

RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY

NEW BRUNSWICK

AN INTERVIEW WITH JUDITH HARPER HASSERT

FOR THE

RUTGERS ORAL HISTORY ARCHIVES OF WORLD WAR II

INTERVIEW CONDUCTED BY

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Kurt Piehler: This begins an interview with Mrs. Judith Harper Hassert on February 4, 1997 at Metchen, New Jersey with Kurt Piehler and ...

Barbara Tomblin: Barbara Tomblin.

KP: Before we began the interview, formally, you began to talk quite a bit about your parents and your grandparents, who both took part in the wars of America, both the Civil War and the First World War.

Judith Hassert: And the Revolutionary and the French and Indian War.

KP: And the Revolutionary.

JH: They were part of that, too.

KP: Maybe you could talk about both your parents and also about your more distant ancestors and their involvement in the wars.

JH: Well, as far as the Revolutionary ones are concerned, you know, their service is really very short, most of them, sometimes three weeks, sometimes three months, or whatever it was. But anyway, they were there and I think that's exciting. We've gone back and checked around Newburyport, where some of them came from, and found things about them that were interesting. In the Civil War, my great great grandfather left his family of six, and in the New Hampshire volume about the division that he was in, it says that he left a babe in arms, which was my grandmother, and the other five children and went off to war. ... I've always wondered how they ever survived when he was in service. But he was in service about four years and did serve as a doctor's assistant (a medical assistant on the field) not because he was trained, but I suspect because he was older and responsible and just happened to find his niche.

KP: You mentioned that he liked being a medical assistant ...

JH: Yes, yes. He apparently did.

KP: How did you find this out?

JH: Oh, just from the feeling that I've had from what my grandmother said and the fact that he was written up, and I've never been able to find the article that was written about him, as the "angel of the battlefield." I've asked my family and they claim they've seen it, but I've not been able to get a copy of it. ... He, apparently, did really, really like it, and when he came back, he went back to farming ...

KP: ... He was your great-great grandfather.

JH: That would be my great-grandfather, right.

KP: Yes. Your grandfather, you mentioned earlier, was fifty and ...

JH: My Grandfather Harper was too old to be drafted into the First World War, so he enlisted with the YMCA and went over as a chaplain. When he was overseas, [he] met my father, who also was in the First World War, but I don't know how many times they saw each other, probably not a lot. My father was with the 78th Division, the so-called, the "lightening division," and he helped to build bridges while he was there. ... He was overseas for about a year and a half, and he had a very rough time. I think that's one reason why I feel very strongly about his service and how proud I am of it, because certainly his life was never quite the same after he came back. He got a very short term, I don't even know how long it was, maybe three months, or something like that, scholarship of some kind from the Army and went to the Beaux Arts School in Paris and studied architecture. ... He, I think, was one of the cleverest people I've ever known. He was really very artistic and thought he would like to be an architect. His family was living in Prince Edward Island, and he decided that he didn't have enough ability to be an architect, so he ... never went ahead with it. ... He started teaching school in Massachusetts, where he met my mother, and then in New Brunswick. ... My father was a teacher in New Brunswick for many, many years. [He] taught printing, and then, eventually, at the end of his teaching career, taught woodworking. But his hobby, and it was a full-time hobby, virtually, was cabinetry, and ... he was a fine, fine cabinetmaker. ... We can look around and see lots of things that he's made, like the clock that he made for an engagement present for us with "Rutgers" painted on the bottom of it. He made all the furniture in the house I grew up in.

BT: I was going to say there's Rutgers.

JH: And the mirrors and the tables ...

BT: You were lucky.

JH: He would go into museums and see something that he liked, then come home and make it. ... As I say, I've never known anybody that I thought was more clever than he was.

KP: When you say the war had a bad effect on him, in what way? Did he suffer from nightmares?

JH: A terribly nervous stomach, and he was wounded in the leg. They never were able to get some of the shrapnel out. So, as a little girl, I remember this, sometimes he'd push his chair up to the dining room table and hit his knee on the table and just about died, because he'd hit the shrapnel ... and pressed on the nerve. ... He seldom talked about it. I don't think people in World War I ever talked about it. I think it [was] something that they didn't feel they wanted to talk about, not the way people do about the Second World War.

KP: No, that's okay.

JH: I'm sorry. You're so noisy, Honey. [dog barking]

KP: So you could occasionally see that he was in real pain ...

JH: Oh, yes.

KP: ... from the shrapnel.

JH: Oh, yes. Yes.

KP: The nervous stomach, in what ways would that act up?

JH: Like an ulcer. ... He grew out of it, but I felt he was very volatile after he came home. He always had trouble at certain times with temper control, and my mother always said he had not been that way before he left.

KP: So she ... really talked about it.

JH: She felt that, yes. She did.

KP: Yeah. Did your father ever go to any war movies? Did he ever comment on any of the movies on World War I?

JH: No, he never did, and when I was a little girl, I do remember his marching in a parade in Highland Park with his uniform on. ... I have his helmet, and I used to have those leggings that they used to wear with the uniform, and I remember how proud I was that he marched in that parade as a veteran.

KP: Did your father ever see *All Quiet on the Western Front*?

JH: He never said if he did.

KP: He never took you to see it.

JH: No. I went when I was grown, but he never saw anything like that.

KP: You mentioned he marched in a veteran parade. I assume it was an Armistice Day parade.

JH: Yes, it was.

KP: But did he join any of the veterans groups?

JH: I don't think so. If he did, I don't know about it.

KP: Was he active in the American Legion?

JH: No. My father was not a big talker. I wish I'd asked him a million more questions, so I would have known more about him.

KP: Your mother went to college, went to Pembroke.

JH: Yes, she's a graduate of Brown. Yes.

KP: She taught English and German. You wrote that down on your survey.

JH: Yes, she did.

KP: Did she teach before she met your father?

JH: Yes, she did. When she first got out of college, she went with the League of Women Voters, as some kind of a national secretary, and she worked at Mount Holyoke College for a short while and then went into teaching. She liked ... language, which is why she taught German and English. ... Then my father was also the principal of adult education in the New Brunswick school system, where English for foreign born was offered. ... She loved that; she loved teaching that. She taught English for him to the Hungarian people who settled in New Brunswick, which was full of wonderful national groups. They both really enjoyed that.

KP: So your mother kept teaching after she got married.

JH: Yes. She didn't teach full-time, because that was an evening school. She substituted occasionally in the public schools.

KP: It sounds like growing up that you were used to your mother working some ...

JH: A little bit, yes, yeah.

KP: Not as a full-time, but still I've interviewed a lot of people and once the women got married, they stopped working, period.

JH: Particularly in that age, but Mother was extremely bright and she had to use what she had.

BT: She did.

KP: It sounds like your mother was a very active suffragette, I mean, being employed by League of Women Voters before the amendment was passed.

JH: Well, she was always active in the League of Voters, locally, in New Brunswick, too. Legislation interested her very much. She was on the national board of the Reformed Church, for legislative affairs, 'cause she always kept up with the reading and knew all that kind of stuff.

KP: What were her interests? What legislation was she most interested in?

JH: I have no idea.

KP: Oh, she never ...

JH: I wasn't interested, so I don't remember. [laughter]

KP: But you just know that that was one of the things that she ...

JH: Oh, yes. That was her thing, yeah.

BT: Did she go to meetings?

JH: Oh, yes. Oh, yes.

BT: Night meetings and day meetings?

JH: Yes, yes.

BT: I think what children remember is their mother was always out. My kids always say, "You're always out at a meeting." [laughter]

KP: Your mother, as a teacher of English and German, is what I was most struck by, because she was a teacher of German in World War I era. Did she ever mention any of the problems she had teaching German, because there were a lot of places that banned German?

JH: They taught in Attleboro, Massachusetts, and when father came back, he taught there, too. ... I think that was the last place.

KP: Except when she came to New Brunswick at the night [school].

JH: Yes, yes.

KP: How long did she teach English as a second language in New Brunswick?

JH: In evening school, some years, because she was fond of it. She just thought it was wonderful to teach government and English language to new citizens. ... You know, I have to say, that I think people in those days were much more appreciative of getting an education from the evening school. As you know, we're loaded with people now that are from every country in the world around here, and they ... do not bother to do anything about learning English, or become more knowledgeable as citizens. I think that's a shame. Maybe it's just sheer number, or something, but the drive is not there.

KP: How did your parents meet? Do you know where?

JH: No, I don't know.

KP: Was it at a church social?

JH: I have no ...

KP: There's no ...

JH: They were married in Mother's home.

KP: Really, they never ...

BT: Did they ever talk about their wedding?

JH: Yes.

BT: My grandmother for example ...

JH: Did she talk about her wedding?

BT: Well, my mother and father eloped, but my grandmother would talk extensively about her wedding.

JH: Well, my grandfather was a minister. He came to her home in Woonsocket, Rhode Island and married them there.

KP: Married who?

JH: ... My grandfather did not live terribly long after that, and so I guess she was glad that he had gotten the chance to marry them.

KP: She had known your father before he had gone off to war.

JH: You know I don't even know, I'm not absolutely sure.

KP: You're not a hundred percent sure.

JH: I'm really not. They never really talked about it.

KP: Really, so it's almost a family mystery.

JH: Oh, lots of things, I guess, are always family mysteries. It was certainly a home wedding in Woonsocket, Rhode Island. I know that.

KP: You mentioned that your father couldn't finish college because of lack of money.

JH: Yes, he couldn't.

KP: How disappointed was he?

JH: Oh, I think probably very disappointed. ... I think, because his father was kind of an itinerant minister, they were very poor all of their life, though he never talked about it, never said that to me.

BT: Never said that to you.

JH: But I know that that's probably why he went to live with his grandmother and grandfather every summer, because I think the children kind of got farmed out because things were difficult. But he loved that, because his grandfather was also somebody, who was very clever with his hands, and he was very fond of his grandparents.

BT: Well, I was just thinking back, to get to go and spend the summer with your grandparents was very kind even, I mean, I know people who are five, six years younger than I am ...

JH: Yes.

BT: ... from large families in the Midwest. One friend of mine was the eleventh of twelve children, and she spent every summer with her grandmother.

JH: She did?

BT: On the farm.

JH: ... Probably helping, didn't she?

BT: Yeah, I think just, I don't know. You know, I've never really been able to ascertain whether it was just one way to, you know, give her a little different experience, or maybe get her out of, you know ...

JH: Yeah.

BT: ... sharing the house and the affection of her parents with ten other brothers and sisters, eleven brothers and sisters, then one of them died. But she talks about spending the whole summer with her grandmother. So I think it ...

JH: One of the things my father did to raise money for college was wrestle, and, you know, I really don't know how this came about. But he did teach wrestling at, I suspect it was at ... Lee, what's the name of the school in New Hampshire, the private school?

Lee Hassert: Exeter?

JH: No, the one where we stay sometimes.

LH: That's it.

JH: That's it?

LH: (Phillip's?) Exeter.

JH: (Phillip's?) Exeter, that's what I was trying to think of. ... I've often thought to myself, I should write to them and find out if there was any record of his having been employed there. But I do know that he did teach wrestling, and then got enough for two years of college, but he just couldn't evidently go on.

KP: Do any of your mother and father's papers survive?

JH: Papers?

KP: Were there any letters or any diaries?

JH: No diaries. I have some letters that my, let's see it would be my great grandmother wrote to my father. These were such a precious letters. I saved a couple of them. "My dear little Kenneth boy," she said and then went on about how he had gone downtown to buy something for them, some vegetables. Very simple country living, you know, just ... a precious feeling, so I had an idea that would be nice for him. They lived in Brattleboro, Vermont, so that's where he stayed. If you want to ...

KP: One question I was also curious about is how your parent, who had real New England roots, came to live in New Brunswick?

BT: Yeah, that's what I was wondering.

JH: Do you know, I haven't any idea. I've often wondered that, too, because they were both New Englanders. Father said he lived in every town in New England. That, of course, was greatly exaggerated, but they did move around a fair amount, with little churches in Vermont and New Hampshire. But I don't know. My mother ... grew up mostly in Rhode Island. Her father had a meat market and a store in Woonsocket and they lived there. ... Before she was born, they went out to California, he and his brother, with the families, and they started a restaurant out in Santa Barbara, California.

BT: Yeah, I wanted to get to that part.

JH: Isn't that strange?

BT: I think, when I read that, I thought ...

JH: I don't know why they did it.

BT: ... because I lived in Santa Barbara. I lived in Santa Barbara for a year.

JH: I don't think of New Englanders as being very adventuresome, you know, but they did do that. ... They were there eight years and Mother was born there. They had another child, who died while they were there, though, when she was four years old, and then mother was born. ... She came back when she was about eight and then always was in New England after that.

KP: So you don't know what led them to go.

JH: I can't imagine.

BT: Santa Barbara must have been very small then. I mean, you know, compared to the area now.

JH: Yes, yes. ... I've never been to California, but my twin sister went there, purposely to Santa Barbara, and found my mother's little sister's grave there and then went to the town office to find out whatever she could find about other relatives. ... I thought it was very sweet of her. She took a bouquet of flowers and put on mother's sister's grave. She said, "Here it's been a hundred years and nobody's ever paid any attention to her, so it's time I put something on the grave."

BT: I think that's nice, particularly when you're that far away. That's right.

JH: Yeah, yeah.

BT: None would ever ...

JH: ... My mother's family is buried outside of Woonsocket, Rhode Island, and I noticed Louise's name is on the grave stone. ... Although she was buried in Santa Barbara, I think they wanted to be sure that she be part of the family, so they put her name there.

KP: How interesting. Where did you live growing up in New Brunswick?

JH: We started in New Brunswick. Then ... Mother and Father had an apartment in Highland Park and then bought a house, so I lived most of the years that I remember anything about growing up in Highland Park.

KP: Did you go initially through New Brunswick elementary schools, or did you start in Highland Park?

JH: No, always Highland Park.

KP: Always Highland Park.

JH: Yeah, kindergarten on.

KP: Both your parents were very well educated. It sounds like you learned quite a bit before you stepped into the classroom.

JH: Oh, I don't know. ... Both of them were intellectually curious. I was just thinking the other day, when my father was overseas in service, that he, being artistic, made special trips to the cathedrals around and was just fascinated with them and brought home postcards showing the rose windows and the gargoyles and all the rest. So my sister and I were brought up on postcards of French cathedrals that he collected.

