

KECK-081/CRANFORD

KECK-081

MILLIE (MIMI) PINTORICH CRANFORD

BIRTH DATE: MAY 3, 1912

INTERVIEW DATE: NOVEMBER 14, 1985

RUNNING TIME: 45:00

INTERVIEWER: NANCY DALLETT

RECORDING ENGINEER: CONNIE KIELTYKA

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YUGOSLAVIA, 1922

AGE 10

SHIP NAME NOT RECALLED

DALLETT: My name is Nancy Dallett and I'm speaking with Millie Cranford on Thursday, November 14, 1985. We are about to begin this interview at 2:15 PM and we're about to hear Millie Cranford's immigration experience from Yugoslavia in 1922. This is the beginning of tape number 081. Take me back to the beginning of this story, and tell me where and when you were born.

CRANFORD: Well, I was born May 3, 1912. I don't recall the village. It must have been a very small village. I never hear of it. But it wasn't far from Zagreb.

DALLETT: In Yugoslavia.

CRANFORD: In Yugoslavia, yeah.

DALLETT: Tell me a bit about your family.

CRANFORD: Well, there were, I had a brother, he was oldest. I was next. And my sister was the youngest. And after the First War we, my father decided to come to America for a better life which was very common in those days. And it wasn't that there was any persecution or anything at that time, but just for a better life. And he went. We were boarded out, so you earn your keep. My sister stayed with my mother. My brother and I were boarded out. We never went to school. And, uh, one day we just congregated where my mother was and got ready for the trip.

DALLETT: What did your father do before he came to this country?

CRANFORD: I guess he was a farm hand. Uh-huh.

DALLETT: And did you know people who had left from your village to come to this country?

CRANFORD: Well, I, uh, nobody in our immediate vicinity, I don't recall my parents talk of, but, you know, if somebody left, word got around that they left and then it was so exciting and somebody else to go away. And it wasn't like today, people go back and visit relatives. You were never coming back. And it was sad. So, uh, I don't remember when my father went, but I do remember when we got our act together and left. (he laughs)

DALLETT: Tell me about what that was like when you make that decision.

CRANFORD: Well, we left, I know we left early in the morning. I think I told you before we left before dawn. And we got to this place and we had straw suitcases and you didn't stop anywhere for something to eat. You carried maybe several loaves of bread, homemade bread, and hard boiled eggs. And that's what we, you know, that was what we lived on. And, uh, before another dawn the train would stop and I guess they had reservations and it was like close to the tracks would be another house that would house us for the evening. We didn't undress or anything because in

the morning you had to hustle up and go. And,
uh . . .

DALLETT: Do you remember what you had packed up, anything special that you wanted to bring?

CRANFORD: You only took, I remember we took a comforter because you may have to sleep on it. Which I guess we slept on the comforter and, uh, our immediate needs, we didn't have that much, I guess, to speak of. But, oh, but I do remember, getting back to before we left, we used, when we were in the fields we used to hear these hooves, horses' hooves, and everybody ran for cover because wherever you saw woods you knew the king was going through. And everybody ran for cover. You were always afraid of authority. And I remember that vividly. But anyway, then . . .

DALLETT: Who was the king that would have been coming through?

CRANFORD: The king of Yugoslavia. I don't know. See, the ex-king, the younger, I see he's in New York in the stock market. (she laughs) Read and you learn, right? And, uh, well, anyway we, then the second, second train that we took, first train I guess took

us to Germany. Second train took us to, um, France. And, uh, I remember in the morning we were on the third floor. I can't describe the amazement because we never saw anything other than a first floor. And the third floor, and I was the mischief maker. My poor mother. I looked out and I saw these girls playing and they played with a ball. You know, they bounce it and turn around and, "That's what I'm doing. When I come to America that's what I'm doing." It drove my mother crazy. I tell everybody, they get a charge out of it. "Tell me more," they say. Anyway, that, that just fascinated me. And then we went to a restaurant. And we had to wait for our boat to come. And, uh, we didn't know how long and we went to this restaurant. And it was so exciting. We were near a dumbwaiter. You know, I never saw this before. And I was looking and looking and I took the tablecloth and bent over and I pulled the tablecloth with everything on it. And my mother was furious.

