

EI-662

ELIZABETH DALBEY

BIRTHDATE: NOVEMBER 27, 1896

INTERVIEW DATE: AUGUST 29, 1995

AGE AT TIME OF INTERVIEW: 98

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INTERVIEWER: PAUL SIGRIST

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TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY: TAPESCRIBE

TRANSCRIPT REVIEWED BY:

IRELAND, 1926

AGE: 25

SHIP:

PORT:

RESIDENCES:

SIGRIST: Good morning, this is Paul Sigrist for the National Park Service. Today is Tuesday, August 29th, 1995. I'm at Cedar Manor in Ossining, New York with Elizabeth Dalbey. Mrs. Dalbey came from Ireland. She thinks she came in 1925 or '26.

DALBEY: I'm not—I'm not sure.

SIGRIST: She's not sure.

EB: I have to think about it.

SIGRIST: Okay. And you think you were around twenty-five when you came?

EB: Yes.

SIGRIST: Present also in the room is Christine. Is that Christine? Christina Muratore, M-U-R-A-T-O-R-E, and you are on the social services staff—

MURATORE: No, co-director of recreation.

SIGRIST: Co-director of recreation, excuse me.

MURATORE: That's all right.

SIGRIST: Mrs. Dalbey, what is your birth date?

DALBEY: My birth date is November the 27th.

SIGRIST: What year? What year were you born?

DALBEY: 1896.

SIGRIST: 1896.

DALBEY: I'll be ninety-nine years old November.

SIGRIST: Congratulations. Where in Ireland were you born?

DALBEY: Black Water, Enfield, County Meath, Ireland.

SIGRIST: What was the name of the town?

DALBEY: Black Water.

SIGRIST: Black Water.

DALBEY: Enfield.

SIGRIST: Enfield.

DALBEY: Yes. County Meath.

SIGRIST: Can you spell Enfield?

DALBEY: E-N-F-I-E-L-D.

SIGRIST: And it was County Meath?

DALBEY: Yes.

SIGRIST: Can you spell Meath?

DALBEY: Yes.

SIGRIST: How do you spell Meath?

DALBEY: M-E-A-T-H.

SIGRIST: And where in Ireland is that?

DALBEY: Near Dublin. About an hour's ride to Dublin.

SIGRIST: Tell me a little bit about the town of Black Water. What was it like?

DALBEY: Very country. Lots of lovely, rich land. Lots of big farms.

SIGRIST: What did people grow on the farms?

DALBEY: Well, I don't know. I was very young and I didn't know much about the out country. We were—my sister and I, we were orphaned. My mother died, left twelve children and we were the youngest. We were only four when she died. We never knew our mother, and we were put into a convent. The sisters raised my sister and I. [Coughs]

SIGRIST: I should also say for the sake of the tape that Mrs. Dalbey has a cold and may cough occasionally.

DALBEY: Terrible, isn't it?

SIGRIST: What was your full name in Ireland?

DALBEY: Elizabeth Rice, R-I-C-E.

SIGRIST: And what was your father's name?

DALBEY: Daniel.

SIGRIST: And what do you know about your father?

DALBEY: I don't know what they grew because we weren't on it. We never lived on—

SIGRIST: Your father. Your father—what do you know about your father, Daniel?

DALBEY: Know nothing about him. Never knew our family and the house is still standing. I was over there and the house was still standing.

SIGRIST: You said that your mother died when you were four. What was her name?

DALBEY: Bridget Farrell. Farrell, F-A-R-R-E-L-L.

SIGRIST: Do you have any memories of your mother?

DALBEY: Oh, never, no. No.

SIGRIST: You were young when she died. Do you know what she died of?

DALBEY: They say she died of childbirth. She had twelve children. Eight boys and four girls.

SIGRIST: And how do you fall into those children?

DALBEY: We were the—my sister and I were twins and we were put into a convent. We lived in the east of Ireland and we went to the west to the convent. The west of Ireland, and that's all we knew. We knew nothing about our family, but the boys, they used to come and see us.