BT: How unusual.

JH: Chartres Cathedral was his favorite.

BT: That's mine.

JH: ... He also was interested in the Roman roads that were around where the Army served, and he brought back stones from some of those roads. My sister and I each have one of those stones with a story he wrote about a Gaelic general who commanded soldiers in that area. He was interested in things like that. ... He was also interested in, as you know, furniture and knew a lot about it and had furniture books that he studied.

KP: So it seems like there's also this being able to study at the Beaux Arts in Paris.. There were some really positive things that came out of his military service.

JH: Oh, yes. Definitely. He thought the southern part of France where he must have been stationed was beautiful.

KP: Did he ever get a chance to go back to France?

JH: No, he never did. ... He would've loved to, I think. ... I always felt saddened, because when my husband and I went over to Europe for the first time, he shook his head and said, "I wish I'd been able to do that for you, send you over there." ... I knew he also meant himself, too.

BT: Himself, too.

KP: When you were going to school, did your parents think you would go to college?

JH: Yes, they did. They valued education. I'm glad that you asked that question. You know, they never talked about it all the time, but I never thought that I would not go to college.

KP: Really? The whole ...

JH: Absolutely, and I was not able to get that through to my kids. I mean, now people seem to make the decision as to whether they want to go or not. That was never a question for us. I automatically assumed that I was going to go to college. ... My father had a very small salary as a public school teacher, and he had to borrow on his life insurance in order to get enough, 'cause I was a twin and we were both going through at the same time. The tuition was 250 dollars.

BT: Is that what it was?

KP: So both you and sister were in NJC.

JH: Yes, we were.

BT: Yeah, they were both there.

JH: Yeah. We were music majors, and my sister went on to teach music later on. I went to library school, which in those days was in the senior year at Douglass College. What a change ...

KP: Yeah.

JH: It's entirely different and ...

KP: Now, it's a different school.

JH: Oh, heavens, and now you do a Master's degree, but I did get through the library school there and did library work, too.

KP: When you were going to school, what was the assumption among your teachers and classmates in terms of how many would go to college, at Highland Park?

JH: In Highland Park, it was very high, because Highland Park was made up mostly of people from the faculty at Rutgers and Douglass. ... I have to say, I had the most wonderful friends in the world, because we had similar economic standards, the same ideals and certain things were important to all of us. Frankly, it was a wonderful way to grow up. [It was] kind of protected, but it was wonderful. ... Still after all these years, we have a large group of friends that get together, who went from kindergarten through Douglass College.

KP: In Highland Park.

JH: ... Two of them are even going out to be where we're going to a retirement community.

BT: Really?

JH: One was maid of honor at our wedding. I've had seventy-five years of friendship, which is a long friendship.

BT: That sounds wonderful to me in a day and age when it seems like it's very hard to have friends, because of the ...

JH: I agree with you. That never happens.

BT: People I went to school with I see them occasionally.

JH: Right.

BT: But, you know, you really miss that.

JH: Yeah.

BT: You just don't do that. A lot of people we've interviewed, we haven't interviewed a lot of people, but those gals that we have really, you know, from around here, that was true, too, I think.

KP: Yeah, yeah. No, we interviewed, I don't know if you know her, Ada Bloom.

JH: I know who she is.

KP: Yeah, she grew up in Highland Park.

JH: Yes, yes.

KP: It's similar ...

JH: Yes.

KP: Carl Woodward had commented ...

JH: Oh, he's one of my favorite people.

KP: ... has commented about how it was really a lot of faculty and ...

JH: Yes, yes.

KP: But you also went, I think, it was your last two years of high school to New Brunswick.

JH: No.

KP: No?

JH: Some people did it ... before they had a high school in Highland Park, but I was in one of the first classes that went all the way ...

KP: Oh, okay.

JH: ... through Highland Park.

KP: So you went all the way through high school.

JH: Yeah.

KP: So you did not have to go ...

JH: No.

KP: Oh, that's interesting, because I've interviewed a number of people who ended up going ...

JH: Going to New Brunswick for their high school, yeah. No, when I got there, we were the first class that went all the way ... through the twelfth grade.

KP: Were you glad to go all the way through Highland Park?

JH: You know what? Never bothered me at all.

KP: Yeah.

JH: We had a happy time, and the education was excellent in Highland Park. We never had to take exams, for instance, for entrance to college, because the school system was so good. Now, I don't know how they worked that, but I never took any. ... They had high standards and the kids were bright.

KP: You were also a lot, Carl Woodward has talked about this, a lot of people I interviewed knew faculty members, or sons or daughters of faculty members, and teachers and said ...

JH: Right.

KP: ... there wasn't a lot of money in the 1930s ...

JH: There wasn't any.

KP: ... even if you had a job. Your salaries were slashed and you in a sense made out, because you were employed, but, still, it could be pretty meager going.

JH: It was very modest living, I assure you.

KP: Because it sounds like your father was, in terms of life insurance, that was probably the only way he could

JH: It was.

KP: ... send you to college.

JH: It was. I'm sort of proud of the way he did that and that it was important that we went to college.

BT: ... That you both went.

JH: Yeah, yeah. ... We were voice majors and we sang our way through college. ... Our voices were alike and we looked a lot alike, but we don't think we were identical twins. In those days, they never bothered to find out. Our voices were very similar. I remember music department, we had to give, not auditions, but concertizing for the faculty, and they, one of the professors always said, you know, "Even the beats of your voices are identical." ... My sister always sang the lower part and I sang the higher part, but ... she didn't have a particularly low voice, she just did it. ... That's how come we dueted our way through college. The Federation of Women's Clubs provided music scholarships for Douglass College. We're very indebted to them. The Federation gave money for the music building. ... As our payback for that, my sister and I used to have to go around to some of the club meetings and sing for them.

BT: Oh, sing for your supper.

KP: So you had a scholarship from the Women's Club.

JH: Yes, for voice scholarship ...

KP: For voice scholarship.

JH: Yeah.

KP: When did you, you and your sister, I mean, become interested in music?

BT: I was wondering that.

JH: We started in kindergarten, and one day we were asked to get up and sing. ... Mother was teaching that day and couldn't come, so my next door neighbor went and was sitting in the audience. ... Much to her deep embarrassment, we got up on the stage to sing, and instead of singing, we fought over who was going to have a little ring that was on one of our fingers and not on the other. ... So we had to be taken down. It was very embarrassing.

BT: Good thing your mother wasn't there.

JH: Yes, but that started our career.

BT: I'm surprised there was a career after that. [laughter]

KP: Did you sing in a church choir?

JH: Always.

KP: Yeah.

BT: I was going to say ...

JH: For forty-nine years.

BT: A Reformed Church, right? So you were active in the church.

JH: ... I met my husband because we were active in music. He was in the glee club for the four years that he was in college.

KP: Oh, okay.

JH: ... Because he was a chemistry major, students were sped up so they could get through sooner and could go into service. ... So he went in the summertime. Do you know Soup Walters, who directed the ...

KP: Yes.

JH: Well, he called up and asked my sister and me if we would be willing to come over and sing with this group. He wanted women as well as men. So we went over, and I kept hearing a good voice in the baritone section and I followed it down. ... He was on the other end, so he never stood a chance. ... I could remember so well saying to my sister, "He's mine, keep your mitts off."

BT: I was going to say, did you have to then worry about [laughter] when the sister spotted him, too, because I know a lot of twins and they would even play games all through school.

JH: Yes, we played games occasionally with the teachers.

BT: You know, if you didn't like the date at the door you switched with your sister, or something, and sometimes you couldn't tell. I have a friend, who was a very good friend, who has an identical twin, and, boy, dead ringer. I mean, really identical and they played a lot of games.

JH: Oh, my. Yeah. We never were very successful with it, because Highland Park was a small school system and when we tried to do it with one of the teachers that kind of ended our career of trying to change.

KP: When did you think that you would study music, because it sounds like you were very active?

JH: We sang all our lives.

KP: You knew that that's what you wanted ...

JH: Yes. The only thing was, I was not one of those people who was really focused in on a career and beyond. A singing professor that we had would have liked it if we would have done more. ... He, I remember, he took us into New York, and we did a radio broadcast, Joan, my sister, Joan, and I, singing. ... If you're going to do anything like that, really do solo work, you have to think that's the most important thing in the world. It was not to me, no matter how much I loved it, church music, especially oratorio. It's been wonderful but not for a career.

KP: So even in college you had the sense that music, while you enjoyed it a great deal, you weren't going to make a career of it, or try to make a career.

JH: No, I don't think I ever thought it was. Actually, I think I was pretty practical, and I think it's not a very practical thing to have a career in.

BT: I was thinking that, yeah, particularly.

JH: ... I've always thought that you'd make a mistake to try to make a living at that.

BT: Do you think that the experiences that people had during the Depression also made you more conscious of having to find something that you had to make a living on?

JH: Oh, very definitely.

BT: That would be ...

JH: Absolutely. ... I did do music library interning for a few weeks in ... library school when I went to the Baltimore Public Library. They had a good music library. But when I came back, I knew I wasn't suited to do that, because music librarians are highly technical people. They really have to know scads and scads about everything and I didn't have the background for it, so I didn't bother. I went with the New York Public Library when I got out of college.

KP: In your high school, did you belong to any sorority? Did your high school have sororities?

JH: No.

KP: No, you didn't have any sororities there ...

JH: No, no.

KP: ... in Highland Park. What did you do for fun?

JH: Oh, everything. You know, there wasn't much traffic, and we used to, every Saturday get together, all of the kids that we knew, and we would roller skate, or in the wintertime, we'd ... get our sleds going down a hill down on Lincoln Avenue, where everybody was over there doing that. ... Girl Scouts, we were active in Girl Scouts. ... We had wonderful game parties, where we played Monopoly, and that kind of thing.

BT: We used to do that.

JH: I mean, we really ... had a wonderful time.

BT: Yeah, there is life before television.

JH: Yeah, there really is.

BT: Yeah, we did Monopoly. We used to play Monopoly just frantically.

JH: Oh, yes. It was wonderful.

BT: The games would go on for days. I mean, this ... I forgot about that.

JH: One of my friends told me a while back, "You know, your mother used to have tea for us when we came over to play Monopoly at your house." And I said, "She did?" ... She said, "Oh, yes, and we were so impressed to think she would have tea."

KP: It sounds like you probably had it, but you didn't remember that you did.

JH: Well, anyway, the mother of one of our friends had been a home economic teacher, so she

had a little cooking group for us on Saturday mornings, too, and taught us how to cook.

BT: Oh, how neat.

KP: So you and your friends would gather ...

JH: Oh, it was wonderful.

KP: It sounds like besides singing in the choir, you were active in youth groups with the church.

JH: Yes, always. Yes, my sister and I were really devout about church. My parents were never as enthusiastically interested as we were. We thoroughly enjoyed the youth group.

BT: So they didn't have to make you go to Sunday school.

JH: Nobody had to make us do anything. My sister was gregarious and I am, too, and I think we just loved having ...

BT: Yeah, were there groups of people you went with? Was there a movie? I don't know much about ...

JH: Yes, there was a movie in Highland Park.

BT: ... movies in Highland Park.

JH: We did go to the movies occasionally.

BT: I was thinking, I bet the movies were fun.

JH: Oh, yes. That's kind of fun. Is that movie theater still ...

KP: Oh, no.

JH: No, no.

KP: No. I didn't even know that Highland Park ever had a theater.

JH: Yes, they did.

BT: Well, that's what I was thinking. I haven't seen one, but I don't spend a lot of time in Highland Park.

JH: Yes.

BT: So how would I know?

JH: I can remember, Nelson Eddie was one of our passions, all of us, while we were growing up. We were all addicted to him.

BT: Yeah, yeah. Yeah, I always wondered what the Nelson Eddie's attraction was.

JH: ... It wouldn't be now, but we certainly thought he was ...

BT: Certainly kind of "hunky."

JH: Oh, I know.

BT: But I bet, yeah, he was really good looking and ...

JH: He was really ...

BT: I mean, in those days' terms.

KP: Yeah.

BT: I don't know about now. I'm just trying to think about what other people did in, you know, because there wasn't a lot of money in the '30s. ... So you really had to make a lot of your own fun, I would think.

JH: My father wanted us to keep as healthy as possible, because we were twins and had been very premature. ... He thought it would be good for us in the summertime, when he wasn't teaching, to be up on a lake in New Hampshire, and so he taught at a boy's camp nearby. He taught woodworking. I can still hear him splashing at six o'clock in morning ... going in the lake and then getting in the car and going up to camp. ... Then he would be back home about three o'clock in the afternoon. But his doing that made it possible for us to rent a cottage on the lake and be active and have fun.

BT: Yeah.

JH: ... We were there for twenty years.

KP: You would summer in New Hampshire.

JH: We spent every summer in New Hampshire.

KP: It sounds like it was very convenient, I mean, in an era where you don't have air conditioning.

JH: Oh, it was wonderful.

KP: New Brunswick and Highland Park, this area can get pretty stifling in the summer.

JH: Right. One winter, when the camp had all their canoes put down by the lake in a boathouse, the boathouse went down with the ice and some of the canoes went down with it. ... My father rescued one of them and brought it home and we always had a canoe, that he fixed up and so we canoed and we rowboated. What a healthy life. We were in the water every day. It was fabulous.

BT: One of the concerns when I was growing up that Kurt probably doesn't remember, 'cause he's so much younger than I am, summertime was polio season.

JH: Yes, it was.

BT: We weren't allowed to go to public pools. I was not allowed to go the movies.

JH: Is that what they made such a ...

BT: No, my mother just said, "You can't go to the movies. You aren't to be around any other kids." She was paranoid about those things, with good reason, I think. That's how you caught it, you caught it from somebody else, evidently ...

JH: Yeah.

BT: ... they thought, but they think my father may have had polio.

JH: Oh, they did think so.

BT: He had something wrong with his neck when he was in camp in Maine. He was in camp in Maine, but ... they've never been sure, so she may have been blatantly thinking about that.

JH: Well, that's funny you should say that ...

BT: But I wonder if that why your father also, maybe not, I just wondered if he said anything about ...

