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Langsdale Library
Special Collections Department
1420 Maryland Avenue Baltimore, MD 21201-5779
Baltimore Neighborhood Heritage Project

Biography Form

Name: (including maiden name) Regina Holdorf Glaeser

Address: 3201 Fleet St. 21224

Phone: 675-1164

Date of Birth: 1893

Place of Birth: Baltimore, Md.

Mother's Name: (including maiden name) Annie (nee Land) Holdorf

Date of Birth: 

Place of Birth: Baltimore, Md.

Occupation: Housewife

Religion: Catholic

Father's Name: George C. Holdorf

Date of Birth: 

Place of Birth: Baltimore, Md.

Occupation: Builder

Religion: Catholic

Brothers and Sisters:

Schooling and/or Other Training:

Public school to 8th grade

Occupation(s):

Sorter at Crown, Cork and Seal Co.

Clerk at Elberth's Department Store

Dates of Births:

Years:

Years:

5 Yrs.
2 yrs.
Religion/Church Membership:
Catholic - Member of Sacred Heart of Jesus

Membership in Clubs and Organizations:(ethnic, religious, political, unions, etc.)
26th Ward Democratic Club (50 year Membership)
John Broth Senior Citizen Club
Mother's of the Boys' Club (Red Shield)
Holy Family Church

Previous Residence(s):
621 South Clinton St.
707 South Lakewood Ave.
721 S. Conkling St.
3310 Fleet St.

Spouse's Name(s): Robert Jordon 1st
George L. Glaeser 2nd

Occupation(s):

Dates(s) of Marriage(s): Robert Jordon in 1913
George L. Glaeser in 1931

Place(s) of Marriage(s):

Children(s) Name(s):
Anna C. Jordon 1914
Gertrude Jordon 1916
Elizabeth Jordon 1918
Robert W. Jordon 1921
Regina M. Jordon 1926
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<td>Building, Boundary change - 805 N, Clinton 621 S. Clinton</td>
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Note spellings of proper names and foreign and old fashioned words; clarify passages that are hard to hear or understand.
### Tape Index

**Name of Informant:** Regina Glaeser  
**Date of Birth:** [Blank]  
**Date(s) of Interview(s):** October 26, 1978  
**Total Length of Interview:** 1 hour  
**Total Number Tapes:** 1  
**Transcribing Priority:** 1  
**Interviewer:** Ken Dashiel  
**Site:** Highlandtown  
**Site Number:** 1

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TO: Potential users of this interview  
FROM: Linda Shopes, Oral History Consultant with BNHP  
DATE: May, 1980  
RE: Evaluation of this interview  

This interview is part of a series of interviews conducted by participants in the Highlandtown history group. This group was convened by me during the fall of 1978 as an outgrowth of the interviewing and other history-related activities BNHP had been conducting at the Abbot Memorial Church "Eating Together" site in Highlandtown. The purpose of the group was for me to teach participants how do they do a history of their own community, to involve them, in other words, in the work of BNHP. Part of the training I did was instruction in the techniques of oral history interviewing.

The group itself was minimally successful in achieving its purpose and the quality of this interview reflects that limited success. It was difficult for participants to learn the skills of interviewing. So, for example, questions posed to interviewees are frequently "loaded." Also, the structure of the interviews themselves is generally fragmented, jumping from topic to topic without sufficient probing. It was even more difficult for interviewers to achieve any kind of critical perspective on Highlandtown's history, to ask questions, in other words, that address topics/issues/problems relevant to historians. Which is not to say that the interviews have no merit; they do contain some valuable information and insights.

For a further evaluation of the Highlandtown history group and BNHP in general, see my paper "Oral History in Its Social Context: Some Thoughts on the Baltimore Neighborhood Heritage Project" in the Project files.
DASHIELL: My name is Ken Dashiell and I am working with the Baltimore Neighborhood Heritage Project collecting an oral history of the Highlandtown area in East Baltimore. Today is October 26, 1978 and I am interviewing Mrs. Regina Glaeser.

(Audio interruption)

GLAESER: All right. This is Regina Glaeser of 3201 Fleet Street. I have been a long resident of Highlandtown, all my life, in fact. And—

DASHIELL: Well, when were you born?

GLAESER: And I was born in 1893.

(Audio interruption)

DASHIELL: Mrs. Glaeser, do you recall where your parents were from?

GLAESER: Baltimore, Maryland

DASHIELL: They were from Baltimore. And their parents?

GLAESER: From Germany.

DASHIELL: Do you recall anything about—

GLAESER: No, I don’t recall anything about my grandparents. They died when I was very young.

DASHIELL: Do you recall anything about the early years of your parents? What their jobs were and so forth?

GLAESER: Well, my father was a builder in Highlandtown. And my mother was a homemaker and raised eight children.

DASHIELL: A builder?

GLAESER: A builder. He was a builder. He worked with Mr. Schuck and Schuck Street is named after Mr. Schuck on the corner of the houses that my father built with him and I lived in as a child.
DASHIELL: But he primarily built homes?

GLAESER: Yeah, he built homes and let’s see now. That was in—shut if off a minute.

(Audio interruption)

DASHIELL: Could you tell me a little bit more about your father’s occupation? Where he got the bricks and anything that you can remember along that line.

GLAESER: Well, my father was a great friend of George Gegner, that was the lawyer in Highlandtown at that time, lived at Clinton and Eastern Avenue. And George Holdorfer?? from the brewery and my father was George Holdorf?? and those three were pals. And they always traveled around together. My name is Holdorf, but everybody calls me Holdorfer. Dr. Glance??, he was down on Eastern Avenue where Haussner’s is. He had a—he was a great doctor at that time.

DASHIELL: Now we’re talking when you were young or when your parents?

GLAESER: When I was young, yes. When I was young. And we lived in—at that time—this is something new you might not know. 805 North Clinton Street, corner Schuck. In those days they counted the north from 1st Avenue down in Canton north and that’s how they got 805 North Clinton Street. And when I was about twelve years old, they changed that to 621 South Clinton Street.

DASHIELL: That’s very interesting.

GLAESER: Yes, I know a lot of people don’t know that because one of my family were looking up the Holdorf tree and they found that out and asked me about it. And I said yes and they said well they don’t see how it could be. But it was because I know they counted it up from 1st Avenue in Canton north. And that’s how the numbers were counted in them days.