DALLETT: How old were you at this point?

CRANFORD: Ten.

DALLETT: Ten years old.

CRANFORD: But, uh, I, I was so curious. I had to see everything and touch everything. And, uh, well, anyway, we ate. I guess I got a good scolding when we got back. And we waited for this ship and we waited. Finally all the commotion to get, to pack everything. Get the suitcase and run. You threw your shoes on. I fell over my shoelace and the suitcase I carried flew out and everything went all helter skelter, and not to be left behind, hurry up and just throw it together. What you leave you leave. So we went.

DALLETT: Which port was this?

CRANFORD: Le Havre.

DALLETT: In France.

CRANFORD: Le Havre, yeah. That was a very famous, uh, port at that time. You don't hear much today, I don't know. And, uh, we got on the ship and we were in bunk beds, you know, three high. And, uh, we had, I remember we had a bad storm. I'll never go on a cruise because I was afraid it would go above the portholes, you know,

the storm. And it was scary. Because we had never been on water before, on top of that. And, uh, it seemed we were on the boat forever. I won't say ship, it was a boat. And . . .

DALLETT: Do you remember what the name of that ship was?

CRANFORD: No. I don't even think my mother knew. And, uh . . .

DALLETT: Now, had your father, I'm not sure if you would know this, but had he arranged to, uh, send for you? Did he send tickets for you?

CRANFORD: Oh, yes. I think he sent passports. He bought them and sent them. That was our ticket, you see.

DALLETT: And how many years after he came did you follow? How long was that?

CRANFORD: I, I would say maybe, I said, I think I said five, it must have been three. It wasn't too long.

DALLETT: Do you remember at all hearing from him? You said it was always exciting to hear that, what life was like here. Did you have any . . .

CRANFORD: People talk. People talk, older people, like, you know, children, they didn't talk in front of children. But, uh, if somebody went and wrote back and that letter everybody would repeat it. America. Gold is on the streets. Money. Well, it was just heaven, you know. It was progress. There was no progress there and that was the way of the world at that time. But, uh, on the ship, I told you, they had coffee. And it smelled delicious. Never smelled coffee.

DALLETT: No coffee in Yugoslavia.

CRANFORD: Never heard of coffee, no. They have it today, i'm sure. And I saw oranges on the table. The people that went to the dining room, people were, you know, better off. They went and they had chocolate bars. And we used to go and just look in. You had to come back and behave yourself. Don't do this and that.

DALLETT: Did you get any of those oranges? Were you fed those oranges?

CRANFORD: No, no.

DALLETT: What did they feed you?

CRANFORD: We, uh, well, I'm sure that we got to eat in another section. See, that was for people that, affluent to us at that time, I'm sure we ate someplace else because whatever we had was already gone and, uh, as it was getting close people were getting more, uh, nervous, fidgety of the things that were expected like this physical inspection. That was a dread.

DALLETT: Why was it so dreaded? What did you hear it would be like?

CRANFORD: That was so dreaded because I remember to this day because if one in the family didn't, maybe had something in their hair or they had TB or their eyesight was poor and they would stick this thing on you, on your back, I guess, so you didn't see it. Maybe one or two initials, well, that was a, their identity or what, you know, whatever was wrong. And if you, if one member of the family, either you all went back or that one, one member of your family went back. That was the most heartrend--, and the screams, the horror, it was heartbreaking, that's all. I won't get into it, it was bad.

DALLETT: But you heard about how that was going to happen while you were on the boat?

CRANFORD: Well, we kind of heard about it on the boat. People talked and the closer we got the more, well, you know, do this or that because they heard it from others. And, uh . . .

DALLETT: What language were you, were you speaking then?

