



November 2017

Longeman, Kathryn Interview

Unidentified

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Recommended Citation

Unidentified, "Longeman, Kathryn Interview" (2017). *Delta Women Oral Histories*. 28.
<https://scholarlycommons.pacific.edu/witw/28>

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Stockton Immigrant Women Oral History Collection

by Sally Miller

LONGEMAN, Kathryn (German)

Date unknown

Interviewed by Unidentified Female

Transcribed by Robert Siess

**[TAPE 1, Side A]
[Begin Tape.]**

INTERVIEWER: ... the United States.

KATHRYN LONGEMAN: Well, I came from Germany. My father was a tailor. We were with 7 children. I lost my dad in the war, World War I. My mother died when I was 14, so I had no future in Germany. So my husband, you know, we went to school together, and he came to America because he didn't enter in early life. But I worked as a girl on the farm there. Hard work labor. In Germany they have class. And just a poor girl doesn't have a chance. So I worked on the farm until I was about 22, when Dick, my husband, came back from America. He had been here four years, and when he came, I worked for his sister. And we had gone to school together, we knew each other, he was older, and I was about ready to get married too. So I thought my future would be in America. So we became engaged. How important is it? How closely should I tell this?

INTERVIEWER: Well, you can just tell me what your life was like then, and then we'll go on to some other questions. Just tell me about how you lived before you came to America.

LONGEMAN: [tape garbled] Well, World War I... We actually hungered... We had nothing, no food whatsoever. And not too much to look forward to in Germany, but a working girl on a farm.

INTERVIEWER: And you thought that you would have a better life if you came here?

LONGEMAN: Yes. I didn't have nothing to [garbled] We had inflation. I worked hundred[?] Whatever hundred pounds arrived... I would get... And get... Within two or three days, well it wouldn't be nothing anymore.

[Remainder of Tape 1, Side A garbled.]

[TAPE 1, Side B]

LONGEMAN: Shall we continue?

INTERVIEWER: Did she [] without being asked, all that [] stuff?

LONGEMAN: Without being asked. So here was that bum, you know. So she grabbed Richard and she ran to the depot. We were a mile away from the closest neighbor was the depot agent. So he'd come back for the car and he looked everywhere, but he couldn't find nobody. They were gone. So he says, well Mama, what do you want to do, wash or come with me, play at the depot? That's what he would have liked, but he didn't want to [scare?] her either. But [] says I'm gonna wash. And when we came that night, she had it done. And luckily nothing happened, but that was quite dangerous.

INTERVIEWER: When you were working outside the home when you were 14, how did you adjust to that?

LONGEMAN: 14?

INTERVIEWER: In Germany, when you were working outside.

LONGEMAN: Oh, I always liked to work. And I had no choice. I had to. Lucky I liked it. And I worked on one farm four years. I had, oh goodness, the mother had a stroke, and there was a grandmother in the house. She was 99 ½ when she died. I had to take care of her. I milked seven cows, carried the milk on my shoulders with the yoke, and we really had to work. If I was ten minutes too long in my bedroom to do my hair or make my bed, they would ask, "What are

you doing so long? We have work to do.” So when we came here, it was almost like Sunday every day.

INTERVIEWER: Did you ever have to do something that you didn't like to do?

LONGEMAN: Oh. Naturally. I mean, we had to dig peat in Germany. We burnt it. You know what peat is?

INTERVIEWER: Yeah, you dry it into bricks.

LONGEMAN: Uh huh. Well, in the spring we had to go and we made bricks, wet, and put it up. The men would up it up and I would have to haul it on the wheelbarrow and spread it so it could dry. And then it laid there for maybe a month, and then we had to take that what we had spread and make bricks out of it, and here a brick and there and there so it could dry. And I hated that. Other than that, I liked to work, and I know I had to. And of course milking. They milked the cows. They had the fresh-milk cows four times a day, and I thought that was just horrible. Morning, noon, at 4:00 and then at 9:00 at night.

INTERVIEWER: Why so many times?

LONGEMAN: Well, the cows had so much milk in the udder, they were really going out for thoroughbred. And they had to go from both sides, fresh-milk cows. I couldn't reach it from this side.

INTERVIEWER: Wow. I've never heard of that before.

LONGEMAN: About four times. And that I hated. At 9:00 too it was bedtime, and you had to go out and milk those old fresh-milk cows, yes. But no choice.

INTERVIEWER: Who made most of the decisions in your family? Your father or your mother, or did they make them together?

LONGEMAN: I lost my father when I was nine. He died in World War I. That left my mother with seven children, and there wasn't much of a decision to make. It was just to barely make a living and get food for the children. My oldest brother was 16. He could had learn tailor. And so he helped out. But other than that, we just had to work out and tried to make ends meat.

INTERVIEWER: What kind of customs and rituals from the old country do you observe today?

LONGEMAN: The customs from the old country?

