**Elisa**: Good afternoon? This is Elisa Mattson for the National Park Service. Today is September 14th. It’s a Wednesday afternoon in 1994 and I am in the home of Mrs. Mary Roberts in California. Who came from Ireland, Belfast Ireland in the year 1910, I think.

**Mary**: I never was any good at figures.

**Elisa**: Ok, well that’s ok. Why don’t you start by giving me your date of birth?

**Mary**: I was 11 year old February-

**Elisa**: I think that’s 1909, 1909.

**Mary**: I arrived in New York-

**Elisa**: Why don’t we start- can you give me your full name and your date of birth?

**Mary**: Yes, Maryanne Roberts. We arrived in new york-

**Elisa**: When were you born?

**Mary**: We arrived in New York when I was 11 years old.

**Elisa**: Do you remember in Ireland. Do you remember what your house looked like? When you were in Ireland?

**Mary**: Oh yes! 29, Wimble Street I can remember that [laughter].

**Elisa**: Tell me what it looked like?

**Mary**: Well it was a potter house and made of brick and they were all joined together and it had big windows that my grandmother kept flowers in.

**Elisa**: What kind of flowers?

**Mary**: I can’t remember only green.

**Elisa**: Ok

**Mary**: And there was no blossom and my grandmother and my aunt and my cousin, two cousins only different names lived there too.

**Elisa**: What were their names?

**Mary**: My cousin, Jenny Murphy, she was killed in this war, dropped in Wimble Street and her husband and two children I think she had. And my cousin Beivia. Came with us to America and she was five years younger than I.

**Elisa**: Do you remember what your town looked? Can you tell me what the town looked like?

**Mary**: You mean Belfast?

**Elisa**: Belfast, mmh.

**Mary**: All I remember going over the - [unclear] bridge and they had one place they- what was the name of that street? It had a big arch and it used to have, even I used to go look at it and imagine it was faces, pictures of faces in it. You went over a little river to go over to the other side.

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

**Mary**: William Maddock Roberts. No, William Maddock.

**Elisa**: And what did he look like?

**Mary**: I couldn’t tell you much about my father because little of him.

**Elisa**: How tall was he?

**Mary**: Oh I lived with his mother and his sister. My mother died when I was born.

**Elisa**: What was her name? And her maiden name?

**Mary**: Mary Jane Maddock.

**Female**: Was her maiden name, before she got married?

**Mary**: Maddock. She was grand mothers' daughter. Mary Jane.

**Elisa**: Well that’s ok. Have you seen pictures of her? What did she look like? Did you see pictures of your mother?

**Mary**: Oh yes. She had lots of pictures.

**Elisa**: Can you tell me what she looked like?

**Mary**: No, I can only know her on the pictures and Bobby is got more pictures than me.

**Elisa**: What did your father do?

**Mary**: My mother and father were in this country up on time. But my mother didn’t like it. But at that time her mother and father were living in [unclear 00:05:23] not Belfast.

**Elisa**: Do you know their names? Your grandparents?

**Mary**: My mother, I should know that- my father my mother was Mary Jane Maddock of course because that was my father’s name and she died when I was born.

**Elisa**: Your brothers and sisters.

**Mary**: Yes.

**Elisa**: What were their names?

**Mary**: Well, I don’t remember all their names. My mother had three children in this country. Two of them were twins. Bobby can tell you all that.

**Elisa**: What can you remember though? You tell me whatever you can remember their names.

**Mary**: Well, I told [unclear 00:06:29] the twins were girls and they died. Bobby is even seen their graves and then she had a boy named Samuel that went sickly.

And her mother and father were living at that time in [unclear 00:06:53] and that’s why she was so homesick. Afterwards she was kind of sorry that they didn’t go home because- then she died when I was born. So I don’t remember ever seeing my mother. I know that my whole life was my grandmother.

**Elisa**: What was your grandmother's name?

**Mary**: Bella. Isabel Dero, before she was married. Funny I can remember that.

**Elisa**: In your house living with your grandmother, do you remember what she used to cook for dinner? What would she make for dinner?

