

KECK-23

JOSEPH DELANEY

BIRTH DATE: DECEMBER 12, 1903

INTERVIEW DATE: SEPTEMBER 5, 1985

RUNNING TIME: 1:02:00

INTERVIEWER: DANA GUMB

RECORDING ENGINEER: O.J. CONNELL, III

INTERVIEW LOCATION: RESTON, VIRGINIA

TRANSCRIPT ORIGINALLY PREPARED BY: NANCY VEGA, 1986

TRANSCRIPT RECONCEIVED BY: NANCY VEGA, 7/1995

TRANSCRIPT NOT REVIEWED

SCOTLAND, 1922

AGE 18

SHIP NAME NOT RECALLED

GUMB: Okay, Mr. Delaney, if we could begin with the first question, where and when were you born?

DELANEY: I was born on 51 Delbor Street, Mary Hill, Glasgow, Scotland.

GUMB: Okay. And when?

DELANEY: 1914, I believe.

GUMB: Okay. If we could start with that first question, Mr. Delaney. Where and when were you born?

DELANEY: 51 Balford Street, Mary Hill, Glasgow, Scotland.

GUMB: Okay. And when were you born?

DELANEY: I was born, uh, twelve, uh, twelve, 12/12/03. I was born in December, uh, the 12th.

GUMB: In 1903.

DELANEY: Yes.

GUMB: In, what was life like in Scotland? What do you remember of the old country?

DELANEY: Uh, there were two of us. It was a very hard living, very bad. And my mother, my mother and father had a tough time keeping us together, feeding us. (?) the man with my father, aye, had taken me down to St. Patrick's, pat me on his shoulder. I wasn't old when he took me down there, and he, then the next thing I know about, I seen the, uh, first electric tram car that came through, and I think that was about 1912. And it was all illuminated at night, it was wonderful, it was, the first tram car that run up to (?) in Mary Hill.

GUMB: What did your father do?

DELANEY: My father was a shaft repairer. He was a sinker and repairer for the (?) Mine Coal Company.

GUMB: Oh, in the mines?

DELANEY: In the, uh, shaftwell. Yeah, he went down and repaired the shafts when they weren't working, you know. He had that time in the night shift, he went down with his partner, they went down by a kettle. The cage was up above, it was a kettle that took them down b they had to bring lumber down and they didn't want to have the cage going up and down, but they couldn't get to the slides. They repaired the big slides, the cage. The cage couldn't get down in the shaft, they went down in seventy-six fathoms deep.

GUMB: What, what's a kettle?

DELANEY: The kettle is just what it says, a bucket.

GUMB: Oh, a bucket.

DELANEY: A bucket. they would put their timbers and tools in there and they went down in that. Yeah. See, they had a way of getting on, into the shaft, where they lift the cage up a little for the bucket to be hooked onto the cage. They picked that up and they swung it over, and they'd got in it and then they signalled the engine man, the engine man was, uh, a man that didn't,

no one could be drinking. And they, one part, my father was down there with a man, a helper, and the name was Jack Henderson. And the cage man, they wanted the kettle down to certain part where there was two planks for the (?) so they could get out and (?).

He come down to me, he had the planks with such a head that they, he knocked them, and then the kettle fell down the shaft. so my, his partner fell on top of him and busted his ribs.

GUMB: So your father fell?

DELANEY: Oh, yeah. Both of them, yeah, Henderson fell on top of him. And it was in about five feet of water and only if Henderson hadn't fallen on top of him, it would have been, it may have been alright. This fellow fell and broke a rib and punctured his lung and he died of pneumonia in the hospital.

GUMB: How old were you when this happened?

DELANEY: Uh, i was about twelve years old, I believe, just about twelve, twelve years old.

GUMB: You said life was very difficult. Was it difficult . . .

DELANEY: Very difficult. After I lost my father, life was very difficult. My mother had to go out and work. And then we were fed by the county, then we were fed and clothed by the county. They used to come up to the house and used to see what we'd be eating and see what we were wearing. I got rubber boots, rubber shoes to wear. And at one time there wa a laundry, oh, just about ten minutes through the, in park, and they had hot ashes that they dumped out into a hole, Galvindale Road, right beside the, the railroad, the roundhouse of the railroad. I think it was the Caledonian Railroad. And I went out one day and there was, I was a boy, and we went all up and down the ashes, and there was red fire in there and I stood, I had the red fire shoes, I come home with (?) instead of sheet rubber boots. Ha, ha, ha! Oh, did I get a wackin' from my mother when my father was gone.

GUMB: Was life difficult before your father died?

DELANEY: It was, yes, it, we didn't have a rich life.

GUMB: How, how so?

DELANEY: Well, he was away. He travelled to different shafts repairing. We'd see him once a week, on a Saturday.

He'd come home.

GUMB: And he didn't make much money?

DELANEY: No, not too much. Not too much money. He had a big family. ( he laughs )

GUMB: How many brothers and sisters?

DELANEY: I had, uh, well living, there was two killed in the hospital ward, James and Tommy. And I had, well, I was next. Then there was Frank, and John, and then there was another little boy, Thomas O'Neill form the second marriage, Tommy. Well, he was about four years old when we came to this country.

GUMB: Okay. Well, after your father died, you said your mother had to work. What did she have to do?

