

**Transcript of Interview with Jeannette Egerman  
Homestead Hebrew Congregation Oral History Project  
Call Number: CSS #4**

**Rauh Jewish Archives  
Library and Archives Division  
Senator John Heinz History Center  
Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania  
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Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15222**

Name of Interviewer: Ann S Powell

Date of Interview: August 1993

Place of Interview:

Length of Interview:

Number of Tapes: 1

Name of Transcriber: Marygrace Denk

Date of Transcription: July 27, 2010

Transcribers Notes:

[unclear] is used when the words spoken are inaudible

(?) is used to spelling of word is not known

... is used when a person stops speaking midsentence

Transcription:

**Anne Sheckter Powell:** This is Anne Sheckter Powell interviewing... Tell me your name to make sure to it is picked up.

**Jeannette Egerman:** Jeannette Fischel Egerman. My parents were Pauline Kramer Fischel and Mark Fischel. They came to this country in 1906. Dad established a small business, he was a watchmaker. And he started out selling watches on the street corner, at first.

AP: Now where did they come from?

JE: They came from Hungary, somewhere in the Budapest area. From where, I have no idea. I'm sure it wasn't from the city. It was somewhere in the outlying area. Dad was helped by Samuel Weinhouse.. At that time he was a wholesale jeweler. And I think my father said he had two American dollars and he bought a couple of watches with that, stood on the street corner, sold them, and then he went back and bought a couple more. And this was the beginning of his business. Gradually he owned a house at 545 Dixon Street, and when I was six years old we moved up to the corner of Eighth and Dixon Streets. And some of our neighbors up there were the Hadburgs, the Frieds, (uhm) let me see, then later on the Katzes. And it was a very thriving Jewish community. I don't know what else you would like me to tell you.

AP: We'll go back and, we'll just talk a little bit. When your parents came to America were they already married?

JE: Oh, yes. Yes.

AP: Did they come directly to Homestead?

JE: Directly. My father had an acquaintance here. He suggested he come here. Evidently the steel mills were doing very well. And he felt this was a good place for dad to settle down.

AP: Oh, I see.

JE: That's how, that's how many of the immigrants came to Homestead.

AP: I was often curious about that, but it is hard to find anybody who had any idea about why anybody chose to settle here.

JE: It's quite a steel town, and of course, our Jewish people are good merchants. As a matter of fact, the Magram family had what was called the Magram Department Store

down on Third Avenue. Yeah, there was a Schwartz family, there were Eskovitzes. As I said to you before, we could find all these names out in the cemetery.

AP: [unclear]

JE: Yeah. There are left.

AP: Were you, was your father always a watchmaker?

JE: Oh, yes. As a matter of fact he was a, I'm trying to think of the word I want and it just isn't coming. He was apprenticed in Hungary for many years and learned his trade there, so he was very good at it. And mother was a seamstress. So in order to get by, she did dressmaking and he did watch repair work.

AP: In the beginning he wasn't repairing, he started off selling?

JE: He started out creating the customers, exactly. And then he began repairing.

AP: Now, were you, were you, were they living in Homestead when you were born?

JE: I was born at Montefiore Hospital on August the 15, 1913.

AP: Oh.

JE: So you see. Then I was married when I was 19, left Homestead, and haven't been back except for an occasional visit, I visited with my parents, of course. But I was no longer involved with the community at Homestead.

AP: You spent your growing up years there.

JE: Yes. Exactly.

AP: Your whole childhood.

JE: Yes, Homestead High School. I graduated in 1930, and then I went on to Carnegie Tech.

AP: You did? At that time?

JE: I graduated in '34.

AP: Was that unusual?

JE: I was in the music school. And I went there when I was still in high school for the Saturday morning classes for the gifted or whatever they called it. So that just naturally I fell into the music department at Carnegie Mellon.

AP: I see and you were still living in Homestead.

JE: In Homestead.

AP: So were you still in college you were married.