**Mary**: Oh, she made lots of stews, I know because my elder cousin Jenny Murphy used to get up and sick of them [laughter]. I don’t remember me ever been tired of them but I know that Jenny was complaining about stews.

She also made potato pie. I remember those plain because she made them on an iron griddle and they made it with mashed potatoes not like the German do. And I loved them with lots of butter [Laughter].

**Elisa**: What did you have for dessert do you remember that? Did you ever have some dessert something sweet?

**Mary**: Very little, very little ice cream. But we did have an ice-cream parlor at the corner.

**Elisa**: Did you go to the ice-cream parlor.

**Mary**: You didn’t go to see it. I went to- my next door neighbor, she was a scotch woman. She used to send me to buy this ice-cream and take it home.

My aunt asked her why she didn’t send her own little boy because she always give me penny for going, and she said, “Because when Mary goes we get ice-cream, when I send my own son, he puts his finger in and licks it all the way home [laughter].”

**Elisa**: So there is never any left when he would go.

**Mary**: So I know we had ice-cream we didn’t have it very often we had very plain food.

**Elisa**: What kind of vegetables would you eat?

**Mary**: Oh. Lots and lots and lots of vegetables.

**Elisa**: What kind was your favorite?

**Mary**: Carrots, parsnip I didn’t like, cabbage and very fresh vegetables. Good vegetables. My grandmother was very good at that and fish. We had good fish.

**Elisa**: What was dinner time like in your house do you remember? Would people talk at the table?

**Mary**: Yes, we all enjoyed our supper. Breakfast was a very hurried up thing because my grandmother was old. After all, my grandmother had already raised nine children and buried one and she still fretted over the one.

**Elisa**: How did that person die?

**Mary**: He was a baby. The last one that she had was a delicate child evidently and it died. After that Murphy, till she was fully grown, then she had me. My grandmother was a wonderful woman.

**Elisa**: It sounds like it. What about religion in your house?

**Mary**: Oh we hadn’t- we went preach like some people do. But we were taught that God was a great wise and huge being who made all things and we believed it.

I went to the church school, the Episcopal Church school and we had I got a certificate on religion too bad I didn’t that because that was one thing I was really good at. Was religion

**Elisa**: Did you pray in the house?

**Mary**: I still believe all that you put into the lives of others will come back into your own. I was taught that. We had an uncle that got tied up with some religion that was preach, preach, preach all time till people didn’t want to see him. Not even my grandmother.

My grandmother I remember one time when she was sick and he was down there praying for us. Her son in-law, her daughter, Rose Helen’s husband [laughter], she taped him on the back-I was always with my grandmother- and she taped him on the back and she said, I would rather you go home and help Rose Helen with all those children-my aunt Rose Helen had nine children.

We had big families. I think you would be doing more good for the lord than my prayers over religious. So you know we weren’t over religious.

**Elisa**: What were holidays like in your house? Do you remember Christmas growing up, what it was like?

**Mary**: Cooking.

**Elisa**: What would you make?

**Mary**: Oh, I made all kinds of things. Whatever was easiest and cheapest, I make.

**Elisa**: Do you remember what you would make can you give me some of things?

**Mary**: I remember my husband loved tapioca pudding. He did till the day he died.

**Elisa**: How about with your grandmother? Do you remember Christmas with your grandmother?

**Mary**: No, I never cooked for my grandmother.

**Elisa**: Christmas though, do you remember a Christmas with your grandmother?

**Mary**: Oh no, we had plum dough. It was something you put [unclear 00:14:30] in clean towel, wrap it in towel, clean towel and you boil it and it formed a crust and it was good. I never made it.

**Elisa**: But you grandmother made that?

**Mary**: My grandmother. My grandmother did very little of that too. Because, she wasn’t young. My grandmother wasn’t a young grandmother.