CRANFORD: Slavish. Slovenian, I would say. That's all we knew.

DALLETT: Did you have any indication how you were going to communicate with these people who were going to be speaking English?

CRANFORD: No way. Well, when we finally did get the physical, we got the physical before they let you get off the boat. And, uh . . .

DALLETT: Before you even came on to Ellis Island.

CRANFORD: Oh, yeah, before you left. And then, uh . . .

DALLETT: Before you tell me about that, anything else you can remember about the trip itself?

CRANFORD: Everybody kept to themselves. And everybody was, uh, maybe they were frightened of the future. I wouldn't say there were that many children. Mostly adults, maybe, you know, they'll send for them later.

DALLETT: Any other people traveling with you who came from your village?

CRANFORD: There were others. There must have been b I remember they, we all stayed in the same room, so they must have spoken our language because we wouldn't be with somebody, you know, we didn't, couldn't communicate with. But whoever you were with, once you got to Ellis Island you lost. You got lost.

DALLETT: So tell me what it was like when you came into the harbor.

CRANFORD: Oh, into the harbor. All of a sudden the ship, like, was getting heavy and everybody was going to one end and, you know, what was that about, we never heard of the Statue of Liberty. Evidently other people did, but when you see that you have arrived, you know, look for it. So that, that's when everybody saw and we didn't see it until we got off. And, you know, I,

look, what is that, I never knew what it was till I went to school. I never knew what it was.

DALLETT: So people didn't tell you on the boat, what it was they were, they were running to the side to see?

CRANFORD: No. Plus everybody had different language, you know, and everybody had their own anxieties and things like that. It wasn't as though you're going on a cruise and everybody gets together having a good time. And where are you from and what your status is, nothing like that. It was a very serious, I would say. It was very, no, you know, nothing happy. Everybody had a lot of anxiety. Just to get here, that was the main thought.

DALLETT: Was there any other rumor or information that spread other than what you might face in terms of the medical examination on Ellis Island? Anything else people were afraid of?

CRANFORD: Nothing. They were just afraid of that. They were deathly afraid of that. But that, the only thing, that, uh, made it a little easier was thinking how beautiful America is. That's all. You never stopped

hearing how beautiful. And, uh, then in Ellis Island they had these cubicles sort of where we were. And I guess that was more to make it easy for, before we get to the Ellis Island, I mean before we get to Ellis Island, uh, when we were in France I had thick curly hair and my mother was afraid that I would get something in my hair because I was always mingling. Well, when we went to that restaurant to eat she had my hair cut off. I mean completely. And you know that girl that was bouncing that ball? She had a tam on. And I fell in love with it. I don't care, I didn't have any hair. I had, even when I came here I buy my granddaughters a tam. I fell in love with that tam and playing that ball. Sounds ridiculous but, but, uh, you know, but that, oh, I just, you know, I played ball and I was a whiz, too. When I came here I made sure I was gonna do that. But, uh, then that was out of the way. Otherwise we were healthy.

DALLETT: So it was in France that your mother had cut your hair.

CRANFORD: Cut my hair, yeah. Because that's where the barber

was. Once you got on the ship, you know, then, uh, then you were gonna be all right. You know, they could tell you you can't come on the ship because you had an examination there, too. But it wasn't as thorough as getting to the Ellis Island.

DALLETT: Tell me about the one that you had on the ship, though, before you came to Ellis Island.

CRANFORD: Well, it wasn't, it couldn't have been much, they just made sure, I guess they looked at your luggage and they made sure where you're going that you, whoever is there is going to be responsible for you. And, uh, make sure we were well, you could hear, you could see. And it wasn't, you know, that strenuous a physical as New York. And then at Ellis Island you were in these cubicles, I guess that's how they determined where you were going. And they put a tag on you so that as you went whoever, uh, took care of you, they knew where to put you, what train. And, uh, people would go, we'd wait, somebody came, then I don't remember, I remember the, getting off the train, that was in Bridgeport. We still had those things on and I guess that's how they determined what

trolley to put us on. And also where to get off the trolley. Got off the trolley. There were no sidewalks. We just walked in the middle of the road.