SIGRIST: Were the boys older than you were?

DALBEY: Oh, yes. They were all old enough to go out and work. We were only four. They were different ages.

SIGRIST: How long did you live in the convent?

DALBEY: Oh, I lived there about nineteen years.

SIGRIST: A long time.

DALBEY: Yes.

SIGRIST: Tell me what you remember about every day life at the convent.

DALBEY: We went to school. We got slapped plenty. [Coughs/Laughs] We done anything wrong or told a lie, we got slapped. We were happy.

SIGRIST: Where did you sleep at the convent?

DALBEY: Oh, we had a dormitory.

SIGRIST: A dormitory.

DALBEY: We were—we weren't the only ones. There was a few more, three or four more.

SIGRIST: Did they keep you and your sister together at the convent?

DALBEY: Eh?

SIGRIST: Were you and your sister together at the convent?

DALBEY: Oh, yes.

SIGRIST: What did you wear at the convent?

DALBEY: We were just dresses, like anybody else. We had no—you're looking for a uniform, we didn't have any.

SIGRIST: What order of sisters?

DALBEY: Mercy.

SIGRIST: The Sisters of Mercy.

DALBEY: Sisters of Mercy.

SIGRIST: Is there one sister that sticks out in your mind, after all these years?

DALBEY: Oh, a lot of them.

SIGRIST: Do you remember their names?

DALBEY: Oh, yes.

SIGRIST: Can you tell me a little bit about the sisters?

DALBEY: The sisters, some of them were lovely. [Coughs]

SIGRIST: Take your time.

DALBEY: And one or two was a little bit mean. Not all of them. They were nice. Of course, we had to obey. We had orders. We had to obey. If we disobeyed those orders, we got slapped.

SIGRIST: What were some of the rules that you had to follow at the convent?

DALBEY: Well, there wasn't any particular rules. We had to do just what we were told. Get up at six in the morning. Have breakfast. Go to church every morning. We were young. We didn't know.

SIGRIST: What did they feed you at the convent?

DALBEY: Oh, the food was good.

SIGRIST: What kinds of food?

DALBEY: We never got chicken. [Laughs/Coughs] Got bacon. Ham. Legs of mutton. Mutton. Not lamb.

SIGRIST: Mutton's tougher than lamb.

DALBEY: Oh, lamb was an expensive thing. They didn't eat it themselves.

SIGRIST: Did they have a garden at the convent?

DALBEY: They had a man who used to come in all day and do gardening, but not a garden like a lot of vegetables around. Nothing like that.

SIGRIST: What kind of gardening did he do?

DALBEY: Huh?

SIGRIST: What kind of gardening did he do? What were they growing?

DALBEY: Flowers, peas. I never seen any carrots so I didn't know what a carrot was. [Laughs/Coughs] I didn't know what a carrot was. Turnips.

SIGRIST: Do you remember what kind of flowers they had at the convent?

DALBEY: Oh, pansies. Oh, lovely flowers. They had to have them for the altar, too.

SIGRIST: What town was the convent in?

DALBEY: Tum, T-U-M.

SIGRIST: T-U-M, "tomb," and that's in the west of Ireland?

DALBEY: In the west of Ireland. Now, we lived in the east near Dublin.

SIGRIST: Do you remember what the county was that Tum is in?

DALBEY: Huh?

SIGRIST: What is the county where Tum was located?

DALBEY: Farms.

SIGRIST: The county, the name of the country that the convent was in?

DALBEY: Tum was the county.

SIGRIST: Oh, that was the county.

DALBEY: Yeah, that was the county.

SIGRIST: I see.

DALBEY: Yeah.

SIGRIST: What kinds of things did the sisters teach you to do?

DALBEY: We went to school.

SIGRIST: But were there other—

DALBEY: We had to do housework.

SIGRIST: What kinds of housework?

DALBEY: To do polishing, dusting, waxing. Waxing floors.

SIGRIST: Did you like doing housework as a child?

DALBEY: Oh, yeah. Didn't know any better. [Laughs]

SIGRIST: Did they teach you any crafts of any sort?

