

RUTGERS-THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY
NEW BRUNSWICK
AN INTERVIEW WITH EILEEN WITTE TREASH
FOR THE
RUTGERS ORAL HISTORY ARCHIVES OF WORLD WAR II

INTERVIEW BY
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Sandra Stewart Holyoak: This begins an interview with Eileen Witte Treash, on May 1, 1999, in Alexandria, Virginia. I would like to begin by asking you a few questions about your family. Where were you born? When were you born? What were your parent's names?

Eileen Witte Treash: ... I was born in Newark, New Jersey in 1927, 14th of November. My father was Carl P. Witte and my mother was Edith Kraeuter Witte, and they were both originally from Irvington, New Jersey.

SS: Do you know how they came to live in Newark?

EWT: They were living in Irvington, at the time, ... and, at that time, St. Barnabas Hospital was in Newark, on High Street, I think, and that's where they went for my delivery. [laughter] My arrival.

SS: Your father's name was Carl Witte. Was he a first-, second-generation American, or had his family been in the States for some time?

EWT: He was born in ... Newark. His mother was born in Newark. His father was born in Germany.

SS: Do you know when your grandfather immigrated?

EWT: 1886. He was nineteen-years-old when he came in.

SS: Was your mother's family originally from the same area?

EWT: ... They were both living in Irvington. ... My maternal grandmother was born in Alsace-Lorraine, came to this country in 1854 when she was three-years-old, and my maternal grandfather was born in the Baden area of Germany. ... He came to this country in 1859. ... My mother was the last of his fourteen surviving children and he was quite elderly when she was born, of course, and I never knew him. His father went to Moscow with Napoleon.

SS: Oh, really.

EWT: And, came back. So, there's only, what? Four generations there between me and Napoleon. [laughter]

SS: Did your family save memorabilia from that?

EWT: Not that I know of.

SS: Any pictures or letters?

EWT: Not that I'm aware of, and I'm sure, at this point, it's all gone, [laughter] 'cause there's ... really very little of that family left.

SS: Oh, really.

EWT: Of, you know, the original children.

SS: Did your mother and father have many siblings?

EWT: Well, my mother had three sisters, four brothers, three half-sisters, and three half-brothers, and my father had only one sister.

SS: Did you grow up in Irvington?

EWT: ... Well, we moved to Maplewood when I was, maybe, two.

SS: Did you have any extended family in the area?

EWT: Yes. They were all, generally, in that area. Well, there was one brother in California, but, most of them were located in that area.

SS: What was your father's occupation?

EWT: He was the horticulturist of the Essex County Park Commission.

SS: Did your mother work outside the house?

EWT: No. I think, ... before she was married, she worked as ... either a schoolteacher or a schoolteacher's aide, and ... that didn't last very long. She went to normal school, and then, after she was married, she just was a housewife. [laughter] Just a housewife, I'm sorry, I take the just back. [laughter]

SS: That is good. Can you tell me about your parent's educations?

EWT: ... Well, they both graduated from Irvington High School, and my father went to Syracuse, graduated with a degree in Forestry, and then, went to Harvard and ... had a Masters in landscape architecture. ... My mother went to a normal school, which was, you know, a short couple of years, preparatory to teaching, in those days.

SS: Did you father play a role in the actual designs of the parks in Essex County? What was his position?

EWT: Well, he was involved in the planting of the cherry trees in Branch Brook Park. Whether or not he actually did the designing, I'm a little vague. I don't think he did, but, he was involved in that, and he, generally, oversaw all the plant life in the parks, and that

was quite an extensive system. ... I don't know how much of it still exists, 'cause I just haven't paid that much attention.

SS: It is still a very popular park, especially at cherry blossom time. In fact, it is touted to be better than the cherry blossom array here in Washington DC. [laughter]

EWT: ... They used to be very beautiful.

SS: As a young child, did you take part in some of the ceremonies and activities that they would have there?

EWT: No. ...

SS: Any concerts?

EWT: Oh, I'm sure we did. ... We used to go to sulky racing. ... I think that was in Weequahic Park, and my first job was with the park commission. During the war, I worked as a playground assistant in Westside Park, I think was the name of it, and the only reason I got the job was, I had just finished junior high school, but, they normally employed college students, and there weren't any to employ in ... the '40s. So, I started out at about, goodness, fifty dollars a month, or something like that.

SS: Fast salary. [laughter]

EWT: Right.

SS: Had your parents met at Irvington high school?

EWT: Yes.

SS: Were they already an item when your father went away to school?

EWT: Well, I'm not sure about that, 'cause it was probably ten years before they married, so, and whether or not they were actually dating then, I don't know. But, they lived within a few blocks of each other. ... They seemed to have a very active social life.

SS: What occupation did your paternal grandfather have?

EWT: My grandfather was a tool and die maker, and he worked for (Mergots?) in either Irvington or Newark. ... The company has long since been out of business. ... My grandmother was a homemaker.

SS: What about you maternal grandfather?

EWT: He had a company called Croyden, and, among other things, they made very fine golf clubs, and that company, also, is out of existence, has been for many years, and, my grandmother, when she married him, he had six children, so, she was a house wife and a mother, and then, she had her own eight. [laughter]

SS: That is a big family. Did your mother ever tell any stories about what it was like to grow up in such a large family?

EWT: Well, ... the children were all spaced about four years apart, so, ... since she was the last of the lot, the half-brothers and -sisters had already gone, married, and were working elsewhere, or something, and, some of her older siblings were also gone from the house. So, she did tell some tales about funny little things that happened. ... I think her next older brother was something of a comic and ... their father was a very stern disciplinarian, and the two didn't always get along, and there were some funny incidents, but, nothing more than that, that I remember.

SS: Do you think that led to the fact that you only have one sibling?

EWT: No, I have two sisters.

SS: Oh, I am sorry. Does that account for the smallness of your family?

EWT: ... I don't know that it made any difference.

SS: Are your two sisters older or younger?

EWT: Younger.

SS: What are their names?

EWT: My next younger is Carol Witte-De Long, who was an NJC graduate in '52, and my youngest sister is Joan Witte-Stewart, who ... still lives in Maplewood and went to Catherine Gibbs, and works now as a secretary in the local high school.

SS: Do you go back to New Jersey often?

EWT: Maybe once a year or so.

SS: We talked about your grandmother being from Alsace-Lorraine and your grandfather being from ...

EWT: From Germany.

SS: Did your parents incorporate their cultural heritage into your home as a child?

EWT: Well, we ate some traditional German foods, ... but, we pretty much celebrated ... the American traditional ... holidays, and so forth. My father spoke German. My mother understood it, and, when I was a child, I ... could say some poems and I sung some little ditties in German, but, I never got beyond that point, and, of course, in the '40s, it was not fashionable to speak German. ...

SS: Were you very aware of that?

EWT: Not really.

SS: The next question I would like to ask is about political affiliations. Was your family involved in any political groups?

EWT: No. Other than to vote, no.

SS: What about religion?

EWT: They were Protestant.

SS: How important was the church in growing up?

EWT: At the time we were growing up, they did not ... attend church very regularly, but we went to Sunday School. They saw that we did that in Protestant churches, and, we went to some Bible things, Bible classes, in the summertime, that sort of thing.

