GL: It must have been 1906 or '07 when we moved back.

Q: What did you do for water supply here in the home?

GL: We had the well.

Q: And a cistern?

GL: Cistern, oh, yes. Cistern and a well.

Q: Do you have any other recollections of your family life here as a child growing up? Was there anything in particular about the home?

GL: Well, I'll tell you, years ago everybody had their really beautiful home life. There was a lot of love years ago.

Q: Very close.

GL: Yes, and understanding. You played a lot of cards. Almost every night in the winter we played cards. (laughs) See my sister and I got to be such good

players, and when we went to the card parties, we'd always get first prize.

(laughs) We wouldn't always play right just so we wouldn't get first prize.

(laughter) See, they used to play cards years ago, you know. And you'd move from one table to the other. Progressive or whatever you call it. And then you'd go up and you'd pick your prize. It wasn't the same thing for every table. Then, of course, the guy who got first prize, he'd have the pick of whatever was there.

Q: So in other words, to keep it a little less embarrassing, you didn't win all the time?

GL: We tried not to win too much. (laughter)

Q: That's good. Other than your family life here, it was basically a farm family life?

GL: Yes.

Q: Did everyone work in the fields?

GL: Oh, yes. We'd come home from school, and we were mud. We went most of our life up to St. Peter's in Skokie. You'd come home from school, you'd take off school clothes, you'd go out in the field and work.

Q: Where were the locations of your fields?

GL: Right here.

Q: Surrounding this whole house here?

GL: Well, yes. It went from here to the corner to the fish place over there, what used to be Weller's, and then back. It was a section right here.

Q: What kind of crops did you raise?

GL: Well, mostly onions and some pickles, too. And then, of course, some grain for the cattle. You had to -- couple of cows and then hogs.

Q: Did you have a lot of vegetables?

GL: Oh, yes. Oh, sure. We had all of that.

Q: Was there anything in particular that you had to take care of in the fields?

GL: Well, mainly the onions. That was our big crop. You had to weed them, and you had to harvest them. That kept you going for quite a few months.

Q: Did your father sell these different foods to stores in different towns or did he go to Chicago to sell them to the market?

GL: No. The onions were on contract to Vaughn Seed Company. They had a warehouse

down here where Vegetable Grower's is now. The onions were taken there, and then the pickle factory was over there, too -- Henning's

Q: So you would take the pickles in?

GL: Yes. Pickles.

Q: Oh, that was easy for him.

GL: Yes, he never done truck gardening.

Q: He never shipped out anything by train?

GL: No.

Q: Many people have told me that they would take their farm goods to Chicago to the markets.

GL: Oh, yes. That's what it mostly was -- truck farming and they would go to Chicago.

Q: Did your father ever go or did you ever go to the market day that was in Niles Center?

GL: Oh, yes. Well, I don't know if I went, but he always went every -- well, whenever he'd go, they'd buy our two pigs for our winter pork, you know. (laughs)

Two or three pigs. He'd go over there to get them every year. Whenever that time of the year was -- I don't know.

Q: Everybody seems to remember market day in Niles Center.

GL: Oh, yes.

Q: It must have been a gala event.

GL: Well, I suppose. I don't think I ever went. I don't remember that I did.

Q: How about a vegetable stand? Didn't you mention to me that you had a little stand right in town?

GL: Oh, yes. We grew vegetables to sell on the stand, but other than that, we didn't do truck gardening.

Q: Where did you have the vegetable stand? Right out here off of Dempster?

GL: Then we lived up there where that big building -- the Prairie View Community Center is. Yes, that's about where our house was. Right around there.

Q: It was not here then?

GL: It wasn't here. No, it was up there at that time.

Q: When did you move in this house then?

GL: Well, this is the same house. We moved it down.

Q: Oh, you did?

GL: Yes, this house was moved down here. Yes, see when my grandfather died, this was his farm. So when he died, then the property was sold to a real estate company. And being that we lived here all the time, my father wouldn't sell, and the rest of his sisters and brothers, of course, didn't want the property here, because what did they want property here for? They didn't live here. So they sold, but the real estate company settled with us for a piece of land down here. Then they didn't want the house. They also gave us the house. They said, "Take it and go!" So that's what we did. (laughs)

Q: Oh, what a nice deal.

GL: So then we moved it down here. See years ago, there used to be quite a bit of house moving in this area.

Q: Oh, that's interesting.

GL: Yes. We didn't have to even go on the road. We just moved it right through the field down here.

Q: How did they move it? Do you remember?



GL: Well, with horses on some kind of a roller thing, you know. Oh, we were down here in less than a day.

Q: The vegetable stand that was down there by the community center, did you work there?

GL: Oh, sure.

Q: Do you remember what you sold anything for?

GL: Well, we sold it for -- the price? No, that I wouldn't remember. And I had a picture of it here, and that girl that was here taking that other -- she wanted to know if she could have some of the pictures, so I left her to have them. She's going to return them, of course, but I now I don't have them to show you. Anyhow, this was where we sold the vegetables from, and then we also had a little refreshment stand here.

Q: What did you sell there?

GL: Well, we sold hamburgers, hot dogs, ice cream cones . . .

Q: Right next to it?

GL: Yes, yes.

Q: [Looking at photo of vegetable stand] Is this your barn back here?

GL: Yes, that is the barn back there.

Q: Look at that! Nothing around there. Oh, look at the car.

GL: See, I had a nice picture of that, the Rest-A-Bit, we called it. Our vegetable stand was called the Rest-A-Bit.

Q: (laughs) And I imagine you got a lot of people that did.

GL: This was even before this elaborate set-up here. This was just selling off of a table.

Q: That's how you originally started.

GL: Yes, selling vegetables. See, now this is Richard. See, that's corn there and cabbage. And this is my sister, Helen, Evelyn's mother. She was already married then, but she just came up here to get on the picture. She was visiting home here.

Q: [Looking at old photo of house and surrounding land] It looks so barren around here.

GL: Yes, without the greenhouse yet. Now this is the house when it was up there yet, before it was moved down here.

Q: It's a different angle though.

GL: This is before it was moved down here. This is the kitchen over here.

Q: And here's where the addition is coming out here?

GL: Yes, the addition comes out over here.

Q: Oh, I see.

GL: I mean that porch. That front part there. The front room there wasn't on it when we lived up there. See, this was the front . . .

Q: You just keep adding to it.

GL: . . . then we just added that porch.

Q: Are those chickens I see?

GL: Yes.

Q: What kind of farm animals did you have?

GL: Well, just cows.

Q: Cows and chickens.

GL: Yes. Chickens, and my mother raised geese and...

Q: What did you do for your milk and butter? Did you make those at home?