JH: No, he just wanted us to be healthy. (We rented a farmhouse in a little village near the lake until he was sure that we were old enough to know how to swim and be safe.) He was very careful about things. ... It's interesting that you should say that, because one of the farmhouses we lived in was owned by a man who my parents invited out for dinner one night. ... While he was there he said he didn't feel well, and he came down with polio. ... They were worried about that because we had been exposed.

BT: People just seemed to avoid crowds, so I think a lot of people would think to just get out of the city. It was just not considered a healthy place.

JH: Yeah.

BT: If you could figure out a way to get out.

JH: My mother was very knowledgeable about wild flowers and ferns and other kinds of nature things, so I grew up with knowledge of that kind of thing because we were in the woods. ... My whole remembrance of my youth was so healthy. We went to the library in Keene, New Hampshire twice a week and [we would] come home with ten or twelve books that we could read. ... The rest of the time we spent on the water or playing near the water. ... I remember I loved to (I'm not any good) but I loved to sketch, and I would go off into the fields, Mount Monadnock is in that area, and sketch Mount Monadnock. You know, I just ...

BT: Wonderful.

JH: There was time to be creative, always. Something I feel very strongly about, having taught young kids, was that there's no time to be creative. I don't know how people create unless it's quiet. ... I can't create in a hubbub, I don't know if you can, but I can't.

BT: Now, we were talking about that.

JH: Were you?

BT: I had a circle group I was in last night, and we were talking about that.

JH: Yes.

BT: And getting kids away from TV and getting kids outside. I played in the woods for hours. We spent the summers in Maine.

JH: Yes.

BT: I just don't know how these kids who are always in some daycare center with a whole lot of people their whole life.

JH: Oh, I know.

BT: They have a life. It's just different than what I remember. That's all.

JH: We've been renting a cottage the last ten years up in Maine, on the coast.

BT: Oh.

JH: ... We're so happy that we can have our granddaughter up there with us, because that's her first experience in being free to go down by the water and throw stones for hours and collect seaweed and build bridges with old planks. You know, even if it's only for a few weeks, it's better than not ever being exposed, which is what's happening to kids today.

BT: Where is your cottage?

JH: Do you know where Damariscotta is?

BT: Yes.

JH: Well, if you went out to the coast from Damariscotta, it's in a little village called Round Pond, a few miles from Pemaquid Point, where there's a big lighthouse. It's heaven. I still love nature. That's what my parents did, I think, and that was such a great gift.

KP: It sounds like they encouraged you to be a Girl Scout.

JH: Yes, they did. Yes. ... Though we were never there in the summer to go to Girl Scout camp, and a lot of my friends did that. We missed out on that, but we used to go weekend camping sometimes, with the Girl Scouts.

KP: Did you ever take any other vacations besides New Hampshire? It sounds like this was the annual ritual.

JH: We wouldn't have had the money to do anything more extensive. We could go and stay there and fish and all that. My sister and I had a great system fishing. I put the worms on and she took the fish off the hook. It worked well.

KP: Did your father or your mother ever take you into New York, either to the museums or to any concerts performances?

JH: No, no. But we went to the concert series in New Brunswick, which was then in the gym, and they had a wonderful concert series. We really learned about all the best singers and instrumentalists that used to come there.

KP: So that's where you would go to, the New Brunswick series.

JH: Yes, we went to the New Brunswick series, and that was the social thing to do in New Brunswick ... Now you go to one of those things and you don't know anybody. We sat in the balcony, because those were the cheaper seats, and looked down and saw ... all the prominent people. President Clothier was president of Rutgers and, oh, there were lots of interesting people in New Brunswick.

KP: I think, General Johnson.

JH: Yes.

BT: ... I'm sure that it was just a much smaller place then, too.

JH: It was. You knew everybody.

BT: Everybody. I mean, you could now go down and not know anybody in one as big as this.

JH: Exactly. My husband and I still go to all the concert series that are held in the State Theater now, with great interest, because they do a good job. I'm glad they have it.

KP: In terms of going to Douglass, would you have liked to have gone someplace else besides NJC or was it just ...

JH: It was never an issue, because we couldn't have afforded to do it and we commuted. Mother and Father had to bring us over every day. We went on a shoestring.

KP: Do you ever wish you could have gone away to college?

JH: Yes, I think I wanted that for my children for that reason, but you know, I don't know. I don't feel cheated about anything in life. I just think I've been lucky I've had what I had.

KP: What about being a commuter? How difficult was that?

JH: Well, you don't know people as well in college, which is one reason it was so wonderful we had so many friends in Highland Park. Some of my friends did, who lived in Highland Park, did live on campus and enjoyed that, but we couldn't have done that.

BT: Was there public transportation?

JH: No public transportation, no.

BT: So you had somebody drive you.

JH: Somebody had to drive us over. It was kind of a grind, I think.

BT: Couldn't have ...

JH: I found college kind of a grind anyway. It was hard work ...

KP: What was your most difficult subject?

JH: Math.

KP: So math was really ...

JH: Math and physics. I had a wonderful physics professor, named Frank Pratt, Dr. Frank Pratt, who was absolutely the sweetest dear in the world, and he really made it possible for me to get through physics. Music majors, we had to take physics, because there was a unit on sound in it. We also had to take Eurythmics. There was a Danish professor over there who did the eurythmics, and we would do all kinds of interesting rhythmic steps ... That was good for music majors.

KP: ... You mentioned that you also had an experience with Professor Hauptmann, before he fled the United States.

JH: Right.

KP: And you remembered him. You were saying earlier that he was a very intimidating Prussian.

JH: He was a typical Prussian, rough, tough and hard.

KP: You also mentioned that he just disappeared in the middle of the semester.

JH: Yes, he did.

KP: What did they tell you? What did the deans tell you?

JH: Nothing, nothing. Nobody knew anything about it. We had no idea what had happened to him. ... I think it was not until some of the Rutgers men saw him overseas, 'cause he was in the SS. Is that right? That was right. He was in the SS, and they saw him and recognized him, and that's how ... the information got back as to what had happened to him.

KP: What happened after your professor disappeared?

JH: Oh, somebody else took his place. I can't remember his name, nice, gentle, soft voice, German professor, thank goodness.

BT: He just showed up in class, and said, "I'm your new ..."

JH: Well, they had to put somebody in there to mind the classroom.

KP: Well they didn't even say, "Well, Professor ..."

JH: Nobody said a word.

BT: Oh, how strange.

JH: I don't think they really knew. They knew he disappeared, but they didn't know anything about it for a long time, I think. If anyone knew, it wasn't general knowledge.

BT: Did you suspect that as a German professor that he disappeared? My first thought was, well, he's been murdered, or he's been kidnapped.

JH: ... I was so happy to find that he was gone, that I didn't care what had happened to him. I thought the good fairy was looking out for me.

KP: You mentioned about Hauptmann that there were students who liked him.

JH: Oh, yes.

KP: In fact, you mentioned one student who was a language major ...

JH: Yes.

KP: ... who really thought very highly of him.

JH: Oh, my sister enjoyed German tremendously. There was a woman professor there, whose name I can't think of off hand, [with] whom ... my sister took a lot of German and enjoyed it very much, but I didn't.

KP: You mention that your favorite professor was J. Earle Newton.

JH: Yes, head of the music department. Yes, he was just wonderful. He was a Canadian. But whenever you go to college and meet up with people who are scholars, what a great introduction to classical music, and he was one of those. We sang in the choir all the years we were there and he did superb music. We got a good foundation of vocal music, that was outstanding music, and then I also took some courses with him. He taught a course in Brahms and one in Wagner, an odd combination, but anyway, he was an excellent professor and I enjoyed it tremendously.

KP: ... Ada Bloom, who was interviewed, was a commuter, but even commuters took part in the rituals of college. She remembers ... Sacred Path.

JH: Sacred Path, right.

KP: She remembers the class dresses that you had.

BT: That's right.

JH: Yes.

KP: Do you remember your class dress?

JH: Indeed, I do. My grandmother made our dresses for us, alike, and I can remember going in the set of dresses, my sister and I dressed exactly alike. ... Then we had a sign with our name on it and as a big bow up here and ankle socks and saddle shoes, and that was our freshman outfit.

KP: So that was what you had to wear?

JH: When you first went, yes. ... I don't know how long we had to wear it.

BT: I was going to say, how long did you have to wear it?

JH: I don't know, probably a couple of weeks, months. I don't know. I don't even remember.

KP: Because the Rutgers College people very vividly remember their freshman hazing and apparently the same thing was at NJC.

JH: Well, if they had hazing, I never knew anything about that.

KP: Well, hazing in terms that you had to wear a certain ...

JH: Oh, yes. We had to do that, and then in our sophomore year, we had to buy the class dress. Ours were maroon, 'cause the colors were maroon and gray.

KP: Apparently, I think, freshman year, you had to initially carry your books in a shopping bag.

JH: Oh, did we?

KP: I don't remember what you ...

JH: I know we, both my sister and I, had what they used to call oxford bags to carry our books in.

-----END OF SIDE ONE, TAPE ONE -----

KP: So you had an oxford bag which you carried your books.

JH: Right. Dr. Newton was interesting in his approach for my sister and me, because we both majored in music. He never treated us the same. Twins want to be individuals. We didn't even have the same close friends. We wanted to be as different as possible. ... I ... remember, I got a voice scholarship before my sister did ... and I did a lot of the solo work, which she never did, and she had just as good a voice, I thought. But anyway, he did what he felt was right, and I always admired him for that, because I think I got a little feeling of individuality, which I needed.

KP: It seems like he was doing this very consciously.

JH: Yes, he was careful. Yes.

KP: Did your parents drop you off at his house in the morning and then pick you up in the evening?

JH: Right, in the morning and then pick us up late in the afternoon. We studied in the library and then came home and did our homework at night.

KP: You were a member of the chapel choir.

JH: Yes, yes.

KP: Did you join any other clubs or organizations?

JH: If I did, I don't remember.

KP: It sounds like that ...

JH: We were really involved with the music, and it's kind of a full-time thing.

KP: No, no, I ...

BT: No, it's true. Did your choir ever travel away?

JH: Yes, they did a little bit but not ...

BT: 'Cause I know the Drew choir goes all kind of places.

JH: Yes. We went a few places.

KP: It sounds like mainly in New Jersey.

JH: Yes.

KP: What about chapel? Do you remember chapel?

JH: Sure do. I have a good feeling about that. I think it's an important thing for people to have. We had prominent speakers that we had to listen to.

BT: I was going to say, it was required, I bet.

KP: Do you remember any of the speakers that spoke at chapel? I know Norman Thomas was a regular for the Rutgers chapel, but I was wondering ...

JH: Oh, goodness. I can't tell you now. ... I can't tell you. I'm sorry I don't remember.

KP: But you do remember ...

BT: They were kind of boring, I mean, they were interesting enough to look forward to.

JH: Yes.

KP: A lot of people remembered, on the Rutgers side of college, Dean Metzger, who was the Dean of Men. What about at Douglass? Jean Comeforo, from another class, remembered Dean Boddie, I think it was.

JH: Oh, yes, Southern gal. One that I remember was Dean Corwin. I thought Dean Corwin was wonderful. She was a very retiring, quiet person, but she was a sweetheart and I'm glad I went through when she was there.

BT: Did you have a chance to really, you know, have tea with these people, or did you meet any of these people?

JH: Yes, we did. Dean Corwin used to entertain at teas. ... As a matter-of-fact, I have a tray sitting out in my kitchen that she gave as a wedding gift. I don't know how many students she did this to, but I would have seen more of her maybe because I did a lot of solo work with the choir, so I always got to stand up next to where she sat. She would sit there for the services and did the introduction, you know, if it was a psalm reading, or whatever it was. ... Then I would get up, and it's a vivid memory 'cause I used to think, "Oh, I hope she can't see my legs trembling." She sent my sister a wedding gift, too, of a tray. Trays were her thing, I guess.

BT: Obviously, if she decided to ...

KP: Did she come to your wedding?

JH: No. She was dead by then. Would she have been? No, no. No, she wouldn't have been.

KP: But she sent a gift, which ...

JH: Yes, yes, yes. You know the house that was on the corner. Is that still the dean's house?

KP: Yes, Douglass still has a home for the dean.

BT: They had so much, I don't know ...

JH: The Halls-Mills murder case house.

KP: Oh, I didn't realize that the house at Douglass was the Halls-Mills.

JH: ... I think that was Mrs. Hall's house.

KP: That's a good question. I'll have to ...

JH: Find out.

KP: Yeah, you sort of brought it up out of sequence, but I'm sure that for a lot of people I've interviewed it's a very distinct memory.

JH: They remembered that.

KP: Do you have any memories of that murder?

JH: No, I don't.

KP: No. In terms of the New Deal, what did your parents think of Roosevelt and the New Deal in the '30s?

JH: Well, since we were "died in the wool" Republicans, not too much.

BT: I noticed that you were Republicans.

KP: So your parents stayed loyal to the Republican Party.

JH: Yes, they did.

KP: What about your classmates at Highland Park?

JH: Well, of course ... now, it's well known that most faculty members are Democratic. I don't think we ever talked about it. I have no idea what their political interests were.

KP: Really, you never ...

JH: Never, never gave it a thought.

KP: Was your mother active in any relief organizations?

JH: No.

KP: What about NJC? Do you have any sense of what your fellow students, whether they were

Republican or Democrats?

JH: No, I don't. I don't ever remember that coming up, maybe 'cause that wasn't something I was particularly interested in.

KP: What about the war itself, the coming of the war? You had lost your German professor under mysterious circumstances at the time.

JH: Yes.

KP: You didn't know what had happened to him.

JH: No. Well, of course, really our whole college career was effected by the fact that everybody was going into service. There wasn't any question of that.

KP: But before Pearl Harbor, did you have any sense that we would be going to war?

JH: No, no. But we did begin losing people that we knew from Rutgers and that were killed in the war and that brought it all home quickly.

BT: Was that before or after Pearl Harbor?

JH: After.

KP: One of the things that my students have been very impressed with by reading both the *Targum* and the *Caellian* was really the social world at Rutgers, which even a commuter would be caught up at least in part of it.

JH: Yes.

KP: The Rutgers men talked about the fraternity parties.

JH: Yes.

KP: The other thing that's really commented on, both sides of the campus, were the dances.

JH: Absolutely. ... They were a big deal. Absolutely. As a matter-of-fact, one of the things my sister and I used to laugh about was that we'd go through the reception line and frequently say something to the greeters.