INTERVIEWER: Are there anything you do, holidays and things that we don't celebrate perhaps, that you do?

LONGEMAN: Yeah, in Germany they have two days of Christmas. The first day they observe religiously. The second day is more for celebrating. There are dances. The thing we missed most was Easter and White Sunday. Do you know what that is?

INTERVIEWER: No.

LONGEMAN: Seven weeks after Easter is White Sunday. You know you have Pentecost, Himmelfarb we call it in Germany, and then White Sunday. We called it Fiesten and that was always seven weeks after Easter. And that was in the spring, and we would hike and take bicycle tours, and we really miss that.

INTERVIEWER: What does it celebrate? Is it just a holiday?

LONGEMAN: Well, it's religious. That's when Jesus will get Himmel, isn't it?

UNIDENTIFIED MAN (background): Yeah, to Heaven.

LONGEMAN: Again, Easter he was crucified, died, and then he arose again. And White Sunday, well that is a religious day too. That's when he went to Heaven or something to that effect. Anyway, that was very important. And then they had too, for the [Odersie?]. That was spring. Winter was over, and the sun shone warmer, bring in the air. And for the second, they had two days of these too. The second day, they would have all fires – no, that was Easter. The fires for Easter is when they really celebrated for spring and getting warmer. And they had Easter fires everywhere you could see in the evening. They had trash or what they wouldn't want, or woods you know, make a big pile, and everyone would see.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think it was helpful for you to have brothers and sisters while you were growing up? Were they able to help you with some of the harder things in your life?

LONGEMAN: Oh, very much so. We were with seven. We learned to stand on our own feet. My brothers were rough, and we had long hair, pigtails. And if we wouldn't behave or they were mad at us, well, they would grab that pigtail and let 'em hang on it. We learned how to take care of ourselves. That was very helpful. We weren't spoiled.

INTERVIEWER: What is your attitude towards schooling? What do you think about education?

LONGEMAN: Well, education is very important, but schooling here, I feel they should weed out the children. Some just go, they hate it. They could do something else maybe. They hate it. Where others that really wants to, they should pay more attention to those. I mean, schooling is nice, but really get down to business and learn to do something and not so much play. And we think there's too much waste here. Too lenient. School should be a little more, I think a little more stricter and a little more disciplined. It was rough in Germany. Maybe too rough

sometimes. But it's good and helps the child. Here they have too much play and too leisure time.

INTERVIEWER: Did your parents ever try to help you with problems you had in school? Homework or whatever?

LONGEMAN: Oh, and how! If we came home and didn't do, for instance, we had a board from, what is it called?

INTERVIEWER: Blackboard.

LONGEMAN: Yeah, like. And it had a white frame. And that frame had to be snow white.

MAN: On Monday morning when you go to school.

LONGEMAN: And you know that sometimes, us kids forgot and played, and then we would take sandpaper and get it. But when my father saw that, we got a spanking and we had to write down 500 times. "We must not forget to wash the board or table." Oh, they were strict.

MAN: Oh yeah.

LONGEMAN: Might be a little too strict.

INTERVIEWER: What did your parents expect you to learn in school? What would they want you to learn?

LONGEMAN: Mainly reading and arithmetic. Now they have a calculator, they don't need to, but I tell you, lots of times in the store when we first came and they tried to figure out. Him especially and I too. We told 'em so much, "How did you know?" Well you learned [].

INTERVIEWER: You need to get up here [].

LONGEMAN: Well that's 50, 60 years ago. That's the way we came through. Mainly reading and arithmetic.

MAN: Yeah, that's the main thing.

LONGEMAN: The main thing. And of course we have religious, one hour in school.

MAN: Every morning.

LONGEMAN: The first hour in school was religious. But we were all Lutheran. Here it's rather hard, we have Catholics and all different, you know.

INTERVIEWER: Did the boys or the girls stay in school longer, generally speaking?

LONGEMAN: We all got out when we were 14. We got confirmed and we were through school. If you were too dumb or wouldn't learn, you'd stay behind. But if you were 14, you would get confirmed and see what you could make.

MAN: I had to go to 18.

LONGEMAN: We had eight years of grammar school.

MAN: [German]

INTERVIEWER: Did you ever participate in school activities? After school, things to do?

LONGEMAN: Oh, I had to clean the school. I had to clean the school, and oh, others could play. And one time...

INTERVIEWER: Why did you have to clean the school?

LONGEMAN: I needed the money. We needed the money. And one time, he said, "Who cleaned the school last night?" And the old teacher knew that was me. I said, "I did." I was about 10 or 11. He said, "Did you sweep under the benches?" I said, "Yes, teacher." He said, "No you didn't. I have proof. There's a need that was laying there yesterday." And then he got in front of the whole class and said, "What's the most important about cleaning?" And one girl got up and she said, "The corners." And he said, "That's right. Get in the corners! The middle comes by itself." I tell you, you don't forget those things.