DASHIELL: What about the boundary? What—what would you consider the boundaries of Highlandtown then and now?

GLAESER: Well, I wouldn’t really know except Eastern Avenue. I mean East Avenue. East Avenue was the boundary line and of course Canton and I don’t know how far it just was in them days. I know more about it now, but not in them days.

DASHIELL: Well, when you were a young girl, what do you—what are some of your vivid memories of this area as far as, you know, pertaining to you?

GLAESER: Well, we had a lot of girlfriends—and we skated, we jumped rope, jumped carr.

DASHIELL: What? You jumped what?
GLAESER: Carr.

DASHIELL: What’s that?

GLAESER: C-A-R-R. You jump over one another’s back.

DASHIELL: Okay. Leap frog.

GLAESER: Yeah. Leap frog. Uh huh. We called it carr. I minded babies. That was my job mostly. Minding babies.

DASHIELL: You had jobs then as youngsters?

GLAESER: No, not outside just home. My mother had eight and I was the second born, so I had all the babies to mind as they grew up.

DASHIELL: Did they share responsibilities in the family?

GLAESER: Oh yes, my older sister did the dishes and I minded the babies.

DASHIELL: What—what kind of responsibilities did everybody have?

GLAESER: Well, they each had the job. One had to clean the—under the cupboard where their groceries were kept. Every Saturday morning that had to be pulled out and cleaned and our steps had to be done. The work really had to be done those days. The kids didn’t get away with anything. And—

DASHIELL: What about boys?

GLAESER: The what?

DASHIELL: The boys?

GLAESER: Well, the boys came so late I wouldn’t have much to say about the boys. But my mother about washing. Do you want to know that?

DASHIELL: Sure. Sure.

GLAESER: My mother washed and she had the washtub full of the clothes and the boiler. And they rinsed them and then blued them and after she scrubbed them on the board. And I did the same thing after I was married.

DASHIELL: What year was this now?

GLAESER: When I got married?

DASHIELL: Yes.
GLAESER: Nineteen-thirteen.

DASHIELL: And we’re talking in the early 1900s it didn’t change that much.

GLAESER: No, because after I got married I did the same thing on a washboard. Then I had a water-powered washing machine. And then they had another washing machine come between that before they had these automatics.

DASHIELL: But do you recall what that one was?

GLAESER: No, not right off I can’t.

DASHIELL: And so could you give me just a routine day, say when you were a young girl. You would get up in the morning. What time would you get up? What did you have for breakfast? Just describe one day in your life when you were about ten years old.

GLAESER: Uh huh. Well, I got up and got ready for school, of course at that time. And we had oatmeal for breakfast. We went to school. We went to school from nine to twelve. And we came home and had lunch a sandwich or so. And we went back to school from one to four. And then after that you came home and run errands and had your supper, did your homework and just sit around.

DASHIELL: What was school--

GLAESER: Sit around or play dominoes or something like that.

DASHIELL: What was school like?

GLAESER: Well, school was all right like every other kid with school.

DASHIELL: Did you go to Catholic or—

GLAESER: No, I went right here on Bank Street where the—where the senior citizens are now. Bank, you know, what do they call that?

DASHIELL: Almost?? Bank and Conklin.

GLAESER: Bank, between Highland and Conklin. Well, that was our school. That was called Bank Street School.

DASHIELL: Do you recall--did it have a number do you recall?

GLAESER: No. No number. We just called it Bank Street School.

DASHIELL: How big was the school? Could you describe it, what it looked like?
GLAESER: Yes, it was a brick building. It was a brick building and they had two outhouses, one for the boys, one for the girls. And then when—when I was in the fifth grade they moved up to the new school on Clinton and Pratt Street. And that was a beautiful school then to us anyhow. And now they tore it down and built a new one.

DASHIELL: Do you recall the year that you moved?

GLAESER: Up to there? I was in the fifth grade. I must have been I guess about ten years old then. Ten was to the eighth grade. I went to the eighth grade.

DASHIELL: What year would that have been? Nineteen.

GLAESER: Eight, five, thirteen. Ninety-three and thirteen. That would be 1906?

DASHIELL: 1906? And the school that they just rebuilt. Did that replace that school that you moved to?

GLAESER: Yes.

DASHIELL: That was a pretty old school _____??.

GLAESER: That is a beautiful school now. Bank Street, they took that and remodeled it for this here.

DASHIELL: You said _____??.

GLAESER: They’ve got a name for it.

DASHIELL: Yeah, well that’s some kind of mayor’s office.

GLAESER: Yeah, everything in the--

DASHIELL: Was that the original building that was there?

GLAESER: That’s the original building.

DASHIELL: Because it looks like a—it looks like homes.

GLAESER: That’s the original building in there. It’s just a wide as it was then, but of course they’ve done—well, the length too is the same only they remodeled it inside a lot.

DASHIELL: How many children attended that school along with you?

GLAESER: I couldn’t tell you.

DASHIELL: A lot or--
GLAESER: Yeah,

DASHIELL: hundred or—

GLAESER: I guess it was about thirty in a class, I imagine.

DASHIELL: How many classes?

GLAESER: Well, they had seven—seven classes I would think anyhow.

DASHIELL: Were there many children in the Highlandtown area back then?

GLAESER: Oh yes, everybody had children in them days.

DASHIELL: Were they large families?

GLAESER: Large families. And those that weren’t in a row house, they had ducks and geese and nanny goats and things like that. ?? around here it was a place and it was farms down further dairies, Winterling’s?? Dairy down there. When we went there we thought we went out of town. It was a couple blocks away, but to us we felt like we were going somewhere.

DASHIELL: The teachers back then, what were they like?

GLAESER: Well, I had no trouble with them. I had no trouble with teachers.

DASHIELL: Were they—you here of problems today.

GLAESER: They were elderly, though. They weren’t teenagers, they were elderly. And you couldn’t get married in them days and be a teacher. If you got married, you were out.

DASHIELL: It was basically women teachers? All women?

GLAESER: Yes, we did.

DASHIELL: You know, were they nice or strict? How were they?

GLAESER: Well, as I say I had no trouble with them so we must have been—must have compromised somewhere.

DASHIELL: What about teaching abilities? Did you consider them good teachers?

