

**EI-107**

**MARY COX HARNEY**

**BIRTH DATE: JUNE 15, 1903**

**INTERVIEW DATE: OCTOBER 11, 1991**

**INTERVIEW LENGTH: 6609 WORDS**

**RUNNING TIME: 38:05**

**INTERVIEWER: PAUL E. SIGRIST, JR.**

**RECORDING ENGINEER: JANET LEVINE, PH.D**

**INTERVIEW LOCATION: BRICK, NEW JERSEY**

**TRANSCRIPT: J. LEVINE, PH.D. AND P. SIGRIST, 1992**

**TRANSCRIPT: JOHN MURIELLO, 4/1995**

**IRELAND, 1925**

**AGE 22**

**SHIP: THE BALTIC**

**PORT: QUEENSTOWN**

**RESIDENCES:**

- **IRELAND: CASTLEREA**
- **US: New York, NY; ASTORIA, QUEENS**

SIGRIST: Good afternoon. This is Paul Sigrist for the National Park Service. Today is Friday, October 11th, 1991. We are here, Janet Levine and I, at the Laurelton Village Center in Brick, New Jersey, and we are here with Mary Harney, who came from Ireland in 1925 when she was twenty-two. Good afternoon.

HARNEY: That's right. That's correct. Good afternoon.

SIGRIST: Mrs. Harney, can you please give me your full name

HARNEY: My marriage name?

SIGRIST: Well, and your maiden name too, please.

HARNEY: Both?

SIGRIST: Yes.

HARNEY: My maiden name is Cox, C-O-X.

SIGRIST: I see.

HARNEY: Three letters.

SIGRIST: And what is the date of your birth?

HARNEY: My birth is the 15th of June. I was born on the 15th.

SIGRIST: What year?

HARNEY: The 15th of June. The year I can't, I don't know if I can discern the year now.

SIGRIST: Well, we'll figure it out later.

HARNEY: What?

SIGRIST: We'll figure that out afterwards.

HARNEY: Yeah, yeah.

SIGRIST: Where were you born?

HARNEY: I was born in County Roscommon; that's in Ireland.

SIGRIST: ( to Janet) Stop just a minute. Please pause. ( pause ) This is Paul Sigrist continuing the interview with Mary Harney who was born in 1903 and came from Ireland in 1925. Mrs. Harney, you were just telling us where you were born.

HARNEY: Oh, I was born in County Roscommon but my home town was Castlerea, County Roscommon, Ireland. That was my address.

SIGRIST: Can you spell the name of the town for me? Is that possible?

HARNEY: Yeah. Well there's two. The one that I just mentioned first is Kluna Holly. That's what you call a small, a small community in Ireland, but then they grew from that on, the children grew up, got a new name, but that's where I started off in Kluna Holly.

SIGRIST: Can you tell me what that place was like?

HARNEY: Oh, yeah.

SIGRIST: Go ahead.

HARNEY: The fields are no greener anywhere only in Ireland. That's the only place that they're that emerald green. It's not any of this color green in this country or any other country, because my son has been around, he's done a lot of traveling as he went to schools, different schools and colleges.

SIGRIST: So there were lots of fields in this town where you grew up?

HARNEY: Lot, what?

SIGRIST: Fields? Lot of farmers?

HARNEY: Oh, yes. a lot of farming, lot of farming and, but of course, when the boys grew up in Ireland, and the girls also, the boys usually went to England and they came to the United States and several of them went to Canada to continue their livelihood.

SIGRIST: Lots of Irish boys did this.

HARNEY: Yeah, lots of Irish boys, and girls too.

SIGRIST: Were there lots of people in this town? Was this a big town that you grew up in?

HARNEY: No, small place, not big but it was a very pretty place. It had a lot of heather and a lot of green fields and, oh, the fields couldn't be no greener anywhere, a special green.

SIGRIST: What was your father's name?

HARNEY: Michael Cox.

SIGRIST: And what did he do for a living?

HARNEY: A farmer, and my mother the same name, but she was Celia Cox.