DELANEY: She went out cleaning for a woman by the name of Miss Kid. And she was, a German lady that lived in this country, and those, a couple of boys there were, well, they were interned, I got suits off them. She gave my mother suits that they had left, and I wore that suit when I got my photograph, taken when I came to this country. So that's the suit that is on my photograph. Yeah, a grey, a grey suit.

GUMB: Uh, you said they were interned?

DELANEY: Yeah. They were interned because they were German.

GUMB: Oh, I see.

DELANEY: This was during the First World War.

GUMB: So, uh, um, your father died at twelve, when you were twelve, did you have to go to work, or could you continue to go to school?

DELANEY: I intend to be a barber then. Mr. Murray, my mother's name was that, we'll call him Murray. He told my mother to send me down, and he would give me a job as a Friday and Saturday boy, and it would help her with some money. And so I went down and I learned the barbering trade.

GUMB: So, so you couldn't go to school after your father died?

DELANEY: No, no, I went to school, oh, yes, absolutely. I went to the first grade, and I went to secondary school, and it was quite a distance away. It was about three miles. And I think it was down by the place called (?). And I think it was Pepper Sole Street (?), or

something like that. It was the name of Garden Guard Road. And we had a headmaster and all. He was a brute. He really was, red-faced boy, and he raised rumpus when you, well, anyway, I had a teacher named Ms. McSheehan and she knew my, my condition. She knew my father, at that time my father was dead. And, uh she, she would let me go away early, to get back up in time to work for the barber shop, and let me out about half hour, so I could get away before the crowd got out. I had about six miles to go on the tram car home. Oh, in that time. Sometimes she would give me the (?), go home.

GUMB: In school, did you study anything about America, did you hear anything about America?

DELANEY: Oh, yes. I heard about America. About, well, the oranges, and the banyan tree. And I used to dream about that, and daydream how nice it would be to be out there with those oranges and see that tree, a banyan tree. And those trees grow like that, you know. So, uh . . .

GUMB: How did the idea come, develop, that you, as a family, were going to America?

DELANEY: Well, my mother married the second time, Thomas O'Neill. He had two, he had about five brothers. And, two of them were in, in Pennsylvania, and that's, and three sisters, and Thomas O'Niell was my stepfather, and they sent word that they wanted us to come to a. So that was glad tidings then, that. So we packed up and got ready, and that's when I say, the manager of the mines, Mr. Hansover, gave me mining papers before my time, I should've had five years, but I didn't have five years. I had a month or two, you know, to go, but anyway he called me into the office and told me. He knew my father, so.

GUMB: So, you were working in the mines?

DELANEY: Oh, yes. I was the pony driver and bencher. They call a bench.

GUMB: Could you spell that, a pincher?

DELANEY: A bencher, a bench. You know, you get all the cars that's gonna go up there and climb up to the trunk, was up on the front, and then there was the cable was going through a pair of sheers that you tightened up. a block of sheers, you called them. And I used to fit them on with my foot to get the pressure of, well,

I was, I brought maybe eight or ten, maybe fifteen, fifteen coal cars and only about eight or seven were rock, because rock was very heavy, different types of rock.

GUMB: So how long were you working in the mines?

DELANEY: For, for about four-and-a-half years, yeah, four-and-a-half. Yeah, 'cause I didn't have long enough to get my mining papers, he gave them, Mr. Hansover gave 'em. He knew my father, you see.

GUMB: Yeah, right. Did you enjoy that work?

DELANEY: Oh, yes. It's all I knew, all I knew at the time. And then I got two books from a fireman about, uh, geology. Bobby Martin, I believe his name was, he had been a fire-boss, and you have to have that kind of training in order to know all the gases, you learn, you know, how to measure it, away from the roof, because the gas goes to the roof, and if you get in there with a naked light, you'll never come out. You'll come out, you'd be blown out. So, uh, when he knew I was coming to America, I told them I was going to study mining. Mining and fireman. You have to know the rock and all that stuff, and fire dump and

how to (?) cloth, double doors to let you go from one part into the other, that's how you regulated the good air from the bad. We had fans, too, that was drawing, drawing the bad air in through the working places on the way up, and it was on top another shaft, but up the surface.

GUMB: Yeah. How was the pay in that job?

DELANEY: Oh, poor, about twenty-six shilling a week. Twenty-six shillings a week.

GUMB: Yeah. Did, did, when the decision, when your stepfather and your mother decided to go, did you have any reservations, or did you have any feelings that maybe you didn't want to go?

DELANEY: Not me. I wanted to get out of Britain, never mind Mary Hill. Britain is what I had against, Lloyd George.

GUMB: What was the reason for that?

DELANEY: Well, they, uh, they refused to give my mother in 1914, fifteen medals, my oldest brother was a mounted Highland Light Infantry man. He wore the pants, he carried the little revolver and a sword and a gun.

Because the Sikhs was jumping off the cliffs, have you.

GUMB: The Sikhs, the Indian Sikhs?

DELANEY: Sikhs, is that what you call them? I call them Sikhs. And they, they were, well, they're still devils. They jump off the cliffs on the horses. He was mounted. He was a Mounted Highland Light Infantry man. Generally they have kilt, but he was mounted, he had to be mounted, he had to have pants, the skilt was no good to you there, you had to be able to run, and, uh, he was a horse.

GUMB: So what happened to him?