DALLETT: Tell me about the exam, the dreaded exam at Ellis Island. How did that go?

CRANFORD: They had, they had many inspectors. They had these stethoscopes which, you know, we never saw this before. It was scary, especially to kids. And to the parents, what was going to be the results, see? And, uh, they, you didn't have to undress or anything. They checked you for TB, your throat, your head, your eyes and all this. And they stuck on all these things.

DALLETT: Did you get to stay with your mother and brother during that exam?

CRANFORD: We stayed together. We stayed, yeah. You had to be careful, there's so many people so you didn't get lost. It just, interlocked your hands and just stayed like that.

DALLETT: And how did you understand, or how did your mother understand the officials when they asked to see the

papers and so forth?

CRANFORD: There must have been translators, is the only way I could figure out. And, uh, you know, the part of Europe we came from, the Balkans, uh, well, people, we understood German, we understood Hungarian. So, you know, a word or two and you could say yes or no, you know, and I imagine that's what it was because the governments there, you used to wake up one morning and you were under German rule or, and till this day I learned Hungarian and German and I remember it. So . . .

DALLETT: Did they ask to see how much money your mother was carrying, do you know?

CRANFORD: I don't recall that. I don't even know that she had money.

DALLETT: Yeah. But that wasn't something that you had heard about having to get through that.

CRANFORD: No, no. You had to have your health and you had to have somebody that was going to be responsible for you.

DALLETT: So, uh, how long were you on the Island?

CRANFORD: Well, we didn't have lodgings so we couldn't stay there, see, they must have put us on a train.

DALLETT: So you weren't there over night. Do you remember being fed a meal? Were you there long enough to have a meal?

CRANFORD: In New York we had a meal, I remember, I don't remember what it was.

DALLETT: Not on Ellis Island?

CRANFORD: What?

DALLETT: On Ellis Island?

CRANFORD: Yes. Yeah.

DALLETT: Do you remember the dining room or where you might have had that meal?

CRANFORD: Somehow I see a large dining room. I don't remember sitting down, maybe it was sort of a, you know, a buffet thing, you know. Just, I'm sure they had something to greet people, you know, they had a long

journey.

DALLETT: So was there any time on the Island where somebody said, "Okay, that's it, you're in, you passed your medical." Or how did you know?

CRANFORD: We knew, I guess my mother knew that we stayed together, we weren't separated. Um, I only remember one family being separated. But they said, you know, different trips, and people used to talk about there were many families, they, you know, they could go home and take care of whatever was wrong and they could join them later. But some families just, uh, couldn't bear to part. Everybody did, well, you know, what was best for them.

DALLETT: So then did your father come to meet you?

CRANFORD: No. (she laughs) And that was a, well, you know, there was no communication at those, and I'm sure some people had maybe somebody come to meet them, that they lived near New York. From Bridgeport to New York was a long way at that time.

DALLETT: Your father was in Bridgeport at that time?

CRANFORD: He was in Bridgeport and he had an apartment for us and he was in a store and we just had, we knew who these people were, neighbors. He had mentioned in the letter. And we just happened to come to the store, it was near a church. He must have described it. And we stopped in and there he was. And he took us home and, uh, my husband is going to laugh, don't tell this one. You know, uh, what are you going to feed a family first thing, especially a man. He had cooked. So we had hotdogs. But, you know, later on, when they had the words, "First thing you gave us hot dogs. In America you have chicken, steaks, everybody lives so beautiful and we had hot dogs." And in years, we had picnics, the grandchildren, we talk, and she relished that hot dog. It's funny. So, and it wasn't long we went to school. The school was close by and my mother went to work and my mother went to school right off, and became a citizen, went on trips. She was a, she was a go-getter.

DALLETT: So she picked up her English in these classes?

CRANFORD: She did, yes.