**Elisa**: How about school? Do you remember school in Ireland? Do you remember going to school?

**Mary**: Oh yes, Episcopal.

**Elisa**: Tell me a little bit about school?

**Mary**: I can remember one time when the teacher said [laughter] everybody had to answer-I think it was figures, I never was good at figures, I still am, can’t even remember figures. [Laughter].

The teacher said you’re not going out, the multiply table built up to 12. Here we are at the end then you were accused of want one that put they hand up first then they got to go home. And I thought oh heck I am going to be here all day all night. But I made a good guess [laughter] put my hand up and I was right, that’s why I remember that [Laughter].

**Elisa**: Do you remember any friends that you had in grade school?

**Mary**: Well we really, we had a master we didn’t have like a principal. We had a master. You didn’t even turn your head you were supposed to march in style you know be very-

And I must have turned my head and did something and probably try to talk because the teacher sent me to the master, scared to death. And he had a great big cane and he said put out your hand and I did scared to death and he put chocolate on my hand [laughter] and he said you eat that and don’t tell your teacher what I did [Laughter].

**Elisa**: Sounds like he was a nice man.

**Mary**: No, I really liked my school over there. Not after I came here we had a terrible teacher.

**Elisa**: Why don’t you tell me a little bit about coming to America? Who decided to come to America? Tell me that story

**Mary**: Oh my aunt. She was crazy to get to America. My uncle had been here for several years. He was a very, very loveable man.

**Elisa**: What was he doing here?

**Mary**: He was a brick layer. He was a builder, he was very good but evidently never- he was an alcoholic. She didn’t know that and probably- it was a very unhappy year to the whole thing because she got sick. She had a baby. Baby that I loved and still do. I always said she was my first baby because my aunt was carried out on stretchers. I was 12 years old.

**Elisa**: Do you remember the ship’s name that you came on?

**Mary**: The what?

**Elisa**: The name of the ship that you came on.

**Mary**: Vanessa.

**Elisa**: What did it look like?

**Mary**: I didn’t see much of it because I was sea sick all the way over.

**Elisa**: Do you remember getting to the ship? How did you get to where the ship was docked?

**Mary**: You mean to take it? We went to Lan, we didn’t go to sail from Belfast, we had to go to Lan.

**Elisa**: How did you get there?

**Mary**: My uncle, my grandfathers, my grandmother's eldest son came from [unclear 00:19:15] and he took us in a cab. None of them-now ever wanted my aunt to come.

My grandmother didn’t of course wanted to come-my grandmother died just few months after we came to America- They didn’t want my aunt to come and her brother didn’t want her to come. Nobody want her. My grandmother had a funny idea my grandmother's father came here and never went back home [Laughter].

**Elisa**: Did your grandmother want you to come to America?

**Mary**: Well she thought it was my best bet. She didn’t know what to do. Until my aunt Mary Jane would have kept me because she had a daughter six months younger and that daughter had had some kind of a sickness that left her with heart trouble and didn’t have much prospect of living.

**Elisa**: What was her daughter’s name?

**Mary**: Margret Maggie and her daughter didn’t live but she would have taken me because we were very good friends, she was about six months younger than I. But I wouldn’t have liked to live there, in fact, I was closer to my aunt but my aunt was never that close. Not like I was to my grandmother. I had too much

**Elisa**: Now, when you were on the ship, what do you remember about that?

**Mary**: About what?

**Elisa**: Being on the ship?

**Mary**: Oh yes, we had a little stage room and it had-I know it had to have three bunks because I had one and my aunt had one and I had one. I had one and the lower and they had little bunks in-

And we had this little scotch stewardess, real cute little woman. She brought us our meal. My aunt and I never got out of bed, but I was happy because I got lucky they almost-one time they brought anchors there was rough weather, see we were coming over here in January, in the winter. And it wasn’t like it is today, it took 10days.