DELANEY: Well, when the war broke out they kept them, they, first of all they came to, uh, North Africa, uh, South Africa, "The Relief of Lady Smith," that was, uh, revolt that broke out in North Africa. Lady Smith was, uh, like a billet, rather, a fort. That's what I would, where the British were. Uh, they had a garrison there. I think it was the Lord Jarvers, I believe, uh, it was a, it was his first time. I was too young to understand the whole thing. But it was during his time Lady Smith was relieved by the

British.

GUMB: Your brother went to the, uh, battle . . .

DELANEY: Up to Nepal, and they were having trouble there at that time, and then, when the war broke out, they brought them back to Egypt and they held them there, excuse me, until they got, the fighting got really bad, they had to draw everything again, in 1918. They had to get everybody out. Because my younger brother, they wouldn't take him. He was working in Queen Street Station in Glasgow. And he wanted to go, but they wouldn't take him until 1918 when they couldn't do no more. They take him in, and he was in the Eighth Gordon Highlanders, some of these . . .

GUMB: Eighth or . . .

DELANEY: Eighth, ninth or tenth, Gordon Highlanders. The Gordon Highlanders, yeah. And, uh . . .

DELANEY: G-O-R-D-O-N. So both brothers were in the service? In Europe?

DELANEY: In the service, that's right, oh, yes.

GUMB: And what happened to them?

DELANEY: Well, the brother was in India, he came to, the regime went to France. Eleven hundred was in a trench and it, they were in there for a week or for so long, and eleven hundred were blown up, because there was one man or two came back from there, and one of the guys was a man across the hall from us, Roddy McDonald. And he told us, how many men was in it.

GUMB: So your brother died?

DELANEY: Oh, yes. He was in, uh, well, the two brothers died, the other brother was, uh, time off with his partner, and the shrapnel came and buried the two of them. So they never knew what happened, so that was a good, well, the war ends and Lloyd George didn't acknowledge that the two brothers were entitled to a medal. Wasn't his fault, the young one, wasn't his fault, he wanted to go but they told him he couldn't, he was important on the railroad, the other brother was held up in Egypt till they were desperate and then they brought them to France, '18, '16 . . .

GUMB: 1916?

DELANEY: That's right. When they couldn't do no more. Then they refused to give my mother a medal for them. And

they never done it to this day either.

GUMB: Do you have any idea why, why they didn't?

DELANEY: Well, they gave medals to them that were fourteen and all the way up. Sure. So that was disheartening. And I didn't want to live there any more. And the sooner I could get out of there, it was the better. I wanted to have no time for them.

GUMB: Yeah. So, do you remember, uh, I don't know if you were involved in it, but, what, did you have to go to some office, or in Scotland, or in England, the American Consulate or something, to make arrangements to come here? Do you remember anything about that?

DELANEY: Oh, yes, oh, yes. We had to get pictures taken, mother had a picture, we were all taken in a group.,

GUMB: Do you remember what city?

DELANEY: Up in Glasgow, oh, yes. In fact, she done nearly all, got all the paperwork done. Her and her, and my, uh, I think it was my aunt, that put all the work together, the papers together, yeah.

GUMB: How about the tickets for the ship? How, where did

you have to go to get that?

DELANEY: Oh, no, our package was sent from America, by, uh, Patty and Jimmy O'Neill. They were the brothers of my stepfather.

GUMB: Okay, in Pennsylvania.

DELANEY: That's right.

GUMB: So they sent the tickets.

DELANEY: I think it was about fifteen hundred dollars. Something like that.

GUMB: Fifteen hundred? That's quite a lot of money.

DELANEY: You see, there was seven of us. No, there was, wait, yeah, there was seven. Because two was killed in France.

GUMB: Okay. So where did, what port did your vessel leave from?

DELANEY: Uh, Greenock, Glasgow, Greenock is south of Glasgow.

GUMB: Could you spell that?

DELANEY: G-R-E-E-N-O-C-K.

GUMB: Okay. Do you remember what you took, what kind, how much luggage you had, you know what kinds of things you took?

DELANEY: Okay. We took as much as we could. There was a square box, a chest, and around, a half-round top, box. Oh, it was quite a bit of stuff went with us.

GUMB: In, what do you remember about the voyage, how was the voyage?

DELANEY: Well, it was uneventful. It wasn't so warm when we started out. As we coming across into the warmer climate, oh, then, when we got into New York, oh, boy, oh, boy was it hot. The head was burning the feet off you on the deck, I was out on the deck, we felt the heat, terrible.

GUMB: What, what class were you traveling?

DELANEY: Uh, tourist, of course. Steerage, no, tourist, steerage.

GUMB: The cheapest class.

DELANEY: Absolutely.

GUMB: What were the accommodations like?

DELANEY: Well, oh, beds on top, four beds to a little cubby place.

GUMB: A little cabin?

DELANEY: A little cabin, that was all, just a just little for the, uh, to get in the bed.

GUMB: Could the family stay together on the boat?

DELANEY: Oh, yeah. We stayed, they had this all in the one place for these beds, the dining room. Oh, yeah, there were these bunks all around, and there was a great, big table. And they brought down the food down from up above the cookhouse up above. Either above or below, I don't (?).

GUMB: The little places that you stayed, was there a door to them?

DELANEY: Oh, yes, just a door, that's all. Just an entrance. And, uh, a drape hung down from the bed, and then you climb up and go to bed.

