

NPS-1

ALFRED MOELLER

BIRTH DATE:	ABOUT 1905
INTERVIEW DATE:	AUGUST 15, 1973
RUNNING TIME:	48:50
INTERVIEWER:	MARGO NASH
RECORDING ENGINEER:	UNKNOWN
INTERVIEW LOCATION:	ELLIS ISLAND
TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY:	UNKNOWN
TRANSCRIPT RECONCIVED BY:	PETER HOM, 3/95
TRANSCRIPT REVIEWED BY:	CATHY NAUGHTON, 3/1995

GERMANY, 1924

AGE 19

SHIP: THURINGIA

PORT: HAMBURG

RESIDENCE:

- **GERMANY:**
- **USA: North Bergen, NJ?**

Oral Historian's Note:

This interview was conducted during a tour of the abandoned immigrant processing buildings on Ellis Island. Various people are also present including Mr. Moeller's wife and National Park Service Ranger John House. Ellis Island Oral History Project, 3/24/1995, Peter Hom.

NASH: Today is August 15, 1973, and we have just arrived at Ellis Island. The boat is pulling in and we can see an old abandoned ferry; it's gray and half in the water. And the sound that you hear in the background is the radio of the captain. And today we are going to interview Mr. Albert Moeller, who arrived at Ellis Island in the year 1924, at the age of nineteen. Mr. Moeller has a yellow hard hat on to protect him from falling debris because the Island has been abandoned and the buildings are in a state of gross disrepair. We have had to sign releases that state that no matter what happens, whether we have an attack of poison ivy or we're hit by the falling brick, that the United States Government is not responsible. We are walking through densely overgrown paths. It's like finding an overgrown castle, an enchanted castle in the woods, but there's no sleeping beauty.

VOICE OFF MIKE: It's like going into a...

NASH: Mr. Moeller, do you remember any of this?

MOELLER: I don't remember it looking this way, I assure you. Right now, what we are looking at is utter desertion and demolition in the last stages so it seems to me.

NASH: Mr. John House is our guide today, and he is opening an old wooden door, and now he has to kick it because it is stuck.

MOELLER: Totally unbelievable.

NASH: The first thing we see is an old dress form. And everything is rubble.

VOICE OFF MIKE: Would you say...

HOUSE: We'll go down to the main hall.

MOELLER: Will you give us a slight warning while we are walking in the dark? ...having a guide by our side who knows his way around, otherwise no one should attempt to go through this deserted Island alone. It would be a wonderful spot for a Hitchcock movie, but certainly not for ordinary folks like my wife and me.

HOUSE: Okay, here we go in the main hall. The dark stairs. Can you see okay?

VOICE OFF MIKE: All this was last...

MOELLER: We had originally hoped to bring one of our granddaughters along, but at the last minute it was decided that she shouldn't come and I am very glad now, looking through this deserted building, that she didn't. It would leave a most horrible memory for her of what her grandfather went through, and it wasn't anything like it, of course, when I came here. Well, we have now arrived in the main Reception Hall, where all the immigrants were brought in from a ferry boat, or a lighter, which had taken them off any other ships on which they arrived from Europe and other places in the world. And here they would be asked to wait in a line and go through the various processing procedures that were a part of the immigrant's lot. Now, I must

tell you right now that not all immigrants in the year 1924 had to go through Ellis Island. It was a shock to me as a youngster at the age of nineteen, but after having passed the Statue of Liberty on the 26th of December, 1924, on a rather small passenger ship of the Hamburg-American Line, its name was the "Thuringia," and on the ship was three classes. Tourist class in those days was still an unknown entity, but there was a first class, there was a second class, and a third class. Altogether, probably three, four hundred people on board as passengers, and of which about one-third were third-class passengers. I was one among those. The reason I didn't travel second class was very obvious. A friend of mine had provided funds for this trip to the land of great opportunity where milk and honey flows, as we thought in those days, and he had bought me a second-class ticket, but when I received it in Hamburg, where I was born, right outside the borders of Hamburg that is, I decided that I needed twenty-five dollars to show to the immigration officials upon arrival because I had no funds to speak of, and so I traveled third class and I was refunded the difference between second and third class and this was just a very good idea, but it had its drawbacks. When we arrived on the, as I said, on the 26th of December, on a very, very cold winter day and the passenger ship was fastened to the pier, at Pier 84, I believe it was, at the foot of 44th Street in Manhattan, the first-class passengers were asked to leave the ship, the second-class passengers followed, then the announcement went around that all third-class passengers were please to remain on board overnight, they would be fed on the ship and be given a breakfast the following morning, at which time a lighter would come to take us over to Ellis Island. And so there was this slight feeling among many of us that, isn't it strange that here we are coming to a country where there is complete equality, but not quite so for the newly arrived immigrants. So third-class passengers had to come to Ellis Island. And none of us knew exactly what this would mean. Well, what it did mean was that first of all, the immigration officials wanted to be sure that we

