**Janet:** Today is April 30th 1995 and I have the pleasure of being here in the Ellis Island Studio with Rose Kelly Laughlin who came from Northern Ireland in 1925 when she was 21 years old.

I’m delighted that you were able to come and be interviewed. I’m sure that you’ll have lots of colorful stories, so I’m looking forward to this.

**Rose:** Thank you.

**Janet:** Tell me to start with your birth date.

**Rose:** My birth date, it’s October 20, 1903.

**Janet:** That makes you 91 as of today.

**Rose:** Uh-huh.

**Janet:** Where in Ireland exactly were you born?

**Rose:** Northern Ireland in the county Londonderry.

**Janet:** How about … was in the town or a village or?

**Rose:** No, in the country.

**Janet:** In the country?

**Rose:** Yes.

**Janet:** Did you live on a farm or?

**Rose:** Yes, we had a farm.

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

**Rose:** My father’s name was John Kelly.

**Janet:** And your mother?

**Rose:** My mother was Mary Atkinson, A-T-K-I-N-S-O-N.

**Janet:** Did you have sisters and brothers?

**Rose:** Yes, there was eight in the family. I had three brothers and five sisters altogether including myself.

**Janet:** Can you recall the birth order starting with the oldest and going down the line?

**Rose:** Well, I couldn’t tell you their birthdays.

**Janet:** No, no, just their names.

**Rose:** Oh, the names. My oldest brother was Tommy, Annie, Susan, Mary, Rose, Bridgette, John, Paul.

**Janet:** Were you particularly close to one or more of your brothers or sisters?

**Rose:** Oh, yes, we were all very close. All of us was very close. Can I elaborate on that?

**Janet:** Sure.

**Rose:** We were all very close and we were very happy. There was a lot of … there were three singers in the family, singing at parties and that kind of thing. We loved to dance and we had a cousin that used to come down, well, at least some times twice a week. He was a great violin player so we used to love to dance.

They would come out from the fields, they would … I never really worked in the fields but the rest of the family did. I did embroidery, that’s what I did.

**Janet:** Did you have grandparents who were around at that time?

**Rose:** No, I just remember my father’s mother. I don’t think … I knew her for only but one year and then she passed away. But I can still see her how she looked.

**Janet:** How did she look?

**Rose:** She was very handsome, a tall lady and she had the most gorgeous brown hair. That was our past time when we would go there, say, “Grandma, let down your hair,” and she could sit on it. It was so beautiful and then we youngsters would fuss, especially me myself. We would fuss with that hair. Oh, it was so beautiful.

**Janet:** How did she wear it?

**Rose:** She wore it with … curled around the back you know, put it up and curled around the back and then she would stick a comb in it down here. I remember that so well.

**Janet:** Do you remember any other experiences with that grandmother?

**Rose:** With that grandmother? Yes, I do. My mother whitewashed the houses over there. You know what that means? With lime. Instead of…

**Janet:** Why don’t you describe it in detail?

**Rose:** Instead of painting, the whitewash, the houses. I was the youngest and this big pail of whitewash was all mixed up. I went over … there was an old container of it and I started splashing it. I splashed it right onto my eyes. My grandmother grabbed me up, took me into the couch, put me down and licked it out of my eyes. That I could never forget, she licked it all out.

That was an experience I never forgot but I however … then my mother used to … can I tell this story? My mother used to bring home … was on a pension and my mother used to bring home a little bit of liquor and just a [inaudible 00:05:22] bottle like I don’t know what they call it, a half a pint or something.

My mother would bring her home this little bit of liquor and I made two dolls, one for my little sister and one for myself. We put them in grandma's bed and of course, we thought we’d make them sleep, we’ll give a little bit of grandma’s medicine so that’s what we did. She never said anything, she started laughing.

That’s the things I do remember. Then Nancy, when she got sick, her daughter, Nancy, took her then when she got older because we had such a house full of kids. She took her and that’s where she died.

**Janet:** Where did she die?

**Rose:** Died in her daughter’s house, my aunt’s.

**Janet:** Before that, did she live with you in this house?

**Rose:** Yes, she lived with my mother and her son, my father. My father was her son. My father died young, he died when he was 52 years old with hearts disease. He was a very tall handsome man and reddish hair. I’m the only one that took the light hair after him and I think I was a favorite brat in the house.

**Janet:** Why do you think you were the favorite?

**Rose:** Well, any time my father come home or when he’s going anywhere, I was … he was a great for riding horseback, he loved horses. He would pick me up and set me on the horse and when we’d be eating breakfast or anything when I was little, I’d be on his knee sitting.

He built the schoolhouse that I went to, my father did and I used to follow him down. I wasn’t at school yet but I remember one time following him there on my bare feet. It was about a mile down the road and this nephew of my father’s was working along with my father at the schoolhouse. He said, “John, put her on your shoulder and take her home.” That’s what I remember about my father.

**Janet:** Was he a carpenter by trade? Is that what he did?

**Rose:** He done everything. He built a bridge there that crossed over to the church. He really ... he was a very intelligent man, my father was. He built the bridge that we went over to, to church and he built the schoolhouse and that was there for years. A second cousin of mine now bought that schoolhouse and has it as a dwelling house.

It’s a beautiful place with cement walls and a big iron gate and two outhouses. That my father built. He really could have done anything. I think too, we had the only ... we had the big open fires.

**Janet:** In the kitchen?

**Rose:** In the kitchen with the iron grates and the crooks on it and the cranes, you know what I mean?

**Janet:** Where the pot hangs down?

**Rose:** Uh-huh. He made two braces, I don’t know what you’d call them. We called them back stones but there were two arches like you ... built up and then the monkey face went across. Well, they were cut stones and then they were cut like little hearts.

When I was talking to them the last time I was home, they said you won’t see another kitchen set like that anywhere. But I come out to my cousins in Manorhaven in Long Island and she said, “Yes, I found another one” and it was in this Protestant church. She took me down to see them and it was just exactly like my fathers.

**Janet:** This was on Long Island?

**Rose:** Huh?

**Janet:** On Long Island?

**Rose:** On Long Island, yes. He really could have done anything, my father was very ... and another thing, we were catholic and all around my place was protestant. Everyone but I was in every house ... and my father would shoe their horses, he could drench their clothes, anything. He just could have done anything. Taking care of the young male calves and he just was a man who had a great head on him.

He used to walk up and down the street with these ... they talk so much about the Protestants today and the Catholics over there. That wasn’t the same in my time. I remember one day my father was walking up with a James Blaire. He comes around, picks me up with the two arms and throws me over his shoulder and carries me home, this kind of thing. Those things I don’t forget because it’s nice things you know.

**Janet:** What was the Catholic-Protestant relationship in your time?

**Rose:** In my time? I didn’t know any difference. Not a big difference. We had the ... in the school, it was a nice enough school. We had the Catholic schoolmaster who went to school with my father. The lady teacher was Mrs. Smith, a Protestant and I used to go over there.

She had ... one daughter was a schoolteacher but then the other one was a ... she was my age. Maybe she might have been a year older but I used to go over. She would ask me over on Saturday night and I would stay until Monday and we used to sleep together.

I remember so well ... I was religious, I still am very religious but the two of us would go down on our knees at the side of the bed and say our own prayers and then hop onto bed.