INTERVIEWER: Not at all.

LONGEMAN: In recess, I had to help the teacher. They would live in the schoolhouse on one end. And I had to do the dishes. And one time she called me in and said, "Do you like beans and peas cooked together?" I said, "No." He says, "Well," she said, "yesterday we had beans and today we want peas, and look at this pot." I didn't get the corner clean. There were beans left. So I had to go and clean the pot again.

MAN: Before she put the new soup in there. Otherwise she'd have mixed soup. [] variety.

LONGEMAN: We learned the hard way, I tell you.

INTERVIEWER: Did you ever participate in neighborhood or church activities? Special things for your age group? Fun things?

LONGEMAN: No. From school we would take, and maybe once during the season, we would take a trip. Either a group of farmers that had a horse and buggy would furnish the buggy and we would make one trip maybe, and that's all.

INTERVIEWER: Did you ever have any special hopes or ambitions when you were in school? Is there anything you especially wanted to do?

LONGEMAN: Yeah. I had desire to go far away. To cross a water. And one time, we had to have recess, and then we were having, what is that [German]?

MAN: [] history, yeah.

INTERVIEWER: My major.

LONGEMAN: Geography. And then we came back in. And then the teacher says, "We're going to New York, America." And I thought, "Here I can't go again. No money," I thought. But he meant atlas, you know. In the book. But I thought, "Here I can't go again." I wanted to see it so bad. So we learned about America and New York and San Francisco, and that was my dream. And I liked theater. My greatest hope was that I could play on stage. Oh, I was so. But no chance. I was too poor. [laugh]

INTERVIEWER: Was there anything ever that you felt was confusing about what you heard or learned about the United States in school? Something that didn't quite click?

LONGEMAN: No. No, America they said, the land of [German?]. You know, there's nothing impossible. That America was just the greatest. And that's the way I have found it too, until recently. But we still think this is paradise too. We see other places, you know.

INTERVIEWER: It's a lot better than living in Indonesia.

LONGEMAN: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: Can you think of any differences between your life when you came to the United States and that of your grown children now?

LONGEMAN: What?

INTERVIEWER: How was your childhood and different from the life of your grown children? Your children who were born and raised here.

LONGEMAN: Ah! My goodness. They have a lot to learn. I'm afraid to experience the hard way. If we should face hardship, they couldn't face it. We came through such rough, rugged times that we learned to cook with it, to where these teenagers nowadays, they're so soft and it has been given to them so easy that I'm afraid that if they should have to face hardship, they would never survive. I know our son, they would say, well, I killed myself, or I don't have to, but I tell you, it could. We never know what's ahead of us. And then it's mighty nice if we learn to do

with little things and do ourselves. Maybe perhaps boil water if you had to instead of just push button here and there.

INTERVIEWER: Push buttons make things too nice, and sometimes they up too much energy. Too much stuff that we don't have.

LONGEMAN: Right.

INTERVIEWER: Who needs a Cuisinart? I don't know.

LONGEMAN: Yeah. I mean, don't get me wrong. It's mighty nice when it's there. Like the washing machine when I had diapers to wash by hand on the board.

INTERVIEWER: It's not fun.

LONGEMAN: And now when you can, it's mighty nice, but if I had to, I wouldn't be afraid to go back the old way. I still could do it at 72.

INTERVIEWER: Are there any customs that are celebrated at home that are celebrated in your children's homes now? Specifically German things.

LONGEMAN: Oh yes. Oh yes. Like weddings. We have the tradition. We have wreath greeneries. We go to the forest and get greeneries and we decorate, and you know.

MAN: [German].

LONGEMAN: And we have German songs. You know, it really is different. Our children, they both went to Germany, and when they come back, we only celebrate birthdays and weddings and such in a German way. And when we build a home, like we build a home in '55. That one over there was our first home. When the rafters go up, we have a three-ring wreath, and when the rafters are done, that wreath goes up. One is long-livity, good health, good luck, and long livity.

INTERVIEWER: I think it's good to celebrate those kind of things and teach your children. The differences are important. When they melt away, that's very bad.

LONGEMAN: That's bad. And our children picked it up, and they wouldn't have it any other way.

INTERVIEWER: Do your children have anyone living with them in their houses besides their children? Do they have aunts or cousins or anyone living there, or just their nuclear family?

LONGEMAN: No. No, they don't. They don't.

INTERVIEWER: Do your children assign their children tasks or chores similar to the ones that you were assigned when you were young?

LONGEMAN: Our son was very strict with his children. They had to clean their plates, and if it took an hour. They had three in one year. And then they had to do the dishes. In one year. They had to do the dishes. They had three girls, and then Ricky. And then they had to feed the dog. And the father would see that was done. And they had to make their own beds. They had to do it right too. Yes.

I [cross talk, to Unknown Voice]: Three?

MAN: Yes, three.