JE: When I was married I was at the end my junior year. By the time I graduated, I was three months pregnant. That settled any kind of a career I might have ever dreamed of. But, all through the years I had been performing and playing.

AP: What are you playing?

JE: Violin.

AP: So were you taking violin lessons when you were a young girl?

JE: Oh, yes.

AP: Where were you staying? Were you coming into the city to study?

JE: No, I was studying in Homestead. And I had odds and ends of teachers there, and finally there was a Hungarian man came into town. And he had arranged the program out in East Pittsburgh. A number of us youngsters went out there to play. And Victor Sadek(?) happened to be in the audience. And my father had taken me out. So he spoke to my father and suggested that I should have another teacher than the one I had. He recommended Dr. Malshreck (?) at Carnegie Tech. So that was the way I got into Tech.

AP: Oh. So I see, so it came on a recommendation from someone who heard you play.

JE: Yes, exactly, so that was it and from there on in. I was thirteen at the time. And I went over to Tech and studied with Carl Malshreck(?)

AP: Did you just study violin?

JE: Uh huh.

AP: You didn't branch off into other instruments.

JE: No, no. I had hoped one day to concertize but of course that was out. Which was just as well. I raised my family. Then I went back to Pitt and got my masters in education and taught school.

AP: Was it teaching music?

JE: No. I went back into elementary education. I was a little far-sighted. You wouldn't remember but during the Depression, they cut art and music teachers, and I decided if I was going back I wanted something a little more permanent. Because reading, writing, arithmetic they were going to have to keep on teaching. So I avoided the music area. So I taught elementary education at Sterrett School for ten years, then I became a supervisor in the city schools. And I did that for eleven and a half years before I retired.

AP: Did you play the violin then?

JE: No, no. As a matter of fact, shortly after I started teaching, I stopped playing because it was just too much. By the time the day was ended, I was too tired to pick it up and practice. You lose your technique after a while. I tried to go back but I couldn't stand to hear myself play. It was like listening to a beginner all over again.

AP: Yes. You had another standard in your mind.

JE: Exactly, exactly.

AP: Now, did you have any brothers or sisters?

JE: No, I was an only child.

AP: That was unusual at that time wasn't it?

JE: Well, Mom, mother had problems, so that took care of that.

AP: Did you feel different from other children because of that?

JE: Not at all. I was part of the group that grew up. We all grew up together. It was a family-orientated situation. Anything that went on in the community, everyone was part of.

AP: Your talking about the Jewish community?

JE: Yes, the Jewish community. And then I associated with a lot of non-Jewish children. In high school. And they were all very friendly.

AP: Were they, were your parents Orthodox?

JE: The shul happened to be Orthodox, in Homestead, so that they had to be. But my father, when I was thirteen and went over to Tech, he decided it was time that I met other people. And he joined Rodef Shalom.

AP: Oh, you mean Rodef Shalom Temple.

JE: On Fifth Avenue. He decided that I should get over there and meet some other young people other than being in that little, tiny knit group in Homestead. But I found that I was very much an outsider. I hated it. I hated every minute of it. Children can be very cruel. And I remember many of the young people who were there in that group at the time. I remember being ignored beautifully. So that when the opportunity came up for me to go to the Saturday morning classes--that came up about a year after I studied with Dr. Malshreck (?), And my father said to me, "You have to make a choice." You either have to continue so that you can be confirmed at Rodef Shalom. or you can take a Saturday morning class at Tech. Well, I jumped at the Tech offer, naturally. And that was wonderful. There I was in my own milieu among other young people who were doing the same thing I was doing. So, that was a very happy time.

AP: That sort of brings two question to mind.

JE: Uh huh.

AP: Now I'll take them one at a time. When you had the choice between taking classes at Carnegie Tech or taking classes that Rodef Shalom. I take it that was because the classes at Rodef Shalom.were on Saturday.