**Elisa**: Do you remember being cold?

**Mary**: They put- we drove, they threw Beivia in, because she was on all over the ship and she was afraid of nothing. I was afraid of everything. I was upset and of course my grandmother had almost, I had hear all, my uncle too [laughter].Say, “This heathen country when the Indians come out and stab you or the earth opens up and swallows you.”

And that’s all I thought about. To me I had no desire to come to America but my aunt had wanted to come all her life and too bad she never got to see much of it. I have seen a lot of it.

**Elisa**: So it turned out well in the end?

**Mary**: I am really been awful sorry that my aunt didn’t live to see more of it.

**Elisa**: Do you remember what you brought with you? Do you remember what you brought with you on the ship?

**Mary**: Yap I remember one trunk [Laughter].

**Elisa**: One trunk?

**Mary**: Mmh

**Elisa**: What did you bring in the trunk?

Mary: Because I was left to stand guard over it while she went somewhere and in somebody came up and they want to know what was in it, they can- I told them a sewing machine.

They said, “What kind?” And I said, “Singer.” It was a singer sewing machine and he said, "That’s already new to the ocean." Because singer was making them right here in this country. They had to ship them there for they were being shipped in and that’s all he did about it. The trunk went through.

**Elisa**: So you brought the sewing machine? How much clothes did you bring with you?

**Mary**: I don’t know I suppose we brought- my aunt would probably bring, I didn’t pay much attention.

**Elisa**: Was there anything you really wanted to bring with you?

**Mary**: Nothing, I was alright I didn’t want to come here.

**Elisa**: You didn’t even want to bring yourself [Laughter].

**Mary**: No. And when we landed and I looked at the people all standing around and I heard had about this great wealth in America, and they weren’t dressed any better than all the kids I had played with and I thought I sure don’t know where- my grandmother wouldn’t have put one of those [unclear 00:25:03] for a hat on me [Laughter].

**Elisa**: Do you remember seeing the statue of liberty? The statue of liberty?

**Mary**: No, I don’t remember that. I do remember getting into that hall and thought I was never going to get out of there.

**Elisa**: At Ellis island? This is at Ellis Island the hall?

**Mary**: You know I think on the same boat that we came over on there must have been an awful number of Italians that come over. On the Vanessa at that time by the time we came because this place was full and I suppose it was Italians.

But I had never heard anything spoken but English language and I had never heard so many people talking in the foreign language. And they weren’t timid.

They were closed up and there was only one young English man and I wish we had kept track of him, I would like to know what happened because he was one young Englishman who come over on the boat and he got chatting there with us too.

And he came over to my aunt and he said, “I hear there is a whole boat of Indians coming in [laughter].” He must have had the same notions that I did. He said his uncle was waiting for him at the dock when the boat landed.

He did not know why he should be in there. My aunt didn’t know but my uncle had a house all furnished, and there was no reason you know why look how they let the man today. And they checked you for vaccination and everything you had to have a doctor’s examination before you got off the boat [Music playing].

**Elisa**: What is that noise?

**Mary**: Now look at it

**Elisa**: Ice-cream track, oh we have an ice-cream track going by just for the tape so that they know what that is.

So how old was this English man? Do you remember what he looked like?

**Mary**: He might have been 20, he might have been 19. You know he'd have to be over 19 to maybe 20.

**Elisa**: Now you stayed on Ellis Island?

**Mary**: He was in there.

**Elisa**: Do you remember what it looked like where you stayed at Ellis Island? Where did you sleep?

**Mary**: Oh! He went with the women. I went with the men.

**Elisa**: Where did you sleep though?

**Mary**: Well, they had another room that you went to and there were bunk beds and one on top of the other. Well, that was fine because I was scared of everything and my aunt was fixing the bottom bed and there was a woman across from it.

Of course she couldn’t speak English but she must traveled somewhere and knew you know more about things than my aunt did because she tried and my aunt couldn’t understand but I couldn’t understand anybody unless they spoke English. She moves to my aunt and told her to get up in the top bunk and to take the purse and take it with her.