knew where we were going after we arrived. We had, of course, been sponsored by someone in the United States in order to get here in the first place, but there had to be some proof shown that someone was either going to pick us up or that we had some destination that we were going to go to. Then the other thing that they wanted to know was whether we had twenty-five dollars, and the third thing they wanted to know was, could we read the English language. And so each of us were asked to read a small paragraph out of a book that the official would show us. And then came the last step and this, of course is most familiar to people who have served in the armed forces, namely that there was a physical inspection awaiting us, the ladies on one side, the men on the other, and then came the great moment when we stood in front of the immigration official who was a doctor, who examined us for venereal diseases, and if there was one who had a venereal disease, why that particular person would not be allowed on land. And there again, I had my peculiar feeling about the strange separation that venereal disease among first and second-class passengers apparently was acceptable, but third-class passengers' venereal diseases were not. Well, this was one of those introductions which one never forgets, but I must say it has long, long ago been completely erased by the tremendous opportunities that the United States have offered me. All the dreams I had about making my way in the world have been completely fulfilled in a country that has been the grandest host to me and also been the fountainhead for the founding of a family together with an American born girl, born in New Jersey, and we together have raised a family of two children and they in turn have married so that today here I am at the age of seventy, excuse me, sixty eight, I'm gonna, getting a little ahead of myself, the age of sixty eight, being the grandfather of two girls and a boy on one side, namely those of my daughter, and two young boys on the side of our son, and our wonderful daughter-in-law. Now getting back once more to the immigration part. I had forgotten in telling before about the various steps that one goes through on Ellis Island. The

one thing that I noticed, and this was an individual thing, my name happens to be Moeller, M-O-E-L-L-E-R, but in German it would be M-Ö with the dots over the O, which in German would be called the umlaut, so I arrived with a German passport that had the dots over the O. And the immigration official said to me, "We don't have such a thing in this country, so your name will be entered now as 'M-O-L-L-E-R.'" And I said, "Well, I protest to that because the dots stand actually for an E, and it is supposed to give you a somewhat different sound from O, it should be pronounced "Moeller" not "Moller" and so I would prefer if you would introduce the letter E after the O, and this would come very close to my original spelling." He says, "We don't have such combinations of vowels so your name will be M-O-L-L-E-R." And so it was. And later on when I decided that this country was the very country I wanted to stay in, not only as a visitor, I had an immigration visa, but that does not necessarily mean people come here to stay. Sometimes they come to work for a few years and then go back to their own home country, but after three years I was completely convinced that I was never going to go back home and make my way in the world right here. And so I applied for citizenship papers and you had a certain waiting period, I think it was five years in those days, and then in the year 1931, seven years after I arrived in this country, I was sworn in as an American citizen. And that to me is also a historical spot just as much as Ellis Island is.

NASH: Where was that?

MOELLER: It was the old post office building which has been taken down long ago, which was directly across the street from where the Woolworth Building stands on the corner of Broadway and Park Place, just directly south of the City Hall of New York where our mayor functions. The building was the most incongruous looking architectural structure and it was a blessing to see it down because the whole approach to City Hall is now a much more

magnificent one than it was in those days, however, when the immigration process was completed, for me by really being sworn in as a full citizen, I walked out of that post office building very proudly to be a part of the American country, the United States. Another little sidelight on how an immigrant gets through the lines here, not all of it was done just exactly the way as the officials would like it to be because twenty-five dollars were not available to everybody as they arrived, and I can assure you that a certain twenty-five dollars were passed along from one passenger to another to help those out who didn't have it. And this had to be done with a quick motion of the hand so no one would get caught doing this, but I do know that this was part of the whole procedure, and immigrants help each other into these kind of trying moments when they all want to get off Ellis Island and into the United States and so I recalled this well. Another thing that...

