Mary Murphy: ...was if you would tell me how your family got here, got to Montana and Butte?

Anna Marinovich: How would I start this now?

Unidentified Female Speaker: Is it on?

Second Unidentified Female Speaker: A little louder Annie.

MM: It is okay. It will pick it up there.

AM: Close it off a minute, and I’ll...

(Break in audio)

AM: I would repeat it!

UFS: Okay. You don’t have to worry on this tape. What Mary does is she goes through and edits all of it. So any mistakes she takes care of.

MM: Right. Then I will send it back to you, and you can make sure it is okay.

AM: When Mother came to America, she was sent by her mother. In them days, they had men that were wanting wives. It reminds me so much of the...How do they call those?

UFS: Seven Wives for Seven Brothers?

AM: No. You know the story of the lumber camp and the girls of Seattle, the brides? They were all picking out when the girls come. They were crazy to see the men too. The women, they were picking out saying, “This one is mine.” By god, that movie! It was in the movies! Did you ever see it?

UFS: Yes, I can’t remember the name of it.
AM: God, I love that movie. My grandmother heard of this man. He was quite wealthy. My grandmother wrote to him saying she had a daughter which was only at that time not quite 16. It was just like the colored folks, when they sold you to slavery, which is the way I would put it. She had to come. She was sold to this man. She came fine and dandy. They greeted her...

MM: She came all by herself?

AM: All by herself, nobody with her. She came to this country without an aunt, an uncle, a cousin, a sister, or a brother. Right off the bat! You might as well say she was robbed of her teenage, childhood, and everything else. There were just the girls in that...no boys at all in that family.

Anyway, she had to come. When she saw the man, she just started to cry. She just couldn’t, and she wouldn’t. She couldn’t, and she wouldn’t. He was just a little bit...Not a little bit, but they say quite a bit older than her. In fact, it was the Bulklas (?), the rich man. Then Boglish (?) man wanted her. She didn’t want either one of them.

MM: Did she come here to Butte?

AM: In Anaconda, Montana, she landed.

MM: In Anaconda.

AM: My dad landed in Ely, Minnesota. His friends moved over to Anaconda that he came with, too. But I’ll take mother first.

Anyhow, she would not. This Mrs. Shutey had a boarding house. She had to take mother for a maid. Bless, my father was there boarding. Just because my dad was jolly and loved to sing, dance, and joke...He never had a rusty penny. In fact, my mother bought his wedding suit for him.

MM: (laughs)

AM: Really and truly. It is a fact.

UFS: I believe it. (laughs)

AM: Yes, because dad...The ladies could get a little bit better work, but Papa, he was always kind of chest sick. He couldn’t stand it. In fact, after they got married, they couldn’t stay long in Anaconda. They moved to Butte.

MM: Was he working at the smelter?
AM: At the smelter down there. He had to have that muzzle on the nose while at the blast furnace. Is what they called the smelter. He came to work in the mine, and I don’t know if that helped him a little bit better or what.

Anyhow, they got married down in Anaconda. I’ll finish that part first. He was a boarder there. Just because he knew how to dance, my dad was...He was husky, but he glided along. You see Lawrence Welk and the way he dances. In fact, he won a prize, years ago, when he was a young fellow for dancing. My brother Pete holds himself like that too when he was dancing. I often said that. And who taught us girls to dance? (laughs) Papa! You know how? I was thinking about it the other day when they went to see that [Frankie] Yankovic down here. Agnes will tell you that too. We did the two step, the waltz, and what have you, with a little mouth harp playing, and us waltzing on the kitchen floor on 71 Plum Street. That’s how we learned to dance. That’s all I know is that.

MM: (laughs)

UFS: They are good dancers, I’ll add.

MM: I’ll bet.

AM: Like you say. So anyhow, Mama and Papa...

MM: Were both your parents from Yugoslavia?

AM: Mother was from Slovenia and Father was from Croatia, but they were both born in Yugoslavia, really. Mother has a little bit of German in her, too, because, the boys, they were here not long ago—the cousins. His mother told him too that...My grandfather and grandmother came to America in Scranton, Pennsylvania. They had two daughters born there—Emma and Louise. They were born in America and spent their life in Yugoslavia. The mother was a sickling. They took her back home. I don’t think everybody in East Butte could say that they had...I always say I was cheated of a grandfather and grandmother. I don’t know why the old man let her go back, otherwise I would know who my grandfather...

UFS: Your mother was born in Pennsylvania too, wasn’t she too? Then she went back then.

AM: My mother? Never.

UFS: I thought she was born in Pennsylvania.

AM: Oh no! My...Mitska, Bill’s mama, is the oldest. Her, my mother, and my Auntie Anka, the three of them were born in Yugoslavia in Zalec. Then Emma and Louise. There was five girls only in that family. Papa never had no sisters, and Mama never had no brothers. Funny.
MM: Yes, that is.

AM: Anyhow, she came and fell in love with Papa. They got married on April 12. I got their
marriage certificate. I went and picked it up in Anaconda. They were the first couple married in
Saint Peter and Paul Church before it was even blessed by the bishop.

UFS: Oh boy!

AM: When I went to Mrs. Slavich’s wake and funeral, I stopped at...Dr. Maroney was his name.

Unidentified Male Speaker: Father, not Doctor.

AM: I always say Doctor. I don’t know why. I even call Father Burns doctor every now and then.
I am so used to calling Dr. Murphy that I think everybody is a doctor.

MM: (laughs)

AM: (laughs) Well, you know, after all.

MM: What year was that that they got married?

AM: I can show you the certificate. 1898 I think, or 1899. I got it smack handy. I can show you.
Saint Peter and Paul. Mr. and Mrs. Adler was the Bronzovich’s (?) mother-in-law.

UMS: It must have been before that, Ma. You are married 64 years. That would only be 70 years
for them

AM: No, I’m not married 64...

UMS: Or 63...

AM: No.

UMS: 1918.

AM: 1918, yes. That don’t make it that much. Sixty-one.

UMS: Sixty-two.

AM: You better believe it. Don’t put me child bride, for Christ’s sake! (laughs)

UMS: Ma?
AM: I was four months less than eighteen. I was married in 1918.

UMS: That is 62 years that you are married.

AM: Yes.

UMS: If grandpa and grandma were married in 1899 that would be 71 years.

AM: I got it in the black and white. It is handy. I’ll show you.

MM: (laughs)

UMS: If Grandma...

(Break in tape)

MM: I always wondered where that (unintelligible) came from.

AM: I’m always buying a frame (?), so help me. One of these days, it’s got to be. (unintelligible)

UFS: Yes.

MM: Ann, that is beautiful.

AM: That is my Mama’s.

Several speakers: 1899.

AM: Wasn’t I right?

MM: Yes. (laughs)

AM: I know what I am talking about.

MM: (laughs)

AM: I didn’t work in the kitchen with my Mama for nothing. She would tell me history from when she was a kid.

UFS: Now tell me (unintelligible).

AM: Now (unintelligible) nobody. (laughs) Beside the one who (unintelligible).
(Multiple speakers talking at same time)

UFS: Like Rodney Dangerfield. Don’t get no credit.

MM: Don’t get no credit.

AM: That’s my Mama. You see...

MM: This is great. So there’s Stephan (?) and Agnes...How do you pronounce it?

AM: Rauch, really German. R-a-u-c-h.

UFS: Rauch.

AM: It is a little bit (makes a rolled r sound) at that end. German. When I tell the kids they got a little bit of German in them, they say, “Don’t call me German. Goddamn.” (laughs)

I say, “You can’t deny it. You got it running in your veins a little bit.”

UFS: A little bit of Jew in us?

UFS2: German

MM: German.

UFS: Oh, German.

UMS: I thought German Jew.

AM: Yeah, Grandpa...Grandpa, Mama’s, used to go...Katie, he was like a...

UFS: We can’t tell Kathy. She’ll kill me.

AM: Which one of the sisters said that Father John Pilnoff (?) married Mama? He is a German who married my mother. I saw it black and white, and it is still down there. Holy smokes, she turned it on. (laughs)

AM: I see the red light blinking.

MM: That is okay. (laughs) We want you natural.

AM: (laughs) They were married on the 12th day of April. I told you. See?
MM: Yes, 1899.

AM: 1899. You want to see it black and white?

UMS: I’ve seen it.

AM: You better.

MM: You were born in 1901?

AM: I was born in 1901. I had a brother that was before me. He was eight months old when he died. Mama had me right the next year or so. Brother George, eight months old he was when he passed away. Here it is. Back here it tells you: son of Peter (?) and Mary Stafanitz (?), George. My mother was the daughter of Steven and Anna Rauch. Anna Rauch’s maiden name was Anna Kambich. Mama always said that she thought we were related to old man Kambich. That is how they got acquainted, through the Pfeiffers. Did you see the back of that?

UFS: No, but I’ll look at it.

AM: I am going to have that framed. I am going to have glass in the back and glass in the front. Make it nice.

MM: Yes. Did your mother still work in the boarding houses after she got married?

AM: Down there, my mother, poor darling, she had me...or little George and then me. It was such a severe winter when they came here, Mama said. They lived right in East Butte there. Next door there was the Skubitz house. That is where Georgey died, I think in there. I was born on Plum Street, lower Plum Street, next door to where Mrs. Cooley (?) was, down by Merzlak. It was right kitty corner from the...What is her name? Francy Spear. Did you know that Francy Spear had passed away?

UFS: Yes.

AM: Yes. I think I did. I am not sure. God love her anyhow, like I say. She thought she was going to live forever too. But what are you going to do?

Anyhow, then, I guess, we moved from there down to a...No, not there. Mama had a boarding house up on a...It was where the Butte Brewery is there, on the corner of Woolman and Wyoming Street. I was about 18, 20 months old running around loose. Mama had a full house of boarders then, from Serbians to...

My auntie told me that she had to send for her, my mother’s sister Ann. She had come to help Mama because she was carrying my sister Aggie. She did come. She met George, the boarder,
Tony’s papa. They got married. She told Mama that she was going to keep house. She wanted them to still stay there. She says, “No. George has already got a little place for me. We are getting married. Then I am going to keep house.” She didn’t have boarders—auntie didn’t—for a long, long time. But she kept them too, mostly all these little old ladies. If they didn’t marry, like Katie’s mama...Papa had the ranch.

UFS: My mother had boarders.

AM: Boarders?

UFS: Oh yes, she did.

AM: Before she got married?

UFS: Oh yes.

AM: I never did know that. I thought that your dad was a rancher.

UFS: No. They moved...My older sisters were all born, and Joe...

AM: Oh yes.

UFS: My cousin Joe was born in Anaconda.

AM: I get that now. I’ll tell you why I know this now. It is coming to me too. I am beginning to forget a little too. Mrs. Sayotivich (?) came with your mama. They won’t let her come. She was really Nick Larko’s sister. They wouldn’t let her come by herself without a chaperone. They found out that your ma or Katie’s mama was coming. They went and pleaded that they would take Mary with them so she would have chaperone to come to America. That is how she got here. They are from the same little village there, the Larkos and all of them.