SS: As a student at Maplewood Elementary and High School, what subjects did you find the most challenging and the most fun?

EWT: [laughter] ... Gee whiz. I just don't have any recollection of that.

SS: Were there any activities that you were particularly active in?

EWT: I can't remember anything other than just going to school, and going home, and doing my homework, and that sort of thing.

SS: Were you involved in any musical programs?

EWT: ... Not other than what was required. Well, now, wait a second. Music, we did ... go to some things in New York, to an opera, and that sort of thing with music ... classes. But, I am not at all athletic, so, ... I did what was required and that was it.

SS: You did not take piano, or voice?

EWT: I took piano for a while, but, I was too lazy to practice, so, that's terminated. [laughter] I have a great appreciation for music. ...

SS: Did you take advantage of living that close to New York?

EWT: Yes, I used to go in with my girlfriends and we would go to Radio City, or something like that, and my grandmother had season tickets at the Metropolitan Opera, so, when we got older, probably into junior high school, we occasionally went with her to operas that were considered suitable for us. [laughter]

SS: How strict was your household?

EWT: Well, I think we were disciplined, but, not severely. My mother, unfortunately, had to be the disciplinarian, 'cause my father's heart was a little too soft, I think. And so, that generated some degree of animosity, and she spanked us, too. [laughter]

SS: [laughter] That is such a transgression in this day and age. Can you tell me about your early relationship with your sisters? How many years difference were there?

EWT: Two-and-a-half between me and my younger sister and seven between the little one, the baby. I think we got along fairly well. We had different interests. My next younger sister was considerably more athletic than I am and was something of a tomboy when she was young. ... The younger one was probably a little too young to share my interests in things.

SS: With your local, extended family, did you celebrate the holidays together?

EWT: Oh, yes. Yes.

SS: Where were these gatherings held?

EWT: Well, ... we went to one family on ... Christmas Eve, and then, my mother had, like, a brunch on Christmas morning for another group, and then, we went out to my grandmother's for Christmas dinner, and that sort of thing.

SS: Did you have playmates in the neighborhood?

EWT: Oh, yes, yes.

SS: What did you do with them?

EWT: Well, ... when I was a child, there were something like twenty-two children ... just on our block, and, there were some that were my age, some that were my sister's ages, and we did all sorts of things, played dolls, climbed jungle gyms, and played baseball in the street until the police came along and chased us. ... We had one adventurous young man up the street who used to make little explosions with very harmless things, compared

to what we do today, ... little dust explosion in a tin can, or something, and that kind of thing, but, we didn't try to blow up the neighborhood or anything like that. [laughter]

SS: Do you remember how you spent your summers?

EWT: Oh, yes, trying to keep cool and played board games, like Monopoly, and that sort of thing. ... Actually, in the '40s, we started going to Vermont for summer vacation, had to save all our gas coupons so we could make the trip.

SS: Did you have a family cabin?

EWT: ... It was to a resort that was run by ... the family of a college classmate's of my father's. ... It was really a very family oriented place and there were a group of us that got acquainted the first year we were there, and they all kept trying to go back at the same time the next year, and that sort of thing. After I started working, I couldn't go anymore, 'cause I was working. [laughter]

SS: Do you have any stories about how the Depression affected your family?

EWT: Not really, because my father was ... a county employee, so, he was ... gainfully employed, and, I do remember people coming to the house looking for handouts, and my mother would give them something to eat, and nobody else in the family seemed to have any ... financial problems, so, we were lucky.

SS: As the situation in Europe reached its critical points, were there any discussions about them in your home?

EWT: ... We had some relatives still in Germany and I know one aunt frequently sent packages of foodstuffs, and things, to them, and I don't think it was discussed much in front of us. Now, it may have been discussed in the family among the adults, but, not that I'm aware of, in front of us.

SS: Do you know where in Germany the packages were sent?

EWT: In the Leipzig area.

SS: Near Poland. Do you know what happened with those relatives?

EWT: Some of them still survive. I don't believe any of them were, well, I should say I don't know whether any of them were affected, but, they weren't, for example, in concentration camps, or anything like that. ... Two of the cousins had ... dual citizenship. They could opt to be American citizens when they got to be, ... was it eighteen or twenty-one? So, two of them did come to the US and lived here for a considerable period of time.

SS: How did they have dual citizenship?

EWT: It was through their father. Whether they were born in this country, or whether he was born in this country, I'm a little vague. It was something like that.

SS: Do you know what they were involved in? Were they part of the Hitler Youth?

EWT: I ... don't remember anything like that.

SS: Do you know what occupations they had?

EWT: I have no recollection of any discussion of that.

SS: You mentioned that, in the 1940s, it was unpopular to speak German. Were there any other anti-German sentiments that you were aware of?

EWT: No. ... There was a *Bund* camp near us which was sort of looked at with ... derision, I guess.

SS: Had you ever attended the *Bund* camp?

EWT: No.

SS: As you were graduating from high school, what educational opportunities did you see on your horizon? Did you want to go to college? Was it an opportunity that was readily available?

EWT: ... I was encouraged to go and I never considered anything but NJC, because the family just couldn't afford it, and I did get a state scholarship, which, in those days, paid tuition, and so, that was a great help.

SS: Had any other members of your family gone to NJC?

EWT: ... The wife of a cousin of my mother's had gone. She was in one of the first classes. I've forgotten whether it was '23 or '24, and so, she was encouraging, too. In fact, she took me down, one time, and showed me around the campus.

SS: When you were still in high school?

EWT: Yes.

SS: Did you live on campus when you came to NJC?

EWT: Yes.

SS: What was it like to be a freshman at NJC?

EWT: [laughter] Well, I was very lucky. I was in one of the small houses on Gibbons Campus and we had a very, very congenial group. Course, the freshman hazing week was a little less desirable. ... [laughter]

SS: What were some of the activities of hazing week?

EWT: ... Just silly things, and I remember being particularly upset, because one of the girls had been in ... grammar and high school with me was an asthmatic, and they made us run, or walk, or something, and she had an attack after we got back to the house, and I was really upset about that. We didn't really need that kind of foolishness, but, we had to wear silly little caps and, I think, maybe, aprons, or something, and we weren't allowed to walk on Sacred Path ... until a certain point ... towards the end of our freshman year. ...

SS: What did you have to do for upperclassmen?

EWT: Oh, I'm sure we probably had some silly little ditties or something that we had to recite when we were coming across them. [laughter]

SS: Did you know what you wanted to major in when you began as a freshman?

EWT: I must have known, because I was in the home ec. major, ... which allowed no deviations, at the time. ... In the four years, we had, I think, two ... six-hour credits that we could choose from the whole gamut. You know, the rest of them was either this or that, ... a lot of chemistry, a lot of physics. ...

SS: I have heard that, during the war, home ec. majors had the option to switch to physics or chemistry majors. Was this option still available after the war?

EWT: I believe so. We ... had one year of physics and three years of chemistry. ...

SS: But, your major was still home ec.

EWT: The major was still nutrition and institutional management.

SS: Did you go on from NJC?

EWT: That's when I joined the Army and had a dietetic internship in the Army, which was a year's training after college, or education after college, and then, I was a fully qualified dietitian.