NASH: Excuse me, were these people who were helping one another out members of the same ethnic group?

MOELLER: I wouldn't believe that they were necessarily. I think once you get thrown together on board a ship, as long as you can speak the same language and these people were mostly from various parts of either Germany or Austria and other parts where or let's say Swiss people who could speak German and they could, of course, converse with each other without trouble and there was a camaraderie among all of us, in the a... whether they were young boys or young girls, we all felt like a group of people having gone through the same experience. And I must say that the trip from Europe was an extremely interesting one. It also had its beginning through a doctor. In a, I, for instance, had to go to an American doctor in Hamburg who examined me before I could get my visa, so there was a preliminary inspection. And the other thing I referred to before is sort of a double check, I guess, just to make sure. But anyway, as I walked onto

the gangplank of the steamship Thuringia in Hamburg, the gangplank which let the passengers into the third-class compartments, on both sides of the gangplank stood two officials, one official on each side, and as the passengers went by and most of them were carrying at least two light pieces of hand luggage and if they had any trunks, I had one steamer trunk that had been sent to the ship before and was already in my cabin and I didn't have to carry that, but the hand luggage, of course, you bring with you. So, I was laden down, my hands were down, but one of the officials immediately pushed my hat and it was a cold winter day and he pushed my hat back. Not so that it was knocked off my head, but just away from the forehead and I said, "Why do you do that?" He said, "We do that to make sure there are no lice in the hair." So this was a... gives you another little feeling of how the steamship lines felt about the passengers that traveled on third-class. They were not quite sure whether they had to take certain precautionary measures to protect the ship against such individuals. This did not, however, stop some people from getting past this line because after we got to the Narrows of the Bay of New York, between Brooklyn and Staten Island, we had to drop anchor and this was true for every ship at that time because at that point the health inspection goes on board to inspect every passenger. And while they did that they discovered that there were certain individuals on board who were infested with lice and they were separated immediately and a fumigation chamber which existed on this steamship and which was on the aft deck of the boat, on top, was activated with steam and all of their belongings were taken there, their clothing off their bodies and they had to stay in there and they had to go into a bathroom and be scrubbed down and cleaned completely while all their belongings were fumigated to make sure that these lice weren't getting out of hand. Another thing that is kind of interesting about the trip was that when you travel in the middle of winter, on a rather small ship, the one that I was on and you hit a storm in mid-ocean as we did, most passengers become very, very seasick. The

smaller the ship the more active the motion of the ship when the waves are very large. I was very lucky, perhaps because I was born along the seashore or rather along the River Elbe and had been on small boats many times as a kid. It didn't bother me, but most passengers were desperately ill during this voyage. Well, this wasn't so bad, the worst thing was that the captain announced one fine day that the steering mechanism was completely out of order and he could no longer steer the ship by means of the automatic controls from his bridge. He had to relay messages from the bridge to the stern of the ship where they had an old-fashioned large wheel that could operate the rudder by hand. And this in a tremendous storm where the sailors had to be lashed onto the steering wheel, three or four of them and by means of several megaphones which carried the message from the captain's bridge to the men at the stern, they steered the ship by hand for several days. And we had left Hamburg on the 12th of December and normally would have expected to reach New York ten days later. Well, we finally got here on the 26th and we had a four day delay simply because of being like a cork on the ocean for several days until they got everything back in shape again. This was one of these little extra experiences that a young immigrant really looks back on with a tremendous amount of fun in retrospect.

NASH: Now we are in the mezzanine section in what used to be detention rooms where immigrants were held perhaps pending physical examination or to make sure that they met the qualifications of the time to admit them legally as immigrants. We are walking along a balcony from where you can look down into the main hall. It's covered with soil and bits of broken tile. And off the balcony there are several rooms lined with tile which have sinks and tables.

MOELLER: ...and so forth, which is all very particular, of course, when you go through a physical examination and then if you are detained here, you undoubtedly

are kept in one of these buildings here for days and days and they had to provide sleeping quarters and everything else. (Inaudible) kitchen somewhere here where they cooked for everybody.