GUMB: What was the food like?

DELANEY: Oh, I can't tell you that, we lasted anyway. We got

enough to eat. ( he laughs )

GUMB: Well, what kind of food did they serve you?

DELANEY: Uh, I can't remember, I really can't.

GUMB: Just bad?

DELANEY: Uh, no, it was decent enough, I'd say.

GUMB: Do you remember how long the voyage was?

DELANEY: I think it was about nine days, eight or nine days.  
Yeah, I'm pretty sure it was about nine days.

GUMB: Did you meet anyone on the voyage, or make any acquaintances?

DELANEY: Well, if I did, uh, no, I was too young, I wasn't, no.

GUMB: What, do you remember anything about what the other passengers looked like, or where they were from?

DELANEY: Oh, they were all from Glasgow, Scotland. Oh, yeah, that was a Greenock, Glasgow, Scotland they was from.

GUMB: Were all people coming to the United States?

DELANEY: Oh, yes, absolutely. There was no way there were first class passengers on there, that I know of, maybe

there was, I was in steerage.

GUMB: Do you remember the date when you left?

DELANEY: The date?

GUMB: Yes, when you left Scotland?

DELANEY: Well, I don't know.

GUMB: Rather, the date when you arrived, do you remember the date when you arrived?

DELANEY: Oh, it couldn't been the twelve. I remember it was hot weather. And, I don't know, it could've been around the twelfth of July or something like that.

GUMB: What was the year?

DELANEY: Well, it would have been around 1922, yeah.

GUMB: As the vessel was coming into New York harbor, do you remember what your first impressions were?

DELANEY: Yeah, that "Ladyship" standing up there, that's when we all went crazy, when you see the Statue of Liberty.

GUMB: Well, what happened?

DELANEY: Oh, boy. If you'd been on the ship, you'd have known

what was happening. Boy, there was hollering and screaming, and, uh, a great day.

GUMB: Had you heard about the Statue of Liberty?

DELANEY: Oh, yes, yes. Learned it in school. Oh, yeah.

GUMB: But do you remember where the boat landed, where the boat docked? Do you have any idea?

DELANEY: Uh, no, I, it wasn't very far away from the Battery, wasn't very far away from the Battery. Uh, maybe about one pier, I think it might be Chambers Street, really. But, uh, I wasn't really interested, I didn't even know New York, so I couldn't tell you. It would only be afterwards . . .

DELANEY: So there's, the boat docked. So what happened then?

GUMB: So there's, the boat docked. So what happened then?

DELANEY: Well, we come in on a Friday night or a Saturday morning, and it was a holiday. And we were in port then from that till Monday morning when they took us over to Ellis Island. And I'm telling you that was hot. There was no air conditioning on that ship. So I slept, the kids, the other ones, we all slept above

deck. Oh, yeah. Just slept with our clothes on, because it got cool at night. But then mother, of course, the other girls were downstairs.

GUMB: This was two days on the boat, just sitting on the boat? could you get off the boat at all?

DELANEY: Oh, no. No way, no way. You had that big (?), you were waiting, you were, no, you were waiting for the, to go to Ellis Island, but if you come back, they wouldn't even let into Penn Station. Yeah. We sat there for about four or five hours waiting for the train to Wilkes Barre. Everybody knew we was immigrants.

GUMB: Oh, yeah, Penn Station.

DELANEY: On the train, uh, in the afternoon sometime, and I came into Allentown, and I was dying for a cigarette, my mother gave me a dollar, see, we, she had money, just not money to use, she gave me the dollar, and I went to the cigars place, and I seen Lucky Strikes. They were no more than ten or twelve cents, I didn't know, but the train gave a whistle, and the guy gave me the Lucky Strikes, when the train gave the whistle, before that whistle stopped I was on that train, and

on the train with my Lucky Strikes, no change from the dollar. ( he laughs )

GUMB: That was the first dollar?

DELANEY: That was the first dollar, that my mother gave me, God bless her. But anyway, we get in, we didn't know that you were not supposed to open the windows on the train, and there were a steam loco, and we're enjoying the breeze, the breeze, Oh, God, we were as black as dogs. ( he laughs ) And when we got into Wilkes Barre nine-thirty at night, my uncle didn't know, my Uncle Jim wanted know . . .

GUMB: This is the end of side one.

END OF SIDE ONE

BEGINNING OF SIDE TWO

GUMB: Okay, Mr. Delaney. If we could get back to the boat. Uh, sitting on the dock. So you had to spend, to spend two days in the boat. Uh, do you remember how you passed the time, what you did?

DELANEY: Uh, run up and down the top deck as much as possible, because if it was hot upstairs, it was hotter down below. There was no air conditioning in the place, oh

no.

GUMB: Did, do you remember any officials that came on the boat or anything?

DELANEY: No, I was too young.

GUMB: So you don't remember any kind of explanation of why you were sitting on the boat?

DELANEY: Well, it was a holiday, some kind of holiday in America. Now, was that the, the twelfth of July, was that a holiday then?

DELANEY: I don't know.

GUMB: It might be changed to the Fourth of July.

DELANEY: It wasn't the Fourth of July, you remember that?

DELANEY: I thought it was July 12th. Maybe it was the Fourth of July.

GUMB: Okay, but, okay. You don't remember any officials or anybody?

