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Ospital, Anna Interview

Mary Cusick

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Stockton Immigrant Women Oral History Collection

by Sally Miller

OSPITAL, Anna (Basque)

June 10, 1980

Interviewed by Mary Cusick

Transcribed by Robert Siess

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

MARY CUSICK: And if you can tell me about your early life in the Basque Country, when you grew up there.

ANNA OSPITAL: Oh, my life was beautiful. We were raised family. My father made good money. We have grounds and everything. Two, three houses over there.

CUSICK: You had a lot of land then?

OSPITAL: Yeah.

CUSICK: What did your father do?

OSPITAL: He was a, what do you call it, for the animals and things. Veterinarian.

CUSICK: Veterinarian? He took care of animals?

OSPITAL: Yeah. He was going around. That time, they didn't have no cars. He had [for lots of dog?].

CUSICK: He had a lot of horses too?

OSPITAL: And he goes on horses.

CUSICK: So you were born right there in the Basque Country.

OSPITAL: Oh yeah.

CUSICK: And you said you were born on the French side? Is that right?

OSPITAL: French side, oh yeah. Spanish is the other side. I never been, till my brother was on the service, and he won't come this way. He came. He was... Well, they didn't call them, but they let him go once, anyhow. Family. There was wartime. He was a paratrooper.

CUSICK: So you were living in the country over there on a lot of land?

OSPITAL: No, no. France there was this town.

CUSICK: You were living in the town.

OSPITAL: Oh yeah.

CUSICK: And the town was made up of all other Basque people, of course.

OSPITAL: Oh yeah. They all Basque people. Yeah. They learn Basque when they's a child. Then they quit that, and the government pull the school back, and you don't want to live the Basque-run way. They want to keep up the Basque. You know, they're no children. They like little things, the French.

CUSICK: So now in school they're learning French?

OSPITAL: No, they're learning Basque and French. Basque was principal. It was... all of town, but all, you know, you explain that. First living, before the war, you talk about it, they all talk Basque.

CUSICK: That was their native tongue?

OSPITAL: More the Basque then. And they won't quit that, and they went to French, but they got the school again to learn, for beginning Basque.

CUSICK: Oh, I see. They had more training with Basque because that was the first language they had in the household. And you were born right in that area?

OSPITAL: Oh yeah.

CUSICK: When was your birthday?

OSPITAL: January the 1st.

CUSICK: Oh, is that right? What year was that?

OSPITAL: My father and mother. All family. We were five in the family too.

CUSICK: How many sisters do you have?

OSPITAL: I have two sister? Two brothers and three sisters with me.

CUSICK: What year were you born?

OSPITAL: In France.

CUSICK: And what year were you born?

OSPITAL: I don't know. Well, I came here 1906, I think.

CUSICK: That's when you came over directly to Stockton?

OSPITAL: Yeah. Directly to Stockton. I didn't know English or nothing, but I came. I wanna come, and that's it. My father that passed away before then. If my father was living, we never go, because it meant family, the wrong business. But my mother, she was not too thrilled neither, because you know, it's awful hard. She let me come easier.

CUSICK: So you came over with your brother?

OSPITAL: No. I came alone, but you meet people, they coming. When you young, you take anything.

CUSICK: That's right. You were 16 years old when you came?

OSPITAL: Yeah.

CUSICK: And you came alone?

OSPITAL: Yeah. Well, I made friends.

CUSICK: Did you know people who were living in Stockton already?

OSPITAL: No, I didn't know anybody.

CUSICK: You knew nobody?

OSPITAL: Nobody.

CUSICK: So where did you first live when you came to Stockton?

OSPITAL: With hotel. Basque hotel. Cousin mine have. And then I married him! [laughs]

CUSICK: Oh, is that right? Your cousin owned it at the time?

OSPITAL: Yeah.

CUSICK: And you ended up marrying him?

OSPITAL: Uh huh.

CUSICK: So your family didn't come over with you then.

OSPITAL: Oh no. Gosh no. I have a brother that by that time in all here.

CUSICK: Your brother and your uncle were here?

OSPITAL: Oh yeah.

CUSICK: Did any of your other family come over later on? To Stockton?

OSPITAL: No. Well, they come by little, but my family never come, no.

CUSICK: So did you first work when you got here? Or did you have a job?

OSPITAL: No. I didn't have no job. I got the job. I just a couple of years and married anyhow.

CUSICK: What did you do first of all? What was your job?

OSPITAL: Well, like all the rest, cleaning and...

CUSICK: Like all the rest of the Basque women you mean? Or all the rest of the young women in Stockton?

OSPITAL: Well, no, everybody got something. I didn't know English. Originally I know Basque and French.

CUSICK: So you knew both Basque and French, but you knew no English.

OSPITAL: No.

CUSICK: So how did you find a job?

OSPITAL: Well, my uncle and my cousin, he have hotel, and I started with them, but I went with some German French.

CUSICK: I see. You did help with your uncle's hotel, right? Your cousins?