GL: We had two cows.

Q: You did it all yourself?

GL: Oh, yes.

Q: Did you ever sell any of that to the stores?

GL: No.

Q: The eggs?

GL: Oh, yes. We used to sell eggs on the street here. We had a sign out. Sold eggs on the street. Yes, oh, we had customers for eggs. They'd come every week.

Q: But your dad never raised any livestock or anything for profit?

GL: No, not on this farm. Buffalo Grove he did, but not here. This is too small a farm for that.

Q: What's that? It looks like hay?

GL: That's oats and that's how they stacked it. See, then after a while, the threshers came through, and then we threshed here. See, this is the threshing

machine there. This is how the oats is bagged then, how it came. Then the hay -- the straw you used for bedding your animals.

Q: Do you know approximately how many acres you had?

GL: Oh, yes. Thirty acres.

Q: Thirty acres?

GL: Yes, this is thirty acres here. Now the Buffalo Grove farm was eighty-five acres. But on thirty acres, you cant raise cattle. But out here they raised cattle. That was up on Dundee Road -- just about where that golf course is now. He had eighty-five acres out there -- my grandfather. That's where I was born.  
(laughs)

Q: How about farming tools? Were there anything other than the hoe and the rake you used?

GL: Well, yes. You had a machine that cut -- right here it is. I'll show it to you. See, right there. Now, that's how you cut oats. See that's the oats cutting. It was pulled by horse. That's about the biggest thing you had, you know. Then you had a plow that was pulled by horse. And you had to go in back of it and hold it. It looked like it was a rough job, that plowing. Because, you know, you stumbled around.

Q: The girls worked in the fields as well as the boys?

GL: Oh, yes, well, my sister and I were the oldest. We were working out there all the time. But it was necessary.

Q: Who were some of your neighbors around here when you were growing up on the farm?

GL: It was the Frenches over here where the telephone company is. Then our next neighbor was at the corner, Clara Burkhardt [?], which is Dilg's relatives. One of the sisters married a Dilg, so that's how they're related.

Q: Did they have children around your age that you all grew up with?

GL: Yes.

Q: You mentioned briefly about the pickle factory over there off of the tracks. Was that Henning's?

GL: That was Henning's.

Q: Do you remember anything in particular about that? Did you ever go with your father when you sold the pickles?

GL: Well, I suppose I did, but I don't remember anything about it.

Q: Did your father belong to any farm organizations? Like the Cook County Truck Gardeners and Farmers Association?

GL: I doubt it because he wasn't a truck gardener.

Q: He just did it for his own use?

GL: Yes, so I don't believe he did belong to any of these organizations.

Q: When did you build the greenhouses here? Did your father build them?

GL: No. Richard and they done all their own work, too. Richard and Mike -- my brother, Michael.

Q: What year was that?

GL: That was during the height of the Depression. Now, let me see -- it must have been . . . (pauses) . . . oh, I suppose it was around 1930, '32, somewhere in there.

Q: And they decided that was going to be their business venture?

GL: Well, we had to, because when the farm was sold, there was only five acres here or six. You couldn't farm on five or six acres. From our previous experience selling the vegetables and things, my mother also raised a lot of flowers -- that was her part of it. And judging from all the flowers we sold, we figured it might be a good idea. You had to do something, so that's how that idea was born.

Q: Were there always these greenhouses -- were there ever more?

GL: Well, no this is it. And we built them in the height of the Depression, and everybody thought we shouldn't do it. Oh, they thought we'd never make it, because that's when Poehlmann failed. We didn't pay attention. We went ahead and we done it anyhow. You have to do something.

Q: Did you sell wholesale or retail?

GL: Oh, always retail. And the only way we could build is if we done it ourself. And our boys -- my brothers -- they built the whole thing themselves.

Q: That's great.

GL: Lord and Burnham, who were up here in Des Plaines, they believed in us, I guess, and they let them use their surveying instruments and all. And they trusted us, too. There was so little business then for any -- nobody was building. It was such a bad time. Nobody was building anything, and then I guess they thought they'd take a chance on us not paying them, because there wasn't much of a better way to do business in those days. But anyhow, we made it go, and they got paid.  
(laughs)

Q: We mentioned Poehlmann's. Did anyone in the family ever work over there before you built?

GL: No.

Q: Do you remember going in Poehlmann's?



GL: Oh, yes. I don't remember too much about it. I know I was in there. Oh, that was a big operation.

Q: Sounds like it was huge.

GL: The biggest in the world.

Q: Yes. I also read some newspaper articles about a different problem -- that town people were complaining about the soot that was coming out of their chimneys. Do you remember anything about the soot?

GL: Well, I remember that people were complaining.

Q: You were a little removed from it.

GL: It didn't bother us here. It didn't come this far.

Q: Jumping back a little bit in time and to your schooling. Where did you go to grade school when you were little?

GL: Well, between Golf School and St. Peter's in Skokie . . .

Q: How many years did you go to Golf?

GL: I started at Golf School and I finished at Golf School. And in the meantime, I went to St. Peter's at Skokie, so I went most of my years at St. Peter's in

Skokie. Maybe two years at Golf and the rest of the years at St. Peter's, which would be like six, I suppose.

Q: How did you get to St. Peter's?

GL: Oh, we walked.

Q: You walked from here over to St. Peter's?

GL: Oh, yes, yes, yes. (laughs) We got there early, too. (laughter)

Q: Did you start a day ahead of time?

GL: You'd almost think you'd have to, wouldn't you? The way it is nowadays, I don't think these kids would make it in one day.

Q: Well, you could cut through the fields, though.

GL: Oh, no. You had to walk on the road, which was almost like going through the field. It wasn't much better. It wasn't a highway. Oh, no, not while we were going to school. (laughs)

Q: You didn't have a horse or buggy?

GL: No, we walked and then finally we got a bicycle. (laughs) As strange as it may seem, we never missed a day, my sister and I.

Q: Even in the winter?

GL: We maybe missed a day on account of weather, but I mean for being sick. But the kids that lived closer to the school, they were always in school with stockings around their neck because they were always having a sore throat. (laughs)

Q: And you were the ones walking all that way!

GL: That's what they done years ago. If you had a sore throat, they wound your stocking around the neck to keep warm, to keep the throat war, I guess. (laughter) But, strange as it may seem, we never missed a day on account of being sick, my sister and I. Not from a cold anyhow. Not from that kind of thing, so I guess it was good for you.

Q: Do you remember any teacher in particular that you took a fancy to? Anybody that sticks out in your mind?

