**Paul:** Good afternoon, this is Paul Seacrest for the National Park Service. Today is Saturday August 26th 1995. I’m in Troy New York at St. Mary’s Woodland Village with Sylvia Jones. Ms. Jones came from England in 1911 and she was seven years old at that time. Ms. Jones can you give me your birth date please?

**Sylvia:** I’m 91.

**Paul:** What’s your birth date?

**Sylvia:** May 24, that’s Queen Victoria’s birthday.

**Paul:** What year were you born?

**Sylvia:** 1904.

**Paul:** Can you say your full name for me on tape?

**Sylvia:** Sylvia Fannie May Jones.

**Paul:** Fannie is F-A- …

**Sylvia:** N-N- …

**Paul:** N-N-Y or I-E?

**Sylvia:** I-E.

**Paul:** Then how do you spell May?

**Sylvia:** M-A-Y.

**Paul:** It’s Sylvia Fannie May Jones?

**Sylvia:** Jones.

**Paul:** Yes. Where in England were you born?

**Sylvia:** We were born in, I got to think now.

**Paul:** It’s all right, take your time.

**Sylvia:** Birmingham.

**Paul:** Birmingham?

**Sylvia:** Yeah.

**Paul:** Can you spell that?

**Sylvia:** Its spelled Birmingham you got Birmingham B-I-R-M-I-G-H-A-M.

**Paul:** Did your mother or father ever tell you any stories about when you were born?

**Sylvia:** To have 11 children you don’t tell each one how they were born.

**Paul:** Your mother had 11 children?

**Sylvia:** Yes.

**Paul:** Were they all born in England?

**Sylvia:** All born in England. I had one brother, Fred that was married over there. When we come to this country she couldn’t bring him here because he worked in the mine. He was married and had a child over there, so she couldn’t bring him with her to this country.

**Paul:** All the other children came?

**Sylvia:** Yes.

**Paul:** Tell me what you remember about Birmingham? Do you remember the house that you lived in?

**Sylvia:** We went to a cousin’s house and her name to us was Aunt Cilia. Then we had to go upstairs. She had an apartment upstairs that we went and stayed until my father could take us -He went to Waterford and got a house for us.

**Paul:** Waterford, New York?

**Sylvia:** New York yeah.

**Paul:** What year did your father come to the United States?

**Sylvia:** I don’t know because my two older sisters came with him. How old …

**Paul:** Were you born? Were you born when he went?

**Sylvia:** Yes, we were all born.

**Paul:** Do you remember when your father left for the United States?

**Sylvia:** My two older sisters came with him. I really couldn’t tell you the dates; because the dates weren’t interested in me I was too interested in eating raisins.

**Paul:** You liked raisins?

**Sylvia:** My mother never would give them to us. On the boat, when we were coming over, and whoever’s the head of it there, he said, “Mrs. Jones, take your children and sit at our table.” Of course they had raisins, and my mother never would give us raisins.

The only thing I did was wait till everybody got away from the table and left the dining room. Then I went back and ate the raisins. My poor mother had an awful time.

**Paul:** I bet she did.

**Sylvia:** I was a devil [inaudible 00:04:24].

**Paul:** When your father came here to Waterford, New York, what job did he get?

**Sylvia:** He was working in Cluett Bleachery.

**Paul:** Cluett Bleachery?

**Sylvia:** Bleachery in Waterford.

**Paul:** What did they do there?

**Sylvia:** He finished material to make shirts, because in Troy Cluett factory made men’s shirts. He finished the material, put a shine on the material and run through. My father worked in the same place. I guess it was my father that worked on the machine and made the finishing the material for shirts.

**Paul:** I should say for the sake of the tape that Cluett is spelled C-L-U-E-T-T, Cluett yeah. Because they’re still in business I guess. What did he do in England, before he went to America, for a living?

**Sylvia:** My father, what did he do? He worked in the mine, the same as one of my brothers.

**Paul:** What do you know about his experience in the mine?

**Sylvia:** I don’t know.

**Paul:** What were they mining?

**Sylvia:** What it is it? Iron, coal or whatever.

**Paul:** Do you have any recollections of him doing that when you were in England?

**Sylvia:** No.

**Paul:** That’s all before you remember.

**Sylvia:** We were all too small.

**Paul:** What was your father’s personality like?

**Sylvia:** He was a good old Joe, my mother was the serious one. My mother of course, having 11 children, you don’t show impartiality to any one child. Of course what one did the other did.