My aunt tried to tell me that and to tell me the woman was quite alright. I sat up all night at the bottom bunk .Next morning I maybe slept the next morning we all went down and the table was set beautiful, you got lovely meals nice white linen table clothes nothing you could find wrong with that at all.

**Elisa**: Do you remember what you had to eat?

**Mary**: No, I don’t remember only one thing, that’s an apple. And that’s the funniest thing because people sat on the other side are manners .I think it was a man, and I of course wasn’t eating, didn’t care, didn’t keep it.

As I said my cousin Beivia was five years younger was really alert, and these were lovely apples. She had taken hers off the table but I didn’t take mine off the table. This man across from reached over to take mine and my little cousin slapped his hand she said, “You can’t have that, that hers,” and she took it up.

So that’s how I remember the apple, otherwise I don’t remember what we ate but I do know it was well served and they were polite and nice as we were going back up again there was an English woman with three little children that had been on the Vanessa-the boat too, and I recognized her.

I ran out after them to see somebody that I knew could speak my language. I broke line because there was a great big colored woman keeping everybody in line like we were sheep.

I saw this English woman at the table. She must have been in another room somewhere with her little ones. I broke rank and run to her didn’t get a chance to talk to her because the woman took me by the arms took me back and I slapped her hand. But she didn’t say a word, didn’t touch me, she just put me back in line and my aunt took on me. Well we get up in the room again, there he got in.

**Elisa**: Do you remember seeing a doctor? Did you see a doctor in Ellis Island? Do you remember seeing a doctor?

**Mary**: Not in Ellis Island. No doctor in Ellis Island. The doctor was on the boat.

**Elisa**: Oh tell me about that?

**Mary**: He checked you as you got off the boat.

**Elisa**: What did he ask you?-

**Mary**: To see if you were already vaccinated. I guess they were afraid of small pox or something at that time, while it was suppose a law in Ireland when you had very short time but you had to have to have a child vaccinated, so there must have been some danger of small pox around at that time.

**Elisa**: So he checked you on the boat? The doctor?

**Mary**: No, he just checked to see that your hand was vaccinated and you knew you have the mark I guess I still have it.

**Elisa**: Was it crowded at Ellis Island when you were there? Crowded?

**Mary**: Yes, it was crowded. The table was full. The room was full. I don’t know we got up in that room-oh how we got there, when this English man came inside I opened my mouth and started screaming and the man that swept the floor came to me and he evidently was an Irishman because he said, “What’s the matter with the we lass' [laughter]?”

My aunt said, “If we don’t get out of here he is going to be sick, and I don’t know how I am going to be. And I don’t know why we here and what they doing.” And he said, “Well I tell you,” he patted me back on the back and he said “You just quiet down now and I am going to see somebody and ask them why you are in here".

So, he went away and no sooner, he wasn’t gone very long until they came and call my aunt name or number whatever it was and we go up into this other room, where all these men were sitting around the table and they were examining -I think a young Italian man and his brother was sponsoring him into this country.

Had bank books and everything to show, but they turned him down and I thought oh boy we going back home. Well my aunt got up there she didn’t have to show a thing, because when she opened her purse to show what letters she had, and what she had in it, there must have been lots of Irish at the table because this one gets up and says, “You can always trust an Irish woman you know.

They took as, out us on the train and got these real good seats and had a set, we really got good treatment and I can’t say I awe abused in any way. And then they started to fill up with all these people that couldn’t speak English on the train too.

**Elisa**: Do you remember playing at all, at Ellis Island with other children?

**Mary**: Playing?

**Elisa**: While you were on Ellis Island do you remember playing outside or playing with other children while you were there or did you just stay with your family?

**Mary**: I stayed with my aunt, I didn’t. A man came near me I had a little cup that I carried all the way across, my grandmother had bought me, and was getting a drink of water there was a tap there and he evidently wanted to drink, but all he did was point to my cup but as long he opened his mouth and gave me that. I threw the cup at him.