JE: Saturday morning. Of course, that was my way of getting away from people who didn't want me there in the first place. There were two of us who were outsiders, who didn't belong to Allderdice. And I think that was it. There was a young lady from the Wilkinsburg area. She, too, was snubbed just the same as I was. So two of us got together as little as we could or as much as be could.

AP: And you sort of ....

JE: And we kind of clung together. But it wasn't a pleasant situation for me, and I didn't dare tell my father. He was, at that time, paying dues in two congregations.

AP: I meant to ask you, he maintained membership in the Homestead congregation and then joined?

JE: Then joined over here.

(talk over)

AP: What happened at the holidays, where did you go?

JE: You went to Homestead. Because, my mother was Orthodox, you didn't ride the street car.

AP: Oh, I see. So your mother was more observant than your father.

JE: Yes, yes, definitely.

AP: Then you went, did you go with her, to services?

JE: Oh, sure, as a matter of fact, most of the time, we young people would go to the services, sit for five minutes, then come downstairs and stand outside, and talk. I don't know if that brings anything back to you, but that's what happened with us.

AP: I certainly does. That is interesting to note that that happened all the way back [unclear].

JE: And I recall my mother baking up a storm before Rosh Hashanah. So that the men could leave the services in between or was it was Yom Kippur, come to think of it, because the men left for a while, they went for a walk, and they walked down back of father's store, where they would have some schnapps and a little piece of cake. I wasn't supposed to know but how could you not know. But that was a treat that the men had on Yom Kippur. I remember that.

AP: Now the shop that your parents had was a jewelry shop?

JR: Jewelry shop. Also, dDad had invested in radios, when they first came in. That was a big thing. And, of course, what happened, he had had records before that. And then came the Great Depression, and there was one solid wall filled with records in my father's store that nobody cared for. They were buying radios. It was during the Depression, we had a gas furnace that was costing a fortune, so what happened, we cut off the heat to the upstairs apartment where we lived. Cut off the gas heat and we had a coal stove in the middle of the living room. And it kept the whole apartment warm. And we burned the records up. Because they were carbon, they gave off good heat. So that we got rid of a whole wall full records that way.

AP: They became fuel.

JE: They became fuel. I think at that time dad said there was about five thousand dollars worth of records that were lost.

AP: [unclear]

JE: Yeah. There was nothing we could do with them. Rather than just throw them out, we just used them up. There were a lot of things we did during the Depression.

AP: Are there other ones that come to mind?

JE: Not at the moment.

AP: Now your father, did he go back to selling records in the –

JE: No. Never, that was it.

AP: ...jewelry store...

JE: And then what happened, too, I think he divided the store and rented part of it out. And that was when Mr. Katz moved in and had his tailor shop there.

AP: Oh, then part of the shop was a tailor shop?

JE: That's right. There were two complete different stores then.

AP: Did your mother continue to be a seamstress there at that time?

JE: No, no. Once dad was making a decent living she stopped.

AP: Do you remember her doing that?

JE: Oh, yes. She sewed for me. I was a fat, little kid.

AP: You were?

JE: Yeah, and at that time there were no chubbies, so mom sewed my complete wardrobe. I had some beautiful clothes.

AP: I can imagine.

JE: She tried desperately to teach me but it was to no avail. I just didn't want to sit still long enough to learn.

AP: She had also been trained in Europe.

JE: Yes. Yeah.

AP: Did your parents speak English at home?

JE: Oh, yes. They also spoke Hungarian. As a matter of fact, I learned to speak Hungarian before I learned to speak English

AP: Oh, you did?

JE: Yes, but then I was bilingual. It was no problem.

AP: When you spoke to your parents

JE: I spoke in English.

AP: You spoke in English. And you learned English before you went to school?

JE: Yes.

AP: What was it like being a Jewish child in the Homestead schools at that time?

JE: That was no problem.

AP: Did you have any sense of anti-Semitism?

JE: No. No anti-Semitism at all.

AP: And like taking off Jewish holidays?

JE: No problem. You just did it.