**Paul:** What was your father’s name?

**Sylvia:** Alfred.

**Paul:** What is his full names?

**Sylvia:** Jones.

**Paul:** Alfred Jones?

**Sylvia:** Just Alfred Jones.

**Paul:** What do you know about his family background?

**Sylvia:** His mother came to America and his sisters. They all came to America first. They landed in North side Waterford.

**Paul:** The North side of Waterford?

**Sylvia:** Yes. That’s all I remember on that.

**Paul:** What was your mother’s name?

**Sylvia:** Ada.

**Paul:** What was her maiden name?

**Sylvia:** Here’s her name Ada Sarah Elizabeth Lanton.

**Paul:** Can you spell Lanton please.

**Sylvia:** L-A-N-T-O-N Jones.

**Paul:** Jones when she married. Tell me what you know about your mother’s family background?

**Sylvia:** My mother was sent to a girls’ school, her education was in a [inaudible 00:08:07] school in England. What part of England, I don’t know. It had to be up around where most of, I’ll say this but I don’t get a swelled head, where the rich people lived, up around. Let’s see if I can think where my mother would say she lived, it won’t come to me.

**Paul:** Maybe it will as we’re talking. What was her personality like? You said she was serious?

**Sylvia:** My mother she was sweet, but she was very strict.

**Paul:** Is there a story?

**Sylvia:** My father, we could get away with murder.

**Paul:** Tell me a story that shows how strict your mother was? Is there something that you remember happening that shows how strict she was?

**Sylvia:** Only eating the raisins, no.

**Paul:** Is there another story that you can think of?

**Sylvia:** She never let us run the streets or anything. When we lived in England, we lived upstairs over what we would call the lady, my Aunt Cilia. We lived upstairs. We used to look out the window see the men fighting in the street. That’s all I remember of that.

They would fight and they would hit, it was awful. My mother said, “You better not watch so much out the window girls,” because she says, “maybe they might be waiting for you to come down.” We wouldn’t go down.

**Paul:** Do you remember what they were fighting about?

**Sylvia:** No. They didn’t have to have anything to fight about. You often see it on the movies today, how people over in the old country. They call it the old country; they just do things to get you mad. Then when they got mad enough they punch in.

**Paul:** Do you remember any other rules that your mother …?

**Sylvia:** We went to school early; I went to school at three years old.

**Paul:** What do you remember about school?

**Sylvia:** I loved it, it was nice. Of course I was so small, you started in first grade. They didn’t put me in kindergarten because I was older than all the rest of the kids.

**Paul:** What kinds of things did you learn in school in England?

**Sylvia:** Reading, writing, arithmetic.

**Paul:** Could your mother read and write?

**Sylvia:** My mother was yes, my mother …

**Paul:** Because you said she went to a girls’ school.

**Sylvia:** She went to a girls’ finishing school. Of course she taught us. I had a cousin live with us, we called him Uncle George. He came over with my father when he came over. He roomed with us in Waterford on First Street.

**Paul:** First Street in Waterford when you got over here?

**Sylvia:** Yes.

**Paul:** Tell me what you remember about your religious life in England, what religion were you?

**Sylvia:** We went to [inaudible 00:11:29] Episcopal Church.

**Paul:** How did you practice your religion at home? What would you do at home?

**Sylvia:** We said the Lord’s Prayer. Then every night, before we went to bed, we had to kneel before my mother. She would tell us a prayer to say, but don’t ask me now.

**Paul:** I won’t. Don’t worry. What do you remember about going to church?

**Sylvia:** We went to church on Sunday. If they had anything during the week, like a picnic or anything, we were able to go to that. Because there was always somebody to take care of you. I don’t know. Have you ever been to an Episcopal Church? Yes. Then you should know …

**Paul:** I’m just curious what you remember about it.

**Sylvia:** We’d get up on Sunday morning. My mother would give us breakfast. Then she would dress us all up in our white clothes, our white dresses and shoes.

There was three of us, younger. This is the young part now. The last children my mother had were three girls. Sylvia was the oldest that’s me, Ivy I-V-Y, my sister and Elsie. Those two are dead and there’s only me Sylvia, and who’s the younger one that’s living? Elsie. She’s in Massachusetts, and I haven’t seen her in two years.

**Paul:** How many years were there between the oldest child and the youngest child?

**Sylvia:** I imagine just the amount of time it took to make. My mother had her children fast.

**Paul:** Do you remember when your younger sisters were born? Do you have any recollection of that?

**Sylvia:** My father used to take us to Sunday school on Sunday while my mother got the dinner. Then when we come back we’d have dinner. Then we’d go for another walk, over what they call, what’s the name of the place? You know anything about Waterford?