DALBEY: No.

SIGRIST: Like needlework?

DALBEY: No.

SIGRIST: Nothing like that?

DALBEY: We learned it in school. We had a half an hour in school for needlework and that was all we got.

SIGRIST: Were there any priests that came?

DALBEY: Oh, lots of priests. Bishop. The Bishop took a liking to my sister and I and he took my sister in his household.

SIGRIST: To do what?

DALBEY: To wait on table. To answer the door.

SIGRIST: To be a domestic servant in his house?

DALBEY: Yes. Yes.

SIGRIST: What was your sister's name?

DALBEY: Nellie.

SIGRIST: Nellie.

DALBEY: She'd dead.

SIGRIST: Did Nellie enjoy doing this?

DALBEY: Oh, loved it. The Bishop was awfully nice.

SIGRIST: Did you get a job outside of the convent?

DALBEY: No, I didn't get any job. I used to down to the Bishop's house when they'd have company and help. Used to help before, in the rooms and note paper and put it on for the priest or the bishop, whoever was coming. [Coughs] Used to love to go down.

SIGRIST: Did the Bishop ever do anything nice for you because you helped him in the house?

DALBEY: Oh, no. No.

SIGRIST: Did you get paid for helping the Bishop?

DALBEY: He used to give us money.

SIGRIST: Do you remember how much?

DALBEY: Oh, half a crown. Five shillings. That was a lot of money for little people.

SIGRIST: What would you do with the money?

- DALBEY: Spend it.
- SIGRIST: On what?
- DALBEY: Sweets. [Laughs/Coughs] Didn't save it. We would tell the Bishop the sister took the money from us. [Cough] We used to tell him everything.
- SIGRIST: Do you want to take a sip of juice?
- DALBEY: She'd tell him everything the sisters do, if they slapped us.
- SIGRIST: He didn't like it if the sisters slapped you?
- DALBEY: He had strawberries in his garden. He told us to go out and get some strawberries. We had pinafores. A pinafore was a garment we wore to school and we took them off when we came home from school. We got the pinafores, we took the corner of them and put the strawberries in it. We got to the convent, we got beat. We told him. [Coughs] We told him everything. The sisters knew. [Coughs] He was a lovely man.
- SIGRIST: What kinds of games did you play when you were a child?
- DALBEY: Ring around the rosy. We used to swing. Had swings. That's what I remember.
- SIGRIST: Did the nuns allow you to play games?
- DALBEY: Oh, play ball. Oh, yes. They wouldn't bother you.
- SIGRIST: Did the nuns ever play the games with you?
- DALBEY: No! No.
- SIGRIST: What language did you speak when you were a young girl?
- DALBEY: Huh?
- SIGRIST: What language did you speak?
- DALBEY: English! [Coughs] That's all we knew. English.
- SIGRIST: You didn't speak any Gaelic?

- DALBEY: No. Later in school we learned Gaelic. I learned a few little some. It was compulsory.
- SIGRIST: But you had always spoken English?
- DALBEY: Yes, always English.
- SIGRIST: Do you remember any prayers or songs that the nuns taught you at the convent?
- DALBEY: Oh, we had to say all the prayers. We went to mass every morning. [Coughs] Every morning.
- SIGRIST: Were there any songs that you were taught to sing when you were a young girl?
- DALBEY: Only ones we learned in school.
- SIGRIST: Do you remember any of those songs?
- DALBEY: [pause] The every day song, whatever was relevant at the time. [pause]
- SIGRIST: Do you remember how you celebrated Christmas in Ireland?
- DALBEY: We had a lovely time at Christmas.
- SIGRIST: What kinds of things did people do to celebrate Christmas?
- DALBEY: [Coughs] We had a goose for dinner, plum pudding. It was lovely.
- SIGRIST: Were there any special ceremonies that took place?
- DALBEY: No. Just go to Mass, that's all.
- SIGRIST: Well, Mrs. Dalbey, why did you want to come to America?
- DALBEY: Well, my sister came first. She was two years here.
- SIGRIST: Was that Nellie?
- DALBEY: That was Nellie. You must remember, we were orphaned. We had no mother, no father, no home. Well, she came to America. She had—[Coughs] We had an aunt and an uncle.
- SIGRIST: Where did they live?