DALLETT: And you picked up yours in public school?

CRANFORD: School, yeah. And we came home, we didn't talk Slavish long at all because in learning English we kind of killed the other language so to speak, and it helped her and she learned. And, oh, I loved learning the American language. I loved everything about it. I loved going to school. I loved that flag.

DALLETT: Was it really so different? Tell me about how it felt for a little girl to . . .

CRANFORD: Little girl. I wasn't a little girl. I was ten and I was so big and I had to be at the end of the, you know, at the end of the room because they couldn't see the teacher or the flag because of me. And, um, my mother told me to put something on, hide your arms with something long so they won't see your skinny arms. See, it's just the opposite now. (she laughs) So, anyway, I enjoyed school. But I, I guess I stayed in kindergarten to get my feel of the language, customs. I don't think I, no, I wasn't there long. And I would pass two, three grades at a time. And I was proud of myself. And my mother would go to work . . .

DALLETT: What did your mother do?

CRANFORD: She was an assembler for Westinghouse.

DALLETT: And your father, what was he doing here?

CRANFORD: Uh, I guess he did carpentry.

DALLETT: So, when you saw him he was speaking English, right?

CRANFORD: Pretty good, he, you know, he was going to be proud, you know, "Hey, I speak English," you, you know. He wasn't going to put that over on my mother long. She learned and she was teaching him. (she laughs) Right? And she was teaching him and, of course, when he came here he went to New Jersey. I think he went to Pennsylvania. Ah, he was always anxious to learn, you know, about this wonderful country and so he would have more to tell us. And then we, uh, we went to New Jersey one time because, to see these people, and getting on the subways (she laughs) we got lost. You know, you go in one door and we couldn't remember, we went to the police station and I guess we spoke a little bit at that time, so they got us reunited.

DALLETT: Did you start playing ball?

CRANFORD: I played ball. I want you to know my granddaughter was a famous basketball star in New England.

DALLETT: Really?

CRANFORD: Yeah. I love all sports, anyway, but I saw that ball and the way she bounced it and turned around. Well, I made sure I got a dress that was going to go out. And I tell that to my children and they say, "Nana, tell us more." But I loved that and that tammy. I loved it. And I thought, you know, I never saw that in Europe, well, you know, I was sort of companion to these people that had a girl. And, uh, we would go down an incline and pick strawberries and just eat them, you know, no pesticides or nothing. Everything was fresh. You didn't have sugar. The milk was delicious. Apples tasted different. You got used to all that difference, you know, when you came here, but it was different. I don't know why, maybe the climate. But, uh, then I got my first Confirmation. And you didn't go out and buy a dress, you, uh, somebody, you had borrowed from somebody. So where I was staying I borrowed a dress and I was so happy to

go to. I romped to go church and I stepped over a puddle and I got the dress all dirty. (they laugh) And, but I, but I made it anyway. But we never went to school there. I guess there was no, no law to make you go to school. They, uh, just go to work and watch the chickens, cut the pumpkins and one thing and another. I wouldn't say it was hard work, just to keep you busy, and what you did the other people didn't have to do. Everything was farm. They had nice homes.

DALLETT: So you were living with this family and . . .

CRANFORD: This family during the time that my father went. So each would sort of earn his own way, you see, their upkeep, because there's no way you could all stay in one place, and who's going to support you, you know. To feed each mouth as a, you know, was an expense.

DALLETT: While you were doing this did you have a fantasy of what coming to this country was going to be like?

CRANFORD: No, I just played every day. No, I didn't. I was happy. I was happy to come. We didn't have any friends. See, you didn't grow up like here you make

friends and even when you're young you're, you always remember that, friends. And, uh, I don't ever recall any friends, but when we, the first night we were here and some people came in and they were talking at this big table. All the adults and my brother and my sister and I went in the corner and he said, "The first thing I'm doing is getting out of here. We're getting out." He didn't like it. "We are going back." So that they wouldn't hear it. Oh, he was, he's, he loves everything. When I write to him, we have one living relative and I write to them sometimes. And they have an interpreter to read it because I can write Slavish but, uh, I'm sure, you know, I never went to school so it would be kind of not up to date. So I write to him and I tell him, it doesn't interest him.