AP: Now, when you were in high school, I assume that you were a minority, in terms of how many Jewish children there were. What did you do about, did you start dating at that time?

JE: Not very much. We usually got together in groups. We'd have parties in each others' homes from school. I was quite young when my mother organized a group of us girls and called it the Merrymakers Club. And we would meet at our house. And mother had a room she called her sewing room. It had a huge table. I recall at that table she would make strudel and pull the dough out, you know...

AP: A lost art now

JE: The way they used to in those days. Either that or that was her sewing table. She would have us youngsters sitting around there teaching us all sorts of little things. I remember pulling threads into huck towels to make designs. It was a kind of a weaving sort of thing. It was a lot of fun.

AP: Now were all these children Jewish?

JE: Yes. Oh yes.

AP: This was her way of trying to maintain a group.

JE: Of keeping us together.

AP: The group that was really Jewish.

JE: And then each of us, at a certain time, I recall, I still have the prayer book that I got as a gift from the Merrymakers Club. Of course that was my mother's way of doing something for each of us that was tangible. And we each got a very lovely prayer book, with an ivory backing. I have it here. I'll show it to you later.

AP: I'd love to see it. Now what about, when you're, I have a lot of things I want to ask you. Did your mother read Hebrew?

JE: Yes, of course.

AP: Did you learn to?

JE: Yes, I went to cheder, also.

AP: Oh, you did?

JE: Oh, all of us girls had to.

AP: As well as the boys?

JE: Yea, oh yes.

AP: That was a

JE: That was a fun time, because we harassed that rabbi who was teaching us. It was not the rabbi, per se, it was the poor gentleman, wandering though this country or whatever, who would come in and teach us. And it was one of those things that you read about it in some of the *Joys of Yiddish*, where the teacher would slap the children with the ruler. Well, this was one of those kinds of teachers.

AP: He'd slap the girls?

JE: We would get our knuckles rapped.

AP: Oh.

JE: It was a gentle kind of thing. But that was what happened at cheder. And boys and girls, we used to stand outside afterwards, if it were decent weather, This was our way of being together.

AP: Oh so you did, so there were a lot of young women, children, young girls?

JE: Yes.

AP: You were being, who went to Hebrew school.

JE: Yes.

AP: Do you remember the name of the teacher?

JE: I have no idea.

AP: Did you also go to Sunday school before you went

JE: Yes, yes. And in Sunday school the Friedlander girls were teachers, that I recall.

AP: Now I gather that, since you referred to temple as Rodef Shalom

JE: Yes.

AP: That you did not think of the shul as Rodef Shalom.

JE: Oh yes, yes.

AP: Oh, you did. Go by that name –

JE: Yes, it was Rodef Shalom in Homestead, too.

AP: So it wasn't just the Homestead shul with Rodef Shalom as a sub-thing that wasn't used.

JE: No.

AP: It was a thing that wasn't used that much.

JE: It was the shul. It was it, it was it.

AP: What other kinds of organizations, Jewish organizations when you were, as you were growing up?

JE: There was a Sisterhood at the temple. And my mother was very active in that. One of the things I remember as a child, that I loved, were the Purim balls that they use to have.

AP: I was going to ask you about holidays.

JE: Yeah.

AP: They had balls

JE: Yeah, Purim. And they use to have them down on Fifth Avenue in the Slovak Hall. Or was it the Ternverein or the Slovak Hall, I don't remember, what it was called. But it was one of those big halls where they would have the event. And they would have different booths.

AP: Oh!

JE: And they would sell raffles, and chances on different things, it was a fun thing to do. And we would dress up. Everyone would wear a costume, the children particularly.

AP: Did the adults do that also?

JE: I don't remember if the adults did, but they certainly fussed over us children. So, those are very happy memories.

AP: It was the event.

JE: Oh it was the event of the year, of course. And it was a money-raising event.

AP: And it involved all the community.

JE: Yes.

AP: The old to the young.