DELANEY: No, no.

GUMB: Okay. Finally, uh, your, your time, you didn't have

to stay on the boat any longer?

DELANEY: No. Well, when we come back from Ellis Island we went to Penn Station, with the tags on us. And then we went to Wilkes Barre, the uncle met us, and then he took us to the apartment we lived in, uh, Sherman Street. And, uh, the apartment was all ready for us. So, we, quarters and everything for us. We lived there for about, oh, two years. And then we moved down to Sheridan Street to another apartment house, out of a home. It was a double family, split, you know, two families under one house. (?)

GUMB: Okay. Well, getting back to Ellis. Uh, when you finally were able to go to Ellis, do you remember how they took you there, how you got to Ellis/

DELANEY: Uh, by boat, yeah, sure. Took it by boat, over there.

GUMB: Okay. Then the boat tied up to your vessel?

DELANEY: Yep. Tied up to the, uh, pier at Ellis Island. Yes, I think we walked about, up a sort of a ramp.

GUMB: Do you remember how long that ferry trip took to the Island?

DELANEY: It wasn't any more than about an hour. I would say, I really wasn't taking any stock in it, to be truthful about it, no.

GUMB: Okay. Once you had landed on Ellis . . .

DELANEY: Yes.

GUMB: On Ellis Island.

GUMB: Yes.

DELANEY: Do you remember what happened, what was the first thing that happened?

DELANEY: Well, they, they called you by your name, you know. Called my mother, and the children. they rounded up the children and we all, then, the boys, we were all segregated and the women were all segregated. So we was taken in the room, and they had to take all their clothes off, everything off. Nothing on your feet, nothing at all. Doctor, a doctor examined you. And, uh, I remember them saying, "You're just the type we need in the coal fields." He didn't say Pennsylvania. They knew or guessed I was going. They said, "You, you're the type we need in the, in the coal fields. You're a miner." And, uh, well . . .

GUMB: What was the examination like? What were they?

DELANEY: Physical. Everything. Oh, your heart, your head, your feet, your, under your belly. Oh, yes. And other parts. The private parts of your body were all examined, see if you had any diseases. Oh, yes.

GUMB: Did they use a stethoscope, or . . .

DELANEY: Everything. No, they, they done everything. You had to be physically fit. They looked at you like a (?). They liked a lot of the regulations after that.

GUMB: Small point, do you remember if he was wearing rubber gloves or how, you know . . .

DELANEY: No, I don't know.

GUMB: You can't remember.

DELANEY: It could have been. It could have been, at certain times, but I wasn't taking any notice. My mind was all on getting, getting in there and getting out of there and getting into America.

GUMB: Yeah. How long did the examination take, do you remember?

DELANEY: I would say it was about an hour, about an hour.

GUMB: That long?

DELANEY: I would think, oh. When you're in a hurry, why, you, not doin' it fast enough, and you're in a hurry. Five minutes is a long time.

GUMB: I'm wondering just how they, you know, they had everybody undress.

GUMB: Oh, they had rooms. Oh, yes, the men and the boys, all the men and boys, they were all in one room. And there was different doctors, I gather. Must have been, after all, one doctor wasn't going to take the whole boatload. There must have been other doctors. Oh, yes.

GUMB: So there was one space where you kept the clothes?

DELANEY: Yes, yes.

GUMB: All right. Okay.

DELANEY: So, um . . .

GUMB: See, you went down like a square, like a walkway, and you take your clothes, you were told, take your

clothes off, hang 'em, get it? When you come back, you come back this side, and you would take off your clothes, you'd take your clothes off. Now, I think there was somebody moving them over so that they kept that lane for clothes only, you get it? and then you come back another way and your clothes, you got your clothes again.

GUMB: On the other side.

DELANEY: Yeah.

GUMB: Somebody was . . .

DELANEY: Some way. Some way, yeah, some way like that. But there was long places just the way that's half there. That's no big deal. Undress, hang your clothes up, and nothing to, you hang them up, hang them up, just use (?) them.

GUMB: How about your valuables? Where were those, like your money and your wallet?

DELANEY: My mother had that. ( he laughs )

GUMB: You didn't, I mean, you weren't worried about your wallet being stolen.

DELANEY: No, I didn't have a wallet. ( he laughs ) My mother carried all the money I had. Yeah. She took it and put it in my pocket.

GUMB: Yeah. Did you see anyone who was having problems in the examination, you know, anyone who was being rejected?

DELANEY: No, no, no. Only ones that we, we figures afterwards were the ones in the, the ones in the cages, about the height of this room here, and you went alone, when you were coming' in or goin' out you'd see 'em. You didn't see them going in, you'd see them when you were coming out. That's it. Yeah.

GUMB: I don't know how much you remember, but you mentioned there was a ramp.

DELANEY: I thought it was a ramp down to the ferryboat.

GUMB: Yeah. Getting off the ferryboat you went up a ramp.

GUMB: Up a ramp. Yeah. Up and down a ramp. Yes.

GUMB: Right. Uh, do you remember if there was an awning above, or if you just remember a ramp?

DELANEY: Could have been an awning, there could have been an

awning.

GUMB: But, uh, then you went into, went into the building,  
from the ramp . . .

DELANEY: Yeah.

GUMB: And did you have to go upstairs to get to the medical  
examination, or . . .