NASH: Ah, dead pigeon.

MOELLER: Watch this here, there's a dead pigeon here.

NASH: Excuse me.

VOICE OFF MIKE: In the movie "The Sound of Music," In that movie, did they show Ellis Island because they came through here?

MOELLER: Could we have a look at this and see what the instructions are beyond the wall? John...

NASH: Um, the Trapp family.

MOELLER: Let's see what this says. It might be interesting to see. Here's some instructions probably. Could I just have that. Thank you. Let's see, this is, of course, Ellis Island to give you the alarm when there is a fire, the fire whistle blows in a sequence to form a code and repeats the code sequence a total of four times... the code sequences the first number in the code indicates the Island One, Two, Three, as the case may be. The second number indicates the floor except cellar boxes are indicated name, same as for first floor by figure one. The third number indicates a particular box as noted on the location. For example, the alarm is turned in from the box number one, three, two, located on Island One on the third floor of the main building near the northeast tower, the fire whistle would sound thus, boo, boo boo boo, boo boo, four times. And here you have all these various locations indicated. And it is interesting to know what kind of

places are there. Here, well, they have a covered way, they have a southwest corner, they have an extreme east end, they have something near boiler room door, a north porch, a corridor near kitchen, they have a control office, they have a northeast tower at stairs, they have a dishwasher area, commissary storeroom, a southwest corner at stairs, a school, now that's interesting, isn't it? Then southeast tower at stairs, then there's a carpenter shop, northeast tower at stairs, northwest corner at stairs, west wing corridor, control post, northwest corner at stairs, northeast tower at stairs, northwest tower at stairs, southwest corner at stairs, covered way near laundry and then again near kitchen, near freight elevator, so they had an elevator here, Building Number One at main stairs, Administration Building main stairs, Building Number Two at east stairs, again a covered way, corridor north, corridor south, Administration Building main stairs, extreme west end and there is an outside kitchen, outside ward number twenty three, extreme east end lobby and covered way, a movie projection booth. Now there's something that's also interesting. West end center and east end. As I look over the whole locations for the various fire alarms, I am impressed by the fact that most stairs are at northeast tower or southeast tower. Well, if you approach Ellis Island and you see little turrets all over, whoever the architect was, don't know, but he certainly had a great admiration for turrets and I presume that these towers indicate in that manner, that they are actually these little turrets and right there must be the stairwell that goes from one floor to the next.

VIOCE OFF MIKE: The stairway is right here in fact.

MOELLER:

OTHER VOICE: Cornerstones. I don't have any idea where that would be located.

MOELLER: What can we see here?

VOICE OFF MIKE: I think there are some nursery buildings, dormitory rooms or such...this hallway.

MOELLER: You notice that there are these covered ways. The covered ways, of course, mean that you are going from one building to another because it isn't just one main building, as we know.

NASH: Look at that desk, beautiful wicker desk.

MOELLER: Yes, yes.

VOICE OFF MIKE: Somebody took the top off.

MOELLER: Yes, it is really a weary, a weird thing, isn't it? Terribly...

NASH: A weary looking wicker desk.

MOELLER: Yes, it is a weird thing to come into a building that is actually still sound, as far as one can feel it by the good solid masonry construction. And the tiles and there are many, many tiles. Practically every room that is used for some kind of cleaning purpose is tiled and the tiles are still in good shape.

VOICE OFF MIKE: It looks more like an apartment, furniture here.

VOICE OFF MIKE: Furniture here...

MOELLER: Ya.

MOELLER: Let it be noted that whatever we have looked at so far, the windows are always barred with rather heavy wire, and there must always have existed, must have existed the possibility that some people who were detained on Ellis Island would want to make an escape and no doubt, some criminals crossed the Island were kept here and held here and as I was told by one of our attendants here, they do have a small number of cells somewhere in this building for that very purpose, but even the other were all barred. It might have other purposes besides. Not only that they wanted to go through them, but that they might have wanted to throw things to each other that could have been used in order to bring proof of their identity or passports could be passed that way. So there was a very good reason for putting this very heavy wire mesh on every window that you look out of.

VOICE OFF MIKE: (Inaudible)

VOICE OFF MIKE: These are quite different from the other areas.