OSPITAL: Yeah. I have, but God knows where. So many put peaches. [laughs] No, I didn't have anybody. I took a chance, and that's it.

CUSICK: Why did you want to come to Stockton?

OSPITAL: Yeah, come, because my cousin was there. He have hotel, and I came to him. And my uncle was [], he was a sheep, and my brother too with him. And we were not too far. They take care of me.

CUSICK: So did you ever go to school here in Stockton?

OSPITAL: No. I should go. I shouldn't have went. In France neither.

CUSICK: You didn't go to school in France?

OSPITAL: No. They took my... well, my aunt. Took me, my father's sister took me over there. Her house. And I never did like. I cry and cry. I cry to sleep. I cry to wake. Work, and that was crying.

CUSICK: Why?

OSPITAL: Well, I didn't like it there.

CUSICK: Oh. Why did you have to go live with your aunt?

OSPITAL: Well, because she want me, and my father, he won't say no. They took me. And I never was happy. Never, never, never.

CUSICK: Why did they want you to live at your aunt's?

OSPITAL: Because she didn't have any children. And I got pickup that afterward my father realized I was not happy and took me away home. That was the happiest one. And I came here because I never want to go back from my house. And I said, "Nobody gonna get me anymore."

CUSICK: So you decided to come.

OSPITAL: Yeah. That's how I came. Yeah.

CUSICK: What was your parents' religion?

OSPITAL: Catholic.

CUSICK: Catholic? And your whole family is Catholic?

OSPITAL: Oh yeah. All Catholic.

CUSICK: Did your mother ever work too? At home in the Basque Country?

OSPITAL: Oh no. No. She didn't need to work. We have three, four houses over there, and my father making money.

CUSICK: What did you do with your other houses?

OSPITAL: Oh, they still there. They still over there. I've went couple times, but my children went more than I do.

CUSICK: Is that right? They went back to see?

OSPITAL: Oh yeah. They love to go!

CUSICK: That's great. That must be quite an experience to go and see those houses that have been there for quite a few years.

OSPITAL: Oh yeah. Oh, definitely.

CUSICK: So how did you feel when you were leaving the old country?

OSPITAL: Feel fine. I was the happiest girl in the world. I didn't know anything, but I was determined I was gonna stay, and it was gonna learn the way they learned.

CUSICK: The way who learned?

OSPITAL: Well, everybody.

CUSICK: In the United States?

OSPITAL: United States.

CUSICK: Did you feel happier about just leaving the old country? Or you were happiest about just coming to the United States?

OSPITAL: Oh yeah. Their country, I was set up. When you don't feel happy, you don't like things.

CUSICK: And you decided you wanted to come out and try things here?

OSPITAL: Oh yeah. That's what I came.

CUSICK: So how did your feelings change when you first got here?

OSPITAL: Oh, like all the rest, I make up. I knew English, but that's alright. I have French, I got Basque, and I got a little Spanish. I mix up everything!

CUSICK: Did you find enough people so that you could get along?

OSPITAL: Oh gosh, yeah.

CUSICK: With your French and your Basque and your little bit of Spanish?

OSPITAL: Oh, everything.

CUSICK: No problem?

OSPITAL: No problem.

CUSICK: That's good. And how did you feel about wanting to learn English?

OSPITAL: Well, was in error, but I try. I never learned good knew anyhow, but that's alright. Passable.

CUSICK: What did you like most about the old country?

OSPITAL: The old country? Well, I was born over there, and that's it. It nice and happy.

CUSICK: What did you like about it most of all?

OSPITAL: Well, I didn't like at all, because I'm here. And I know, maybe I never go back.

CUSICK: And you came here at such a young age too, didn't you?

OSPITAL: Yeah. And I went with some German people, French they know. That's what I didn't learn right away English right. Oh yeah.

CUSICK: Okay, so what do you remember about your life when you first came to the United States? You came to the hotel, and you were working there for a while you said?

OSPITAL: No. I got that job. German and French they were. But I got French, inside I was fine. And I went for that mostly.

CUSICK: How long did you work there?

OSPITAL: Oh, about a couple years. And then I got married.

CUSICK: So when you first came to the United States, what kinds of things did you expect?

OSPITAL: Well...

CUSICK: Did you have any idea what you might find here?

OSPITAL: No. I was happy the way I came, and the world around me. They have music, and there was singing on the hotel. I used to go once a week, twice a week.

CUSICK: With the Basque people?

OSPITAL: No, for that. Well, anybody around. I was working by that time. Yeah.

CUSICK: So was there anything in the United States that surprised you?

OSPITAL: Everything. But it was better than any beautiful thing. And I was happy. I was happiest girl in the world.

CUSICK: Were there vey many other Basque people living around you?

OSPITAL: Quite a few, yeah. Oh yeah. They used to come, sheep-herders. And a lot of Basque, Spanish more people than anything.

CUSICK: Oh yeah? More Spanish than...?