GLAESER: The teachers—oh yeah, they were well--good teachers. Very good. Very good. They didn’t take any monkey shines. You got hit with a ruler if you needed it across your hands, you know.

DASHIELL: So they actually disciplined the unruly students?
GLAESER: Oh, yeah. Yes. Uh huh.

DASHIELL: What did the parents say about that?

GLAESER: Well, now and then parents would object that they would hit your hands with a ruler.

DASHIELL: But for the most part the parents supported the teachers?

GLAESER: Yes. You got home and maybe got another licking besides, you know.

DASHIELL: So how was what we call today the juvenile delinquency problem? How was that back then?

GLAESER: I don’t think we had any in those days, not that I know of. Not that I know of. The—of course I didn’t maybe get too far out of Highlandtown to find out anything because we were right here in Highlandtown all the time. And this was a good neighborhood then and it still is.

DASHIELL: Pretty stable

GLAESER: Still is. Pretty stable, yes.

DASHIELL: Now, I know boys have the reputation of getting in a lot of trouble. So if they weren’t like bad kids, what about mischievous then?

GLAESER: I guess they were mischievous. All boys are anyhow, but nothing special.

DASHIELL: Do you recall any pranks?

GLAESER: No. Shut that off a minute and I’ll tell you something.

(Audio interruption)

DASHIELL: Do you recall much about the young people when they dated and got courted and so forth? The hayrides?

GLAESER: Yes. Well, when you were home you sat in the parlor and the mothers generally had a mirror where they could see what was going on in the parlor. So you didn’t have much trouble or getting out of order. And then we went to theaters once a week and different things like that. And we went to hayrides and straw rides as they called them.

DASHIELL: Was dating just one or two people or--

GLAESER: Oh, only two nights a week. I think--no Tuesday, Friday and Saturday was beau night.
DASHIELL: Beau night?

GLAESER: Beau night. Tuesday, Friday and Saturday. That was beau night. You couldn’t have a boy around any other night.

DASHIELL: Now who set these rules up?

GLAESER: I guess the parents, but it was--everybody did the same thing.

DASHIELL: But it was pretty well accepted those three nights,

GLAESER: Uh huh. Beau nights.

DASHIELL: Well, that’s—and they necked on the couch in the parlor?

GLAESER: If they couldn’t get near that mirror and it wouldn’t show them.

DASHIELL: Well, what was a typical date that say you had as a young girl sitting in that living room parlor?

GLAESER: Well, we put the light down low whenever we could, but other than that you just—you didn’t know what to talk about half the time except going to a theater or a dance or something like that.

DASHIELL: Now, about what age did the girls start to date?

GLAESER: Around seventeen, I’d say.

DASHIELL: Oh, they were young ladies.

GLAESER: Oh yes, we didn’t go out when you were fourteen in them days. You went to work. You went to work.

DASHIELL: And how old were the boys when they started coming around?

GLAESER: About the same age.

DASHIELL: There wasn’t a big older man and--

GLAESER: No.

DASHIELL: Well, how forward were the girls back then? Who usually initiated the courtship? Did the girls chase the boys?

GLAESER: Well, if they had a beau, they’d walk on the other side of the street and look over and see if they could see him _____??.
DASHIELL: But generally the girls--

GLAESER: They hung around on the corner like together and the girls would of course flirt naturally.

DASHIELL: But usually the guy had to approach the girl, is that what you’re saying?

GLAESER: Yes. Yes. Uh huh.

DASHIELL: Now, did they do a lot of things just the boy and girl or was it usually a group activity?

GLAESER: Oh, generally a group. You had little socials. Little socials like the Wild Rose Social and then you were always in a group when you were out of the house you were always in a group.

DASHIELL: What’s the Wild Rose Socials?

GLAESER: Just a little boys and girls get together and the mothers would have the—some coffee and cake or something like that after a little meeting together and they would just talk.

DASHIELL: Where was it? At church or home?

GLAESER: No, in the home. From one home to another they would go.

DASHIELL: Could you talk a little bit more about what and how it started, if you know?

GLAESER: Well, you just got together. If it was two couples, and then they’d get two more couples and the first thing you know they have about eight couples. And wherever one went, they’d all go together.

DASHIELL: And it was—wasn’t a--like a literary group or anything like that, it was just a little party.

GLAESER: A little sociability, yes. Uh huh.

DASHIELL: What about other activities that the groups did the young people. What would you do on your straw ride and who would arrange that? Did the parents do that?

GLAESER: Well, somebody would anyhow. Some parent probably did because the parents always went along on all those things, you know. One parent would be going. No, we’d take a ride. They’d go down maybe as far as Back River because that was all woods then, you know, and go down there and have soda or punch or something like that.
DASHIELL: Now you say soda, and I’m thinking of today’s soft drinks. What were the refreshments and how did you get them?

GLAESER: We’d take them along.

DASHIELL: Were they bottled like today?

GLAESER: We’d take them along. No. No. No.

DASHIELL: Could you tell me—

GLAESER: Lemonade. Lemonade mostly because it was summertime. Lemonade and cookies and just something like that. We never went in to any other kind of eating.

DASHIELL: Okay. What kind of foods did you prepare at home?

GLAESER: Steak and gravy. Steak and gravy was mostly of the thing. Round steak and gravy, tomato gravy, mashed potatoes, soup, cabbage, ham and cabbage. All good boiled dinners.

DASHIELL: Boiled dinners.

GLAESER: Boiled dinners. Something that stuck to your ribs.

DASHIELL: And where did—this was mostly like fresh foods as opposed to canned foods?

GLAESER: Oh no, fresh food when you could get it, you know. In them days you didn’t even buy as much canned goods as you do today. You had to put it up yourself.

DASHIELL: Okay, because you alluded before that one of the girl’s job on Saturday morning was to clean out the pantry. What did you call it?

GLAESER: Well, whatever--you had to scrub out the pantry, you know, wash out the woodwork in there and then put the things back again.

DASHIELL: And that was—

GLAESER: But most—most everybody put up peaches, string beans, tomatoes. They did that all so they’d have it in the winter.

DASHIELL: In the mason jars?

GLAESER: Yeah, mason jars. Uh huh.

DASHIELL: Who all did that? Just the mom or—
GLAESER: Well, everybody helped to make green pepper relish, green and red and onions. Everybody cried because hot peppers would get in their eyes. But that’s what they done. Everybody helped.

