

NPS-133

EDUARDA A. CLIFFORD

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THE NETHERLANDS, 1935, 1940 and 1947

AGES UNKNOWN

TEMPLE: . . . interviewing Ms. Eduarda A. Clifford, here at Liberty Island. Ms. Clifford came to the United States in 1940, went back to Europe in 1946 for a visit, and returned in 1947. She had to go to Ellis Island for medical tests at that time. Okay, Ms. Clifford.

CLIFFORD: Yes.

TEMPLE: Can you come closer? Can you tell me where in Holland you are from.

CLIFFORD: I'm from Nymegen, that's N-Y-M-E-G-E-N, And it's a small place near the border of, a town in Holland near the border of Germany. But I went to Switzerland and lived there with my parents when I was only eight months old,

because my father was ill and we had to go to Switzerland.

TEMPLE: Okay. Why don't you tell me about the first time you came to the United States?

CLIFFORD: Uh, well, the very first time was in 1935 and I came here because I wanted to see the United States, and I went to the West Coast and back, and in 1936 I went back to Holland. But then in 1940 I decided that I'd better come here because I thought that the war would get to Holland this time, and Hitler would invade Holland, and he did invade Holland, and I arrived here from the southern part of France just one day before the invasion of Holland, actually the ninth of May, 1940.

TEMPLE: And there wasn't any blockade? I mean, your ship was able to get through?

CLIFFORD: Oh, yes. I came with the Rex from Genoa, Italy. And then when I arrived here and I found that Holland was in war, I immediately went to the Dutch consulate, and he sent me to the legation, the Netherlands legation in Washington to do, to work there, you know, being Dutch. So I worked all through the war

with the Dutch government. The Dutch government was in exile.

TEMPLE: Right.

CLIFFORD: It was in England. And also, in New York, I was staying, worked in New York with government agencies from Holland.

TEMPLE: So did you plan to go back to Holland after the war was over?

CLIFFORD: Well, uh, we did go back. But, of course, we had, mother and I had many friends and relatives in Holland, so we used to spend every two years we'd go on a vacation. I was working here, you see, and so I couldn't go as much as I wanted to Europe. But I did go often to Europe, backwards and forwards, on the Dutch ships, of course.

TEMPLE: But you never planned to go back to live?

CLIFFORD: No, because my mother, no. My mother decided she wanted to become an American citizen. This was in 1954. And I became a citizen along with her, you see. We decided we would become Americans, and so now we, my mother passed away, but I'm an American citizen here now.

TEMPLE: I see. Okay. So why don't you tell me about going back to Europe and then returning to the United States.

CLIFFORD: You mean in 1947?

TEMPLE: Right.

CLIFFORD: When I was taken to Ellis Island?

TEMPLE: Yes.

CLIFFORD: Well, it was, I was at the end of a trip. I'd done a lot of swimming and boating and all that in Norway and in Holland and so on, and I had had a thing in my right chest that I hadn't paid much attention to it. So when in August 1947 we were on board of the Fahnendam, the Fahnendam, coming back, on the Holland American Line, then I discovered I had a fever, and the doctor came, and the doctor said, from listening, that I had a pleurisy, and a very bad one. So I stayed in bed for the whole trip, and the doctor said he would have to tell the immigration officers here that I had a pleurisy, that I was ill. So when we landed in Hoboken, which was on the 25th of August 1947, the immigration officer came on board in my cabin and he said, "I'm sorry, lady, but I have