OSPITAL: Yeah. Oh yeah. They used to take care of the sheep, and that's why there's no sheep anymore. They don't come anymore.

CUSICK: Why is that?

OSPITAL: That's where the people that we – around here, they didn't have anymore sheep. Because the Spanish people, they came and they took back. Now they got their Mexican, something, and they never work. Life's changed.

CUSICK: What kinds of problems did you first have when you got here?

OSPITAL: Anyway problems. I was happy-go-lucky.

CUSICK: You felt confident about everything?

OSPITAL: I welcomed it. I used to come on Sundays, even in Sundays and Tuesdays I think, two days. My cousin was the one I married. They have music. I go there. And we were happy. We danced. Afterwards, go home and work again, and waiting for next dance! They don't do things now where they're like that.

CUSICK: So you were living on your own when you first got here, is that right?

OSPITAL: Oh yeah.

CUSICK: How did your parents feel about you leaving to the United States?

OSPITAL: Oh, they was not happy, no. My father was living, I never been. But he died, he passed away.

CUSICK: And then your mother was not too happy?

OSPITAL: Well, she was not happy, but the mother got more soft heart than anything.

CUSICK: And so she decided to let you go?

OSPITAL: Oh, I was happy to come. Very brave. There was not anything good neither, because I was unhappy in the other place.

CUSICK: And you were just happy to be here, to make your own decisions?

OSPITAL: Oh yeah. I like Stockton. I love it. Well, I never been out of the Stockton too much, I mean.

CUSICK: You've pretty much stayed in this area?

OSPITAL: Oh yeah. Then I started having children. I have 24th of children. And I was happy, and I love children. So there was nothing for me to be unhappy.

CUSICK: So you were setting your own rules. You parents were not around since you were 16 years old. Is that right?

OSPITAL: Yeah.

CUSICK: And you were living on your own.

OSPITAL: Oh yeah. Well, I have my uncle, my brothers there if I need anything.

CUSICK: And they took care of you pretty much?

OSPITAL: Oh, I didn't miss anything.

CUSICK: That's great. Did you live right with them? Or you lived alone?

OSPITAL: No. I live at the place I was working.

CUSICK: That's right.

OSPITAL: And then when the dancing come, they all come get me somebody, and they big, so I was happy. When you're unhappy some place and you got happiness, you'll do anything.

CUSICK: I'd agree. You were enjoying your life completely then.

OSPITAL: Yeah.

CUSICK: That's great. So can you tell me about the differences between your life, first when you got here at 16 years of age, and life in the old country? What kinds of things made you happy? The part about going out and dancing, you loved that. Did you enjoy your job?

OSPITAL: Oh yeah. I enjoy everything. I didn't miss anything on the other side. I was so hard on the other one, and I didn't miss anything.

CUSICK: How did you feel about working for somebody then?

OSPITAL: Fine. Didn't hurt me at all. We used to get so much to the hotel to dance and things, and I was happy. That was enough for me. And I'm always, I never miss anything. I'm always here, and I'm happy. In Stockton, it's happy place.

CUSICK: I'm glad that you're happy here. Tell me about the other Basque people too. What is it like for them to live in Stockton?

OSPITAL: Well, some people I guess they don't.

CUSICK: What do some people like about it, and what do some people not like about it? Do you know?

OSPITAL: Well, the different life. And they don't speak, a lot of them, and they don't try neither. But afterward, more and more they came, French and Basque, and they started in family, and there was different.

CUSICK: Once they settled down with a family...

OSPITAL: Yeah.

CUSICK: ...you feel that they got more used to things?

OSPITAL: What?

CUSICK: Do you think they got more used to Stockton?

OSPITAL: Oh yeah. Oh yeah. They make their own life. Is different. And then they get married, and they have their children, and jeez, it's home for them.

CUSICK: So you got married at 18 years of age, right?

OSPITAL: 36. Yeah, 18, 18.

CUSICK: And your husband is your cousin. Is that right?

OSPITAL: Yeah.

CUSICK: Was he originally from...?

OSPITAL: From Pyrenees over there, from Pyrenees. Oh yeah.

CUSICK: And his parents were from over there, and he grew up over there?

OSPITAL: Oh yeah.

CUSICK: And he came over just a little bit before you did?

OSPITAL: Yeah. They were four... [break]

OSPITAL: ...other things. And I never get friends, because I was not... I didn't like it because I was not treated right. And those things you never forget.

CUSICK: At a young age like that, you're right.

OSPITAL: My mother, she was sorry that... Finally he got in his head though. He told him, "You take to the doctor that girl, because she's worse than you think."

CUSICK: Who? Your father's sister?

OSPITAL: My father. The doctor. After I went home.

CUSICK: That's scary.

OSPITAL: Well, you cry and you cry and not eat, you know you can't leave.

CUSICK: Did they take you to the doctor?

OSPITAL: Oh yeah. Oh yeah. I got [something wrong?]. That's why I didn't like to go no place. I like home. My heart went my home. We have everything we need. Happiness and everything.