GL: Well, yes, at the Golf School there was a teacher named Mrs. Bixby. B-I-X-B-Y, and she was a very wonderful person. And I had her when I went there for the last year. I graduated from Golf School. And she was a very wonderful person, and she had all those eight grades. She had what they called a primer class. Primer -- it was like kindergarten. So she had eight grades and the primer. All in one room, you know, and she was really a wonderful person. Then, of course, when I went to St. Peter's, I had so many teachers there, because I went there much longer. I don't remember any one especially.

Q: I realize St. Martha wasn't started until 1919 or so. Was there a reason why your parents sent you to St. Peter's rather than to Grove School? That would have been closer.

GL: Well, they wanted us to have a religious education.

Q: I see.

GL: And, it seemed like it was a hard thing, but everybody done it. Like the Gabel girl, she lived even farther, and we'd all walk, she'd always stop here and pick us up because she was older when we were quite young. And then we walked. Everybody done it. Everybody walked far years ago.

Q: Did your parents belong to St. Martha then?

GL: Oh, yes, as soon as they organized here. Sure.

Q: Do you remember what your major interest was when you were going through grade school?

GL: Crocheting. (laughter) Everybody, was crocheting.

Q: Did they teach you in school?

GL: No. You didn't learn it in school. That was everybody's pastime, crocheting.

Q: Really?

GL: Well, maybe not so much when I was going to grade school, but later. That was a regular crocheting era then. Everybody was crocheting. By the time we got home and by the time you done your homework and helped. And then on Sunday, you had to go to church, of course, and so you didn't have much time off really for any hobbies.

Q: Do you remember any games you would play on the playground or in recess?

GL: Well, I don't remember too much about the games. I suppose it was hopscotch.

Q: So you palled around with the Gabel girl?

GL: Yes. I had friends from Skokie, you know. There weren't many young people up here then.

Q: Was it considered a little bit out of the way from the main part of Morton Grove where you lived?

GL: Yes, the main part was right down there on Lincoln Avenue, between . . .

Q: Where the village hall is now.

GL: Yes, that was the main part. This was the outskirts really.

Q: Did your mother use a midwife when she had you children or was there a doctor?

GL: Well, she had both.

Q: Who did your family see in town here?

GL: Dr. Sintzel in Skokie mostly. And then there was a Dr. Drostenfels in town. He came after Sintzel.

Q: How about Dr. Klehm in Skokie? Did you ever use her?

GL: Oh, yes. We had Dr. Klehm.

Q: How were they notified when someone was ill?

GL: Not everybody had a telephone even then. I know one time when my mother got terribly sick one night. It was during the flu, when the flu was so bad. My sister and I took a lantern and walked down.

TAPE ONE, SIDE A ENDS

TAPE ONE, SIDE B

GL: We took a lantern and we walked down there and had him call a doctor. And I think it was during that flu epidemic. We called Dr. Klehm. She was our doctor then. The snow was so bad she didn't know how she'd get here. She couldn't come

through, and she said if we could get somebody to bring her, she could come. We called my cousins Fred Heinz in Skokie, and he brought her. They were in the automobile business right there across from St. Peter's.

Q: In Niles Center?

GL: Yes. And he bought her up -- and that's what saved her life. She said she would never have lived through the night if she couldn't have seen her. Fred Heinz was the only one we could think of. There might have been someone else, but, at the time, he was the only one we could think of, because he was out in all kinds of weather. Those mechanics, you know how they are.

Q: Yes.

GL: And he lived right there, too, where Dr. Klehm lived. In that same block. Oh, I can still see her. She was quite a big woman. Not extra big, but she was, well, as big as I am, and I don't think of myself as small. She was, I think, even a little bigger than I am.

Q: Did your mother have any special home remedies she used on you kids when you got sick.

GL: Well, goose grease. (laughs) Goose grease.

Q: I've heard that so much! That must have been terrible. Did she rub it on your chest?

GL: Yes, well, you know that goose grease lying on bread was good. It was. Even eat some today if it had it.

Q: Oh, Gertrude, I don't know. (laughter) It doesn't sound good.

GL: Oh, you don't know what you missed. (laughs) No, it really was. But, of course, we didn't live on it, but we had it once in a while. After you roasted the goose and with all that flavor in roasting with salt and pepper. It was a good spread for bread.

Q: Okay, how about on the chest?

GL: Well, on the chest, of course, you didn't have all that salt and pepper and stuff in it. (laughter)

Q: Did it break up congestion?

GL: Well, I don't know. I suppose it helped some, like, for instance, that medicine plant that we got out there in the greenhouse . . .

Q: Aloe?

GL: Yes. I mean that cures, you'd be surprised of all the things it cures. Mainly people use it for burns. It just takes the sting right out and it never swells, never does anything.



Q: Did she ever mix up any of her own concoctions?

GL: No, I don't think so. Not that I remember. People used like a lot of honey and lemonade. I remember hot lemonade with honey or peppermint tea.

Q: Hot lemonade with honey sounds good.

GL: Yes, that was a pretty good cold remedy.

Q: Now we're going to get to the section on entertainment and recreation. What you did for fun here in town. Did you ever go to any of the dances in town?

GL: No, never went to dances, no. our entertainment was more or less people coming to our house and we going to their house.

Q: More of a close-knit type of gathering.

GL: Yes, yes.

Q: How about Dilg's Tavern? Did you ever go in there for shopping?

GL: Oh, we went in there. They used to sell ice cream in there. They used to sell everything there. We used to go for ice cream sodas and stuff like that there. And thread and . . .

Q: Was that the main place where your mother shopped?

GL: We shopped down in the Loop. Well, when you wanted anything years ago, you went to the Loop.

Q: Did you take the train down there?

GL: Yes, you took the train. If you wanted little things like thread, needles, hooks, eyes and stuff like that, they'd have it by Dilg's. There was very, very few places you could buy anything around here. You'd have to go to the Loop.

Q: Did you ever go into Glenview for anything?

GL: Years ago? Well, to Rugens. Well, no not really. Except we had relatives up there. We used to go visit our relatives.

Q: Nothing other than that.

GL: No.

Q: It was just mainly Morton Grove and Niles Center?

GL: Nothing other than that, except we went to Rugens store. They're one of the old stores there, and everybody shopped at Rugens. So, we'd go there for Christmas. They had Christmas candies and stuff and Christmas trees for all that stuff we went to Rugens.

Q: How about picnics? Did the church ever sponsor a picnic?

GL: Oh, yes, they had a picnic and dinners . . .

Q: Morton Grove Days picnic?

GL: Yes, dinners. You know, they'd give church dinners, chicken dinners and in the fall they'd give like a *Schobermesse* dinner, you know. About twice a year the church gave a dinner.

Q: How about when the Morton Grove Days celebrations were started in the '20s over by the library?

GL: Oh, yes, everybody went to the Morton Grove Days.