DALBEY: New York City.

SIGRIST: And what did your uncle do for a living?

DALBEY: What did she do?

SIGRIST: What did your uncle do for a living?

DALBEY: He was superintendent [Coughs] of a big apartment house.

SIGRIST: And Nellie went to your uncle and aunt.

DALBEY: Yeah.

SIGRIST: Do you remember what year she came to America?

DALBEY: '22.

SIGRIST: She came in 1922. And what work did she get when she came to America?

DALBEY: What did she get?

SIGRIST: What work did she get?

DALBEY: She went out doing domestic work. She was a waitress in the rich homes. She was very much in demand.

SIGRIST: Did she live with your uncle and aunt?

DALBEY: No, only for a while. She went out and worked and, you know, you lived out.

SIGRIST: Oh, she lived in the homes where she worked?

DALBEY: Yeah, you lived. Yeah.

SIGRIST: Well, how did she—did she suggest that you come to America?

DALBEY: [Coughs] Yes, she—[Coughs]

SIGRIST: Take your time.

DALBEY: She was the one. She was two years out here before I came and then I came.

SIGRIST: What did you know about America before you came here?

DALBEY: I knew nothing. New nothing, absolutely. Just the name.

SIGRIST: What kinds of things did Nellie tell you about America?

DALBEY: She didn't tell me anything.

SIGRIST: Do you remember who paid for your passage on the ocean liner?

DALBEY: The aunt.

SIGRIST: Do you remember what you packed to take with you to America?

DALBEY: Huh?

SIGRIST: What did you pack to take to America?

DALBEY: [Coughs] What did I what?

SIGRIST: What did you take to America?

DALBEY: I didn't take anything. Just myself. [Laughs]

SIGRIST: Did you have a suitcase?

DALBEY: Oh, yes.

SIGRIST: And what was in the suitcase?

DALBEY: I had a couple of suits, underwear. I hadn't much. Enough.

SIGRIST: Were you still living at the convent when you decided to come to America?

DALBEY: Yes.

SIGRIST: You were still living there?

DALBEY: Yes.

SIGRIST: And how old were you when you decided to come to America?

DALBEY: I was about maybe seventeen or eighteen.

SIGRIST: That's when you wanted to come?

DALBEY: Yeah. [Coughs] It's an awful cough.

SIGRIST: Where did you go to get on the ship?

DALBEY: Went with my aunt and uncle.

SIGRIST: And where did you go to get on the ship?

DALBEY: That's where that they met me.

SIGRIST: No, in Ireland, where did you get on the ship in Ireland?

DALBEY: In Dublin.

SIGRIST: Do you remember the name of the ship?

DALBEY: Celtic. It's no more.

SIGRIST: You came on the Celtic?

DALBEY: Yeah.

SIGRIST: And had you ever been on a ship before?

DALBEY: No, never.

SIGRIST: What did you think when you saw the ocean liner?

DALBEY: Oh, I thought it was huge, which it was.

SIGRIST: Can you describe for me where you slept on the ship?

DALBEY: We stopped only at Queenstown. That's all—went to Liverpool from Dublin and then took the ship there, and then they went to Liverpool down to Ireland, Queenstown. [Coughs] It's a direct route from Queenstown.

SIGRIST: From Queenstown to New York?

DALBEY: Yeah.

SIGRIST: Where did you sleep on the ship?

DALBEY: On the ship.

SIGRIST: Where on the ship?

DALBEY: In berths. What they called berths.

SIGRIST: What are those?

DALBEY: They're one, two, three in a room. One, two. One, two, one, two.

SIGRIST: Were you by yourself traveling?

DALBEY: I was by myself.

SIGRIST: And who stayed in the cabin with you?

DALBEY: Well, I didn't get acquainted with them. I just knew them to say that they were my companions. That's all.