CUSICK: Tell me about your marriage to your cousin.

OSPITAL: We're fine. I didn't have any trouble.

CUSICK: How was it for you when you were that young and...

OSPITAL: I didn't think myself neither I was going to. [laughs]

CUSICK: You didn't think you were going to?

OSPITAL: Yeah.

CUSICK: How about your courtship? Was a big part of your courtship going out to the dances?

OSPITAL: Oh yeah. He have hotel. He have a 200 people when we got married. We have big handball.

CUSICK: Oh, pelota?

OSPITAL: The dinner, pelota.

CUSICK: And did all the Basque people come? Or did you have a lot of other people there too?

OSPITAL: Oh yeah. American. My husband. I know later too, but not that time.

CUSICK: So he was running the hotel at the time. Did he ever change jobs after that?

OSPITAL: Oh, he died long time ago. 32, 33? I'm widow for long time.

CUSICK: Did he run the hotel the whole time that you were married to him?

OSPITAL: Yeah. Oh yeah. And then he had hundred sheep.

CUSICK: He did take care of sheep too?

OSPITAL: Yeah. Well, we bought it. And then we have the shepherders. I used to go cook over there sometimes. And then we board the profit on top. [laughs] No. You get your heart if he is good, and your love, and you'll do anything. But you said that you'd be true.

CUSICK: Yeah. So you were happy in your marriage too?

OSPITAL: Oh yeah. Always. Long as I had the children, I was happy.

CUSICK: You had five children?

OSPITAL: Five.

CUSICK: So you had three girls and two boys?

OSPITAL: Two boys. One boy died two years ago.

CUSICK: How did you and your husband divide the responsibilities in your household when you were bringing up your own children?

OSPITAL: Oh, we didn't have no trouble. I have workers, you know.

CUSICK: You had workers in your home?

OSPITAL: Oh yeah.

CUSICK: Like people who would clean the house?

OSPITAL: Well, they have restaurant, you see, and they need a lot of workers. Oh no, we have happy life.

CUSICK: Were your children very demanding on you?

OSPITAL: No. Oh, they were happy-go-lucky. They were pretty close to me though.

CUSICK: You were home quite a bit, is that right?

OSPITAL: All the time. I took them the car any place they needed to go, but nobody took them. And I took a lot of the ones too. Took happy, they'd be mine happy.

CUSICK: Was your husband around just as much, or he was at work?

OSPITAL: Oh no. When you got work, you have all over. Little bit. We had it pretty good.

CUSICK: So did you sometimes help your children at school? Were there problems at school?

OSPITAL: No, I didn't know the schooling that much. Like I say, crying, and I didn't learn anything. And I didn't have my mind to stay over there or my mind here. So that never bothered me, but later on that bother me, that's true, but not that time.

CUSICK: When your children were first born, did you always speak Basque?

OSPITAL: All the time.

CUSICK: Did you speak French to them too?

OSPITAL: No French. You can't do two things. The Basque is pretty hard. But if you learn when you're young, it's nothing.

CUSICK: True. So that was the first language they learned.

OSPITAL: Yeah.

CUSICK: Did they ever learn French too?

OSPITAL: Oh, at home always Basque for them. They knew pretty good, but now they married and we separate for quite a while. It's different.

CUSICK: They didn't forget it, did they?

OSPITAL: Well, they don't have chance to talk.

CUSICK: Yeah. That's hard when they don't talk it as much. How did they learn English? Did they learn it at home or in school?

OSPITAL: Oh, school. Home too. Oh, there would have been in the hotel all kinds. And they have a lot of people wants to play with them, and nothing.

CUSICK: Yeah. All the other kids always spoke English to them?

OSPITAL: Oh yeah.

CUSICK: So did your children play with a lot of people of different ethnic backgrounds? They played with other people, not just the Basque people?

OSPITAL: Well, I keep pretty close to them. When you got a hotel and you're off, you gotta keep children apart. And then finally, I won't anymore. We learn to the place. I said, "It's too young, the children. They learn lot of things." And you keep to yourself, they're better off. So we manage very nicely.

CUSICK: What was your biggest satisfaction as a mother? What made you most happy about being a mother?

OSPITAL: Oh, there's the children. And played with them. And be nice and learn.

CUSICK: Spending a lot of time with them.

OSPITAL: Oh yeah.

CUSICK: Always.

OSPITAL: Oh yeah. Oh, they never have no trouble with the children like they have now with the children.

CUSICK: How do you see that changing now? What kinds of differences do you think there are with the children now?

OSPITAL: All kinds of difference. The mothers, they're not enough with the children.

CUSICK: Pardon me?

OSPITAL: The mothers, they don't stay enough with the children.

CUSICK: And what do you think about the differences in children themselves now compared to when yours?

OSPITAL: Well, there sweet ones and there awful ones. All depends how you're raised.