BT: I was gonna say, you had a reception line?

JH: Yes, there was a reception line. ... It was always kind of a cause for fun, because I'd go through first and then they'd wonder why somebody else was coming through that looked just

like me.

BT: Now who was in the reception line? Was there a hostess or faculty member, or something, chaperons?

JH: I think it might have been Dean Corwin and some of the professors, whoever chaperoned.

KP: ... How many dances did you go to?

JH: We went to all of them, until I met my husband, who didn't dance. My other boyfriends used to take me.

BT: Were they once a week?

JH: Oh, I don't know how often. I really don't remember, but we wore evening gowns and ... it was such a big deal.

KP: My students have been really impressed with both the bands that were there ...

JH: Oh, they had big bands.

KP: ... and how formal they were.

JH: Yes. ... The ones at Rutgers were wonderful, too. They always had a good orchestra.

KP: Yeah.

JH: ... They had some top orchestras. In fact, Carl Woodward is one of the people that I remember. His date, Alice, was one of the most beautiful women I had ever seen, and he was a handsome fellow. They were a stunning looking couple. I was impressed.

BT: What did the fellows wear? Did they wear suits or did they really wear ...

JH: I think they wore tuxedos.

KP: Yeah, at least in the pictures in the yearbook.

BT: Yeah.

JH: I think they do.

BT: Okay, I have to go look at some ...

KP: What about any fraternity parties? Did you ever go to any fraternity parties?

JH: No. Well, one fellow that I dated belonged to the Scarlet Barb, which I think is a ... Was that a commuting student's ...

KP: No, I think, no, the Scarlet Barb was for the non-fraternity men.

JH: I used to go to those with him, but my husband was not a fraternity person, either.

KP: Yeah.

JH: His brothers were students later, but he never thought he could afford to do anything like that.

KP: What about your sister? What did she do?

JH: My sister was a real gad about, she knew lots of fellows from Rutgers, but I can't seem to remember whether it was connected to Phi Gamma Delta or another fraternity.

KP: As a commuter, did you ever feel ostracized or left out?

JH: Not ostracized, but I always felt there was a certain kind of stigma that was attached to not being able to afford to live on campus.

KP: Because both at Rutgers, particularly because we've interviewed more Rutgers people, commuters often felt that they were left out and some felt deliberately and some just ...

JH: Oh, did they?

KP: ... They were not on campus. A lot of fraternity people are not as observant of it, but even some of them will say, in fact, if you didn't live on campus ... you really missed out.

JH: Yes. That's one thing that music did for us, because we were always involved with musical activities, and that gave us a way to meet other students. But many of the girls knew everybody in the class, and I never had a way of doing that. Unless I'd been in class with them, I never had a way of meeting them, so to that extent, it was anti-social.

KP: You mention that you knew Dean Corwin.

JH: Yes.

KP: Do you remember Dean Boddie?

JH: I certainly do. ... They had another one named Alice Aranoff, and she worked somewhere in the administration. ... I remember because she was kind of a big woman, wore a caped coat.

She was a rather dramatic looking person, didn't have any contact with teaching but was in administration somewhere. Edna Newby would've known her.

BT: I'll have to ask her.

KP: You'd mentioned that the war had a major impact on NJC.

JH: Yes.

KP: What was among the most immediate impact, besides the men going off that you used to date?

JH: They had a course in auto mechanics ... so that you could learn how to change your own tires. ... I told you in the letter that ... there were girls pulled out of college and sent places where they were needed. One was a math major ...

BT: That's very interesting.

JH: ... and one to nursing, up at Yale, because they wanted more nurses to replace those that were going overseas.

BT: Were those women contacted somehow? Did you know how and why they disappeared?

JH: I don't know how they picked them out. I think probably major professors knew that they were outstanding ... had asked for them.

BT: Probably went to Douglass, we'll find that out at NJC, and asked if there were students who had particular skills ...

JH: Yeah. ... I remember some girls learned how to change tires. I never did, but some of them were much more practical.

KP: The course wasn't for credit, was it?

JH: I don't know. I haven't any ... I don't think so.

KP: We've read in the *Caellian* that gym, physical education, became a requirement at NJC during the war.

JH: Oh, during the war?

KP: Much like at Rutgers.

JH: 'Cause we'd always had to take it.

KP: Then maybe my students have confused the two. So you took gym.

JH: Yeah, we always had to take it. Yeah, it was one of the things that people always tried to get out of, unsuccessfully.

BT: Yeah, maybe it's still required, but when I went to college, it ... was two years, or something. It was definitely required. I wondered if there was any impact when the war started in terms of people trying, you know, Red Cross, or whatever, trying to get gals to volunteer to fold bandages, or whatever you did.

JH: If they did, I never heard of that.

BT: You know, a campus being a source of potential volunteers, I wondered if ...

KP: What about air raid drills? Do you remember those at NJC?

JH: I remember one particularly, when Paul Robeson came to give a concert. I loved Paul Robeson. ... It was held in the New Brunswick High School auditorium, and while he was singing, they had to turn all the lights out. There was a black out. That's one that I remember the most.

KP: How many times did you hear Paul Robeson sing?

JH: Oh, only that once in concert.

KP: Yeah.

JH: ... I was always impressed by him. I thought he was wonderful.

KP: Many people really admired Paul Robeson.

BT: I've heard that, too.

JH: Well, of course, he was a genius. Anyway, he had one of the highest IQs that ever went through Rutgers.

KP: Because even people, I mean Paul Robeson's politics were pretty ...

JH: That is nothing I ever heard anything about. I just loved his singing, and I remember seeing him in New York in *Othello*. He was wonderful in that.

KP: I'm struck by how admired he was even by people who ...

JH: Is that right?

KP: ... would normally be against his politics but still say how much they admired him. It seems to have been that a lot of Rutgers men and NJC women really respected him for his talent.

JH: Well, I was never sure that the Communist interest that he had was anything that was important, anyway.

KP: It sounds like it didn't affect your view.

JH: Never thought about it.

KP: Yeah. His voice was as impressive and ...

JH: The epitome of a bass voice, velvet, black velvet.

KP: What about your decision to chose librarianship? You had a sense that with music, you didn't have the drive to ...

JH: Yes, after I decided that, I knew, as you said, I would need a job and I had to pick something which I knew I could get a job, so I decided library school was a good place because librarians were still being hired. Now, my sister didn't have any luck getting a music-teaching job when she got out of college. She had to wait for a while. That was not a good field to go into.

BT: What fields did you really think, as a woman, were open at that point?

JH: That's a good question.

BT: Of course, the war effected some of that.

JH: Of course, teaching.

BT: Teaching, library, nursing.

JH: And nursing, yeah.

BT: There weren't as many real options.

JH: No, there weren't. I can't seem to remember, until I met the girls some year later, what careers they had that would have been important ...

KP: You met your husband singing. You're not the first marriage that started off that way. I always get the Daggett's mixed up, with his son.

JH: Oh, yeah.

KP: Yeah.

JH: Tom Daggett.

KP: Tom Daggett. I've heard of his brother, Chris. He met his wife. She was in the choir.

JH: Is that right?

KP: And he was interested in her, and it seems like you ...

JH: Well, now, Tom Daggett's wife was in the choir.

KP: Yes, exactly.

JH: I remember her.

KP: That's how they met.

JH: Yes. ... My husband, since he was on that speed-up program, taking chemistry and things in the summertime, and I had a summer job in the drugstore in New Brunswick, and he used to walk with his buddies downtown and come and visit me in the drug store.

KP: ... How did the war effect your courting? Did you think it speeded up your decision to get married?

JH: Probably slowed it down, because we had to wait until there was a time when we could do it. We, as I remember, got engaged and then he went into the Navy. He just called up and said, "I have a weekend pass, either in one week or two weeks, which week would you like to get married?" He had impacted wisdom teeth and he had to have them taken care of, so the Navy dentist gave him three days leave to come home. We got married, and then he went back and had the impacted wisdom teeth taken care of. But that's why I happened to get married. We had all the plans. I had bought a wedding gown, and we had a church wedding. ... My mother made all the little sandwiches, and we had a very modest reception, but it was lovely. We did things in small ways then. Nobody would be happy with that now, would they?

BT: I guess not.

JH: A wedding cake, sandwiches, and tea.

BT: My daughter's getting married. It's going to be a bigger affair than any of us want, but there has been a discussion about going back to just the afternoon teas.

JH: Yes.

BT: Now did you get the wedding dress in that week or two that you had?

JH: No, no. I bought it ahead. I worked in New York at the New York Public Library and bought it the summer before.

BT: I was going to say, you can't get them a week ahead.

JH: I went to "The Tailored Woman" and bought a wedding dress that was on sale for fifteen dollars, and it was very pretty.

BT: Wow, fifteen dollars.

JH: I know, crazy.

BT: You don't want to know what they cost now.

KP: In getting engaged, had you thought of getting married right away?

JH: Well, we really ...

KP: Some people I've interviewed, they got married as soon as they graduated.

JH: No, we didn't. We kind of held on because we wanted to know what he was going to do. It's so uncertain when you are waiting to be drafted, and he had started graduate work.

BT: When did he actually go into the Navy?

JH: Well, he wasn't in a long time.

BT: It must have been toward the end of the war.

JH: I'm trying to think. We were married in 1944, and he was in about a year and a half, I think. ... When he went overseas was the time when I came back home and got the job with the Army.

KP: How did you get the job with the Army? First, let's back up. How did you get the job with the New York Public Library?

JH: That's a good question. I don't remember. Of course, the New York Public Library was an impressive system. I don't know why I went in there and interviewed, but I did and got the job as a children's librarian. ... I was lucky, after I had been there for a few months, the woman who was head of all the children's work, who was herself a writer of children's books, asked if I would come down to the office and be her junior assistant. ... I just did office work, typing, etc.,

but she wanted somebody new, so it kind of exposed them to children's literature. ... It was a marvelous experience, because she had editors, authors and artists of children's books in and out of her office constantly, and I, really, in the year and a half that I worked for them, got a liberal education in the field of children's literature.

KP: This was in the main branch.

JH: In the main branch. Well, I started out on 78th Street, in Yorkville, and then she ... asked me to come down and move to the ...

KP: So you both had the chance to work in a branch, but also to work in the central ...

JH: Yes, yes.

KP: ... in a sense, the central offices.

JH: Yes. ... I got my sister a job in the summer working in the New York Public Library.

KP: What did your sister do?

JH: Oh, she was just an assistant in the library, down in the Chinese section somewhere.

BT: How did you get into New York?

JH: Train.

BT: So that was easy. You just went to New Brunswick and ...

JH: Yeah. Just walked to New Brunswick, walked ...

BT: Walked.

JH: Walked to New Brunswick from where we lived in Highland Park.

KP: How far away did you live?

JH: Well, we lived on the last street over in Highland Park, Cleveland Avenue.

KP: Oh, that's quite a walk.

JH: ... It was quite a walk, but my father walked every day to teach school, which was way up in the central part of New Brunswick.

BT: Was that partly because of wartime rationing, or just that he'd always walked?

JH: No, I, you know, nobody had ...

BT: Cars.

JH: ... money to buy a car and drive like that.

KP: Did your family own a car?

JH: Yes, we had one.

KP: But just one and ...

JH: One car had to do for everybody, and that was not my car.

KP: So it sounds like your father would walk to work, it sounds partly for fitness, but also ...

JH: He did, but he thought it was healthy.

KP: Yeah, but also it saved money.

JH: Oh, yeah. Yeah, definitely. ... I had one grandmother that made our dresses, and the other grandmother who made our coats, so we were really pretty well fixed up.

KP: Yeah, it sounds like you really stretched your dollar.

JH: But were we thrilled when we could get over the dressing alike. Mother was willing to let us have dresses that weren't the same.

BT: How old were you then? When did she finally do that?

JH: I don't remember but certainly by ... college we didn't have to do it.

BT: I was assuming by college.

KP: But it was for a while. I mean, it ...

JH: Yes, it wasn't for any foolish reason. It was because that was the cheapest thing to do to have them made like that.

KP: Do you have any remembrances of rationing?

JH: Yes, when we were married, we had to have our honeymoon in Princeton, because that was as far as our gas rationing would let the car run. We borrowed the car from his father and we

drove to Princeton.

KP: Where did you stay?

JH: The Nassau Inn. ... Our whole day and a half honeymoon, because he had to be back again to Navy Pier in Chicago. He went back and I gave notice at the New York Public Library and trained somebody into the job I was doing and then went out and joined ... and got a library job right away. It was a good. It was really a practical career to have. I never had any trouble. The ALA headquarters were in Chicago, and I went there and interviewed and got a job and was a children's librarian in one of the suburbs.

BT: What was he doing with the Navy in Chicago?

JH: He trained at Navy Pier. He heard about a test being given, which if he passed, he could go to electronics school for radar and sonar training.

BT: Oh.

JH: He had applied for a Navy commission but was drafted before he heard about officers' training.

BT: This is a special school.

JH: ... His job in the Navy was helping repair electronic equipment. He was on a repair ship.

BT: First, you did live in Chicago. I mean, you had some married life of stability, despite the war and the Navy.

JH: For about six months.

BT: For a while, about six months.

JH: Yeah.

BT: In Chicago. You were actually able to get out there and get a job, 'cause wartime was ...

JH: Oh, yes. ... I can still remember getting on that train to go to Chicago to meet my husband. ... My father put me on the train and he looked at me and he said, "You don't know where you're going to live, do you?" And I said, "No," and he said, "Well, where are you gonna go?" I said, "I don't know." I could see the panic in his face, and I look back on it now and think, "He must have thought we were out of our minds." But I didn't worry about it.

KP: Where did you get a place?

JH: Well, my husband found a room that was really not much fun. It had cockroaches, so we moved away from that. Well, Chicago, you know ...

KP: Well, housing was very hard to get.

JH: Housing was hard to find.

BT: Housing anywhere during the war was hard to find.

JH: ... I remember agreeing to meet him, when he got off duty, at Marshall Field in Chicago. ... I got myself in there on the subway, and we were to meet at the fourth floor store escalator. ... I went and I waited, but he never came, and I was not exactly sure how to go home. But I did. I found my way home. I'm notorious for the fact that I never know directions, and when I got back to the room, he was there. He was barely speaking to me. He was so upset, 'cause he couldn't imagine what had happened.

BT: What had happened?

