

RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY
NEW BRUNSWICK

AN INTERVIEW WITH DOROTHY SALKIN-WELLES
FOR THE
RUTGERS ORAL HISTORY ARCHIVES OF WORLD WAR II

INTERVIEW CONDUCTED BY

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and
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TRANSCRIPT BY

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Eve Snyder: This begins an interview with Dorothy Salkin-Welles on April 16, 1999 in Alexandria, Virginia for the Rutgers Oral History Archives of World War II with Eve Snyder ...

Lynn Marley: And Lynn Marley.

Dorothy Salkin-Welles: Dorothy Salkin-Welles, '41, NJC. ... I thought I would start ... with my parents. My mother's older sisters came to the United States from a place between Poland and Russia, 'cause they were always changing, were European Jews. My father's family came with two little children and my father, an infant when he came here. We don't know just where he came from, 'cause he never spoke about it. My mother had decided that he was born in the United States, which she thought was the most important thing that could happen to you. So, if anyone asked her, she always said, "He was born here." My mother graduated from Schenectady High School, New York State. My father went to Townsend-Harris in ... Manhattan, which was for outstanding students. From there, he went to ... CCNY, and, after he was there for two years, someone told him about an agricultural school, he had hardly ever been out of the city, that was being run in South Jersey, and they thought that he might like to go there. ... That was two years. They raised all their own crops. They learned everything that they could about being a farmer there, and then, you could specialize in one thing or another. The school was named the Baron de Hiosh Cultural School. The money was given by a French Jew. They had always said that the Jews could not be farmers, that they weren't prepared to be farmers, but, the thing is, in Europe, Jews were not allowed to own land, and that was the reason they said that. It wasn't true. My father became a poultry man, but, in one summer, he was working at a hotel as the bookkeeper, up in the Catskills, and my mother and her sisters were up there on vacation, so, they met on a hay ride. [laughter] My mother said she put straw down my father's back, and he got angry, and she said, "Well, forget it," [laughter], but, he also wrote her beautiful poetry. So, she turned around when they got back ... into the city. He worked, first, ... on estates until he had enough money to buy his own ... poultry farm and he bought one in New Jersey. I guess I was about two by then. My brother had been born on the Grace Estate, Manhasset, New York. My brother is Rutgers, '41, and was a journalism major, and the life on the farm was very, very hard, even with just two children. We had neighbors with nine. They used to steal a bottle of our milk. The milkman came, and, every morning, ... it came at five o'clock, and they would take a quart of milk, and ... I said to my mother, "Why don't you say something?" She said, "I'd rather they have the milk," and then, on the school bus, we talked about what we had for breakfast, and we always had a substantial breakfast. Those kids had tea with milk in it, so, it was really very, very hard. It was in the late '20s, possibly after the Crash. Anyway, in the early 1930s, my mother said she'd never planned to work that hard and she said that she just couldn't stay there any longer. So, they sold the farm. My father went into New Brunswick, and he found a real estate agency that said, "Farms a specialty," and they liked having him, because he was able to teach. People came out from New York City, like furriers who had gotten fur in their lungs, and that kind of thing, and so, he was able to help them, and, a lot of them, they came out and bought from him. There was also something called the Jewish Agricultural Society in New York, and, when Hitler began to be popular in Germany, many of the Jews left, and they came here to farm, even though they were doctors, and dentists, and lawyers, and all. One man owned ... a big business in Berlin, and he bought a farm right outside of Princeton, and he was a friend of Doctor Einstein's, ... from when they had been in Berlin. So, Doctor Einstein would come out to his

farm. ... He liked the privacy there. He came with his sister. This is jumping ahead quite a bit now. I'm up to about 1937. ...

LM: I have a question about your mother. Did her family leave Poland-Russia because of the persecution and the pogroms?

DSW: The only thing my mother ever told me was that the Cossacks came, they knew that the markets were open on Friday, and they would go through there with their swords, and just swing their swords over and hit whoever they could, knock off their arm. Another time, my ... grandfather was the equivalent of a doctor in a small town. We had his medical journal from the ... 1870s. I guess somebody else has it too, in the family, but, we had a maid who stole everything. She took that, too. She took some things from college and all. Anyway, my mother and her two older sisters, ... my mother was the eighth of nine, they were going to a lake in a horse and carriage with people. ...

LM: Was this in Poland?