JE: Yes,

AP: Did you dance?

JE: Yeah, oh sure.

AP: Did they, what sort of dancing did they do?

JE: Very simple waltzes and fox trots is all I can remember.

AP: Did they, what I was wondering was did they do those dances that came from Europe, were maintained at all?

JE: I don't recall. I don't remember.

AP: When you went from the Orthodox Rodef Shalom to the Reform, did you go to any of the services at the Reform?

JE: Yes, I did, I went to the Saturday mornings, yes we all did. I think we used to go from Saturday school into Temple.

AP: Did it seem strange to you that the men and the women were sitting together?

JE: No. No. Not at all, I really enjoyed the services far more there.

AP: Oh, you did. That part you did.

JE: Oh sure, because I knew what was going on. Out at Homestead I recall the high holidays with the women sitting up in the balcony. And a lot of them couldn't read Hebrew. And they would sit up there and chatter and I remember the gentlemen, in quotes, on the first floor looking up at the women, and banging on the little desks that they had saying [unclear] [be quite in Yiddish]], I will never forget that, you know.

AP: Did you know Yiddish, as well?

JE: No, my parents didn't speak Yiddish. They spoke German, Hungarian and English. And they both spoke English quite well.

AP: It's interesting. I think different people had different levels of proficiency.

JE: Yes, yeah, well dad was involved with the public all the time. And he picked up English very well.

AP: Did you seders for Pesach.

JE: In our home.

AP: And did you have other family that came?

JE: I had an aunt that was here in this country, my father's sister. And, then, I had other family too, my mother had a brother, too, Ignatz Kramer, and his wife and their two boys.

AP: They didn't live in Homestead?

JE: Yes, they did, oh yeah.

AP: Oh, they did?

JE: Yeah.

AP: There was a Kramer I heard mentioned who had a kosher butcher shop.

JE: That's right, that was my uncle.

AP: That was your uncle?

JE: Yes.

AP: I see. These things are sort of coming together.

JE: Oh yes, yeah. And they had two sons, Joseph and Julius. And Joseph was a musician, and he eventually got into a small business. He was married and had seven children. He had quite a time making a living. And the younger brother worked at Mesta Machine, and

had an accident with one of the laths and nearly lost his hand. And eventually, he and his wife, who was a young lady from Braddock, moved to New York, as did my uncle and aunt, the Kramers. Those two ended up in New York, and, of course, the elder Kramers are gone. And the younger ones, just recently moved to Florida. As you said, there is where you are going to find people.

AP: Yeah. [unclear] have a jet and travel with it to find all these people now.

JE: I can give you some of these addresses.

AP: I would like to get them from you later.

JE: I'll get you the Kramer address and the Porter address.

AP: At least I can get in touch with them.

JE: That too.

AP: At least I can telephone them.

JE: That, too.

AP: So this aunt and uncle, who had the kosher butcher shop left this area completely?

JE: Yes. My aunt had a sister living in New York. And business was pretty bad. So they decided they'd chance it in Brooklyn. And that's where they headed. There they did much better.

AP: Oh, so they opened ....

JE: They opened a little grocery store there. A neighborhood store and did very nicely. Yeah.

AP: Did the kosher butcher, do you remember, was he held to a higher standard of observance than the run-of-the-mill Jewish community ... was everybody ...

JE: Nah, we were all on a par.

AP: Yeah, so most people were sufficiently observant...

JE: Oh, sure.

AP: There really wasn't that much difference...

JE: No, there really wasn't

AP: Like, for example, did he have to be Sabbath observant?

JE: Oh yes, oh yes. That he did.

AP: So if you went to their house on a Saturday, it would be different from..

JE: Well, the store was closed. But as far as their home, they lived the same as everyone else.

AP: That's what I was getting at.

JE: No, it's just that you didn't keep your store open on Shabbat.

AP: And he didn't ride on...