All my girl friends in those days was a Hetty Smith, Naomi Ritchie as a schoolteacher and I don’t know what ... Hetty Smith was a very beautiful girl. I think she got married young and Lilly Smith, she was a schoolteacher. That was Mrs. Smith’s daughters, she had two daughters and they were both schoolteachers.

I was very quiet when I was a youngster. I never went out to play in the schoolyard. She used to chase me around the desks, the schoolmasters. I think we were the pets because my mother used to go over. See, my father died young and my mother was a widow and my mother did her washing. I think I was a pet with her.

When I grow up, my feet would be wet or anything, she would set me right and I think at the stove. It wasn’t an open fire they had in the school, it was a big range. Sat me over there and put my feet up.

She would run after me and when there were any sewing to do in the school, we had a sewing class, and I always took my embroideries. She said, “Rose, you can take your embroidery with you and I would embroider.” I was known as the little embroiderer in the neighborhood.

**Janet:** Your friends, Hetty and...

**Rose:** Hetty Gibson.

**Janet:** Gibson, any of your friends, what do you remember about the kinds of things you did together with your friends?

**Rose:** We went to the store together. We pulled flowers together, we chased butterflies together. Our farm, there was a big field, we called it the park. It was a big square piece of garden. They would come up there and we would chase butterflies, put them in jars and then let them go without ... they weren’t ... want to die or something, we’d let them go.

Some of them fields was white with daisies, they were beautiful. Then would have hide and go seek, skip rope and there was hill, a little hill. We’d lie down and roll to the bottom. We done everything. I was a great for skipping rope, and I was a good runner too.

**Janet:** Do you remember any of those skip rope rhymes that you used to say?

**Rose:** Yeah and even I can’t forget them. I used to [inaudible 00:15:20] and skipped away home from school. Oh, I know a lot of rhymes, *Ring around the Rosies*, we used to do the ring around and all that kind of thing and I forget [inaudible 00:15:32]

**Janet:** If you think of them, you can just say them later. How about the dolls you made? What were your dolls like?

**Rose:** Oh, what were the dolls ... A little small potato for the face and then I make like a pair of stockings. I get an old sock and ... a little sock, and thread it all out and stuff the leg. Then make little dresses for them and that kind of thing. People gave me a lot of little brooches and pins because they always see me doing something, getting dressed up. They knew I was crazy for getting dressed up and I always put a little brooch in here.

I’d embroider like a [inaudible 00:16:27] backstitch around for ... with a different thread to give it color and I liked it. Oh, I done a lot of things. I could think of anything like that.

Here’s a little rhymes “Here we come gathering nuts in May, nuts in May, nuts in May. Here we come gathering nuts in May, this cold and frosty morning.” That’s one. Yes, I remember that one but ... Oh, I have a whole lot of them but I just can’t remember them right.

**Janet:** How about your mother, what was she like?

**Rose:** Oh, my mother worked ... oh, she was the greatest. Even when I come out here to this country and met some of my old neighbors, this was the way they would say, “Oh, your mother was wonderful. Your mother was something else.” I don’t know how she raised us, eight of us. She just worked away. She lived until she was 78 years old, [inaudible 00:17:32] only small.

She was a great singer. Yeah, she had a beautiful voice. She just worked away. She embroidered too, that’s from her I got. Her and I we would take out so much for the week, seven days and finish it up and take it back in. In our town, it was Tuesday you went down to the market so we took it down and we took out some more and that kept the house going.

**Janet:** Where would you take it to?

**Rose:** Well, there was a place ... in the embroider place. Mrs. Sheels was the one I knew so well. She had a great place with piles of this marked embroidery. Pillowcases and sheets, was that ... buttoning. Do you know what buttoning is?

**Janet:** Is that a stitch?

**Rose:** Yeah, it’s a stitch, a backstitch and quilt work. Then they had ... there was nightgowns, pillowcases, everything, sheets and especially blouses on [inaudible 00:18:49], I used to do that. We had a little thing that they gave us for cutting. We embroidered around the marking first. You traced it around and then you sewed it around and then you cut the leaves, little leaves, like branches and all that.

I should have took some with me because I had ... and then there was the other we used to take out dozens and dozens and dozens of handkerchiefs and there’d be one embroidered corner. This is Irish, that’s Irish lace there, embroider the corner. Oh, it was different threads and the we’d take them and then you would take a dozen for them.

**Janet:** Did you continue that kind of work when you came here? Did you keep doing that Irish embroidery?

**Rose:** No, I did it for myself.

**Janet:** Oh, for yourself.

**Rose:** Yes, I did it for myself. The latest thing I did was when my son was in school, they went to the parochial school. The nun asked them one day to do the little white squares that the priest used to put over the chalice, our parents to embroider so I embroidered… I think mine was the only one they kept. That’s what he said. Yeah, I did a lot of that. I still, do a lot of things. I give a lot to Mary, my daughter.

**Janet:** Now, as far as your mother was concerned, were there any kinds of things that you did besides the embroidering? Either you helped her to do or you did with her?

**Rose:** Oh, I did all the patching. You didn’t throw out and you did the elbow and changed the collars on the shirts. All these things now. All for being economical. We used to knit a lot, not socks, we had sheep. You sent it away to [inaudible 00:21:17] and you got back the wool.

My aunt Nancy was a great spinner on the spinning wheel and I used to carry the wool for her. She said I was the best carrier of wool she ever had.

When she would start to knit and get the thing in order, she always brought me over for a week, Aunt Nancy, and I would sit with her and carry the wool.

**Janet:** What about school? What do you remember about your school days?

**Rose:** Oh, yes. Well, being a schoolmaster, I went to school with my father. He said to me one day when I went down, “Come on now Rosie and buckle up your whiskers.” That’s what he said. I was a very nice student, terribly nice man too. Of course, he only loved my brothers anyhow. It was awfully nice. I couldn’t say anything.

Oh, I’ll tell you a joke about my sister Mary. Mary was very quiet and when she went to school, she didn’t want to go in to the school. She was one older than I was so he said, “Mary, you’re as sour as butter milk.” She come home and she told my father what they said to her and my father went to school with her and knowing him so well. He had very black curly hair. It was more like Spanish than Irish and she says, “You tell him tomorrow and he’s as black as soot.”

Well, these are silly things I’m telling you but they all happened. Anyway, during that time, my brother told me he was very smart, the master couldn’t put him any further. I never was … they would hurt you in school with a ruler and never got a slap.

When our master was sick or anything and been out, our schoolmistress would come in and teach us, teach us Catholics or catechism. A few times, she sent me in to read, she gave me something to read to her children. She trusted me because she knew me so well. That’s the way things was, just so nice.

Mrs. was … she was a lovely lady. The master, Master John too was very, very nice. The last thing I remember about him was him coming to my father’s wake and funeral. He picked me up and put me on one of his knees. That’s the last thing I remember about Master John.

**Janet:** How old were you? How old were you when your father died?

**Rose:** I don’t know, might have been nine maybe or eight or nine or something. I know we were all young. My youngest brother wasn’t even born, he was born two months after and I took care of him. He was my favorite and he died five months ago in England. I helped him buy his house in England. He had two houses when he died and he had four kids. His wife stills lives and we still write to each other.