MOELLER: You might also notice that here is a, to me it was called shelter at one time and here we are past World War Two a good many years and I wonder if at one time or another during World War Two this was used for some purpose and for that reason that they had given some indication as to where people could take shelter in case of some aerial attack.

END SIDE ONE
BEGINNING OF SIDE TWO

VOICE OFF MIKE: Okay, go through here.

VOICE OFF MIKE: When you get out of the bathtub, everything else, I guess.

MOELLER: And, or I should say, in the best Watergate tradition, to the best of my recollection, the meal we had was on board the ship before we left in the morning on the 27th to get to Ellis Island and then we had, we were off the Island, that is I was and most of those who came with me were off the Island by noon and I don't think we had anything to eat here. (break in tape)

MOELLER: Is it playing now?

NASH: No, you can talk now.

MOELLER: Another interesting recollection is the type of things that people will bring from their home country when they arrive as immigrants, people of the poorer classes who first of all are very much attached to their featherbeds when they come from certain parts in Europe. And as they had to open some of these bags in order to show to the customs officials what they were bringing in, I noticed that there were quite a number of people who had half their steamer trunks filled with feather bedding which, of course, made for a pretty difficult spacing for all the other things that also had to go into the trunk. In addition to that, there were people who were so fond of certain types of foods, especially people from farming stock, who liked to eat smoked things, especially if the smoking of the pork was done on their own farm and so nothing would be a better remembrance of their home life than to bring along smoked sausages or a small smoked ham and the customs officials in those days were not as strict as they are now, so that people were allowed to bring these things and then take them along. And since I traveled on a German ship, the interest was largely in sausages and things of that sort and I am sure many of them later on, those who stayed in New York, discovered there was such a place as Yorkville, where the German element has

located over many, many years and you find a half a dozen pork stores which have exactly that type of food for sale which these people had brought from Europe. I remember only one thing that I brought along and that was smoking tobacco. I had a certain kind that I was very, very fond of. I was only nineteen, but I was smoking a pipe in those days. I have given it up since. But this was a Turkish, very mild tobacco and I had it in a large tin can and when the customs officials saw the can, he wanted to know what was inside and I said, "Well, help yourself." So he opened the can and as he opened the can, all this very light, fluffy Turkish tobacco spilled all over my shirts and everything else. So he was a little apologetic about it, but nevertheless, he was convinced I had no contraband with me. This is just one more of those little ideas. Having been asked to give a talk on tape, I think the human interest, especially of the person who actually has gone through this, is perhaps not without some value to others who want to hear about it. And that is, what prompts a youngster nineteen years old to come to the United States? And I have already indicated that there was a great spirit of adventure and because I was born near the, in Hamburg where traffic of, by boat is the common thing, that you get the urge to come, but that is not the only thing. 1922, Germany experienced an inflation, the like of which no other country has even seen since and I hope no other country ever will. At that time I was an orphan boy, my parents died when I was very young. My mother died when I was ten years old. My father died when I was eight years old and so I was brought up by relatives until I buried the relatives who brought me up and then I was on my own by the time I was about sixteen years old. Fortunately, I had an older brother who was nine years older and who had just married, so that I could move in with him and stay with him. But this was another reason. You felt that you had to be on your own as quickly as possible and, although it had it had been my hope as a child to become a doctor, I was always interested in medicine, there was no money left to continue school beyond high school and go to the university because the inflation

had wiped out every cent I had. An orphan is not allowed to manage his own money. This has to be managed by some officials who were appointed by estate, by the state itself. And they in turn are not allowed to invest any estate that a youngster might have and anything that could be considered a speculation. So all my funds which had been left to me by my parents had been invested in what they considered very safe investments. Well they happened to be state bonds and city bonds and bonds of the State of Hungary and things of that sort, all of which were about the worst investment anyone can possibly have. If they had only bought American dollars and left them there, I would have been able to go to college and get myself a good education, but this was all out of the window in about one year. So I got myself an education, what is known in Europe as an apprenticeship, a commercial apprenticeship. When you are apprenticed in a commercial firm in Hamburg, you really get no money at all except a little Christmas bonus in the order of twenty-five dollars the first year and maybe fifty dollars the second year and a hundred dollars perhaps the third year. After that time, you were supposed to have learned enough about clerking in an office that you can then hire yourself out as an office employee. And this is about as far as I had gotten with my education when I had this great urge to leave Hamburg and come here. So here is another good reason why the United States beckoned in my particular instance and my wishes certainly have been fulfilled. Again, I looked around for jobs as I arrived in this country. I had a few introductions because I knew some business firms in Hamburg who had connections in New York, I tried all of these various introductions, but people would say, "Well, yes, maybe sometime and call again on another occasion." But I had a very definite feeling that no one was particularly interested in giving me a job. And again, my one and only friend in this country, who had preceded me and who had some money and was able to advance the cost of the trip, he again, had some people on the Island of Staten Island, a company that was making pigments and dye colors and he sent me there