CUSICK: Yeah, true. So what were your biggest concerns when you were bringing up your children?

OSPITAL: To be nice, and mind things. Be there in time to do anything when they got to be in. Be ladies and gentlemens, and that's all. We used to go up to the ranch a lot of times too. They don't have that chance to be with too many people neither. Too many children.

CUSICK: What were you especially proud of in your home?

OSPITAL: What mean that?

CUSICK: What were you especially proud of when running your home? What made you feel very proud of your home?

OSPITAL: Oh, anything. Anything. When you learn from the beginning, you do anything, any way to be happy.

CUSICK: Was your home right above the hotel, or was it right in the hotel itself?

OSPITAL: Well, I have a separate home too for the children and myself.

CUSICK: Oh, I see. Was that really close to the hotel?

OSPITAL: Yeah.

CUSICK: It was right nearby, so that you could walk?

OSPITAL: Well, we sold that. I didn't want a hotel.

CUSICK: Oh, you sold it?

OSPITAL: Yeah.

CUSICK: When did you sell your hotel?

OSPITAL: A long time ago.

CUSICK: Was this when your husband was still alive?

OSPITAL: Oh yeah. Long time ago. The children, they were not to be, I didn't want to raise children in the hotel. There's too many competition. They drink and they play, and there's nothing good in the hotel.

CUSICK: How old were your children at this time? When you did sell the hotel?

OSPITAL: Five.

CUSICK: The youngest one was five?

OSPITAL: Oh, the youngest one. Genevieve, the girl is the youngest one. You've got to give it time and [get clean?]. [laughs]

CUSICK: Yeah. So at age did your children start to be independent? Because they were around you and around home a lot.

OSPITAL: Oh yeah. And the oldest one I keep in San Rafael, in school.

CUSICK: You kept her in school?

OSPITAL: Yeah. I saw that I learned with the sisters...

CUSICK: Oh, in San Rafael?

OSPITAL: Yeah. The oldest one. She was a little bit, she won't do this, she won't do that, and I got to go too many times after them. And maybe she's the same. She can change too more. She's the boss. No?

CUSICK: She had no idea what she wanted? What time did she leave the house to go away to school?

OSPITAL: My daughter?

CUSICK: Yeah. How old was she then?

OSPITAL: She was about twelve years.

CUSICK: And did you say the other ones went away to school too? The boys went away?

OSPITAL: Yeah. She goes and sister. They have sister schooling.

CUSICK: And did your boys do the same?

OSPITAL: Brothers they had. Yeah. Very nice brothers. I used to give them meal and a lot of things, the brothers. They didn't have neither too much, you know. And they were happy, and I was happy. Like the girls, they took care of them after school. They like I go. I was alright. As long as they were alright, I was satisfied.

CUSICK: Yeah. How long did they live in the home before they moved out?

OSPITAL: The boys?

CUSICK: All your children. Did they live in the home until they went and got married?

OSPITAL: Oh yeah. Oh yeah.

CUSICK: All your children did that?

OSPITAL: Oh yeah.

CUSICK: What were your concerns as they began to move out? You say they lived in the home until they got married, and then they only moved out of your home when they did get married, instead of their own home?

OSPITAL: Oh no. Oh yeah. They live children their own home. Oh yeah.

CUSICK: They did live on their own?

OSPITAL: Oh yeah.

CUSICK: Before they were married, did they live on their own?

OSPITAL: No. No.

CUSICK: Oh. They'd always wait until they got married?

OSPITAL: They always wait. I wait too, so might as well wait. They're happier too if they know what they doing.

CUSICK: Did they marry people of Basque origin?

OSPITAL: Well, no, not exactly. They married English boys.

CUSICK: The girls married English boys?

OSPITAL: Oh yeah.

CUSICK: And did your sons marry women of different ethnic background?

OSPITAL: Oh yeah.

CUSICK: Did that bother you at all? Did you mind?

OSPITAL: No. No, no, no, no.

CUSICK: Were you hoping that they might marry somebody who was Basque, or from the Pyrenees?

OSPITAL: No. Oh yeah. Most of the people they know Basque too. They know Basque too. There a lot of Basque at that time. A lot of Basque there were.

CUSICK: So were you hoping that your children would marry somebody who was Basque?

OSPITAL: No, I didn't hope anything.

CUSICK: Huh. You didn't influence them?

OSPITAL: No. They never cross me neither, and as long as I know more or less where they were, and that's enough.

CUSICK: Did your children's activities sometimes involve you in different activities?

OSPITAL: Oh, I used to take them board games. And mine and the other ones, they wanna come. I take anybody. Mine, I don't want to go with them, but if they want, I never force anybody. And they came.

They always were ready to come with me. So two sit on the back, and I sit and watch. [laughs] That was happiness!

CUSICK: So did you meet a lot of other people that way?

OSPITAL: Oh yeah. We at the hotel, I meet many, many people.

CUSICK: True. Then you knew a lot of people in Stockton.