**Janet:** What do you remember about him when he was a little boy when you were taking care of him?

**Rose:** Well, he was heavier, I was always a skinny little kid and I couldn’t carry him or anything. They had these chairs and the round … we called them the round chairs in the back, like sticks up the back. Three or four up the back. I put him on one of those chairs, tied a scarf under his arms or around the back and tied another one here around the waist and I trailed him through the house when I’d go to do anything. I trailed him around with him. That I remember.

Well, I done everything for him, combed his hair and kept him nice and then he went to school. When I went back home ... when I left he was eight years old. When I went back home he was 12 and he still had the short pants. We called them the knickers. I took him and I bought him a pair of long pants and I bought him a bicycle.

When we went down ... the neighborhood girl, when they all walked down to the church to mass on a Sunday and here he comes riding back and forth and I didn’t even knew him, it was a long [inaudible 00:27:06]. He stops and he says, “Rosie don’t you know me?” That was that. Then he went to England when my mother died and he got married there, married a Dublin girl.

**Janet:** Do you remember your father’s funeral and wake from when you were about nine years old?

**Rose:** I didn’t go to the funeral. I didn’t get to him but I remember his wake very well and I can still see him lying in his [inaudible 00:27:37] in the house.

**Janet:** Was there anything about the Irish wake that you remember that was...?

**Rose:** Well, they used to get pipes you know, clear pipes for smoking. The family got them and left them on a table there tobacco, stuff, and smoke. Then there would be tea, they would make tea. They’d have tea with homemade bread and bought bread and everyone that come would have a cup of tea and have whatever they wanted, tea, a piece of cake or whatever.

Then they would go and some of them would stay all night and the candles was lighted around the bed. The priest in the parish was great friends of my father’s. They used to ... the way they give him his funeral ... his fuel, fuel.

Each one would bring load of turf and my father always built the turf stack. I remember my sister and myself throwing out the turf for my father to build and he would build that like a wall, up like [inaudible 00:29:13] the top.

Yeah and then we’d go into the parochial house and we would have tea. I can still remember the raisin bread that they would have. I loved that when we were kids.

**Janet:** Tea and raisin bread and the turf fire?

**Rose:** Yeah, yeah.

**Janet:** Well, I think maybe this is a good time. We’re going to pause now and turn over the tape. We’ll continue in a minute.

Okay, we are continuing now on side two. I’m speaking with Rose Laughlin. Tell me now what you expected your life would be like when you were growing up. Did you have dreams or aspirations or what you thought you would do when you grew up? Do you remember anything like that?

**Rose:** Yes, we had two ... I guess you might say ... there were my mother’s second cousins and their name was Cassidy. See, mother’s mother was Cassidy. They lived beside us and they had been in this country at home at that time when I was about maybe 15 or 16. Of course, I was always talking to them and when they used to come onto our yard. There was a big iron gate between our two farms. But we had the well, the water. We had the spring well and they used to have to come down.

They would start talking to my mother and some of us youngsters, I used to do it a lot, I’d pick up their cans and go down a little lane and fill them and bring them up to them. Nobody said anything, they only say thank you.

I used to go in and sit with them and they told me all about America. They were great singers. They would sing this special song. I can’t remember it, well I know it. They would tell me all ... you know, it’s hard work. Probably maybe they were domestics. They didn’t say what they done but it was hard work and they didn’t tell me. Of course, I didn’t think of asking because I was too young, how long they were there.

But they must have come home ... they must have had quite a few dollars home with them because they had two men working for them on the farm. There was one older brother, he was always sick so he didn’t do anything. They ... some of us would ... when they’d be cutting their oats, the corn as we called it, when they would cutting that or anything, we just would go over the fence and help them but they never could come to us because they were that much older.

They had chickens in the farms and they had a white mare and we had a chestnut horse. When we let the horse and the mare out, the mare was on the other side and the horse on our side. You should have seen those two with their heads together across the fence. We used to say, “What’s making love.” You should have seen them, it was really funny. I was minding this little boy out in [inaudible 00:33:03] and I told him this story now. When the mother got it, she put it in the paper.

**Janet:** What did they tell you? Do you remember? Besides saying it was hard work, did they tell you things about America?

**Rose:** Yeah, they said you would like America. They told me that I was just made for it, that I would like it.

**Janet:** Do you remember why they thought you were made for it?

**Rose:** Well, I think I was always fussy, dressy and I think I always wore a smile to tell you the truth. I was always laughing and playing jokes. I was kind to everybody and they just liked me. I think I had the gift [inaudible 00:33:57].

**Janet:** When did you decide or how was it decided that you would come?

**Rose:** My sister Bridgette, her and I were both to come. She was a year younger than me or 14 months and we decided I just want to go to America. I always want to help my mother and when I would make anything from the embroidery and all, I never kept it, it went to the house.

I think ... there was a quota and I signed up when I was 18 for it and so did my sister, younger, she was 17. We were supposed to go to Belfast to get our passports. I got a sore throat and I couldn’t go on the day appointed but she went with this other girl and two brothers and a sister. Them three went and I was left alone of course.

Two weeks later, I went myself up to Belfast. Well, my brothers took me of course, my brothers took me. I went up to Belfast to get my passport and I had mine before them.

**Janet:** Do you know why?

**Rose:** I had mine before they had theirs. This young fellow ... well, I went up to the desk and he gave me the papers and all that. He said, “Would like me to fill them out for you?’ and I said, “Would you please?”And so he pulled out my paper and shook hands with me so that was that.

Then I was down ... I went down to the well to wash potatoes. I had a pail and a basket and there was this spouting and you put the basket in and throw the potatoes in and then the water. I didn’t know ... I was shaking the basket and I didn’t know there was anybody around. I didn’t see nobody. I didn’t know this young 15-year old had a crush on me, a young boy and they started throwing earth through the bushes.

I never lifted at my head, I didn’t bother look but when the ... there was a bigger ball of ... I lifted my head up and here I got hit right across the brow and on the cheekbone there. He wanted to get my attention, he put a stone in it, a rock in it and fractured my skull bone.

This other man was coming up over a field and he seen me fall down. He picks me up and takes me into the house and my mother say, “Well, she lost her eye, she’ll be blind.” He says, “No, I’ll watch her closely. No,” he says, “Her eyesight is all right, I watched her closely.” I laid there for two years. I was deaf and I was blind and I thought that’s goodbye America for me.

When I got ... I was 123 pounds and when I got better and all that I was 97. I split my brow there and here and when they took me doctor, the doctor said fractured a skull bone. Well, that boy, even to my ... a niece of mine come out on a trip and he was a married man at that time. He says, “Tell Rosie,” he says, “If you see her that I never forgot that.” He says, “I’m very sorry.” He says, “I might have put her eye out,” he says.

When I went back in four years, he was 15 and four, he was 19. He said, “I’m a young man now Rosie,” he says, “Will you marry me?” he said. He was still regretting what he’d done so I just laughed at him. I intended to come back and he got married a dozen times.

**Janet:** Well, this time for those two years, did you think that...?

**Rose:** No, I just lay there.

**Janet:** Did you think you would get better?

**Rose:** No, I don’t know, I don’t think I ... I think I didn’t think I was going to get better because my head ... they kept pouring the spring water on my head. They put a plastic ... a big plastic over the end of the couch and I had my head there and somebody ... I used to say, “Oh, my head, oh, my head,” and they’d pour the spring water on my head.