SIGRIST: Ceda. Can you spell Ceda for me?

HARNEY: The two of them, the one name.

SIGRIST: How do you spell Ceda?

HARNEY: Pardon.

SIGRIST: How do you spell Ceda?

HARNEY: Beg pardon?

SIGRIST: How do you spell her first name, your mother's first name?

HARNEY: C-E-L-I-A. Celia.

SIGRIST: Oh, Celia. Can you talk to me a little bit about your father and what he was like as a person.

HARNEY: Oh, my father was, my father was, I always said to my mother, my father was the handsomest man in the west of Ireland. He as about six foot tall and he had auburn hair and very light skin, and that was my father. He was one of the farmers in the west of Ireland. ( she laughs )

SIGRIST: So what did your mother look like? What was she like?

HARNEY: My mother had the dark hair. You have to be Irish to have dark hair. This story that the people have here and in many countries is about, oh, Irish people with the red hair. There is no such thing as Irish people with red hair. We got the red-haired people into Ireland when the Danes invaded Ireland in 1014, and they remarried, they married Irish girls and they mixed up and got married and that's how we got all this red hair.

SIGRIST: But not in your family.

HARNEY: Black hair, no, I had the brown, the light brown, more of an auburn tint.

SIGRIST: I see. Can you tell me a little bit about the house that you grew up in?

HARNEY: Oh, I grew up in what they call a thatched cottage, a thatched roof and the walls of, no, they were stone walls, but then as the families grew they added on to those and they enlarged them so that they'd have plenty of room for all these kids.

SIGRIST: How many rooms did your house have?

HARNEY: I had three, we had three, I'll say, me and my father and mother and, but my brothers start to emigrate after they grew up. They went to England and one of them to Canada, and they went out and got themselves jobs.

SIGRIST: Did you come from a big family? Were there lots of brothers and sisters?

HARNEY: Three boys older than me.

SIGRIST: Three boys and then you?

HARNEY: Me, and I was the baby. ( she laughs )

SIGRIST: I see. Can you tell me a little bit about what it was like growing up on this farm? What kinds of things did you do?

HARNEY: Oh, I loved growing on the farm. I wouldn't change it for another thing because it was the most beautiful place, the nicest environment to be brought up in. And going to school, and my brothers took me to school,

the three of them or I went with my youngest brother, the two older ones went together and me and my youngest brother went to school together.

SIGRIST: I see. Was there a school nearby the house?

HARNEY: Oh no, we had to walk two miles, and the same to go to church.

SIGRIST: Talk to me, first of all, a little bit about the school. Can you describe the school building for me?

HARNEY: Oh, the school, I would say, was nothing elaborate but it was, still was a very nice what you call "country school," a country school. It was a very pretty place, very pretty.

SIGRIST: One room?

HARNEY: No, two; was one for the boys and there was a cement wall and brick over to the girl's part of the school. Two parts.

SIGRIST: Were the boys and girls ever allowed to mix at all?

HARNEY: Oh, they were all the time going to dances on Saturday night and we had fiddles and every house has a, in Ireland has a violin or a fiddle they call it in the old country, they call it the fiddle and violin and an accordion and a flute, the old-fashioned flute, the big one. And everybody in this country is able to play some kind of music.

SIGRIST: What instruments did your family play? Did you play an instrument?

HARNEY: I didn't play any instrument but I always sang with the group.

SIGRIST: Did one of your brothers play an instrument?

HARNEY: Yeah, one of them played the flute.

SIGRIST: I want you to tell me a little bit about your father was a farmer, tell me about like did you have a barn? Did you grow vegetables?

HARNEY: Oh, we had more than one barn. We had three, three barns and we grew everything: potatoes, turnips, cabbage, and we grew a lot of things ,beets, and some other kinds of plants, vegetables. In fact, we grew everything for the winter to feed a family.

SIGRIST: How did you put things up for the winter? What kinds of things did you preserve for the winter?