JH: Well, there were two sets of escalators, and he waited at one and I waited at the other. [laughter] And he was one mad chicken, I'll tell you. But we had a good time. People were very nice to the servicemen, and when we moved to the suburbs, people were very nice to us in the church. They would want to invite us out to dinner and things like that.

KP: It also sounds ..

BT: It seems interesting.

KP: ... You really did not travel much, so Chicago must have seemed ...

JH: Oh, I was in the big bad world, I'll tell you. ... When we moved out to the Chicago suburbs, it was a fairly wealthy suburb, and we rented a room there with cooking privileges and Lee would come home on the weekends. ... The landlady decided if he was going to come home on the weekends, he was using too much water to shower and she'd have to raise our rent. We didn't have enough money, so we moved into another place in the same town, and I stayed there until we left. My husband came home on the weekends without further problems.

BT: Did you meet other service couples?

JH: No.

BT: No.

JH: We were really isolated because of my job.

BT: You're probably just doing your thing. So there wasn't really an Army or Navy support system that often is true for wives of servicemen.

JH: ... The one thing we used to be able to afford to be able to do was go to the USO, which served free hot dogs in Chicago, so we used to go. [laughter]

KP: Did you see any sights in Chicago that stick out, like the art institute? You mentioned Marshall Field.

JH: No, I didn't. Of course, I was working, and I don't think at the end of the day that I probably would have gone back into Chicago.

BT: Once you got home.

JH: Should have but didn't.

KP: Do you remember what town you were working in?

JH: Oh, Riverside.

KP: Riverside.

JH: Riverside. It's on the Burlington Railroad.

BT: Could you cut back and forth to places on the train?

JH: Yes, yes.

BT: I always thought about how important the train was ...

JH: Oh, very.

BT: ... in those days, and I remember the train. I mean, I was just little, you know, late '40s, but the train was everything. I mean, not too many people flew.

JH: ... You went to Chicago on the train from here.

BT: Yeah, I was going to say. Now, I wanted to get back to that, because the train made such an impression on me as a child. Also, when you talk to anybody who went anywhere during the war period, they talk about the trains. It was even true when I was little, the trains were still crowded and shorthanded and ...

JH: Oh, terribly crowded.

BT: Even in the late '40s.

JH: Full of servicemen, and that was one reason why I never went on out with my husband to California, because they begged us not to do that. They didn't really have accommodations for people using transportation to do that, so I didn't. I decided that was ...

KP: You took their advice, which, I know there were some people, who I interviewed, and their wives did follow them.

JH: Well, I would like to have ... but there, again, money was a problem, too, so I came back home.

BT: Particularly on the West Coast, housing was a tremendous problem.

JH: Terrible, I imagine.

BT: Very over-priced for a shack, and especially if you didn't know anybody. There were a lot of wives who got out and were stranded in California.

JH: Is that right?

BT: Yeah. A lot of famous people, you know, a lot of people who later became admirals and generals, when they were first married they would talk about ...

JH: Yes.

BT: ... you know, "I followed him to San Diego and was living in a one room, cold water flat with cockroaches," kind of story.

JH: Yes.

BT: ... I remember the trains and how long those train trips were.

JH: I can remember my husband having to stand all the way from Chicago back to New Brunswick. It was miserable.

BT: Oh, really.

JH: ... I can remember seeing him sleep standing up, he was so tired, but there just weren't any seats.

BT: What did you do for food? I'll bet the dining car was ...

JH: I don't know, remember anything about food. I guess we didn't eat.

BT: Maybe you just took it with you, because you know, the glorious days of the dining car, I don't think ...

JH: Oh, I never went to the dining car.

BT: ... during the war were there.

JH: No.

KP: Did you notice any differences between the war in New Jersey and the war in Illinois, in terms of people's attitudes?

JH: Well, of course, when you get out in the Midwest, it's very, oh, what's the word I want, ingrown. They live kind of their own quiet life, and it would not have been active the way it was around here. I mean, look at all the Army camps that were around here, Dix and Kilmer and that ...

KP: So you got a sense even before you went ...

JH: Yes.

KP: ... out there that this was very active ...

JH: Yes.

KP: ... then when you ...

JH: It was very quiet.

KP: ... you were very quiet out there.

JH: Yeah, but as I said, people were very kind.

KP: One of the reasons why we're so fascinated in interviewing you is that you eventually worked in Camp Kilmer. What was the impact at Camp Kilmer? This was a base that didn't exist before Pearl Harbor, really.

JH: No. ... I don't know, but it was overpowering the number of people that went through there. It was huge, and, of course, everybody was embarking and de-embarking from there. Is that what it was? Yeah. ... De-embarking from there for overseas, and then ...

BT: Embarking.

JH: ... debarking coming back home.

KP: I mean, you had a lot of servicemen out here for only a short time.

JH: Yes.

KP: Did that have an impact on Douglass, or on Highland Park, or New Brunswick that you can tell?

JH: Well, other than that there were servicemen everywhere, and ... I remember my sister meeting somebody, who was stationed at Camp Kilmer, and going with him for a short while.

KP: Did you ever go to any of the USO dances when you were still a student?

JH: No, I never did. No.

BT: I've always wondered what the attitude was about that. Did people's parents really encourage their daughters to go with soldiers if they weren't officers?

JH: I can understand why you're asking that.

BT: Yeah, I wondered.

JH: ... One of the things that happened, while I was a librarian with the Army, was a remembrance of going to a church dinner and having the wife of one of the engineering professors at Rutgers saying, "You work at Camp Kilmer?" ... I think she thought, "Oh, my goodness, this gal is really," you know, I won't say the word, but she probably [thought] that ... was not the thing that one did if you were respectable.

BT: Just because the legendary soldiers and sailors are kind of next in rank to dogs.

JH: Yeah.

BT: You certainly don't want your daughter dating one.

JH: Exactly.

BT: With the war, most of the soldiers and sailors were just guys that you would want your daughter to date ...

JH: Yes.

BT: ... but they got drafted.

JH: Yes.

BT: On the other hand, it would be hard to tell. How much freedom did they have off base? If you went to the movie, or to the store, or to a restaurant, were there a lot of servicemen there? Were they just everywhere?

JH: Yes.

BT: Maybe the Midwest, those little towns wouldn't have been affected that much ...

JH: Yes, that's right. No.

BT: ... but here, I would think that everywhere ...

JH: Yeah.

BT: ... you turned, you would be bumping into them.

JH: Well, we went to church out in Riverside and that's where people were very nice ...

KP: It sounds like your husband was the only one with a uniform on at that church in Riverside.

JH: I can't remember.

KP: ... Whereas out here, it's sounds like New Brunswick was overrun with them.

JH: Oh, it was overrun with them. Yes, that's true.

KP: Any instance of unruly servicemen that you remember when you were still a student?

JH: No.

KP: No, you never had any.

JH: Not at all.

BT: Yeah, we had asked, I think, Ada that question. She was remarking about how she didn't worry about walking. She walked back and forth to school, I think.

KP: Yeah.

JH: Yes. She didn't worry about it.

BT: I said, "Weren't you afraid?"

JH: No, I never was afraid. No, that never dawned on us.

BT: It was just no real crime.

JH: If it was, we didn't know about it.

BT: If there'd been a lot of it, you probably would have known about it. ... Very different, as you said, a very different time.

JH: Yes, it was, yes. Safer.

KP: You very much wanted to follow your husband to California.

JH: Yes, I would like to have.

KP: How often did you write each other after you were separated?

JH: Gosh, I don't know, but I sure do have a pack of letters and couldn't wait until the mailman got there every day.

KP: So your husband was a pretty regular ...

JH: Oh, he was good. Oh, yes, he was good at that.

KP: Have you saved your letters?

JH: Do you know, I have to be honest with you, I would have to look up in the attic, I have a box of things that I kept and I haven't gone through it. I may have some of them. I certainly didn't keep them all, but I may have some of them.

KP: Well, please don't throw them out.

JH: Don't throw them out, right.

KP: Either give them to your children, or please consider giving them to Special Collections.

JH: Oh. That's an interesting idea. I know, when he was ... off Okinawa, in a ship, they had a huge typhoon, and ... the ships had to leave the bay where they were. ... I got a letter from him and writing on the outside was kind of water-soaked, and I thought, "Oh my gosh, something's happened to them." It wasn't, but my imagination was kind of vivid, so I thought something was wrong. ... It was a really a rough thing time. Boats tried to pull up anchor and move away, but his ship did not.

KP: People said ...

JH: Sixty-foot waves.

KP: They said quite a bit about it. I've interviewed a number of people who said...

JH: Isn't that interesting that they would remember that.

KP: ... that the typhoons were among most memorable experiences. For a lot of people, even in combat, they were a lot more afraid during the typhoons.

JH: Yes, and my husband, because he was a radio technician and did that kind of repair, he heard over the radio that a ship was coming in called the *Robin Daster*, and his brother was on that, so he wired over and went over to the boat. But his brother left and gone over to Okinawa on leave. Lee went but could never find him, so he never saw him while he was overseas.

BT: That's too bad. So he went, obviously, to the West Coast and went right out on ship.

JH: Yes. ... Lee went to Okinawa and then Japan, and from Japan, [he] came home on the battleship *New Jersey*, which was a change, because he'd been riding on those old Liberty boats and repair ships, and the *New Jersey* was very GI.

BT: I'll bet.

JH: Yeah.

BT: There's been a lot of interest in the *New Jersey*, you know, because this is New Jersey ... and the battleship. ... Now, by the time he went, the war was not over.

JH: Yes, V-J Day. Gosh, I haven't the timing. I remembered V-E Day, when we were out in ...

KP: Camp Kilmer.

JH: No, Riverside.

KP: Oh, in Riverside, you were still there?

JH: ... I can't remember how soon after V-J Day he came home. I really don't remember.

BT: Didn't you have a long period of time where you really worried about him coming back?

JH: No.

BT: War was pretty much ...

JH: Compared to most people, I had a real easy time, because the Navy, at that point, was not being attacked. I did have a girl that was in library school with me, whose husband was killed by a kamikaze.

BT: I was going to say, Okinawa and kamikazes go together, so I wondered.

JH: That always horrified me. That that could have happened. They were so young.

BT: There were so many casualties to kamikazes.

JH: Yeah. She lives in Maine, in Freeport.

BT: Freeport.

JH: And married again, fortunately. She was young when that happened.

BT: You mentioned that you knew people, once that war was real, when you were still in school, who were killed. Did you have school friends from high school or ...

JH: Yes. I did. It's sad. I'm sure everybody says that it's a very touching time to have lived. I'm sure all the people you interview felt that the war was very necessary and very important. I wanted my husband to go into service. He actually, if he had tried very hard, as a chemistry major could have probably stayed out. I wanted him to go. I felt patriotic about that and wanted him to do it.

BT: So you were really supportive.

JH: Yes.

BT: Again, that's important when it comes time to moving out, you know.

JH: Yes.

BT: If you didn't really want your husband to go, it's a lot harder to go through someplace ...

KP: Yeah.

JH: Well, my husband ...

BT: ... to be a cheerleader when you wish they had ...

JH: My husband, [who] is a perfectionist scientist and had a difficult time being in the Navy, because all of a sudden he had to do things in the GI way, and when orders were given, [it] took

him awhile to adapt to that.

BT: My husband was in it like that, too.

JH: Did he? Yeah. He did the same.

BT: He never ended up in the Navy, but they offered him a ROTC fellowship to graduate school at Cornell.

JH: Oh, did they?

BT: He doesn't like to take orders, and so he went there for one year and gave it up.

JH: Is that right?

BT: I don't know, the scientific types ...

JH: I know.

BT: ... like to play the game by their own rules.

JH: Everything has to be just so, and you don't change it too much.

BT: I was just thinking about, you know, during the war, even if you didn't listen to the radio, which I assume people did, or read the papers, that the signs of it are all around.

JH: Yeah.

BT: I mean, it's a pretty hard thing to avoid.

JH: Yes.

BT: You know, just even walking up and down and just looking at people's windows. Do you remember the gold stars?

JH: Yes, I remember that.

BT: You remember that.

JH: Yes. Looking for gold stars.

BT: Gold stars were a very symbolic.

JH: Dr. Clothier lost his son in the war.

KP: Yes.

JH: ... My father made the memorial plaque for the church. It was of colonial design, of wood, and had names of the people who were in service. Then gold stars were added next to those who were killed, and I always remember that, because Arthur Clothier was ...

KP: Where was the plaque?

JH: In the church.

KP: Oh, okay. So you worshipped in the same church as the Clothiers.

JH: Yes, we did. The Reform Church is on College Avenue.

KP: Yes, yes.

JH: It's the church with big, white pillars. At that time, that was the church to go to. That isn't why my parents went. They liked the minister that was there, but it was definitely the social place to go, because it was in the middle of the college campus.

KP: Oh, yes.

JH: ... We had not only a lot of college people, but Dr. Demarest went there, who'd been president of the College and president of the seminary, and a lot of seminary people went there. It was an interesting church and it was an intellectual church. They always had to get a minister that could live up to that, because ... the real folksy kind wouldn't have gone over with the Rutgers seminary or faculty.

KP: Oh, yeah. No.

JH: Dr. Demarest was interesting ... He was a fabulous man.

KP: How did you come back east after living in Chicago? How did you get the position?

JH: Well, my mother practically met me at the door and said, "They've been pestering me to death, asking me when you were going to come home." Well, they knew who the library school graduates were, and they had probably called the library school and asked who was available and knew that I had lived in Highland Park. ... She said, "I know they want you to call," so I called and went out, and so right away I started working again.

BT: You were really recruited.

JH: Yeah, yeah.

KP: When did you start? What month, do you remember?

JH: I don't know.

KP: It was before V-J Day that you started.

JH: No, it was after V-J Day.

KP: It was after V-J Day.

JH: Yes, and the camp was loaded.

BT: I was going to say, that's when the real crunch started to come.

JH: It was tremendous. Yeah, well, I suspect they were still, some of them, going out. I'm not sure about that ... but what we did also have were POWs. We had Italian POWs and we had German POWs.

BT: Yeah, interesting.

KP: Did you have any contact with the POWs?

JH: Yes, I did.

KP: What kind of contact?

BT: Now were they staying at Camp Kilmer ...

JH: Well, what they did was ...

BT: ... or were they just in transit?