**Janet:** So it was like you had a headache? It was a headache that you had for all that time?

**Rose:** Yeah, yeah. I never thought then, you know. Well, then I packed up and I didn’t gain much weight but they were very religious over there. They had me in the center and they said the rosary around me every night. Even the neighbors would come on and everybody heard that I’d lost an eye. Thank God I didn’t, anyway, it healed up and everything and I come and to Derry.

**Janet:** Before that, do you remember when it healed? Do you remember when you started to realize that you were going to be all right?

**Rose:** Oh, yes, when I started to hear, when I could hear. See, I was deaf too and I would write down and scratch things down. When I started to hear, that’s when I knew I was getting better. My mother used to say thank God and all that.

**Janet:** Then you had already gotten your visa because you had...?

**Rose:** Yeah, I had my passport there and all. During that time by the way, my sister died. That [inaudible 00:41:16] she died with pneumonia within one week.

**Janet:** Bridgette?

**Rose:** Yes and so ... then there after me ... you don’t go alone. I said, “I’m going to America,” so I come to America.

**Janet:** You travelled by yourself?

**Rose:** There was a girl from home with me. She got off at New York but I went on to Philadelphia. Her brother now was the fireman and he took her off. He said ... when he met me afterwards, he said, “If, I’d known it was you, I’d put on my uniform and I took you off too.” He could have you know.

I got better and I come out, I come to Derry. My brother ... I had a boyfriend of course. He wanted me to get married but I didn’t want to get married. I was always on tender to help my mother.

**Janet:** How long was it from the time you got better until you left for America?

**Rose:** It was 18 to ... two years. I was 20 and I was in the third year, I was 21 when I come out.

**Janet:** When did you get the ... have the stone hit?

**Rose:** It all come ... it was healed up and brow healed up. Seems I got better fast I think. You forget kind of, you know. Anyway, when I come to Derry and I passed everything and I come to Derry. I met six girls, and the girl that was with me ... five girls and the girl that was with me. There were seven of us and we were all about the same age. They were from a different county, they were two counties, Donegal and Cavan and I was from Derry.

We come onto Derry that day and it was February and it was very cold. My two brothers was with me and a boyfriend. This young fellow was ... we had a handful of papers and he was examining. When we was standing there, somebody come, I can’t remember who or why, and they took the girls, all but me, left me alone to get their hair washed there and I didn’t have to go.

I thought that was ... I often think of that. The other four of them ... it was five of them. Five of us, yeah, five of us. The other girls took their suitcases but the girl that was with me, I had her two suitcases and my own two and I couldn’t move. They were all passing me by in the line and he was taking the papers.

So he said ... this nice young fellow, when he come, he said, this fellow that was taking the papers, “Would you mind just taking a couple of them suitcases up to the tender. That little girl is standing just for over an hour.” He says, “Not at all,” so he took my two suitcases and I took my own two and we went up on to the tender and he took my papers.

After they were all finished, the papers, finished taking the papers, he comes up and he sits beside me this young fellow and he says they were taken to get their hair washed. I says, “Is that what they done? I didn’t know where they went,” I said. “Will they be back soon?” “Yeah,” he says, “In about half an hour.”

He sat there and he said, “Was that your boyfriend you was with?” and I says, “Yes, it was.” He says, “He was a fool to let you go.” Then he shook hands with me and ... he was an Irishman too. Shook hands with me and wished me good luck in America and all that.

Then when I went on the boat, the boat ... we was a circus. People just come ... there was two men come, one was a detective from Chicago and his name was Dennis Kelly. Can you imagine, I was Rose, he pulls out his passport and show it. Then when they were out on the shuffle ... on the deck with the shuffle ... what do you call it?

**Janet:** Shuffleboard?

**Rose:** Yeah, and we were called and the guard come on the boat. We all had to go down by the way for our passports to get examined. In comes this man behind me from the shuffleboard and he said when he give the orders to go down to get the passports, “I don’t want to [inaudible 00:46:54]. He put up his hand anyway and he says [inaudible 00:47:02] Kelly.”

When that was done and all I didn’t have to go down with my passport. When that was done and all, he comes over and showed me his passport, his name was Kelly. Can you believe it? I just never could get over all the things that happened to me.

**Janet:** Tell me how you would describe yourself. What did you look like when you were coming to this country?

**Rose:** I’ll tell you what they called me, they called me the pretty collie. I had two long braids of hair and I had two bows in the back. There was a kid around, a little child around and had his ... I loved kids and everybody was so nice.

They took me up first class, that fellow that took on my suitcases. He was sick and he’d come down one day to the steerage where I was and he said, “I had ... I took up two suitcases for ...” such a nice accent, “For a little girl.” He says, “I wonder if she’s sick or where she is.” I says ... and so we shook hands and we were friends there.

He come down there and he took me up to the party. His uncle was bringing him out here. They weren’t Catholic. His uncle brought him out here and so I was taken up first class. I had a couple of dance ... I was a good dancer and I had a couple of dances with him. He used to ... when they’d play the piano and there were about singing, I could sing a piece too.

I shook hands with the captain and it seemed to me I was the belle of the ball. Every day when we come down for breakfast, the stewards, they were young Scot fellows and the seats we were sitting on was like a piano stool and you lifted up the top. There was [inaudible 00:49:17] there was oranges, there was apples and [inaudible 00:49:20]. There was a lot of jealousy of course, they were all nice to me.

Of course, I defied them anyway. All in all, I really had a ball out nine days on the ocean. What more can I tell you?

**Janet:** Well, there was a storm when you were...

**Rose:** Oh, yes, the storm, yeah, the storm. I don’t know how far we were out in the ocean, there was a big storm and I wasn’t sick a day nor an hour. When I was home, I went down to see … I used to do our church, altar three months of the year. I would walk to the parochial house and our priest said to Annie the housekeeper, “Make Rose some oatmeal fowls,” you know square fowls like that.

Then I’d take them and he says, “When she can’t eat anything, she can nibble on those.” Of course I divide them around with the people on the boat but I wasn’t sick a day.

**Janet:** How about other people during that storm, during the storm on ship?

**Rose:** They were all very excited, a lot of them where excited. I’ve never seen … I remember before the storm I remember the old boat, I remember just going like this all time.

**Janet:** Back and forth?

**Rose:** Yeah, but I wasn’t sick or anything. I think there were really some jealousy that ... well, I was just lucky. I carried- you were Jewish? Well you understand the Catholic. I carried my Rosary beads with me and I thrust them around my arm and had the cross in my hand all the time. I had great faith. I was very happy. I was always a happy person. I could see the right side of things.

**Janet:** Can you remember when the ship … it was the Columbia, right?

**Rose:** The Old Columbia, the last time.

**Janet:** The last voyage. Did you know it was the last voyage when you were on the ship?

**Rose:** Yeah, they were all talking about it. There was a young boy, nobody could take him and he was so sick. He was out on the deck and he just lay there in February, he lay there. The boy was trying to get him and he was so sick, he wouldn’t come in. He was a very handsome young boy, an Irish boy and come to me and said, “Rosie, would you try and get him in?”

Do you want to know how I got him in and kissed him up? I went down on my knee and kissed on the cheek and I just told him, “Come on get up and come on with me.” I says, “You know you are going to get your death of cold,” and he walked arm in arm with me.