DELANEY: Yeah, you went up, you went up just about four steps,  
and that was all level, then. But then there was, up  
above was the, when you went before the judge, he was  
in the center of the room, greta big room, and you  
seen people lookin' down at us like what you've, well,  
what you've a photograph of. That's the only thing I  
know, remember.

GUMB: Where, where did the medical examination take place?  
Between the ramp and the Great Hall?

DELANEY: Yes, oh, yes. Before you, there's like a room, well,  
there's three guys getting examined. And you go in  
there, and you come out, you went alone, and you come  
out and that took you, when you had your clothes on,  
then you come into another room that was allocated for  
all the people that passed and was waiting for to be,

go before the judge.

GUMB: Yeah, the great registry hall.

DELANEY: Yeah, the great registry hall. Yeah. I think it had seats in it. Yeah.

GUMB: Yeah. But to get from the examination room to the great registry hall, did you have to go up steps, or was it on the same level?

DELANEY: No, it was in the same level, as far as I remember.

GUMB: Okay. All right. So, um, once the medical exam was over, you went into the Great Hall.

DELANEY: Yes.

GUMB: Do you remember anything else about that room, what it looked like?

DELANEY: Just a plain room with seats. There were seats in it, that's all.

GUMB: What kind of seats, do you know?

DELANEY: Oh, just these wicker, wire, iron seats, they weren't soft seats, no, no.

GUMB: Do you remember which way they were facing/

DELANEY: No, they were all facing the one way. I think you, i think you called it, it was like facing the judge's chamber.

GUMB: The people that were asking the questions, the INS, the immigration people, officers, asking the questions.

DELANEY: They were there. See, they interrogated my mother. They didn't interrogate us, the children.

GUMB: Right. How did the family, after the medical examinations, how did the family get together? How did you meet?

DELANEY: Oh, we met in this room. Oh, yeah.

GUMB: In the great registry hall?

DELANEY: We were all kept together all the time. My mother was waiting for us gettin' through, all the boys, and then the girls, they went with her. And we met, and then we were told that we had to go before the judge. And naturally he gave you this spiel, proud to be American and all that.

GUMB: Okay. The girls were going through a medical exam.

DELANEY: That's right.

GUMB: And the boys were going through a medical exam.

DELANEY: Yeah. And then they all come to meet.

GUMB: And then they met.

DELANEY: Yes. Then they all meet together there, you know.

GUMB: Oh, okay. All right. Um, so, uh, do you remember how long you had to wait in the great registry hall before your parents came?

DELANEY: Oh, no. I think, I think it was only about fifteen or twenty minutes.

GUMB: Yeah. How much time did you spend on Ellis Island all together?

DELANEY: About one hour. Not more than an hour. Yeah.

GUMB: Okay. All right. So you were, you were, how did you know, how did the family know, that it was their time before the, what you say, the judge?

DELANEY: Yeah. They came and told you. The attendants there.

Oh, yeah, they brought you in and then the, the bailiff called your name, the Mrs. O'Neill family, and we went before the judge. He gave his speil then.

GUMB: What was his speil?

DELANEY: About America, she needed strong supports that wanted to be Americans. She had a proud heritage, and all that stuff, okay. We were wishing to get through with the speil, to get to the point. ( he laughs )

GUMB: Did he ask questions?

DELANEY: No, no questions. He just gave us a speil. Well, the boys, yes, he asked if we had a good voyage, and my mother would answer. She was doing all the answering, almost.

GUMB: Where was your stepfather, do you remember?

DELANEY: Oh, he was in this country. He was in Wilkes Barre, Pennsylvania.

GUMB: He had come before?

DELANEY: Oh, yeah. He was out and had the house all ready for us.

GUMB: Oh, I see, I see.

DELANEY: On Sherman Street.

GUMB: Okay. I see. How much earlier had he come?

DELANEY: He was, about a year-and-a-half, and mother was getting worried about him being so long away, God rest her.

GUMB: Okay. Um, okay. So, um, do you remember anything about, uh, well, after the questions, or after the . . .

DELANEY: Interrogation.

GUMB: Right. The interrogation, um, uh, what happened at that point? Where did you go from there? Do you remember what . . .

DELANEY: We just waited until we got a group, great big group of us, and we went on the ferry over to New York, Penn Station, Pennsylvania Station.

GUMB: Right. Did you, um, did you have to, uh, change any money? Do you remember if your mother . . .

DELANEY: My mother had a few dollars sent to her. Oh, yes.

them days didn't need much. A dollar, I think she had about fifty dollars or something like that. But she had a check. I think, that she had five hundred dollars. Yeah. I know she had that check sent to her. That was what I knew she needed for landing money.

GUMB: What do you mean by landing money?

DELANEY: Well, that she wasn't a poor, she wouldn't become a vagrant in this country, she was allowed five hundred, she had to show that she had five hundred dollars, and she had to show proof that her husband was working, and that Uncle Jim was the, uh, guardian, Uncle Jim McMade, he's dead, God rest him now.

GUMB: He was the guardian?

DELANEY: Oh, he was the guardian.

GUMB: The Guardian, right. Okay. Um, did someone on Ellis . . .

DELANEY: He was vouching for the, for the safety and safe well being of the whole family to the judge, on the paper, rather.

GUMB: Yeah. Was there, uh, did someone on Ellis Island ask to see that money? Did they want to see that . . .