SS: Where did you do your training?

EWT: At Brooke Army Hospital at Fort Sam Houston, Texas.

SS: That is quite a difference from New Jersey.

EWT: Yes. [laughter]

SS: How did you become aware of this program with the Army?

EWT: A distant cousin's husband was in the military, and he ... knew about it and encouraged me to join, and, ... compared to other internships, it was a very lucrative program, because we got 180 dollars a month salary, plus room and a food allowance of approximately forty dollars, and most of the internships in civilian hospitals, you just got room and board. ... Someone that my father knew said, "I don't recommend it for your daughter. They're not too well-treated." [laughter]

SS: In the Army?

EWT: No, no, in the civilian hospitals, at that time.

SS: How did your family feel about you joining the Army?

EWT: Well, I don't think they had any particular hang-ups on it. They were sorry to see me go away, and that kind of thing, I think, but they weren't upset about it, or anything like that.

SS: Your younger sister, Carol, came to NJC when you were a sophomore or a junior?

EWT: No, when I was a senior, she was a freshman. ...

SS: Did that affect anything in regards to hazing?

EWT: No.

SS: Did you help her out?

EWT: No, ... [laughter] I tried to leave her alone.

SS: What was your sister's major at NJC?

EWT: Chemistry. She's the brain of the family. [laughter]

SS: I was wondering how you interacted with each other.

EWT: I had to go to her one time to get help with my physics homework. I just could not get thorough them. I didn't think I was going to graduate, 'cause I was sure I was going to flunk physics in my senior year. [laughter] But, I squeaked through. ...

SS: Were you involved in any other programs at NJC that were great fun for you?

EWT: Well, we had such a busy program. We had all these labs and things that nobody else had. You know the ... English majors, and so forth, didn't spend three hours in the chemistry lab every afternoon, or something, and so, we were kept pretty busy and, I believe, I joined the home ec. club, or something, but, not any other activities.

SS: Who was the head of NJC at that time?

EWT: Dean Corwin.

SS: Did you have any interaction with Dean Corwin?

EWT: Well, we all went to tea at her house, but, no. I would say ... she didn't get out and mingle with the students all that much. I think, these days, they probably do more of that. ... She was pretty much in her ivory tower and it was better if we didn't get too close. [laughter]

SS: How strict were the house rules?

EWT: Well, they were very reasonable rules. You had to be in by eleven o'clock on week nights and, what was it? one o'clock on weekends, or something like that, and we were on our honor. The doors were open and the ... house chairman, I guess we called them, locked the doors at the curfew time, and we were very much on our own, and the honor system worked. ... As I said, most of the houses that I was in were usually very agreeable groups of people. I don't remember any altercations, or noise, or anything that disturbed people.

SS: Did you change houses each year?

EWT: Oh, yes.

SS: Were did you live after Gibbons?

EWT: I stayed on Gibbons, but I just went from different houses and I had the same roommate all four years.

SS: What was her name?

EWT: Betty Lou Glass. Unfortunately, she's deceased, and she was also a home ec. major, but she was in the education branch, so, we didn't ... pass too often ... in our course work.

SS: Did you have mandatory chapel at NJC?

EWT: Not very often, I don't think.

SS: At Rutgers College, there was an enormous difference between the college before the war and after the war. Did you see similar changes at NJC?

EWT: We didn't seem terribly overcrowded. I don't think there was that much of a jump in the women's college as there would have been in the men's.

SS: Were you involved in any programs aimed towards helping the war effort in either high school or college?

EWT: Well, we knitted for Britain, and did things like that, and I'm sure there were bandage rollings, or something. We saved tin foil from cigarette packages. [laughter]

SS: Were they part of the bond selling campaigns?

EWT: Oh, yes. ... You bought stamps, really, and you filled a little book, and, eventually, you got a bond.

SS: When did you start doing that?

EWT: Oh, goodness, probably sometime in the '40s.

SS: Did your parents ever talk about what they were doing? Did they discuss the progress of the war?

EWT: We must have, because we read the newspapers and listened to the radio, but, it's kind of hazy.

SS: Do you remember the Pearl Harbor attack?

EWT: Oh, my, yes.

SS: What were you doing?

EWT: Well, my recollection is that it was a beautiful warm day, and we were out washing the car, and somebody came screaming out, ... "Pearl Harbor's been attacked!" I'm not sure we knew where Pearl Harbor was, but, we soon found out.

SS: Did you notice an immediate impact upon your neighborhood?

EWT: Not really. I don't remember that anyone in our neighborhood went off to the military, or anything like that.

SS: No one in the reserves, or the draft?

EWT: No. Course, they were all family people, and had a lot of children, so, that would have given them a certain exemption from military service.[laughter]

SS: Did the war affect your father's work at all?

EWT: Well, I think it probably became harder for him to find laboring types.

SS: I was wondering if he changed the focus of what he was manufacturing.

EWT: No. Well, he was in the park business, so ...

SS: That is right. I am sorry, I was thinking of your grandfather.

EWT: [laughter] No. ... I guess it would have had some impact on his machine works. ... He retired at a fairly early age and I can't remember exactly when that was. ... Sandra, this is my husband, Dick Treash.

SS: Well, nice to meet you Mr. Treash.

Richard Treash: How do you do?

SS: Just let me pause the tape for a moment.

[Tape paused]

SS: How did you meet Mr. Treash?

EWT: Well, we were both stationed in Chicago. Dick was in the headquarters building ... of what was then the Fifth Army, which no longer exists. Is that correct?

RT: Yes.

EWT: And, I was working in the Army Medical Department recruiting office, and, we met. He was a recent widow and he is considered my best recruit. [laughter]

RT: We would never have met other than that, because ... her assignments were all in big hospitals, and I had little contact with anything like that.

EWT: I had one other officer working with me, and we covered the thirteen states of the Fifth Army area, at that time, and we visited, primarily, colleges and universities, and, occasionally, hospitals. ... We were recruiting for dietitians, physical, and occupational therapists, and the Army has training programs in all of those, and they're very excellent training programs, which is primarily what we were trying to ... find candidates for those

programs. ... If we'd found a qualified specialist, we would've been happy to have them too.

SS: Was this either gender?

EWT: Yes.

SS: When you first joined the Army, you were sent to Texas. What was that like? Did you have any kind of a boot camp?

EWT: ... We had a basic training, which was something of a joke. It was mostly classroom instruction and it was sort of an orientation into the Army Medical Department, and, we did do a little marching, and we did go out to the field one day, ... but, it was ... a piece of cake. [laughter] That lasted for four weeks, and then, we went into the dietetic internship program, which was a year in length.

SS: Were you involved with people who were veterans of the war?

EWT: ... We probably were.

SS: Were your superior officers women or men?

EWT: Women, because, when I came into the Army, our corps was solely female. Men were not admitted until 1955.

SS: Had these women served in Europe?

EWT: Oh, yes.

SS: Did they discuss their experiences at all?

EWT: Oh, yes. Well, ... there are two I remember the best. One of them was a woman, who was a dietitian, who had been caught in the Bulge, in

RT: Germany. ... It was on the edge of Belgium.