UFS: Yes.

AM: I know. Mama told me all these. I wouldn’t know myself. I didn’t know she had boarders. I thought that Daddy had the ranch right off the bat. God love her. She was a worker that woman, a beautiful person. If you saw that a...I always say that lady...

UFS: Grandpa too. He did everything from logging to mining.

AM: Everything.

UFS: He just worked a little slower. (laughs) How old would you have been when they got the ranch in Melrose?
UFS2: When Pat and Glenn first (unintelligible)?

MM: Okay.

AM: Yes. I’ll put your mother in it, too, and your father as we go along.

MM: Okay.

AM: After all, I am kind of proud of all these old gals. They never complained. They never fussed or nothing like we got now. Everybody wants the best. They scrubbed wooden floors. I don’t know what all they didn’t do. Everything. You name it; they had it. Never, never, no matter how many kids they had. Wonderful parents. Raised big families too.

MM: Did that boarders live in the house and eat there? Or did they just come for meals?

AM: No. Mama only had the two rooms upstairs. There were two double beds in each room. Two boys slept together, plus a little couch in the corner or something. My uncle was up there for a while, Papa’s brother. But he couldn’t stand it. Some of them would come home polluted. The other ones were noisy. He couldn’t stand it.

So my dad built on that extra room that many used to have. Then they put the bathroom on it after. The house was without that. Then Uncle Pete helped pay for the lumber for that. Do you understand? So he had his private room back there.

UFS: He knew how to arrange things.

AM: Yes, he just wanted to. He took sick with the 1918 flu. He was only about...I don’t know. What it said on the tombstone. He was born on your birthday.

UFS: Yes. No, he died on my birthday.

AM: On your birthday.

UFS: That is right.

AM: I thought it was the birth date, July...

UFS: Twelfth.

AM: Twelfth. Yes. Anyhow, the bathroom was put on the back there. Upstairs, it had in the two back...The rooms were quite big up there. The little couch, some of them wanted to board there, single bed. That was my job—to fix the beds and keep the floors clean. Oh god! No
carpets! No linoleum! Nothing. Some of them would haul that mud up there, the steps and all. Talk about when I dust and sweep up.

They always used to say get the tea leaves wet and sprinkle it on. I didn’t like that. You know why? I’d sooner suck the dust. The tea leaves made the dust and dirt all muddy. I would have to scrub them on top. The best way was that I would just leave the tea leaves where they belong. I would throw them to chickens, birds, or in the garden, which they did after. It was all mud. It was hard work in them days, really. I just as soon plow out in the dirt and dig if I had too. No better.

UFS: They slept and ate. It was their homes. They stayed right there.

AM: Oh yes. Those boarders that Mama had...They always wanted to be where there were small children because they felt like they were family. A couple of them did. They just loved children. They were so good to all of us kids too. Every time payday would come...Two bits, fifty cents, that was big money in those days. We thought the world of that. They would bring us candy home and stuff like that.

MM: I always wondered if that was true. There were so many single men in Butte. I wondered if they tried to find other families.

AM: That was. Yes, ma’am, they did. They left their home over there. They were naturally sad and lonely. If they got in with some nice children or good family, they wouldn’t go. Mama...Papa wouldn’t have anybody but the best. You know what I mean? Some of these rowdies, he would just not take them at all.

There she was. The smelter was going with three shifts. The mine was going with a day and night shift. I don’t know how in the world she ever made it or done it, make bread and cook. She served wonderful meals and good buckets.

UFS: Didn’t they compete for clients by having good meals?

AM: What?

UFS: If they were a good cook, didn’t they get more people to board in their houses?

AM: That is what I mean. Mama, if she had a big place like Benson’s next store...Mama did have more come to eat there than she had sleeping upstairs. You know why? Benson’s house next door. They built that house for all the fireman, engineers, and the brakemen that were single coming to Butte on the different passenger trains. They would sleep there. Most of the boys got married. They had quite a few rooms left. My dad went over and asked Mr. Benson one time if he would be all right...if he would like some roomers. A couple of them slept with Mrs. Skubit...
next door. So that way they just had to come across the road or just come next door to sleep upstairs.

UFS: In your mother’s place.

AM: When that smelter and that mine was going, you should see the population in East Butte. You have no idea. Then they had a big ship, the called it. They used to walk this boardwalk up to the mine. They had the different nationalities such as Norwegians, Swedes, Irish, or something who were single men who came across because...I am telling you. They were all imported from the old country. Everybody that come from old country, where did they land but in the mines? The Irish one were the big...On Miner’s Union Day, great big slabs... who is going to win the...You have heard of that on Miner’s Union Day. Break that big rock in half. They have two men with their hammers. That was interesting. Like you see in some of these movies when they are sawing the wood and chopping it. It was beautiful! I am glad that I lived in that era, in that time.

Like I say, mother had the three shifts. We would probably go to sleep two o’clock in the morning. We were already up at four o’clock or three thirty in the morning. They had to start to work at a... Some of them worked at six o’clock, some of them seven or eight. It depended on the smelter and the mines. Three shifts: eleven to seven, three to eleven, and seven to three in the afternoon. Nothing but washing dishes, pots and pans, peeling spuds, and cooking all the time. Really! And changing tidies (?) in between. We had the babies running around too. Washing clothes by the board. That was hard living. I don’t know how them poor girls done it. Mama was no bigger than myself.

UFS: Did they have chickens, pigs, and stock?

AM: Yes ma’am. I was going to mention that now. Your dad and me used to go to Parrott Flat with the biggest kind of wash tub. Papa made us a four wheel cart. The wheels were those big, heavy wheel barrow wheels.

UFS: Yes.

AM: Four of them. We would pull by the handle. Then sometimes the load got heavy. He would pull by the handle, and I was pushing in the back. Then we would vice versa. Your back would get tired. There were no roads like now. If we had road like this, it would be easy! Over the ditches, over the rocks, and railroad tracks.

UFS: Yes, that was to pick up slop from other boarding houses (?)

AM: The whole Parrott Flat, from one street up and one down...All the way...It is all now that concentrator there, I mean that F & S (?) All that Parrott Flat from Kemper (?) Avenue from Shields Avenue. Even from the Great Northern. They had a boarding house over there.
UFS: You got the slop from all of them?

AM: All of them. Every time a bridge gang would come to town to fix different bridges, or a painting crew, or whatever it was, I would be knocking at the door. Mama was pretty good. Of course, she went to school there. She knew her stuff. She said, “When you knock on the door, don’t say ‘Please save the slop.’ Tell them to save the swill.” (laughs) Yes, my dear, I will never forget it as long as I as live. I never heard it my life. It was the first time I ever heard it. Yes, get them to save you the swill.

UFS: That sounds worse than slop.

AM: She says, “If they don’t know it, then tell them slop.” (laughs) In our spare moments, we would run down with a sack and bring a sack of coal home on the back. Railroad ties when they were pulling, we would bring them home, drag them, saw them, and split them.

MM: How old were you when you started doing these chores?

AM: I was no bigger than a grasshopper, you might say. I didn’t even graduate the eighth grade. I was going into the sixth B (?) when I quit school. I don’t know what it was like to go to the seventh or eighth grade. I never graduated. People say, “How come you never...You mean to tell me you never graduated?”

I say, “No, I was so damn smart. Hells bells, they told me to just go.”

I was...How you call...One of those...

MM: Genius.

AM: Genius. I said, “Yeah. I had so much brains they let me go.” (laughs)

\MM: I’ll bet they did. (laughs)

AM: I am kind of proud of it. I wouldn’t know a damn thing more if I did graduate even high school.

UFS: Good point! Really good point.

AM: Really! I am glad. Financially, I tell my sisters and all...They were always working. They always had to give Mama the money. They were doing this, and they were doing that. One day, I spoke up and said, “Well, I’ll tell what. I never did work. Financially, I never gave nothing, but I think I saved her a few dollars anyhow. She didn’t have to pay no maid.” (laughs) They never
teased me no more after that especially Aggie. She was working hard at Gamer’s which was hard work in them days.

This town was just loaded with populations. People were coming and going. Now, you go uptown; I don’t know a soul when I go up there, unless I meet an old timer or something. Or if I see...

UFS: Your sisters worked out. They made a dollar a day, wasn’t it?

AM: That’s all.

UFS: Housekeeping...They did everything. Cooking...

AM: Yes. Then they had gone to the lake every summer. Mrs. Evans saw Agnes working in Gamer’s. She saw how quick she was. She was kind of kind to them. She said, “Honey, how much are you getting here?”

Agnes told her. She says, “Well, how would you like to work for me and go down at the Flathead?” which she didn’t know.

Who the hell had ever heard of the Flathead? We went from here to church or school. That was it. No vacations. No trips. Where were you going when you didn’t have money in the pocket? (laughs) It was different in them days than it is now.

UFS: How much did Ag make at Gamer’s as waitress?

AM: I wouldn’t be able to tell you.

UFS: I never did hear.

AM: Katie Pfeiffer was with her. Quite a few of the girls were working up there. Pretty doggone hard, that job.

UFS: When those girls were working up there up at Con Kelley’s resort, were you working or were you married?

AM: I was already married.

UFS: You were married and already having kids.

AM: If I wasn’t, I bet you I would be over there too.

UFS: Yes. I wondered about that.
MM: Did you only have Yugoslavs board at your mother’s house?

AM: That’s about it. They were Slovenians or they were Serbians or what they call Lechoni (?). They called them Permorti (?). Uncle Tomich was a Permort (?).

UFS: Different sections of...

AM: Yes. The dialects are different.

UFS: It is hard to understand.

AM: Yes.

UFS: I used to understand one time...

AM: Yes, that is right. It is a different dialect. They wonder how I learned so quick. I said, “Well, I was interested in it. I was living with it day in and day out, so I gobbled it all up.”

MM: You picked up all the different ones?

AM: I picked up all the ones. I speak, they say Carniolan. There is a difference right there. Carniolan, you can’t hardly understand them when they talk. Like Mr. Puzel was.

UFS: It is black and white.

AM: Black and white Slovenian. Anyhow, I helped all I could. My dad, he was working as a watchman after he got through with the...He worked in the mine a while. He worked in the Pittsmont smelter. I was on the blast furnace at the Pittsmont when they used to have...they used to have kind of a little lay off in the jobs just like they do here. Then they would call you. No, you would have to go up to the office every day to see because nobody had telephones or anything. You didn’t know.

My dad would say...My mother’s name was Agnes but he would call her Nazsha (?). “If I am not going to be home in a half an hour,” he said, “send Annie up to me with the bucket.” Sometimes, I had a couple of buckets up here, holding them and going. The boarders were at the job. By god, if they knew I was on at the blast furnace. My dad with that muzzle, and he was breathing heavy because he was short-winded, but you had to. That smoke was so thick.