Q: Those were big deals?

GL: Yes.

Q: Where'd they have the picnics when they had them?

GL: The church picnics? It wasn't really a picnic. It was more like a church dinner and a raffle right on the grounds. It wasn't exactly a picnic. And I don't think we ever had church picnics.

Q: Did the Morton Grove days have a picnic?

GL: Well, the festival. Picnic, festival, whatever you call it. Yes. Oh, sure, they had like a week or whatever. Over here at St. Paul, down here what is Harrer Park now. Or in that area anyhow.

Q: Do you remember the movie house down on Ferris Avenue?

GL: Oh, yes. We used to go there once in a while. (laughs)

Q: Tell me a little bit about that. How much was admission? Do you remember?

GL: A ten-cent.

Q: And what kind of movies were they? Of course, black and white.

GL: Oh, yes black and white.

Q: Someone said they had a piano player there. Is that true?

GL: Oh, yes, they did. Yes, this woman -- now what was her name? I knew her; I knew the name. I can't remember it now. I think it was Anderson.

Q: Where did she sit? Up in front?

GL: Up in front, yes, where she could see what was going on, but then she played whatever happened (laughs). She played with whatever the thing was on the screen. (laughs)

Q: How about sports? Was Richie involved in any sports or the baseball teams?

GL: Well, there wasn't much of that years ago. Now kids are playing every kind of ball game now. There's so many games, there ain't days enough to play them in. there's more kinds than there are days. But those days, it wasn't much of that. It was just more or less -- either they were people who were more semi-professional or else you just didn't play. It was a group that played, and you went to see them. Watch them play on Sundays. But it wasn't that everybody just played like the kids do now.

Q: Have you ever heard any stories about the gravel pit that was behind Poehlmann's where the guys used to go swimming?

GL: Yes, I guess they used to. Yes, nature's own [skinny dipping], they called it, huh. (laughs)

Q: I've heard a lot of things they called it. I guess girls weren't allowed.

GL: Well, I guess not. No. and they wouldn't even want to get near it. They were different in those days. (laughs)

Q: Yes. How about the river down here? Did you have a lot to do with the river, go fishing and skating?

GL: My father was raised right on that river. They had like about two acres that was open, that was cleared, no trees. And so they sloped right into the river, their

property. Yes, they were on the river all the time. They even caught a sturgeon there, a sixty-pound sturgeon. It was during my father's time.

Q: Really? As kids did you go sledding and skating on the river there?

GL: Oh, yes, we went skating there.

Q: Do you remember Hobo Island?

G: Well, I heard about it. Just from hearing about it, that's all.

Q: Someone told me that your grandfather used to remember Indians?

GL: Yes, there were some Indians. My father even did. But they were like about along the river, but near the church. Beckwith Road area up here. There were still some when he was young yet. They lived there in dug-outs or whatever.

Q: Did your family own a part of the land when the railroad came through? Did they sell part of that to the railroad?

GL: I really don't know, but they were right up against the railroad. Could be.

Q: Then who bought out that land? The forest preserve?

GL: Oh, after while? Yes.

Q: So all this land on the other side of Dempster was once . . .

GL: . . . what was my father's homestead there where he was born, no, then the county bought it in like about . . .

Q: What happened to that house?

GL: Well, that house, they let my grandparents live in it until as long as they lived. When my grandfather died, somebody bought it, and they moved it over here. Before too many years it burned down one night. It was right over here someplace. Right where about where the Bethany Terrace is. It was right around in there where that is. My grandfather's old homestead. They moved it from here to over there. Somebody bought it and it was right around that area, and we saw it burn that night.

Q: How about holidays? Do you remember anything in particular about Christmas here?

GL: Oh, I tell you, Christmas was a beautiful thing when we were young. It was different than it is now. You had Kris Kringle. And then you'd close the door. See, we had rooms and everything wasn't open like this. Every door was closed by a little door, like here, for instance. Then a couple of days before Christmas, the door would close, and then the tree would be decorated and the toys would be brought in. Then you'd look through the key hole and that. They'd put it so you could see a little something of the toys. When we were young, my grandfather, Grandpa, still lived down here. And then my aunt would dress like in white. She looked like an angel. I don't know what it was supposed to represent then -- an

angel or whatever. Then when Christmas Eve came, of course, they'd know about what time she'd be coming, then we'd all start singing "Holy Night" and all those songs. Then, all of a sudden, there'd be a rap on the door. The door would open -- there'd she be standing then. All in white. And then she'd point -- she never talked, because we'd recognize her voice, you know.

Q: Oh, she was disguised?

GL: Yes, she was disguised. Her face was covered with some little veil. And then she'd point with a ruler or stick or whatever, a long like thing, to whose -- this is yours. She'd point to whoever the person was getting that particular toy. Oh, it was a beautiful thing, Christmas years ago.

Q: Did you have candles on your tree?

GL: Oh, yes.

Q: Wasn't that dangerous?

GL: I guess so.

Q: Because today they're so flammable when they dry out.

GL: Oh, sure, it was dangerous, but that was the only thing there was.

Q: You made your own decorations for the tree?



GL: Well, most of it. A lot of it. We had some beautiful things, too, that we bought.

Q: Now what were your grandparents doing when they still lived across the way from you? Were they farming?

GL: Well, my grandfather retired kind of early. They were only in this country for a couple of years and his father died, and he was the head of the house. He had to support and take care of the family. He was only like fourteen years old. They didn't really farm. I don't know just what he did. See, years ago, they cut wood for that railroad for burning for power.

Q: For fuel.

GL: For power or whatever. This was all wooded evidently. That's how they made their living -- by cutting wood and supplying it to the railroad.

Q: Anybody mischievous around here on Halloween?

GL: Well, they used to do things like turning over the little outhouses and putting the buggies up on the roofs and stuff like that. Oh, yes, they were mischievous.  
(laughs)

Q; You said you were involved in St. Peter's. Did they have any women's organization when you belonged to St. Peter's Church that your mother was involved in?

GL: Well, not over there she wasn't, but St. Martha she was. They had the Woman's Club, the Altar and Rosary and the Woman's Club.

Q: Were your parents important in helping to organize St. Martha?

GL: Yes, when St. Martha was organized, Father Schmidt, the first priest here, he came. It was the first place he came to, and my father hitched up the horse and the buggy and he took him around to all the different ones. We were very much involved. And then my father took him around to meet all the different people, because there weren't many here that belonged to . . .

Q: To organize?

GL: Yes, to organize.

Q: So then you remember the church when it was in the store front on Lincoln Avenue?

GL: Oh, yes. I even played the organ there. (laughs) Not very good.

Q: Did you sing, too?