HARNEY: Oh, for the winter, I had to help to dig the potatoes with my father and the three boys, and I helped to plant them, also. Plant potatoes in Ireland, I know how to plant a big farm of potatoes. We used to plant potatoes, turnips, and beets and other things that we planted. And me and my mother used to go out and help in the hay fields. We used to help with raking the hay and we have to know how to turn it over one bright, sunny day so that it gets dry from the hot sun. There's lots of things to be done in Ireland.

SIGRIST: If you had hay, does that mean you had animals?

HARNEY: That was for the cows. We had, I think, eight cows and a horse, small sized horse. I used to take care of the horse.

SIGRIST: Did the horse have a name?

HARNEY: I don't remember now, but the day when I left Ireland I sure was in tears leaving my horse after me and my dog, Beauty. Beauty was the name of my dog.

SIGRIST: What kind of a dog was it?

HARNEY: Little, small dog. I went to church on Sunday on my bicycle with my cousins and my girlfriends, he'd come to meet me and I'd have to get half about a mile away from the church, 'cause the churches are very far away, so that he wouldn't knock me off my bike, she laughs ) and I ride my bike. ( she's laughing )

SIGRIST: Were you a religious family?

HARNEY: What's that?

SIGRIST: Were you a religious family?

HARNEY: What?

SIGRIST: Were your parents religious?

HARNEY: Oh, yeah, we always went to church every Sunday and holiday: Christmas Day, New Year's day, Easter Saturday, Easter Sunday we wouldn't miss. That's a big day in Ireland.

SIGRIST: Can you describe an Easter celebration for me? What was it like to celebrate Easter in this town in Ireland?

HARNEY: Oh, well it's practically the same as a Sunday. The priests say, they say two masses or three masses, usually three, but they say two: An early

mass around six or six-thirty and then there's an eight o'clock mass for the parents, go to the older mass because they don't get out of bed that early, but we, we, we got out and got dressed and went off on our bikes, after I got my bicycle, after I got that from England from my brothers, they sent it to me.

SIGRIST: How old were you when you got your bicycle?

HARNEY: Thirteen. Thirteen years old.

SIGRIST: What was it like to get a bicycle from your brother?

HARNEY: Oh, I was so happy, I didn't know what to do with myself, and I told my first cousin, my uncle's daughter, I told her that I, the bike was going' to be delivered to the station in Ballyderry, my home town, my small town, and, oh, know what to do and then my youngest brother went off to town to bring the bike home with a horse and cart. He brought the bike home and I learned to ride on the bicycle and fell off it a dozen times, scratched my legs. ( she laughs heartily ). I had fun.

SIGRIST: Let me ask you a little bit about, I want to get back to your mother. Do you remember, did your mother do the cooking?

HARNEY: Yeah, my mother, but I helped her once I got old enough. I was about ten, I think, or nine.

SIGRIST: And she let you help in the kitchen?

HARNEY: I help in the kitchen. I helped her bake the bread and make great, big Irish soda bread, great big ones, and I used to help her with it, and pancakes for breakfast and all kind of things, all kinds of nice things.

SIGRIST: Can you describe the kitchen for me in your house?

HARNEY: Oh, the kitchen was big, big kitchen and two medium sized bedrooms I would say. But the kitchen was as big as two rooms or three put together. It was a great big kitchen and it had a thatched roof on it.

SIGRIST: Did the kitchen have a stove in it or a fireplace?

HARNEY: Fireplace. Fireplace, an old-fashioned fireplace and in that fireplace we heated our kitchen and did our cooking and everything with turf fire. I don't know, did you ever see turf?

SIGRIST: Like peat?

HARNEY: Huh?

SIGRIST: Is it...

HARNEY: Peat! Well we call it turf in Ireland.

SIGRIST: Where did you get the turf from?

HARNEY: The turf? They had to dig it, they have a tool called the slane.

SIGRIST: Slane.

HARNEY: Yeah, slane, and with the slane they pick it up into sods, a certain size, and throw them out into the, for the hot sun to come down and they're all nice and dry and they turn hard, and you can make a beautiful, blazing fire with that kind of fire.

SIGRIST: Is it hard to cook over an open fire like that?