You see the smelters over there. Nobody could (?) in East Butte. These hills are only now, since the smelter was closed down for the last 50 years or more say...that the trees are coming back. Otherwise, everything was burnt up from the bad smoke. On a day when I see the wind blow

Anna Marinovich Interview, OH 098-031, 032, Archives and Special Collections, Mansfield Library, University of Montana-Missoula.
the ash that came from over there, you couldn’t see across the street. You had to keep the windows closed all day, or it will choke you. You’ll have to sleep in it and everything.

We were right there by the ore dump and the Pittsmont. They dumped that hot slag down there. Oh god, that heat that would come out of them! The slag that they put in the cups and dumped them over. The heat! At night the whole sky would glow red.

UFS: The heat even made your house hot?

AM: What?

UFS: The heat even made your house hot.

AM: You could feel it when you were close. It had that big, black fence all the way around. They used to call it the black fence. It was always grey; painted grey. If anybody caught you in that fence...A lot of kids, even myself...We used to, just like gopher digs a hole, crawl on our bellies, and go in to get a couple pieces of wood or just try to steal something. The watchman in there...You got to go, or you’d never get out. Sometimes, I bonked my head on nails and everything else.

UFS: Tell them about the time the watchman thought she was getting the coal.

AM: Oh yes, Russell.

MM: Let me turn this over.

[End of Tape 1, Side A]
[Tape 1, Side B]

MM: I got it, okay.

AM: It was myself and a little...She was born in the old country. In fact, she’s in East Helena. I must go and see her one day and tease her about it. I was telling Anton and a bunch here not long ago I don’t forget my childhood even since I was a little girl. I’ll have to tell you a story about that too and another thing here.

We went down for coal.

UFS: They used to steal it off the cars.

AM: Off of the railroad cars. On the railroad cars, we had plenty of coal. The steam engines, they used to have a great big water tank like you see in the movies years ago. We used to love to watch them put that horn down and put it into to make the steam for engines to go. Then the coal chute...You drive the thing up against to the...in the back of the train cab was the engineer and fireman.

How many times I’d ride in that cab! Oh boy! It is right down there by the Civic Center. I said, “Anton.”

He says, “You got to crawl over that fence.”

I said, “One day I am going to do it! I am going to get on that point there. That’s where I got on with the...”

I used to love to ride. When I went to slop, I would sneak a ride.

MM: You would get on the point?

AM: Those paddy cars (?) that you would drive like that. Fred Sampson, he was the boss of the bridge gang! Every time he was off, he would say, “Ann, you want a ride?”

I would say, “Sure I do!”

I would go there, and he was up like this. I was real tomboy all my life (laughs), and I am glad. You better believe it! Anyhow, this day we didn’t want any of that small coal. We would watch that coal. It used to come down fast: big chunks, little chunks, and sand. We would watch the fireman shovel it in the...He would open up the big door to the engine. They would be shoveling that in there, sparks flying all over. It was lovely. She will laugh when I tell her about the banana car and the strawberry.
UFS: I don’t (unintelligible).

MM: Oh okay. (laughs) Finish the coal first.

AM: Anyhow, it was after school. The watchman told us, “Now, I don’t care if you come down, but the inspector is coming today. We don’t want you to be in the yard when the inspector has come to town.” They were over in Livingston. We ignored all that and went anyway.

They lived in the back of the coal docks. The coal dock was big. In the back of the coal dock, we saw him—that he was going. We quick skedaddled, but we wanted a couple of great, big chunks. They were chunks. They were just as wide as this in length. I always wanted a big chunk and put it on here (patting sound). Then I would put it on my shoulder or whatever.

Here I was, down there. We slid the coal dock in the chute, where they emptied the box car. Those machines were going around like that. Beautiful chunks down there. I come up. I’ll tell you. We used to slide down, quick. It was like a tin roof, shiny and nice, because the coal had to slide down into the little chute.

I got my chunk. They had some kind of a…they weren’t exactly steps. Anyhow, they were kind of narrow. Here I was, pulling my coal up on my side like this. I got my (laughs) chunk, and I was half away turned around. I was going back on the dumps, so I could go back and get another one. We used to pile it up on the dumps by the black fence. When we had a stack, Mama would come and help, maybe bring the wheel barrow or the wagon. We would take it home. They lived next door, neighbor like. Illyvich (?) was her name, Mary.

Anyhow, she was a little bit slower than me. Pretty soon, I don’t know. I never saw them. I had my back turned, and I was crossing the track. All the sudden, I guess the watchman come. Mary was trying to get her chunk out. She was on the top already. When you get on the top, you got to get off of the steps there. You turn around and grab your chunk.

I guess he had one of those…kind of like this only wider. He cracked her over the butt so damn hard. She says to the watchman, “Goddamn you Annie! Cut it out!” She thought it was me, but it was the watchman.

Then the watchman…I hear him say, “Is that little devil here?” He took off for me. I dropped my chunk of coal. It splattered in all little chunks. It was nothing but pulverized. I ran like a deer.

He says, “I’ll get you yet. You are going to get two of them, not one of them!” (laughs)

We had fun. We had struggle, work, and everything else. When I tell her these, and she tells me, she says, “Do you remember when we used to pack coal home?” She bust (?) my sack. The watchman, his name was Mike Shaughnessy and Eddy Clark, the young fellow was. Shaughnessy was good to us. He felt sorry for us. He was quite grey around 50 or 60 maybe.
around there somewhere. Then he would bust our sacks on our back. Then he would paddle our ass like this. “Now go on home and don’t come back anymore.” (laughs) When we would see that he had gone back, we would go back again. (laughs) Get some more coal. They couldn’t keep us for doing it!

UFS: Well, you needed it.

AM: I’ll tell what. Coal was cheap them days, really, but it helped. Like I told, I never financially gave them anything from working, but I saved them a few dollars anyhow one way or another.

UMS: I am going to tell you about the time they caught me and Howard Hammers (?) stealing ice.

AM: Oh yes.

MM: What happened?

UMS: The watchman swore and grabbed us both by the shirt. We were just kids.

AM: Yes, they were from the ice house!

UMS: The watchman asked us, “What do you want a slap in the face or a kick in the ass?” (laughs) It scared the hell out of us.

I said, “Neither one!” (laughs)

AM: He started to cry because he was a big, tall...They called him Rocky. For ten cents, he used to sell the ice all over the...Us kids had to. He was scared to ask for money. Who had money in them days when you are starting out in life? Him and Frugel (?), they were just little kids about ten or twelve years, somewhere in there.

UFS: And your mother did all the washing for them too?

AM: Oh god, miners’ clothes! There were no washers or dryers. It was wet belly and everything., and haul up the alley. No sewer! Oh god...

MM: Did you have running water?

AM: Running water, but we had two great big double boilers you might say.

UFS: You didn’t have hot water, just cold.
AM: Just cold! We had to get the boilers and heat the hot water. Otherwise, you would never wash clothes. Then poor Mommy used to make her own soap to boot.

MM: God!

AM: Really!

MM: She must never have slept.

AM: I don’t think so.

UFS: They said those women never complained. They were just too tired.

AM: That’s right. Honest to god!

MM: How many kids did your mom bear?

AM: My mother had nine of us plus what she lost. She had a few miscarriages. You bet she did.

UFS: Most of the women did, didn’t they?

AM: Yes.

UFS: Yes, I think they did.

AM: They never complained like you hear now. I saw a lady friend of mine. I guess she was about 43 years, 44, or a little bit more. Her children were all grown. She got pregnant again.

UFS: What did the boarders pay?

AM: Forty dollars, board and room. Washed and ironed clothes and patched to boot.

UFS: Forty dollars?

AM: Yes. Like I say, you never had no recreation. Morning through night, you had to just keep moving.

UFS: Just keep moving.

AM: This is why I got married so young. I am going to tell the gospel truth. Like I say, “Right hand to god.” Like little Annie Tomich (?) used to say, “God strike me dead if I am telling a lie.” (laughs) I was working. She wouldn’t even let me go visit Hilda Benson. I couldn’t go out of the house no place. My god almighty! Then one time, I saw Tom. I thought, “Oh my!” Which I am
glad I did. I never made no mistake, you understand. I met him in October, and I married him in December. I never had one blasted date to go out with him alone. I was kept right in the house.

UFS: That is typical.

UFS2: I think this cute, how Toma used to keep the courtship going. He used to come in buy...You remember, (unintelligible) buying China (unintelligible). She worked in the store a little. There was a store right next close to...

AM: That is where I met him.

UFS2: He used to come in and buy extra Lava soap. (laughs)

AM: Yes, he wanted to see what I looked like. He watched me from the street car. “When I was going home, I never walked. When I see you jump over that fence,” he said, “Jesus, that’s the girl for me.” (laughs) That is just the way he put it. Really!

MM: That is great!

AM: He would come there. He did ask for Lava soap when I was the clerking there. That was in the month of...end of October.

UFS: He bought a lot Lava soap.

AM: Yes, he bought Lava soap. The first time he came in, we didn’t have Lava soap. So he was cute to even tell me how good a clerk I was. He come in, and he said, “I would like to have...” I noticed him looking at me. Then I don’t know what the hell he wanted. They used to sell a little bit of shaving soap and all that stuff.

We had that ladder. I would have to fill all of them cans with everything: cotton, and I don’t know what, Vaseline, stuff like that to buy handy. I get a hold of that ladder. It was down there. I just swung it and jumped on it like a street car. I rode all the way down there. (laughs)

UFS: He thought that was pretty good?

AM: He thought that was pretty tricky!

UFS: That’s what they call sexy now! (laughs)

AM: Yes. I never did think of anything of the kind. I told him, “Well, we are out of Lava soap, but Mechanic soap is just as good.”
He says, “All right, give me a couple.” He threw me five dollars and said, “Go ahead. Keep the change.” In them days, it was only ten cents a bar.

MM: Oh my gosh.

AM: When I brought home the money, my mother thought I stole it from the cash register because I was swamper; I was packing the groceries. Helping the kids fill...We never had automobiles then. I told Anton the other day about Dewy and Dick, the two horses. They were beauties. They were looking at a show with some good work, team horses that were pulling hard. Those buggers would make a runaway once a day no matter where they were going, and come up the alley there.

Mama was always scared, if the little ones were out, they would tip over. They knew where to come. You ought to see them jump over that railroad track that was going up to the Pittsmont with the cars and all. It was Mr....He was a Petriz (?) boy. He tried to hold the horses back. He got in between the two horses, and them horses. He was just swinging back and forth like this. Oh my god! I never want to see no more of that.

UFS: Did the groceries fly all over the street?

AM: They come from the (unintelligible). They would run over the railroad track. They would come between the Mama’s house and Snookie’s (?) was on that one side, twisted around like that. They would come around there. When they come around the bend, the buck board...You know the big one? Wide with the big seat on and all? You stack groceries two, three times a day. They used to deliver. Yes, they had to put up boarders and everything. I was pretty smart, quick.