INTERVIEWER: That's good for children in a way.

LONGEMAN: Oh, definitely.

INTERVIEWER: But sometimes it can make them so mad at their parents. Little girls, smoke will come up from their heads sometimes. [laughing]

LONGEMAN: Yes, yeah.

INTERVIEWER: Do your children have husbands and wives that are German also, or have they intermarried?

LONGEMAN: No, our son married an American girl, and our daughter unfortunately is divorced. She was married to an Italian. And then she married the second time, 100% German, but he was worse. So she's divorced. She has two children that hers. One that was the Joe, he looked like his father. And then they have Cathy, she's in Modesto. She has her own business, travel agency. Yeah, she's been around the world, and they were very well educated and brought up, and Cathy wanted to. She went to Weaver airline school. She wanted to be a stewardess. She passed it 100%, but when she went through, she was only 18 ½ and they gotta be 19, otherwise they have to handle liquor on the plane. So she couldn't. So that made us so mad. So she went all around, see if she couldn't get a job. So [Charles?] travel agent took her in on trial.

MAN: Three-week trial.

LONGEMAN: And my goodness, she's been with him and she's been with Sir Galley, and now she has her own, it's Galley and Cathy. They bought a brand in Modesto. She's half owner of that and she runs that.

INTERVIEWER: That's good. A lot of times women don't have their own businesses. They work in their husband's business.

LONGEMAN: Yeah, no, Cathy is a very, very...

INTERVIEWER: How old is she now?

LONGEMAN: She will be 30. Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: She can retire at 40!

LONGEMAN: Oh, yeah, she really is doing well.

INTERVIEWER: Would you prefer to live with your children if you could, or close...

LONGEMAN: Never. Not under one roof. As good as they are, and I mean me too, but it's not fair to them, it's not fair to us. Never.

INTERVIEWER: What do you think of the lives that your children are living? What do you think about their lives? What are the best things and the worst things about their lives?

LONGEMAN: Well, our son I would say is doing great. He's in his father's footsteps. He took over the ranch. He keeps it clean and he does his duty. He is a trustee for the school. He is active there. He's in church. And he's been in asparagus, the president. He's doing well. But our daughter, I'm naturally a little bit disappointed. She through two divorces. The first I would blame on her more or less, but the second one, that was absolutely him. He left her for a richer woman. He cheated on her. He went with a prostitute. And he never worked, so we are disappointed naturally with our daughter, but nevertheless, she is loyal. She is great. She has a good job. And her children are married. They are doing fine. So they have their own life to live, and we won't interfere.

INTERVIEWER: What do you think life is like here for people from Germany? Is it good, bad?

LONGEMAN: Whoever wants to, they can really make it here. Especially like those men. What is it, Dick, the two guys that learned their trade in Germany, they can really make it here, I think. And if whoever wants to still, there's an opportunity here yet for everyone.

MAN: Yeah.

LONGEMAN: This is a great country.

MAN: [] hour [] so many people [].

LONGEMAN: First of all we have the weather. I mean, this is paradise. Now we had letters. They told us. They called. They have had June and 2/3 of July, nothing but rain. The hay was so bad, they hauled it on the manure pile. It was black. And my sister-in-law just called the other night.

She said, "Our fruit jars are all empty. We have so much rain, I planted three times and we didn't harvest nothing." So especially California, I think this is a great country to be in.

INTERVIEWER: I was reading somewhere that if California seceded from the Union, it would be the sixth richest country in the world. There's so much here.

LONGEMAN: So much. You can raise everything. We went to get peaches, Tuesday, wasn't it?

MAN: Modesto.

LONGEMAN: My goodness, the big peaches.

INTERVIEWER: I got some from Fairfield. They taste so good!

LONGEMAN: So good. And I think it's depending on what they want in life, but if they put their best forward, they can find jobs here.

MAN: Oh yeah.

INTERVIEWER: You can always find a job, even if it's working at McDonald's and you don't want it. You can always do it.

LONGEMAN: Yes you can.

INTERVIEWER: Have you felt close to Germany? Do you feel ties with Germany? When something happens there politically, do you think it affects you at all?

LONGEMAN: Ah. We are here. During the war too, we bought war bonds. We came here on our own free will. We made this our country, our home, and we fought for this country. Naturally, there is blood, you think about it. But that's the way it goes. We like to go back. We enjoy it. But we are always glad when we can come back.

INTERVIEWER: This is probably kind of a bad question. Your father was killed in World War I. Did you ever feel any kind of resentment? I mean, the United States was fighting Germany then.

LONGEMAN: No, not at all.

INTERVIEWER: None?

LONGEMAN: It was a war, brother against brother. And this was World War I. He died in []. He had malaria. But even so, my brother, he had two in Germany. But this war, you gotta be level-headed, and war is war. And each one to their own.

INTERVIEWER: Are you still in contact with your friends or relatives in Germany? Do you write them, call them?