SIGRIST: What happened on the ship?

DALBEY: Nothing. We had lots of fun.

SIGRIST: What kind of fun did you have?

DALBEY: We had games, played games. Shuffle board and cards. I didn't play any. Had lots of people come—[Coughs]—and invite me.

SIGRIST: Invite you to join them?

DALBEY: To join them, yeah.

SIGRIST: Where did they feed you on the ship?

DALBEY: Dining—big dining room.

SIGRIST: Do you remember any of the food?

DALBEY: I went and asked for milk. Now, what did they give me but canned milk. [Laughs] I was dying for a glass of milk, and got what they call condensed. It's very sweet and thick.

SIGRIST: Were there any safety drills on the ship?

DALBEY: We didn't do any safety drills.

SIGRIST: No?

DALBEY: No.

SIGRIST: How long did the shape take to get to New York?

DALBEY: Five days.

SIGRIST: Five days. Do you remember seeing the Statue of Liberty?

DALBEY: Yes.

SIGRIST: Did you know what that was?

DALBEY: No, I didn't know what it was. [Coughs/Laughs/Coughs]

SIGRIST: Did you go to Ellis Island when you got to New York?

DALBEY: I went to Ellis Island.

SIGRIST: What happened at Ellis Island?

DALBEY: Nothing happened. They brought you into a room. We were in a group. We were examined by a lady doctor and then we got coffee and cookies or sandwiches, I don't remember whether it was cookies or sandwiches, but the coffee was lovely.

SIGRIST: What did it look like on the inside of Ellis Island? Do you remember what it looked like?

DALBEY: Oh, it didn't look—didn't pay any attention to it. You know, you're young. You just looking to get ahead.

SIGRIST: Who came to meet you at Ellis Island?

DALBEY: My aunt came to meet me. My sister-in-law came to meet me. My sister came to meet me. My brother came to meet me. So I had the four of them.

SIGRIST: Quite a crowd came to—

DALBEY: Yeah, a crowd.

SIGRIST: How long were you at Ellis Island?

DALBEY: A short time. Couple of hours.

SIGRIST: Did anything else happen that you remember?

DALBEY: Not a thing. Nothing.

SIGRIST: What was it like to see Nellie again?

DALBEY: Oh, it was lovely to see—[Coughs]—to see my brother and my aunt.

SIGRIST: Did they bring any gifts for you?

DALBEY: No, they didn't bring any gifts.

SIGRIST: Where did they take you?

DALBEY: They took me on the subway to where she lived, and I couldn't figure out the colored people, whatever. I'd never seen one before and they intrigued me. [Laughs] I never seen a colored person before. [Coughs]

SIGRIST: Were there any other things that you saw in New York that you had never seen before?

DALBEY: Yeah. We hadn't anything like the City of New York in Ireland.

SIGRIST: Where did you live when you first got to America?

DALBEY: With my aunt.

SIGRIST: And did you get work?

DALBEY: I went to work.

SIGRIST: How long were you here before you got work?

DALBEY: Two weeks.

SIGRIST: What did you do during the two weeks before you got a job?

DALBEY: I done nothing. [Coughs/Laughs] Isn't this terrible?

SIGRIST: What work did you get?

DALBEY: Domestic work.

SIGRIST: And tell me how you got a job? How did you get the work?

DALBEY: It was very easy. They were glad to get a greenhorn. I got seventy dollars a month.

SIGRIST: What was the first place that you worked at?

DALBEY: With a Jewish family.

SIGRIST: And explain to me what that experience was like.

DALBEY: And they were nice. They were very lovely. They loved it.

SIGRIST: Did you live with them?

DALBEY: Oh, yes. Oh, yes. I got married while I was there.

SIGRIST: How long did you work for the Jewish family?

DALBEY: About less than a year.

SIGRIST: What kinds of duties did you have in their—

DALBEY: Huh?

SIGRIST: What were your jobs at their house?

DALBEY: Wait on table.

SIGRIST: Who taught you how to do that?