**Janet:** Do you remember coming into the New York Harbor?

**Rose:** Do I remember when I come in? On the old tender, yeah, I remember.

**Janet:** The Statue of Liberty?

**Rose:** Yeah, we all jumped up and clapped our hands and hollered I guess too you know. Yes, I remember. I can still see it the way it was and there was and was icicles on the old tender as thick as my arm hanging down and then I remember passing ... I can’t remember stepping when we come on the door until we sailed here. I can’t remember that, you know what door I went down, it was a big white, open door steps up to as far as I can remember.

**Janet:** You can go down there.

**Rose:** It was like a barn place like with … to me it’s what they called I think it was like cement blocks or just not plastered. You could see the blocks or something like that, that’s 70 years ago. The lady come and give me a clothes hanger and a towel and you take off all your clothes. I can see the pegs up there where you hang ... when you put your clothes and hang them up there.

She says, “Open your braids here.” When I had them on, she says, “Shake out your hair,” I shook out my hair. She examined me then. She examined me then from the head to the foot all the way down and she says, “Very good, you passed.” I was really scared after the eyes and ears and the whole but I looked good but I was only 97 pounds.

I remember I had a ... we had this dressmaker because it was a big family. She used to sew quite a lot for ... and I had this lovely, brown dress. These two American ladies that lived besides us, they give me braiding with green and white like a twist. She put it all around my collar and put a band and a big buckle on the side, and I thought I was the [inaudible 00:55:24].

I got a ... my cousin bought me a beautiful, silk plain sunflowers and it was a beautiful thing. She was in Belfast and she bought the blouse. I thought I was the cast but [inaudible 00:55:41]

**Janet:** Is there anything else about Ellis Island that you...?

**Rose:** Yeah, she said, “Get dressed now,” so I got dressed. When I got dressed, she hang this on the button because I had a coat with a button.

**Janet:** That’s inspection?

**Rose:** Yeah, and she hung that on me, passed and inspected. Yes, I remember there was two other girls sent back home.

**Janet:** Do you know why?

**Rose:** Well they didn’t pass the inspection. To tell you the truth, some people even to look at them you know, they just didn’t suit where they were coming I think. But when I was on the ship and I watched the people, what they were doing and I figured that’s what I’d be doing in America. A lot of the things that they were doing there. The way they waited on the table.

**Janet:** You mean when you were up in the first-class when you…?

**Rose:** When I was coming out on the boat, I’d seen the young boys working and then the man in the library asked me to go and talk to him. He was a Scotts fellow and they liked to talk about Ireland and Scotland and I used to go up and talk to him. I figured all the things I’ve seen that they were doing that I’d be doing some of them things in America but when I went to the office. That’s the boat bit now, that’s when I got off the boat and I had a ticket on me hand. I don’t know who gave me that ticket. It was a ticket for Philadelphia for the train. I don’t know where I got that ticket or who give it to me.

**Janet:** Did anyone meet you? You just went by yourself to Philadelphia?

**Rose:** Nobody met me because my cousin was working for Fords in Philadelphia. During the time that I was preparing, Fords moved to Detroit and he was one of the foremen. He was there seven years at the time and he went with them.

He told me to go to the boarding house. “Don’t change anything because they’ll put you back but go to the boarding house where I was boarding,” he says and he was from [inaudible 00:58:30] in the boarding house. He was from home with me too but he was a lot older and I didn’t know him at home anything.

Apart from that, these other two girls, they were three of them I think, two or three of them left and a sister come to meet them at Broad Street Station down in Philadelphia. She come to meet them and a friend of hers took the day off and she said, “I’ll go with you to meet the greenhorns.” These girls told them the sister and the lady my story, which was true about my cousin and all that. She says, “Would you mind if I took you up there to the boarding house?” I said, “I’d be delighted.”

We got … we parted with the girls and we got on the trolley car, the old trolley cars in those days. We were just one block, traveled one block and on comes a girl right from home with me in Ireland. I said, “Aren’t you Bridgette Marlon from [inaudible 00:59:49]?” and she said, “Yes, I am,” and she said to her, she says, “In the name of God, who are you?”

She was so flabbergasted. I said, “I’m Rose Kelly from [inaudible 01:00:03],” and she stood there, she couldn’t say anything else. She held my hand and come up with me said, “What is your phone number?” She told her. She says, “Locus 2612,” I never forgot it.

**Janet:** Wait, we need to pause right here to change the tape but just hold on that. I want to finish that.

This is Janet Levine from the National Park Service and this is tape two and I’ve been speaking with Rose Kelly Laughlin. We are going to continue here with this story that you were telling about when you arrived in Philadelphia and you saw someone who you recognized.

**Rose:** We got on the trolley car when we got at Broad Street Station and we rode one block and on comes this young woman from home with me in Ireland. I said … I got up and I said, “Aren’t you Bridgette Marlon from [inaudible 01:01:30]?” She said, “Yes, I am. On the name of God, who are you?” I said, “I’m Rose Kelly from [inaudible 01:01:41].” She said, “Oh, you were only that height when I left.”

Then Lizzie said ... the girl that was taking me up, she said, “Where do you live? Do they have a phone number.” She told her Locus 2612.” She said, “I’ll call you,” and she called her and they got together and I knew the half of Philadelphia.

I went to one house. They took me to one house. His name was Johnnie Haggardy and they told me who … they told him who I was. They said I was a daughter’s John Kelly of [inaudible 01:02:36]. He gets up off his rocking chair and he said, “There’s no chair in the house good enough for a daughter of John Kelly’s,” that’s the way he liked my father. Then from then on, I knew a lot of people.

Lizzie took me up to the boarding house where my cousin was but he had moved to Detroit with Fords Motor Company. When we got there she looked in and there was nobody there but the gentleman himself and she said, “Oh, I don’t like the looks of this,” she said, she meant there was no woman around so she says, “Would you come up with me to my cousin’s in West Philadelphia?” and I said, “All right, I will.” Knew her [inaudible 01:03:41] for nine days in the boat and everything.

She took me up to her cousins in West Philadelphia and they had a beautiful house, a beautiful daughter and he was such a gentleman. He was a park man in the park. He had a uniform in the park in Philadelphia.

**Janet:** A park ranger?

**Rose:** Yes. Anyway, they were thrilled to have me. I think they liked to have me with the daughter. Lizzie stayed that night in that house, her cousin’s house and then she said the next morning, “Would you like to come down with me,” she said, “To where I work?” She never said what their name was or anything so I said, “Sure.” I got dressed and I went down with her to where she was working.

There was another lady there from … [inaudible 01:04:49], she was a cook in the house, Lizzie was the waitress. Lizzie got the breakfast ready and took it up to old people upstairs, the man and the wife. They both had a day nurse and the night nurse.

When Lizzie went up and told them where she was and that she had a green horn, as they call it there so the lady said, “Will you bring her up so we see her?” Lizzie come down and this is what Lizzie said to me, “Don’t put your hand out to shake hands with her,” she said, “If she wants, she’ll do it.”

Lizzie took me up and went up there and I remember stopping in front. I can see the old lady sitting there and the nurse down at her side and she looked at me. “What is your name?” she said and I said, “Rose Kelly,” sticks out her hand and she said, “With a name like that,” this is the way she said it, “With a name like that you can stay in the guest room here as long as you want.”

Their name was Kelly. They weren’t Catholic but that made no difference, she was a Kelly.