DELANEY: Yeah. The judge. Why did you think the judge was gonna let you go in? Oh, no. You had to show that. That's what the check, and the five hundred dollars . . .

GUMB: Yeah. Do you remember any of the other questions he asked, or what else he wanted?

DELANEY: Well, he, he asked me, they asked me about being a, going to the mines. He asked me, you're going to the mines, you're a miner. I told him, "Yes." And then I said, "That's my occupation." That was all.

GUMB: Did he ask you if you had a job in the mines?

DELANEY: Oh, I was gonna get a job. I had a job, as a job at (?) rope factory waiting on me, a relation of McDade's was, had a job for me.

GUMB: Um, okay, um, so did you have to eat any food on Ellis Island? Do you remember, was there a meal that you had to eat?

DELANEY: I don't remember, tell you the truth. But we may have

had, you know. I'm not gonna say we didn't and I'm not gonna say we had.

GUMB: Okay. So once you had finished the procedure, all the legal procedures, uh, how did you make your way to Penn Station? Did you have a guide or . . .

DELANEY: Oh, yes. Oh, yes. We had a guide there, and he, he sat all on one of the seats, told us, "Don't move." And then when the train, time for the train was, someone came and told Mother, "That's your train, now's your train at that platform, beyond that platform. And he seen us on the train.

GUMB: Um, who was this guide, how did you . . .

DELANEY: No, I wouldn't know.

GUMB: You didn't know.

DELANEY: It might have been the, one of the railroad, the employees, or it might have been a government man, you know, an immigration authority. I think it would be one of them. Because he would be looking after us to see that we had to got to the right destination. I think it was the government, wouldn't ge the railroad. The railroad doesn't care who they take on.

GUMB: Do you remember how you traveled from Ellis Island to Penn Station, how you got there, do you remember that?

DELANEY: It was on the boat, the ferry.

GUMB: To the Battery.

DELANEY: That's right.

GUMB: And from the Battery from Penn Station.

GUMB: That's right.

GUMB: And how did you get from the Batty to Penn Station? Do you remember that?

DELANEY: No, I can't remember that.

GUMB: Okay.

DELANEY: Could have been a bus or could have been . . .

GUMB: I remember you mentioned . . .

DELANEY: Most likely it would be a bus because I think there was more than us going to Penn Station for a train. I don't think they were all just coming to New York.

GUMB: Oh, you traveled as a group, there was a group of

immigrants.

DELANEY: Oh, yes, absolutely sure.

GUMB: That came together.

DELANEY: Yeah. Oh, yeah. God, there might have been thirty or sixty or seventy in that, on that trip over.

GUMB: Did you feel conspicuous, like, you know, people were looking at you?

DELANEY: I wasn't caring if the Devil himself looked at me, as long as I was in a. ( he laughs ) Nah!

GUMB: Uh, did you get the, did you, on Ellis Island, do you remember if the family went to talk to any groups, any social, like Traveler's Aid.

DELANEY: No. Traveler's, no. Not that I know of.

GUMB: Okay. So, as a group you went up to, to Penn Station, and I remember you mentioned something about tags?

DELANEY: A B&O. A tag, a white tag with Baltimore and Ohio.  
( he laughs ) That was, I had mine right down here . . .

GUMB: Were people sort of looking at you?

DELANEY: Yeah, sure.

GUMB: Okay. Um, so I, you know, you talked about the railroad trip, so you arrived in Wilkes Barre.

DELANEY: Yeah.

GUMB: Do you remember your first impression of the new land?

DELANEY: Well, it was dark. So, and Uncle Jim's car, they took it up to Sherman Street. It was at night. So, we couldn't, all I know is we went up a hill and . . .

DELANEY: Do you remember any difficulties in adjusting to the new country?

GUMB: Eh, I went to work, eh, well, I think we landed in the Friday, or a Saturday, what it was, had a job for me on Monday morn, or Tuesday morn, at the Hazard Wire Rope factory, some friends had a job.

GUMB: At the Hynam Rope Factory?

DELANEY: At the Hazard.

GUMB: Oh, Hazard.

DELANEY: Hazard Wire Rope Company.

GUMB: They made all kinds of cables. Yeah.

GUMB: Okay. And, I think you mentioned before, this job was, uh, arranged, was arranged before you came?

DELANEY: That's right. They was waiting on me. There was a big Winters, Mike Winters, his name was. He was a fireman in the plant. And he talked to the foreman, and his foreman told me (?). And, uh, I came and went and worked there Monday morning, thirty-four-and-a-half cents an hour. And my job was, then, was to hang, unload cans of ashes from the bottom of the boiler, either, from the fires. The ash pit was in the cellar, from the furnace. It dropped down into a great big holder, and we could open it, and we could shove a big cart under it that bound it up there, and we'd get a load of ashes out and then we'd take them up and chop them down through grate, down to a conveyor, bucket conveyor that ran about two hundred and fifty feet long, the length of the, the whole square of the flat square, and then they got up to a place where they dump the ashes into a, a chute, and that went down, and went to a place where the trucks could come in and fill and load it right there, a load of ashes, and the same way with coal, we had to, the

coal come up that same way, and they come up in the buckets, and we would load the big place for the coal.

GUMB: Had your stepfather . . .

DELANEY: He had nothing to do with that.