UFS: Yes. When did Toma first ask to see you alone?

AM: He never did.

UFS: I mean, he must have asked. He didn’t know better.

AM: No. This is what he did. I am telling the gospel truth. He had a Dalmatian that was there. I wave to everybody that comes now. Even if they don’t see me, I am still waving. He waved to me one day for an open street car.

When they got up to the Pittsmont...When they used to go to work in the open street cars, the biggest one they had...That thing was jammed tight right now. There would be guys on both sides, trying to get a seat to ride home. This time he got on this side where Larko’s was. The Larko’s window was that way. He waved to me. I was sitting in the cashier’s box, and I waved back! So that was an invitation to the party. He came down to buy the soap, and from the soap it went on.
Anyhow, he didn’t know how in the hell...He talked a little bit broken too, naturally, a foreigner. He was 23 years old when we got married. Tom was. That’s all. I was four months less than 18.

MM: Was he from Yugoslavia?

AM: Yes, from Dalmatia. I married a foreigner. You bet! A hard, tough worker too. He was a tall fellow. He was pretty near six foot tall. They called us Mutt and Jeff.

MM: (laughs)

UFS: How, did you say, what he did to see...?

AM: Yes. He didn’t know how the hell he was going to get over. He wanted to come so bad to the house. Mrs. Grivich...He was over at Katie Wall’s house first—Snookie’s papa and Mama. He was there. This friend of his was boarding with Mama. You know what he did? He pleased him to quit the board there and exchange for vice versa.

MM: (laughs)

AM: My mother said, “No, we haven’t got no room.” Because my mother smelled something. (laughs) You couldn’t fool my mother.

UFS: I know. There is a lot of them like that!

AM: You better believe it! Never knew nothing about it. She wasn’t going to give in, and she wasn’t going to give in. Finally, this guy went, and Toma came over. He was kind of shy, awfully shy person. He didn’t say much, talk much, or anything. He come over to my mother and asked for board. She says, “No, I got no room. It is all full up, no beds, no nothing.”

He said, “Oh, yes. Mr. so and so, today he leave your house. I know you got for one.”

My mother was stuck. So she said, “All right.” So, he come in the house. (laughs)

UFS: But you never got to sneak off alone.

AM: I never got to sneak out. But where there is a will, there is always a way. (laughs) When it was time for the wake up the boarders, I would go upstairs. I would have to knock. (gestures with hand) Either six o’clock, seven o’clock, “Time to get up.” Toma was waiting in the middle of the steps down below. He would grab me, hug me, and mug me. (laughs)

Mama wanted to know why I was long waking up the boarders. I said, “Well, I couldn’t wake up that one guy. You know, he was out.” I started making up excuses. I was smart too. I said, “He
must have been out boozing. He was hard to wake up.” I would say that I would have to....not exactly...I would never go in their room, though. No man at all. I wouldn’t trust nobody. No way! (laughs)

UFS: Just Toma on the stairs.

AM: Toma on the stairs, yes. Still, he didn’t propose.

UFS: He got up early!

AM: He did. Honest to god, Katie, I am not lying. It’s just like it sounds.

UMS: (unintelligible)

AM: Honest to god, he did. He was way too friendly. He was waiting for me. I didn’t go out with him and have any dates, dinners, or nothing. Still, I think it was the most beautiful way I met him, the way we snuck and had our little siestas or what do you want to say...little hug and a kiss and what have you. I’ll never forget the time I told him. I’ll come to that. You’re going to laugh too. I don’t want to talk too much because I might bawl. To me, it was beautiful. Really! It always will be.

Anyhow, he got to board there. He’d do that all the time. He was there about a week. Then all of the sudden, he said he would like me...Because in the evenings...It was November and December. At five thirty, six o’clock, it would start getting dark already. He had to be on the job at six o’clock. He would tell me if I would please sneak out the back door and come around the front of the house. He wanted to ask me something. That is when he proposed to me. I said, “Oh gee, no. My mother will kill me if I am going to tell her.” (laughs) No kidding! “She is so suspicious...My god, if she finds out! She’ll probably lock me in the basement and throw the key away.” I was her main help.

UFS: She’d be stirring soil.

AM: Really, that went on until she finally kind of smelt something. Then I told him no. I said that I wasn’t going to go for a couple of nights like that. What did he do? He says “Well, I’ll...” In the old country, this what they do, and this is what he did. I didn’t know.

I said, “I don’t know. I am too young to get married. I am only just 17, four months less than 18.”

He said, “That’s nothing.”

I know lots of my girlfriends were getting married when they were 16, 17. I thought, “Jesus Christ, Mary Tomich, you’re better than all them (?)? I am going to get married too. For this
simple reason, if I am going to work hard like I got to work now, I am going to get married and keep my house. If I got time, I’ll go help Mama. If not, I’ll take it easy.” So, I decided.

He says, “I am going to have a party.”

I said, “What kind of party are you going to have?”

He said, “That is the way we do it in old country. I believe in it.”

He bought my mother a five pound box of candy and a string of pearls. He bought my father a box of cigars, a gallon of wine, and a gallon of rakia [alcoholic beverage like wine popular throughout the Balkans].

UMS: In our country, that’s what they call bribery. (laughs)

AM: No. That was like a dowry to give to the folks. Really! Like I say, the five pound box of candy was for the kids and Mama. He gave her extra pair of white pearls. Mama wore them for a long, long time.

Anyhow, he didn’t ask my mother and father, but he had this friend of his that was a neighbor. He was too shy to propose and tell my mother and dad that he would like...

(Multiple speakers talk at same time)

AM: Hey! I am not lying. This is the way they done it in the old country. To ask the mother and father, he thought it was already through with me. He never even asked me. He took it for granted that I was going to. I never made a mistake again. I say, if I had my life to do over, I would take the same guy again. Same thing.

He goes to work the next night, the next night, and the next night. Then my mother right away, “Oh no, she can’t get married. No! No!”

My dad said, “Well, I don’t know.”

My dad and him got along right off the bat, just like I did. There was something about him that he liked and always did. Mama wasn’t going to give in no which way because she would lose her maid. She would have to hire one, and it would cost a little piece of money.

Aggie (unintelligible)...My sister Agnes was handy. Of course, she was 18 months younger than I was. She was good for taking care of the babies while Mama was a...She would nurse her, take care, change her, or whatever it was. That was her job mostly. After that, she would help with the dishes and the buckets because we had so many lined up against the wall. My god!
UFS: How come you mother finally gave in? She did?

AM: She did for the simple reason of this...My dad even said so. She said, “No, she is too young.” My mother said, “No, she is too young. She can’t get married yet.”

Then Tom said, “She likes me, and I like her. I would like to get married.” Then he spoke up and said, “How long do you think I am going to wait?”

My mother said right away, “Till she is 25 years old.”

UFS: Twenty-five? My god, that’s your curse for being a good worker.

AM: Then Papa said, “If that is the case...” That is why he fell in love with my dad too. My dad said, “Oh no, not in this house going to wait that long. Not even a year,” he said, “I wouldn’t let you be in the house to wait that long. As long as you like one another...I know she is young.”

He told my dad, “You won’t be sorry. She won’t be sorry either. She will never have to worry. If she promises me, she will be mine. I am going to work with all my heart, soul, and mind. She will never be hungry. She will always have plenty to eat and drink.” Which he did.

(unintelligible) said he was a gambler. He was no good. He was a drifter. He traveled coast to coast and all over. My mother was bitter against that. “Absolutely not.”

UMS: Ma, didn’t Daddy say when Grandma told him, “Ok, I’ll wait till 25.”

AM: Yes. He said, “Okay, I’ll wait till 25.”

Papa said, “No! As long as that is the way you feel,” and Mama consented

UFS: Your father probably caught you on the stairs a few times. (laughs)

AM: Maybe so. He probably saw more than my mother did. She didn’t have time.

UFS: Maybe he could smell it. His nose was bigger. (laughs)

AM: No, I don’t know what. My dad said, “As long as that is the case.” You wouldn’t dare get married in Advent or Lent either. No which way! He said, “Set the date and get married! But, you can’t get married till after Lent.”

We were married the 29th day of the December. Lent was over after Christmas. You understand? That was the day I got married. I had a wedding that lasted three days. I had one of the finest. Tom paid for, like the he said, the Kaiser silk underwear. Those one

Anna Marinovich Interview, OH 098-031, 032, Archives and Special Collections, Mansfield Library, University of Montana-Missoula.
piece...Everything! Veil, dress, and all! Whole works paid for! No honeymoon. No nothing. I never missed it.

You know that room I told you that Minnie (?) had where they dressed in there? That is where they had a bed in there. That was my honeymoon hotel, 71 Plum Street. Anton was born upstairs.

Third Unidentified Female Speaker: What happened to the canary?

AM: The canary froze that night. There was ice about that thick. The day before, it was gorgeous, such a beautiful day. Mr. Gerbich (?) was going to take us in his reel (?). They had those plastic windows. I said, “Put them all down.” I wanted all to see me. I was getting married! How does that song go? “I am getting married in the morning...” (laughs) It was afternoon. We walked across the flat to Communion for eight o’clock mass. Afternoon three o’clock, we had the wedding. We had a big, long wedding too.

MM: What did you do for three days?

AM: Danced, sang, slept, and what have you.

UFS: Ate?

AM: Ate. Yes, I had two cooks. There was food galore, really beautiful cooked food! Mrs. Molse (?) and Mrs... Buzoch (?). That was Mrs. Molorich’s (?) sister. They made from noodle soup up to turkeys, roast pig, and you name it. They even had boiled prunes. I had my cake made at the...You know where the Mondich (?) now sell it? They had in there kind of a bakery shop. It was delicious fruit cake, beautiful thinking.

UFS: It was a fruit cake?

AM: Fruit cake all the way through. It was three big layers.

UFS: Oh man!

AM: My Tommy...I had the top. It was a beautiful, great, big bell. It was the most pretty thing you ever saw. Those days everything was cheap too. When he was little, he took it off the dresser one time. My god, I didn’t know what he done with it. He mauled it all to heck. I should have put it away. I would probably have it yet today because I am the one...

UFS: He thought it was (unintelligible).

AM: Maybe so. He thought it was probably. My Tommy, the kid.
Like I say, before I got married, he was going to work. I had to walk him up Plum Street to the gate. The day I promised him I would be his, he grabbed a hold of me and lifted me like...What the hell! He was a strong man, big husky body and big build. He said in our language that I was never going to be sorry. He said, “I am the happiest man in all the world that you say you are going to be mine!” There was a couple other guys that wanted me. He wasn’t sure.

UFS: (unintelligible)

UFS2: Competition.

AM: It was really. One guy wanted to take me. He was going to take layoff on Monday and put 3,000 dollars in my name. Tom didn’t have...Just what he was getting that one week too. They were all single men. Them Dalmatians, they were pretty good sports: dressing, eating, and drinking. I told this guy. Three thousand dollars in 1918. That was pretty nice money. I said, “I don’t want you, and I don’t want your money. Leave me alone.”