**Paul:** No, we’re talking about England now.

**Sylvia:** England?

**Paul:** Yes, so we’re back in England now.

**Sylvia:** Yeah that’s right. I’m thinking of what we did when we come to Waterford.

**Paul:** We’re going to get you to Waterford in a minute. I was wondering if you remembered when your younger sisters were born.

**Sylvia:** No.

**Paul:** In England. Do you remember the clothes that you wore in England? You mentioned white dresses?

**Sylvia:** Yeah.

**Paul:** Can you describe …

**Sylvia:** I had older sisters, my sister Gladys and my sister Gertrude, but they came over here with my father. Before that, they would make our clothes. One of my sister’s, she was a dressmaker, so she made our clothes. Then we had a grandmother over there, and she would make our clothes.

**Paul:** How would your grandmother make your clothes? Can you describe the process for me?

**Sylvia:** Just ordinary plain clothes, that’s all.

**Paul:** What did they look like?

**Sylvia:** Kids wear the same things today, practically.

**Paul:** What is that, can you say it in words what it looks like?

**Sylvia:** Yeah, it’s a white dress and it would be short sleeves. If it was a white dress you’d only wear that in the summer. Then you would have another dress, a heavier dress for you know.

**Paul:** How long was the dress?

**Sylvia:** They didn’t wear them very short I’ll tell you.

**Paul:** When you were a little girl how did you wear your hair?

**Sylvia:** I had natural curly hair. When I came in here …

**Paul:** To America?

**Sylvia:** The man that used to cut my hair when I was a kid lives in this place.

**Paul:** You mean here at St. Mary’s Village?

**Sylvia:** Yes.

**Paul:** The man who used to cut your hair …

**Sylvia:** That used to cut my hair, but not in England …

**Paul:** In Waterford?

**Sylvia:** When I was in Waterford, because we were all small when we came here.

**Paul:** That must have been a surprise.

**Sylvia:** Yeah. He used to cut my hair and my mother used to yell at him because he’d cut up my curls.

**Paul:** It all grew back?

**Sylvia:** Yeah it all grew back. I have to have perms, but my hair has got a tinge of the natural.

**Paul:** What color was it when you were a little girl?

**Sylvia:** Black, no, my sister Ivy’s was black, mine was brown. My sister Elsie was a towhead.

**Paul:** Meaning that she was blonde?

**Sylvia:** Yes. Those two, Elsie and Ivy, we were all young when we came here.

**Paul:** In England, do you remember, you said you lived upstairs from your aunt?

**Sylvia:** Yeah.

**Paul:** Can you describe for me the apartment, how many rooms it had, and what it looked like.

**Sylvia:** It had one room and you’d put two beds in it. Three kids would sleep in one bed. Ivy always took the foot and my other two sisters were younger so they took the top. Then of course I had older sisters that lived in England too.

**Paul:** Did they live in the apartment with you?

**Sylvia:** Yes, but they had another part of what we would call Aunt Cilia’s house. Then we stayed down with my mother this way.

**Paul:** What else do you remember about the apartment that you lived in? Do you remember the kitchen?

**Sylvia:** Yes, much the same as over here.

**Paul:** How did you cook?

**Sylvia:** I didn’t cook.

**Paul:** Your mother cooked?

**Sylvia:** Yeah my mother cooked.

**Paul:** What did she cook? How did she cook? What did she have to cook on?

**Sylvia:** Every Sunday we had a leg of lamb, I do remember that. Then during the week you had like pork chops or [inaudible 00:18:44] chops, or whatever.

**Paul:** Did she have a stove to cook on or did -How did she cook?

**Sylvia:** No, you’ve seen houses where the built in fire?

**Paul:** Like a fireplace?

**Sylvia:** Yes like a fireplace. Then you would put the things to, we called it a hub. You put the, whatever you were going to cook for your dinner, you put it on, it was like the grate in there was a fire. Then there was a thing that you would so the children wouldn’t get near enough to it. Then they would cook whatever they had I guess.

**Paul:** What was your favorite food as a young girl when you were growing up?

**Sylvia:** Just anything, actually just anything.

**Paul:** You liked to eat?

**Sylvia:** Yeah, [inaudible 00:19:55] I knew was something to eat. My mother was a good cook.

**Paul:** What would she cook for Christmas?

**Sylvia:** You had everything for Christmas. We had, what do we call it? [Inaudible 00:20:23], and then what she would cook for Christmas would be a chicken or chickens. What else did they have on Christmas for? Whatever and it was a big family so we had to have a lot to eat.