GL: Oh, sure, yes. Not very good, but everybody lived through it. (laughter)  
Nobody quit. (laughs)

Q: Did your mother help make the linens that were used for the altar?

GL: No, not actually helped with it, but she helped with all the things that were done to make money to do this stuff, you know. Like the chicken dinners, whatever, the bazaars. She helped to raise the funds to do these things. Oh, yes, she was active in them.

Q: Did they have bazaars at that time?

GL: Yes, bazaars. Church dinners were the biggest thing, I believe.

Q: Women in town would make the dinners?

GL: Oh, yes, they'd work. They'd put on some terrific dinners twice a year, like in the fall and then in the summer. Chicken dinner in the summer. Then like a harvest fest kind of dinner in the fall. She was a very active member.

Q: We've said that the streets weren't paved yet at that time. How was Dempster as a road? Was it as wide as it is today?

GL: Oh, no. Well, it was very wide, though, when they paved it. I remember the first stretch of concrete that was poured here was over on Church Street. They had like about one mile. That was when they were in the experimental stage. Everybody went to see it. Miracle. (laughs) But it was the first. It wasn't a concrete world like it is now. It was then a concrete world like it is now. Oh, was that something! There was ribbon cutting and everything when the first mile opened over on Church Street. I guess that area was Evanston, Skokie, or . . .

Q: Was Dempster ever planked?

GL: I don't think that Dempster was ever planked. Not in my time.

Q: Was it pretty bad when it rained out here?

GL: Oh, yes it was mud. You know how anything hardens when you use it a lot, drive on it, but when it rained, it was mud.

Q: Do you remember when your family got their first car? What kind of car it was?

GL: That was a Model T. It was like about 1916.

Q: Were you one of the first ones around here to have a car?

GL: Yes, I think we were.

Q: Did you learn how to drive right away when you got the car?

GL: Well, not right away.

Q: Were you sixteen years old at that time?

GL: I must have been. Yes, I was about sixteen. My father drove, and then my sister after a while. My sister, Helen. She was a much better chauffeur than I was, but I finally learned, too. (laughs)

Q: Are you familiar with a bus route?

GL: Well, there was a pretty early bus route here on Dempster Street. I don't remember when it was, but it was quite early. We had buses here quite early. Not during my school days, though, but quite early for buses. Not all the towns around here had buses when Morton Grove did, though.

Q: When you were growing up as a child did your family speak German?

GL: The first couple of years, because it made my grandfather so happy when us kids would talk German. So we talked the first couple of -- but my sister, she could talk English and German when she was even one year old.

Q: Helen?

GL: Yes, Helen. (laughs) Well, not fluently. But she could say words and little sentences in both English and German. (laughs)

Q: It must have pleased him.

GL: Yes, just to please Grandpa more or less.

Q: What early newspapers did your family read?

GL: I think there was a *Chicago Herald*, but I know we always had the *Tribune* delivered when it was published.

Q: Right. Did they ever read the Abendpost? It was a German newspaper.

GL: I don't know. I didn't see it around much, but they may have had it.

Q: How did most news travel in town? How did the word get around if something was happening?

GL: You mean the local news?

Q: Yes.

GL: Well, I suppose -- maybe the butcher. You had a butcher who came from door to door those years in a wagon. He'd come with his wagon and with the meat in it.

Q: You picked out your meat and brought it home?

GL: Yes, and he came maybe two or three times a week, and maybe he brought the news. I really don't know.

Q: Who was the butcher?

GL: Henry Loutsch. He was our butcher. I suppose there was somebody before him, but I don't know. The only one I remember is Henry Loutsch.

Q: How about law and order in town? Do you remember who the policeman was?

GL: I don't suppose we always had a policeman, but the one we did have years ago was on foot. I don't think he had much to do. (laughs) There wasn't much violence those years.

Q: What would be the crime if anybody was in trouble? Too much drinking?

GL: Well, I suppose. I don't remember any . . .

Q: I would think it would be in the center of town if any trouble was going on with the taverns.

GL: Yes, it had to have been down there.

Q: Was anyone in the family involved in the volunteer fire department?

GL: No.

Q: In World War I, was anyone involved in that? Any friends or family?

GL: My uncle served in World War I. John Lochner.

Q: Do you remember the dedication of the monument which is over by the library right now? That doughboy statue? Were you at that?

GL: I may have been, but I don't remember.

Q: Do you remember the different roadhouses along Dempster during Prohibition here in Morton Grove?

GL: Oh, yes. They were popular here in Morton Grove.

Q: Well, what are some of the ones you remember?

GL: Well, there was The Dells and there was the Lincoln Tavern and then The Bridge.

Q: Did you ever go in any of them?

GL: No, no. What was the big one that Charlie Kremp had. There was like a high, exclusive one. Now that was along the river. What was the name? The Wayside Inn!

Q: Oh, yes.

GL: That was a high-class one. That was the exclusive one.

Q: Where was that located?

GL: Wayside Inn? I don't know, but it was along the river. I think it was off of Dempster here this way. North of Dempster, but I don't know just where it would have been. That was class, the Wayside Inn. Yes.

Q: The elite.



GL: Yes.

Q: Do you remember any interesting stories about these roadhouses? Did they all have booze?

GL: Oh, yes.

Q: Under the table?

GL: Sure, during Prohibition. Oh, yes.

Q: Were any of the places ever in trouble with the law?

GL: Well, I suppose, yes. Who was that big gangster during Prohibition? He was...

Q: Al Capone?

GL: . . . connected here. Was it Al Capone? Might have been. They had connections here with those roadhouses, taverns.

Q: Do you remember the airport in Morton Grove?

GL: Oh, it was right here, the first one. Right next to us here.

Q: Right over here?

GL: Yes, that was the airport.

Q: Now people have been saying across from Val's Tavern.

GL: Well, there, too, yes.

Q: And I heard someone else say off of Lehigh, which would be right here.

GL: Oh, yes. This whole thing was airport here.

Q: Did you ever go up for a ride?

GL; Oh, yes. I had three rides.

Q: Did you?

GL: Three rides in those old, sitting up there in those open airplanes. There was a pilot down here. His name is Walter Meyer. We knew him kind of well because my brother took flying lessons from him.

Q: Oh, really?

GL: My brother, Richard. And it looked so safe and so simple.

Q: How did it feel once you got up there?

GL: I don't know, I think I was too scared to death to feel.

Q: Never opened your eyes. (laughs)

GL: You sat right out there in the open. Of course, you didn't stay up long. Five minutes, and you were back down again.

Q: They didn't go that high, though, did they?

GL: No, not so high.

Q: Did a lot of people come out on Sundays to watch them?