But I didn’t stay, of course. I wanted to get a job and so on. Then I went to … Lizzie put me on a trolley and I went up to her cousin’s that night and I stayed there and then walking distance just to the office where you could get a job. I went and I got the job right away. I was walking back up again and there was nobody on that street. The park bench was there and the big iron post all fenced in and then this side was houses. It wasn’t a sewer on that place that I’d seen only that one old gentleman working for [inaudible 01:07:10].

I was crying, I was so cold and this old Polish man, he was standing at the smoke lamp, he was standing with a white moustache, I can still see him. He says, “Little girl, what are you crying about?” I said, “I’m so cold. I’m so cold,” I said. He took me over and put my hands over the lamp. Then there was a police car coming up and he called the policeman to take me home.

I stayed on the running board because I had a short distance to go and maybe that’s where I supposed to stay anyway. I stayed on the running board and he took me up and when went to a short place he said, “Now your name wouldn’t be Kelly, would it?” in Irish brother. I said, “Yeah, how did you know?” and after that he started laughing. After that, he got his wallet and showed his name was Kelly too. [inaudible 01:08:28] Kelly.

Anyway, he took me up. He left me off and I went into the place in there. That lady that I got that job with took me twice to the Devon Horse Show. They had no children themselves. Their name was Ensley, Mr. and Mrs. Ensley.

**Janet:** How do you spell that?

**Rose:** I don’t know. I think it was E-L ... I guess you could spell better than me. There were two other Irish girls there and it was just a lovely place. She said to Annie the cook ... they bought me uniforms and she said to Annie, “Send Rose up. I’d like to talk her,” she said. “She’s such a child,” she said. I went up to the upstairs like this. She opens the door and laughed and then went away and I went up. Of course, I was so embarrassed when I got up there. She took my measure for my uniforms and all that kind of thing. That was that part.

I stayed there in that place until my cousin come over, three times she come over before I come and she said one day she’d make me the parlor maid.

Then I come over to New York and well, I didn’t mind children. I worked out in Long Island and they were a lot of us those sides. I worked in this house. He was a Mr. Clark, he was an attorney and he won the case for the Metro Goldwyn Mayer at that time, in the movie industry. His name was Mr. Clark and they had a son and a daughter.

I was minding them and of course, I was minding them partly but I did the cooking for them too. They had a chauffeur and they had another maid there and she used to take the girls ... took the kids to the Greenvale School, drive them. It was there that I’ve seen Gloria Vanderbilt and Medina Hutton. They used to come up and have lunch parties or ... and all the boys was after Medina. She was so pretty, Medina Hutton.

They were just nice girls. You’d think they’d be stiffer, what they had a maids with them but they were just so nice. Gloria Vanderbilt had the most gorgeous black hair, beautiful black hair I ever seen at that time. I used to read about her two aunts. One of them used to go with the Duke of Windsor and all that. See being English and all that, me, Northern Ireland, I was always interested in these things.

Anyway, they were going to Greenvale School, the neighbors lived there and then I remember after that when I left I watched ... they kept in touch with the papers and I’ve seen where Medina Hutton got married to a man of the name s[inaudible 01:12:27] or something. He was related to the Colgate’s family.

**Janet:** Is that at the period of time when you met the Marks brother chauffeur?

**Rose:** That I?

**Janet:** The Marks brother chauffeur.

**Rose:** No, no.

**Janet:** When was that?

**Rose:** No, I was working for a family by the name of Bakers. I was minding young James Baker at the time. I always went to the 11 O’clock Mass on Sunday and I notice this big limousine pass me by at that time of the day on Sunday and there was many people on the street.

This big limousine go past and when it was empty it would go slow. One day he stopped and he said, “Would you like me to take you to church?” He knew where I was going. I looked at him and all that. He was an old Jewish gentleman and he was so wrinkled. I’ve never seen anybody wrinkled like that. He was so nice.

He said, “Get into the back seat and I will take you up.” He knew I was going to the great [inaudible 01:13:53]. He says, “I drive my lady,” he says, “Mark’s brother’s mother. I take her to the synagogue he says every Sunday,” and he showed me where the synagogue was there and my church was there.

I don’t know how long he took me. He called me then and the little collie. I don’t know, he took me ... mostly he took me for over a year to church. One day, I got into the car on Sunday and he says, “My dear lady,” he says, “Died on that seat where you are sitting,” and I never actually forgot that. He says, “She was a dear lady, “he said, and he took me up to church.

Then he come back after that, another time and I was just wondering, did he come back to say good-bye to me because he said [inaudible 01:15:03] he says, “Well now my little Collin,” he says, “This is the last time I will see you,” and that was the last time I’ve seen.

I’ve often wondered about that and I never seen her face until I seen movie not long ago when she was on that movie and I stayed up to watch it and I seen her the pretty woman she was. Yeah, so that’s my story.

**Janet:** Wow.

**Rose:** Yeah, it was fantastic but that old gentleman, God rest him if he’s dead and everything. He was so good.

**Janet:** Was this before you met your husband? Did this happen before you met your husband?

**Rose:** Yes, yes, yes. That all happened to me. The Bakers, I was there I think three years in that place and they went away up to Boston and this girl called me and she said, want to come up and work with her in Irvington, the Hudson.

I went and that was the girl that come out with me, by the way. Her name was Annie. This other girl was there in this house to and her name was Cathleen. When I was there for a while, Annie left and Cathleen and I were working together.

Cathleen, she just did everything, mind the kids and everything. She said her brother was coming out. Cathleen said her brother was coming to this country. This was 1928. He come out and he come up to where we were and we were introduced. Nothing happened or anything for a long time.

In fact, he had a task to go to work in one of the hotels. He got it from Ireland when he was working and he just went right down and got a job. Then he … we started to go out together and I was working with Cathleen about four years or three years, two or three years anyway at this time. That’s how I met my husband.

**Janet:** What was his name?

**Rose:** Owen, Owen Laughlin and he was very nice. He looked like a Spaniard. He had black curly hair, very good looking. I had a picture to take with me and Mary say, “I don’t think that.” No, he was a very good man. I always say if I get the honest man in the wide world. He was so honest. He worked for Fordham then and he worked in Manhattan College in his later years. No, he worked really for the Board of Education and then he retired from there.

Then he was working and he met one of the Priests from Fordham. He went up and they talked a while and he worked with them with the food bit, a restaurant’s owner. Then when he left that and we moved over to the west side near the Hudson where my daughter lives now. He was out where walking around Cortland Park or he was and we met this brother, Christian Brother from Manhattan College from home. He was right from home with him in Ireland so he went off and worked there. He didn’t get much but just to pass the time, he got his food. He adored them all. They were so nice to him.

Then when my daughter now got sick, that young man’s wife got sick, she died. She got sick. She had in all the time them bandages they … the things that they used for menstruation. What do you call them? She all swollen up and then she died in Valley Hospital. I [inaudible 01:20:10] his two daughters for five years back and forth. That’s when I left Riverdale and come over to Jersey.

**Janet:** Why don’t you tell the names of your children and the ones that are here with you today?

**Rose:** What are the names of my children?

**Janet:** Yes.

**Rose:** Edmond was the oldest one. He worked for the government. He got a scholarship to Ridges and a scholarship to Fordham and then he got a job and he just went to Washington and got a job there and he knew them all. He knew them all. He could tell you all. He was there 31 years in the government and he is retired now and living in Maryland.