DASHIELL: And when would they—would they just set a Saturday aside for this or after school?

GLAESER: No, after school or in the evening when we had time.

DASHIELL: So here at the—a kid might come home from school and how did the parents feel about homework. Did they get their homework done first?

GLAESER: They had to do their homework, yes. Had to do homework.

DASHIELL: And if there were—

GLAESER: Because we had plenty of homework in them days. Because when we got out of eighth grade, you knew as much as they come out of high school today and more. They knew more then because we had physiology and all of that right in them eight grades.

DASHIELL: What kind of language?

GLAESER: No, we didn’t study language.

DASHIELL: The teachers were pretty good then?

GLAESER: Yes, they were good. Very good.

DASHIELL: After you got your homework done you’d have to go and peel peppers and onions?

GLAESER: Yes, at that time. Yes. We washed the dishes and got everything done first.

DASHIELL: I would imagine most families had their own big pots full of stuff.

GLAESER: Yes. Uh huh.

DASHIELL: Now today we have county fairs and so forth and people bring their preserves cakes.

GLAESER: Yes. Yes.

DASHIELL: What about you? Did you do anything with home--cakes or homemade—

GLAESER: Homemade preserves?

DASHIELL: Right. Anything in that line. Did they have little fairs where you took yours to be judged the best?
GLAESER: No.

DASHIELL: No?

GLAESER: Not that I ever went anyhow. They might have had them, but maybe I didn’t get to it.

DASHIELL: So basically, people preserved their foods for the winter

GLAESER: For theirself. Uh huh.

DASHIELL: It was just economics.

GLAESER: Uh huh.

DASHIELL: Now, how did it taste?

GLAESER: Oh, it was—actually sometimes it would spoil.

DASHIELL: You had some problems?

GLAESER: Oh, yes. Some of it could spoil at times, you know, if you didn’t just get it right. It just happened.

DASHIELL: Oh yeah.

GLAESER: You buy canned goods and their spoiled too sometimes.

DASHIELL: Okay, now canned goods. What about—what kind of variety was in the market for the housewife to go in and buy in the way of canned goods back in say nineteen, what are we talking about, 1910?

GLAESER: Well, I—I don’t know. The coffee. They got their—they ground the coffee. They made the sauerkraut in the store. You bought it loose. And you bought apple butter loose. Preserves was loose in jars—in buckets and they just weighed it up a pound.

DASHIELL: What about—

GLAESER: They didn’t have them in jars, you know.

DASHIELL: What did they have canned already or jarred?

GLAESER: Well, I—I imagine that they would have had tomatoes and peas that somebody from some other county, you know, made and sent in or something.

DASHIELL: So basically though you bought fresh foods.
GLAESER: Yes, in them days you bought them fresh and you used them.

DASHIELL: And a lot of the prepared stuff was in big tubs.

GLAESER: In tubs. Yeah, tubs.

DASHIELL: Did you have to bring your own container? Did they have a—

GLAESER: No, they had them little shells??—little cups like, you know--containers that would hold it. Not exactly a cup, it was shaped something like that, you know.

DASHIELL: With a lid or without a lid?

GLAESER: Oh, no lid. No lid in them days. No lids on anything, in fact.

DASHIELL: What happened if, here you are a ten year old girl and say, “Okay, Regina, go get me a dish of peach preserves,” and you dropped it on the way home. What would the reaction be?

GLAESER: Well, she bit the back of my hand?? for one thing.

DASHIELL: No, I mean, if you dropped it.

GLAESER: Oh, if I dropped it.

DASHIELL: Yeah, if you were a little girl and you dropped it, how would your-- what was her reaction?

GLAESER: Well, I’d get the back of their hand when I got in the house for dropping it. And maybe my mother would even cry about it because you lost the five cents or ten cents what it cost. Because in those days, you know, they were very careful with their money and with eight children everybody had problems.

DASHIELL: Yeah, where did your father work?

GLAESER: He was a builder as I—

DASHIELL: Was he self-employed or—

GLAESER: At times, and sometimes with Mr. Schuck or with somebody else.

DASHIELL: Okay. Well, construction work we know is seasonal. A lot of times in the winter it’s—there’s hardship. Do you recall like the income?

GLAESER: Many a time he paid his men off and we didn’t get anything, you know, the money. Just certain times of the year that those things happened.
DASHIELL: I can see that.

GLAESER: Yeah.

DASHIELL: But generally you recall like what your income was maybe for a year or some years?

GLAESER: No. You mean mine?

DASHIELL: Your family, you know, what Dad brought home.

GLAESER: Oh, no. No, I wouldn’t know because in those days parents didn’t tell you their business.

DASHIELL: Now, I’m trying to get a feel for how your family sort of measured up with other families. If you were like one of many or you were, you know, with Dad being a builder you might have had more money or even less money.

GLAESER: At times. At times. We never did without.

DASHIELL: Who did—who did go without in this area back then?

GLAESER: I don’t know.

DASHIELL: Well, everybody was pretty self-sufficient?

GLAESER: I think they all got along. I think if anybody needed anything somebody else would help them like with food or something. I don’t know that they’d give any money, but if they knew it was a family that had a lot of children and they just run into hard luck, why they’d make a pot of soup or something like that and give it to them.

DASHIELL: _____?? it was--

GLAESER: Friendly. Be friendly with it and not just for the sake of giving it because they needed it, they would just do it for neighborly.

DASHIELL: Right, and everybody sort of cooperated.

GLAESER: Yes. Uh huh.

DASHIELL: If somebody had hard times, they’d help them out.

GLAESER: Yes. Uh huh.

DASHIELL: And you all had gardens in the back?

GLAESER: No, we didn’t. No. No, we didn’t.
DASHIELL: Did you raise—

GLAESER: We had to buy everything we put up.

DASHIELL: And where did you say you lived as a young girl?

GLAESER: Right here right now at 621 South Clinton Street.

DASHIELL: At the corner of Schuck Street.

GLAESER: Corner of Schuck. Three story house. And we slept on the third floor and we froze to death all winter because we didn’t have any heat until later on when they got furnaces and then we got a furnace.

DASHIELL: Well, how did you—how did you heat before you got a big furnace in the basement?

GLAESER: We had a big stove in the kitchen.

DASHIELL: And that was—

GLAESER: One of those big black stoves with an oven over the top.