LONGEMAN: Oh, very much. We've been back ten times. And they come and visit, and they love it here. And God willing, we will go back next month.

INTERVIEWER: Oh yeah?

LONGEMAN: The 9th of September, to celebrate our Golden Wedding there.

INTERVIEWER: 50 years?

LONGEMAN: 50 years, yeah.

INTERVIEWER: Wow. That's a long time.

LONGEMAN: Long time with one husband.

MAN: [laughter] []. One husband.

INTERVIEWER: Well, you know, the new models, they're always nicer than the old ones.

LONGEMAN: Right.

MAN: [] pool... drill sergeant.

LONGEMAN: I give exercises in the pool.

MAN: Do you know what that means?

INTERVIEWER: What does it mean?

MAN: Drill sergeant?

INTERVIEWER: Oh, a drill sergeant, I'm sorry. [laughter]

MAN: [] yes.

INTERVIEWER: Could be a Marine!

MAN: Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: Do you feel affected at all by what happens in Germany?

LONGEMAN: No I don't. No way. No way. They're all greedy when it comes to war and, I mean, it was bad, but Germany started it. The war, Hitler, you know. So not at all.

INTERVIEWER: When you first came to the United States, did you still think of yourself as a German person?

LONGEMAN: Yes. But I've got to admit, I hated the language and that I couldn't understand what they were saying, you know. But I wanted to learn as soon as I could. And then you learn the words and you can't make a sentence! You know, that's so hard.

MAN: [] that's not so bad, but making a sentence!

INTERVIEWER: That's what I've heard about Spanish. You can read it, but ask me to speak a sentence in it, I could not.

LONGEMAN: I mean I consider myself German, and you know, when the Second World War, when we were here on the West Coast and then we got in war with Germany, and I wasn't a citizen. So all the aliens had to have their fingerprints, so I had to go to the post office in Stockton. And then I felt so ashamed that I was German and an enemy considered, you know. And the postmaster said, "Don't feel bad. That's just a war. You know, nation against nation." And he said, "There were just as many good Germans as there were Americans. And furthermore Mrs. Logeman," he said, "if you wouldn't admit you were German, nobody would know it." I thought that was pretty nice.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think of yourself as a German American now, or...

[End of Tape.]

[TAPE 2, Side A]

LONGEMAN: ...It takes a little to make it. You've got to find out. When the first hour comes, then you hang on to it, and you appreciate it. And you think it over twice before you throw it away, frivolously.

INTERVIEWER: After you were married, how did you make the decisions about what you were going to do. Like what piece of land you were going to buy. Did you decide together?

LONGEMAN: Together.

MAN: Together, yeah.

LONGEMAN: We rented a farm. 160 acres in Nebraska. We rented. And that's where we started our farm hopefully that we made. But we went in the hole, for six years we were in a hole backwards.

INTERVIEWER: ...It happens like that sometimes, but it'll be transcribed, so it'll be okay. Like he says one thing and you say another thing.

LONGEMAN: Well, when he's mad, then I'm quiet and really good. And then when he's good again, then sometimes I will say, "Dick, you're wrong. You shouldn't have done that." We got along real well.

MAN: Yeah.

LONGEMAN: You've gotta give and take, and you make your decisions, and you gotta go through with it.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah, like with John. I cannot argue with him when he is mad. I have to wait until he's not mad anymore, and then I can say something. Because if you argue with someone when you're both mad, then you go places and say things that you don't mean.

LONGEMAN: And later, you're sorry. And later you're sorry. No, we never argued over the children. We never had arguments over money. I don't know. We got along good.

MAN: I gotta wait a long time for my allowance.

INTERVIEWER: You should always let the woman handle the money. We're better at it.

LONGEMAN: Yes. Right, right.

MAN: Not allowed for two months now. [] flat as a pancake.

INTERVIEWER: How many children do you have? Two?

LONGEMAN: Two.

MAN: [] so far... four.

LONGEMAN: We couldn't afford it. When we had the girl, he said, "Well, when she's big enough to take care of the boy, we'll have the boy." And that's the way it turned out.

MAN: Eight years later.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think your child-rearing practices different from your mom's?

LONGEMAN: No, I don't think so. Be firm with them. Tell them the truth. Don't hold nothing from them. And when they are seven, begin to push them out of the nest.

INTERVIEWER: Seven? They don't even have feathers then.

LONGEMAN: Got to stand on their own feet. They gotta learn. Always I said, when Wilma gave them some money, I said, "I'd give you more than you need. I expect so-and-so much more back. But if you need it in an emergency so that you won't get caught without money. And not today." She says, "Momma never broke."

INTERVIEWER: Do you think that your children were very demanding of you, on you?

LONGEMAN: No. They were very thoughtful, very helpful, and never sass'd us back. If each of our children got two spankings, that's all.

INTERVIEWER: How do you think your relationship with your family in Germany changed when you got married, other than the separation? Did you become more distant, or?