**Janet:** [inaudible 01:21:08].

**Rose:** He had three children. Patrick is the eldest. Peter, college graduate. He was on the submarines for five years. He come out and accepted to school for another year to polish up or something and he has a big position now.

Janet is creative. She teaches school. She’s creative with archeology, like me, I love that stuff and she’s living in Georgia too and Kristie. She was the movie queen. She graduated from college in Virginia and went to California and she was working for Mr. Stoners. What was the name? Charlie Stoner, one of them movie stars.

Anyway, you know and she didn’t like things so she just quit and went to be a ... not a secretary but an accountant or something for two ladies. Yeah, so that’s Kristie. Kristie, they always say looks like me but she’s a little imp. That’s her three kids.

**Janet:** How about your other children?

**Rose:** Owen, he has two daughters. Denise is 23 now, she went to the public school in New Jersey and she went to Gettysburg. She graduated from Gettysburg. She’s a smart one and her and three other girls went to the Atlanta. She has a big position and she’s only there about five months and she got a promotion. She can speak Spanish and French just like native.

She’s the only there that can ... but Tracy now graduated. She went one day just to college and she has been working in [inaudible 01:23:33] all of five years now I guess, well, maybe four years.

That’s the kids, beautiful girls, very pretty and of course, I’m like them. They call me if sometimes twice, three times a week and grandma I need a hug. That’s the story of them.

**Janet:** And your daughter?

**Rose:** Mary. Mary is a sweetheart. Mary went a couple of years to Fordham University and she was a … what do you call the professional? She was a secretary in Colgate for 15 years. She has arthritis now but they loved her and not planned. We went down one day and I went down with her to get the job and I went down. I remember it was a Wednesday and we walked in. Mary, she was a very pretty girl really, when she was 18 and 19 and she walked in and she went to the headboard but she didn’t know it was then.

They never asked her for a reference or anything. They said, “Can you start work tomorrow, Mary?” She was just, “Sure I can,” and started to work the next day. “I’ve got a job. I never heard no word about reference or anything else.”

They went to the private schools and she met this man. She always talks about him, how good he was and she worked with him for years and then on her hands typing and all that. She retired and she gets some social security. She gets the benefits, social security and she had quite a lot of I saved all her money. She doesn’t know I saved her money but I saved it all and give her back to her but she met … before this though, of course, before she retired we were over in Ireland.

My cousin and her cousin, of course, is married to her husband’s brother. She went over as a bridesmaid there to Ireland and she met the best man with her brother and they got married. He was working in England and they sent for her.

**Janet:** We should mention that your son, Owen and your daughter Mary are here today.

**Rose:** Yeah, that’s them.

**Janet:** Is there anything else ... when you think about coming here, as a young woman and spending the rest of your life in this country, are there things that you would say you’ve retained about being Irish, about coming here from Ireland and living out your life here? Are there certain qualities that you have that you consider to be…?

**Rose:** The way I look at it there’s certain people you can be from a family and you’re different from a family too you know. I was...., I always picked in the family. People like for instance, my schoolteacher and our schoolmistress. She’d have me over there for the weekend and she didn’t ask the others and a lot of things.

**Janet:** Why do you think you’ve been so fortunate in so many ways?

**Rose:** I don’t know. I went to this place. There were a protestant family. This is Ireland now and they were well to do because they had two servant boys there and she just liked me. I think I made fun for them. When I was in that house that’s the first experience I had with working out anywhere from home. They had a big troller and all that. [inaudible 01:28:32] in a closet.

One day she was out I think [inaudible 01:28:35] on the table and when she … when they come on out I was playing highly louder [inaudible 01:28:44] as loud as you please. Then another time I had on the music, a polka, and she come on. This was my lady boss and I grabbed her, I danced the polka. That I think I made fun I think.

I think that was it because then when my mother wanted me home because I embroider and my sister Bridgette knew I liked the place and she went and I didn’t like her at all. They didn’t ... when we would go out to do something, that lady herself would take a [inaudible 01:29:31] water and she walked beside me and take it. When she would go out for serving tea to the men and her husband and all that she’d take me with her and all that. I don’t know. I was just a companion or I was always maybe I was [inaudible 01:29:58].

**Janet:** Maybe you were what?

**Rose:** Maybe I was [inaudible 01:29:58]. But I was asked every place, I really was. There were seven Protestant houses, families where we lived. My father … I think we had about the best farm in the place but I was in every house and then men when they would go to the town and bring me home candy and I don’t know. I never could figure it. I think maybe that was my father’s favorite. My father said I was like his aunt Rose.

Aunt Rose is a very pretty girl and she had every color of suit, only have velvet, she wanted a velvet suit. Of course, I kept it up. I said I’m going to get a velvet suit too. I got a velvet suit but I never seen Aunt Rose but she eloped with somebody. They were trying to marry her to someone else but she lived with the one she loved.

**Janet:** Let’s pause here. We need to turn the tape over one last time.

We are now on side two of tape two and I’m speaking with Rose Kelly Laughlin and I want to … you were talking about you seem to take after your aunt Rose although you never met your aunt Rose. Is there anything else? Let’s talk about this time in your life.

**Rose:** Oh, now?

**Janet:** You are in your 90 now. What is this space of life like for you?

**Rose:** I was taking care of my husband. We lived there in 24 years in that apartment and that’s when I was minding my son’s, two girls. That’s part of it and of course, they would come over then and stay with me but I stayed over in their house and mind them and they never seemed to miss their mother much. They would say to me at night, “Grandma, tell us to go to sleep the way you used to do in Ireland,” and I’d say to them, “Come on now, go to sleep there girls, I’m going to spank ye.” I put on a good brogue and then they’d giggle and laugh and everything and they were so happy.

They always talk about ... the driver was like a [inaudible 01:33:12] come down. When I’d give them their supper at night, we’d go up to the top of that hill and I was 20 years younger then. [inaudible 01:33:24] on that. Then of course, they had their homework to do but we had a cat. They called her ... what did they call that cat? Gray.

Anyway, that cat, when I’d be raking the leaves that cat would follow me. When I was [inaudible 01:33:56] the leaves, she would come over, move every time to get closer to me. When she would go out at night, she would come to the back door. She would get up on the wire because they had a little black railing on the back door and then a window was there. She would get up there and tap the window with her foot to get in. Shadow, that was her name, Shadow.

Every morning when the girls would go to school, go up to get the bus she walked them up. I walked them up too but she walked with us and when she knew the time that they were coming home, she went up to the top of the hill and lay there and walked down between the two of them. You’d think I’m making this up but honest to God it’s true.

If I was home in my own place and come back again, she would crawl up and get on my knee on my lap the cat and then I would rub her and pat her for a while and she would go down. I think when you feed them, they always cling to you like that. She was 15 years old and then one day I said now, when she was coming down the stairs she only can use the two front feet. I said you’d be doing an act cat of charity if you take that cat and get her put away.

The two of them they put her … they carried in their arms. They went out in the car and carried her in the arms and left in the stable. She had a couple of tears and she said, “Good-bye Shadow,” and you know what she says? “Meow,” honest to God, they told me this when they come home and her mom put her to sleep.