DALLETT: That is the end of side one of interview number 081.

END OF SIDE ONE

BEGINNING OF SIDE TWO

DALLETT: This is the beginning of side two of interview number 081. When you settled in Bridgeport were there, was there a sense of, uh, of a community that you could

fit into?

CRANFORD: Yes.

DALLETT: Tell me about that.

CRANFORD: Bridgeport was a community of immigrants at that time though the others had been here. And, uh . . .

DALLETT: Where, primarily, were the people coming from?

CRANFORD: Well, in our area it was from Yugoslavia, a few. There were Hungarians and there, maybe a few, very few Italians, but I would say it was a Hungarian and, uh, Yugoslav community. And those were the two churches we had there, see, so that's how . . .

DALLETT: So there was continuity there, you could go to the churches.

CRANFORD: Yeah, everybody got together and, you know, never lonesome, or, you know, everybody wanted to better themselves, go to work. And when they got better they'd go out in the suburbs and buy a house and that's what we did, too. And everybody was self-sufficient. Nobody, uh, there was no welfare, there was no social security. Nobody, everybody was proud

and, uh, determined because if word ever got out you didn't make it, you'd go home and you would be a shame to your country. Everybody wanted, worked hard to make good.

DALLETT: Did other people from your village where you were from come later, once you were settled here?

CRANFORD: No, we never met anybody who came from our, well, they came, maybe, uh, you know, like say from New York or Massachusetts, like that. You didn't know them, but we knew it was, uh, 'cause Yugoslavia is big.

DALLETT: And did your mother, did she continue baking in the same style?

CRANFORD: Oh, yeah, everybody did. Oh. Sunday you ate. Sundays you ate like a king. During the week you made do. And they made do. You didn't go to the store like here, shopping bags. If you bought one bag it lasted you a week, okay. And it was, it was, still, Bridgeport was, I would say, rural. People had chickens in the outskirts or rabbits and, you know, people. Potatoes and noodles and you had a

meal that doesn't compare today. And, you know, it was, uh, filling. Stick to your ribs.

DALLETT: Ah, tell me, what was your name when you came through when you were ten?

CRANFORD: Ah, when, M-I-M-I. Mimi.

DALLETT: Mimi.

CRANFORD: P-I-N-T-O-R-I-C-H.

DALLETT: Pintorich?

CRANFORD: Yeah.

DALLETT: And did you have, uh, you didn't have any name change at all at Ellis Island? Your mother didn't go through any change?

CRANFORD: No, no, no.

DALLETT: And how did it become Millie from Mimi?

CRANFORD: Well, when I went to school, uh, they couldn't, nobody was called Mimi at that time so they figured they'd just label me Minnie and I went along, I didn't care. So they told me what my name was and I

kept writing it down every time I had to sign my name. I guess when I got to work, which was at an early age, I said I was sixteen, I was fifteen. And I, I changed it. I didn't change it legally but everything legal is, uh, since, you know, social security, everything. I named it that.

DALLETT: So you were saying how it got from Minnie to Millie.

CRANFORD: Yeah. And, uh, it just stayed that way.

DALLETT: I'm sorry. I, I'm confused. It stayed which way?

CRANFORD: Millie.

DALLETT: Oh, okay. Okay. When did you get citizenship?

CRANFORD: Well, the, the year we came here was the last year you automatically became a citizen if you were a minor, see? But my mother had to go to school and get hers, see? But we were minors so we just . . .

DALLETT: Because your father was here, and he had his papers.

CRANFORD: My father was here, yeah.

DALLETT: Do you have any of those original documents, would

you have any of those? Passport, visa, citizenship papers?