JH: You know, if you go down past Central Avenue, Camp Kilmer was on the left-hand side. On the right-hand side, were other barracks, where there's a private school now ... Timothy Christian. But there were barracks over on that side, and they kept the POWs there, and, of course, they all wore things that showed that they were POWs. There was a sign on them so that you knew that that's who they were. ... Of course, as a librarian, they were in the library. They were allowed to come in there if they were hospital patients.

BT: They could take out books.

JH: One of the German POWs that came in to use the library loved to find people to talk to, and so he gave me a buckle off of a German uniform. ... You know, I was so impressed that I had a

buckle off a German uniform, but it was also a little intimidating, because he wanted to know where I lived. ... Having been brought up in a sheltered life, I was a little nervous about things like that, but, anyway, nothing happened. He never looked me up.

BT: Could he speak English?

JH: Yes, he did.

KP: Roughly what percentage of the POWs would use the library? Did you have any sense?

JH: The ones that used our library were in the hospital. I was in the hospital library. I wasn't on the post ... and so they were fellows who were in there as patients and so they had a right as patients to use it. I don't know what went on in the rest of the [post]. Maybe they didn't allow them in other [libraries], but they did in the hospital.

KP: Did you have German language books for them and Italian language books for them, or were the people using the libraries reading English?

JH: Yes, yes, they were. Of course, all of our clients were in bathrobes and pajamas.

KP: How big was the hospital roughly?

JH: Well, it was big. I don't even know how many we would have accommodated. I guess probably at least four buildings. The hospital library was just in one building. ... The woman who was head librarian did all the cataloguing and buying and this kind of thing and I did the circulation. They had bookcarts and ... I just spent my days going in and out of the wards all day long with books and magazines.

KP: How seriously wounded and how sick were the people in the wards? What types of casualties, what types of sicknesses were there?

JH: There were people who were very ill. I learned a lot because I had not come in contact with death before, and this was a really emotional experience some of the time. After some of the fellows died that I knew, it took me about three or four days before I could really get it all together again, 'cause I felt so strongly about it.

BT: So they had come back, obviously, from overseas.

JH: Yes, yes.

BT: This was a convalescence hospital.

JH: There were wards with many hepatitis patients, and they were people who were rather languid. They couldn't do very much ... but they could get out of bed. You know, they'd be

wandering around. It was very boring, 'cause they were always around longer than a lot of the other patients were.

KP: They seem like they're going to be the best customers, 'cause they, they could ...

JH: You know what, there wasn't anybody who wasn't glad to have company. That's the truth of the matter.

BT: So you did a lot of talking.

JH: I did.

BT: More talking than dispensing books.

JH: Well, and that's part of the job. It was wonderful. It was great ...

-----END OF SIDE TWO, TAPE ONE -----

KP: This continues an interview with Mrs. Judith Harper Hassert on February 4, 1997 in Metuchen, New Jersey with Kurt Piehler and ...

BT: Barbara Tomblin.

KP: The tape had cut out just as you were telling about the various patients you met, and this one Welshman.

JH: ... I was asking about where he had come from 'cause he had an accent. He was obviously older. He was just as white as a sheet and had leukemia. ... I said, "Oh, I love the Welsh folk songs," and he said, "Will you sing one for me?" So I did. You know, it made such an impression on me, because here he was dying alone in this country. His family was in Wales, and as a young woman, it made a big impression on me.

KP: Did any of the patients ever tell you anything about their experiences?

JH: I kept in contact with the some of the fellows, who had accidents on the boats coming back, in the fall, with the high seas. They would come in with broken legs and arms, and, of course, they'd be there for quite a long while, so I got to know quite a few of them. I wrote to one of them up until a few years ago.

BT: Really?

JH: He became a school principal out in California. ... [There were] a couple of things I wanted to tell you about, something that I learned that I hadn't known. In a hospital area like that, the psychiatrists have servicemen that really cannot be put into other kinds of barracks of service.

They would have problems adjusting. They take them in the medical corps and they do assistant jobs. They did not know what to do if they ever had to leave the Army, because that was their security and that was the only way that they could make their way.

KP: Had these been veterans, or these had even pre-dated the war?

JH: You know ... I'm not even sure ... exactly to tell you the truth, but I realize that they were people who eventually were incapable of managing without a structured environment.

BT: They never did leave the Army.

JH: Yes.

BT: So they downsized the Army, which they did, of course, after the war.

KP: Did you have battle fatigue casualties and other mental illness?

JH: Oh, yes, and then we also had [a] prison ward for the, I suppose, probably kind of insane criminals, and I used to ...

BT: That's right, it's a hospital.

JH: ... go in there. They had to unlock the doors to let you through, and that I was a little afraid of, because I wasn't quite sure about the men that were in there. ... I was never left entirely alone, but I had a little uneasy feeling about it some of the time.

KP: Those who had battle fatigue and other mental illnesses, do any of them stick out in your mind?

JH: One of the people that stood out was a fellow who couldn't talk, because he was afraid they were going to send him overseas, and he was one of the patients that we had there.

KP: Had he been overseas?

JH: No, I don't think he ever got there. They couldn't send him. He never spoke as long as I knew him.

KP: I mean, he really just ...

BT: He panicked maybe.

JH: Yes, he panicked and couldn't speak. Many soldiers contracted measles coming back from overseas. I would be in and out of the wards and I caught the measles. My husband was coming back from overseas and when he arrived I came down with the measles. Can you imagine? He'd

been gone all this time and I was so glad to see him, but I was really sick. When you're an adult like that, you get really sick.

BT: I know I had them as an adult.

JH: Yeah.

BT: When I had it, my glands were swollen. It was like the mumps. Oh, it was awful. I've had measles three times. I wondered about the nurses. I mean most of the Army hospitals have a nurse in a ward, with a lot of people who ... enlisted then, who did most of the actual nursing.

JH: Army nurses. We also had Red Cross workers there all the time. They had "Gray Ladies" that went in and out of the wards helping.

BT: What did they do? I mean, did they do any real nursing?

JH: One of the things they had to do was investigate ... if somebody had an illness in the family and they had to leave, or somebody had died. ... Also, I learned that they get to be very watchful about wedding rings, because when they're trying to find out information about pensions and all the rest, they [would] need to see, because the fellows didn't always tell them the truth. Of course, some of the fellows were "foot loose and fancy free." Makes a difference. Had one funny thing happen. I used to go back and forth to Kilmer on the bus, and it went right past the street where we lived on in Highland Park. ... Of course, when we get on the bus you had to show your pass, and I showed mine and sat down next to an Army officer, who did not show his pass. ... Of course, I didn't say anything, and I thought, "That's very interesting." So after the guard went off, I said to him, "How come you don't show your pass?" He said, "I don't know." He said, "I never have. They have never ever asked me for mine." And I said, "Well how do you account for that?" He said, "Some people have faces that don't make any impression on them, and nobody has ever asked for my identification." He is probably in the FBI now.

BT: I was gonna say the perfect spy.

JH: ... for the FBI, do try to pick people that aren't noticed?

BT: Innocuous, yeah.

JH: I thought that was the strangest thing.

BT: I guess they assumed, I don't know. I was thinking if they assumed he was an officer, he would have a pass, but I don't know.

JH: Well, they looked at other people's. They always looked at mine. I couldn't get away with a thing. I didn't want to.

KP: You were in uniform. You showed us a picture of your uniform.

JH: Yes.

KP: You had an emblem. You were subject to military regulations.

JH: Right.

KP: So what would you salute for example?

JH: Oh, we never had to salute.

KP: You didn't have to salute.

JH: No, no. We just had to abide by any Army regulations that there were for that particular area. ... We were supposed to eat in the Officers' Club and things like that, and that always kind of irritated me a little bit.

KP: What you didn't ...

BT: So you were treated as ...

JH: No, I don't think that's fair. You know, I think there's a rank ...

KP: You didn't like the class.

JH: I'm just an ordinary person. I don't have to ... eat in the Officers' Club. I do think the Army's very rank conscious. There's no question about it.

KP: Was working in the hospital where you got that class sense from? It sounds like the Officers' Club highlighted that.

JH: I think so.

KP: What was the food like? Did you ever eat there?

JH: Yeah, I did, on and off. It was all right. I can't really remember very much about it.

BT: So where did you take your lunch, or did you eat?

JH: I took my lunch most of the time instead of bothering to go to the Officers' Club.

BT: I assume the buildings that you were in at Camp Kilmer were temporary ...

JH: Yes, they were the temporary barracks. Of course, they are all gone now.

BT: ... two story wooden barracks or ...

JH: No, just one story. ... There are still some basically that are left in other areas, used by the Job Corps.

KP: There's still some. Yeah.

JH: The hospital was down at the far end. One of my vivid memories was how many buildings there were and how many soldiers marched in platoons down the road. ... I was gonna tell you that that was where I first saw the animals that they brought back from overseas.

BT: Oh, yes. We were talking about mascots.

JH: The soldiers would bring back dogs and anything that they could, you know ...

KP: So animals were, mascots were in fact brought home.

JH: Oh, yes.

BT: Oh, yeah. They were not supposed to be brought back.

KP: Yeah, yeah.

JH: ... One fellow had a raccoon, and I remember being in the post exchange store and the raccoon got loose and climbed up all these white rows of boxes full of material. Everything was falling around. I'm sure he was very popular. ... The other funny thing was a fellow who brought back a fox, and when I went into the ward, it was in his pillowcase. I don't know what they did to it to keep it quiet. There wasn't anything they wouldn't try, you know.

KP: Now, in terms of mascots and so forth, were they taken away from these people?

JH: I don't know.

KP: You don't know what happened to them.

JH: I have no idea what happened to them. I just remember seeing them as they would march in, and here would always be a few dogs that would be trailing along.

BT: Particularly British ships always had cats and dogs.

JH: Cats and dogs.

BT: Up to several cats, at least, but I know the nurses, you know, the great stories of nurses who've come back to the United States from southern France, in Marseilles, or something. The rule was you were not suppose to take pets and *Stars and Stripes* said, "Just the inventive were there ..."

JH: Is that right?

BT: Just said, "Use your imagination."

JH: Yes.

BT: It was one of the big general hospitals and they got on with the second of the pets that they had, the dogs, and they kept him. They smuggled him in an overcoat. Some gal had him in an overcoat. The head nurse said, "You know, you're gonna have to keep him in your cabin, and, you, it's going to be a long voyage." ... The nurses all came down after the ship had sailed, and they all said, "It's okay," I can't remember her name now, Ada, or something. "It's okay Ada." There were about twenty or thirty dogs running around the deck. The minute they'd left port, everybody un-smuggled their dog.

JH: Oh, cute.

BT: She said this just all happened, the same thing. They all smuggled these animals in, cats and dogs and stuff. They were running all over the place.

KP: Camp Kilmer, as a base, strikes me as a very strange type of base, again, because the Army is vert transient, particularly in wartime. Being an embarkation base really means that every week, you're going to have huge numbers of people go through.

JH: That's right.

KP: What was that sense to see new faces every day you walk out?

JH: Well, it was true in the hospital area, too, because as soon as they were able to be discharged ... many of them went on to the bigger general hospitals. Camp Kilmer was just a small one, but they went on to wherever the specialty was that these patients needed.

KP: So even your hospitals in many ways ...

JH: It was just soldiers who broke legs, had hepatitis or were mentally ill who stayed for any length of time. Army service was an interesting experience. I'm glad as a young woman I had the chance to do this. I think it was good for me. I had to grow up, because I had not been exposed too much.

KP: No, I mean, particularly being in a hospital where you have criminally insane and prisoners

of war, you really ...

JH: Yes, and, of course, the thing that always stuck out in my mind were the fellows that died, and that was a really tough experience for me.

BT: Now you would make a round, you know, ward by ward in some kind of a pattern. How did you know they had died? I mean, you just got to the ward and they weren't there, or they died when you were there.

JH: They were gone and ... I knew they were dying. You could tell.

BT: You could tell. That must be very sad to know that. The wards are big and nobody can sit and hold your hand, I mean. You really are going to be kind of alone.

JH: I remember one fellow in particular, who'd actually died after he'd had his tonsils out. I don't know what happened, and he was so young. He looked like he was about seventeen, and I never will forget the expression on his face. He looked absolutely terror stricken. I think he knew things were very bad.

BT: You couldn't tell.

JH: No.

KP: How well did you get to know the staff on the hospital and then also just people on the base in general?

JH: I didn't. Only the officer that was in charge of special services and just the couple of people that I worked with in the library. I was on my own.

KP: It sounds like it was very much a nine-to-five. You take the bus out, do your job, and then come home.

JH: Yes.

KP: In a sense, you were waiting for your husband in fact to come home.

JH: Yes. I did work after he got back and started doing some graduate work. All librarians had to work evenings and it began to get difficult for me.

KP: So how long did you work at ...

JH: I don't remember.

KP: Was it over a year?

JH: It was over a year, maybe, two and a half years, something like that.

KP: So it was a long period of time ...

JH: Yes.

BT: So the base itself must have changed toward the end.

JH: It was changing, yes.

BT: It was getting smaller and smaller, when you get more service ...

JH: They were just bringing them back by the slew.

BT: Even toward the end.

JH: Yes.

BT: That's something you really forget, 'cause I know it was the war plus six months, but a lot of people were over longer than that ...

KP: Yes.

BT: ... 'cause of the point system. The other thing, you may have never seen any of this, but they got to a point with Operation Magic Carpet, at some point, they were beginning to bring back war brides and children.

JH: Oh, were they?

BT: Yeah, some of those ships had ...

JH: Oh, isn't that interesting.

BT: I just wondered, Camp Kilmer being one of the big ports of entry, if you ever saw any ...

JH: I don't remember ...

BT: I don't know much about them.

JH: No, our best friend was overseas four years. That was a long time to be over. ... Of course, that didn't happen in World War I, they weren't over that long. I think my father was a year and a half or something like that, as long as you could have been. He wouldn't have survived much longer, I think.

KP: If you could remember, what did soldiers want to read?

BT: Good question.

JH: That's one way I had to grow up, too. They read books I didn't know anything about, Faulkner and *The Postman Always Rings Twice*.

KP: Oh, yeah. *The Postman Always Rings Twice*.

JH: *Rings Twice*. That's the one.

BT: That's interesting.

JH: That kind of thing.

KP: So their taste could be ...