DASHIELL: Wood stove or coal?

GLAESER: Wood and coal.

DASHIELL: And that heated?

GLAESER: The kitchen.

DASHIELL: Just the kitchen?

GLAESER: Just the kitchen, and when you went upstairs you threw a blanket around you and run up to the third floor.

DASHIELL: And you didn’t have any inside plumbing?

GLAESER: Well, we—not at first, but we did—we did later. I was still a child when they got it, yes.

DASHIELL: So I would imagine a lot of the activity in the family took place in the kitchen, rather than the parlor because of the heat in the winter.

GLAESER: Yes. Uh huh. Yeah. The married ones would come and they’d play cards with my mother and father and they’d catch and then have a cup of coffee. And they’d go down to the bakers and get some buns, and that’s what they had and then they’d go home.
DASHIELL: About what time would this—would you—would your evening end?

GLAESER: Oh, around ten, 10:30.

DASHIELL: Oh, so relatively early.

GLAESER: Yes. Yes. Uh huh.

DASHIELL: And people got up at what time to go to work?

GLAESER: Oh, they got up early in them days. At six o’clock anyhow. And you’re talking about before I was married.

DASHIELL: Well, I’m talking about when you were a young girl so _____?? this all around.

GLAESER: Yes. Yes.

DASHIELL: _____?? when I say teenager _____?? . But your dad as a builder probably had to get to bed early and get up before daylight.

GLAESER: Well, at times. Yes.

DASHIELL: Now, he got most of his material from where?

GLAESER: Selig. Selig Brothers. They were way down Clinton Street. Way down there, I guess about Elliott—Clinton and Elliott. They really—they supplied most everybody in Highlandtown with lumber and anything they needed to go with building.

DASHIELL: So they were a pretty big outfit?

GLAESER: Yeah, it was a big outfit.

DASHIELL: You don’t know how long they lasted do you, like when they went—because I don’t recall.

GLAESER: Well, they were there then already, and they went down from one generation to the other. And they were there—oh, for years and years.

DASHIELL: Clinton and Elliott.

GLAESER: Yeah.

DASHIELL: Well, how did your Dad get around to these jobs? Did he have his own horse and wagon or—

GLAESER: No. No, we never had any horse and wagon or automobile.
DASHIELL: Well, when he went—when he had to build a house how did he get the material to the site?

GLAESER: Well, you went down to Selig and you ordered it and then it got sent there.

DASHIELL: So everything was--

GLAESER: So it was all right here in Highlandtown.

DASHIELL: Okay, now I guess you can recall seeing houses being built.

GLAESER: Oh, yes. Yeah. I still like to run around and look—

(End of Tape 1 side 1, beginning side 2)

DASHIELL: Could you give me your description of—of watching your father be a--build some of these houses? Was it a single house or was it a whole row?

GLAESER: Well, they didn’t do a whole row. They’d do like half a row at a time. And then later on--years later they’d add another half a row that would make the whole row.

DASHIELL: Now, when you talk about a row and I’m looking out the window here on Clinton Street, and there’s maybe twelve houses.

GLAESER: Well, they’d do maybe six—six houses and then they’d add right on to that in six more years later. And by that time they had different ideas, you know, to put in the houses.

DASHIELL: For instance--

GLAESER: Well, they’d make the rooms different. The layout of the house would be different.

D What about basements?

GLAESER: Basements?

DASHIELL: Did they dig a cellar back then?

GLAESER: Yes, these houses that I’m referring to had cellars. They had cellars.

DASHIELL: Where--specifically can you tell me some of the houses you saw going up? What street--

GLAESER: Well, right up Schuck Street, that’s a small street that they have houses on both sides and they built—it’s five houses—five houses on one side and five or six on the other. But they were built at different times.

DASHIELL: What year? Do you recall?
GLAESER: Yes, I know I played on the grounds while they were getting built. I was going to school. It must have been _____?? years about ten I guess or earlier than that. I don’t know what year. I couldn’t tell you quickly.

DASHIELL: What was on the corner of Schuck and Highland Avenue? Was that--

GLAESER: They had a water tank.

DASHIELL: Water?

GLAESER: A water tank up there.

DASHIELL: And that supplied the water for this area?

GLAESER: Yes. Uh huh. I was just trying to think of the name of them. I couldn’t think of the name of them _____??

DASHIELL: Was that Baltimore County?

GLAESER: Yeah, that was Baltimore County.

DASHIELL: Now, what was on the corner up here of Clinton and Fleet Street were Mario’s is now?

GLAESER: Well, at one time the Salvation Army had—had a place there where they used to meet there.

DASHIELL: Yeah, but that was before the Boy’s Club _____??.

GLAESER: But that--oh, yeah. That was when my children were little.

DASHIELL: But I’m talking—I thought you told me there used to be a pump there where people used to come up and get water. Do you recall anything?

GLAESER: No, I don’t recall that. No.

DASHIELL: So they built maybe four or five houses in a city block and then some time later would come back and finish that.

GLAESER: And add on to it. Yes. On Conklin Street in the seven hundred block, too, there was one half a row built and then later years they added the other half a row and those houses looked altogether different than the first houses—

DASHIELL: Inside.

GLAESER: --because they had different ideas and different ways of doing things then.
DASHIELL: Now, when your father built the house, do you mean he built the complete house, the insides, the walls?

GLAESER: Well, he had his men. He was the builder and as I say Mr. Schuck and him they had men under them and every man did their own job, you know.

DASHIELL: And you said—we were talking about courting and you said if you can turn the light down. Was that gaslight or electric?

GLAESER: Well, at first we had gas then in them days and then we got the electric and my mother had electric ______??

DASHIELL: Do you recall—do you recall much about gas?

GLAESER: The gaslights?

DASHIELL: Uh huh.

GLAESER: Yes. Yes, they had that in the middle and then you lit it and it got black, you know, and then then ______?? off and it got white and that was the light, the gaslight was like that.

DASHIELL: Could you describe like in your house when you were a girl just the lighting system when it was gas and then compare it with electric later on? Like you came in the front door. Did you come in the front door or did you always have to use the back door?

GLAESER: No, we’d come in the side door. We had the corner and we always used the side.

DASHIELL: Okay then, you know, where would the lights be in the rooms?