DSW: In Poland, the Cossacks came along, and they ran over my mother, and my mother said she could still hear them laughing to this day. They injured her very badly, and her sisters took her back, and my grandfather was able to save her life, strangely enough. My mother remembered that the peasants would bring people tied up in the back of wagons, and my grandfather had a room that he used as sort of a medical room, and my grandfather said, "You mustn't tie them up," some who were very angry, and things like that. I don't know what their emotional state was. He said that, "You're just making them angrier by tying them up like that." I remember she told me that. I could probably get a hold of his journal, but, it was written in Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, and one of our cousins, who was a doctor, finally got it translated into English. We lived in Highland Park, and the rent was thirty-five dollars a month, and we were on the top floor of a two floor apartment. My mother usually was the one that had to go down there and shovel the coal on to the furnace. It still was very difficult. Of course, in the farm house, we had a very big house, an 1890s house. ... I don't know if I said it was Oaktree, ... sort of between Iselin, Metuchen, and Plainfield, in the middle there.

LM: Is it near Woodbridge?

DSW: Not at all. [laughter] ... You know where Iselin is?

LM: Yes.

DSW: Okay, and then, you go up the hill, it was called the Oaktree Road. I think it still is.

LM: It still is.

DSW: Yes. My school was the Oaktree School. It was about two miles up there, and ... it was on Oaktree Road, going toward ... Plainfield. ... That's where that was.

LM: What were some of your chores on the farm?

DSW: My mother and father didn't believe in my brother and me doing anything, and so, ... they just wanted us to study and that kind of thing. I have no recollection of ever having to do anything. ... I was about eleven and he was about nine. I have no recollection of doing anything but playing, but, there weren't that kind of thing. They got us roller skates, and there ... had been a barn that had had a cement floor, and, somehow the barn had been taken down long ago, so, we had this cement to roller skate on. We had a swing that was made out of a tire. We had very few toys, but, ... my father's friends, who had sold us the farm, were two single men. They were Russian and they bought my brother and me a toy that I remember to this day, but, it wasn't really a toy. It was something like a tripod, ... something like you would have for a painter, and it had two rollers with pictures of animals, and fruit, and everything, and then, it had a slate under it, and it had chalk, and you copy the pictures off of the rollers on to there, but, we couldn't even imagine anything like that. [laughter] When we moved to Highland Park, we had skates, ... and then, after a while, we had one bicycle. We had one pair of skates. My brother and I just, you know, took turns on these things. ...

ES: It seems like your maternal grandfather was well versed in numerous languages.

DSW: Right, my father, too, Greek, Latin and Hebrew scholar.

ES: When you said that your parents wanted you to study, did they intend for you to study the classical languages?

DSW: No, never got to that, just what was in school. ... They just wanted us to read and that kind of thing. ... Well, playing, for children, of course, is a way of growing up, and it's very painful to me that the children now have something to do every five minutes and have no time to themselves, whatsoever. We had time for that, I remember. There were very few children around there, and virtually none our age, but, my cousins used to come out from New York in the summers, so, we had them to play with. My father was a Greek, Latin, and Hebrew scholar, too, although, he never knew my grandfather. When we moved to Highland Park, ... there was a Greek section down behind that new hotel on the Raritan River.

LM: The Hyatt?

DSW: Yes, behind the Hyatt, ... and we used to get him to go down there and read the Greek to us, and then, when we got older, I was interested in the fraternity houses, so, he would take us up there and read the Greek letters on the fraternity house. ... My parents were both very pleasant. They never raised their voices, ever. I was the one who would raise my voice. My brother never did. ... It was just me, I demanded something. [laughter] Get back to Mr. Schweitzer, who was a friend of Doctor Einstein, he invited my father and my brother to come one afternoon when Einstein and his sister were coming, and I said, "Oh, I want to go, too." ... Mr. Schweitzer said, "Everybody wants to go, but, ... if everybody goes, the Einsteins won't come anymore." So, my father told me to go, and I ... always felt bad about that, because they made sure we had everything, and my mother wore her sister's clothes. The two sisters she had were slightly well

to do, and she would wear them, so that my brother and I could have new clothes. My father hardly ever got anything. Maybe every three or five years, there was a big thing and he'd get a suit or a pair of shoes.

ES: Did you get to meet the Einsteins?