**Janet:** Do you think back over your life more now than you did before?

**Rose:** Yes, when I think back in all the things I told you in the start, I laugh at some things. Everybody was so nice. I think how nice these people was. I met a lady they called … she was Mrs. Mugson. Her name was Eleanor DuPont. She was the nicest. I cooked one-day eight chickens and her and I cleaned them all. They had a yacht out on Long Island [inaudible 01:36:46].

We cleaned them off and I said to her when we were mixing them up and made potato salad and tomatoes, we made big basins of salad and I said to her, “My wrists are very thin.” I said, “I’d like to mix with my hands.” This is what I said, [inaudible 01:37:09] my paws.” She was laughing. She [inaudible 01:37:18].

I started to mix then everything with my hand. We went to … took that out to the yard and I went out and there was two other girls there and she never took them out. I went out in the yard with them and she made a sandwich. There was a count from England and he a manacle on him she made a sandwich herself and put four big toothpicks sticking up on it and I was supposed to give it to him. They knew him so well.

Of course, I put this on a plate and got over slowly and he looks at it. “Is that for me?” and he took it and left it down. “I’ll get you later,” he said. Of course, he made her laugh.

Then when I had the ripple glass, you ever hear of the ripple glass? It’s a glass and they make holes down and it’s like here and all that and when you drink, it was [inaudible 01:38:34]. I was the one expected to do all these tricks. I did that too to another one that same day I was out there.

Anyway, it was nice and I always think of [inaudible 01:38:52]. She was so ready to make a joke but Mrs. Baker, I’ll tell you to another thing about Mrs. Baker. She was Spanish. She loved her husband so much. He was English descent. That lady cleaned his shoes and I never seen a shoe that was soiled in all his closet... She took out his clothes to the cleaners and [inaudible 01:39:19] darling.

She just loves them and they were such a nice. I called their house a little love nest. That was so nice. They took me everyplace, to the beaches and everywhere with them. Of course, I was minding their son, Jimmy and he was a wild kid but … that was that. That was them two ladies I just adored. They were so nice.

I liked them all but they had such a sense of humor. Mrs. Baker would be upstairs and she knew all the Irish songs. She would be singing *My Wild Irish Rose* and Cathleen [inaudible 01:40:05] I was singing downstairs. We were half-crazy but she was … Jimmy used to say, the boy that I was minding, “I have the two prettiest girls on the block,” his mother and me, he says. That was a compliment.

Then there was a family, the [inaudible 01:40:30] and she was the daughter of … I forget what her name was but she was married to a man of the name Mr. [inaudible 01:40:43] I called him. Her father was the president of the Canadian Railroad and she was married to Mr. [inaudible 01:40:52]. Little Eleanor, they had a son and daughter, little Eleanor would always come over to me every day when she’d come from school and there we used to talking.

She was so crazy about her dad. “My daddy, my daddy.” I said, “Your daddy is not coming home.” This is me, “Your daddy is not coming home,” I says, “Tonight at seven o'clock,” and she said, “Yes, he is. He always does.” I says, “He called me up and he called here,” I said and told me he wouldn’t be able to make it tonight,’ and that was all, I didn’t remember any more about him. She went home and told her mother and here was Mr. [inaudible 01:41:35] gentleman on Wall Street.

The next day I was out with the kids, with Jimmy and they were there playing too and they were all around and Mrs. [inaudible 01:41:49] herself was knitting then on a chair and he was watching his car. She says to me, “Rose, come over here.”

She says, “Why did you tell Eleanor about my husband wasn’t coming home?” I was so thunderstruck and he looks at me and winks and laughs and that was all there was it was to it. I would come back to you. I wonder where Eleanor is now. She was such a beautiful child and she was nine years old at that time, Eleanor.

**Janet:** Is there any …

**Rose:** That was [inaudible 01:42:38].

**Janet:** Is there any advice that you would have to give to somebody who was immigrating to this country now?

**Rose:** Just be honest and be clean. Whenever you start something finish it and always be nice to the children. That’s all people expect of you. You go to do a job, that’s the way I looked at it. You go to do a job and you do it. If you don’t know how to do it, ask them and they’ll tell you.

We were pretty well brought up. My mother was a great worker and we knew how to do a lot of things. We knew how to wash woolen sweaters and I was a good knitter and I could embroider. When the kids were small, when children are small out here I could put the bows on their caps. I knit them caps. I knit them sweaters to the people I work for.

Another thing I did was this lady, Mrs. Clark. She had an Irish woman knitter and that suit, she wanted to knit suit but she got sick and she couldn’t finish it. I took it and finished the skirt. Lots of things that I think you might say endears you to them.

**Janet:** How do you feel about the part of you that’s American and the part of you that’s Irish?

**Rose:** The part of me that’s Irish?

**Janet:** Yeah, how do you think about that?

**Rose:** I think I’m more American. Now I do things more American ways. But it’d seem very easy for me to get into the ways of anything. I could see you doing something and say, “I’ll try it too,” things like that.

When I would work in the kitchen, the ladies always loved to come into the kitchen because I had flowers. I had plants, I could grow plants. I used to do the altar at home and I could grow plants. Me, I have 11 plants in my own house and where my sister would have … let them die, mine never died. I don’t know.

**Janet:** It sounds like you were like your father.

**Rose:** It’s just my ways. That’s what ... I was watching a mason. His name was Tom O’Connor and he was building my cousin’s house for him and he said to me one day, “Come on out and look at these Rose,” and you’re a daughter of your father’s,” he says, “you’ll tell me what I’m doing wrong.” Absolutely, that’s what they said.

**Janet:** Is there anything you’d like to say before we close? Is there anything else that maybe we haven’t talked about or anything you’d like to say about coming to this country or whatever?

**Rose:** I enjoyed every minute out in this country. I enjoy it and I knew as soon as I put my foot in the country, I knew what I’d be doing because I didn’t have the education. I knew I would be minding children or something like that. Anything else in the domestic line, I think I could do it.

I always worked for somebody that had more than myself, you know what I mean? I would work. That’s why I work with the rich … the society and I seem to fit in. I don’t know. I was well-reared. We were poor but we got everything we needed, nice clothes and everything and I just seemed to know where I’ll fit it in and I always liked every place I went. I can go back to a lot … when I would leave a place, I’ve gone away anywhere, “Rose, the guest room is yours, anything you want.”

I never met … American people are fabulous, honest to God, they are just fabulous. They are kind. I never bought a sweater or underwear while I worked with those people. There was one lady that went away to the Catskills one time, two sisters they went away. She knew I had lost my umbrella so she bought me an umbrella and wrote a note on it. “To a little girl that lost her umbrella.”

No, American people … I love America. I just love it. I love everybody I meet and now I’m in Jersey. People are so darn nice. That’s every one [inaudible 01:48:37]. I go to the store ... I go to the Grand Union and one of the managers, she’s an Irish lady, she’s there for years, she comes over and gives me a hug.

**Janet:** I’m sure people feel the same about you as you feel about them. I want to thank you very, very much. This has been most pleasurable. I’m so happy you were able to come today.

I’ve been speaking with Rose Kelly Laughlin who came up from Northern Ireland in 1925 when she was 21 years of age and today is April 30th, 1995. Mrs. Laughlin is 91 years old at the time of this interview. We are at the Ellis Island studio and this is Janet Levine and I’m signing off.