to take you to Ellis Island, because we have to see if you have TB. And since you're not a citizen, that's the law." So I was taken down on a stretcher and in an ambulance and so on, and we landed in Ellis Island around five in the afternoon. Immediately in the hospital, and I was put into the ward of, the single, the only ward I believe there is in Ellis Island, for women who are not contagious, who have non-contagious diseases. And so I stayed in Ellis Island seven weeks because I had what they called, I think they called it a wet pleurisy. Anyway, it had, I had liquid, I had, uh, there was some liquid in my lungs. And the doctors decided that it was better to, for me to stay there and, rather than be transported to New York. I mean, they first did all the tests, you know, for TB. And after twenty-four hours said, "You're quite free to go back to New York. But we would advise you, it would better for you to stay where you are because we can take care of you here, and it would be dangerous for you to be transported anyway." So I stayed there for seven weeks in the hospital on Ellis Island. And in the beginning there was only in the ward a young girl from an island somewhere in the Atlantic

that belongs to Portugal. And she had apparently seven kind of worms. And the doctors told me that they had gradually eliminated all but two, but that these two were terribly difficult to get rid of, and that she couldn't get in, she couldn't, well, wouldn't be allowed into America if she had these worms. Her parents and her were all right, and her brothers. But this girl was beautiful, but she had sort of an arrested development and the doctor said it was because she had all these worms. She was about nineteen, and she was playing like a child of twelve or nine or something like that, with a ball, you know. And very timid, very, very timid. So she stayed, she was still there when I left. And there was also, there were some, I think there were civil servants, some women who were recuperating from operations or illnesses who were there temporarily, and they left. But there were three doctors of the public health service who came and, who used to come do the rounds, and they came and listened to everything, my chest, and so on. And they were wonderful doctors, and the nurses were marvelous. There was a, an elderly nurse there. She said she had been there twenty years. She

was a head, twenty-five years. She was a head nurse. And she had seen the most incredible things there, of course, on Ellis Island, in that hospital. And there was a very nice young nurse who came in the day time. But we had, I sort of interpreted, because I speak various languages, and the doctors would ask me, when I could get up, to come and talk to the patient, you know, who were brought in who could talk German, for instance, and couldn't speak English, what was the matter with her, I mean, to give some ideas. And at one time in came a young woman, she was from Naples. She was sixteen years old, and she was pregnant seven, seven months, or something like that. And she was coming to marry here a G.I. she had met in Naples, which she did. He had to post bond for her. And I said, "Well, what happens if he hasn't posted bond?" She said, "Well, I'd probably be sent back to Naples. But he'll come." He was a handsome sergeant in the army, and he came and he took her off. And then at one time it was a very dramatic thing. We had two couples, people who had come from the Auschwitz camps in Germany, you know, extermination camps. And they were tailors, two couples, two, a man and a woman, and a man

and a woman. And one of these young women ( a buzzing noise is heard in the background on the tape ) had a tremendous case of, had had a tremendous case of TB in the camp, and she was going to be examined also for TB, naturally. And the others were all okay health-wise. So they weren't told that she had had to go through these tests before coming to the United States. So these four people thought they were being brought in another camp, you know.

TEMPLE: Oh.

CLIFFORD: Since in Europe this was the reason we were all taken for these TB tests was because they had discovered that in Europe, in Germany, they had a black market of healthy lungs that were being sold to people who had TB and who wanted to come to America, they would go to the consul, the American consulate, and apply for immigration papers, and produced beautiful healthy lungs while they were very ill, you know, and would be given the visa to come here, and they discovered that.

TEMPLE: Oh, they had the x-rays?

CLIFFORD: The healthy x-rays, you see, which they bought,

black market. And then they discovered that here when an elderly man was found who had the immigration visa and a terrific case of contagious TB, and he had these healthy, he had produced these healthy x-rays. So that's when they started putting everybody into, for examination in Ellis Island. And so this young woman was there, too. And she was beautiful, and she spoke a tiny little bit of English. She had tried to learn it. And the other three people, the other couple and her husband were waiting for these tests to finish, and she was sure, poor thing, that she would be deported, that she had a recurrence of this TB. So one day this man, her husband came because they had to get off the island into New York, her husband and the other couple. And the husband came to say goodbye to his wife, and that was simply enough to send them, you know. He was sobbing on his knees near the bed, and she was stroking his head, his hair, and she was telling him, "At least you will know." She was talking to him in German. She was saying, "At least you will know what freedom is like." And then he left. And I told the doctors, Dr. Whitehead he was called, "For Pete's sake, find out if this woman has TB. I mean, you've