MM: (laughs)

AM: That is what I told him. (laughs) I took the one that didn’t have a rusty penny left.

MM: What did your mom do once you got married?

AM: She kind of got whiff of this too that I am sneaking out and walking up the street.

[End of Tape 1, Side B]
AM: ...Oh I know. But that day I told him I would be his, he grabbed me, hugged and squeezed me. He said, “You’re never going to be sorry.” He said, “I was always scared,” because I told him that I had to think it over. He said, “No...” He told me right to my face that day. “You don’t want to think it over,” he says, “because you promise somebody else maybe.” So, when I told him, oh my god. When he left me he went... He says, “Now ...” He went like that because he put his bucket down. As soon as he put it down, he went like that. He says, “I’m happiest man in the world!” He says, “Tonight eight hour shift is going to be like fifteen minutes for me!”

I go, “No.”

He says, “No, I am so happy. I won’t even know I am down in the mine.”

MM: (laughs)

AM: From that day forward...In the meantime, where Tommy and Bernice were living, by the Big Ship up there across the road from the Pittsmont in the Cherry Street house, there was some poor little...They knew I was a good worker. She had six boarders and four little children. She had a baby in the house. I took care of the kids, the boarders, and the whole works without any trouble at all. I was happy too. I was like Tom. Work...I just went like that: one after the other.

I got proof in the pudding. That man who was delivering, he is still in a single man. His name was Tomich. He was driving for the Serbian. You know Andy Vukovich (?). He is something big too. His wife died. She was a Sullivan girl. You should know him because he is quite popular. He is a widower for a long time. It was Rufio Bryan’s first cousin he married. She was a journalist at the Montana Standard. I guess she had two or three children. Zager (?) over here was Annie Vukovich (?). Annie Zager, she died about three years ago. He had a bakery shop on South Montana. Montana Baker, if you remember, where we used to take all the lamb to roast for picnics and all that. That was Mr. Vukovich. He was a Serbian man. Annie Zager was his wife. God, she was a beauty.

MM: Did your mom have to hire a maid once you got married?

AM: My dad helped her quite a bit. No! My god, I couldn’t get no house to rent. I was too late to rent the Cornez’s (?) little house where Jessie lived. That was two apartments in there. Just four minute or five, I could have had it. So I had to live at home. (laughs) And I was still working! I paid board and room to boot! If you want to believe this or not!

UMS: Yes, your old man paid it (?)

Anna Marinovich Interview, OH 098-031, 032, Archives and Special Collections, Mansfield Library, University of Montana-Missoula.
AM: You better believe it! Yes sir! I was working for nothing all my life for my mother. I never get nothing. No way! Like I say...(unintelligible) Like Toma said, “Gee, what that means. All my body and my life for nothing but work.”

UFS: How long did you live there with your mother?

AM: Until I got pregnant with Tommy, didn’t tell nobody. I never had a child for a year and nine months. The next nine months I had it. I got married so fast, so quick that nobody knew. Aggie Spear and those Spear girls had it all over the country that Ann Marinovich is pregnant. That is why she had to get married. I never knew that Aggie Spear was at that time pregnant and single to boot. (laughs) She blamed me that I was. I never had for a year and nine months a baby. My Tommy was born a year and nine months after. So, I fooled the whole bloody caboodle (?)

UFS: Did you move before Tommy was born?

AM: Oh yes. How I got to move. Mr. Morrissey...I still was going downhill for mother all the time. I didn’t have no place else to go. I was glad. The kids and my dad when Tommy was born...my gosh! First grandchild!

Anyhow, the Morrisseys...There was an electrician...He was an electrician on the hill. There was a strike, and it was going on for months and months and months. She was a Lee girl, a Butte girl. In fact, they lived in there where Mike Olman (?) had that house, Mr. Lee. Mike Olman bought that when he was single. When he married Mary, he already had the home. He was eating over at Mrs. Ferlic’s across the alley. The home was there for Annie and the bunch where Rosie was born.

Anyhow, Mr. Burgers said, “Tom, Jesus, you got a chance now! Mr. Morrissey came down to the saloon to drink a glass of beer. He wanted to know if I knew anybody that wants to buy...” To get the house to rent, you have to buy all the furniture in there that he had. That is how I got some of my antiques. You understand? I left upstairs. Annie sold half on them on me. Double, beautiful, gorgeous dressers upstairs and nice iron beds. Those fancy things, god, they were pretty. She sold everything. But, that’s all right.

UFS: She’ll get hers.

AM; No, I don’t care if she did. What the hell. That’s what you wanted, that’s what you got. Sell it if you want, I don’t care. She never asked me if she did. Anyhow, she did. That is how I got the house to rent. That was on 2121 Ash Street right next to the MacMillan’s. Johnny Magalen (?) lived on the corner. He didn’t live in there then. He lived in that house where you were living and then beat it when you got married, Johnny Magalen did years ago. We were kind of neighbors in that neighborhood.
UFS: Ann, you know something else I bet Mary would be interested in...You know that old lady Ferlic? What did they do about the men’s insurances? They were really rotten weren’t they about them living in the boarding houses? Didn’t they have the men sign insurances? Tell me about that.

MM: Yes. What was that?

AM: When they were in the lodges because they were secretive (?) men, she went to them. She was foxy. I would never be that rotten or that dirty. If the man is working, let him do what he wants.

Elofchun (?) they called him. He froze to death coming from Evatz’s (?) when it was...he fell down. He was so cold. The street cars were all gone. He froze to death there just before New Year’s, one of her boarders. They would have to sign their lodge over. The money that they put in the bank was on her name.

MM: Oh god.

AM: She was worth a nice piece of money. You understand? Like she said, she made it all by herself. Sure she did.

UFS: I heard about a lot of those women—

AM: Oh yes.

UFS: —who did that. If the men died or something, they got the insurance.

MM: It was put all to her.

AM: Because their name wasn’t under the book. She had rent with them. They had a lawyer to (slapping noise) to put...What do you call it?

UFS: Seal?

AM: Yeah, the John Henry down. She said to my mother one time, “It is awful hard to put the 1,000 dollars together, but the second thousand come easy.”

I thought to myself, You never had the first, second, or the third one! But we had pretty good pay. You better believe it.

UFS: Then those men used to...a lot of them left their wives in the old country, didn’t they? They couldn’t afford to ship them over. They would be separated from the families maybe until...then they would send money back, didn’t they?
AM: Yes.

UFS: Families in Butte...

AM: Yes.

UFS: (unintelligible)

AM: Yes. Some of the women didn’t want to leave their native land. They didn’t want to come, so they went to work. No divorce or anything! They just picked up and married another and there you are. Kids over there and (laughs)...They didn’t want to go back because they found out that America was good to them. My husband...He was a wonderful American for that part. He said, “I had the best luck in America. I married you. I had a good job.” Not a good job, but he had a nice job, money saved, and happiness.

MM: Did he work in the mines all his life?

AM: He worked in the mines 48 years. What am I talking about? Listen Katie, I say 48 years! When he first come, he traveled wherever there was mining even here in Montana, Winnemucca, and all. When there was strikes, I was...My boy...He was over in Coeur d’Alene. He come home two weeks before he was born. I was...six months...

UFS: Yes He went to Rock Springs didn’t he?

AM: Rock Springs.

MM: When there was a strike here, he would go?

AM: Yes. He never stayed home. He always went to make money for me and send it to me. He would always say, “You’re going to be surprised what I got saved for you.”

MM: Wow.

AM: He was a real good. Now that he is gone, I never appreciate so much.

UFS: Well, you do.

AM: You don’t think. I always say, I picked myself a winner.

MM: Sounds like it.
AM: I had a good home. I don’t have the best, but what I got, I have. I buy anything I want to eat. Clothes! I say, “Come on with me, and see what I am going to buy.”

“No,” he said, “If you are going to like it, I am going to like it.”

When I dress up, “My goodness,” he says. “Sure, you’re cute,” he said to me lots of times. “You sure know how to dress.” (laughs)

UFS: Ann, (unintelligible). I don’t know this stuff either. Those men that worked different shifts, they used the same beds. Didn’t they?

AM: What?

UFS: They used the same beds on different shifts.

AM: Oh yes. Mama had like a...One room was for the miners day and night shift, whenever they went. The ones that were in the smelter, they had the other. Most of them were over there, really. There were two, four, six, eight, nine...about ten or eleven were in the house with my Uncle Pete down below. The rest of them went to Mrs. Skubitz across the road. Mrs. (unintelligible), you know? Then, over to the Benson’s, sleeping upstairs.

UFS: Tell Mary about how many of you slept in a bed. We did too. You kids.

AM: I told my neighbor over here to her daughter. I said, “You know, we were poor, but, boy, were we happy when we were kids. Better than we are today.” Let me tell you. Really! Come the holiday, hog killing time, sausage, and oh my god...

UFS: But how many of you kids would sleep in a bed? We used to...

AM: Oh my god! We never had a bed. I was telling her, “In the daytime, it was couch.” You go over here and push that up when you come at night on each end. In the daytime, you pull it down and put the...a nice cover on top. Who knows it’s a bed? When we go to bed, I was the oldest. I had to watch and cover them. I made that girl laugh today. Her mother went home with her to Billings today. I said, “We were lined up in that bed from...” I would say from Mitzah (?) when she was a baby.

Teresa was born down below, down at the Corra’s (?) house, down on Plum Street there. We lived in that place a longtime. Julia was born up above, but she was younger. It was myself, Aggie, and Mitzah. Let’s see. No, it wasn’t Teresa either. Or was it? Yes, because I was 18 years old. I was home yet for a long time. We were pretty good size when we moved for 24 Plum to 1913. Hell yes, we were lined up. I said that we were just like sardines in a can, one right up against the other. You know like that. I said, “Believe me, in the winter time, it was good.”
MM: (laughs)

AM: Because one heat the other. You didn’t need too many blankets. But in the summertime, you sweat like hell. One time, something gave loose—that one thing. I kind of reversed myself. God darn, I flopped on the floor so hard. I thought, “Oh god, I am glad it is me instead one of the little ones.” Mama told me to keep by them, the littler kids. I just tell you. We suffered the hard way.

UFS: Dad tells me about—

AM: You would be better off on the floor all together.

UFS: —how the guys would sleep. There would be a couple with their heads on this end and another couple with their heads on that head. Then they would be breathing toe jams in.

AM: No.

UFS: The kids.

AM: They were, the kids.

UFS: Well, the kids. Yes. The boys, I should say. He said the thing he hated about it...

AM: Feet. Yes.

UFS: He had to breathe toe jam all night.

AM: Yes, yes, that is true. He was the boy. We put him in the bottom. It was girls on top over there.

UFS: Oh that is how. Now I see. Okay.