JE: I don't recall, I don't recall that. But I know the store was always closed on a Saturday. Friday night and Saturday. Three o'clock, I think it was, he hung up his apron.

AP: No one was going to come and buy...

JE: That's exactly right. Yeah.

AP: So...

JE: The same as they do on Murray Avenue now.

AP: This wasn't a matter of his closing off business...

JE: Yeah, that's right, and he was open on Sunday.

AP: Do you remember if other Jewish children were taking music when you were?

JE: Oh, yeah. Yes, every Jewish child, every Jewish boy had to study violin.

AP: So a music teacher in that community...

JE: Made a half decent living. The reason I studied violin, I wanted piano, my parents couldn't afford a piano.

AP: And the violin was a better price?

JE: That's right, exactly.

AP: Did you, did they actually buy a violin for you.

JE: Oh yes, of course.

AP: they didn't rent them in those days

JE: No they didn't, they bought it.

AP: Was the music shop in the area?

JE: No, Volkwein's that's where you went to buy your instruments. Come to think of it Dad carried them, too. He had some violins in stock that he sold on the side.

AP: Did you change violins as you...

JE: Yeah, oh yeah.

AP: So I guess, did you use most of the facilities within the community until you started going to Rodef Shalom Temple?

JE: Yes,

AP: In other words, you took the lessons there, you did your shopping there...

JE: Exactly. Mother use to, every once in a while, head for Logan Street.

AP: Even though you had a relative who was a kosher butcher.

JE: I think she went there to get fresh fish, if I'm not mistaken.

AP: Did your parents drive a car or was this all happening on a streetcar or bus.

JE: My father drove, I remember as a youngster, and he had an accident on the High Level Bridge. And after that accident, he sold the car and never drove again. So we used public transportation.

AP: And your mother would go down to Logan Street, she would...

JE: and we'd go down by streetcar.

AP: This cousin that you said worked in Mesta, was he a laborer?

JE: He just had a high school graduation certificate and that was it.

AP: Do you remember if that was...

JE: There were a number of young Jewish boys who did. You got a job where you could. He couldn't afford to go to college. So the next best thing was to get a job where you

could. And, of course, the steel mills would have been one. But I don't think any of the Jewish children went to the steel mills. Mesta Machine was a little more technical.

AP: I see.

JE: And I have a sneaky suspicion my uncle had a job there before he became a kosher butcher. And this was how my cousin got there.

AP: Oh.

JE: Because, I'm sure somebody knew about Mesta Machine. And it was a decent place to work.

AP:

JE: It was a possibility, yes.

AP: Better than the mills.

JE: Yes. There was a possibility [unclear].

AP: I think it was non-union.

JE: I'm sure everybody was non-union, yes. Or maybe the steel mills were union and but maybe Mesta wasn't, I don't know. I didn't know anything about that.

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TAPE ONE, SIDE TWO

JE: Those things didn't interest me. I was interested in where I was going and what was happening with me.

AP: So you don't remember anything about the political scene.

JE: Not at all, no.

AP [unclear] Then part of that was that it wasn't intruding and making itself .....part of the life around you...

JE: No, not at all. Not that I recall.

AP: Carnegie Mellon was Carnegie Tech, even though you were in a music school, was it unusual for a young woman to be at the university?

JE: Oh no. No, there were a lot of young women at school there.

AP: What about your classmates, your Jewish classmates or your non-Jewish classmates?

JE: Where at Tech?

AP: No, no, from high school. Did many go on to college?

JE: Not very many, not very many.

AP: So you were an exception in terms of that?

JE: There were a few of us who went on. I remember one classmate who worked in the steel mills during the day and went to classes at night.

AP: That was very motivated.

JE: Yeah, and then he had a scholarship at one of the small colleges in the nearby area. He got a full-time scholarship. He went on, he was an engineer. And I recall he had a position outside of the city running a steel plant.

AP: Oh, I see. So he actually was able... Was this a Jewish classmate or a non-Jewish classmate?