**Paul:** Did you exchange presents for Christmas?

**Sylvia:** Yeah.

**Paul:** Is there a Christmas present that you got as a child that sticks out in your mind?

**Sylvia:** I was glad enough to get anything. Because people weren’t rich in those days and they didn’t have money to spend, but we always got something. When we went to Sunday school they would always give us something. They’d always give us kids’ stockings, black stockings. I would fold mine up and put them under the bed, I hated black stockings.

**Paul:** Were those intended to be worn every day?

**Sylvia:** The black …

**Paul:** The black?

**Sylvia:** Yeah, you had to wear them to school. I went to school here and my sister Ivy. My sister Elsie wasn’t quite old enough to go to school. We lived in Waterford for so many years.

**Paul:** Once you got to America?

**Sylvia:** Yes, when we got to America.

**Paul:** When you were a little girl in England, do you remember how you thought about America? What ideas you had about America, before you got here?

**Sylvia:** They would read us stories. When we would go to Sunday school, we would hear the stories about Christmas and things like that. Then we didn’t call him Santa Claus, he was called Father Christmas. Did you ever hear that?

**Paul:** Did you have a Christmas tree in the house?

**Sylvia:** No, we had what they call a Christmas bow. It was two hoops, one going this way and one going this way.

**Paul:** Opposite directions.

**Sylvia:** Yes. They would decorate it all up with, much the same as you put Christmas up here. It would go on that round, one would go that way and one would come this way.

**Paul:** When you were a little girl, how did you think about America? Before you got here when you were in England, how did you think about America?

**Sylvia:** I don’t know because I wasn’t old enough to go to school. I went to school. There you go to school three years old over there.

**Paul:** Was your father writing to your mother from America?

**Sylvia:** Yes.

**Paul:** Do you remember the kinds of things?

**Sylvia:** No.

**Paul:** Did your mother have a job in England? How was she supporting the family?

**Sylvia:** Yes. My mother was from a rich family and she was brought up like a young lady and then when she married my father, why he was just an ordinary man with a job. As I say, he run a machine called a calendar. It would run this way and this way and this way, and it would put finish to the material that they would use to make shirts.

**Paul:** That was here in Waterford?

**Sylvia:** Yeah.

**Paul:** Do you remember packing to leave for America?

**Sylvia:** No.

**Paul:** Do you remember what you packed?

**Sylvia:** My mother used to wait till night and she’d put us all to bed and then she would do the packing. She was a very particular person.

**Paul:** Do you remember how you felt about leaving England?

**Sylvia:** All I wanted to do was get on the boat and ride, that’s all.

**Paul:** Do you remember leaving your house to get on the boat?

**Sylvia:** There was so many others that we all went together. You had to wait for a certain boat to come up. We came up over on the Mauretania, if you’ve ever heard of the Mauretania.

**Paul:** Where did you have to go to get on the Mauretania? Where did you have to travel to get on the ship?

**Sylvia:** What was the name of the place? I can’t remember, but it was wherever it would have to stop at Ellis Island.

**Paul:** Wait, we’re still in England, we haven’t gotten across the Atlantic yet. Tell me what you thought when you saw the ship, and the Mauretania is a big ship.

**Sylvia:** Sure it is.

**Paul:** Tell me what you thought when you saw the ship.

**Sylvia:** All we did was run up and down. My mother had the worst time, because when we got on that boat my mother said she could have given me away a dozen times. I was small and I was very thin.

My sister Ivy was a little chubby. She was still younger than me, but she had long black hair right down to her shoulders. I had brown hair. My mother didn’t like me in long hair, so she used to cut it, cut my hair short or bob it, a bob. Then my sister Elsie was a towhead.

**Paul:** Do you remember where you slept on the Mauretania? Where did you sleep on the ship?

**Sylvia:** My mother and us girls were on the girls’ side. Then my brothers, there was only two, Archie and Reg and Bert, there was only three brothers. No, there was four but one stayed back, because he was working in the mines and he had to stay there because he had a child.

**Paul:** The ladies were separated from the men on the ship?

**Sylvia:** Yeah.

**Paul:** What did you do on the boat?

**Sylvia:** Fall on the bed on top of my mother. My mother couldn’t stay in the bed, so she laid on the floor, because she was seasick. I was on the upper bunk, there was three of us, and one bunk up on the top. I don't know how I got pushed out, but I got pushed out and I came down on my mother. Can you imagine?