DSW: We spent the afternoon. We have pictures. ... I still remember, ... I think my brother said it was 1937. I had a camera ... set to take five more pictures, a box camera, and I didn't want to ask them. We were standing around and I asked Mr. Schweitzer to ask them if it's okay to take pictures. I didn't want to say to my brother, take the time to say, "Take the camera, let me be in the picture." So, my brother was in it with them, but, I was not. ... Schweitzer and Doctor Einstein spoke mostly about how, by then, 1937, things were getting pretty tight in Germany. Mr. Schweitzer owned an insurance company in Berlin. I couldn't think of it before. Anyway, I ... graduated from high school in 1936, and Highland Park had two years of high school, and then, we had to go to New Brunswick for the other two. My brother was a year behind me, ... he was the last class to have to go to New Brunswick. After that, ... they built the Highland Park High School. My best friend, whom I met in the fifth grade, when we moved to Highland Park, was Sarah Kahn Frischling. She was the Class of '40, in '36. Now, after my freshman and sophomore years, I found, home ec sounds like a dumb thing, but, it's three years of chemistry, it's physics, it's human anatomy, and physiology, and all, and I was in over my head, not to mention all the cooking, and nutrition, and we had to do canning. ... They started at the beginning. Miss Alberta Dent was very, very good, but, she was, I'll call her a tough cookie right now. [laughter] She just died six or seven years ago. ... I think she went to Cornell. She was from New York State and had gone back up there. Anyway, the reason that my brother and I graduated in '41, I was the Class of '40, and I continue to feel that way, is that, my junior year, I decided not to go back. I just thought that it was too much. So, I worked at my father's real estate office, which was 6 French Street, right across the street from the ... railroad station. The RU boys used to come by there, and so, it was okay. [laughter] But, then, I realized that if I didn't go back, I would be ... nothing without an education, even back then, so that when I went back, my brother and I were in the same class. When we entered NJC, I lived at home, and the tuition was one hundred and twenty-five dollars a year.

LM: Wow.

DSW: The second year, my brother was going, and ... before I went to college, we all took it for granted we were going to go there, just walked over. [laughter] My father said, "You know, now, Harold has to have the education, and I can't send both of you." So, I said, "Well, let me go this year. ... I'm sure he'll get a scholarship, and, if he doesn't, I just won't go the second year." Well, ... there were 850 New Jersey kids that took something called the Governor's Scholarship, Governor Hoffman started it, and the five top boys and the five top girls got the scholarship. So, he was one of the five. The scholarship even paid for the athletic book tickets and everything. So, he was outstanding there.

LM: So, you got to stay in school?

DSW: ... Yes, I stayed out that year, because ... I hadn't had any chemistry in high school, and almost ... everybody in the class had had it. I didn't have the least idea what was going on my freshman year, and ... I think, it's possible that that was the time I failed my second semester and went to a summer school at Rutgers, and then, ... sophomore year, I had ... Doctor Gerard, and that was organic chemistry, which was much easier, because you could see what you were doing. It wasn't just numbers and imaging. [laughter] ... My beautician's daughter just graduated from Colgate as a chemistry major, first one in the family to go to college, and she was on the Dean's List from the beginning. Might also say here that we have a granddaughter who's eighteen, lives in Mendocino, California. She's not quite eighteen, and she was accepted at one of the universities in California at Santa Barbara, and she's given, ... (the college is fourteen thousand dollars a year), ... a package of a two thousand dollar loan, a scholarship, and a grant. So, she just owes the \$2000. We did have money set aside for her. Our daughter died young and left two young children, and then, my son-in-law married one of my daughter's friends about a year later, and then, he got a brain tumor, and he died five years later. So, someone else raised our granddaughter. She happened to be a wonderful, wonderful woman. We were very fortunate and they went up to Northern California. Anyway, that's getting ahead a little.

LM: Do you remember any members of the administration, like Dean Boddie?