DALBEY: Myself. My sister Nellie worked for the Archbishop. [Coughs] And he wanted me, too.

SIGRIST: She worked for the Archbishop—

DALBEY: Oh, yeah.

SIGRIST: In Ireland or America?

DALBEY: In Ireland.

SIGRIST: Oh, in Ireland, yes.

DALBEY: Yeah.

SIGRIST: Did you have to wear a uniform when you worked for the Jewish family?

DALBEY: No. No.

SIGRIST: What did you wear?

DALBEY: Dress. A gray dress.

SIGRIST: What did you do with your hair?

DALBEY: Oh, I had it done every week.

SIGRIST: And how did they do it? What was the style at that time?

DALBEY: I had it cut short, bobbed. Had a little curl. I used to go every week to the hairdresser. [Coughs]

SIGRIST: And that was the style in the 1920s, the short hair.

DALBEY: Yeah.

SIGRIST: Did you have to do any cooking at the Jewish family?

DALBEY: No.

SIGRIST: No. Who did the cooking for them?

DALBEY: They had a cook.

SIGRIST: How did you get that job? Who did you get the job?

DALBEY: Go to the employment office.

SIGRIST: And what did they do at the employment office?

DALBEY: You went to the employment office and you paid a fee and the employer paid it.

SIGRIST: The employer paid the fee?

DALBEY: Yes.

SIGRIST: Oh, that's interesting. Did the employer come to the office to—I mean, how did they chose you?

DALBEY: They'd go to the office.

SIGRIST: The employer went to the office. Were you all at the office when the employer came?

DALBEY: Yes.

SIGRIST: So they looked at everybody.

DALBEY: Yeah.

SIGRIST: Yes, that's what you remember.

DALBEY: Yeah.

SIGRIST: What did you do for fun on your day off?

DALBEY: Went to the movies.

SIGRIST: And what movies do you remember seeing?

DALBEY: Oh, all the movies that was going.

SIGRIST: What kind of movies were there at that time?

DALBEY: It was just like they are today.

SIGRIST: What about—what about music? Did you enjoy any music?

DALBEY: Yes, I enjoy music immensely.

[End of Tape One, Side A/Start of Tape One, Side B]

SIGRIST: What kinds of things were available in New York City? Is that where you worked?

DALBEY: There was everything available. Everything you'd want to pay for.

SIGRIST: It all cost money.

DALBEY: Yeah, everything cost money.

SIGRIST: How did you meet your husband to be?

DALBEY: I met my husband standing on the street. I got out the wrong way. I was forced to get out where the taxis are. I didn't know, and the lady I worked for told me she'd send a chauffer to pick me up. I went into New York for the day to get a suitcase out of the apartment, a little

suitcase out of the apartment and when the train arrived at New Rochelle, the taxi—the taxi was down by the side, and then you went up the stairs and you were on the road, the highway. I was standing there and I went the wrong way. I followed the crowd, and I said, “What am I going to do?” So, this man passed by. He was a uniform. Now, this is very, very—and I thought he was a policeman because the policeman wore khaki, khaki tops and I thought he was a policeman and I went up and asked him to direct me to where I was going. And instead of directing me, he took me in a taxi and took me to where I was going. The lady told me to take a taxi. She had the chauffeur there and he said, “I can’t find Elizabeth.” I followed the crowd. I didn’t go where the taxis were.

SIGRIST: Why was he wearing a uniform?

DALBEY: He was in the army!

SIGRIST: What was his name?

DALBEY: Milo.

SIGRIST: Milo, and what year were you married?

DALBEY: November the 17th, 1927.

SIGRIST: And how long had you been in America before you met your husband-to-be.

DALBEY: Not a year. That’s how I met my husband. I went up and asked him to direct me to where I was going. I told him the whole story. So he took me. Got a taxi and took me.

SIGRIST: Where was he from?

DALBEY: Fort Slocum.

SIGRIST: Is that in Ireland?

DALBEY: He was American.

SIGRIST: Oh, he was born in America? Oh. What nationality, what background was he?

DALBEY: American.