HARNEY: No, no, well, in a way we say it's hard but then again it's the best way to cook in Ireland, but they have the peat for to make the fires.

SIGRIST: What kinds of foods did your mother cook? How did she feed her family?

HARNEY: Oh, everything. I'm sure we had, of course we had lots of chickens and she was always making roast chickens and boiled, chicken fricassee and boiled chickens and what have you, and what have you for the family, for the whole crowd of us.

SIGRIST: Being a little girl, growing up on a farm like this in Ireland, was it a hard life? Was it a lot of hard work for you or did you have fun as a kid?

HARNEY: No, it wasn't hard work because there was such a crowd of us. After all, there was three boys older than me and me, four, and my father and mother. there were six of us. And everybody chipped in and helped with everything. No such a thing as, nobody sat back and said, "Well, I'm not going to do it. I'm going out to play ball." ( she laughs ) And I used to play ball with my brothers.

SIGRIST: You did! You were a tomboy then.

HARNEY: I was a child who loved playing ball. I used to play stick ball and then they had sports. They had a three-legged race and they had, oh, different things what they call "sports" in Ireland, but now they have everything. Now they're real modern now. They have all kinds of nice things over there.

SIGRIST: So you were a very active little girl when you were growing up.

HARNEY: Oh, and how. Me and my girlfriends and I and me and my family, my brothers and I, my three brothers and me, we were very chummy, especially my youngest brother, he was my pal.

SIGRIST: What was his name?

HARNEY: Dominick.

SIGRIST: Dominick?

HARNEY: Dominick. Dominick and Michael and Tom.

SIGRIST: Let me talk about your brothers. Tell me about how old you were when they went away, and a little bit about what happened to them when they went away.

HARNEY: Oh, okay. ( she coughs ) Well, I would say the oldest one, he started off, he went over to England and he got himself working on, with some big farmers in England. And then the next one to him, he brought him over, he sent him his money to go over on the boat. And we got no planes and we had no way, no way of traveling, in other words. I often, we often talk about it and said, "Well, I wish we had planes in Ireland when we were kids because we'd be going places," because I come from a large family on my mother's side and three boys on my father's side. And they were scattered around the different towns and I would like to go there and go and visit.

SIGRIST: But it was hard. Transportation was..

HARNEY: But it was hard to travel, so I didn't go there very much.

SIGRIST: So, you had two brothers in England and then the third brother went, too?

HARNEY: He was home helping his father, doing the work with his father on the farm.

SIGRIST: And you were helping, too?

HARNEY: And I was helping, too, along with helping my mother.

SIGRIST: So how old were you when your youngest brother left?

HARNEY: Oh, I was only about, maybe seven. Six or seven.

SIGRIST: So your brothers are much older than you.

HARNEY: Oh, yeah, yeah. My brother, my three brothers.

SIGRIST: Were you lonely after all your brothers left?

HARNEY: Huh?

SIGRIST: Were you lonely after all your brothers had gone and it was just you and your mother and father?

HARNEY: Oh, yes, yeah. I missed them a lot because we were really chummy, you know.

SIGRIST: Did you have to work extra hard on the farm with all the boys gone?

HARNEY: Well, it was pretty hard, rough work on a farm, sowing the potato, planting potatoes is not easy work. You have to, they show you how to do it, how you have to use this tool call a "steeve" to make the holes, how to put the potatoes in. And then the next thing, the potatoes come up. And we have various varieties of potatoes in Ireland and we have varieties called "Irish Whites"; they're white, long potatoes about that long. (she gestures) And then we have, the first potatoes they have are called "Peelers" and they're reddish, kind of a reddish potato and then they have, another potato is called "Elephants" and they're long potatoes like that (she gestures) but they are delicious when they, when they, oh, they call them the first potatoes they dig, as they call them in Ireland. They did them up. They taste so tasty.

SIGRIST: So, and you grew all different kinds of potatoes, then?

HARNEY: Grew all that all over. And then we had different corners on the farm and turnips and spinach and...