EWT: Belgium, and, she told some stories about that, how they had German prisoners working in the kitchen, and they kept saying, "The Germans are coming! The Germans are coming!" ... And then, the other, whom I met a few years later, was a physical therapist who had been a prisoner of war in the Philippines. She had been over there as a civilian, and had been taken prisoner, and was fairly well-treated, was imprisoned in Santo Thomas. ...

RT: Did you explain that ... the corps wasn't formed until later and it was all civilians?

EWT: Well, right, yes. Originally, during the Second World War, they were, basically, civilians, and they had relative rank, which meant they could wear military insignia, but, they were not actually in the military, and, it wasn't until 1947 that the corps was actually formed, and then, they were actually commissioned in the Army.

SS: So, this women who told you about the Battle of the Bulge, she actually was a civilian?

EWT: At the time, yes, and same with the woman who'd been the prisoner of war. ...

SS: She was in the corps at the time, but, she was considered a civilian.

EWT: I think you could probably say that.

SS: How many women would usually be stationed at a military installation?

EWT: It would be highly variable, and it would depend upon the size of the installation.

SS: Were you there to cover the entire base in all medical aspects?

EWT: Just the hospital. ... Now, our officers get involved in much more. They're doing nutrition education out in the troop areas, and that sort of thing, and working on wellness programs out of the hospital, so that they are involved in the total post activity, or total camp, or whatever. But, at the time, we were strictly in the hospital.

SS: Were there any programs set up in the VA hospitals at that point?

EWT: Yes. ... At least, I know, the VA had ... dietetic internships. Now, whether or not they had training for occupational and physical therapists, I don't know.

SS: After your one-year internship, where did you go?

EWT: I went to Fort Bragg, North Carolina and worked in the hospital there, which was a considerable smaller hospital than Brooke, ... whereas at Brooke, we probably had a dozen staff dietitians, at Fort Bragg, we only had three.

SS: Now, from Fort Benning ...

EWT: Fort Bragg

SS: Excuse me, Fort Bragg, where did you go?

EWT: To Fort Campbell, Kentucky, and, from there, to Japan, and I was stationed ... in Kyoto, in a hospital there, and then, that hospital closed, so, I went up to Tokyo.

SS: When you were in Japan, were you attached to a US military hospital?

EWT: Yes, right, yes.

SS: Did you have any exposure to the Japanese and the hardships they were enduring?

EWT: We had Japanese employees and, of course, they didn't speak an awful lot of English. ... We did have at least one employee who could interpret, but, we didn't talk an awful lot about the war, from their standpoint, and I do remember one young man who was supposed to be our secretary, and, on the anniversary of the atom bomb dropped on Hiroshima, I said something, I was reading the *Stars and Stripes*, ... "Oh, my goodness. Today's the anniversary." ... He said, "I was there." That kind of terminated the conversation. [laughter]

SS: Do you remember where you were when you heard the bomb had been dropped?

EWT: No. I remember where I was when Roosevelt died, ... or shortly after Roosevelt died, but I don't remember. What was the date, '45?

RT: August, '45.

EWT: August, '45. I was probably working on my playground.

SS: How did you and your family and friends react to the news?

EWT: We were startled, surprised.

SS: Did you understand what an atom bomb was, at that point?

EWT: Probably not. Course, we had been told all the terrible things that the Japanese were doing, so, we probably felt they deserved it. [laughter] ... [I] didn't realize quite how bad it was. Yes.

SS: How long were you stationed in Japan?

EWT: A little over two years.

SS: Did you tour the countryside?

EWT: Oh, yes. We traveled a fair amount, and, one of the places we went was to Hiroshima, and saw the remnants of the one building that they had left unchanged, and toured the museum that they have there, and there didn't seem to be any great animosity towards us. In fact, one of the reactions I remember was the fact that I was so tall, and that was always of great interest to the Japanese, particularly the young people, who wanted to come talk English to us, so they could practice their English. [laughter]

SS: Do you have any homecoming experiences that you remember?

EWT: No, not that I can think of.

SS: Did you meet a lot of Rutgers College men when you were at NJC?

EWT: Not a lot. We met some. ... Of course, there was very little interchange for classes, in those days. I don't remember any men coming to any of the classes that I was in, but, of course, they were sort of specialized, and I don't really think there were that many in any other classes.

SS: Were there dances held while you were at NJC?

EWT: ... We had dances at NJC, but, we invited our own dates. ... I don't remember much social mingling in a group sense sort of thing.

SS: Did you participate in the dances?

EWT: Oh, yes. Yeah.

SS: Were you dating anyone in particular?

EWT: No. [laughter] ...

SS: From Japan, where did you go?

EWT: Fort Belvoir, Virginia.

SS: Were you in the hospital there?

EWT: Yes.

SS: Did you plan to make the Army a career at this point?

EWT: Well, I guess so. Deep down, I must have been. I didn't really have any idea of doing anything else.

SS: Did you have an enlistment time?

EWT: Well, originally, I came in for a two year period. I was committed to a two year period. ... We also signed an obligation to join the regular Army, if we wanted to. So, somewhere, ... it was before the end of our internship, we were interviewed and asked if we would accept a commission, and I said, "Yes," and so, after that, I no longer had a ...

term limit, or anything, and I just could stay until either they or I wanted to ... be separated.

SS: What were you commissioned as?

EWT: A second lieutenant.

SS: How did your advancement unfold?

EWT: Well, after ... about eighteen months, I became a first lieutenant, and then, ... about five years [later], I became a captain, and then, things slowed down. [laughter] Then, it was, oh, good grief, ... where was I when I got promoted to major? Governor's Island, so that would have been early sixties, so, that was about ... seven more years before I got another promotion.

SS: When you came to Fort Belvoir, were you a captain?

EWT: Yes, yes, because I was promoted in Japan.

SS: Were your duties the same as a captain?

EWT: Well, yes, I was a staff dietitian.

SS: Where did you go from Fort Belvoir?

EWT: To graduate school.

SS: Where did you go to graduate school?

EWT: Well, I went back to Fort Sam Houston. The Army had a program, and still has a program, with Baylor University, and ... it was then Hospital Administration, and, I think, they have a different name for it now, ... and, eventually, we received a Masters Degree from Baylor University, but, we had some professors come from Baylor. We didn't go there, other than for a more or less social event, like a football game. [laughter] And, some of our military officers were affiliated, and they had professorial credentials at Baylor.

SS: Where did you go after you got your Masters?

EWT: Then, I went to Governor's Island, which was a doll house of a hospital. I was the only dietitian there.

SS: You were close to your family and friends there.

EWT: Oh, yes, yes.

SS: Did you take full advantage of that?

EWT: Oh, yes. [laughter] Took the subway uptown and that sort of thing.

SS: Where you housed in the hospitals as a dietitian?

EWT: In a separate building, yes.

SS: Was this the procedure at all the bases that you served on?

EWT: Well, at Fort Belvoir, I was able to live off-post, in a civilian apartment.

SS: For a woman, would living off-post overseas, in Japan, be acceptable?

EWT: We lived in ... what they called the nurse's quarters, because it was primarily nurses, in Tokyo, and they wanted to convert the building that we were living in into a clinic building. So, we moved downtown to a hotel, which was an American military compound. It was an interesting place. It had been built for the Olympics, which ... were to be held in Japan in '39?