OSPITAL: Oh gosh, yeah.

CUSICK: That's true.

OSPITAL: I like people. Nice people.

CUSICK: How would you compare your family with other families from the Pyrenees that live in Stockton? Was it typical?

OSPITAL: Like I says, all depends how you're raised. Mine, I always keep – that time, I used to say, [we was come and ever been from?]. From the hallway, in fire they were making homework. I used to sit during the evening. I was with them all the time, and I was just happy. The other boys, they welcome nice boys, they were welcome too. That's the way life go.

CUSICK: Can you tell me about the differences between bringing up your children and how you were brought up? Did you have a lot of the same customs in your household that you came with from the Basque country? And a lot of the same foods, or a lot of the same traditions, a lot of the same celebrations?

OSPITAL: Well, there was celebration when I came all the time at the hotel, and there was beans, and this and that. We were pretty quiet. No, my father was there, and they got do their own work, and do things and stay home. After that, they couldn't go neither.

CUSICK: What kind of religious celebrations did you have in the Pyrenees?

OSPITAL: Religion?

CUSICK: Yeah. What kind of celebrations? Catholic celebrations?

OSPITAL: Over there? Oh, they have parties. You cook and you celebrate for all.

CUSICK: What do you celebrate? What kinds of days do you celebrate on?

OSPITAL: Oh, anything. Birthdays or anything they come. It's difference, you know.

CUSICK: Any excuse, right?

OSPITAL: It was not many, but they used a lot, and was happy. It all depends how you're raised.

CUSICK: In the Pyrenees, you had these celebrations, what kinds of food did you eat?

OSPITAL: Well, like here.

CUSICK: What's that?

OSPITAL: Yeah. The same.

CUSICK: Same kind of food?

OSPITAL: Oh yeah. Good food all the time. It's strong, nice food.

CUSICK: What did you cook for your family when you were bringing up your children?

OSPITAL: Well they wanna cook big meals all the time.

CUSICK: Did you cook the same kind of food that you had in the Pyrenees?

OSPITAL: Oh, that's what I learned, and that's what we do.

CUSICK: Did you cook a lot of lamb?

OSPITAL: Oh yeah. Lamb and bacon and eggs and anything good to eat. Milk. A lot of milk. Cheese.

CUSICK: Were there special things that you used to make for them?

OSPITAL: Dairy. Anything you think.

CUSICK: What about the special food s you had? Things of celebration? Were there special things you'd make for your children that you used to have when you were a kid?

OSPITAL: Oh yeah. Over there they don't cook that much. Like here, I used to cook mostly for the children. Cake and things like that. Feast day they do, but not otherwise. That's different. But they eat good, yeah. Strong food, and nourishing food for all.

CUSICK: Did you see that a lot of men over here play pelota as much as they played in Basque Country?

OSPITAL: Did I see what?

CUSICK: Do you see as many men playing pelota here as they did in the Basque Country?

OSPITAL: Basque Country, that's the way they do pelota. Now I don't know what they do.

CUSICK: You don't see it as much over here.

OSPITAL: No. No. Over there, the pelota, and the gancha they call over there, the way they play, it was across the street. Water from our house was running!

CUSICK: The gutter was running?

OSPITAL: Yeah.

CUSICK: And they still played it, huh?

OSPITAL: Well, it's different, but it's nice. Of course, but water to go really, they [put it in fence?] because for the family. They pass back and forth all the time, the kids. There was a lot of water running. But that was fine.

CUSICK: They played anyway, huh?

OSPITAL: [laughing] No, we have good life. Only what I have that think I didn't have good life. After that, I always remember. Never forget that. Boy, no.

CUSICK: Yeah. What kind of goals did you have for your family when you were bringing up your children? What kind of goals and expectations?

OSPITAL: Over there to play you mean?

CUSICK: No, over here. For your family and for your children.

OSPITAL: Oh, I used to take up the ranch. Up at the ranch, when it was no school. And maybe show up at the mountains. We used to go with the sheep.

CUSICK: Which mountains did you used to go to?

OSPITAL: Way down. What do they call it? Gosh, I forgot the names now. Well, I didn't stay all the time, but part of that. With the kids, and I bring the kids down.

CUSICK: On vacation you bring them?

OSPITAL: Yeah. Up in the mountains, they were happy.

CUSICK: Yeah. I can imagine.

OSPITAL: Yeah. All the time I took. Oh yeah.

CUSICK: So what kind of hopes did you have for your children after they got out of school? What did you hope they would do with their life?

OSPITAL: Well, they have good chances, they make good things. My youngest boy make book too.

CUSICK: Did he write a book?

OSPITAL: Yeah. Write a book.

CUSICK: Oh, what did he write about?

OSPITAL: Well, he was a paratrooper. He got money. We got in the back of it. [break]

OSPITAL: You see? He was paratrooper.

CUSICK: Your son wrote this, huh?

OSPITAL: Yeah.