DSW: I didn't have anything to do with her. ... I don't think she had much to do with the students, as far as I can remember, and the home ecs were sort of fenced off from the rest of the school, because you had very few choices in the courses that you took. I did, one year, take a philosophy course with Doctor Norton. I forgot his first name, but, he was an extraordinary teacher, and we had seven in the class. I think three boys came over from Rutgers, and four of us, and I did very well in that. ... I was very much interested and I really liked it. ... Another choice I made, I can't believe, it was an English class with Doctor Oral Coad, let me see, Pre-Shakespearean Drama. I don't know what I was thinking, because it's not English. [laughter] ... But, at least, I did okay there. [laughter] It's just a lot of reading. My freshman English teacher, everybody, I guess you still do, have to take your first year, was also an extraordinary man named Doctor Donald. I don't know who was Doctor and who was Mister. Donald Dorian his name was, and he died rather young of cancer, long after we were gone, but, he was just a wonderful teacher, and I remember, one time, ... you had to turn in a paper every Monday morning, little story, and so, he rarely told you what to write about, but, this one time, he said, "How did you happen ... to take ... the major that you're taking?" ... When we had the interview, I told them I wanted to go to the agricultural school. My father said it was okay, and whoever did the interview said that the only way you could go is if you had some place to go to when you graduated, and one of the girls was from a horse family from Virginia, remember. There were only three at the agricultural school. She told me that, what they did, and she said I couldn't go. She said, "Why don't you try home economics and you can be," what do you call them? ... The people who go to the homes and help the farmer's wives, you know, can, "and teach them all that stuff." I never ... got to that. [laughter] Anyway, she just wrote it down there and pushed me out the door. So, here I was, a home ec I ... didn't even know what she was talking about. I didn't know much about it. It turned out, ... my life was extremely interesting because of that. ... You asked me about Dean Boddie, ... she had nothing to do with us whatsoever, but, of course, Dean Margaret Corwin did, and I told Linda Hennessey, recently, that I ... have had a slight

correspondence with Dean Shailor, and she signs her letters Barbara. Well, ... Miss Margaret Corwin, you didn't go near her without white gloves and a hat. [laughter] I think Dean Shailor is extraordinary, but, the funny thing is that she married a man who grew up about a mile from where we live, and his younger sister was my daughter's friend, and ... his name was not that unusual, it's Harry Blair, ... and I heard that he had gone up there. So, I went to talk to him. I said, "Did you know "Ducky" Blair?" I thought he was going to fall over. He said, "We were four children. I'm the oldest and she was the youngest," and so, in fact, I wrote to ... Dean Shailor yesterday. They were supposed to come down about two months ago with Linda Hennessey. You know Linda, I'm sure, and they had invited us to the country club that Harry Blair's family, ... I'm sure they've always been members there, because I remember when the sister asked my daughter to go there to go swimming. ... Anyway, they had asked us to go with them when they came, but, Dean Shailor's brother-in-law died, ... just that weekend. So, there were meetings here they were supposed to go to and Linda came down by herself. So, ... we had dinner with her. I think they're just marvelous people there (Douglass). ... There's only one there that I remember that I didn't like, and I really didn't like her, that was the third year chemistry teacher. Her niece taught freshman chemistry. She was nice, but, I didn't know what she was talking about. [laughter] This one was a battle ax and I've forgotten their names. Anyway, Doctor Gerard, who taught the second year of chemistry, was wonderful. ... Certainly, one of the outstanding ones was Doctor Emily Hickman, who was a marvelous, marvelous teacher.

ES: What did she teach?

DSW: History, as the building is, yes. She was extremely anti-war, and she ... went with the United Nations, and she was so happy with them, because that was just everything she wanted, something for peace as soon as the war was over. She went with them, and, one night, she was driving back to what was called Lake Success, out on Long Island, and it was snowing, and she got hit [on a] bridge, and skidded, and the car went into the water, and that was the end of ... Doctor Hickman. ... She died happy, but, I ... really admired her.

ES: Was there a significant peace movement on the NJC campus during the late 1930s? I read something about it in the *Campus News*.

DSW: I was so involved in just trying to graduate that I don't remember it, but, I should. ... I also took a year of psychology, and ... I was trying to think of his name, because I always knew it. ... On November the 11th, we had a class, and ... it must have been about 1938 or '39, and he said, "Everyone's talking about peace," so, that must have been part of that, and they all want peace and everything, but, he said, ... "Right now, if a band came along with wartime music," I guess you'd call it martial music, "and, 'Would they parade behind it?' ... Everybody'd be running out there and be right for the war, go right after them." [laughter] So, I don't know. Actually, he committed suicide a number of years later. I don't know why. He just ran himself off the edge of the bridge, and he ... was about seventeen during World War I, and he wanted to be in the Army very badly. They wouldn't take him, and so, he drove an ambulance in France. He was a very charming man, very attractive, and I can't imagine. I think he was a little nutty, too, but, well, he's the only one I think that was a little nutty. [laughter] Psychology major has to

be a little nutty, but, he had a very lively class, and it was really a good class, and I'm sorry I can't think of his name. I think it started with an H, but, I forget what it was. ... My memory is pretty good for the old days. It's now that I can't remember. ... Another story is that the freshman got a letter saying ... what your freshman outfit would be. You had to wear a green apron with a pocket in it so you could carry matches, in case the older classmen wanted you to light their cigarettes. ...