RT: Something like that.

EWT: Something like that, and they were never held because of the looming war situation, and so, we were there with ... Army officers, and Marine, and Air Force, and so forth, and people coming in from Korea on R&R stayed there, so, that was really a swinging place. [laughter]

SS: I can imagine. Do you have any stories you want to share?

EWT: [laughter] I did just think of one, but, I remember, we had a big party for the Army-Navy football game. The party started at something like two a.m., [laughter] 'cause it was being broadcast live from the States.

RT: Oh, that's right. ... I was over there, too, Korea and Japan and, of course, the time change, it was very difficult because we were fourteen hours ahead. You always had to think ahead, you know. What time is it back home, you know? Fourteen hours was a strange time.

EWT: I guess that would be right. It was at like two a.m. ...

RT: The Armed Forces Broadcasting System over there was able to get all the big games, the World Series, big football games, and so on, but it was at an awkward time of day.

...

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EWT: I always felt that we were very well received. We were respected. I can only remember one incident where I felt that a male took advantage of me, in a work sense, no other sense. [laughter] ... Actually, when I was working for men, my performance ratings were slightly better than when I was working for women. Now, what that says, I don't know, but, maybe the women are more critical than the men, or ... it was a different relationship. I was further removed from the men because they had another job ... someplace else, whereas I was working more closely with the women, and they could be more observant. I don't know, but, I never really particularly felt ... put down, or put on, by the men, and consider that I had pretty good relationships.

SS: How far along were you in your career when this incident occurred?

EWT: I was a fairly young captain, at the time, and, it was a situation where the man ... seemed to think that I was getting away with something, and so, he put his feet down and balked, [laughter] didn't cooperate. So, we went to a higher level and got it straightened out. [laughter]

SS: Did you win?

EWT: I think so.

SS: For the women who were returning from World War II, do you think their wartime experiences changed their expectations for women in the corps?

EWT: Boy, that's a hard question to answer. I don't really know. We were, of course, performing a specialized function. ... In our particular case, we were feeding people, so, it was important, and ... people could easily understand the importance of it. I do remember one tale that one of ... the older officers told about being stationed in a hospital in the Pacific, I believe, and they were having an inspection, and the commanding officer, the general, or whoever it was doing the inspection, came through and said, "My, this is a very clean storeroom," and the dietitian said, "Well, of course, nobody will give us any food to feed our patients." [laughter] ... The patients were VD patients, and, apparently, there was a great deal of animosity about VD patients, and they didn't care whether they starved or not. [laughter] ... That's another isolated instance and I don't remember any other tales like that. I mean, they had hardships and things like that. ...

SS: Was there a pecking order among the nurses, doctors, and dietitians?

EWT: Sometimes there was a problem. Other times, it wasn't. It was probably dependent upon personalities and that sort of thing.

SS: When you were in Japan, was the devastation of the war still apparent? I know they put you up in a posh hotel.

EWT: I'll tell you about the posh hotel. One of my friends came to visit, and she had come from Korea ... where it wasn't quite so posh. So, she got into the little bathtub, which was mosaic tiles, and, I said, "How are you doing?" ... She said, "Well, I'm scrubbing something. I'm not sure whether it's me or the bathtub." So, that gives you an idea how big the bath tub was. [laughter]

RT: We had to get used to that reduced scale. Doorways were a big problem in many cases, ... where, again, many of installations they had painted yellow and black stripes, because a six foot tall man would bash his head, and, of course, berths on trains, things of that nature, furniture, ... smaller scale than what we were used to.

EWT: I've forgotten, what was the question?

SS: What were the facilities like? We were talking about the telephone and means of communication. How did you communicate from installation to installation and with the United States?

EWT: Well, we could communicate back and forth between two different installations in Japan, for example, and we could communicate to Korea. It was not easy, but, it was possible. ... By the time I got to Japan, the Korean War was going, and that was a great boost to the Japanese economy, so that things were looking up considerably by the time that I got there, and even by the time you got there. ...

RT: Oh, yeah.

EWT: They were much better off. ... We had adequate supplies, food supplies, and that kind of thing.

SS: The Korean War was never called a war.

RT: No.

EWT: Police action.

SS: When were you aware that there was going to be a police action in Korea? Where you already in Japan?

EWT: No. I was still at Fort Sam Houston, and it was 25th of June, 1950. My sister's birthday, that's how I remember, and, I guess, it was a surprise to me, because I don't think, at that point, that we were paying all that much attention to news and things, 'cause we were so engrossed in our internship program, and we knew some young people, ... there were some ROTC students, at the time, on the post, and they were expecting to be called up, and that sort of thing. ... They were very interested in it.

SS: Were you sent to Japan because of it?

EWT: No, because it was enough afterwards. ... Actual military operations had ceased by that time.

RT: ... July, '53.

EWT: ... When I was at Fort Campbell, which was just prior to going to Japan, we got at least one patient back who had been in Operation Little Switch, where they exchanged prisoners of war, and he was in fairly good condition, so, ... it wasn't a traumatic thing, or anything, and then, when I was originally in Japan, at Kyoto, that was a hospital that was supporting the Korean activity, but, by that time, there were very few patients coming from Korea, ... certainly not with battle injuries or anything like that. By that time, they would have been moved back to the States. And then, in Tokyo, we had ... patients from other ... country's military services. I remember one particular incident where we goofed and we served a vegetable that had a little ham in it to the Turks, and that caused an international incident. [laughter] We had to take the meals back, and start all over again, and give them something that didn't have ham in it, or pork in it.

SS: How did they come to be part of Korean effort?

EWT: They were part of the UN force in Korea, and so, they were still there on, what kind of duty?

RT: ... It was still, practically, a state of war. They just weren't shooting.

EWT: Right. ...

RT: Everybody just remained where they were for quite a long time. ...

EWT: Until the peace treaty, well, there never has been ...

RT: ... Never has been one.

EWT: The cease-fire. ...

RT: ... Just a cease-fire is all it was.

EWT: So, they were, you know, still part of the UN force in Korea. So, this was the major hospital for their evacuation.

SS: Were there any other incidents with the UN forces, as far as being able to communicate with them to find out what they needed?

EWT: Well, they usually had an interpreter that came with them, so that they could, ... communicate. ... Were there Swiss over there?

RT: I think only as medical personnel.

EWT: Well, I remember there was one in Tokyo, I believe he was Swiss, he was a very good waltzer, I remember. [laughter] Ran into him at the Officer's Club.

SS: What other nationalities did you have contact with?

EWT: Those are the ... only ones I can remember having any contact with.

SS: Did they frequent the Officer's Club? Did most people go to Japan on R&R?

EWT: Yes

RT: Oh, yeah.

EWT: Oh, I'm sure there were some others and we just didn't happen ... to cross their paths.

SS: I thought maybe your parties at the hotel may have included some of these people.

EWT: No. [laughter]

SS: What kind of entertainment was provided for you?

EWT: Well, ... we had an Officer's Club, and there were NCO Clubs, or clubs for the enlisted personnel. There was entertainment provided, bands, and shows, and that kind of thing.

SS: Was the USO still active?

EWT: Oh, yes. ... The Red Cross, of course, ... and then, there were special service people who were providing opportunities like that.