LONGEMAN: To the families in Germany?

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

LONGEMAN: Well, for a long time we couldn't correspond. First my brother knew that I was homesick. He wrote a letter every week, and it took four weeks for a letter to get here. But then came the war, we didn't hear for a long time. Through the Red Cross maybe a few words. That was bad. But when they wrote again and they were so poor we kept sending packages, and in '49 we went back and visited. His father was still alive, and his wish was to see us once more and get acquainted with our children.

MAN: See our family.

LONGEMAN: So that's when we became a little closer again. But naturally, you are far away, they have other interests, we have ours.

INTERVIEWER: What is your greatest satisfaction as a mother? What pleased you the most?

LONGEMAN: When they turn out to be good and doing well and have a good family. And my most satisfaction is help raising the grandchildren.

MAN: Yeah, [].

LONGEMAN: Oh, that was when Sue lost her mother when the twins were two weeks old. And she was an only child, Sue. And my gosh, those three. She had the two girls and she became pregnant right away again. So I really enjoyed, that was my greatest reward was to help. I

taught them how to – I potty trained them, tied their shoes, blew their nose, and gave them the first train ride to San Francisco, and oh so many things. Taught them the German songs.

INTERVIEWER: What do you think your greatest concerns as a mother have been? Like what things worried you the most.

LONGEMAN: What I'm afraid of? Divorces. Divorces and when they're children and they don't know where they belong to. That is what I'm afraid of. And then that they smoking and nowadays that's...

MAN: That was the old generation, yeah. The kids from the next generation [].

LONGEMAN: That can really be disastrous, that dope and smoking and divorces. The birth control period, I don't believe in either. I wonder what will happen 20, 30 years from now. How it will affect this. But that's up to the next generation.

INTERVIEWER: [] What made you happiest or proudest of what you did?

LONGEMAN: When we built our home, finally, in '54. We built this home after... Well, we never had a home. We lived in shacks. And we could build the home on our own property on our own land. And the children turned out healthy, and when we took them back to Germany, they were able to speak the language, yet they were Americans. And they ate what was on the table. We were proud of our children there when we took them back.

MAN: We'd love to go back any time.

LONGEMAN: That was the greatest achievement. We raised them, we taught them right, we taught them the language, German, and so when we brought them back, we were so proud of them. Yes, I have a sister in Holland and she wouldn't teach her children German. And they didn't even want them there. They said, "What good does it do? We can't understand them." So I think it's good to have another language that they can.

MAN: Oh yes.

LONGEMAN: Well, in other words, they fit in this world.

INTERVIEWER: The world is so much smaller than it was before. You have to be able to speak more than one language.

LONGEMAN: Right. Yes, yes.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think your interests would be different if you hadn't gotten married? How do you think your life would be different?

LONGEMAN: In Germany, I believe I would have become a nurse. Because my goal was theater. I loved to play on the stage and in front of public. But that was out because no money. So the next thing would have been a nurse I thought. Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: Now that your children are on your own, do you get together often? Do you see them at all?

LONGEMAN: Oh yes. When there are gatherings, it's here at the ranch. And they all gladly come and it's just one happy reunion.

INTERVIEWER: Are you still in touch a lot with your sisters in Germany, your brothers?

LONGEMAN: Mmhmm. Correspond with letters. Altogether we've been back 10 times. In '67, it was so rugged when we came the first time. You know, homesick and seasick and everything. And then we had the rough time. So in '67, I told him, we want to go back once more the way we came.

MAN: By boat.

LONGEMAN: So we took the zephyr through the States to Chicago. Then we took the Broadway Limited to New York. And then the Bremen to Germany. And oh it was great.

INTERVIEWER: Did you get sea sick?

LONGEMAN: No, no, no time. I was chosen the queen on the boat. Rhineland Queen. And he got first prize in dancing. Oh, the boat, we...

MAN: [] on my head... [garbled]

INTERVIEWER: Did your children's activities sometimes lead you to get involved with things like PTA, things that you normally wouldn't have done?

LONGEMAN: Oh yes. Future Brides and Future Farmers and what is it, Girl Scouts. And they had glee club and singing and ball games and, oh yes.

INTERVIEWER: Taking everything together, how would you say your married life has turned out? Life in general has turned out?

LONGEMAN: Oh, great. If I should do it over again, I would have it done just the same it went. With all the hardship and everything, because this makes you stronger and you can overcome those obstacles.

INTERVIEWER: You can appreciate it, huh?

LONGEMAN: Oh, definitely, definitely. [German expression?] Atte!

MAN: You know what she did in Germany? [] on the bar. [laughter]

INTERVIEWER: How has your life changed since you got married and now? How did it change?

LONGEMAN: Oh, I was pretty well hardened. I mean I knew it wouldn't be easy, it would be a struggle. But we [] and came through fine. I'm not disappointed.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think the goals that you had for you and your family are different from the goals that your parents had for you and your brothers and sisters?