had her here now for more than twenty-four hours, because this is terrible for these people. They can't go through that again, you know." And he said, "Well, she has a border case, and we have to do more tests." I said, "Well, please do it, because this is too much." So he did, and the next, the same afternoon he came late, and he told me, "Tell her she's all right, and I've already told the other couple and her husband, who is still here on the island, to hold it, because she would join them." And the next morning she got up. I told her, of course. She was, she blushed, uh, she was beautiful again, you know. And she, I gave her a flower. She got dressed, and I had roses from my boss in New York, sent me that, so I gave her a rose. And it happened to be the day of Yom Kippur, which is a big day for the Jewish people. So I said, "Well, you coming into New York in a day that was very well-known for you, Yom Kippur." She said, "But, for Heaven's sake, do they know about that in America?" I said, "When you go to New York, you'll find out." So she left a very happy person, of course. And then we had another woman who decided, she came from Greece, and she spoke French, but I think she

was a little bit coo-coo, you know. There's something wrong with her. And she had the bed which was closest to the entrance. And at one time in the late afternoon she got up, she took off her clothes, her nightgown, and she started walking out to the garden, because we had a door going to the garden, we were on the ground floor, very close to our front door of, the door of our ward. So she was going diving out there. I was well enough to get out of bed. I raced to our, this wonderful head nurse, told her about it, and they just caught her. I think she was trying to commit suicide, actually, by jumping into the water, because she said she didn't have anybody here, she didn't have anybody in Greece, and how she came here I never knew, because she wasn't quite here, you know, she wasn't quite there.

TEMPLE: Yeah.

CLIFFORD: But she was, she was still a young woman. And we had, we had to go up. This is very fascinating. We had to go up for lunch, uh, which was a big meal, the biggest meal of the day was in lunch, to the dining room, which was right over our floor on the second floor, close

to us. And that little Maria, that little Portuguese girl and I had to go up there for lunch. And this the whole dining room, it was huge, and I saw it today, was filled with sailors who had come from ships who were, they were ill or something. So the whole place was filled with sailors, and there was just one table for women, and that's where we sat, near the door. And the sailors, well, some of them had like stockings on their heads, I understand they were Portuguese, and a ring in their ear. They would come and talk to my little Maria, but she didn't understand them at all, and she was so scared of everybody that she would hide behind me all the time, you know. She was beautiful, absolutely beautiful, like a Madonna face. And then, and this is a very exciting thing for me, was because there was a group of young men who would come when everybody was seated, and they sat at a table very close to me, to our table, and they all wore a sort of a robe with a big, I don't know whether it was blue or green-striped back, and I thought it was a sort of a sports team or something from the island. I didn't pay any more attention. And then the guard would come and sit near the door. ( she coughs ) And I thought, well,

that's probably how it's done here, you know. Guards were all over the place. But it happened to be prisoners. And shortly after they, I started going to the dining room, suddenly I would get little balls, little pellets were thrown on our table, and I would find a letter in it, and the letter would read, "Dear Bright Eyes." ( they laugh ) I must have looked ghastly then because I was, of course, no makeup or anything at all, and having had fever and all that, you know. "I'm very lonely." ( they laugh ) And a whole lot of things. And we're not supposed to communicate, so be careful. So I sent a letter back in a little piece of bread saying, "Don't communicate if you're not allowed to." You know. But I used to get these little letters every day, and he had ulcers, so he brought us, he would get a lot of eggs, and ice cream, apparently. So, and these sailors, many of them would come, and our table would be full of eggs and ice cream because, sort of like to pamper us, you know, two women sitting there. So that was very exciting. But then I heard when he left he came, this man came to the ward, and he brought me something he had made with the gray ladies or something, in leather,

you know. He had made something there. And he said he was let out now, and he was going off, and it was nice to know me and so on. And then after that a young boy came with them, always, with that group.