ES: One of the Rutgers men, Carl Woodward, told us that he had to carry matches while he was a pledge for his fraternity. Someone was getting paddled and, all of a sudden, the matches ignited in his back pocket. [laughter]

DSW: That is a fantastic story that I'd never heard of.

LM: Did you have any other hazing rituals?

DSW: Well, ... the other thing you had to have was a sort of a cap ...

ES: A beanie.

DSW: Beanie with a twelve inch green feather, [laughter] and I could not imagine where you would get one, but, ... everybody went to New York, and went to Macy's if there was anything they needed, and I was a little shy, and, ... I guess, feathers must have been in vogue, or something. I think I was about six back from ... where the feathers were being sold, counter, and I heard somebody up in front say, "I need a twelve inch green feather." So, I pushed my way down there, and said, "And I need one, too." ... So, it turned out that she was going to be a home ec and she was in my class, also. Her name was Rose Gordon. She was from Teaneck. We became good friends. ... She was a home ec., but, she was a clothing major. So, she never got into the chemistry and all that. We did four-hour chemistry labs in the fourth year.

LM: Where were they held on Douglass? In Lipman Hall?

DSW: ... There was no Lipman Hall. There was a chemistry building.

ES: Oh, yes, it is still called the Chemistry Building, near Ruth Adams?

DSW: That I don't know either. ...

LM: It is near old College Hall, by Antilles Field.

DSW: Yes, right. ... Yes, near the chapel. I have a picture of the chapel in 1936.

LM: Do you recall having to go to mandatory chapel?

DSW: We had to go, but, I don't remember about the attendance. You were expected to go. ... I had a lot of chapel programs. ... At our fiftieth reunion, they asked for that kind of thing. I had

what I called a boat, or a hat, straw hat, with NJC '40 on it, and that kind of thing, and there's someone named Frieda Finklestein Feller. Do you know her?

LM: Yes.

DSW: Well, she and I, ... we were written up in the alumni magazine for having the most stuff. [laughter] I was really shocked at what I had there, but, I had the four or five newspapers, the *Caellian*, I think, I forgot the name of it, ... covering our graduation. ... Well, that was the Class of '41 by then, and I had a lot of the ... chapel programs. ... I think they were very interesting and it was very moving. ... My friend that I said was my best friend from the fifth grade was in my Class of '40, ... and I was talking to her last night. We've remained friends since then. ... Since we didn't ever belong to a church or anything, and we were not active as Jews, I found that a very moving experience. I don't remember not wanting to go. I don't remember anybody not wanting to go. Back then, ... no one even thought about some of the things that happened later. I don't remember any peace movements, I don't think, except for what you said about that. Are you sure that that wasn't Vietnam you're talking about?

ES: Yes.

DSW: You're sure it's before World War II?

ES: Yes. In our oral history class, we had to pick a semester of either the *Caellian*, the *Campus News*, or the *Targum*, and I chose the Spring of 1938, and the peace movement was mentioned a great deal.

LM: ... I also read in the *Campus News* about some disputes over the class dress. Do you remember what your dress was?

DSW: ... You mean the class dress that you got in your sophomore year. ... They were yellow and blue or blue and yellow. We had the yellow one with the blue, but, I kept the belt of mine for a long time. The dress, I don't remember what happened to it, maybe it got moth holes. [laughter] ... Though, it didn't seem to be wool. Wasn't a light material, a lot of lightweight material, but, anyway, that was gone, and I don't have a picture of that, I don't think.

ES: You said you knew that you would not have much promise for the future if you did not go back to college. I thought that was a rather bold statement for a woman in the 1930s to make, since not many women went to college then.

DSW: Right.

ES: How did you arrive at that conclusion?