GLAESER: Oh, well the one table was over against the wall and it was a light there and there was a light over the sink that was about all in the kitchen. And the other I—I just can’t remember. Can’t remember.

DASHIELL: And where--

GLAESER: In the middle rooms and the parlor and that ______??

DASHIELL: Well, was it adequate lighting or was the kitchen the best lighted room?

GLAESER: Oh, the kitchen because we really lived in the kitchen.

DASHIELL: Okay, that’s what I’m trying to find out.

GLAESER: Yeah.

DASHIELL: And then when you went to electricity, do you recall when that was?
GLAESER: No, I don’t. Let’s see—about—about 1923 I know my mother had electric then. I know that.

DASHIELL: Was it a case like one family got it or the gas and electric company came in and gave it to everybody. Took out the gas and put in electric. How did that come about?

GLAESER: I don’t know. I guess if you could afford to have it, why you just let them know and they come and did it.

DASHIELL: You’re remembering it after World War I, electricity?

GLAESER: Yes. Uh huh.

DASHIELL: Was it the open wire kind?

GLAESER: Yes. Oh yeah, they just stretched the wires along the ceiling and down the wall.

DASHIELL: Was your father still in the building trade then in ’23?

GLAESER: No. No. No, he had—twenty-three. No, he wasn’t building then.

DASHIELL: Okay, let’s get back to the school because every once in a while we touch back on the teachers and so forth. When did you stop going to school? After the—

GLAESER: Well, I was in the eighth grade. I was thirteen years old.

DASHIELL: And that ended your formal education?

GLAESER: Yes.

DASHIELL: Eighth grade.

GLAESER: Eighth grade.

DASHIELL: And then what did—okay, so you’re thirteen, fourteen and you’re out of school. What does a young girl back in the 1900s do when she’s out of school?

GLAESER: Out of school she’s already at the Crown Cork and Seal and gets a job for three dollars a week, ten hours a day and half a day on Saturday for three dollars a week. And _____ ?? to nearly every girl at that age in my time we went to the Crown Cork and Seal because they had just about started out here on Eastern Avenue. They had a—a pointed shack like this and that’s where we worked in there. And then they built, you know, from there up.

DASHIELL: All right. Tell me how you got to work and if you took your lunch or you ate with the girls out or what you did.
GLAESER: No, you took your lunch and you went—we worked for ten hours. It must have been from seven to five. And to get down to the Crown Cork we walked naturally. And the—those trains, the cars, you know, they would back up and we’d crawl through the—those—what do you call those cars? You know, the box cars on the railroad. We’d crawl through them to get over so we could get to work, wouldn’t be late.

DASHIELL: You didn’t have the underpass or anything like that then?

GLAESER: No. No. And if—if the cars were there that’s what we would do because they’d be switching them back and forth and we’d crawl through there, you know, and get over. A lot of them got their leg cut off from ______??, you know, because they backed them cars while they were doing it.

DASHIELL: Do you—did that ever happen—did any of your friends ever get—

GLAESER: No, not—no, not mine in particular, no. But some of them did get hurt, yeah.

DASHIELL: The streetcar didn’t run that way _____??

GLAESER: No streetcar. It was a jerk order?? from 8th Street. Now it was a jerk order?? that went down to like around River View.

DASHIELL: What’s a jerk order??

GLAESER: A little car that run every now and then, like every hour. A little open car.

DASHIELL: It was electric?

GLAESER: Yes. Yes, it was electric.

DASHIELL: Now when Highlandtown was starting out what kind of streets did they have?

GLAESER: Well, I know on Clinton Street in the back, let’s see now wait, about 1920 they picked Clinton street here on ______?? of my mother’s house there, you know, this right down here with the red bricks, you know.

DASHIELL: So they had brick streets?

GLAESER: Uh huh.

DASHIELL: What else? Cobblestones?

GLAESER: No, it was your regular bricks, but some—some had cobblestones yet, you know.

DASHIELL: How about dirt roads? Do you recall that as a young girl?
GLAESER: No. No, I don’t just recall that.

DASHIELL: So basically the streets were pretty well paved or bricked or cobblestoned?

GLAESER: Yeah, as I can remember we didn’t have any trouble with them, with the streets. I couldn’t just say that whether they were all done or not. But I remember at that time and then that was in my later years when they did that. See, I was married then already.

DASHIELL: Okay. So—

GLAESER: But before that I guess it probably was dirt streets when I was very young, but I didn’t pay no attention to that.

DASHIELL: Getting back to Crown Cork and Seal what, you know, what did you do there?

GLAESER: I sorted cork. That—that’s the little cork that goes up in a cap or a bottle. And they would dump—you had a table and you had a trash can under here and they dumped it on and you had to sort it and pick out the bad ones. Throw the bad ones on the side, you know, and you just keep—and you had to work fast.

DASHIELL: How many was doing this?

GLAESER: Oh, they had—this one whole floor was doing that. It was two on a table and I guess it was about twenty or more in that one room doing that.

DASHIELL: What other kind of job—was that the only thing you ever did?

GLAESER: That was the only thing I did out there.

DASHIELL: And how long did you do that?

GLAESER: Well, it went on strike for four dollars—no four and a half—from three dollars they went on strike for four and a half. And of course I went in with the strikers so I got fired.

DASHIELL: Now you said four and a half. A day?

GLAESER: No, a week.

DASHIELL: I mean a week.

GLAESER: A week. But they took me back because my sister was such a good worker out there that she could always talk them into taking me back. And later on they went on strike again for five dollars a week.

DASHIELL: Can you recall the years?
GLAESER: No, I was out of school then it was—no, I couldn’t tell the year right off. But that was—that was _____?? to me then.

DASHIELL: How old—well, how old were you when these strikes were going on?

GLAESER: Well, I started when I was thirteen. I started out there and I guess it might have went—might have went about five years altogether with all of it. Joe Jomorski??, he was our foreman. He was a good foreman but he’d say to my sister, “If she don’t get that work out, too bad, I ain’t taking her back no more.” But anyhow.

DASHIELL: _____??

GLAESER: After they went on strike for five dollars why then I didn’t go back. I didn’t go back anymore.

DASHIELL: They had a lot of like thirteen, fourteen year old girls--

GLAESER: Oh yeah, in them days twelve years old. Yeah.

DASHIELL: And nobody _____?? It was the normal thing to do.