TEMPLE: With the sailors, or with the convicts?

CLIFFORD: No, with the convicts. And he was Canadian. And he came here illegally. He was a very nice young chap, he was about sixteen or seventeen. And he had come from Canada illegally, and they caught him. And I don't know what he ailed. He had some sort of problem. And he said, "You know, we were all afraid of your boyfriend." ( they laugh ) Because he was a criminal.

TEMPLE: Oh, he had done something more than just come into the country illegally?

CLIFFORD: He apparently had killed somebody. But he was awfully nice. And I was sorry for him. He said his whole family had been killed in a car accident up there in Canada. So, anyway, while I, you see, I had this liquid in the lung, and you can extract that by putting a needle in your back and getting it out, but the doctors decided no, they wanted it to get off

naturally, to cure naturally. They said it would be better. That's why I stayed seven weeks in Ellis Island. So after the seven weeks were over, the doctor said that I could, I could leave. And I left. My mother came to get me. But we had many women coming and going. And at one point we had the head nurse, there was some sort of commotion in the hall, and the head nurse came and told me, "You know, we're going to have to make room for forty people who have to be in quarantine because they come from Egypt or some place where there was cholera." And so these people came from the airport, and one man in that group, I don't know what happened to him, but he went completely, he went berserk, and he started screaming. It was very close, this ward, to ours. And he started screaming and screaming. You have no idea. It was absolutely terrible. And my little Maria, who was at the time alone with me in that big ward, and her bed was at the other end of the hall, of our ward, she dashed out of her bed and dashed under my bed, you know, she was terrified. Then they gave him a shot, apparently, to calm him down, and explained to him that he was going to be released and they were just, you know,

precautionary measures that had to be taken. And so he quieted down. But otherwise I must say this, the care was marvelous. The nurses were great. The elderly nurse was a bit of a, she was very serious and very curt in a way because she had so much responsibility, and she, there was no fooling around with her, you know. But she was a marvelous nurse, and we became great friends, she and I. She used to tell me the stories of all these immigrants coming there with the most incredible things. With worms coming out of their mouth, you know. Incredible. And, of course, malaria, dysentery, I mean, all kinds of illnesses.

TEMPLE: Do you remember her name?

CLIFFORD: No, I don't remember her name, and I would like to know it. Perhaps I can find it in records of the Public Health Service, because she was, of course, employed by them. I remember Dr. Whitehead, who was the senior doctor who was with us. Of course, we were in the non-contagious side of the hospital, you know. And I, the funny thing in re-visiting Ellis Island now, that I could pinpoint exactly where we were, where this big sink was, because I

remember how horrified I was when this young Jewish woman who was to be examined, you know, and was sure she was going to be deported, that from our bathroom window, we could see the skyline of Manhattan, lower Manhattan, downtown Manhattan. So she could see here freedom there, and there she was. So I remember that so vividly because she mentioned it, too. There were tears, you see, while here. And today, with this young woman going through the grinds we found it immediately.

TEMPLE: Oh, so you went around the other part of Ellis Island also.

CLIFFORD: Yes. We went, I said, "Let's go outside." Because the door to the outside, to the garden, was very almost a yard, very close to where we were in the ward, in the ward. And I wanted to see the ward, and I remember that woman going naked down into the garden, you see. So we found the immediately the door to that entrance, the entrance to the ward. And also we found the stairs going up and the huge dining room where all these sailors were. So we found it very easily. And then I was taken all around the hospital by this young girl,

Jane, up in that ward. And there was a young man from the Circle Line with us, too, who wanted to see it. But I had not realized, of course, when I was in Ellis Island, what an enormous hospital this was.

TEMPLE: Yeah. You never got to walk around to the other sections.