JH: Oh, it was very different. They really wanted leisure. It wasn't a library for informational kind of things.

KP: But reading Faulkner is not light reading.

BT: I was going to say, I would've thought they would have really read comic books. Some of these people, these kids were young.

JH: Boxes and boxes of paperback books were shipped overseas. Once I saw a collection of Elizabeth Browning's poetry, but for the most part, it was light fiction.

KP: They didn't want for the most part heavy reading.

JH: No. They liked magazines, too. We had a lot of magazines.

BT: I was thinking magazines would be very popular. Well, when you're sick, sometimes it is hard to read something very serious.

JH: Yes.

KP: Did you have any chaplains that ever came through the wards?

JH: We always had chaplains around.

KP: What about chapel services?

JH: I'm sure they had them. We didn't have one in the hospital area, but I'm sure they had them. ... One friend from NJ had a husband who was the minister in the Reformed Church in New Brunswick, and we knew him for many years. He was a chaplain in World War II, and I learned a lot from him about what happened. It was a horrendous job. By the time he got ready to return to this country, he was really worn out. You can't bury hundreds and hundreds of men and not ... It meant a great deal to him. His wife saw to it that they went back to France together, and they went around in the area where he served and she said it really helped him. For whatever reason, he needed to get back and look and see what it was like. ... If you knew this man, tall, handsome guy, nothing would ever make you think that he would have buckled, but he really was very frazzled when he got back, and I can understand that.

BT: ... I just wondered if, you know, you had any good stories or funny things that might have happened.

JH: I can't remember that kind of thing. I just remember how much they liked having company. They really did.

BT: Were they by and large polite?

JH: Yes, I think they were. Of course, I hadn't been married terribly long, and I was a real prude, so when they asked me if I would go out ...

BT: ... Yeah, I wondered if they did that.

JH: Well, yes, they did, and I would say, "Well, I'm married," and, of course, their answer was "What's that got to do with it ..."

BT: But sometimes that's just sport.

JH: Well, you know. I'm sure a lot of them probably felt that way about it.

BT: You know, they were probably just teasing you. I used to push a book cart over at Overlook Hospital.

JH: At Overlook?

BT: Yes, much, much younger, and that can be true of older guys. You know, I was maybe thirty, thirty-two and ...

JH: Oh, absolutely. They can do that.

BT: You get a lot, and it's all just, they don't mean it. I don't consider it harassment. I mean, they would say, "Oh, come back and talk with us," you know.

JH: I would laugh. I'll tell you.

BT: Sixty-five, seventy, seventy-five, eighty.

JH: My husband was at in the hospital for something, briefly, and when one of the nurses came over, he started to kid her and he got a little flip. I said, "You have a daughter who's a nurse. How dare you." My husband's such a gentleman. I never heard him do it again.

BT: But I think sometimes the nurses are people who just get used to it.

JH: Oh, you do get used to it.

BT: I think it's part of it.

JH: It just rolls off.

BT: You know, as they said, when you have a whole ward full of nineteen-year-olds, who really don't want to be there, who ... have a broken leg, or they're not suppose to get out of bed, or do nothing, because the Army only has two categories, sick or well. You have to be ready for duty to leave ... which means a lot of people are really convalescing, and they are bored, so a lot of nurses spent their time trying to figure out how to keep them busy. There was no occupational therapy there to keep these fellows busy.

JH: Yes, yes, that's right.

BT: Maybe doing things, or knitting, or whatever they could teach them to do.

JH: Yes.

BT: It would be a challenge.

JH: When my husband was in the Navy, when we were out in Chicago, he did get pneumonia, and he's never sick. He was really miserable, and they kept him on duty. He could go in the morning to get an aspirin or something, but that was all, and I was concerned about that. The doctor said to me, "You be sure that you keep an eagle eye," because he knew he should not be on duty, but they didn't let anybody sign ... off for awhile.

BT: I was curious when they recruited you, so to speak, and you came, did they explain the regulations to you? Did you sign a contract?

JH: Yes. Yes, they did, and I had to take the civil service examination.

BT: Oh, you had to take that.

JH: Which I don't remember anything about, but I did, and you have to sign the military thing about ...

BT: As I said, I think I have dimly heard about special services but ...

JH: Yes.

BT: ... and it almost is a separate category, in terms of, you know, as I said ...

JH: Well, they were in charge of all the entertainment.

BT: Yeah.

JH: That didn't have anything to do with our job. I remember the officer who was in charge and talking to him about some of the famous people that they wanted to get over to Camp Kilmer to perform.

BT: Oh, that's a good question that I haven't thought of.

JH: And Lily Pons was one of them. And guess what? Could you tell by having known about Lily Pons, she didn't come. They would do this for publicity and say, "We're doing this show," and then they wouldn't appear.

KP: Did you get any famous entertainers?

JH: Well, they probably did, but in the hospital I wouldn't know. They wouldn't be anywhere where I would've seen them.

KP: Yeah.

JH: But I did hear about it occasionally, that they were trying to get people, but Lily Pons was the one that stuck in my memory.

BT: Yeah, that was always a big event, even if it was not Bob Hope, if it was anybody. ... A lot of people remember that. I've talked to guys in North Africa who can remember ...

JH: And they can remember?

BT: ... Bob Hope, actually ... and sometimes have not very positive stories to tell about Bob Hope's visit. ... Yeah, there was an air raid of something and he hid under the stage.

JH: Oh, no, how wonderful.

BT: Yeah, he really panicked. Yeah, I can't remember the whole story, but it was when he went

to North Africa.

JH: Isn't that something?

BT: When did you wear your uniform?

JH: Just during the working day.

BT: But you really didn't have a lot of association with other people who were doing the same job?

JH: No, just the library where I was. ... We were busy. It was a busy library.

KP: But you could use the post exchange?

JH: ... Yes, I could. There was a post exchange for the hospital area, and we used to be able to go in there.

BT: Did they have things that might have not been available because of rationing to the public?

JH: I don't remember that. I just remember the prices were so good.

BT: The price was good.

JH: It was cheap.

BT: Yeah, that's been a big part until recently, I guess.

JH: In fact, there's a fellow in New Brunswick, who used to run post exchanges for the Army, and it was a big business.

BT: No, I just remember my mother talking about what she couldn't get during the war. You just really couldn't get a lot of anything.

JH: When we were out in Chicago, there were stamps for meat and that kind of thing.

BT: Sugar.

JH: Yeah, sugar, and was it butter?

BT: Butter, yes. My husband talks about mixing margarine. We had to mix the white and the color together.

JH: Oh, we did that. You get your little capsules. You buy, it comes white, and you get your

little capsule with the yellow coloring in it and then you sit there and mix it all up.

BT: So, yeah, it would be kind of interesting to know if working on an Army base in the home front that you could maybe get things that were not available at the supermarket, or at the grocery.

JH: Well, I lived at home, so it wasn't a problem. I didn't need anything much, but I'm sure people could've.

KP: But it sounds like you occasionally shopped for stuff for your mother.

JH: I didn't do much shopping. I never had much money when I was young, but the Army paid better than regular library work.

KP: Really? So you were doing better than when you were at the public library or Chicago.

JH: Yes. I did.

KP: Oh, that's very interesting.

JH: When I started with the New York Public Library, my salary was 1,250 dollars.

KP: Oh, that's not even very good.

JH: One thousand two hundred and fifty dollars and I really scrimped living in New York.

KP: So you actually lived in New York when you were working in the public library?

JH: I worked there, 'till I was married. I hated New York.

BT: Yeah, that's interesting, because there was a lot of discussion among nurses, after the war, about whether they could make as much money and do as well and stay in nursing.

JH: I bet they couldn't. Is that right?

BT: I guess the perception was they might not, and yet they couldn't keep them all, so a lot of them did not have the choice about staying.

JH: Yes.

BT: But many of them, I think, wanted to stay. A lot of military women wanted to stay in military.

JH: Well, of course, they got pensions, too, which was terrific.

BT: A lot of things we take for granted now. Of course the social welfare system wasn't in place. It was a lot better to be in the military.

JH: In fact, I just heard about a young fellow the other day who is in college, and he will have to give service but not active service. He can go to college, while he's getting his college. I thought it was great. He's a smart guy. ... He's doing the right thing to get your college paid for like that. Of course, my husband did his graduate work under the GI Bill.

KP: How long could you have stayed in the job if you hadn't quit?

JH: Well, until Camp Kilmer broke up, and I don't remember how long that was. It was there for quite a long time.

KP: So in other words, you really thought this would have been a permanent position.

JH: Well, yes, you could've.

KP: I mean, you decided not to.

JH: I left because I thought the hours weren't so good for being with my husband.

BT: Mostly because of the evening.

JH: Yes.

BT: Did you work eight-hour shifts? Sometimes nurses work twelve, that's why I'm asking.

JH: Then I worked ... at the Rutgers library.

KP: How long did you work at the Rutgers library?

JH: Oh gosh, I don't know. I learned students sure do cheat. You know, I worked in the reserve room, and they would come in and take the books out they needed for exams so nobody else could have them. It used to make me so doggoned mad. I wasn't too thrilled.

KP: Where did you work after Rutgers?

JH: I left to have my kids.

KP: So you took time off from the ...

JH: Yeah. I was of the generation that you felt you had to stay home when you had your kids, which I did, and I didn't start working again until I started substituting, which was when the kids

were both in school full-time.

KP: You mentioned to us while we were having lunch, that you really enjoyed your substitute teaching, ended up turning into you wanting to do it as a career.

JH: Yes. I really loved it. Library work is a very picky, picky kind of a job. You know, when you make your catalog cards and your period has to go there and the capital there, and I'm not a picky, picky person. I liked it for the intellectual curiosity that went along with it, but there it ended, and besides, I met my husband. The end of the my junior year in college was when I met him. ... I went into library school in my senior year, and I was really very fragmented thinking about him. I know I probably did a lousy job in library school.

BT: Senior year in general, with all the distractions.

JH: Is that true, you think?

BT: Yeah, I got married right out of college.

JH: Did you?

BT: And so I think the last semester senior year might have been ... intellectually it might have been not a good time. It's just, yeah, you got a lot of things on your mind. I'd like to do that last year over again.

JH: You're still going to school. ... You still have a chance, so that's wonderful.

BT: Actually, I've stopped going to school. Now, I'm only letting myself teach. You have to have an end to this at some point. You cannot go to school anymore. I guess you sort of addressed this earlier, but what we've been interested in, Kurt and I, and I think historians in general, is about how the war or how servicing in the war, affected the rest of your life? I mean, you have sort of spoken about that, but I just wondered if there were any other ...

JH: I do think it affects the rest of your life in a good way, because it matures you, and I think that's important. Otherwise, I would never have had any particular reason for growing up. ... You get married when you're young, and, you know, it's ...

KP: You might never have gone into a hospital unless, you were going in yourself. I mean, that experience seems ...

BT: That's certainly true.

JH: Yes.

BT: Did it make you, I would think it would also have made you, as part of the maturing

process, when you see so many young men sick and dying especially, this may have made you think more about the preciousness of life?

JH: Exactly.

BT: Or the shortness of life.

JH: That's exactly what it is. It's the preciousness of life, and that's why I say I really think it has something to do with people who were married during the war, having their marriages last. The wives that stayed at home went through hell, and you feel differently about it then ...

KP: What were some of the experiences of some of your classmates who were married? I mean they had their husbands in most cases who were away. Do you have any stories?

JH: Well, you know, it's interesting, 'cause we didn't see each other during those years. Everybody was in a different place. Steve Dunton ... and his wife were in Chicago, when we were there, I remember ... But they were scattered all around. So I really don't have any way of reporting how it was, really ... I do know and I'm sure you know this, that when anybody gets together now, they always talk about their war service, the men always end up somewhere along ... I've been amazed.

BT: That's interesting.

JH: It's very obvious that that's a great common denominator about which people care.

KP: It's also interesting 'cause my sense is after the war, that a lot of people didn't want to talk very much about the war.

JH: Oh, is it really?

KP: After the war, did you talk very much about the war?

JH: Well, I don't know that we did directly afterwards. I'm not sure that it hasn't come now. I noticed with our alumnae, that when we go back for alumnae things, you sit at a table and all of those fellows have service records and the first thing you know is they're talking about it.

BT: They're talking about it.

KP: Well, no, I found it, because, in fact, I've observed that there are a lot of them now ...

JH: Who'll talk about it now.

KP: That's really why this project was created.

JH: Yes.

KP: But I also was struck by how little people talked about World War II after it was over.

JH: I think that's true 'cause it's hard for some people to go back and re-live an experience like that.

KP: Yeah, 'cause if you read for example, the *Targums* from the late '40s, there's very little discussion about the war. If you were to read the *Targum* except for the discussion about GI benefits ...

JH: Well, isn't that amazing?

KP: ... you would hardly know that there had ever been a war. I mean, it's really, so I'm curious about your perspective. It was also really that people wanted to get on with their lives.

JH: Yes, I think that's true ... and we had a lot of catching up to do, to get your education and to get a job, and it was slow going.

BT: A lot of people delayed in finding work.

JH: Exactly.

BT: Or even maybe deciding what they wanted to do.

JH: Yes. When I had the measles, my husband was at home helping me, of course, and so I said, "Why don't you go out and see what you can find? What would be an interesting place to work?" ... He went out to Squibb and applied and immediately was employed, because somebody wanted his experience in how to repair equipment ... instruments. He started in pharmacology and then decided that he liked pharmacology, so then he had to switch everything in his graduate work into that field and it took a long time.

KP: Where did you use the GI Bill?

JH: Yes, he used it totally.

KP: Yeah, he used it for education, but also for the house.

JH: Yes. Our first house was in a veteran's development in Franklin Township. We had to pay 650 dollars down payment and that was it. It was hard to get the 650 dollars, but we did it. ... It was wonderful, because we lived there for five years, but I didn't feel that the community was really good enough for the kids. I felt they needed a little bit better atmosphere than they were getting. ... There was a strike at Squibb, and when they had the strike, you had to stay in, because you have animals that have to be taken care of, so my husband was in for three weeks.

... While he was in, I read the paper and heard about a house out here in Metuchen that had a fireplace, and I, busy bee that I am, went and looked at the house. ... When he got out, I said, "Dear, I know what we're going to do with the bonus you just got from having stayed in," and we bought this house. We had equity enough in our first home to finance the second one.