**Paul:** Did you get seasick?

**Sylvia:** I think we all got seasick. The ones that got seasick were the ones that couldn't eat, but I could always eat.

**Paul:** Yes, you told about eating the raisins that was on the boat. Do you remember eating other things on the boat?

**Sylvia:** Yes, we had cooked meats and things like that. Dinner night and then for lunch you'd have like a sandwich or something like that, but very much the same as it is here.

**Paul:** Did they have activities for you to do on the ship? Did they have activities for you to do on the ship?

**Sylvia:** Yes. We did a lot of things; we jumped rope, played hop scotch. They entertained us very well and sang, I had a sister, and oh she had a beautiful voice and she would sing. Not until later, did she and I go out here -I got to play the piano real well. I would play the piano, but this is in the country now.

**Paul:** In Waterford?

**Sylvia:** In Waterford. I would play in church, 20 years I think I played and attended the Episcopal Church there in Troy in Waterford.

**Paul:** You would play and your sister would sing here in America?

**Sylvia:** Yeah.

**Paul:** Do you remember some of the songs that she sang?

**Sylvia:** All the old hymns. I don’t know if you know them, but whatever the hymns for the Sunday had to be picked out. Then you would take those. You would go to choir rehearsal during the week; you'd go to choir rehearsal. Then on Sunday you'd go to Sunday school, then you'd go to church, then you’d go to Sunday school at night.

**Paul:** Were other members of your family musical?

**Sylvia:** My sister Gertrude played -It wasn’t a one of these things.

**Paul:** Like a violin?

**Sylvia:** Yes, it wasn’t the violin, what’s another musical?

**Paul:** There's a viola that you play like that.

**Sylvia:** No, it was a small one.

**Paul:** Small, but was held like a violin?

**Sylvia:** Yes.

**Paul:** A violin or a viola, that’s all I can think of, or chelo.

**Sylvia:** We all played something. I played the piano, but I have never played the piano here.

**Paul:** You have a beautiful piano out there I saw.

**Sylvia:** Yes I know. I’m going to try it one day.

**Paul:** How long was the ship? How long did it take the ship to get to New York?

**Sylvia:** Weeks at that time. You can go in two days or three days right now on the same boat, the same crossing. You can go very quickly because they -Unless had a better boat or must have more people.

**Paul:** They’re faster now.

**Sylvia:** When we came over there was a strike. When we got on the ship nobody knew whether we were ever going to get to America or not. Because it was an awful strike on the river or something I don’t know, I don’t remember that much about it.

**Paul:** You remember that it did cause some inconvenience?

**Sylvia:** Yeah.

**Paul:** Do you remember being on the deck of the ship?

**Sylvia:** Yes.

**Paul:** What did you see when you were on the deck of the ship?

**Sylvia:** Nothing but the ocean. They had it like a division, they had the ship. Then there was glass windows like all about so far apart, where you could go inside and sit and just watch the ocean. That’s all you did.

**Paul:** Do you remember any of the other passengers who were traveling on the ship?

**Sylvia:** Yes, we had their name was Barnett or Bennett, we would call it here, but it was Bennett in England. Where did they live? In New York, they got off at New York because their home was going to be in New York.

Later, when we lived in Waterford, those same people came to visit us. When they said to my mother, “Let's take this one back with us, she's awful skinny.” My other two sisters they would eat, but I don’t know what happened to me that I didn’t.

This lady took me, she lived in New York, she took me with her. I was supposed to stay two weeks, I stayed two years. I loved it there, but then...

**Paul:** This is right after you arrived? When you first arrived you stayed for two years in New York?

**Sylvia:** Yeah.

**Paul:** They had come up to Waterford?

**Sylvia:** Yes, they had come up to Waterford and visited us. Then they took me back with them. I was only supposed to stay two weeks and then they were supposed to bring me back. I stayed two years.

**Paul:** We'll talk about that when we get you to New York. Do you remember seeing the Statue of Liberty when the ship came in to the New York harbor?

**Sylvia:** Yes.

**Paul:** Did you know what that was?

**Sylvia:** No, not really. I think I was too young to get the meaning of it. All I could see was this lady in that the Statue of Liberty. I didn’t like looking at the ocean, because I didn’t like -Sometimes the waves would come over. You would think they were going to take that boat right underneath the water. Maybe they did, I don’t know.