AM: You bet! (laughs)

MM: So, the miners that worked on the day shift would come home and go to bed. The men that worked on the night shift would get out of bed. Would they use the same bed?

AM: Surely! Sure! Just smooth them over. It was my job to run up and straighten them up. You had to go like hell.

UFS: Where did they take baths?

AM: In the bathhouse at the Pittsmont mine.
AM: Yes, they had a bathhouse. They called it The Dry. I was always wondering what The Dry was like. My dad used to clean The Dry at the Mountain Con [Mountain Consolidated Mine]. At the Pittsmont, he was...towards the end there after the smelter, he was carrying the clock. He used to have to walk around that fence. I don’t know. He had ten or twelve...every hour, he had to...Every hour on the hour. It was nothing but walking the whole eight hours of the shift. On a birthday, he would sneak away and come home. We would always have cake. He would order from the hot tamale man when he would come. They used to come around the place selling hot tamales. He would buy each of us a hot tamale, Papa did.

UFS: Did you have anyone ever tell you about Shoe String Annie or Crazy Mary?

MM: No.

UFS: Which ones did you know of those ladies, Crazy Mary and Shoe String Annie?

AM: Crazy Mary mostly. She was half the time.

UFS: She was down here a lot, I mean East Butte.

AM: East Butte. Yeah, all the time.

UFS: What did she do?

AM: Nothing. She just had kind of an old suitcase and carried all kinds of old clothes, pretending she was selling. She was a little bit, you know, but everybody was good to her.

UFS: She did sell stuff?

AM: No, she pretended she was.

UFE: Did she get money from anybody?

AM: They would give it to her for nothing. Then she’d sometimes stop and have a glass a beer or something. I did myself give her sandwich and coffee, stuff like that, to eat.

UFS: What did she eat?

AM: She would always go over to Sinbad (?). You remember Sinbad?

UFS: Yes.
AM: Then to Julius a couple of times. Then, all of the sudden, she just disappeared. They say that she got an awful cold, and she died from pneumonia.

UFS: Yes, I knew there was a Crazy Mary.

AM: I’ll tell you what. There was a Crazy Mullaney (?). Once a month, she would get a kind of a fit spell. You could see her coming down the trestle. No one ever mentioned it. I hate to mention it. You ask Pete someday if he remember Crazy Mullaney. That poor soul! She had sort of like a stand by the statue (?), and, once a month, she would just go off the rocker. You would see her coming, and she would be foaming at the mouth. The kids would tease her. “Here comes Crazy Mullaney. Here comes...” She would cry and scream, would get real mean. She would kill you if she got a hold of you. She would be throwing her hands and legs and running and running coming down that road from the Copper Tank. Once a month, she never failed.

Another thing I have got to tell you: Canonica, his papa that’s related to Tony, they...The ladies had the...I like them the best. I got so used to them. They gave me the best pot in the house. I don’t want nothing but...granite. I liked them the best. I got some others too, but I liked them the best.

UFS: What about Canonica?

AM: Canonica...He and his brother, both...

UFS: (unintelligible)

AM: Yes, his papa and his father.

UFS: You mean Tony the Trader?

AM: They had a little stove, carried it. Every chip of wood or something, they would keep that boiling. He could tell you. The women with the hole in the washtub, hole in the boiler, hole in the butter pan, or the frying pan, they solder them there for 25, 30, or 15 cents. They would walk the whole East Butte one street after another.

UFS: That was Tony the Trader’s dad?

AM: This, nobody put in that book. I told (unintelligible) about Crazy Mullaney. I could tell you (unintelligible). On Christmas Day, Simon’s would send a (unintelligible) of two horses and a Santy Claus in the back. He would make them horses go like the devil. He was just throwing this side and this side. I thought I was going to bring a teddy bear to the kids at home. I never run so fast in my life. (laughs) I come home bawling. I wore myself out running. I run half way to McQueen. The jingle bells would jingle.
UFS: They had an ice cream wagon too, didn’t they?

AM: Yes ma’am. We would get up there. He had a dog. He had a song with it. I still remember it.

MM: What was it?

AM: (Sings) “Ice cream, ice cream cornucopia (?). A nickel, a half dime keeps you happy all the time. Got strawberry, vanilla, chocolate” He would go all the way. “Come on, ice cream cornucopia.” He had a good voice. The dog would sit there. If somebody wanted to get on that truck, do you think that dog would let them? He sat right beside him. He had a horse. In the summertime...

UFS: How often did he...?

AM: Summertime, he had the umbrella, that big umbrella.

UFS: How often did he come through?

AM: Once a week, sometimes twice. It just depended. Mama, by the time she got the change and all...hells bells from 71 or down below. We lived down on 24 Plum Street. By the time she got...I would run as far as the Big Ship. When I come home, the ice cream was pretty near all melted. It was so hot that day. Everybody wanted ice cream. (laughs) I had an interesting life.

MM: Gosh.

AM: I thought you save it (?).

MM: What was that about the watermelon and the...

AM: Oh yes, Maria. Mama had the pigs, chickens, and all that. They switched the cars around. They was just little bit watermelon scraps. It was plum full in there. We would go in there, and some of them were even eaten because they were so nice.

UFS: In the railroad cars?

AM: In the railroad cares. The bananas...They left lots of green ones in there. We would bring them home by the bunches. Papa put them down in the basement. We had ripened bananas all the time. The soft ones we would feed to the pigs; the watermelons, the same way; strawberries, the same way.

One time, I saw the nicest bunch of bananas in there. They got some kind of...something in between so they get the air. I got a hold of one those things. I threw them over, but it slipped
back and hit. I couldn’t get myself out. They were switching, and little Annie Marinovich was in the car. I went half way...pretty near around the bend going up that way until, finally, I said, “Oh my god! What am I going to do? Where am I going to land? They will think that I was a hobo girl riding in the boxcar. They are going to put me in jail. I don’t know nobody.” I was crying in there like hell. I said (?), “Oh my god help me.” All of the sudden, I did. It was running, and I jumped out. I never got hurt. In fact, I fell down ten steps out here at my house. I never broke a bone.

MM: God! It is all that hard work you did.

AM: I think it toughened me, but I don’t know. What the hell! Dr. Murphy said that I got cast iron bones. I said, “Well, maybe that’s why I can’t bend them anymore. They are rusty.” (laughs) I need some oil to strengthen the joints. Maybe I can run better or something! (laughs) I’ll tell you. We used to have the nicest fruit all the time. Then knock on the door to save the swill. I had to go two times a day. Yes, sir.

MM: How often a year would you kill the hogs?

AM: Once a year. The bacon, they used to call it...No, the fat was about that thick. Then we would have a...Dad would sharpen our knives. We would all have a little board. Mama used to render it. She used to make fifty gallons out of it at a time.

UFS: Make the lard?

AM: Yes. Sure! Who heard of Crisco? Who heard of anything like that? We would make with nice, fat lard. Good, crunchy, nice. Probably lots of cholesterol, but I am here to tell the story. (laughs) I still like lard dough better than I do...

UFS: You made crusts once when you were little?

AM: The man I was working for at Larko’s...They never had children. They all the time liked me. She was my Confirmation godmother. God love her. In fact, I got her picture. I’ll show you. Johnny...Seasatovich (?), I saw it one time. I said to Annie just for fun...not to Annie, but Mrs. Seasatovich. I said...I guess Mrs. Seasatovich told Mrs. Larko that I would. When she died, she had it up here with her up in the Crest. Johnny come knocking on the door one day. I said, “Hello, Johnny.” I didn’t know. I thought...His mother died. I was good friends with her too. That is the lady that come with your grandma Boyum with Mrs. Seasatovich. We were friends. Close to Papa’s village, too, I guess around in there in Croatia.

UFS: I understand.

AM: Yes. That is the way it is. Really! Beautiful people. Anyhow, they asked me if I wanted to go the show. Mama said, “No. I am not going to let you go unless you make the pie dough.” You

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had to make a pretty good batch. They weren’t going to wait. They wanted me to come quick. I had to kind of half way dress myself as fast as I could.

They always gave me a ride. When they had the little buggy and horse, take me every Sunday for the ride. He wanted to adopt me when I was getting married. He said, “Don’t get married. You don’t know him. We are going to ask your mother and father. We are going to adopt you.”

I said, “Oh no you ain’t! I am going to get married. You ain’t going to adopt me.”

I told him after I quit the job there. Tom wouldn’t let me work long over there. He make me quit before a long a time.

Anyhow, I said, “All right,” when Mama said to make the pie dough. Here I was. I was hurry up, hurry up, hurry up. Mother of god almighty! When I come home, she half paddled me, and I was a grown girl. I wasted all that good, lovely flour. I forgot to put the shortening in. I just mixed the water in the flour. I just made it good. I put it there, and that’s all. She was going to make lemon pie. You have to bake the crust before you put the filling in. It won’t brown, and it won’t brown. It is white, white, white! When she went, she can’t even break it, it was so hard. (laughs)

UFS: Unleavened bread.

AM: And she did! Yes, ma’am. It was. It was a good thing we had pigs. She mixed it up, and it was okay. But when I came home, I got paddled. I said that I went because they were going to be late otherwise. They had to be home at a certain time too. They had that business there with the house in the back.

She said, “The reason why I am paddling you, and giving you a whipping, so you won’t do it again. You’re going to remember to do it the right way.” I think that is the proper way to do it. I would have done the same thing. Wouldn’t you?

UFS: I guess so!

MM: (laughs)

UFS: I don’t know. I guess it would depend.

AM: I learned how to cook many years ago. I cook and bake everything without recipe.

MM: What would they serve at dinner? What would a typical meal be like?

AM: Oh god, everything from soup to roast, soup meat, homemade bread, and homemade everything.
UFS: Vegetables?

AM: Oh yes.

UFS: Like what?

AM: In the garden. Mama always had the big garden. In fact, my Tom dug the garden out when he was single. It never took him no time to shovel it out. He got a couple of the other boarders. They brought in some big dirt. You know that garden Mama had, that whole yard over there, that lot?

UFS: That is still (unintelligible).

AM: You bet! My Tom done that. When my Uncle Pete died from the flu—

UFS: In 1918.

AM: 1918.

MM: Yes, the flu epidemic.

AM: He was only about 35, going on 36, somewhere in there. I got the flu first. My Uncle Pete just thought that I was everything. He got the doctor for me. I think it was Whitford. He used to bring the pills down and give it to you.

I was in love with Tom. I got over mine quick. Poor Uncle Pete, he went to work that next day. He got sick. He went to work. Then he came home. He wasn’t feeling good. With the other boarders and all, my mother thought that the best thing, he would go to the hospital. He just lived a day and a half after he got there. He died from the flu. He had the flu.

UFS: Did any of the boarders die from the flu?

AM: Not in Mama’s. My uncle Pete was the only one. Uncle Pete...Wherever he got it, I don’t know.

UFS: Were you the only child that had the flu?

AM: What?