GL: Oh, yes. Oh, sure, the policeman was there. People would come and watch.

Q: Did they charge to go up in the planes?

GL: Yes, but I think it was, if I remember right, it was three dollars a ride, if I remember right. (laughs)

Q: Sounds like a lot of fun.

GL: Oh, it was a lot of fun.

Q: Were there every any accidents?

GL: Well, no, not until Walter Meyer was killed.

Q: How was he killed?

GL: He collided in mid air. I think I got the story right.

Q: Was he killed here?

GL: Well, in this area, up, out, you know, something like maybe like forty or fifty miles from here, thirty or forty miles.

Q: He collided?

GL: The few planes that were in the sky those years, he collided with a plane up there.

Q: That's kind of freakish to happen.

GL: You'd go up time after time after time after time. He was a good pilot, but that's how things happen.

Q: During the Depression years, did it have any particular effect on your family life here? Did you find it hard financially or were you basically living off your farm and it didn't affect you as much?

GL: Well, I'll tell you. On the farm years ago, you always had a Depression.

(laughs)

Q: You either made it or you didn't.

GL: Yes, it depends on how the weather was. For two years we were rained out. We didn't have a crop at all. That was before Depression or after, whatever. On a farm, you always had Depression. There wasn't much difference.

Q: Because you had to watch the weather.

GL: Well, I mean you had no control over the weather, of course. I know for a couple of years, one right after the other, two which made it really hard. You didn't have a crop. You know, everything rotted. Onions, which were our main crop, but we didn't have a crop at all for two years.

Q: How long did the onions have to stay in the ground?

GL: Well, I know you planted the seed as soon as you could get in the ground, which was in March, I suppose. March or April it was. And then I think you start to harvest them around in August.

Q: Did a lot of farmers grow onions because of Vaughn's over there?

GL: Yes. Like Geweke up here -- they were the onion kings. Family of Gewekes. They were called the onion king.

Q: The soil was that conductive to growing onions?

GL: They went into it in a big way. They had a lot of property and they went into it in a big way.

Q: Where did they live? Off of Waukegan?

GL: Well, yes, they lived right over there about where Abt is. In fact, one of their houses is still up there.

Q: Down further, across from Handyman.

GL: Yes, up in that area.

Q: Did you lose out in the bank in Morton Grove also like so many other people when that failed?

GL: No, we didn't have any money in the bank. (laughs) We weren't stockholders or anything. I think I had two hundred dollars there, and I don't know whether I got it back or not. I don't remember. (laughs)

Q: And nobody in your family worked on the W.P.A.?

GL: No.

Q: When Poehlmann's collapsed, was that big talk in town when they went under during the Depression?

GL: It was quite a tragedy. I remember going through and seeing Mr. Poehlmann sitting there and seeing his place being sold out.

Q: Which Poehlmann was it?

GL: August. That's the only part I remember. We drove through town, and he was sitting there across the street by one of those buildings, and seeing all the people going -- I guess they had an auction, I suppose, or whatever. It was really sad to have been so up, you know. They were such wealthy people and people who were so involved in everything. And then to see all that be taken away from you.

Q: Have you ever heard any other reason other than the Depression as to why that business failed?

GL: No, not really. You hear different things, but I don't know.

Q: Do you know when those greenhouses came down? Did they tear them down during the Depression? Do you remember that?

GL: Well, I suppose they were town down as soon as he closed up there. I just don't recall.

Q: Then when World War II came around in the '40s, were any family members involved in that?

GL: No, we just happened to escape for some reason or other. They were maybe too old or too young or whatever.

Q: Did that have any effect on your life back here at home? The rationing of different foods?

GL: Well, yes. You couldn't get what you wanted, but like I say, on a farm, you're always in a Depression.

Q: Did you find your farming profits going up because you were selling more during the war or did it just not affect you as much?

GL: I don't remember that part of it. I don't know.

Q: Do you remember hearing the bombing of Pearl Harbor on the radio?

GL: No, I don't remember, no.

Q: How about the reaction of different Germans -- this community was basically German. Was there a particular reaction?

GL: The only thing I remember (laughs), my father, who was village clerk here in Morton Grove then and who worked with different things because of the war, like



maybe, for instance -- I don't know what it was, but it was like book work or something. And Bill Kirscht, who was a trustee in (laughs) the village, and they were both good citizens, they went downtown on a train one time, and they were talking German, because they liked to talk German. And there was one guy from Golf got up and wanted them put off the train. (laughs)

Q: Because of all this happening during the war.

GL: Because they were talking German.

Q: Really.

GL: Yes.

Q: Was it a big scene or fighting?

GL: Well, I don't think it got to be a big scene, but anyhow he wanted them put off the train because they were talking German. That's the only incident that I can remember.

TAPE ONE, SIDE B ENDS

TAPE TWO, SIDE A

Q: Who is Medard Lochner?

GL: That was my father's uncle, my grandfather's brother.

Q: So it was really your grandfather that came to this area. He was one of the first ones to come to this area at all. It was in the eighteen, what, forties, fifties?

GL: He was born September the 5<sup>th</sup>, 1836, and he came here when he was eight or ten years old. Then it would have been like '46 about.

Q: Now your grandparents came to this area, right, as children?

GL: As children.

Q: So it's your great-grandparents that brought your grandparents here.

GL: It's my great-grandparents.

Q: They're the ones that really settled the area.

GL: Oh, yes. It's the great-grandparents.

Q: Do you know their names? I know that's going back.

GL: Well, I don't really know, but I have no doubt it was Michael. (laughs) I'll bet it was Michael.

- Q: We're almost fifty percent sure on that. (laughter) As far as your own career, you worked on the farm, and then you're into the greenhouse.
- GL: Yes, and I've been more or less running the store part ever since, which is now like fifty years or more. (laughs) And I'm still running it. I'm still the big mouth over there. (laughs)
- Q: That's incredible. Women's lib. (laughs) Do you remember when you got your first telephone in your family? Was that a big event for you?
- GL: Well, it was a big event. It must have been . . . (pauses) . . . now let me see. It must have been like about 1918. Around or a little sooner than that -- maybe 1916.
- Q: How about electricity? What did you use in your home before you got electricity?
- GL: I suppose we had the lamps. I don't remember that part, but then they had gas. They had these little mantles, you know. They were about this big -- as soon as you'd slam a door, they'd fall to pieces, you know. They'd collapse. (laughs)
- Q: What did you do when you were a child and your mother wanted to keep something cold?
- GL: We had a cellar, and it was fairly cold down there.
- Q: For the milk and everything?

GL: Yes.

Q: I'm always interested in the different conveniences that we have today that you didn't have then. How did she do the washing?