SS: What did you think about these services?

EWT: ... The Red Cross was the one we were primarily familiar with, because they were in the hospitals, and I think they did a wonderful job.

SS: Were they under your guidelines?

EWT: No, no, they operated independently. They had ... their own supply channels and we became friendly with them, because they were very nice people, and well educated, interesting people.

SS: Were they multi-national in Japan?

EWT: The ones that I knew were mostly Americans, and I'm sure there were others, but, we just never crossed their paths, or never had any contact with them.

SS: How did you manage to communicate with the States?

EWT: Well, you had to make an appointment, first, to make a phone call, and then, the operator, somewhere along the line, would contact the person that you were going to call, and ... inform them that they were going to get this phone call. [laughter] ... That usually came at an inconvenient time, because it was the middle of the night, or something, but, anyway.

SS: How often were you able to call home?

EWT: ... You could do it as often as you wanted to, but, it was fairly expensive. ...

RT: ... Yeah, for those days.

EWT: ... Fifteen dollars, or something like that. ... You didn't want to do it everyday, certainly, every couple of months or so.

SS: Was your mail censored or affected in anyway by the war?

EWT: Ours was certainly not.

RT: ... We had excellent mail service. ... Supply planes, and so on, there was always planes going back, and almost all of it was air mail. So, it didn't take long for letters to get back, and, of course, it was free for people in Korea. We just ... wrote "Free" up in the corner where you put a stamp. [laughter]

EWT: Was your mail censored?

RT: No, no, they had no mail censorship that I know of.

EWT: Ours certainly wasn't.

RT: They did in World War II, but, not in Korea.

EWT: I remember asking one of my co-workers, one time, well, it was a man who worked in the next office, and something was said about secrecy, and that sort of thing, I

said, “Good grief, what do I know that’s a secret. [laughter] That would be give aid and comfort to the enemy, how many calories we had for lunch,” or something like that.

SS: Were the supplies that you used in your hospital in Japan flown in from the States?

EWT: I would say the major portion came from the States, either by ship or by plane. However, we did have several installations in Japan, like a hydroponic farm, ... which grew fresh vegetables for us, and, also, ... some of those things went to Korea, too, I’m sure. ... And then, we had kind of a dairy operation, where they made milk from powdered milk, and packaged it in individual servings, and that kind of thing, and ice cream, also, from a mix, and Dick remembers that it all had a very strange, paper taste.

RT: Yeah, tasted like paper.

EWT: Now, I don’t remember that

RT: I think the word that was used at the time was a cardboard taste.

EWT: But, I don’t remember that I had any objection to it.

SS: Did you have a specialty in your field?

EWT: Well, we basically branched into two areas. One being administration, the administration of the food service operation, and the other being the therapeutic aspect, and, originally, as a young staff officer, I did both, and then, later on, I went into, basically, administration.

SS: Did you find that your tour in Japan served you well in your career in the States?

EWT: Well, you kind of learn from every experience, ... and you build on that. So, it certainly added up to my total experience, ability, I hope.

SS: From Japan, you went to Governor’s Island, correct?

EWT: No. ... From Japan, I came to Fort Belvoir, and then, I went to graduate school, and then, I went to Governor’s Island. ... That’s right, yeah. Where did I go from Governor’s Island.

RT: Didn’t you go back to Belvoir?

EWT: Back to Fort Belvoir. ... [laughter]

SS: How long were you at Fort Belvoir?

EWT: Twenty-one months.

SS: Where you in the hospital there?

EWT: Then, I was the chief dietitian.

SS: How did your duties change when you became the chief dietitian?

EWT: Well, I ... had overall responsibility for the entire division, rather than just one area. ...

SS: Were you in charge of other facilities at that point?

EWT: No, just in the hospital. ... We had a few miscellaneous additional duties at some posts. We would serve on the post menu board, and we would meet, probably, once a month, and discuss the menu that was being served to the troops ... and any alterations that had to be made, or any thing like that. ...

SS: Did the military take up all of your time, or did you have other activities?

EWT: Well, we did various and sundry other things, going to the theater, going shopping, ... doing, what? traveling, that sort of thing. We kind of worked sort of a normal, average day, five days a week, and had time off to enjoy local activities.

SS: When did you buy your first car?

EWT: Fort Bragg, 1951. ... There was a man who worked at the Chevrolet agency in town who'd been a patient at Fort Bragg, and he treated us very kindly, helped us get cars. [laughter] And so, I had that for a couple of years, and traded in, and took a car to Japan, ... which was, of course, an interesting experience, 'cause they drove on the wrong side of the road. [laughter]

RT: They still do.

EWT: ... Sold that in Japan to a dental officer that I knew and came home, got another one, that sort of thing.

SS: How much traveling did you do around Japan, since you had a car?

EWT: Fair amount. We didn't drive an awful lot in Japan, because the roads weren't that great. Now, I did go from Tokyo to Osaka with a friend who had been transferred. It was a question of whether she or I was going to be transferred, and we had made a pact that which ever one ... wasn't transferred would go along on the ride, and that was sort of an interesting experience, because we met the main Route 1 in Japan and it was pretty much unpaved, and we ... did get into one little village, ... and we ran into a truck of Marines, and they said, "Follow us, we know the way." Well, they didn't know the way.

[laughter] We got into a dead end, or something. ... We could turn around easily, but, they had a little trouble turning around their two-and-a-half ton truck. And then, another time, we were approaching Nagoya, we got on a beautiful concrete highway, and, just about dusk, we were just going down that road, and all of a sudden, something loomed up in front of us. Well, it was a piece of heavy construction equipment. That was the end of the paving and they just left the construction equipment right in the middle of the road. [laughter]

SS: How did you get around it?

EWT: Well, ... gradually, I think, they had sort of a sloped area where you could drive off the concrete surface and back on to the dirt road. [laughter]

SS: Did you stop and eat as you went along the way?

EWT: I think we must have taken some provisions with us. I know we carried some gasoline in the trunk of the car, which, of course, is not the best thing to do, but, you have to do something like that, and we finally made it to where we were going. I think it took us two-and-a-half, three days, ... which was a distance of maybe 200 miles.

RT: ... Not very far.

SS: Did you stay over night in hotels?

EWT: Yes, yes. ... I think we stayed in Air Force billet in Nagoya, and then, I think we stayed at the Biloako Hotel, ... outside of ... Kyoto.

SS: I wondered if there were facilities like that at that point.

EWT: Oh, yes. ... We took the train places and, occasionally, got a hop with the Air Force.

SS: Where did you hop to?

EWT: ... I got a hop back from Kyoto, one time, to Tokyo, and then, ... well, the same trip that we went to Hiroshima and the Inland Sea, we got a hop back from ... someplace down there. What would have been down there?

RT: ... It's right on the tip of my tongue, but, I can't say it.

EWT: But, somewhere down in the area of ...

RT: South Honshu.

EWT: South Honshu. Off hand, I can't remember the name of the base, or the town.

SS: Did you do any other exploring around that area at all?

EWT: Well, when we went on the trip to Hiroshima, we did things like climb the volcano, Mount Aso, and we ... stayed in a Japanese hotel in Hiroshima. We did the Inland Sea and we went, you know, visited the shrines, and things around that. On that trip, we took a boat out of Osaka to Beppu. ...