CLIFFORD: Never, never. I was given, and this may be interesting, too, uh, I mean, in first days I was given penicillin, because it had just come out. But it had come out in a new form. First I was given, I don't know, three or four shots a day, or perhaps three shots a day, and one at night. And then the nurse gave me a new way of doing penicillin. It came in a sort of butter. It looked had the color of margarine, shall we say, butter. And you inject that in the buttocks, and instead of dissolving immediately, it dissolves gradually. So that instead of telling four shots, you only had one of penicillin.

TEMPLE: I see.

CLIFFORD: It lasted a long time, over many hours. And I had these shots for quite a while, I think

about five days or something like that. And then my temperature went down to normal, almost, and the doctor discontinued that. And he told me then, "You get up now and go to the dining room." ( she laughs ) That's when we started going to all these sailors, you know. ( they laugh ) Those "bright eyes" letters were very, very encouraging to me because I felt quite awful at the time. And, well, Ellis Island, of course, had a terrible sort of a reputation for some time, and it was foreboding, it was weird. Nobody quite knew about Ellis Island, you know. They said, "Oh, that's not a place for you to be happy." So my mother was horrified.

TEMPLE: I can imagine.

CLIFFORD: She came to visit me every Wednesday. That was visiting day, for her anyway. And she used to take the ferry at 1:45. I found that in her diaries. I kept her diaries, and I found many of these things. In fact, I tell you, I arrived in Ellis Island on the 25th of August 1947, and I left on the 14th of October, 1947.

TEMPLE: Wow.

CLIFFORD: So it was from August, mid-August to mid-October.

TEMPLE: Was she encouraged by the way Ellis Island looked, that it was well-kept?

CLIFFORD: Oh, my mother said, she said, and she said that in her diary, too, she said, "I'm so glad Eddie's," she calls me Eddie, "there because it's so nice and roomy and airy and high ceilings, and lots of windows, you know. It isn't a sort of a dreary-looking place at all." And she had told our doctor in New York, our general physician, that I was taken to Ellis Island. And he said, "For Pete's sake, leave her there because she'll be very well taken care of." You know, instead of taking her in the summer, it was terribly hot. And, as the doctor had told me, it would be dangerous to go and be transported to another hospital, which I could have done. I couldn't go home. I would have to be (?). So he said, "Leave her there, because she's well taken care of. Let her stay there." So Mother was reassured. And, of course, after the tests were taken over twenty-four hours, we all knew that I wouldn't be deported, you see, so it was just a question of

waiting until this liquid would heal. And touch wood, I haven't had trouble afterwards.  
( Ms. Temple laughs )

TEMPLE: Now, do you think if you had had, uh, tuberculosis, that they would have deported you?

CLIFFORD: Oh, yes, oh, yes.

TEMPLE: Even though you were a resident alien?

CLIFFORD: Oh, yes, absolutely. I was an immigrant, still. And, you know, we take naturalization very seriously in Europe, I mean, uh, we've lived, I lived all my youth in Switzerland because my father had TB. That was another thing. That's why we went to Switzerland. I was eight months old. We went from Holland to Switzerland, and he died when I was sixteen. My sister died when I was fifteen of also a sort of tuberculosis, so it was in the family, you see. ( a buzzing noise is heard in the background on the tape ) There would have been no question. But becoming a citizen, I don't know. All my youth I went to school there and everything else. I was nineteen years old when I left, or eighteen years old when I left. So,