DSW: Well, when I thought that was when I stayed out for the year, ... although I wanted to go very badly freshman year. The choices that you had if you didn't go to college were being a nurse, which I knew was out of the question, being in sales, ... and I had been a salesgirl in a

dime store and some of those places in high school, in women's specialty shops, and ... I knew I didn't want that, being a waitress, which was out of the question, and I think there was a fourth thing. ... I can't remember what it was (secretary).

ES: Teacher, maybe.

DSW: No, ... a teacher, you had to have college. The nurse's training was three years. ... You paid fifty dollars to enter the hospital and you never had to pay for anything else. The fifty was for your uniforms, and it was free all the way through, so, you could go. Teachers would be a college education. I never wanted to be a teacher either, although, ... I ended up doing a lot of teaching. ...

LM: Your senior year, you lived in Douglass A?

DSW: Right.

LM: Do you remember your curfew?

DSW: Oh, yes (11:00 PM).

LM: What about your dating experiences? Did you go to the fraternities on College Avenue?

ES: Or, the Soph Hops?

DSW: Soph Hops. [laughter]

LM: Or, the Military Ball?

DSW: Well, I was invited to the Military Ball one year, and we had sewing and all, and I had found this beautiful piece of, it was a blue and silver material, and so, I made my dress, and my date was named Eddy Schwartz. He was at Rutgers. I mean, he was from Highland Park, too, and I just thought I looked like really great in that dress, and I said to Eddy, "What do you think of my dress?" He said, "I think you made it in your home ec class." [laughter] It was terrible.

ES: I hope you did not date him any longer.

DSW: ... He was all over the place, as far as dating was concerned. He had a lot of girlfriends. ... It wasn't any kind of a steady thing.

LM: What time was the curfew?

DSW: Eleven. Yes, I guess it was a little bit later on ... Saturday night, must have been twelve, but, ... I'm not sure. Tell you one thing I remember though, and I don't know if you want to have on here, one of the girls took the mattress off her bed and, you know, there were stairs, and ...

someone said to me, “She thinks she’s pregnant and she thinks she’s going to get rid of it that way,” by bouncing down the stairs.

ES: Wow.

DSW: Someone in my Class of ‘41 was very outstanding, ... her name was Pat Patterson, Pat Patterson Thompson, and, maybe ten or fifteen years ago, she got a grant to write a book, and ... did you see that book, or do you know anything about it? It’s about her experiences in the four years of college and it’s really awfully good. ... She sent me two to send to Douglass. ... I’m sure I sent one to Linda and one for the dean. ... She was from Northern New Jersey, but, her husband died of cancer, and, ... after a while, she couldn’t keep the house, and so, she sold it, and she went to live with her son and daughter-in-law. They bought a large house. ... She has a suite in the house. She’s losing her vision and stuff like that, but, in the Class of ‘41, I think Frieda Finklestein Feller writes the best ...

ES: She wrote the class book?

DSW: ... She wrote a book on her experiences for the four years. ... You don’t know what I’m talking about.

ES: The Pat Patterson book?

DSW: Pat Patterson Thompson, ‘41.

ES: Do you know what the book was called?

DSW: ... I had one, and I gave it to someone, and she had thirty-five in the basement, so, she sent one for me, one for Linda, and one for the dean. I’m sure that I sent the one to Linda and the dean, and so, Pat said, “You know, they never thanked me for it. ... Did they write to you?” I said, “No, I never heard from them, but, I guess they’re pretty busy,” and I asked Linda, when I saw her in February. ... She has no recollection of it getting there. ... I wrote her an eight page letter the day before yesterday, and the dean, I wrote a shorter one. ... We had a large ... pressed-glass punch bowl, stuff that you don’t use anymore, and it’s certainly not going to go to California. I gave that to the dean’s residence with some silver things and everything, but, there was a candelabra. My husband’s a very fine bridge player and ... he and his partner won a big tournament in Durham one time, and this day worker we had had been stealing for two-and-a-half years, and my husband wouldn’t believe me. He’d say, “Oh, you know, you put it someplace.” Well, I thought she got the candelabra, too, and, now, we’re buying a condo, and I looked, and there was, I can’t believe it, these beautiful sterling silver candlesticks. See, they weren’t with the other silver. They were just in a box on a shelf and I’m finding a lot of things like this. [laughter] It’s a good thing we’re moving all these things. So, anyway, I had it all polished, but, it has to be packed and sent to the dean’s residence, and Dean Shailor wrote a letter to me ... after Christmas, telling about the way the table looked, how beautiful the punch bowl was. ... They had a Victorian Christmas, and the table, I had never heard of this, had pearls on it.