**Elisa**: Did you get the cap back?

**Mary**: Oh, I broke it all to pieces was a little china cup.

**Elisa**: Oh! A china cup.

**Mary**: That when I really know my aunt had a bad time.

**Elisa**: What did the train take you?

**Mary**: Well, the young English man came up to my aunt and he said, “If you get out-I saw my uncle standing waiting-and if you get out of here and get near a telephone would you please take this number and try to call my uncle?” Evidently his uncle must have lived in New York or somewhere, he said, “Because he was there, I saw him and he waved to me,” and I don’t know why, he almost as bad as I because he was thinking there was a whole boat of Indians coming. Oh no that was a great life.

**Elisa**: When you left Ellis Island, where did the train take you?

**Mary**: Watertown, New York.

**Elisa**: And what type of house or apartment or-

**Mary**: It was a nice house had a basement, but it was open side. Right now my sister, my cousin rather but I always call her sister and my niece and it is right now becoming the really nicest place in Watertown.

But it wasn’t at that time it was full-on. There was a few English people not English-not English, Americans born in America, and families on our street and we had, I think a bedroom downstairs I remember we had a great big bedroom upstairs but then they sold the house and we had to move.

**Elisa**: Why did they sell the house?

**Mary**: Because I suppose they didn’t want it. My uncle being a stone mason had done a lot of remodeling, he had built a basement. So you could almost get in the basement, you know he finished it completely.

Well the house was a lot more valuable than where we moved into and we had no canteen, so we just had to move out and find another place and we found one that he had made an old school out or something, I don’t know what it was-

**Elisa**: Was it far from the house?

**Mary**: It was a long- well it was over the rail route on the wrong side of the railroad train, right now it’s a big, and it’s the one-

**Elisa**: Now who lived in this house? Your uncle?

**Mary**: My uncle and aunt, and Bei and I at that time and my aunt afterwards had had another baby

**Elisa**: What was that baby's name?

**Mary**: Bingham and my uncle had lost his leg.

**Elisa**: How did that happen?

**Mary**: He jumped-he was coming into to-I don’t know how you call it-coming in slowly. Anyway instead of staying and wait, the only thing about it was that he hadn’t locked the door when he should.

Because he sit there, he was taken a catholic hospital and they took his leg there below the knee, and it should have been taken off above the knee, but he didn’t want it because that way it would have cost. And even the sisters tried to get him not to sign it, well that’s probably when he got enough money, before that was not doing so well.

My aunt should have known that what her brother tried to tell her. Too many years alone and a brick layer especially the trades’ people, loveable man, a good man.

If they had had this, what do you call it alcohol anonymous-if they had had that today he would have been alright because I would have taken him and he would have gone. Even as young as I was-but my aunt never knew how to handle him.

All she did was, if she smelled the leach was dry, and if she smelled just a weft on him, she would start an argument and then he could go get himself plastered. He couldn’t stand up, used to make me so mad even as little as I was but you couldn’t tell her. But I knew he would do things for me because I even had got a hold of a dollar and I sent away for some nice oil in the magazine that said you know to stop it.

And when I put it in his coffee or tea, and he caught me one day and he said “That what’s making my tea taste so awful”. He said “You know I should wring your neck” [laughter] I said “I spent a whole dollar, you just don’t know what you are doing”- well he kissed me and he said-

That’s why I love my uncle. He said “Since you spent a dollar and I know you could have used it so, I am going to take It.” and you know he took that damn stuff and it didn’t do him any good.

**Elisa**: Didn’t help?

**Mary**: No, didn’t do it. But that’s how I know alcohol anonymous would. In fact I know because, after my second son came back from the service, he became an alcoholic.

**Elisa**: And that helped him?

**Mary**: I knew it, the minute he got home. His wife didn’t recognize it. She thought I was being narrow minded she even told me. She apologized afterwards. When I said not now my husband can take a drink and leave it. But I said “No more liquor in this house, every bit of it out it goes.”