SIGRIST: American. His parents, where did his parents come from?

DALBEY: America.

SIGRIST: And did you have children?

DALBEY: Huh?

SIGRIST: Did you have children?

DALBEY: I had three.

SIGRIST: And their names?

DALBEY: Merion, M-E-R-I-O-N and Ruth Elizabeth, and Milo, my son.

SIGRIST: And did you ever want to go to back to Ireland?

DALBEY: I was back three times.

SIGRIST: You did go back. When was the first time you went back?

DALBEY: Milo sent me back, my son, and then I went back again. I went back with him.

SIGRIST: What was it like to go back to Ireland? How did that make you feel?

DALBEY: Hmm?

SIGRIST: How did it make you feel to go to Ireland?

DALBEY: Oh, it felt so good.

SIGRIST: Did you go to the convent where you had grown up?

DALBEY: Oh, yeah. I stayed there.

SIGRIST: Were any of the sisters still there that you—

DALBEY: There was four. Four there that was living that I knew.

SIGRIST: They must have been very old.

DALBEY: Oh, they were very old and they were very good to me. They treated me like a queen.

SIGRIST: How long did you stay in Ireland the first time you went back?

DALBEY: I stayed three weeks.

SIGRIST: Did you become an American citizen?

DALBEY: Oh, yes.

SIGRIST: Can you tell me a little bit about how you became an American citizen?

DALBEY: Oh, in Kingston.

SIGRIST: Kingston, New York?

DALBEY: Kingston, New York. [Coughs] I had no problem.

SIGRIST: Did you have to learn something to become a citizen?

DALBEY: You have to learn a few things, but I wasn't asked. I was asked who was the President of the United States. Who was it but Johnson?

SIGRIST: How old were you when you became a citizen?

DALBEY: I was in my thirties. I tried when my husband was—my husband was dead then. I tried when my husband was living and he passed away.

SIGRIST: So you tried to become a citizen twice?

DALBEY: Twice.

SIGRIST: So the first time it didn't work? The second time was much later then. You said Johnson was the President?

DALBEY: Yes.

SIGRIST: Lyndon B. Johnson?

DALBEY: Yes.

SIGRIST: Yeah, so you were older than in your thirties by then.

DALBEY: Oh, yes.

SIGRIST: Yeah. Do you think of yourself as being Irish or American?

DALBEY: American.

SIGRIST: What part of you is Irish?

DALBEY: Every bit of me. [Laughs/Coughs]

SIGRIST: But is there some part of your personality that you think of as being particularly Irish?

DALBEY: Yeah.

SIGRIST: What part is that?

DALBEY: I am—I'm proud to be Irish. Everybody seems to like the Irish.

SIGRIST: How do you feel about your life now? Now you're going to be ninety-nine in a couple of months. How do you feel about being—about having lived this long life?

DALBEY: Oh, I'm so proud. I'm so proud to be an American citizen and to live in this wonderful country, which is the most wonderful country in the world.

SIGRIST: Mrs. Dalbey, thank you very much. That's a good place for us to end. I'm not going to ask you any more questions.

DALBEY: I'm sorry. [Laughs/Coughs] I have this cough.

SIGRIST: That's quite all right.

DALBEY: I am so proud to be an American. [Coughs] I have ten grandchildren, five great grandchildren, seven great great.

SIGRIST: Several great, great grandchildren?

DALBEY: Hmm.

SIGRIST: Wow. What kind of advice would you give a young person about how to live a long happy life?

DALBEY: I've lived a happy life. Do unto others what you'd like to have done to yourself.

SIGRIST: Mrs. Dalbey, thank you. This is Paul Sigrist signing off with Elizabeth Dalbey on Tuesday, August 29th, 1995.

DALBEY: I'll be ninety-nine on the twenty-seventh of November.

SIGRIST: Coming up, yup. Cedar Manor is in Ossining, New York and I'm in the presence also of Chris Muratore. This is Paul Sigrist signing off. Thank you.

DALBEY: I'm sorry. [Coughs]

[End of Interview]