JE: No, a non-Jewish young man. We had class reunions up until, I think, our thirty-fifth year. And then it kind of dropped off.

AP: So you were actually able to follow the careers to some extent of some of those classmates.

JE: A little bit.

AP: Did a lot of them stay in the area?

JE: Not too many, not very many. Not very many. Of course when the steel mills went, they had to find something else to do, too. And that's a number of years now. And by now, most of us are, are on Social Security. We're all older citizens.

AP: Now, after you married your parents in Homestead.

JE: They remained in Homestead.

AP: Did they live there all their life long?

JE: Yes, yes. And mother died in '44 and dad in '46.

AP: And after you left the Rodef Shalom Temple, did they just remain...

JE: They remained the Homestead shul, yes. And they were both buried out in Homestead Cemetery.

AP: So their connections with that community really continued...

JE: Yeah, continued until the end.

AP: And was it your sense that it continued until their death, supported by a cohesive kind of community?

JE: Well, people began leaving.

AP: Oh!

JE: And there were, they ended up with very few Jewish families in that definite Homestead area. They moved up to Homestead Park or Munhall. They headed for the hills, or to Squirrel Hill.

AP: If they stayed in that area, they kept going up higher, as it were.

JE: That's right, there very few who stayed at this lower level, at Eighth Avenue area.

AP: Was the Munhall area considered a nicer community then?

JE: Munhall, yes. Homestead was the steel mills, the business area. Munhall, Homestead Park were the residential areas.

AP: Oh, I see.

JE: But, once I was married, my folks kept up the store and figured they might just as well stay where they were.

AP: Oh, I see.

JE: And they were content there.

AP: Did your father keep the store going?

JE: Yes,

AP: So there was enough of a...

JE: It became minimal.

AP: Really?

JE: Yes.

AP: Even at that point?

JE: Yes. Well, he was, dad was already in his early seventies, late sixties, early seventies. And things were very slow. And he did his little bit of watch repair. And finally, we convinced him, when mother died, we convinced him to leave. And he came to live with us.

AP: And you were already in Squirrel Hill?

JE: Oh, yes, oh gosh yes.

AP: I was just trying to figure out where you...

JE: Yeah, we lived in Squirrel Hill. We were on Saline Street at first, then we bought a house on Northumberland. We were there for forty-three years.

AP: And that was really was ...

JE: Yeah, almost settlers.

AP: Almost.

JE: Yeah,

AP: I was trying to think, maybe if as I was moving along, I missed something that I should have thought of asking you about, or any further observations, or thoughts that you had that I didn't give you a chance to talk about.

JE: As I told you, I feel that I really don't have very much to offer.

AP: But you see, you did, you were really very interesting.

JE: A few, a few.

AP: I want to ask you one thing, as I was asking you whether students went on to college, did the school itself encourage that?

JE: Yes, they tried. I think they realized the financial problem. At that time, my tuition at Tech was three hundred and sixty dollars a year. And those who could afford it went to Pitt because it was even more reasonable. And both of my children went to Pitt.

AP: You had to have very specialized kind of interest...

JE: Exactly, exactly, just as you do today.

AP: Although they have tried to broaden themselves.

JE: Oh, they certainly have.

AP: The people who have specific talents.

JE: Talents, arts, whatever.

AP: Well I thought this was a really interesting interview.

JE: Thank you.

AP: I really appreciate your taking the time.

JE: You're very welcome. I just wish I had more to offer, things evade you, as you get older, you kind of let them slip by.

AP: And, of course, you have had a lot that happened in the intervening years.

JE: Yes, in the sixty years, yes, since I have been out of there. Thank you.

AP: Now, this has been marvelous. Thank you.

To recapitulate this has been Anne Sheckter Powell interviewing Jeannette Fischel Egerman, August 1993, with the Jewish Archives of the Western Pennsylvania Historical Society about her life in Homestead early in the century. We have been meeting in her apartment in Oakland talking with her at her dining room table.