GUMB: Arranged the job? No.

DELANEY: No, no. That was, oh, yeah, the stepfather, or Jim McDade, rather, that got the job for me.

GUMB: The stepfather.

DELANEY: No, my uncle.

GUMB: Your uncle. Okay, right. Before you even arrived.

DELANEY: Oh, yeah, yeah. They had been talking, you know, that I was comin' out.

GUMB: So when did you start working in the mines? Was it much later?

DELANEY: Oh, I only stayed there about, oh, about six months, say, with the Hazard Wire Rope factory. And there was, there wasn't enough money in it for me so I wanted to be into the mining again. And in the mines I worked about three months, that was enough for me.

Boy, oh, boy. Whoof! It was Lithuanians, Russians, Pollacks, and they were tougher than I was, boy. Well, the workings were twelve foot high in places.

GUMB: The workings?

DELANEY: Workings. I was used to small working, three-foot-nine-inches, three-foot-nine-inches was the highest. Theirs was, theirs went, the shovel loaders that could load a four-ton car. If I was loading a car, I would have to, but an eighteen-inch topper on a four-ton car and, I'm after learning a job where ten hundred weight is the full amount of the car of coal. I'm coming to this country and I'm gonna fill a four-ton car, and I have an eighteen-inch topper, when it gets to the breaker.

GUMB: In Scotland?

DELANEY: No, in America.

GUMB: Yeah. But in Scotland how much was in the car?

DELANEY: A half a ton, ten hundred weight.

GUMB: Half a ton.

DELANEY: Yes.

GUMB: In this country it was . . .

DELANEY: Four tons.

GUMB: Four tons.

DELANEY: With a topper on, an eighteen-inch topper over the top of the car. So that was because the wheels had flat wheels, they weren't putting sprags to let them slide down the inclines in the mines. Wooden rails. Oh, yeah.

GUMB: So it was much more difficult here.

DELANEY: Ho, ho, ho. I stuck it three months and I got out of there. I do. ( he laughs ) I could earn a livelihood much cheaper than that. Boy.

GUMB: You mentioned your mining papers.

GUMB: Yeah.

DELANEY: What was, that you got in Scotland, what was the significance of those?

DELANEY: I was a miner. Full-fledged miner. Because you had to have working papers. You had to have mining papers to mine. After all you got your blast. Yeah, sure,

you got to know your dynamite and all that stuff. Oh, sure, after all . . .

GUMB: It certified that you knew the work.

DELANEY: Oh, yes. Absolutely. Knew how to handle it and how to fire the shots. We used a strum, what you call strum. Then here we used cable, wire cable, two wire cables to a cab. It comes, a cabs come that long, and then there's a set of wires coming out of it. Well, you, you keep them separated, you understand? i mean, you keep them separated away from the gelignite. The gelignite is only about that long, six inches long.

GUMB: Okay. Um . . .

DELANEY: And how you, how deep a hole in the gelignite, you use a wood, a piece of wood, and you just made a, you can make a hole in the gelignite with it. You don't put steel in there, you put a piece of wood, hard wood, smooth, and you make the hole. Then you put your cap in there. Then you put, you can take a candlewick or oil or, and you close the waterproof package off.

GUMB: Did you ever, did you ever feel homesick, or . . .

DELANEY: Plenty of times. ( he laughs ) And how.

GUMB: What did you miss about Scotland?

DELANEY: ( he laughs ) Everything. Life was easier.

GUMB: How so?

DELANEY: Life was easier, that's all. Wasn't the hard way work. Then I went and I, well, I quit the coal mines anyway, and I went as a driller's helper, and then from drilling I went to driller, and I went with different companies, went, eh, down to, I was in, I went to Tennessee.

GUMB: Did you, excuse me for a minute, one last question. The expectations of America that you had in Scotland, how did they compare to the reality, can, do you remember? What you heard about a in Scotland, how does that compare to what you found here?

DELANEY: Oh, there was more here. There was more for your work, more money for your work. I didn't realize that at the time. And just about, not too sure, of my ground. After all, I'd left, I'd left all my companions over there, and girlfriend, and here I am in a strange country and, oh, boy, they used to have a laugh at me, at Wilkes Barre. Kelly's Corner, they

called the place where we all gathered around, a little candy store, a grocery store.

GUMB: What did they, what did they laugh at?

DELANEY: My voice and my talk.

GUMB: Oh, accent.

DELANEY: Yeah. Absolutely. We used to have, we used to have, at night, wearing the suspension on, suspension on and I landed and, no work in the mines, how do you like that? It was a good job. I had an occupation to go in the Hazard Wire Rope factory.

GUMB: Would you do it again? Would you come to this country again?

DELANEY: I certainly would. I most certainly would. That's the best move I ever made in my life, or my mother made for me, brought us all here, and my stepfather was the cause of it.

GUMB: Any idea what would have happened to you in Scotland if you'd stayed there?

DELANEY: Oh, no. It would have been tough, it would have been a rough life. Poor, poor, way. A very poor way of

making a living. Yes.

DELANEY: How long did it take you to adjust to America? How long was it before you weren't a greenhorn any more, you didn't feel like a greenhorn?

DELANEY: Oh, I would say about six months, a year. Yes. And they got, and I grew to know the people around, the different ones. Then I grew, I wanted to be an American.

GUMB: This is the end of side two.