GL: Well, we had a machine that you had to work by hand. It wasn't on the board. You had to work it by hand with a pull, you know, like -- and I guess they washed pretty good, too, as far as that goes.

Q: Did she make any of her own soap?

GL: Oh, yes, she made her own soap, too. And she canned like about six hundred quarts of stuff every year. Yes.

Q: SO you were never wanting for food that's for sure.

GL: Well, no, because you canned your own. You canned when you had it from the farm or when it was cheap to buy. You'd always buy like a couple of bushels of peaches in the fall when you'd get them for a couple of dollars a bushel. And then a lot of the stuff like tomatoes and beans and all that sort of thing you'd have yourself.

Q: How about politics in town? Was anybody in the family actively involved in politics?

GL: Well, my father was village clerk for I think forty-five years. Yes. Otherwise, not. No, that's all.

Q: Did your father's brothers all stay in the area here?

GL: Oh, no, none of them did. No, they all stayed around Chicago area, except one went to Cleveland.

Q: And the rest settled. What was in Cleveland?

GL: He done pretty well there. He got to be head of a department with the May Company. He went there when he was just a -- you know, nobody went to high school, of course, or anything like that during their time. And even my time, because the nearest high school we had here was Carl Schurz down there.

Q: Right.

GL: So I guess he left when he was about seventeen years old. He headed off for Cleveland and he got in with the May Company. He was one of the buyers there. He got to be quite a successful businessman.

Q: So to this day, there's Lochners in Cleveland?

GL: Well, yes, I think he's got one son there yet. I believe so, yes.

Q: Do you ever remember the ice cream wagon coming around?

GL: Yes, I remember it.

Q: How about civic organizations in town? Was there a girls' club?

GL: No, there was nothing like that. The only would be like the church group, you know. Then one time, we had a little bowling group get together. You know, we bowled through the church. I played basketball for a couple of years. (laughs)

Q: Did you? They had a girls' team?

GL: (laughing) Yes, we played down here at Grove School. They had a place downstairs, you know. We were all girls from the church. Everything you done mostly was from the church.

Q: Well, it was a good way of getting people together at the church, and people clustered around it, so that was good.

GL: Yes, we played basketball I know for a couple of years. Then we started -- see the Lutheran church down here had two bowling alleys.

Q: Jerusalem?

GL: Yes, it's gone now. The building is gone. The Jerusalem church down here. And that's where we started to bowl. None of us knew how to bowl. Some took two hands and threw it (laughter). And then we finally got a little more expert at it, then we went to Des Plaines and bowled.

Q: Oh, then you were big shots. (laughter)

GL: (laughing) Yes, then we went to Des Plaines. And I'll bet they were glad when they saw us, when they had to play against us, because they always won. (laughs)

Q: Well, of course, when you know you can't win . . .

GL: They always won, so they were better than we were. (laughs)

Q: Well, we've just about covered everything.

GL: They were the better bowlers up there. They were at it longer.

Q: Is there anything in particular that you liked best about Morton Grove or about living here in the area?

GL: Well, I think it's the best place on earth as far as I'm concerned. I wouldn't want to live anyplace else.

Q: It's always been your home and your family's home.

GL: Yes, yes. I have no desire to go anyplace. They can have Florida, they can have Wisconsin -- well, I like Wisconsin once in a while. (laughs) Maybe for a week or two or three. No, I have no desire to go anyplace else.

Q: What do you think about all the changes that are happening? All the building they're doing now?

GL: Well, see the way I'm situated here, if I don't want to look across the street and see all that goings on over there, I look east and I see the woods, and I wouldn't know if anything ever changed.

Q: You're smart, Gertrude.

GL: I can have my choice. I can look out, I can look east and it's the way it used to was. I look over there and then it's different. And I don't know which I like best. I think I like them both.

Q: When we were going over different things, you said that your grandparents before they came over had a store in Germany.

GL: Yes.

Q: Now is that a family tradition? Had there always been general stores?

GL: Well, no, it just happened to be one of the things he done for a living. I don't think it was a tradition though.

Q: Do you still have relatives in Germany?

GL: Oh, I suppose so.



Q: But no one you keep in contact with?

GL: No, no one in contact with.

Q: Do you know from where in Germany they came?

GL: Yes, now my mother came from Krufft along the Rhine, and the town nearer that people know better is Andernach. That's a bigger town. But it's still on the map because I've got some German friends who go there all the time. I was visiting there one time, and they had a big map of Germany and they allowed me where Krufft was. See, it's a little town, but they never change names over there, they said. See, like here, Lincolnwood was Tessville. Now Krufft is Krufft and it stays that way. So it's still there. I saw it myself on the map. That was where my mother was, then my grandfather, my Grandpa Lochner, he came from Wurzburg, Bavaria, around the Bavaria area. Here's the name of it here.

Q: W-U-E-R-Z-B-U-R-G. Yes, I think you did a pretty good job at that. This is what Evelyn [Gertrude's niece] had given me when they came to interview you that time, and I wanted to ask you about this. When you told me about the Dilgs and the Gabels here, you have that the three families put their names in a hat to divide the land. Is that true?

GL: Yes. See, evidently they must have just bought this whole section here or whatever, you know. Those things were sold in sections, I suppose. And then the three women, they put their -- this was my grandmother and I guess it was Mrs.

Dilg and Mrs. Gabel, then the women had to pull the name out of the hat as to what section was going to be theirs.

Q: And that was that.

GL: That was that. And my grandmother drew this part here. Then the Dilgs and Gabels drew over in there. So if she'd have drew different, if she'd have drew over there, we wouldn't be on Dempster. We'd be on Waukegan Road.

Q: So now these stories have been passed down to you kids like this,

GL; Yes.

Q: Here you said six to eight weeks, huh? I wonder what made them come from Columbus down to this area?

GL: Well, that I wouldn't know. They didn't have anyone here or I suppose they wanted to go to Chicago. You know, they came to Chicago.

Q: Maybe they did. Maybe they heard that there was more land available out this way.

GL: Yes, I suppose he wanted to come. It was cheap. They farmed then in that "Baumanville" area. When he came to Chicago, that was all prairie there yet. And he had enough money to buy like, I don't know, thirty or forty or fifty acres there. But people discouraged him. Said, "Chicago. Oh, don't put your money here. Chicago's never going to come out here." And he had enough money,

because, like I say, they came, they had a lot of money when they came from Germany. It was a lot of money in those days, you know, eight thousand dollars. And he could have bought, oh, a lot of land down there, but they said, "Oh, that's never going to be anything. Don't put your money here." (laughs)

Q: Did they ever mention how much it cost them for the boat trip over?

GL: No, not to me.

Q: Now here it says -- how much did you say she had sewn in her skirt?