SIGRIST: Tell me a little bit about when your brothers came to America. HARNEY: Well, the only one that came here was my oldest brother, who went back to, less than year he made a visit to the old country and he got, I think it was pneumonia he got over there. He was coming back but he had this, he just didn't make it back, my brother Thomas.

SIGRIST: So why did you want to come to America?

HARNEY: Oh, I wanted, I wanted to come to America. I also said, I don't know, "Oh, when am I going? When am I going?" and all that. And then, when I wrote to my brother and described to him, offered, he said, "Whenever you think you want to come, Mary" he said, "just let me know and I will send

you your passage money for to come on the boat." So he sent me, I think, two hundred dollars.

SIGRIST: Now where was he living?

HARNEY: New York. He lived in New York all his life.

SIGRIST: And what was he doing for a living when he was in New York?

HARNEY: When he was in New York he used to work, first when he came here he worked on the trolley cars. He was a motorman, driving on the trolley cars on the West Side and East Side, both sides of New York. So he was well up on trolley cars and things like that.

SIGRIST: Did your parents want you to go to America?

HARNEY: No. Well, my mother always said, "Mary, if you like the United States, you may stay. And if you don't like it, you should come home here. You'll find yourself a nice Irish boy and get married." Oh, and I said, "Is that so? How do you know, what are you talking about?" I said to my mother, "How do you think I might be bothered with any Irish boys?! Maybe I want someone in Canada or someplace!" ( she laughs heartily )

SIGRIST: So you really wanted to come. You really wanted to get out of Ireland.

HARNEY: Yeah, I wanted to. I wanted to come in the worst way! And I was so glad when my cousin said that I could come and I could stay until I would get work or whatever I wanted to do. I had several cousins in the United States.

SIGRIST: So you had family here. You had cousins and your brother was here.

HARNEY: Oh, oh, one of my aunts had twelve. She only raised twelve children.  
That's a lot of kids to bring up.

SIGRIST: I see. So your brother sent you money from America to come.

HARNEY: Yeah, and he sent me the check.

SIGRIST: He sent you the check.

HARNEY: And I went off to the town and got my passport and I went up to Dublin, had to get my visa signed. I came back home. I left my bicycle in the town, I checked it in, came back, got my bike. I can't, it took five miles to this town called Castlerea. I had to come home. My bike was there waiting for me. I came home to my house and told my father and mother all the stories about Dublin. I didn't like Dublin. I could do without Dublin. Dublin is no bargain. It's all right but I could get along without Dublin.

SIGRIST: Do you remember packing?

HARNEY: Huh?

SIGRIST: Do you remember packing, what you took with you when you were to come to America?

HARNEY: No.

SIGRIST: Did you take much with you?

HARNEY: No, I didn't take a lot of stuff with me because my cousins and some, the girls that came out to this country and went home to visit, they didn't bring

home that much clothes. They bought clothes in Ireland. Whatever they bought they bought home and they gave them to sisters and brothers, home in Ireland that didn't have all these nice dresses and everything. They gave them over to them.

SIGRIST: So you just didn't bring very much with you.

HARNEY: No. They came back here. Not too many of them stayed home. Some of them stayed home because they had boyfriends and they got settled, they got married. They got married and stayed in Ireland. And some of them went home and they didn't want to come back here anymore. They didn't like the United States so they stayed home.

SIGRIST: Do you remember saying goodbye to your mother and father?

HARNEY: Huh?

SIGRIST: Do you remember saying goodbye to your mother and father?

HARNEY: Oh, yeah, my mother especially. My father didn't come to the town the day I left for United States.

SIGRIST: Why not?

HARNEY: Me and my brother, Dominick, the youngest one, and my mother; the three of us left and we traveled in an Irish jaunting car from my house out in the country to Ballyharny, the nearest town.

SIGRIST: An Irish jaunting car, is that what you said?

HARNEY: Yeah.

SIGRIST: Jaunting? What is a jaunting car. What is that?

HARNEY: Didn't you ever see it? Well they have them in, they're like what they have on Fifty-ninth Street and Central Park.