and they had an opening for a clerk in the office. And this is how I got started. And I stayed there for two years and then I found out that the boys who were making good money in that company were the salesmen and I asked if I could not become a salesman, but that would have made me twenty-one years old and they said, "Well, by the time you are twenty-five or twenty-six people will probably buy from you, but you are much too young to try. Stay with us and eventually we might make you into a salesman." Well, I wasn't going to wait that long and I looked around and I finally found another job. And this, by sheer accident, landed me into the business of supplying perfume raw materials to the cosmetic soap and toiletry industries. And so I learned from the bottom up how this business is conducted. Eventually, I had the good fortune of marrying a lovely, lovely girl from Hackensack, New Jersey, of all places, and this enabled me to settle down. Instead of having just a little bachelor quarters, we were able to get a very, very small little house in Summit, New Jersey and my first thought was to establish a laboratory in the basement so I could experiment with perfume raw materials and eventually get myself to the point where I could become a perfumer. Well, all this happened. Eventually, the company that I was working for was bought up by the largest chemical firm in the United States, the E. I. DuPont Denimor Company in Wilmington, and they gave me a laboratory in New York where I could work as a perfumer and also enough time so I could call on the industry and call on people who were buyers of perfume oils. All of this led up to the happiest moment in my life, when the DuPont Company was gradually deciding to disassociate itself from this phase of their business and I wanted to go into my own business. And so I had met another man who also was born not very far from where I was born and he had a small business making perfume compounds, which were sold by him in South America. And I thought it would be good for him to have another leg under his business and supply the American industry. And, of course, I had a good many contacts through DuPont to the American industry. And with

DuPont now getting out of the way and no longer calling on the trade, quite a few friends and customers decided to buy from us, although we were very, very small at the beginning. And so I joined this man as a partner and for many, many years we worked together and built up a business which over all these years has grown and grown and today my partner is retired. I have bought him out and he is now in full retirement, enjoying life. And I'm at sixty-eight still so much interested in this fragrance field and have also a son-in-law who is as interested as I am in this particular business, that we have all intentions of continuing a little industry which was started by my partner, incidentally, started in New York on Stone Street on the very spot on which the first city hall of the City of New York stood, namely the old Stautaus of the Dutch settlers when New York was called New Amsterdam. And we always thought that was a very good omen for our business when you realize what has become out of the City of New York from the early days of New Amsterdam. We thought we couldn't do any wrong by starting from the same spot and building up a business there. And now that I look back of all these years of what I would say, a modest, but a very satisfying business success, there is much to be said for coming through Ellis Island and getting the kind of hello that I finally got after I reached the shores. Thank you so much.

NASH: Thank you, Mr. Moeller. (break in tape) Now we are going down the stairs and we have to go by flashlight because it's very dark. (pause)

VOICES OFF MIKE: (Inaudible)

NASH: Now we are in the laundry and there are kind of long automatic ironing boards and great motors and it is all filthy and covered with dust. And there's a whole pile of dirty pillows.

VOICE OFF MIKE: (Inaudible)

NASH: Lots of kinds of mattresses strewn all over the floor.

VOICE OFF MIKE: (Inaudible)

NASH: There are these two very big machines that look kind of like wells and they say "American Humatic Extractor." I wonder what they were used for.