but we never dreamt of becoming Swiss citizens, you know. We didn't do that. So over here we came and we didn't become citizens right away. We could have already been citizens, because we'd been here around seven years already when this happened, but we never thought of doing that. And I remember when I got my re-entry permit exactly, I had to go to an inspector at the State Department here, the office of the State Department in New York, and he said to me, "Well, why haven't you become a citizen? I have your file here. You've been here for years." And I said, "Well, we take, we think twice about becoming citizens in another country. And how would, what would you do," I said, "if you lived in Holland for seven years, would you become a Dutchman." And he scratched his head, and he said, "No." ( they laugh ) So I said, "There you are." And I said, "Besides, you know, if Holland were ever in a war with America I'm sure I would be a traitor if I would be a citizen, because I would go for Holland, of course." So he started to laugh, and he said, "I don't think you ever have to fear that, you know, but I understand what you mean." And he was a very nice man. I told him I lived very close by, on 56th Street. And the

office of the Department of State was on I think 57th, was near Lincoln Center, somewhere like that. And he said, "What happened, what are you doing with your apartment?" I said, "Well, I'm giving it up." He said, "Well, I'm going to rent it, because it will be close to here." I don't know whether he ever did, you know. I don't think he did, but he said, "It would be much nicer, because I had to come all the way from Brooklyn," or something like that.

TEMPLE: You were moving to another part of Manhattan, then?

END OF SIDE ONE

BEGINNING OF SIDE TWO

CLIFFORD: Uh, well, I went to Mexico because of General Taylor, because he engaged me, and he was, uh, of course, General Maxwell D. Taylor, and he had the Chairman of Chiefs of Staff in Washington, General Eis--, uh, President Eisenhower. But he had resigned because he didn't agree with the policies of the president at the time, and he had taken up the job as president of the board of a Mexican Light and Power company. And so I became his personal secretary. But that happened in the beginning

of 1960, in February, and in September we were both out of a job because the company had been sold to the government, and the government wanted all the foreigners out and the Mexicans in. And so General Taylor came here. He was then the president, he was offered the job of president of the Lincoln Center, the board of Lincoln Center, which had started here, apparently, New York, and he wanted me to go back with him to New York. ( a buzzing noise is heard in the background on the tape ) But I didn't want to. I wanted to stay in Mexico. So, I had an awful time trying to find a job then there because of regulations of the Mexican government. If you, I would have had to leave the company for thirty days if I hadn't found another job. Well, I found another job with the cultural, Mexican North American Cultural Institute in Mexico City, which is a marvelous school for languages. ( buzz on tape ) They have about six thousand Mexicans learning English there, and Americans and English people learning Spanish. And I worked there in the activities department, which was, it was very exciting. We put on concerts, and they had lots of artists coming from the United States to perform over there,

you know, which we would bring in there to Mexico. But that didn't pay very much, because ( buzz on tape ) it was a non-profit organization, and so I joined a medical journal there started by an American, a wonderful man, Mr. Aris Cooper. And he started a medical journal in Spanish for the Mexican doctors, but tailored to their needs, but on a pattern of the American medical journal here, the JAMA, I suppose. So there I was mostly with advertising, and running the administration. I did that about three years. I was sent to Europe for them, because many of the laboratories have branch ( buzz on tape ) offices or daughter companies in Mexico, but the main headquarters are in Europe. So I visited five or six companies in Europe in 1963 for them. And then in 1965 I decided to quit. I don't remember exactly why. I was going to go to Europe, I think. And I did, I stayed in Europe for a year and came back to Mexico. ( a bell is heard in the background of the tape ) And then, then I started working with conventions, because I know languages. And then the Mexicans were hosting a world petroleum congress and they needed somebody with languages, and then in 1968 Olympics were

held there, so I worked for the Mexican organizing committee, also the language department, which was very well-organized, beautifully organized. And I worked a lot with international conventions and congresses, a symposium of leading American businessmen, leading Mexican businessmen. I organized a whole staff from my team of the organizing committee for the Olympics, the English team I worked with, you know, I got them in so we could have bilingual, perfect bilingual service for everything, for our (?), for interpreters, for stencil machines. We had everything, secretaries and everything.

TEMPLE: You sound very busy.