SS: Did you need to have an interpreter with you?

EWT: No. Usually, you could find people at railroad station, and things like that, who could speak English and could help you. ...

SS: Did you travel in pairs?

EWT: Oh, yes, right. Well, I did make ... a couple of trips by myself, but, it was more fun to do it with a friend, certainly, and you certainly felt a little more secure if there were two of you to get lost. [laughter]

SS: Especially with the roads like that.

EWT: Right, yes.

SS: From Fort Belvoir, where did you go next?

EWT: Then, I went to Chicago on my recruiting assignment.

SS: How did you get assigned to be a recruiter?

EWT: Well, I had asked to go to Hawaii and they sent me to Chicago. [laughter]

RT: That is the way it works. [laughter]

SS: What did you want to go to Hawaii as?

EWT: Well, as a dietitian, but, instead, I got to go ... recruit for dietitians.

SS: Did you receive training as a recruiter?

EWT: Well, I followed a young male officer, a young man, who showed me the ropes. ...

SS: Was he also recruiting for the dietitians?

EWT: He had been, and I was, actually, replacing him, which was a big joke. ... Dick knew all these young people that had been on recruiting. ... He teased me because ... this young man was a captain, and here ... I was, a major, and I was replacing a captain. ...

SS: How long have dietitians been both male and female?

EWT: Since '55, so, at that point, that would have been about eight years.

SS: I was curious about that situation with the captain.

EWT: He was a physical therapist and, of course, he had ... only been in six or seven years. ...

SS: How did you recruit? Was it within the Army?

EWT: No. We were going to colleges and universities and, occasionally, to hospitals where they had internship programs, or OT clinical affiliations, that kind of thing.

SS: You said there were five states.

EWT: No, thirteen.

SS: Thirteen states. Which states did you travel to?

EWT: Illinois, Indiana, Missouri, the Dakotas, Colorado, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan, Wyoming, Nebraska, Iowa, Kansas.

SS: I would love to hear your wonderful stories of that area, or your stories about recruiting.

EWT: Well, it was interesting, and we certainly got to meet a lot of interesting people, nice people. ... Of course, I had inherited, from my predecessors, all the contacts, and so forth, and many of them, ... in fact, a couple of them, had served in the military, during the war, and knew some of our people, and they were happy to have us come and tell about our programs. We got a fairly good response, not in numbers, really, because it was, you know, five or six a year. It seemed like an awful expenditure of effort, but, we got some good people. ...

SS: Did you have to drive to all these different points?

EWT: No, no. We flew, primarily. In fact, I was just remembering the other day that I had gone out to O'Hare one day, and the fellow at the ticket counter said, "You were here last week." [laughter]

RT: People didn't travel as much back then.

EWT: Didn't travel as much, and, of course, we generally traveled in uniform, so that we were easily recognizable.

RT: May I interject one little bit here? This was a period when military recruiting was difficult on a lot of campuses because of the growing unrest on campuses against the Vietnam War. There were some places you didn't go, wasn't that true of certain campuses?

EWT: I don't think it was so bad when we were doing it. ... Later on, it got a little worse.

RT: I thought there was one place in Colorado you didn't go, I don't know, ... Boulder. I don't know, I don't remember.

EWT: ... Did you and I go to Boulder? No.

RT: No.

EWT: Maybe that was one of the places ...

RT: I think it was. ...

EWT: We didn't go.

RT: Maybe you were told not to go.

EWT: If there was an ROTC ... unit on post, we usually would contact them, and, you know, just sort of as a courtesy call, and inform them of what we were doing, and that kind of thing. ...

SS: When you got to Chicago and recruited Mr. Treash, [laughter] what was he doing at that point?

EWT: He was in the public information business at Fifth Army headquarters and you traveled a bit, too.

RT: Oh, yes.

EWT: ... We actually lived in the same building. It was a Wherry housing, high-rise apartment building, and worked in the same ... building for a while, until they moved us over to the stockyards, [laughter], and then, brought us back again. ...

SS: Do you remember when you met?

RT: Mailbox, I think.

EWT: At the mailbox.

RT: ... Apartment mailboxes.

EWT: And then, we met one evening at the Officer's Club, and you invited me home for tuna fish salad and pizza, which didn't sound particularly good, so, I didn't go. [laughter]

SS: [laughter] As a dietitian, what did you think of his eating habits?

EWT: Well, he was a widower with ... two teenage sons, and they liked that for ... Friday night supper. So, after we got married, we had it for Friday night supper, too, and it wasn't too bad. [laughter]

SS: You made the adjustment. [laughter]

EWT: Right.

SS: Did you visit the VA hospitals in the areas where you were recruiting?

EWT: No. Not really. ... I guess, maybe, they didn't want us to come recruit away from them. ... There really wasn't any much point in doing it.

SS: Did the weather affect your recruiting in that part of the country?

EWT: Well, actually, we tried to avoid the bad weather. I did, at one point, get hung up in Duluth, Minnesota.

RT: This was after we were married.

EWT: ... Well, that was a bad trip, because I had to get off the ...

RT: You had to come right back by train.

EWT: Well, and the plane wouldn't go from Minneapolis. We couldn't get all the way into Duluth. We had to bus in, and then, the spring thaw started, and created such bad fog conditions in Duluth that we couldn't get out by plane, so, I had to come back on the train, but, that was really the worst that we had, because we did a lot of recruiting in September, October, November, and early December, and then, January and February, we pretty much stayed in the office, or did local things. ...

SS: How many years were you in Chicago?

EWT: Two-and-a-half.

SS: Where did you go from Chicago?

EWT: Frankfurt, Germany.

SS: What were you doing in Frankfurt?

EWT: [laughter] I was the chief dietitian at the 97th General Hospital.

SS: Did Mr. Treash go with you?

EWT: Well, by that time, he had retired, so, he came along as a dependent.

RT: Camp follower. [laughter]

EWT: Camp follower.

SS: Can you tell me about Europe at that point? What year would this have been?

EWT: It was '66 and '67, and things were pretty much back to normal in Germany, by that time. There were a few vestiges of the war, but, not a lot. I remember the big pile of rubble outside of Frankfurt, ... but, they had rebuilt a lot. ... We lived in a German apartment building which only had, what? six apartments, or something like that, and it was very modern, in comparison to the other buildings on the street, other homes on the street, and they told us that the building that had been there had been a direct hit. A bomb, it was the only place on the street that was affected. ... So, it was replaced with this more modern structure, and then, there'd been considerable damage in downtown Frankfurt, which had all been repaired, and the only real damage that we saw was the church in Berlin which has been left as it was, ... what was the name of the church?

SS: Kaiser Wilhelm.

EWT: ... Yes, yes.

RT: Very good.

EWT: Oh, and, of course, the railroad station.

RT: Oh, yeah. Ain't nothing left there, the Anhalter Bahnhof.

EWT: Right.

SS: Did you have to fly into Berlin?

EWT: ... We took the so-called duty train, which was restricted to military personnel.

RT: Right, had to be. They wanted us to do this, in order to keep that line of communication open, 'cause the Russians would have been very glad to cut us off, but, by keeping that train full all the time, it gave us an excuse to always be able to come in and out of Berlin.