UFS: Were you the only one that had the flu?

AM: Yes. At that time. Yes, I had the flu. I had it kind of light like you see.
UFS: They had wine with every meal.

AM: Oh yes. Always, always.

MM: Did your family make the wine?

AM: My husband made the most delicious wine anybody could drink.

UFS: Did your father make the wine for the boarders?

AM: Yes. Not so much for that—after the boarders were gone. Papa used to buy it—50 gallon. Then the boarders used to pitch in. Then Mama had the pitcher on the table. They would help themselves that way. If Papa had to buy it, he couldn’t afford to buy the wine. Board and room was 40 dollars, washing clothes...

UFS: And the boarders...

AM: Yes. They pitched in. Papa would put in his too, so he would have some when he wanted too. Fifty gallons down in the basement all the time once a month.

MM: God, incredible. Did your parents set up rules for the boarding house? Did they have to come in at a certain time?

AM: No. They never came in through the kitchen, never did. We had the front door. When we had the boarders, that door was there. It would make that hall way over to the steps. The steps were going upstairs. If any boarder would come into the kitchen, my dad would say, “You belong...Don’t let me catch you in the kitchen no more. This is for the cook and the children here. You got the dining room.”

He said, “Maybe I could help Mrs."

My dad said, “No. If somebody is going to help Mama, I’m going to hire the help. You don’t have to help.”

MM: So you...

AM: He didn’t allow nobody in the kitchen. That was good because, hell, they’d probably all be in there watching what we were doing and what not. The little ones were around, too, the kids.

Julia, I could show you my wedding picture. Sometime when you come down, I am going to show you. Stevie, my brother, was only two and half, three years old when I got married. Aggie and...No Aggie is 18 months younger than I am. Minnie is on it, Teresa, Julia, my cousin Annie,
and that bunch. Little kids! It was nice. It is down in the basement in the box. Not in a box. All of Mama’s boarders are in the background. Tom’s Dalmatian friends. My auntie and my uncle, Katie Wall, and Kate Stafanus (?), the nurse. They were in my wedding, the only two gals.

UFS: You said three to eleven. Did miners just work eight hours then?

[End of Tape 2, Side A]
AM: ...plus all the baking, the cooking, and everything: homemade noodles, povitica, strudel, [list ethnic Slavic foods] from the buckwheat. All that old fashioned food! Just like your mama did for the hay crew (?), I suppose. Hot cakes. Oh god! I was...

UFS: Your mother made all you clothes too, didn’t she?

AM: Yes, she did, and her own half the time. I don’t think she saw uptown very much at all. Maybe once a month, that is all. Take the street car and go.

MM: Did she teach you how to cook and sew?

AM: I never did take much to sewing, never did. In fact, I could buy it cheaper than have it made, even now.

UFS: That is true.

UFS2: But you learned all your cooking from her.

AM: Oh yes, I would just watch her. Then I would do it. I don’t have no recipes. Lots of people now want me to give them recipes. I haven’t got any. I said, “I wouldn’t know.” Who the heck asked me? I made some nice bread the other day, and I gave her some. She said, “Oh god, will you give me the recipe?”

I make my bread all with potato water. I said, “The only thing I can tell you is that I can come up to your house. I’ll mix you a batch, and you’ll watch. That is all. Or if you want to come down her where I am making some.” Little Helen up here...Nicholls. I made some good (unintelligible) the other day.

UFS: Did you work with your mom after you got married?

AM: Sure. I was there for pretty near two years until...

UFS: I shouldn’t say that. I should say after you had your own house with Tom. Would you go back to the boarding house and help after you had your own place?

AM: Oh always! Even with the kids and all. I washed her clothes and everything; helped her. Everything. Oh Jesus Christ, when I calcimined my house in paint, (speaks in foreign language) she would say in my language. “Come and clean mine.” If I stretched curtains, I did Aggie’s; I did Julie’s; I did mine. I done...Oh my god! My fingers were all from the stretchers. In fact, I have some beautiful curtains. I am going to stretch them one day.
MM: God.

AM: Just for the hell of it. Even if I just put them and lay them aside. I took them off from over there. I had some pretty curtains on the window. I always liked nice windows. I used to stretch all of my...I never done it yet, but I am going to do it one day. I am probably going to tint it too, just for the hell of it, a different color. Just to keep busy. I haven’t been doing much this winter at all.

I got whip lash. I got hit in the back with a car. It is worse now than it was in the beginning. Look at it, Katie.

UFS: (unintelligible)

MM: Your first son was born 18 months after you were married?

UMS: I just got this (unintelligible).

AM: No.

MM: A year and nine months after.

AM: A year and nine months. My sister, Agnes, is 18 months younger than I am. Then mother had two other children or something like that at 16 months. Thirteen months was between Steven and the baby that was born dead. She said that she had one on the arm up here while mixing, for the boarders, polenta or something. Poor soul!

UFS: I am thinking zganci, but polenta is the Italian name.

AM: Yeah. In Toma’s country, it is polenta. And fagioli in Italian...We have fagioli too.

MM: What is polenta?

AM: Cornmeal mush. I love it. I love it! Now, I got that stone ground from Coeur d’Alene, Idaho. Is that ever good! I make buttermilk hotcakes. I even put in my buns that I made the other day. I got white flour. I got rye flour. I got the cornmeal. I got graham. I got whole wheat. All in one with the potato water, molasses, butter, and brown sugar. Only if I let this in a little bit longer. I forgot about it. I was busy. Telephone ringing, and then it was time to go over to...I went to church. I was in the procession in the back of the bishop. Coming down...it was lovely. I was on cloud nine. Seventh heaven!

MM: Did you start a boarding house of your own then? Did you take in boarders?
AM: I always wanted to. Tom said, “No, no! No woman of mine going to work. You have enough to do taking care of the home.”

UFS: What year...?

AM: You know what I told him? I said, “You’re just scared some fellow is going to catch me.”

UFS: Ann, when did boarding houses stop? Not till around 1930 or so, wasn’t it? Later?

MM: Later. Wasn’t it around the ‘50s, after World War Two?

AM: Some of them in town ain’t around.

UFS: Well a few, but the Mullin House might have...You hear these feuds. What year did they maybe...?

AM: I know Mama kept them up until...until 1920, I think. Maybe not even that far. Then after that, no more. You know why? Because the maid was gone! (laughs) I always say that. She says, “To hell with it.”

UFS: I think I came to Butte like in 1927. I don’t think, except for the Mullin House up there and the one in Finntown...I don’t think there were anymore.

AM: On Mercury, I think it was the Braun (?) House. Did you ever hear of the Braun House?

UFS: Yes, I did.

AM: You know where Penzic (?) had his drug store? Right in that block? It was on a (unintelligible).

MM: Yes. I have heard of the Finnish ones in the ‘30s.

UFS: What did they call your house?

AM: What?

UFS: What did they call Grandma’s house?

AM: They just called it George and Anna Stafanitz (?).

UFS: They didn’t have any names...
AM: No. They never had. My mother also had a boarding house. This is another good story. The corner of Wyoming and Woolman, up where the Capri Motel now is, right around the corner in the O’Brien house, my mother traveled. We were living in Meaderville one time. My dad had a saloon. That is why your uncle...my Uncle Pete. You’ll have to talk to Uncle Pete. This fellow came every morning. Petey was only about how high. Minnie! Mama was carrying Minnie. He is only few years...

UFS: Older than her?

AM: That’s all. I said two and half, didn’t I? Or three? I started school in Meaderville in 1907. I was six years old. I was born in 1901. I was six years old in 1907. I was walking from there up to school. Papa had the saloon right next to the drugstore that was down there. It was in 1907 that it was panic. The guy that had sold Dad the business...What did he do? Of course, the town was like that with people, especially all the Italians and some of the others. He make all of them come inside the saloon. He was giving them all the beer that was left because Dad was going to take it over in two, three days. Shoving the beer down, good business here and there. Yes!

UFS: (unintelligible)

AM: It was a panic. It come just in that week. Mom almost died when she found out. They went about 5,000 dollars in the hole that time. There was no relief, no nothing. They worked for years to pay that all back. Mama told me all these stories that I am going to try to hang onto them as long as I can. That is why she kept boarders. You know what she always said? With Dad’s wages that he was making...The pay wasn’t very good and a house full of kids. “I keep boarders,” she said, “so you kids got your bellies full all the time with fruit and everything.”

UFS: Yes, that is what my mother said to me.

AM: Yes, that’s true. She said, “Put on an extra potato or something. There are always lots left.” She’d buy apples by the box, oranges by the box, and all that stuff. We always had plenty of good food on the table.

UFS: Like Larko’s and the stores, they would carry you all through a Depression, wouldn’t they?

AM: Oh yes. If you had good credit, they would let you sign it down. You would pay as much as you want. It’s not like now, how you got to pay right now in cash or you don’t get it. Your credit was good. As long as you were working, your credit...Then everybody knew everybody too.

UMS: There were a lot of them that didn’t pay too.

AM: Oh yes. I knew a couple of them.

UFS: The stores would lose a lot.
AM: I knew a couple of them that didn’t. My aunt, she had a store. A couple of them right in East Butte here, to our nationality too (?). Uncle worked for nothing. They were eating for nothing, the Tomichs in the canyon for one!

UMS: About 800 bucks!

AM: About 800 dollars or more.

MM: Wow.

AM: She says, “Here we were eating...” That is true. Here, they had boiled ham every day—plump, sliced boiled ham for one lunch.

UFS: Yes. The stores used to...

AM: And bread! She wouldn’t make the bread at home. I’ll buy homemade bread once and a while. When we lived up there, Mama had boarders too.

UMS: (unintelligible, talking at same time)

UFS: When your mother had the boarding house, could she buy bread? Did they have bakery bread?

AM: They had French bread. They would just bake so much. If you put your order like today, they would save it for you. Otherwise, it was gone, even the Meaderville bakery. Even when I worked at Larko’s, I had to save all that.

UFS: But not very many?

AM: No, no. Everybody made their own.

MM: Was there a living room where the boarders could sit together?

AM: No, there was just a great big...Mama had a great big...They used to play cards if they didn’t feel like going out, but most of them used to go to shows. They had friends, and they went and visited. They would come home and go to bed. Then they would get up the next morning and go to work again. Come Christmas and holidays we had a Christmas tree, lots more to eat and lots more to drink. Yes. It was really a nice life, I think, considering.

UMS: Tell her how you raised the pigs, and how Grandpa chopped the cat’s head off.
AM: Yes, I could do that too, but I am going to finish this story. I got to tell you this. I was a little rascal right from the beginning. I never tell you that good story. Of course, Aggie was a baby. A house full of men, all grown up. No matter how high the fence was up on the North...up on Wyoming.

UMS: Anaconda Road?

AM: Anaconda Road. Yeah, that is right. I always tell people that I lived with the best of the Irish, the ones that come from across the sea from Ireland, and the best of the Italians in Meaderville. In East Butte and McQueen, it was all...