GL: She had eight thousand dollars sewn in her skirt. Is that what it says there?

Q: Eight thousand? That's a lot of money.

GL Yes, that was a lot of money in those days.

Q: They must have been well off.

GL: Well, yes. Oh, they were well off. They didn't leave Germany because they were looking for better fields or better pastures.

Q: No, evidently not.

GL: No, they just left Germany because he didn't like that regulation of that Army thing for his sons. See, they had how many? Four or five sons.

Q: Oh, so many sons had to go in the Army?

GL: Yes, he didn't want that. He didn't like that, the way they operated, the way the Kaiser (laughs) . . . He didn't like that Kaiser thing there, but I suppose it was better than it was later when Hitler took over. But I guess the Kaiser wasn't too goo either, huh? I mean he was pretty powerful . . .

Q: No, I guess not.

GL: Yes, I guess he had a lot of power, too. So that's why they really left. I've got the picture if you want to see it. Or have you got time?

Q: Yes, I'd love to see it.

GL: I've got the picture of their place over there.

Q: Yes, let me take a look. (TAPE STOPPED AND RESTARTED)

GL: [looking at photographs] See, I used to always read these, I used to like mystery stories. And I thought one day I'd win that thousand dollars and I wanted to look intelligent, so why I looked that way. I wasn't going to smile or nothing, because that's the picture I was going to have put in the paper. Only I never won the thousand dollars, but I got ten dollars once, and I got five. (laughter) Now that's my cousins. These are the Heinz's. But now that ain't Fred, though. That's Harry. (laughs)

Q: Yes, you can see a resemblance in the eyes.

GL: So now this is my brother Mike and Richard. That's when we lived up there, and this is my grandparents when they celebrated their Golden Wedding. That's Mike and that's Katherine. And then this is my grandmother when she was in her nineties. She lived long, too.

Q: This is Michael's wife? Michael that lived to be 102 -- your grandfather?

GL: Yes, this is Michael. That's husband and wife there.

Q: How long did your grandfather live?

GL: Eighty-five.

Q: She lived to be what?

GL: Ninety -- just about ninety-five.

Q: Have you always grown just house plants in your greenhouse business here or was it bedding?

GL: Well, no. Mostly bedding. Like now we got seven thousand poinsettias out there. Then at Easter we got a lot of Easter lilies. The green plants we didn't grow. We just sell them; we just handle them. Once in a while we grow some. [looking at photos] Now this is my father at one of the village meetings. That's my

father there. They're discussing something there. That's just a picture. See, now this is on the river down there. That's where we're skating on the river.

Q: Boy, that's an oldie.

GL: Now that's a big threshing machine there.

Q: Did you own your own machines?

GL: No. that's my father and mother standing in front of the house here.

Q: Threshing machine. 1915. What's this? 1950.

GL: And that's down here on the river. That's my sister and my cousin.

Q: Skating on the Morton Grove River. Where is this?

GL: Well, it's just down here by the bridge.

Q: Oh, yes. On the other side.

GL: See that's the house when it was up there before it was remodeled.

Q: Yes. Look at those pumpkins you have in the front here. And squashes.

GL: And this is my father and Max Finke. You heard of Max Finke and Fred Huscher, didn't you?

Q: Yes.

GL: They always used to come to visit him when his birthday was. So these are all pictures that you wouldn't be interested in unless you've got a lot of time.

Q: Just explain it to me, and pass them on. I love looking at them.

GL: Now that's when my father was a hundred years old. That's us -- my sister and Richard and me. This is in Columbus now, about fifty years, it almost was fifty years to the day that they left for Columbus, and we drove out there one time, my mother and dad and I. and so we never was there in fifty years, but she knew the park that they lived across from. And the park was still there, and this was their house. Only instead of it being a home, it was a two-flat now.

Q: But she only remembered the park?

GL: Yes. And by remembering the park, she knew. Now this was my mother's home, and see, this is where their store was in Germany. And this is where the store was in this front part of the house. It was part of the house.

TAPE TWO, SIDE A ENDS

TAPE TWO, SIDE B

Q: How old is Richie?

GL: Richard is ten years younger than I am. He's sixty-eight. Now that's my Grandmother Lochner when she was around ninety.

Q: Boy, you have pictures here.

GL: Oh, I got a whole bunch of those pictures.

Q: Oh, this is cute. I love looking at these do you still have get-togethers at the house here at Christmas and all that.

GL: Not any more. Now when my mother and dad were living yet, I had people come here quite a bit. I always had a Christmas party. On Christmas Day I always had like my aunt and uncle who were single and lived over in Skokie, then my brother and his wife Betty, and my uncle who lived in Chicago who lived alone. But now I don't any more.

Q: What did all the other brothers and sisters do? Did any of them go into business?

GL: Well, I only had another brother -- one more brother.

Q: How about Helen then?



GL: Helen got married and she . . .

Q: Raised her family.

GL: Yes, they lived over here and her husband had, was in another line, you know.

And my brother, Mike, he started out with it, but he didn't like it, so he left.

He went into the like black dirt business, selling black dirt.

Q: Selling it.

GL: Then he'd buy property and sell it and like that, you know. Then when the dirt

was all off, he'd sell it, and he got himself into a pretty good business there.

Q: See I was under the impression that maybe your father had build the greenhouse.

GL: No, no. Richard and I built it, and we run it. But it was his property, though,

you know. It was on his property.

Q: How was business that first year when you opened in the middle of the Depression?

GL: Well, we didn't expect too much. We were never discouraged, because we didn't

expect too much. Although we had people that bought from us anyhow with the

vegetables and that, you know, they came and bought the flowers then, too. My

mother's the one who grew the flowers, and we sold more flowers than we did

vegetables, so that's what gave us the idea of why not start a greenhouse. We

had to do something, you know. You're sitting on, you're here on five acres of land, six, well, you had to do something. You couldn't farm, so . . .

Q: Did you grow all different kinds of flowers?

GL: Well, at first we used to grow cut flowers. We used to grow mums.

Q: Carnations.

GL: No, not carnations. Just mums. That was the only cut flowers we grew. And we were the kind that stuck, you know. We didn't get discouraged. We didn't give up.

Q: I think that's really remarkable.

GL: We stuck through the thick and thin of it.

Q: Yes. That's great. So it's just you and Richie back here working now. Are any of the kids . . .

GL: Yes, Richard's son, Jack, he's here with us. But his son, Dick, he didn't care about it, so he didn't like this kind of -- too much work, you know. It's a lot of work in a greenhouse.

Q: Yes.

GL: He didn't like this kind of business.

Q: Well, you've got a beautiful place here, Gertrude.

TAPE TWO, SIDE B ENDS