KP: So then anyway that GI Bill mortgage put you in a house much sooner than ...

JH: Yes, yes. Yes, it did. ... The reason why my daughter bought the house that she did, was it was a GI that had had it, so seven and a half percent mortgage was a much better rate, and she took that over.

BT: Oh, I see, she could take over the mortgage.

JH: So that's why she took that house, and then the house next door to her, my other daughter bought. There was an elderly lady who lived [there], and Debbie used to go down and sit on the porch and talk to her and she began to say that the house was getting a bit much for her. So Debbie said to her, "Well, if you ever get to the point when you want to get rid of it, you call me up," and she did. Debbie bought it. They never put it on the market or anything.

BT: That's the way to do it. You don't have to go through realtors ...

JH: I shouldn't complain. They're very nice.

KP: Where did you teach? You taught for over twenty years.

JH: I taught in public school in Highland Park for a year and a half and then I taught in Edison for eight or nine years and later at Rutgers Prep School for twelve years. I loved teaching there.

BT: A great school.

JH: Wonderful, yes, because they have a campus, and the children used to walk to gym and walk to music and walk to art. It's much healthier for them. ... I used to take my children out everyday to play, sometimes even in the snow. I didn't usually take them in the rain, but in the snow, and it was a, I thought, a much healthier kind of school to be in.

KP: And you taught elementary school.

JH: Yeah, I always taught first or second grade.

KP: Then you went back to becoming a librarian. How long were you at J&J?

JH: Eight years in the research library there. That was an exciting ...

KP: When did you retire?

JH: Lee?

LH: What?

JH: When did I retire?

LH: October of '86.

JH: Thank you.

KP: Yeah, no. Having grown up in this area, and then you've even worked in many of the key institutions, Rutgers and J&J, and the Edison school system, is there any, when you look back at how the area has changed? What is to you the most striking change of Highland Park, Metuchen, Edison, New Brunswick from the '30s and '40s?

JH: People are in a hurry and impersonal and they only think about themselves. ... You don't have a community feeling the way you used to. I knew people in New Brunswick, a lot of the people who have lived there for years, and you have a good feeling about it. But I think now there is very little connection in most of the places around here. Metuchen has some community spirit, but most of the towns have very little.

KP: One of the things my wife and I liked about Metuchen was it seemed like a much more closely-knit community.

JH: It is.

KP: People really come out for activities.

JH: There's a Bureau Improvement League, BIL, fine churches, a women's literary club and YMCA.

BT: That's very interesting 'cause I'm just not familiar with this area at all.

JH: Well, you're in an area that is quite up-scale.

BT: I'm in a very upscale area, and they all work in New York basically.

JH: Yes.

BT: They work at J&J and Merck. See, a lot of the companies have moved out.

JH: AT&T.

BT: Most people in the areas I have lived were like my husband, AT&T.

JH: Yes.

BT: Bell Labs, it was Bell Labs.

JH: Yeah, Bell Labs, great company. I hate the traffic.

KP: Yeah, 'cause when you were growing up Edison was farmland.

JH: I know it. Highland Park was kind of an isolated place and you used to ride your bike on the streets and never think anything about it.

BT: Has Douglass changed much since? I mean I assume you get back to alumnae and ...

JH: Well, I haven't been as active in the alumnae affairs as I ought to be.

KP: ... When you commented about reserved readings, I'm not completely surprised. No, I know.

BT: Yeah, the students. I think the tenure system, in terms of faculty is, I know you know my husband teaches and runs the business department at NJIT and his biggest problem is tenure. ... They just simply have professors that are seventy years old that won't retire. You know, that kind of thing. Or they have people, it's difficult to have accountability with faculty, but now I always thought, I don't know the inner workings of the History Department, my impression of Rutgers faculty that I know is that everybody seems reasonably competent.

JH: Well, we were ...

BT: They run a pretty tight ship there.

JH: We were good friends with Dr. Ethan Ellis, and, of course, they all took turns being head of the History Department, but people like that are really wonderful scholars. I guess some of the impression you get is when you drive down College Avenue or over on the Douglass, people look so slummy. And you know, I object to that. I know I shouldn't. There just doesn't seem to be anything that gives them a feeling that something's important.

KP: I think you'd encounter that actually at a lot of colleges. I don't think that's any ...

JH: Oh, it probably isn't. No.

KP: Yeah.

BT: The grunge look has been in.

KP: I think you would encounter that at Drew. Most of my students really look ...

JH: Is that right?

KP: Yeah and when I taught there.

JH: ... Isn't that interesting? I notice an awful lot of foreign students at Rutgers whenever we go down there. It just seems to me that I don't see anybody that doesn't look like they're, kind of from a foreign country.

BT: I'm surprised in the classes that I have taught there, particularly the African American population, and I know that when I talk to administrators in Middlesex, they have also said they have had trouble getting that percentage of the population to increase there. I've always been very interested.

JH: You're kidding.

BT: Yeah. In the classes I've taught, if I have one or two black students out of a hundred, that always surprises me.

JH: I'm dumbfounded.

BT: I'm surprised by that.

-----END OF SIDE ONE, TAPE TWO -----

BT: I was teaching foreign students, English as a second language. That's been a kind of a pattern in this area being that we're near New York Harbor for many, many years. Now, I was told by someone I think ... that during the Hungarian Revolution there were a number of Hungarian refugees who did not come through the port of New York. They sailed up the river here, clandestinely, and hopped off.

JH: Did they really? Oh, that's interesting.

BT: Yes. I wondered if you ever encountered that.

KP: Camp Kilmer ...

BT: Yeah.

KP: ... was one of the places where Hungarian refugees came to. Do you remember?

JH: No, I didn't know that.

KP: Actually, I found out when I was courting my wife in Boston, she came to Camp Kilmer as a five-year-old.

BT: Oh, really.

KP: Yeah.

JH: Oh, that's interesting, isn't it?

KP: To Camp Kilmer.

JH: To Camp Kilmer.

BT: I'll be darned.

JH: They were willing to take them in and willing to ...

KP: I don't know the whole detail, but apparently this was a resettlement camp and ... they came here before they were, and she ended up, she and her parents moved to Boston area but this is their original area. She says she has very distinct memories of Camp Kilmer.

JH: Oh, of course, we have big Hungarian population in New Brunswick.

KP: Yeah.

BT: ... I didn't realize that until I taught at Middlesex. You know, because I said something about the large number of Hungarian students I had. A girl who's Hungarian, and she knew how to pronounce some Hungarian words I was mispronouncing. I said, "How do you know that?" And she said, "Oh, well, didn't you know? There are an awful a lot of Hungarians in this area," and I did not know that. But it's interesting that this is an area that you have a series of waves of immigration that go way back.

JH: I understand that Highland Park, I think, has a high concentration of Russians.

BT: I think Union does, too. My friend, who's the county librarian in Union, is most concerned about East European and Russian immigrants.

JH: They run a secondhand shop in the Reformed Church in Highland Park, and their customers are Russians that come in and buy all these things. ... It's good stuff and they can get it reasonable ... I think they're smart.

BT: No, I just, you know, I don't know a lot about the history of NJC and Douglass, and I'd like to really know more. But when I went to Alumnae Day and spent the whole day and spent more

time on campus and just talked to people, I got a sense that some things were very much the same, and, as usual, some things had changed. They had brought out the old alumnae banner from ...

JH: Oh, had they?

BT: ... They had found, that day. I remember. The original NJC one was hanging up and I didn't think anything of it when I walked into the building, because, I thought, oh, they always do that, but what I didn't know is, no, they don't always do that.

JH: No.

BT: So I think they're trying to go back and reclaim, I think there's a big move to go back and reclaim some of the tradition.

JH: ... When I went back for Alumnae Days, I was thrilled with the caliber of women who had gone to Douglass College. They had really made a lot out of their lives and been successful. I was really thrilled. They were mature women with important things that they were doing and certainly the academics, when I was in college, the academics were really tough. It was ...

BT: One of the things that I think is fun when you can have students come on interviews, or work with the interviews, for the current Douglass students to, you know, to see how it was and to have a sense of the role models of women who were at NJC and went out and did serve in the war effort somehow.

JH: Edna Newby's interesting, because she handled so many of the foreign students that went to Douglass. ... She's been everywhere around the world. ... The foreign students, they all dote on her and ask her to come and treat her like royalty, because she was good to them.

BT: She was good to them.

JH: And made sure they were taken care of, but ... she's very careful, because she worked with them for years, and she's very careful what she says. But I gather that she's very dubious about what's going on as far as the swallowing up the administration of Douglass College, and it has made me feel that, in all honesty, that I do not want to support that financially. If that's where they're going, I'm not interested. I would like that college to ... stay a good women's college ...

BT: Well, I think you have a lot of that, from what I can gather from Alumnae Day, 'cause I really hadn't had a lot of that before, and not being a Douglass graduate ...

KP: Although you did go to a women's college.

BT: Yeah. I went to a women's college. As I sat and listened to the Alumnae Day discussions, I began to sort of understand a lot better how they felt, that they had really been swallowed up. I

think the new dean was very impressive. The new Douglass dean ...

JH: The one that they have now?

BT: Yeah, the one that just came. The day that they installed her ...

JH: I loved the one that was there before.

BT: Yeah, no, I don't know anything about that. The new gal seems to me, very well spoken, very diplomatic, but she really came across as a really gracious but determined individual.

JH: Really?

BT: Yeah, I didn't have the feeling that too much was going to be put over on her. I could be wrong about this, but ...

JH: Oh, that'll be interesting.

BT: I mean, I went with no opinion one way or another. I said, "Wow," and a lot of the women around me said, well, this was the first time they met her, of course. Very, I thought, very well spoken, very clever. I mean, I don't know anything else, but I came away with a good feeling about Douglass from the standpoint that there is something here to tell people about. If anybody would happen, nobody has, but if anybody would happen to come to me and say, "Where's a good place to go to school in New Jersey?" I might say, "Well, you ought to look at Douglass." I would not have said that before, so I think there's a lot that Douglass can do to sell itself, and I think part of that is to go back and reclaim some of the earlier traditions ... of having been NJC.

JH: Yes.

BT: They've got a PR thing there they can use, and I hope they'll do it. I'm sure they do. It sounds like a neat place.

KP: This is a question out of sequence, but you mention how the Army was looking for you ... as a librarian. Were there any active recruiting efforts after Pearl Harbor in Douglass? Do you remember any ...

JH: You mean, recruiting for people in service.

KP: The Red Cross, or the beat to join the WASPs or the WACs.

JH: If there was, I don't know about it, and it is interesting you should ask that, because some of my friends did go into the WAVES. I don't think of anybody in the WACs, and I don't know how they came to join. I'll have to ask them sometime.

BT: Yeah. I did ask that, I thought I'd ask you, but Virginia Reynolds ...

JH: Oh, Didy. You know Didy?

BT: Yeah, we're gonna talk to her.

KP: In a few weeks.

BT: In a few weeks.

JH: Are you really? Oh, I'm so glad that I gave you her name then.

BT: Yes. She wrote right back ...

KP: Yeah, I have a copy.

JH: She's a wonderful gal.

BT: I said, "One of the things we want to talk to you about, is how did you come, you know, to join the WAVES," because ...

JH: No, she didn't. She's the one that was a librarian at Los Alamos.

BT: Oh, she was the one who was a librarian. Yeah, okay.

JH: 'Cause her husband was a physics professor at Rutgers.

BT: It was the other gal, Nancy Godfrey, who was in the WAVES, because I'm really interested to talk to her about that. Nancy Godfrey, and I said, "Why the WAVES over something else? Did they have a big recruiting campaign?"

JH: I wondered that, too ...

BT: And she couldn't remember. She said, "I'm gonna have to think about that." You know, people have seemed to have real preferences, but there were so many more WAVES, so many more NJC girls became WAVES than any other service, that I wondered if they had been on campus ...

JH: That's interesting.

BT: ... really actively recruiting somehow and I've still yet to track that down.

JH: One of the gals, that I gave you the name, Josephine Rounds lives out in Michigan now. She's a really smart gal; she would know a lot of that stuff. She's an interesting person.

BT: Yeah, I started by writing all the, immediately, a couple weeks ago, wrote everybody who was New Jersey, and now I have to go back with another round, because they may come back here, or we may be able to get somebody out there to interview them.

KP: We've had quite a bit of luck with that actually.

JH: I'm so glad.

KP: It's been very scattered, but we, my interns and I, have interviewed people all over the country.

JH: Isn't that great.

BT: It's been very helpful.

KP: It's strange because we haven't, for example, we've almost interviewed everyone from Rutgers from Arizona that's interested in participating, but Florida, I just, I haven't been able to go and most of my students ironically have not. But I've just been lucky that I have people going out to Arizona, so we've interviewed like five or six people who live in Arizona.

JH: We've got millions of Rutgers and Douglass people in Florida.

KP: No, I know.

JH: Every time I turn around.

KP: I'm very aware of that.

BT: I do have a very good friend that lives in Orlando, so if you get any, 'cause it really does help if you have a place to stay. The airfares are not the problem nowadays. You know, to go and do research of any kind is a hundred dollars a day.

JH: Is that right?

BT: By the time you eat and stay in a Holiday Inn, I can't seem to do it less for much less than that.

JH: Oh, boy.

BT: When you think about eating, so if you could go stay with a friend ...

JH: Oh, absolutely.

KP: Yeah.

BT: ... or relatives. I don't have any relatives, but I have this one friend in Orlando.

KP: Is there anything we forgot to ask you?

JH: You did very well.

KP: You mention you wrote to some of the patients. In fact, one you wrote ...

JH: Just a couple of years ago, and he probably retired and decided we better stop.

KP: Was there anyone else that you stayed in touch with?

JH: Not as long as I did with him.

KP: Yeah, yeah. What made him so unusual, do you think?

JH: I don't know. I assure you it was not anything like a romantic interest. He just was a person [who], as an educator, was interesting and a friendly person.

KP: Yeah.

BT: Some people are just really good letter-writers.

JH: Yeah.

KP: Did you ever encounter people after the hospital?

BT: Oh, that's a good question.

KP: Did you ever run into anyone and say, "I remember you?"

JH: No, never. But that's pretty casual, when you're only a patient for a short length of time so ...

KP: Thank you ...

-----END OF INTERVIEW-----

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