SIGRIST: Oh, like a carriage.

HARNEY: Yeah, like a carriage, but different, they're different

SIGRIST: A nice carriage.

HARNEY: They're different, they're different in Ireland, much different.

SIGRIST: So why didn't your father go with you?

HARNEY: He just didn't want to be bothered. I know he was farming. It was a nice, sunny day with the sun shining and he had work to do out on his farm. He had hay to turn and dry and start stacking it away for the winter for the cows and the horse. They have to put away all the, all your stuff for the winter you have to have it preserved and put away.

SIGRIST: So you and Dominick and your mother went to the town...

HARNEY: The three of us went into the town...

SIGRIST: And then did they leave you there?

HARNEY: No, they had to take me to County Cork, that's where you got your ship or your boat. You didn't get the boat. They had to take you out on what they

call a tender, a small sized boat, to the boat comes to the United States, which I come on the S.S. Baltic, S.S. Baltic.

SIGRIST: And so, but your brother and your mother, they didn't go off on the tender with you on to the boat, they'd left you someplace, right?

HARNEY: Left me at the waterfront. I went out with a lot of boys and girls with me, and several from Boston. An awful lot of Irish people embarked to Boston because that's where you have, you had a lot of Irish people at that time. You don't have that many people now, but you had at that time.

SIGRIST: So you came on the S. S. Baltic, can you describe what your room was like, what your cabin was like?

HARNEY: Oh, yes, S.S. Baltic was beautiful. I didn't want to get off. I would have loved to stay out mid-ocean, and I said to, it was a girl and her brother and her sister, the four of us traveled together from Ireland to the United States. She had been here ten years and she had gone home on a visit to see her family, and she came, she was with us and she took her youngest brother --I think he was seventeen or eighteen --she brought him out here and we all traveled together, and we had a great time. And we used to go up on deck and go dancing and ( she laughs ) we used to dance all the Irish dances up on deck. ( she's laughing ) We had a great time!

SIGRIST: So you had a good time on the boat.

HARNEY: Oh, boy.

SIGRIST: What kinds, were there activities for you to do on the boat other than the dancing? Did they have games on the boat or...

HARNEY: Yeah, they have all kinds of things on those large boats like S.S. Baltic and the Cedric and all the other different ships and boats.

SIGRIST: How was the food on the boat?

HARNEY: Very good. Couldn't complain.

SIGRIST: Did you get sick on the boat at all?

HARNEY: No, I didn't get seasick. My girlfriends, some of them got sick. Some of them couldn't take it. ( she laughs heartily )

SIGRIST: You were too busy dancing up on the deck.

HARNEY: Oh up on top, up on deck was a great place to go dancing. We had a great time. We used to go there and to dance all the Irish dances, the old-fashioned dances and everything. And we saw the captain, shook hands with him, the captain of the S.S. Baltic, a lovely man, and the second mate and all them, yeah, and we were greenhorns from Ireland and we didn't know anything. ( she laughs heartily )

SIGRIST: Just having a great time.

HARNEY: We were real greenhorns.

SIGRIST: How long did the trip take?

HARNEY: Eight days at that time. Now that is something to have to stay on the ocean for eight days but I didn't want to get off because I loved the blue waters and the, when I was half way through and all you could see was

water and fog and mist and stuff like that. I hated to get off. I said, "Oh, couldn't we stay another couple of days or something."

SIGRIST: Do you remember seeing the Statue of Liberty for the first time?

HARNEY: Yeah, oh, the Statue. No, I saw it here.

SIGRIST: But not, you didn't see it when you pulled into New York harbor when the boat pulled in.

HARNEY: No, no, no. I didn't go out to see it at that time.

SIGRIST: Tell me a little bit about how you got to Ellis Island.

HARNEY: Well, I didn't pay much attention how I got there, as far as that goes, but I liked Ellis Island. I thought it was real fantastic.

SIGRIST: What was it like? What was it like to be there? Were there lots of people there?