My husband says, “Why?” and I said ”Because every time Jim comes into this house the first thing he does is to go out there and look for a drink.” and I said “I have seen too much of that” and he said “If I am not drinking in my house then no one else.”

So Jim goes out there and he looks in the cupboard and he says “Anything to drink?” I said “Oh yes, plenty of cold drink in the refrigerator, plenty of milk anything you want.” And he said “No liquor?” and I said “No, and you’re to blame for it.” I said “Right now you should stop drinking.”

**Elisa**: That’s a very strong thing to say-

**Mary**: And his wife said “Oh mother, leave him alone he is celebrating now getting home.” Oh yes, she didn’t know, she never seen it like I did, you watch it. I don’t like, I still don’t like seeing anybody drink it. Not that I didn’t used to be able to take a drink but I don’t think I’d ever- maybe I could be an alcoholic-

**Elisa**: Well, Mrs. Roberts, why don’t we get back to little bit of an earlier time. Can you describe when you were living in America and you were living with you aunt and uncle, can you describe for me a holiday? What was it like Christmas time?

**Mary**: The first Christmas when I was in America?

**Elisa**: Sure tell me about that one.

**Mary**: There was no gifts. There was no hanging of stockings because there was no money. One of my uncles that’s living in at that time was living in [unclear 00:47:20] and he sent my cousin a doll.

He probably thought I was too big for one. He had only boys maybe his wife bought it I don’t know-my uncle took one look at me and he sent me a Christmas card. My uncle opened-we were burning coal, stove like we got out there, he burnt, dropped in the fire the post card.

He walked all the way to over that bridge into Watertown and where he must have got it I don’t know but he got some money somewhere and he came home and gave me a silver scarf. You see why I love my uncle?

**Elisa**: I think I can understand why.

**Mary**: Right to the day he died I loved my uncle, no I never was that close to my aunt, she was a blood relative.

**Elisa**: What was your uncle's name? I am not sure if we have that.

**Mary**: Isabel.

**Elisa**: No your uncle?

**Mary**: Oh my uncle, Bingham. Oh the trees in that family, that’s the one she's related to.

**Elisa**: Poly?

**Mary**: Poly. Poly its Christmas family history too.

**Elisa**: So you will have both sides of the family trees. What can you tell me-how long did you leave with your aunt and uncle when did you meet your husband? When did you move out of the house?

**Mary**: I meet my husband when I was 16. I married him.

**Elisa**: How old were you when you got married?

**Mary**: 17, I wasn’t 18 yet.

**Elisa**: How did you meet him?

**Mary**: Church. I went to Sunday school every Sunday a little. It was a branch of the Presbyterian Church.

**Elisa**: Was it close to your house where you lived? Was the church close to your house?

**Mary**: Yes, we could walk to it. And I went to church, every Sunday we went to Sunday school. My aunt never missed church.

**Elisa**: Did your uncle go?

**Mary**: Oh once in a while he did and he’d go if I asked him to come along. He was a good man God knows I didn’t judge him.

**Elisa**: So you meet you husband in church?

**Mary**: He asked one of his cousins to introduce me and she said, “If you wanted me you will have to go to church.” Well, he did go to church; he didn’t go very often after [Laughter].

**Elisa**: After you had meet?

**Mary**: He be able to go church [unclear 00:50:55] do you know my husband too- I was lucky, I was very lucky. I couldn’t have met a better man.

**Elisa**: Can you tell me about your wedding? What do you remember about your wedding?

**Mary**: My uncle said if I got married, we ask him. My husband didn’t try any you know go on with the wedding. They knew it. I had an engagement ring and I was going to get married. And my uncle says “If you do I break your legs and keep you home” [laughter]. Well, I was married, by the Presbyterian minister. You know all nice and legal, not in the church in a [unclear 00:52:00] home.