GLAESER: No. Normal.

DASHIELL: Okay. What other kind of jobs were there and who were the bosses?

GLAESER: Well, that was the only one I knewed. It was the only one I was under.

DASHIELL: Okay, you don’t know if they had women bosses or just men?

GLAESER: Oh yes, they had women. They had a woman in our department, too. I can’t think of her name, but it was under him, though. You know, she was under him.

DASHIELL: But she was sort of management?

GLAESER: Yeah, management.

DASHIELL: Was that considered unusual back then to have women as—

GLAESER: No, I don’t think so. Anyhow we didn’t know any better so whatever came came.

DASHIELL: Did you have any feel other than, you know, your sorting job the total work down there with _____??

GLAESER: No.

DASHIELL: You were so young you just--
GLAESER: You had to get so many of them cans out or else. That’s how they told you, you know.

DASHIELL: It didn’t matter how young or how old you were?

GLAESER: No, just how fast you worked.

DASHIELL: What was your feelings about that?

GLAESER: Well, I—to tell you the truth I made the fun and the other ones made the money. You can take it that way. I was careless, you know. Instead of doing my work I was making fun all the time and—and my sister had to come and make up my—my buckets that I had to have done.

DASHIELL: So you were fun loving as a girl.

GLAESER: Yeah, fun.

DASHIELL: You still are. Did that ever get you into trouble other than--

GLAESER: No. No, really.

DASHIELL: So what did you do after you left good old Crown Cork and Seal?

GLAESER: Well, I went to work in Elberths’s Department Store on Clinton and Foster Avenues. And from there I got married.

DASHIELL: Okay, what did you do at Eldridge’s?

GLAESER: No, Elberth’s, E-L-B-E-R-T-H. They had a grocery store on the corner and two—three more houses were made into a into a dry goods store, and shoe department. It was a big department store.

DASHIELL: And what did you do there?

GLAESER: Well, I was in the shoe department for a while and then I was in the dry goods department.

DASHIELL: What kind of shoes?

GLAESER: Dolly Madison particularly,

DASHIELL: The brand name?

GLAESER: That was the—the brand of the good—good ones was Dolly Madison.
DASHIELL: What other? Tell me all you can remember about the shoe section of it. What they looked like. How much they cost.

GLAESER: Well, I can’t remember the names, but I know we had high top shoes and they had buttons and they were hard to get on people’s feet so you would take a couple of—the two first buttons and you’d go up a way and you’d catch a button and then you’d go back and you’d ease it in that way because they wanted them tight and they were tight.

DASHIELL: Did you use a button hook?

GLAESER: Yeah, a button hook. Uh huh.

DASHIELL: Okay, so when a person bought a pair of shoes you’d get a button hook with that?

GLAESER: No. No, you didn’t get any button hooks.

DASHIELL: How much were the shoes approximately cost?

GLAESER: Well they were the expensive one, Dolly Madison. I don’t know. They might have been five dollars in them days.

DASHIELL: Average. _____??.

GLAESER: Oh, they were good. They were, and they had the real high shoes come up to the knees sometime. And they had leather scraps—not scraps, but shoe strings but they were leather—leather strings, you know, to bring up those.

DASHIELL: And they had cheaper shoes?

GLAESER: Yes. Uh huh. They had cheaper shoes.

DASHIELL: Now, what were the quality of the merchandise just in the shoe department? How would you consider it?

GLAESER: They were good. They were good. They never had complaints that I know.

DASHIELL: Now suppose my mother would have bought a pair of shoes there and she had a complaint. How would you have handled that or your boss?

GLAESER: Well, I would just send her to Mr. Elberth and he’d take care of it.

DASHIELL: And how—how do you think he would handle that?

GLAESER: Well, it was a fault he would take care of it. We had a lady come in one time and she bought a pair and she said to Mr. Elberth—I waited on her but she said to Mr. Elberth, “Mike,” she said, “can’t you give me that a little cheaper?” And he said, “Well, ma’am, why?”
And she said, “Well, I just had my roof fixed and I had to pay the roofer.” He said, “Did you pay the roofer?” She said, “Yes.” And he said, “Well, then you have to pay me.” So that was the end of that sale. She paid for them.

DASHIELL: So they were businessmen, but they could be understanding of a problem.

GLAESER: Yes. Uh huh.

DASHIELL: Okay, so you worked in a shoe store—a shoe department and where else?

GLAESER: The dry goods. See they had—it was all in one.

DASHIELL: Yard or dry goods?

GLAESER: Well, yard goods, dress goods, lace, ribbons.

DASHIELL: Was that a good--

GLAESER: Sheets. Anything that was dry goods. And they used to call them dry goods.

DASHIELL: Yeah. How—how much did people use that department?

GLAESER: Oh, well it was about the only one in Highlandtown then. It was really a big place.

DASHIELL: Were you busy?

GLAESER: At times, yeah. Yes. Uh huh.

DASHIELL: You see, what I’m trying to get at is if a lot of people came in and did their own sewing they would buy their own dry goods.

GLAESER: Uh huh.

DASHIELL: Now what would they do with this stuff when they bought it?

GLAESER: Well, they’d make housedresses, children’s dresses because you did a lot of sewing then.

DASHIELL: And—

GLAESER: And they had sheets and spreads and they handled anything in that line. Anything in dry goods.

DASHIELL: And you would just sell it or would you have any part in ordering the material?

GLAESER: Well, I’d have to whatever I thought was running low I’d have to, you know, mark down on a sheet and then he’d follow up from there.
DASHIELL: Yeah, but then Mr. Elberth is the one who ordered it. I’m trying to find where the stuff came from.

GLAESER: Yeah, Mr. Elberth, he ordered it.

DASHIELL: You don’t know if it came from Baltimore?

GLAESER: I don’t know where it came from. No, I don’t know.

DASHIELL: Was that a pretty popular store?

GLAESER: Yes, very. It’s still got the name on the grocery store corner because when the grocery store was sold it was sold with the name Elberth’s. Elberth’s.

DASHIELL: Now, where was this located?

GLAESER: At Clinton and Foster Avenue.

DASHIELL: Clinton and Foster?

GLAESER: Uh huh. Southwest corner.

DASHIELL: Okay. So after you worked at Elberth’s—how long was that?

GLAESER: Well, I only worked there about two years because I got married.