**Paul:** The ship comes into New York, and then what happens?

**Sylvia:** Then my father was here first and my two older sisters. We lived in Waterford, my mother and father, and whoever was over here at that time, they lived in Waterford. Do you know where Waterford is?

**Paul:** Yes.

**Sylvia:** Then we got off the boat and my father met us. My two older sisters were going to have dates with fellows. They thought when we got off the boat, they didn’t think that my father was going to meet the boat and take us up with my mother, but they did. They didn’t get to meet the fellows in New York; it’s like a fairy story actually.

**Paul:** That’s a long time ago.

**Sylvia:** Yeah.

**Paul:** Did you have to go to Ellis Island and be processed?

**Sylvia:** Yeah, we went to Ellis...

**Paul:** What do you remember about that?

**Sylvia:** We stopped at Ellis Island. I don’t know whether we got off there or -No, that’s when we came to this country, wasn’t it?

**Paul:** Yeah it would have been on the way.

**Sylvia:** Yeah, on the way.

**Paul:** What happened to you there, do you remember?

**Sylvia:** Only that all we did was eat. All we did on the boat, run around the boat and up the boat. There was always somebody that wanted to take one of us.

Now there was a lady, and she lived in New Jersey, and she wanted to take me. My mother said, “No, I have to take them home.” My sister Ivy, she had beautiful black hair and she wore it long. I was too short to wear my hair long, so I had to have bobbed hair.

**Paul:** Did you have to undergo any medical examinations?

**Sylvia:** Before you get off the boat, you all get in line. They looked up your eyes, take your eyes and look them up, see if they were all right, see if there's any diseases. That’s all they did was that, they didn’t take your clothes off or anything like that. Then they would feel your arms, and that’s all they did.

**Paul:** Can you describe for me meeting your father, because he'd been in America for a while?

**Sylvia:** My father had a moustache and he was light. My sister Elsie took after my father because she was light. My mother had dark hair, my hair was brown, my mother had the same kind of hair.

**Paul:** Did your father bring anything when he came to meet you at the boat?

**Sylvia:** Not that I know of.

**Paul:** When you came off the ship, where did your father take you?

**Sylvia:** To New York, would we have stopped in New York?

**Paul:** Yes, possibly.

**Sylvia:** Yeah we got to New York. Then we had to take a train home.

**Paul:** Did the boat stop or were you on a smaller boat?

**Sylvia:** No, the boat...

**Paul:** The boat stop, is that where your father met you when the boat stopped?

**Sylvia:** Yeah.

**Paul:** The big boat, the Mauretania?

**Sylvia:** Yeah. They came into New York harbor I imagine. Because I remember seeing the Statue of Liberty, would I see that there? Yeah. I had to [inaudible 00:38:58], but anyway.

**Paul:** Your father took you to where?

**Sylvia:** Waterford.

**Paul:** How did you get from New York City to Waterford?

**Sylvia:** On a train.

**Paul:** What do you remember about [inaudible 00:39:15]?

**Sylvia:** I was very sick on the train. I had to stand up in the back and he opened the window for me because it made me sick to ride the train. The others never got sick; my other two sisters didn’t get sick.

**Paul:** Did you see anything, in New York or on the train that you had never seen before?

**Sylvia:** Lots of things.

**Paul:** That was new? What sticks out in your mind?

**Sylvia:** One thing we never saw in England. That was the men that would be in New York selling out of their wares, whatever they had, to sell or such as lollipops or what else?

**Paul:** You mean like street vendors?

**Sylvia:** Yes, very much so.

**Paul:** That was something new?

**Sylvia:** That was new yes. My poor mother she was so sick riding the train from New York. When we came in on the boat, then you got off of the boat and you went to get the train to come to Waterford anyway.

The train, where did it stop? Because we had to get a trolley car and that made me sick too. For a long time I couldn’t ride anything, I don’t know why.

**Paul:** You were sick on the boat, sick on the train, sick on the trolley car?

**Sylvia:** Yes.

**Paul:** You mentioned you thought you might have...

**Sylvia:** Because then we went from there to Waterford. Now do you know anything about Waterford?

**Paul:** No, tell me what you remember about arriving in Waterford.

**Sylvia:** My father got us a house. It was a nice house. A woman lived upstairs and then we took the one down on the lower level. It was in, must have been the time of the year that they -They never had a flood there before, but they had a flood at this time.

At night when we got there, my mother put us to bed and then her and my father went to bed, as people do when they get in a place. Then my father was to go to work in the bleachery in Waterford of course. You go over the bridge, and that’s where he had to work, he worked there. He'd run what they call a calendar.