MOELLER: Isn't that a lovely word, instead of calling it a laundry dryer. (laughter)

VOICE OFF MIKE: (Inaudible)

NASH: There is a smell of mildew everywhere. (break in tape) There's a kind of a brick catacomb and we have been warned not to go inside because the Park Service has set traps for people who come and pillage. Now we are in an old railroad ticket office. Mr. Moeller has just found an old telephone directory. He is looking to see if his name is in it.

MOELLER: Well, indeed, look here. Listed on, in this old telephone directory is the name of Alfred H. Moeller with the address in New Jersey, 1312 Fifth Street, North Bergen, New Jersey. Ask operator for North Bergen, Union 79080. That is still my telephone number today. ...all these old drums here.

VOICE OFF MIKE: All these witnesses...

MOELLER: Well, I think this is very interesting. Here is left on an old iron drum, a little book. It's called "A Little Blue Book," Number 347 and the title of it is "A Guide to Stoicism." While I am sure that this is a very interesting thing and I wonder if I might personally keep this as a souvenir of the Island without offending the people who are going to restore everything here. I have a

particular interest because I belong to a small group of people, we call ourselves "Stoics," and we do write papers every winter. Each "Stoic" writes one about his particular avocation and his interest in reading. And here now I have, perhaps the making of another little Stoic paper based on this little booklet which I found here. It's still very neat here. There is that lovely word, release office. I hope that means when you are finally out to, out of the place on your way to Manhattan. There is a visitors room so people who are being retained on the Island for one reason or another can come here and visit. And there is also an Attorneys Interview Room which again may mean that people who have legal problems or would like to be properly represented so they can enter the United States under proper guidance of an attorney, they have a place where they can meet. There is also a spot indicated on this directory in this hallway which says, "Railroad Tickets," so people who have come this far and now need to take a railroad from here to other places in the United States, they will know just where they can apply and get them. Interestingly enough, it doesn't say airline tickets. Of course, this goes back to the days when people who came across here, I am sure, could not even afford it. Besides, when I crossed here, it was several years before a famous aviator, Lindbergh, had crossed the Atlantic, which I think he did in 1927. (break in tape)

NASH: We are looking out on a courtyard now, and there is an enormous tree covered with leaves, the entire trunk and the beautiful branches and the whole--and the ground is covered with ivy and fallen leaves and it is just lovely.

MOELLER: ...blowing over from New Jersey in great profusion. The spaces between the buildings, I don't know exactly what they are, but plain their little yellow flowers that look rather picturesque. (break in tape)

NASH: I seem to be in what is a deserted larder. And there are great rusty cans of carrot chips and green beans and Miriam's Fancy Sauerkraut. Now I am moving into a large room, and there are old bottles of prune juice and rusty doorknobs. And as usual the bits of broken crockery and tile and just old soil everywhere. There's an old shoe. Now we are walking out and we are facing the ferry that we first saw when we came in. Now we are coming into an enormous Rec Hall which has a, ah, there's a stage and two enormous paintings alongside the posenium, one of a sailor and one of a, I guess a captain holding a, holding a boat in his hands, very heavy no doubt. (break in tape) Old yellow draperies, ripped across the bottom and a huge fireplace. (break in tape) An old piano and the sound of a fire alarm just pulled, just making a very faint little noise, pulled by one of the people who is with us today. We keep walking down these very long hallways with many windows facing outside into the dense, dense gardens overgrown. I see an ancient fire extinguisher in the courtyard. (Break in tape) Now we have come to the sterilizing room where they no doubt sterilized the clothing as well as the people to guard against infectious diseases.

OTHER VOICE: ...down there at the morgue.

NASH: The what? The morgue. (break in tape) ...morgue like looking boxes which I am told were eight, eight boxes which were refrigerated – a vile of zinc sulfate granulated, which no doubt was used in the morgue procedures. We are going into another dark passage. We have just emerged from the hospital where there were – now we are out. It feel good to be in the sunshine and able to breath some fresh air. There's an old boat lying on it's, lying in it's back. It says the Ellis Island #2, an old rowboat. We are walking towards the pier now and we can see, we can see a tugboat pulling a barge crossing over the, kind of a small canal where the old, old ferry is resting on it's sort of askew. It's a very nice visit and perhaps we

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will come back some day. There is so much to see, it is like an enormous castle, but I think you can only take it in small doses because there is so much, so much history and so much, so much dust that...

END OF THE INTERVIEW