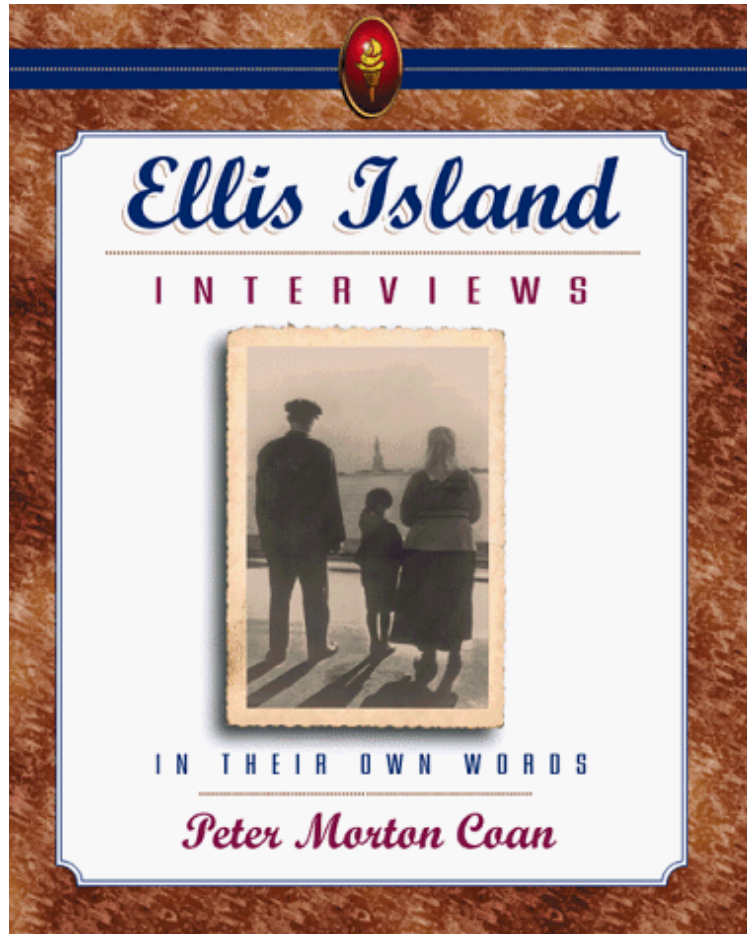


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## Ellis Island Interviews: In Their Own Words

*Peter Morton Coan*

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A truly unique account of what Ellis Island immigrants endured on their journeys to freedom from Europe, the Middle

East, and elsewhere. Produced in co-operation with the Ellis Island Research Foundation, this book is an unparalleled collection of 130 first-hand accounts from 130 immigrants. These last surviving immigrants describe in compelling detail their reasons for leaving their native shores, the lives they left behind, their passage, what they endured, and what became of them. Ellis Island closed in 1954 after 62 years of processing immigrants. It is believed that over forty per cent of today's US population are descendants of Ellis Island-processed immigrants.

From Kirkus sCoan takes readers on an emotional tour of Ellis Island with this elaborate, readable collection of interviews. As he makes clear, from 1892 to 1924, Ellis Island was truly the "golden door" to America; later, quotas and legislation made US citizenship much more difficult to obtain. The voices captured in first-person narrations--bemused, feisty, poignant--express enthusiasm for their new country, but most are unafraid to look back. The book is divided into the geographical regions from which the interviewees emigrated: the United Kingdom, Northern, Eastern, and Western Europe, Scandinavia, and the Middle East. Each interview comes with an introduction revealing where the speaker settled, thus connecting the old stories to the present. A few famous subjects make appearances among the 130+ men and women included: Bob Hope explains how his first sight of the Statue of Liberty is linked to his theme song ("Thanks for the Memories") and Otto Preminger is frank about his prospects had his film career succeeded in Germany--he would not have been able to escape Hitler. With so many stories, and so many voices, this is a fine collection of primary-source materials. (index, appendix, bw photos, not seen) (Nonfiction. 10-14) -- Copyright 1997, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved. To tell their stories, Peter Morton Coan lets the immigrants speak for themselves...All their stories are compelling because they are true, and all are important because they tell our collective American story -- Continental Airlines Magazine, January, 1998Well presented and expectedly poignant -- Publishers Weekly, October 6, 1997About the AuthorPeter Coan is a biographer and writer. He lives in New York and ends his book with a plea to help find his biological mother, and Ellis Island immigrant of the inter-war years.