LONGEMAN: Well, I think so. My dad wanted to have every child become a seamstress or tailor. That was my father's goal, what he wanted for his children. That was foolish, because my gosh, not everyone is cut out to be a dressmaker. I don't like sewing. But if my dad had lived, that's what I would've been.

MAN: You did a lot of sewing.

LONGEMAN: Yes. Would've been pound into me. So...

MAN: In Germany you gotta [] you know.

LONGEMAN: What was the next question?

INTERVIEWER: Let's see.

LONGEMAN: Different?

INTERVIEWER: What you wanted your children to do.

LONGEMAN: Yes. Well we gave our children the choice of what they liked and were cut out for. To where my parents, we were forced to, you know, become. See, fortunately, I lost my dad when I was only nine. My oldest brother was 16, and do you know he made his own confirmation suit when he was 14? And he made every bit, and it hadn't have been goo, he wouldn't have worn it. So it was pound into him. That I think was not good.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think your husband shared these goals with you?

LONGEMAN: Yes. Our girl became a beauty operator, became a beautician. And Richard of course, he went to agriculture. He has a ranch. He went into farming. But he had a choice.

MAN: [garbled]

LONGEMAN: Yeah. When we're done, we'll see what... [Something about 7-Up and coffee]

INTERVIEWER: How do you feel about Germany? How have your attitudes about Germany changed?

LONGEMAN: Well, it's amazing. We went back in '49 and you wouldn't believe. The trains were all bombed out. There was nothing. They didn't even have as much as a newspaper. They didn't have toilet paper. Otherwise they'd use the newspaper as toilet paper.

[cut off]

INTERVIEWER: Where were we? Do you think the people from Germany tend to live in the same neighborhoods, the same neighborhood, or are they all spread out?

LONGEMAN: In America? Oh, I think they mingle. The whole world has become one, and one likes it here, the other likes it in San Francisco. There is no that closeness anymore.

MAN: No.

INTERVIEWER: What kind of things did the parents in the neighborhood, parents of the friends do?

LONGEMAN: The parents of the friends. In Germany or here?

INTERVIEWER: In Germany.

LONGEMAN: Well, in Germany they were farmers. They all have a garden. They depend on their own [] don't go to the store and buy everything in cans. They raise it. And the man might be a bricklayer or a carpenter, and that's what they do.

INTERVIEWER: What aspects of German culture do you think your children have maintained, and what aspects have they lost?

LONGEMAN: Oh, they lost just about everything from there. They think they are a little more accurate or refined. Like a carpenter, in Germany, they really learned the trade, whether it be Denmark or Germany. Our kids these days, just a little more honesty, a little more sense, a little more. Oh yes, and they like that.

INTERVIEWER: Are your friends now people from other places?

LONGEMAN: Oh, we have them from all over. We have nice Filipinos. A Filipino foreman been with us since '62, and they call us Momma and Pop. They really think of us and his wife and the other Filipinos. We have nice Mexican friends too, and it doesn't matter. We have a real nice Negro, Ralph, what is his name? Who buys the hay. You couldn't ask for a better or more faithful friend than him. He says, "Here's my telephone number. If your husband should get sick

through the night and children shouldn't be there no matter what time," he says, "Give us a call. We are there." And those are the kind of friends we need.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah, friends who are there when the bad things happen, not just for the good things.

LONGEMAN: Oh, absolutely.

INTERVIEWER: Have you ever felt discriminated against because you were German? Have you ever felt that someone looked down on you because you were German?

LONGEMAN: I don't think so. We have found in World War I, they told us, in Pendle, Nebraska, they really did look down on them, but that was World War I. And there was one true friend, Shopkey? was his name. They really made fun of him. During the war, they tried to, they should buy war bonds and raise money, you know. And they had a goat. And they would auction off this goat. And they expected mainly the Germans would buy that goat. And this particular Shopkey had brought that goat three times, turn it back, and it'd be auctioned off again. So they expected him to buy it some more. And he said, "No, this is it." And that night they went and smeared his windows with goat on it, and then on Saturday night, they caught up with him and they tarred and feathered him. Drug him down the Main Street in Emerson, Nebraska. I mean then there was racial, but I haven't found that. We got along very well. I have an accent. They say, "Where do you come from? I detect an accent." I said, "Can't get rid of it!" They said, "No, keep it," they say. They, you know, from Germany. "Well, my grandfather or my so-and-so came from Germany." They accept us.

MAN: There's a lot of German in here. []

LONGEMAN: We feel comfortable and I haven't found it.

INTERVIEWER: What kind of recreational activities do you enjoy? If you have a couple hours that there's nothing to do, what would you do?

LONGEMAN: Oh, swimming, exercise in the pool.

MAN: You never played Pinnacle.