CUSICK: That's great. "We wore jump boots and baggy pants." By John Ospital.

OSPITAL: He did.

CUSICK: So your son is an author? Does he write any other books?

OSPITAL: Yeah. I didn't know he was making this neither!

CUSICK: And all of a sudden it was published, and he told you he's written a book.

OSPITAL: He was making another one, I ask him nothing, but he didn't even answer, so I don't know what he's doing now. He got now, he can make anything if he want. Oh yeah. That's my son too, and now the boy's, he's building for him too. And girl married another one, but they arrange, he build it. He got the house, and his son is making too, the house. Oh yeah.

CUSICK: So your son has a sheep ranch with a lot of land in San Joaquin County.

OSPITAL: Yeah. We used to have two.

CUSICK: And your husband worked on that.

OSPITAL: Yeah. And we used to have the hotel.

CUSICK: Did your sons used to help your husband with the sheep on the ranch?

OSPITAL: My son? Oh, they were going to school.

CUSICK: So they weren't there as often?

OSPITAL: Oh yeah. They were going to school.

CUSICK: What kinds of things happened in Stockton that affected you and your family? You had your hotel business, so that kept you rather busy.

OSPITAL: Oh yeah. Well, I'm not too much mixed up with anybody anyhow. I like people, but, you know, not too much it go deeply with anyone.

CUSICK: Do you meet a lot with your family? With all your relatives over here?

OSPITAL: Oh yeah. Oh yeah.

CUSICK: Did you ever become a U.S. citizen?

OSPITAL: Oh gosh, yes. I have.

CUSICK: You did a long time ago?

OSPITAL: Oh yeah.

CUSICK: Do you remember what year you became a U.S. citizen?

OSPITAL: No. I got on the bank along the drawer the paper.

CUSICK: That was a long time ago?

OSPITAL: Yeah. Oh yeah, long time ago.

CUSICK: And so how do you feel about the United States now?

OSPITAL: I love it.

CUSICK: You love living here?

OSPITAL: I love it.

CUSICK: You're happy?

OSPITAL: Oh yeah.

CUSICK: That's good.

OSPITAL: I never change. I came here, and here I am yet.

CUSICK: Well considering your life, what would you say is the best age to be?

OSPITAL: To be where?

CUSICK: How old is the best age to be, in your opinion?

OSPITAL: In life?

CUSICK: Mmhmm.

OSPITAL: Well, any kind. If you're healthy, any time.

CUSICK: If you're healthy, any time in your life?

OSPITAL: Like if you're sick, might as well dead. That's what I think.

CUSICK: Do you think there's any time of a person's life when it's the worst time?

OSPITAL: Oh, well yeah, I guess.

CUSICK: At what age would you say that is?

OSPITAL: I can't tell that. I don't know.

CUSICK: Do you feel like that depends on a person's life individually?

OSPITAL: Oh yeah. I think that's the best way.

CUSICK: Well looking back on your life, can you tell me of some of the times when there were big changes that changed your life?

OSPITAL: Well, you change every life I think. Everybody's life.

CUSICK: What kinds of things changed your life a lot when you were living in Stockton?

OSPITAL: Well, never too much of really change. All I doing was the kids come right, and be good children, and not get mad. They don't get. Now they're married. That's it.

CUSICK: Did your husband have these same kind of hopes for your family?

OSPITAL: Well, he was a [prissy?] man most of time.

CUSICK: How did your life change after your husband died?

OSPITAL: Well, I took it the way come.

CUSICK: Pardon me?

OSPITAL: I took the way it come.

CUSICK: You took it the way it came? Did you live in the same place after that?

OSPITAL: Well, he die, and then the kids run the sheep. We have the groundsmake.

CUSICK: Did your children start running the business then?

OSPITAL: Yeah.

CUSICK: And you still have the business? Is that right?

OSPITAL: Oh yeah. And the grounds there, they got something underground to make money.

CUSICK: Oh, I see. It's the same ground now, the same land, but your sons...

OSPITAL: Yeah, oh yeah. Same land.

CUSICK: ...deal with. Oh, okay. And the same sheep.

OSPITAL: No, they got no sheep anymore. Few sheep, but they got cows now.

CUSICK: Are there any government programs that you particularly enjoy having? Anything that's affected your life?

OSPITAL: I don't think so.

CUSICK: Can't think of anything?

OSPITAL: No.

CUSICK: Have any other Stockton events really affected your life?

OSPITAL: No. I don't make, try to befit anyone. And my conscience is clear. And I raised the kids too to be like that. Chew on the wrong, but they got do what they do in the right way. Now you gonna have trouble. I really [].

CUSICK: You never had any trouble?

OSPITAL: Never, never.

CUSICK: That's fortunate you feel that way. You just never had any major problems you feel, your life in Stockton?

OSPITAL: Never. No .They get sick with something or they get together and help each other, and that's it. There's really no problem if you do things right.

CUSICK: How do you do things right? What is the right way?

OSPITAL: You got to study that. There's a right way, and more comes.