HARNEY: Oh, there was hundreds, hundreds of people all over, but they gave you just a small amount of food they gave to the immigrants coming in here. They only gave them just enough that you could survive for a week. ( she laughs. )

SIGRIST: And what did they do to you at Ellis Island? What kinds of things did you have to do at Ellis Island?

HARNEY: Why nothing, nothing of importance I would say.

SIGRIST: Did they examine you at all?

HARNEY: Oh, yeah, they had a couple of doctors and they give you a thorough examination as far as that goes, to see that you don't bring any disease into the country. They have to be careful of who they admitted at that time, I don't know about now, but they were very particular because I had what they call warts on my finger --right here, ( she gestures ) I still have the mark on this third finger --and I had to go to the doctor after I was here for not too long and he took them off, a doctor up in the Bronx.

SIGRIST: But did they give you a hard time about that at Ellis Island?

HARNEY: Well, I think, yeah, they did. Before I went on to the S.S. Baltic they gave me a, the doctor examined it, but he said it was nothing to talk about but he would take care of me with some kind of medicine on it.

END OF SIDE A      BEGIN SIDE B

HARNEY: ...straightened it out.

SIGRIST: I see, so it wasn't a problem.

HARNEY: No, nothing.

SIGRIST: Did someone come and meet you at Ellis?

HARNEY: My cousin. I have...

SIGRIST: Now who is this? This is your aunt's son?

HARNEY: I had all arrangements, and my brother, we had all arrangements made for my first cousin to meet me at the pier. But he couldn't come because he had to work that day. And then another cousin took over his job on the trolley car and he took over and he was the one that brought me to my other cousin. I have hundreds of cousins in the United States...

SIGRIST: Yeah, I guess.

HARNEY: And in Canada and all over. Big family.

SIGRIST: When did you finally see your brother?

HARNEY: Huh?

SIGRIST: When did you finally see your brother who was here?

HARNEY: Oh, my brother. I didn't see him 'til the next day. I didn't see him that day at all. But my cousin, my first cousin, he came down and picked me off the boat and brought me to another cousin out on Third Avenue in Astoria, Queens.

SIGRIST: What did you do on your first night in America? What did you do at your cousin's house?

HARNEY: My cousin, of course, was making Irish tea for me and all kinds of nice things. Made a big dinner for me and her and her husband and two children. She had two children, up on the West side, near Central Park West.

SIGRIST: What did you think of New York City, seeing New York for the first time?  
You didn't like Dublin.

HARNEY: Oh! I just, I just couldn't stand it and when I got on the subway, I got on the subway and I said to my cousin who was taking me out to Astoria to my other cousin, I said, "Look, you mean all them kind of people I have to ride on the subway with?!" He said, "You'd better make up your mind because you'll be riding everyday. You're going to get a job. Who knows where you're going to be working and you have to be prepared for it." He said, " Don't you worry about anything because you never know who you're going to meet or who you're going to see here! This is America." ( she laughs heartily )

SIGRIST: It was really surprising to you to see all different kinds of people.

HARNEY: Oh, I was amazed. I was just amazed, I'm telling you. Especially when I was over there, me and my brother and my cousin on the other side and all these different kind of people you get to know at the different stations. And I said, "Oh, will I have to everyday, if I get a job in the city and I have to be going to work?" I said. He says, "Yeah, make up your mind. You'll do a lot things here. Why didn't you stay over where you were?" ( she laughs heartily again )

SIGRIST: Were you really happy to see your brother?

HARNEY: Oh, yeah, of course. Yeah. My oldest brother Thomas.

SIGRIST: Tell me about the first job you got.

HARNEY: Oh, my first job. I guess, it was quite a while ago. I can't remember now but I know that I used to work for doctors. I liked that because it was very interesting work, I thought, for an Irish girl from Ireland. ( she laughs )

SIGRIST: Did you find that people in New York, did they treat you differently or was there any kind of discrimination because you were Irish and you were from a foreign country? Did you ever get insulted in any way or..?

HARNEY: No, no. I think I got along well with everybody, you know, all the American people and Canadian people and all kinds of people.

SIGRIST: What did you really like about New York?