UMS: Cousin Jack?

AM: Yes. Cousin Jacks are in the Northern part of Meaderville, up on the side of the hill. I never knew for a long time. I was going to school down there. I thought it was just that main, one street as far as...the Rocky Mountain [Café]. (unintelligible) You go over up in the hillside yet over there.

UMS: North Meaderville.

AM: Yeah. Beautiful. We lived by the Pennsylvania Mine. That’s where Pete was born, on East Park Street. Right below the Pennsylvania Mine, Mama had Uncle Pete at that time and a couple other boarders. That’s all. Papa said, “Take it easy for a little while.” Then, up there, when I was just a little kid...She had us right off of the bat after she got married. She started taking boarders.

UFS: What do you think hard work is good for? (laughs)

UMS: It is a good way to break your back, (laughs)

UFS: Makes you strong!

AM: That’s right. Good day’s work...You don’t have to play golf or nothing. You got all the exercise you want to do when you are working like that. Hauling coal on your back, the wheel barrow dad made, rolling up them ties...I wouldn’t change my life for the world.

MM: That’s great.

UMS: ...if you go home and do a little god damn work, you didn’t have to exercise! (laughs)

AM: Poor thing. Sometimes she comes in here, she bring him out...I get so nervous. One time she kicked so hard. I was already married. She wanted to kick over my head. Mother of god, she...
hit me back here. I tell you, I thought I was...I saw red lights and blue stars. I turned around and looked at her. I said, “Don’t you ever do that again.” I screamed at her.

UMS: We come here after mass, after the mass on Saturday. We had coffee and little bit of sandwich and so forth. I parked the car. She puts her wheel into the curb. Then she gets in there and put’s it into gear. She tries to go. Her back wheels are going, digging into ground. She wonders why she can’t go. (laughs) Okay. Then she kind of turned the wheels, but not enough. The side wall of the tire is up against the curb. She still can’t make it. She wants to know why her tires are all wrong.

AM: Poor thing, I don’t know why she did it. Anton, you opened the door and said, “Minnie aren’t you going to learn how to drive that car of yours?” That car is too high powered for her.

UMS: One winter...This is no lie. She was out there trying to gun it. She was up against the curb. She had a god damn hole that deep dug in that hard ground out there just like concrete.

AM: Joe come across the street, and he said, “I think your sister burn lots of rubber off of that.” (laughs) This little place on Park...Uptown by the Capri now...I got to put this in a frame. I got this a long time since Mrs. Slavich (?) died. Mama never did get it. So I thought, “Oh god, I have come from mass. I’m going to ask him.”

He said, “I am not sending you nothing. I got time right now. We are going to get it right now, sweetheart.” He says, “I’ll take it.”

I asked how much I owed him. He said, “Not a thing; just for remembering.”

When he looked in there, I knew the bridesmaids and everything. Mama told me all. Tony Rumsovich’s (?) mother-in-law and father-in-law was my mother’s...She was pregnant at the time the poor woman. You can see her little belly sticking out, poor soul. Not my Mama, but...(laughs) I won’t go for that! Mrs. Adler was a little bit married before Mama. That was Snookie Gerburvich’s (?) mother’s sister. You better believe it!

Anyhow, I was a little girl. I guess my mother was busy in the house. Dad was working that day. The boarders, the few on night shift, were home Mama told me. I was looking for somebody to play with, I guess. And what did I do? I jumped over that big fence, and I was walking downtown. The coppers saw me walking on the street. There were three, four runaways. There were no automobiles. Runaways upside down (?) and everything. My dad was running all over the city of Butte, crying that he couldn’t find me. Even went into the Murray Hospital that was there. It was new in them days. He went to the undertaker and asked if so and so got a little girl.

I always liked red. I had red shoes on. I always wanted red. I still love red too. Of course, I love all colors. I don’t know. They asked me what my name was. I guess I didn’t even want to tell
them. I was having fun. The cops put me on the desk at city hall. They said that you are not an American citizen if you don’t have a shiner. That I wore too, didn’t I?

UFS: What was the shiner, Annie?

AM: Black eye. If you’re not put in jail or have a shiner, you’re not a real citizen.

MM: (laughs)

AM: You never knew that?

MM: No.

AM: So, I got flying colors! (laughs)

UMS: I must be a first class citizen then!

AM: Yes. You and I both! (laughs) My god almighty! Papa is crying and looking all over the street. A fellow said, “What is the matter, Mister?” He sees him walking up Broadway, down, and all over. Them days...those nice buildings were brand new. Nice...They still are! I love those old homes. They are beautiful. He says, “I don’t know. I have been looking for three hours now. I lost my little girl. She ran away out of the yard. I don’t know where she is at. I hope that she is alive; that she is not dead. You know, run away horse kill her or something.”

What the heck? I didn’t know where I was going. I just kept on walking, but I was in the City Hall, in the police station. I wouldn’t tell where I lived. I couldn’t tell them anyhow. I didn’t know where I was going, or where I was at. I was about two and a half years old. I guess somewhere in there.

Auntie had been home that time in America then too. Pretty soon, my dad says...He says, “Come with me. There is a little girl they got over there.” Oh my god. Papa said that when he saw me, he thought he saw Christ. He was so happy. (laughs)

UFS: ...and it had blood all over. (laughs)

UMS: The police officer bought the ice cream anyway, didn’t he?

AM: Oh hell, I had nickels in my pocket. That’s why I was happy. I had somebody to talk to and all. Ice cream! The fellow gave me, I remember, rock candy. Did you ever have that rock candy? God, I wish I could see a chunk of that. I love it. They used to have it on a string. You used to pull a chunk off. Wonderful for the throat!

UMS: It looked like rock salt.

Anna Marinovich Interview, OH 098-031, 032, Archives and Special Collections, Mansfield Library, University of Montana-Missoula.
MM: Yes.

AM: Yes. It was crystal clear like a glass. When I got home, my dad gave me a good talking to. The next day what did he do? He went and get a clothes line fifty feet long. He tied me around her and put me in the yard. (laughs) I guess he put, like Anton said, Boy Scout knots and everything else. I got the whole thing off, and I did the same thing. The cops knew where to bring me. They bring me home and find me on the street again. Then Mama really had to lock me in the house because they were afraid I would get killed. I was a little...

UMS: They did that with Sandy. Every time they would go shopping, little Sandy would disappear. So, they had them harnesses with a god damn leash on them. She got one for Sandy. She couldn’t get away from her.

AM: The fence was high, but I made it. I was like a spider crawling and jumped over. Mama would say, “Spytmyš (?)”. That is another word.

MM: What’s that mean?

UFS: What is it? I never heard that before?

AM: Spytmyš.

UFS: Spytmyš. (laughs)

UMS: Tell her about how Grandpa...

AM: You know one of those quick mice that can run quick. (laughs)

UFS: Say it again?

AM: Spytmyš.

UFS: Spytmyš.

AM: Myš.

UFS: Myš.

AM: Myš is a mouse. Myš. (laughs)

UFS: I don’t know anyone that runs that fast. (laughs)
AM: Really and truly, this is true. Not long ago, someone was looking... She said, “My god! I put him out in the back yard for a few minutes. I didn't even turn around in the house. When I looked out, the kid was gone. Before I could look in the back, I looked up the street." She said he was pretty near reaching Saint Ann’s [Saint Ann’s Catholic Church]! He walked that fast! How he got up there that fast, I swore! He must have been quick running. He just walked, I guess. He didn't know where he was going. Probably no one to play with. Kids will do it, every time!

UFS: Ann, tell them about the chickens, Steve’s chickens.

AM: What?

UFS: Tell Mary and Bonnie about Steve’s chickens. Steve’s chickens. This guy killed them (?).

AM: That was a...

UMS: Raldulovich (?).

AM: Yes. Sam Raldulovich came down. No, he called on the telephone. He called on the phone. I was talking to him on the phone. He came down, maybe, two days later. He said hello. That was when Pete was with his leg in a bed. Right about that time, when Toma was in a mine, it caved in. His hip was out of joint. He went up here...his leg...Tom...I guess he took six cans of ether before they got him to sleep. They thought they would have to cut it off. He was trying to save it. He just wouldn’t...Finally...he was sick when he came out of it.

So, this guy says, “Who am I talking to please?”

I said, “This is Annie Marinovich.”

“I don’t know you.”

I said, “I don’t know you either.”

He said, “Sam Raldulovich.”

I said, “I don’t know you either. What do you want?”

He said, “I want Annie Tomich Stafanitz.” I said, “Alright, you’re speaking to Annie Stafanitz Marinovich.”

Again, “I don’t know you.” I said, “What do you want?”

He said, “I make bargain with brother, Steve. I want to talk to Annie or Steve.”
I said, “No.”

First, he says, “We make bargain. I am going to give to him one of my pullets for one of his rooster. I need rooster awful bad for my pullets.” (laughs)

I said, “Well…”

He said, “Can I talk to him?”

I said, “No, you can’t. They have gone to Dillon.”

“Oh Jesus Christ, don’t kill them. Please don’t kill them. God Almighty, don’t kill them. Please don’t kill them.” Then he said, “Where did they go?”

I said, “They went to Dillon.”

“No, please, Mrs., don’t kill them.”

He didn’t know what Dillon was, I guess. I don’t know. It does sound…Dillon and kill them. (laughs) I am on the other end giggling and laughing. Mama was laughing in the room. She said, “What is so funny?”

I said, “I am going to tell you after a while.” Pete was in the room, Mama’s bedroom, with a burnt leg that day from when he got in the garage.

Then he said, “When you expect him to come home?”

I said, “I don’t know. They have been gone for two days now. I don’t know when they come home.”

“Where they go?”

“They go to Dillon.”

Again, “Please don’t kill them, lady! Please don’t kill them. I am going to come in a stage car. I will bring you a sack with my pullets, and I am going to take that rooster home.”

I never know what they make. Steve had chickens. Nice! He was pretty good that way to have animals around the house. Pretty soon, he said, “Well, I will tell you what. I don’t know if I am going to come today, but please, Mrs., don’t kill them. I don’t know you, but you sound all right.”

I said, “Well, I am Steve’s sister.”
“Well, I still don’t know you,” he said.

When he told...he said, “Sam Raldulovich.” I had never heard of him myself, just like he never heard of mine.

UMS: He lived up on East Granite.

AM: Some place up there, yes. Anyhow, he came back. When I saw, I got the giggles. I started laughing. I turned around and went out the yard. I went back home. I couldn’t go in the house because I would have laughed out loud. I couldn’t help it.

MM: Did he trade the roosters and chickens?

AM: Yes. Steven gave him the rooster, and he brought the pullet down. “He don’t want for nothing that rooster. I’ll bring him one pullet,” he said. “Please, Mrs., don’t kill him.”

MM: That’s wonderful! That is about two hours.

AM: That’s about it?

MM: Yes.

UFS: Oh god!

[End of Interview]