SS: Oh, really. So, you could travel to and from Berlin whenever you wanted, as long as you took the duty train.

EWT: We probably could have flown, I suppose.

RT: ... Yeah, but that was much more difficult.

EWT: Yeah.

RT: And, you could drive, too, but there, again, you're putting yourself 110 miles inside of East Germany, under Communist control, driving, and that was not ... recommended, not good sense.

SS: Were there any stops on the duty train?

EWT: They did stop in Potsdam, was it?

RT: Yeah, but ... we couldn't get out or off. ...

EWT: Oh, no, no, we couldn't. ...

SS: Did they check your credentials at that point?

RT: Very through.

EWT: It was in the middle of the night, and we had ... to give our papers to the ... porter, and then, he dealt with the, did we have MPs on the train?

RT: I think so.

EWT: Maybe they dealt with the Russians.

RT: ... That's right, there was an MP officer I remember.

EWT: Yeah.

SS: Did you go right from Potsdam to the center of Berlin?

EWT: Yes.

RT: Yeah, they couldn't go downtown any more. There was no railroad station, so, we did go right to the American sector. ... All the big stations downtown had all been destroyed, but, that was right in there ... Dahlem.

SS: Were you able to visit the other sectors controlled by the British and French?

RT: No, ... where any of the Allies were, we could travel. Course, to go to the east zone, you had to have all kinds of documentation and everything else to do that.

SS: Did you ever try to go to the east side?

EWT: Well, no. I didn't give Dick the straight poop, because I didn't want to do it. [laughter] I could have gone on ... a military bus, in uniform. No, well, I don't know whether I had to be in uniform or not.

RT: I think you had to be in uniform.

EWT: But, he couldn't have, since he was retired at that point, and we could have taken a civilian tour bus, but, I would have had to be in uniform, and I didn't feel like I wanted to stand out like a sore thumb like that, so, we didn't go into East Berlin.

SS: What did you do when you were in Berlin?

EWT: Well, we had a friend who was stationed there, so, we were visiting her, and we went to some art museums, and we walked on the Kurfürstendamm?

RT: Yeah, the Kurfürstendamm.

EWT: ... And, what else did we do?

SS: I wondered if the symphony was back in business.

RT: It was. ... we didn't really have a chance to get any tickets to anything, so, we weren't able to do that. We did do it in Frankfurt, of course. ...

EWT: And, we went to Munich to the opera.

RT: Yeah, we went to the opera in Munich.

SS: Did you ever go to Oktoberfest?

EWT: Oh, Oktoberfest.

RT: Oh, yes.

EWT: Well, Dick had done that.

RT: I did, you never had a chance. ... They had a minor one in Frankfurt, but it wasn't anything like Munich.

EWT: Dick had been stationed in Munich years earlier, so, he had done that, at the time, and he went to a fasching party and that sort of thing.

RT: Munich was a wonderful place. ... It was the best overseas assignment I ever had, and one of the best all told. I was there two years and we just loved it there. Most people did.

SS: What year were you there?

RT: Let's see, from the summer of '58 to the summer of '60. It was two whole years.

SS: You mentioned how difficult it was to recruit on college campuses because of the Vietnam War. What did you hear in Germany about our involvement in the war?

EWT: Nothing.

RT: Except, things were very austere in Germany, because all the military money was going to Vietnam, at that point.

EWT: But, that was internal.

RT: Yeah, that was an internal thing. We had no friction with the Germans over it, I don't think. ... Matter-of-fact, we're barely mentioned.

EWT: Certainly don't remember it.

SS: Was it discussed within the military?

EWT: Oh, I'm sure it was, yes. ...

SS: The protests going on in the States.

EWT: Oh, yes, definitely.

SS: What was said?

EWT: Well, I ... don't think we were terrible impressed with the protests, but, ... I guess we just have a different attitude about those things and, I don't know. It's hard to comprehend sometimes.

SS: Now, from Frankfurt, where were you sent?

EWT: Oh, dear, we had a terrible assignment then. We went to San Francisco.
[laughter]

SS: Can you tell me how it would be terrible to be stationed in San Francisco?

EWT: [laughter] It wasn't at all. We're just getting to the good part of my career.
[laughter]

SS: Tell me about that.

EWT: Well, after Letterman, we went to Tripler and Honolulu. ... We were at Letterman for three-and-a-half-years, went to Tripler for two-and-a-half years, and then, came back to Letterman for three-and-a-half years, so, really tough.

SS: But, somebody had to do it, right? [laughter]

EWT: Right.

SS: So, you retired in San Francisco?

EWT: Yes.

SS: Did you move immediately back here to Virginia?

EWT: Yes, ... well, ... going up to Seattle first, and then, stopping in Michigan, that sort of thing, but, pretty much directly.

SS: Why did you pick Virginia?

EWT: Well, we had thought about staying in San Francisco, and then, Dick was mugged on the street one night, and he kind of lost interest in staying there, and so, he decided we should come back this way, where we have family, ... or I have family, particularly, since my sister lives in Falls Church now. ... It was probably a wise move, because ... I'm not sure what we'd have done in San Francisco, and we came back here, and bought a house, and went through the trials and tribulations of ... new home owners, and that sort of thing, and lived there for about twelve years, until we moved here about ten years ago.

SS: Were you ever tempted to work in the private sector?

EWT: Not really to work. I did some volunteer work, originally in my field. A friend was working with the Red Cross in the District, and she set up some events for me, which

I did, and then, we started volunteering at Kennedy Center, and we've been doing that, in various capacities, ever since.

SS: What do you do?

EWT: Well, originally, ... we volunteered for the Washington Opera, and worked in the subscription office, and did a variety of things, depending upon who was in charge, and then, ... they got highly computerized, and we were just not prepared to cope with that. So, we now work with the Friends of Kennedy Center, and Dick was doing tour guiding, originally, until he had a small stroke a couple years ago and had to give that up, and, now, he's going back to doing it, because they have a new group of new volunteers, and he's sort of the power behind the scenes, and gives guidance and counsel, and I work in what's now known as the Education Resource Center and work doing a variety of things. It used to be a performing arts library, and it's still a small library, and we have patrons come in, and we help them find things, and do other projects.

SS: As your parents were aging and you were still in the military, did you have the flexibility to come home and help?

EWT: I was able to come home on ... leaves, and so forth, but, I didn't get involved in helping with their care, particularly. My younger sister lived in the same town, and so, the brunt of it fell on her, I'm afraid, and my mother had some health problems, and then, she broke her hip, and died shortly thereafter, and, my father remarried, and moved to Connecticut, and he also broke his hip, and died not too long afterwards. ... Other people did what I might have done. If I'd ... been single, I probably would have ended up going home and taking care of them. ...

SS: Do you think the military was a good career choice for you?

EWT: Oh, my, yes, yes. I think so, and, one of the reasons I didn't work after I retired was I really didn't need to.

SS: Well, thank you very much for allowing me so much of your time.

EWT: Well, I hope I've been able to contribute something.

SS: When you get your transcript back, please feel free to add stories and anything that you feel we may have left out.

-----END OF INTERVIEW-----

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