CRANFORD: Well, my mother I guess had them. And whether or not my sister has all that I don't know if she still had them. My mother's gone. Thirteen years.

DALLETT: And what was, what was the job you got when you were fifteen and you had to say you were sixteen?

CRANFORD: I was an assembler.

DALLETT: Where your mother was?

CRANFORD: She no longer worked there. She had been ill. So they laid her off. That's how things were. No union. And, uh, I didn't want to go to school. We moved from Bridgeport to Fairfield. We bought a home. And it was, no matter whether you were smart, or how big or small you were, when you moved automatically, uh, went one grade behind. And, you know, I was anxious for everything. So, gee, I'm gonna be that much older. I went through all this before. I couldn't go to school. And I stayed home and the truant officer was a State Police. And he would come. The sight of him! But I wouldn't open

that door. And one day my father was home. I said, "Pop, tell him I'm not going to school anymore." (they laugh) And he never came back. So I went and I got to the Brian Electric. It was a subsidiary of Westinghouse. I walked all the way to Bridgeport and I asked for a job and because, you had to have working papers, and because I was tall I didn't, they didn't ask for one. And she said, "Yeah, could you start right away?" Well, I got so scared. I said, "I can't. I haven't got an apron." I walked all the way back to Fairfield. Got my mother's apron. Went back and worked. Well, we didn't work hard, there were a lot of other women my age there. They were just starting the key socket. And then I assembled it and then I would inspect it. Anyway, there were a group of us, an assembly line. And that night I went to the corner and I got the bus. My mother walked to work in the morning and at night she got the bus. And I got on the bus before her and I sat. And she came on. And, "Ma, Ma," you know, she looked at me. "My goodness. What are you doing here? People coming from work. What are you doing here far away from Fairfield?" So I got up and gave her a seat and I says, "Ma, I'm working." And she wouldn't talk,

you know, you don't talk just like this, you wait till you get home so everybody don't have to hear your business. (they laugh) So I worked and I gave her my first envelope, so everything was all right. She saw I was determined not to go to school. But, uh, nobody else went at that time either. They didn't even finish school. High school was for somebody that was going to normal school to be a teacher or pursue their education. But people in our class, we were happy to go to work, to get work and help support, you know, and be better, get better, to be, have a better living.

DALLETT: So is that when, when you started working? Or when was it?

CRANFORD: Yeah, that was when I started, for thirty-nine years. But I took time off. I had three daughters. Went back to work. And I retired from there.

DALLETT: And you never went back to, uh, to Yugoslavia for a visit?

CRANFORD: Never, no. Never. When my mother died she said to sometime to write to them. I didn't know how she

thought I was going to write, but I wrote a little bit because to write in, uh, Slovenian is just the way you say it. An H is an H. There is no PH, you know, like, the way we, we make it an F. It's very simple, and I did it once, but I didn't do, anyway, it was too much of an effort for me and I thought it looked like bad, you know, like say a bad English (?) if you don't spell correctly. So then I would do this and I would always send a few dollars so they would give the translator something, or whatever, so they could get a stamp and write back to me, which they did. And the letters to them were special and I would always send a picture of, um, you know, of our house or Easter, Christmas or the children. And they, every time they would always say that everybody in America always smiles. We do. And I said, "Do you know why? We always say 'cheese.'" (she laughs) That's our secret. But we do all smile. People there are more serious. Maybe not so today. They, they have, they have American Universities all over. So they learn. People you see on TV, they speak English regardless of what country it is, and so, um . . . That's why I never have that desire to go back. I watched the Olympics. I was proud and I

wrote to them about it. We had ours, I told them.
"Did you see that beautiful Olympics we had?" "We
sure did," they said.

DALLETT: Okay, I think that's all the questions I need to ask
you. Unless there's any, one further thing you want
to say?

CRANFORD: I'm just happy to be here.

DALLETT: Thank you.

CRANFORD: My pleasure.

DALLETT: That is the end of side two and the end of interview
number 081 with Millie Cranford.