CLIFFORD: It was very exciting. You know, Mexico City became so polluted, because Mexico City is in a cup, and the mountains are around it. And in order to attract business and industry, lots of privileges were given to companies that would settle there. So lots of industrial companies sprung up there, and they spout a lot of (?) over the air, and it doesn't get away because the mountains are around. The air doesn't come and sweep it away. So it's quite bad, and it's

gotten ten times worse now. You can't see the volcanoes or anything any more. But, anyway, I decided to leave, and I went to live in Cuernavaca which is, I don't know if you know Mexico, but it's very close to Mexico City like a residential section it takes now to get there. You have to go up the mountain and down the other side into another valley, you know. But its eternal spring. It's the land of eternal spring, and it's beautiful, beautiful, beautiful. So lots of Americans live there now. And there I lived until I decided, well, I'm getting white hair, I'm getting older, and I, you see, I couldn't quite retire because I didn't have enough funds to retire on. So I was waiting also to retire till I could get Social Security benefits. And once I got that, I came back to the United States, and I got back to where we used to live, Mother and I, and that's where I am now, you see.

TEMPLE: You say you speak several languages. You speak Spanish, German . . .

CLIFFORD: French.

TEMPLE: French.

CLIFFORD: Dutch.

TEMPLE: Dutch. And do you speak Italian also?

CLIFFORD: I can understand Italian, yes, yes. It's very close. They don't go too fast. I used to know it better before when I was in Europe, but the Spanish sort of mixed it all up, and now I speak better Spanish.

TEMPLE: Yeah, yeah. You said that when you and Maria were on the ward she was on one side and you were on the other side.

CLIFFORD: No. We were on the same, in the same row of . . .

TEMPLE: Oh, the same row.

CLIFFORD: In the same row. But she was, shall we say, in Bed Two and I was in Bed Nine.

TEMPLE: I see.

CLIFFORD: You see? We were all against the wall.

TEMPLE: Right. And so then it was rare that the wards were filled with women?

CLIFFORD: Very rare, hardly ever. When I came I think there were, there was Maria, with her mother at

the time, still, there. And three ladies who were on the other row, facing me, you know. But they left, and then there were a few people that would come, but we were never more than six or seven, I think.

TEMPLE: But it sounds like the men's wards were, uh . . .

CLIFFORD: Filled. Filled, filled, filled to capacity. But this was the only ward there, because there were very few women apparently coming on these boats as, uh, what do you call them, in a crew, you know. Because that was, I think that part of the hospital was, mostly people from the crew were there.

TEMPLE: I see.

CLIFFORD: And there were very few women in those, in the crew.

TEMPLE: Right.

CLIFFORD: Of the ships that would, I mean, that would start working in those jobs. Many nowadays would do it, but then they didn't.

TEMPLE: And so you didn't see many people who came from the camps in Europe.

CLIFFORD: No. Only those four.

TEMPLE: Those four.

CLIFFORD: Only those four. And that was really a tremendous experience.

TEMPLE: I can imagine.

CLIFFORD: They were so, that young woman, she was so, she had such courage because, you know, she never faltered when her husband was sobbing at the bed. And she didn't start screaming or crying herself. She was absolutely quiet and calm, stroking his head and telling him not to despair, you know, trying to comfort him. And then he left, and then she cried. And, of course, I, you see, when you are in that sort of state that she is in, you always expect the worse. And she was perfectly sure that she would be deported, that this thing had recurred, because they took so long to do these tests and do more tests and more tests. So she felt that "Now I have a recurrence of this, and I will be sent back." And I kept on telling her, "Listen." I had long talks with her and told her, trying to comfort her and tell her to take, not to despair, not to think the worst.

It was only a matter of getting things done, because she had a case. She had had such a bad case of TB in the camp, much worse than I. I hadn't had TB, touch wood, you know. I had a pleurisy, but I hadn't had TB. She had had TB, and apparently she had, it was cured, but she probably full of scars.

TEMPLE:        Hmm, yes.