DASHIELL: Okay, then you got married. And then what happened?

GLAESER: And when you got married in those days you didn’t work. See, that was—I don’t know. It’s just like people got married, they didn’t work no more.

DASHIELL: Why?

GLAESER: Well, I—I guess it was just one of those things that you got married so you didn’t have to work. That was probably the thing.

DASHIELL: So you’re—

GLAESER: Somebody else got your job. My sister got my job then. She was two years younger than me.

DASHIELL: So you’re telling me that once you became a housewife all your worries were over. You didn’t have to work hard.

GLAESER: You didn’t have to go out to work anyhow.

DASHIELL: So you got married, let’s see, when you were twenty?
GLAESER: Twenty. I was twenty.

DASHIELL: Now—when did you say you were born? Ninety-three?

GLAESER: Ninety-three.

DASHIELL: So 1913 then you were married.

GLAESER: Uh huh.

DASHIELL: Okay. Tell me your--about that first year of your married life. How you set up your home and where you lived and what your husband did and all that kind of stuff.

GLAESER: Well, my husband worked down at Gibb’s down on Boston Street. It was a packing house in the jelly department. And he worked in the jelly department where they made the jelly and canned it and they made ketchup. But they didn’t skin the tomatoes or anything in that department. See that was in another—where they skinned tomatoes and packed peas and string beans and things like that.

DASHIELL: And how did he get to work?

GLAESER: And then--he walked. He walked to work. Everybody walked in them days, it didn’t matter. They didn’t know any better anyhow. They didn’t have anything. So--

DASHIELL: Where’d you--

GLAESER: Anyhow we got married. We lived on Lakewood Avenue, 707 South Lakewood Avenue. And he walked from there down. Well, then when the war come along--when the war come along and they worked so much overtime and everything, you know, half the time he’d stay right down there at night because they were working so hard. So we got along. We saved everything he made overtime and bought furniture and had everything--bought our home and the furniture.

DASHIELL: Do you recall how much the house was then? The price?

GLAESER: Let’s see—it probably was about maybe 2995 or something like that.

DASHIELL: Yeah, we know the problems they’re having right now on Lakewood Avenue with that drainage.

GLAESER: Yeah.

DASHIELL: What was the street like and the conditions like?

GLAESER: Oh, this was all new at that time. It was all new. New houses and all.
DASHIELL: Okay, somebody told me that the boat lake at Patterson Park is now and it drained down Lakewood Avenue.

GLAESER: That’s what they say about it. I really couldn’t just say exactly that’s that what it was because I don’t know.

DASHIELL: But there was never a ravine or ditch or anything.

GLAESER: Not nothing like that. Nuh uh. They were all new houses in that part.

DASHIELL: Your father didn’t—your father didn’t build?

GLAESER: No. No.

DASHIELL: The—

GLAESER: And I moved from Lakewood Avenue and I moved out on Conklin Street, 721 South Conklin.

DASHIELL: How long did you live on Lakewood?

GLAESER: I lived on Lakewood five years and I lived out here five years.

DASHIELL: All right. Now, when you sold your house on Lakewood, about how much did you sell it for?

GLAESER: I don’t know. I paid 3995 for the one on Conklin Street, so I guess I broke even or something. I don’t know. We didn’t really get profit in them days on houses. You probably sell it for less than what you paid for it just to—if you don’t like it and I didn’t like it down there.

DASHIELL: You didn’t like it?

GLAESER: No, I didn’t like it.

DASHIELL: Why?

GLAESER: I don’t know. Well, it was a new house, but—and everything was nice, but I was just too far from Highlandtown. That was the thing of it. My mother lived here on Clinton Street and I just had to get up this way. That was it.

DASHIELL: Didn’t you consider Lakewood Avenue Highlandtown then?

GLAESER: No, we didn’t.

DASHIELL: You consider East Avenue and this side.
GLAESER: From East Avenue and ______?? and now they call it from way up Charles Street, I believe.

DASHIELL: We haven’t determined the boundaries yet.

GLAESER: No, not now.

DASHIELL: So what was your—say a typical day to you as a young married woman? You would send your husband off to work at Gibb’s and then what would you do? There were no children.

GLAESER: The first year?

DASHIELL: Uh huh.

GLAESER: Oh well, I don’t know. It was just the novelty kind of. When he was gone you cleaned up and you runned over and see your mother and come back again and got your supper ready.

DASHIELL: Pretty much like like the same thing ______?? today.

GLAESER: Yeah, the same thing they do today.

DASHIELL: Did you have a radio?

GLAESER: Well, not right away, but I had one later. Uh huh.

DASHIELL: Would you just sit and listen to the radio?

GLAESER: No. No, anyhow when I did get a radio I was on Conklin Street and they only played it certain hours of the day anyhow, the radio.

DASHIELL: Was that Arthur Godfrey back then?

GLAESER: Huh?

DASHIELL: Arthur Godfrey?

GLAESER: Yeah.

DASHIELL: He started here in Baltimore.

GLAESER: Yeah, Arthur Godfrey. Yes.

DASHIELL: So what did your mother think that you moved in and you were at her house all the time ______???
GLAESER: Oh, she would say, “You better go home and get your supper ready.” “All right, Mom. I’ll go.”

DASHIELL: Did she give you a lot of little hints on homemaking—

GLAESER: Oh, yes. Yeah. Because you don’t know how to cook when you get married, you know, and you have to go home and ask Mom.

DASHIELL: So even though the girls did help out around the house, you still didn’t know enough.

GLAESER: No, you don’t go into the cooking. You help, but you don’t go into it.

DASHIELL: Whose fault was that? Was it the young girl’s fault that she didn’t want to do it or mom—mom just ______?

GLAESER: No, it was--just didn’t work that way.

DASHIELL: Well, when you got married you had to learn all over? You had to learn to cook?

GLAESER: Yeah, if you wanted to make big pots of things, yeah.

DASHIELL: See now that strikes me as unusual because I would have imagined the mothers would really teach that to the girl.

GLAESER: Well, not in particular. It’s up to the girl. Up to the girl. You could always fry bacon and eggs, you know. Always do that. Have oatmeal and stuff like that.

DASHIELL: Right. So that first year that you were married did you still use a lot of fresh vegetables, you know, from the market or were you into canned--

GLAESER: Yeah, we used to go to the market—

(End of recording)