**Paul:** You were saying about a flood, something happened?

**Sylvia:** Yeah. Anyway, that morning, when we got there, then he took us to the house, where we were to stay. In the morning when he got up, the river had risen. Not the Hudson, but the one that runs this way, whatever, went that way, Mohawk.

**Paul:** The Mohawk.

**Sylvia:** When my father got up out of bed, went into the bathroom, I suppose, and the water was up to his waist. We all had to stay in bed until they came with a row boat to get us out of bed. They put us in the row boat and brought us up to Broad Street in Waterford. Then we went up to the Knights of Columbus Hall. They took us all in, they had all these white beds, I can see those white beds today.

**Paul:** How did you feel during this?

**Sylvia:** I was too busy. I was always busy with something.

**Paul:** I mean during this experience of being in the flood, how did that make you feel?

**Sylvia:** We didn’t think anything. Yes, we had an aunt who met us with my father and met us when we were coming home. She used to take fits.

The day that they had the flood in Waterford it said, if they rang the bell all right like a church bell or whatever it was, everybody had to run up to the Catholic Church. That was running up the hill.

**Paul:** High ground?

**Sylvia:** A high ground which we did. My one sister Ivy she was so cold that she was crying, I never cried over anything, I don't to this day, only if it hits me. Just so, but...

**Paul:** What happened to your aunt? You said that she...

**Sylvia:** She took fits.

**Paul:** What do you mean when...?

**Sylvia:** She took a fit right in the middle of the where all the water was. Where you had wait until the boat come and pick you up, to take you up to the church.

**Paul:** When you say take a fit, what do you mean? What happened to her?

**Sylvia:** I don’t know she’d just faint and fall down right into the water. “Go get her.”

**Paul:** Was she okay though?

**Sylvia:** Yeah, she lived to be a real old lady.

**Paul:** I see.

**Sylvia:** These were my father’s mother and sisters and brothers, that was all here before he came. Then we came here to join them.

**Paul:** Tell me about going to school in America, tell me what that experience was like for you?

**Sylvia:** Just that I had to do some [inaudible 0:46:02] and the same as they did in England, very much the same. Only we went to school at three years old.

**Paul:** What grade did they start you off in America?

**Sylvia:** They wanted to put me in kindergarten. My mother wouldn’t let them because I had four years schooling, before we even got here. They put me in grade four. Then my other two sisters they went in the lower grade, like grade one. My sister Elsie went in kindergarten.

**Paul:** Tell me [inaudible 00:46:40]. How was it different than what you were used to?

**Sylvia:** I have to tell you about going to New York first. I stayed in New York, I was supposed to stay two weeks and I stayed two years. I went to school over there.

**Paul:** Did that happen soon after you arrived?

**Sylvia:** After yes.

**Paul:** How long had you been in America before you went back down to New York to stay for two years?

**Sylvia:** Maybe about four or five years. Where we lived there [inaudible 00:47:27] was a public school. Then right next door to it was a man that ran a machine and made all kinds of paper stuff. If you wanted a certain kind of paper or something like that, it was a paper place anyway.

**Paul:** Did your mother get a job in Waterford when you arrived?

**Sylvia:** Yes, my mother worked in Cluett Bleachery for 27 years after we got here.

**Paul:** That’s the same place your father worked?

**Sylvia:** Yes, same place my father worked.

**Paul:** Did she do the same work at the Bleachery or did she do something different?

**Sylvia:** My mother graduated in England from girl’s school and she went to a very high school. When she come over here she was married and she had children. She did get a job in -Do you know anything about Waterford?

**Paul:** No, I don’t.

**Sylvia:** Do you know or you don’t?

**Paul:** You said …

**Sylvia:** You know there's a bridge you go over? We lived on First Street and you had to go a block, walk a block and go over the bridge. That’s where my mother worked in there.

**Paul:** That's also where your father worked?

**Sylvia:** Where my father worked.

**Paul:** Were there lots of immigrants in Waterford? I mean were there other English people in Waterford?

**Sylvia:** Yes. Most of them stopped in New Jersey when we got on the train to come to Troy. Those people got up, didn’t get on, they went into New Jersey. After you got off the boat I guess.

**Paul:** Why do you suppose they did that?

**Sylvia:** They had a home here before they got here. They had to go to where their home was.

**Paul:** Tell me a little bit about those two years that you spent in New York City with the Bennett family. What sticks out in your mind about that experience?