HARNEY: Well, I don't know. One thing I liked about New York was that we had some lovely, warm summers. When I came here, when I came to this country the summers were so warm and so nice and you didn't have to dress with any kind of heavy clothes. You could get, I went down to Fourteenth Street, me and my cousin, and we bought a flock of dresses and fancy clothes and everything. Then we went off to a dance in Tuxedo Park. Everybody knows where that is. They had an Irish dance hall there with fiddlers and accordion players and all kinds things they had there, here from Ireland. They came here from Ireland. They did very well, all the Irish musicians that came to this country.

SIGRIST: Did you write to your mother and father?

HARNEY: Everyday! I used to write to my mother everyday and I wrote, what I was writing about and I was up in Bronxville, New York, which is the upper part of the Bronx, a beautiful part. I was up there for quite a while working for a lovely lady. She had a baby and I think it was five months old or six and another, little girl about a year old or something and I didn't stay up there

that long because I thought I was too far away from the dances. And I said to my other cousin when I was there, "Why do you want to move from that nice place?" "Oh," I said, "it's too far up. By the time I get down and meet the girls and we go to Tuxedo Park, Tuxedo Park, in other words I would go any of the Irish dance halls where they have all the Irish musicians," I said, "it would be too late." But I learned all that and we used to take a taxi, four or five of us, and coming home at three and four o'clock in the morning. I was up dancing all night.

SIGRIST: Did you miss Ireland when you were here?

HARNEY: I did miss Ireland. I missed Ireland so much.

SIGRIST: What was it that you missed about Ireland?

HARNEY: Most I missed essentially was my mother and father, my parents. Mostly, mostly. I missed them most.

SIGRIST: Did you ever see them again?

HARNEY: No, I never went to Ireland. I always wanted to go on a trip, to take a trip to the old country but I never did go over thereafter coming here. And I had promised my mother and father, my mother especially because my father died one year after I was here at Christmas time in Ireland he got, I think it was, pneumonia and he died but my mother was over there and my brother Dominick, the two of them. And I miss them so much. I miss them an awful lot. I miss them.

SIGRIST: My final question to you is, are you happy you came to America?

HARNEY: Oh, yeah, of course. I don't think I would go to any other country but I do want to go to England before I die or maybe Canada .My oldest sister, my husband's oldest sister, she's married to a doctor, a psychiatrist.

SIGRIST: And she lived in Canada?

HARNEY: No, she lives here. She's Mrs. Seymour Parker. She met her husband out on Long Island on that day, Pilgrim State Hospital. That's where she met him. And he was in the World War Two, see? That's right. Kathleen Harney, she liked it in America. She didn't go, she went to Ireland one time on a trip. Took a trip to the old country. My sister-in-law.

SIGRIST: And, I have to ask you, we were talking about this before, what's your favorite color?

HARNEY: My favorite, blue! To match my eyes. ( she laughs )

SIGRIST: But I would like you to tell the story about the hotel owner who made you go to the Saint Patrick's Day Parade, that you were telling me before.

HARNEY: Oh, an awful lot of people go there for the parades and things like that, but I think they're going to get tired of that after a while.

SIGRIST: Did you wear green on Saint Patrick's Day?

HARNEY: No.

SIGRIST: Why not?

HARNEY: I don't like green. I'm not fond of green. I'm not partial to green and I'm not fond of green. And I had two, three green dresses. Two were given to

me as gifts and I gave them away to some cousins of mine that liked to wear green, so I gave them away to them. I said, "If you want them you can have them. Otherwise I'm going to throw them out." They said, "Well, don't throw them out. We'll find someone for them." I said, "Find someone if you want to but, "I said, "I'm not going to wear that green. I'm not going to wear green in the United States!" They laughed at me. ( she laughs )

SIGRIST: Well, Mrs. Harney, I want to thank you very much for letting us come out and talk to you this afternoon. You've just been delightful and this has been a very nice, a very nice interview to do.

HARNEY: It was.

SIGRIST: This is Paul Sigrist signing off for the National Park Service.

END OF INTERVIEW