CUSICK: You have to study it? Is that what you said?

OSPITAL: Study the problem. If you do things right, if you fly, you bump the wind. And there's nothing better than be happy everybody. That's what I think. Happiness is one day on the road and keep you happy.

CUSICK: Mrs. Ospital, have you ever heard of the women's liberation movement?

OSPITAL: What?

CUSICK: The women's liberation movement.

OSPITAL: What mean that?

CUSICK: I'm wondering if you've ever heard of the women's liberation movement in the United States now.

OSPITAL: Oh, well I don't know. I don't think.

CUSICK: You don't think so. Okay.

OSPITAL: Yeah. I don't think those things.

CUSICK: Can you tell me what kind of customs you celebrated in your home with your children that were the same that you had from the Pyrenees?

OSPITAL: Oh yeah. I didn't change anything.

CUSICK: Can you tell me about some of these customs you had?

OSPITAL: Well, feel you go out and march and you like to this and you can get plenty. But if you dress, this never mean nothing. Happiness. The children who always dress nice, always have something new, birthdays or something, and I never have any problem. We have good start, and I think that make big difference, you see. They have good start, and they're smarter on them.

CUSICK: Yeah. But you were fortunate enough to begin...

OSPITAL: From the day I was born, we have everything in the house. Everything.

CUSICK: Excuse me. Can you describe to me some of the customs, some of the habits that your family had, and the way that some of them are the same over in Stockton?

OSPITAL: Oh, I think the same. The way you teach them, that's what they go by. I never have any trouble.

CUSICK: So what kinds of things were the same from your household when you were growing up, and then the way you tried to bring up your children the same way? What kinds of things are the same?

OSPITAL: Well, they hanging the things, always the same way, they keep that way, and they never ask for anything else. There's a lot of people, they want this, they want that. They got two, three things they can wear nicely, that's plenty. They grow up and they []. That's the way you raised everything. You got to go through with that.

CUSICK: And do you think that your children are raising their children the same way?

OSPITAL: Well, the boys and mine, they have raised near the same, but it's big difference though.

CUSICK: What's the big difference that you see?

OSPITAL: Well, they do altogether different things than we do.

CUSICK: Can you think of any examples?

OSPITAL: Well, there's nothing examples. They raised different, and they want to do their own way. It's not like their own way.

CUSICK: What are the differences then that you see?

OSPITAL: Well, altogether different way. I'm not going to do the same thing you do, you not going to do the same thing I do neither.

CUSICK: That's true. Do you think these differences are very big?

OSPITAL: It all depends what you doing in life. You want to spend money, you can spend, and you gonna keep it, and they can be just as nice. I went two from one thing the other, and I take the change the way it come.

CUSICK: Do you think your children are bringing up their children with a lot of Basque tradition?

OSPITAL: Well, yeah. They love it. They always we took Basque, and they were pretty good. They still pretty good.

CUSICK: Do your grandchildren also speak Basque?

OSPITAL: Well, they different.

CUSICK: They haven't learned it?

OSPITAL: Well, we were Basque French. But the boys or the girls they take out, they different race. So I all mixed up on anyone. You know, you can't do the same. You got the different idea, you raised a different way, and other raised different way, they go the other way. The same way. It'll never be the same. Look where I raised and where they're raised, it's different.

CUSICK: And I'm really curious to know what kind of differences there are when your children bring up their children, and how that affects you. Did you want your children to keep a lot of the customs that you had? Same habits?

OSPITAL: Oh yeah, it's the way they want.

CUSICK: You feel like the way they want to bring up their children is fine?

OSPITAL: Definitely. I don't mix up in them, and I get along fine. No, I don't mix up. The kids love to be.

CUSICK: Do you get to see them a lot?

OSPITAL: Oh yeah. The last time I took, there was a lot of time, and see, if they go out, if they're long, I'm on the phone all night. [laughs] No. I lifted it what they want. They like that. That's it.

CUSICK: Do your children live in Stockton?

OSPITAL: Oh yeah.

CUSICK: All of them live in Stockton?

OSPITAL: Yeah.

CUSICK: With their families?

OSPITAL: Oh yeah.

CUSICK: Yeah, because you have so many nice pictures around here. I'm wondering, do you get together a lot with your family?

OSPITAL: Oh, I go around myself, and I'm alone. I didn't want to run to the house. I don't like to be alone. So that's what I came here. I'm never needed here.

CUSICK: So you get to go around and see your children a lot then.

OSPITAL: No. They can come if they want. I don't like the car now.

CUSICK: Oh. So they come and visit you because you don't have the car as often.

OSPITAL: Oh yeah. They come. Or I go over there. They come get me, and they take me home. And all we live life same way.

CUSICK: What are the best things about the lives of your children right now?

OSPITAL: I don't know. They're near the same. They go with their father and with the mother. Well, there's not much difference really.

CUSICK: Not much difference between your children being brought up and...

[End of Tape]