**Sylvia:** It was wonderful. The Bennett people had birds, they kept them in the cellar, and they were all in cages. Of course what we did, they had one son Harry, but Mrs. Bennett had married a man that had two grown girls.

Those girls went out and did office work and so Harry and I had to take care of the birds. We had to make sure that they didn’t get out of the cage. When we cleaned the bottom of the cage, we had to take them and put them on the table. Make sure they didn’t get out to fly around.

One of those birds, they didn’t like me for some reason, I don’t know, I never heard anything. They didn’t like me, I think because I was too small, and Harry was a big boy. Every time I went near them he wanted to bite me, and bite me he did, my fingers. I don’t know whatever happened to him.

**Paul:** Why did they have all these birds? Why did the Bennett family have all these birds?

**Sylvia:** They had a store. It’s a store in Troy or a round about where they sold them, sold birds or chickens.

**Paul:** Are you in New York City now or are you up in Troy?

**Sylvia:** No, up in New York City, in New York. Newark, New Jersey is where we were.

**Paul:** You were in Newark?

**Sylvia:** Newark.

**Paul:** Newark, New Jersey?

**Sylvia:** The people where we went, they had this big house. They had the cellar that was filled with birds. Of course, they would sell the birds. There was one, this one that didn’t like me, but why? I don’t know. We had to clean them every day, and not just on a Saturday.

**Paul:** How old were you when you were living with the Bennett family?

**Sylvia:** About 11.

**Paul:** You'd been here for a few years?

**Sylvia:** Yes.

**Paul:** Before that happened?

**Sylvia:** Yeah.

**Paul:** Tell me a little bit about what you remember about the period of World War 1? In 1915, 1916, 1917, what do you remember about that?

**Sylvia:** I had two brothers in it, one brother. The other brother cried when my one brother went away with the service. My brother Reg, his name was Reginald now and we call him Reg. He cried because they wouldn’t let him go because he was too young. They wouldn’t take him. Then I had a younger brother Archie, but he didn’t go in the war because he was too young.

**Paul:** Did one of your brothers serve during the war?

**Sylvia:** Two.

**Paul:** Which ones served? You said Reggie they didn’t take because he was too young?

**Sylvia:** Yeah, and my brother Bertram.

**Paul:** Bertram?

**Sylvia:** Yeah. He lived in Waterford.

**Paul:** Did he ever talk about his experiences during the war?

**Sylvia:** Never. Never could get a thing away from him, but we lived in Waterford for a good many years. Everybody I think, in Kingdom Come knew us.

**Paul:** Ms. Jones, have you ever gone back to England to visit?

**Sylvia:** Only once, my mother and I went back.

**Paul:** Do you remember what year it was or how old you were?

**Sylvia:** I know I was still going to school, no I wasn’t I was working. I did office work, because I went to school.

**Paul:** Why did you go back to England?

**Sylvia:** To visit my cousins, I got lots of cousins over there. They wanted me to stay, and they came over here and they didn’t like it. They went back.

**Paul:** Was that before you went over to visit or after?

**Sylvia:** After I went over.

**Paul:** Did you go back to the town where you had been born with your mother? Did you go visit the house where your Aunt Cilia lived?

**Sylvia:** Yes.

**Paul:** How did it feel to go to England at that time? How did it feel to be in England?

**Sylvia:** Because I was so young it didn’t make any impression on me at all, just that my mother and I. My father stayed home and took care of the kids.

**Paul:** It didn’t really mean anything to you particularly?

**Sylvia:** No.

**Paul:** Were there any things that your parents taught you when you were young? Rules to live your life by?

**Sylvia:** “Keep your fingers from picking and stealing.” My mother would say, five times a day, “Keep your hands from picking and stealing.” That’s all that she would ever tell us. We were scared to death; we didn’t know what to do.

**Paul:** Do you think of yourself as being English or American?

**Sylvia:** I don’t remember that much of England, even though I did go over and I met all my cousins and everything. I wouldn’t want to live there after we came back. They came over and visited us one time. They didn’t like America, so they went back. They never came back. That’s the end of my story.

**Paul:** That’s a good place for us to end. I want to thank you very much Ms. Jones for letting me come over.

**Sylvia:** Did I help you out?

**Paul:** You did a wonderful job, you really did.

**Sylvia:** That’s all I could think of. I got an itchy head.

**Paul:** This is Paul Seacrest signing off with Sylvia Fannie May Jones.

**Sylvia:** Jones.

**Paul:** On Saturday August 26th 1995 here in Troy, New York. Thank you very much.

**Sylvia:** Okay, I hope...