**Elisa**: And where was this that you were married?

**Mary**: My husband's cousin or somebody, some relative of.

**Elisa**: At their home?

**Mary**: Mmh. And there was a- I had a bridesmaid little friend that I had made-

**Elisa**: What was her name?

**Mary**: Edia Dinks later she was already married to a fellow named Fred Stanberry and they were quite a few. My mother-in-law made the wedding cake and made the dinner and they were living out in the country.

**Elisa**: How many people were at the dinner?

**Mary**: And we all went down there. I know there was quite a crowd of little [unclear 00:53:01].

**Elisa**: What did you have for dinner?

**Mary**: I don’t know.

**Elisa**: You don’t remember?

**Mary**: I just know that my mother in law made the cake, and it was nice and I think-

**Elisa**: And where was your house? Where did you move after?

**Mary**: Well, my husband had a little apartment.

**Elisa**: So you moved into the apartment?

**Mary**: Mmh and we [unclear 00:53:27] well, he was working. He never liked Watertown and of course I didn’t either. Nothing wrong with Watertown it was just me.

And he wanted to go back to Ohio, see that where he graduated from high school and he knew a lot of people in Ohio and he wanted to go back to Ohio. Well, he could get a chance and I didn’t know what a dangerous chance it was, to work on the railroad.

I found out afterwards, whatever he was doing was jumping from one guard to another. I had been worried sick- but anyway, as soon as he got enough money, I stayed in a little apartment, until, and then met my cousin because my aunt wouldn’t allow any of them to come near me.

**Elisa**: Why?

**Mary**: Because I went off and got married and she was insulted by the whole thing. When he got a paycheck, he sent me-I didn’t know he sent me all of the money, but that was one Christmas. I couldn’t buy anybody anything, and right along comes this check.

So I bought everybody something and spent it. I didn’t know that he sent me the whole- well then he came halfway, and met me because he couldn’t get a pass you see. And as he entered the train, selling all these stuff, he bought all of stuff that kids usually like and we have a good time.

Then when we got off the train he asked me how much money have you got, I said I haven’t got any money [Laughter]. Thank goodness he had taken a room so that we had a place to sleep and she was an Irish catholic the woman that we had the room from she was very good-I was sorry about her.

**Elisa**: So where was that? That was in Ohio?

**Mary**: In Ohio.

**Elisa**: Where in Ohio?

**Mary**: Conneaut, Conneaut Ohio.

**Elisa**: How long did you live there?

**Mary**: Well, let’s see. There is something wrong in there. We left that woman’s house and we moved into a little apartment. It had our own bathroom and a bedroom and a kitchen and a little sitting room. My husband had found it. So we lived most of our lives in Cleveland till we came to California. On 82nd street.

**Elisa**: What can you tell me about- how many children did you have?

**Mary**: Five.

**Elisa**: Can you tell me their names?

**Mary**: I had four boys and one girl, two boys and a girl, and two more boys.

**Elisa**: What are their names?

**Mary**: Frank, Jim-

**Elisa**: Its ok, we can talk about another subject. How about coming to America are you happy, that you came here after all of the not wanting to come the very beginning?

**Mary**: I was very happy after I got married.

**Elisa**: Good.

**Mary**: I don’t say that we always lived in peace. Sometimes we could have killed each other. But I was very lucky and I am very glad I came to America. Even though,-I much better. Though I said to people in Ireland as far as prospering goes can get as much staying home. From what Bobby tells me.

**Elisa**: I think you are right in some cases.

**Mary**: But my aunt would have been a lot better off staying home. She never got- she loved America. She even went away across town to see some movies you know that showed American before she came here.

And when I think of it now, and think about what we've got and think of her- you know I used to get mad at her, but when I think of the fact that she never got to see any of it-

**Elisa**: And you got to see it-

**Mary**: Oh I did. I got to the other round [unclear 00: 59:58] I had a very interesting husband.

**Elisa**: Mrs. Roberts, thank you very much for doing this interview with me. I am signing off this is Elisa Madsen, on the 14th of September 1994 for the Ellis Island world history project. Thank you.

**Mary**: You are welcome.