CLIFFORD:      And she was beautiful, beautiful, beautiful. And she was the only one of the four of them who had really tried hard to learn English, and she spoke English haltingly. And, of course, when she was told that she was free to go she, she had, she blossomed. She simply blossomed like a flower. And, of course, my, no, I, there were very few people there with, from the camps, and I think probably more people were in these contagious disease wards.

TEMPLE:        Oh, that's right.

CLIFFORD:      Wards, you know.

TEMPLE:        So you never, I guess, well, naturally you wouldn't see those people, or you wouldn't see anybody else that was in the hospital, other parts of the hospital.

CLIFFORD: I didn't see anyone else. Only all these sixty or seventy sailors upstairs. ( Ms. Temple laughs ) But apart from those, I didn't see anybody else. And a few women who were in the ward with me. I remember that when I woke up the first day, I had been given some sedative, probably, when I arrived. I know I had a big fever when I arrived. And I remember vaguely around nine or ten at night I woke up and I saw sort of a very old face full of, full of lines and hair hanging down over me like that, ( she gestures ) and I thought, "Where am I? What is it?" I couldn't imagine what had happened, you know. And the ward was already in darkness, but then only these lamps, which you have near your bed, up. One was lit somewhere, and the light of that lamp just shone on that face, and then, and then it moved away. Well, the next day I found that it was a very old lady, and she was on the other, facing me, on that line, you know, just across from the passageway. And she was there for some recuperation. I don't know if she had had something. She must, she was probably working there somewhere, you know. She left after two or three days. But the thing that I heard over and over again was,

because one of the women who was also there on the other side had a radio with her. I had one later, Mother brought me my radio. She had a radio, and there was a tune that was very much of a bestseller at the time. It was sung by Rosemary Clooney, and it was "A Real Gone Guy." It was called "A Real Gone Guy." So when I got out of the hospital I bought "A Real Gone Guy" record. ( they laugh ) And took it home with me. You know, I loved to dance and it was a very wonderful thing to dance on. It was very peppy. And I had it a long time. I think I just gave it away along with old records to The Salvation Army a couple of years ago, but that gay voice of this Rosemary Clooney, I just loved it. I almost used to get out of my bed and start dancing, but I couldn't, of course.

TEMPLE: Did they have any kind of recreation for you?

CLIFFORD: No, no. None at all. None at all. Well, we're supposed to be ill, you know.  
( they laugh ) But we had a darling day nurse. She was very young, and everybody adored her. When she came in the ward, everybody cheered. And she would come and bring us, well, in the beginning I used to have to have meals in bed,

you know, until I could go upstairs. And she would bring our meals, and she was a very cheerful, nice person. And the doctors were wonderful. I wish I could remember the name of that young, the younger doctor, one of them, he had an Italian name and he lived in Brooklyn. And we exchanged Christmas cards for quite a while afterwards. And he used to come alone many times after, after that. And then the doctor, a senior doctor, Whitehead, or White, yes, Whitehead would come once a week or something like that. They were all from the health service, you know, Public Health Service. I don't know what happened to that. Is it still there?

TEMPLE: I think it's, uh, well, they have a hospital in Staten Island. And, you know, last year or two years ago President Reagan changed their designation. There are no longer any Public Health Service hospitals.

CLIFFORD: No?!

TEMPLE: No.

CLIFFORD: Why not?

TEMPLE: No. He, it (?).

CLIFFORD: And what happened to all the doctors?

TEMPLE: Those that were on scholarships had to find other jobs, had to find other hospitals.

CLIFFORD: Because they did a wonderful job.

TEMPLE: Yes, they did.

CLIFFORD: And the care was wonderful in Ellis Island. I don't know how it was in the contagious wards or the other wards, but in our ward it was really wonderful.

TEMPLE: Well, is there anything else you'd like to say?

CLIFFORD: No. I enjoyed this.

TEMPLE: Thank you very much. ( they laugh )