LONGEMAN: Oh yes, cards. We never could do that in Germany. And I help a lot. I like, you know, wherever I can help out with. Blind friends. Wherever I can help out, I'd rather do that than lay around or go some place. I like to write. I love poems.

INTERVIEWER: You like poetry, huh? You find poets in strange places. Do you enjoy working?

LONGEMAN: Very much. Very much. They tell me too much. Yeah, I like to work.

MAN: She wakes up every morning... 4 in the morning...[?]

LONGEMAN: They come running. I call them babies.

INTERVIEWER: That's just like whenever I go to my parents' ranch and we open the door. Every single time, the mare that they have, she just whinnies and she thinks it's time to eat. Boy, she tells you!

LONGEMAN: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: When you got your first job in the United States, did you think that there were only certain jobs that were available to you as a woman? Did you think that there were some things you couldn't do?

LONGEMAN: Well, see, my husband was a farmer. And I worked towards that. I helped on the farm. I drove the tractor. I almost drove it in the river too. And I learned the hard way too. I never did outside jobs, because when the first year... [tape warped]

INTERVIEWER: Do you think you'd have had a different kind of job if you'd have stayed in Germany, or do you think you'd always have worked in the fields?

LONGEMAN: Oh, I wouldn't have had much of a chance in Germany. You know, a poor girl just didn't have a chance, no matter how capable or how pretty she would be. If she couldn't bring along something of value, she just wouldn't have a chance. I would have to marry a working man, and we might have struggled too, how bout that?

MAN: Book working.

LONGEMAN: Book working. Saving you know.

MAN: And get to own their home.

LONGEMAN: But that's not so easy to come buy a farm in Germany, no.

INTERVIEWER: No, the land comes down from generation to generation.

LONGEMAN: Right. And if my mother had been alive, I wouldn't have done this to my mother because she had such rough life. But I lost here when I was 14, so I had nothing to lose. I gained a lot.

INTERVIEWER: After you were married and you were here for a while, did you ever have anybody come in and help you with the housework at all?

LONGEMAN: No. Oh God, I'd get done and helped in the field too!

MAN: When we were staying at those people's houses.

INTERVIEWER: Did you ever join a union for any reason at all?

LONGEMAN: No. No.

INTERVIEWER: What do you think about it?

LONGEMAN: Well, little bit of the union was nice. I mean, laborers, workers should be treated nice. But this has gone too far now, I feel. You know, we had just last week our air condition went haywire. You know, the man came out, he worked 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ of an hour, and that labor bill was \$110. I mean, no man is worth that kind of money. And when there's money given just for so much, for free you might say, that you don't get work for, something is going back. And that I believe is our downfall today. Too many want too much, you know, and not enough... Yeah. We feel that way. I might be wrong, but union little bit of it is fine. The workmen should be protected. But it's gone too far. I believe we are leaning too far towards communism.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think so?

LONGEMAN: Yeah, I'm afraid.

INTERVIEWER: I always feel sorry for the workers, because I think they're not the ones who want unreasonable things.

MAN: Yeah, sure.

INTERVIEWER: And they make money from that!

LONGEMAN: That's true! But now you can't get a job or, I don't know, we never have had that. They've got to join the union.

MAN: [cross talk] I've never belonged to union. I worked on the farm. But I'm for the workingmen.

LONGEMAN: Yes. We are too.

MAN: I always say treat the man the way we want to be treated. And I only worked on two or three [bases?] before I started farming.

LONGEMAN: And we have the men, the laborers that cut the asparagus. That's piecework. Now, that is fine. They are satisfied. We are satisfied. They like it. They're on their own. Of course, not everything can be piecework, but if that can be piecework, that means if you work, you make. And nobody loses. Like we had one, what was it? One of the winos from Stockton

that [] picked tomatoes and cut asparagus. Well, you know, we went to Skidmore and picked him up. By the next stop sign, we lost half of them.

MAN: ...No-good son of a gun... By noon, and harvesting sunflowers...

LONGEMAN: Our neighbor here got men from town and he had to pay them by the hour. Cutting asparagus. He had to pay them that night. Why, he went in the hole.

MAN: He could figure out every night how much he lost that day.

LONGEMAN: Yes, so he plowed the asparagus under. So what have we got? If it were piecework, let them work piecework.

MAN: A man makes good wages hourly... good man... only maybe one of the works by piecework. Now... yeah.

LONGEMAN: You can cut it out, but that's the way we feel.

INTERVIEWER: Do [] for you to work in fields and on the farm and raise a family and do all the homework too?

LONGEMAN: Ah, I enjoyed it. It was rough sometimes, but we wanted to get ahead. This was the country...

MAN: It was '41[?].

LONGEMAN: We could see we were gaining, and in the fall I picked tomatoes along with it we picked hundred boxes a day. I got 17 cents a box. And I did housework. And I packed corn and asparagus in the packing shed...

[End of Tape.]