... I spoke to a very knowledgeable friend of mine. She said, "Of course that's how they had it." So, she ... said it was beautiful, and I've sent her a number of silver things, but, anyway. ...

ES: Someone I interviewed from the Class of 1938 had a napkin ring with her initials on it. Do you have anything like that? Oh, sorry, that was from the dining hall and you did not live on campus.

DSW: ... Only my fourth year, and the reason I lived there is because the home ecs have to live in the practice house then. So, I was half a semester in, I think that was Douglass M, or K, or something, and, when we drew the papers for our room selection, I got one of the first ones. ... My roommate and I got two rooms in the Attic there, you know that, what I'm talking about. So, that was very nice, and we were going to have one bedroom and one living room, but, she stayed up half the night with the radio and I always went to sleep early. [laughter] We had to each take a room. ...

LM: It still works the same way.

DSW: Right. ... Well, anyway, I told you that somebody asked for the green feather, and it was Rose Gordon, and we were both home ecs, but, since she didn't have any afternoon labs, that bunch went down to a place called the Sweet Shop, which was going back ... two or three blocks ... on the west side of the street.

LM: George Street?

DSW: George Street, and so, they'd spend the afternoon there smoking and drinking Coca-Colas. ... I still don't drink a Coke. [laughter] Anyway, the three of them got around me one afternoon and they said, "You have to try a cigarette." No one in our family smoked and I said, "I don't want to." They said, "Well, just try it," and I said, "Oh, this is awful." They said, "Yes, the first one is awful. Maybe the second one, but, ... you'll really enjoy it after that," and I said, "Forget it." Am I the only one in the United States who did that? [laughter] ... I wanted to be with them and everything, and she was from Teaneck, anyway. She died of cancer when she was twenty-eight, at the end of the war. She had left two babies. They were very close together. ...

ES: We would like to hear more about your education as a dietitian and as a home economics major.

DSW: There weren't so many. In my Class of '40, there were three graduates. ... When I graduated in '41, there were seven. Course, they were small classes there. We didn't have that many students. Mel thinks only about 800 at the college. I didn't remember just what it was. That's an entire college. The summer of your junior year, ... I was at the Atlantic City Hospital. I'll just say this about the college, it was a wonderful, wonderful experience. It may have been the most important thing that happened to me, and it was useful every bit of the way, and its importance through time has not diminished. ... For a long time, at first, I didn't realize how fortunate I was. Anyway, we went to the Atlantic City Hospital, and I had a roommate named Pat O'Brien, and she was from the College of St. Elizabeth, and a hotel, right in front of the

hospital, left a big section of the hotel sand and everything, and it was just for anyone who wanted to come at anytime from the hospital, could go down there and stay. Now, when I got there, it was the first time I had ever seen so many old people and all, and I was very upset. People always are, and, to get to the nurse's home, you had to walk through, ... they had twenty bed wards in those days. We don't have anything like it now, and people were very ill in there, because they were very poor and all, and I used to be just distraught when I walked through there. But, after a while, you get used to it. The people did get better. They didn't die. I thought they were all dying, and that kind of thing, and we had to be someplace with what they called quantity cookery. There was no air conditioning. The steam tables, and the ovens, and everything, and the bakers, and all that kind of stuff. It was very, very hot, all the time, and you couldn't go anyplace to cool off. We didn't know the difference. [laughter] ...

-----END SIDE ONE TAPE TWO-----

DSW: Three of us. The third one was from a college in Pennsylvania. Actually, you only had to do six weeks for the college, but, ... no one would take you for six weeks. They said, "At six weeks, you're just becoming useful to us," which was really true. So, you had to stay for ten, but, the one from Pennsylvania, she just left after six weeks. ... I never heard of anything like that. ... So, Pat O'Brien and I were there. Pat's sister was a nun in Atlantic City, something I never thought I would see. I thought the nuns went around with long faces, but, she'd come up to see us, and she was very funny, and lots of fun, and all that kind of thing. ... A little bit, I was going with my husband, who was the Class of '40 then. He came down one time, ... Mel hitchhiked down one time. I think he was parking cars at the ... World's Fair at that time.

LM: How did you meet your husband?

DSW: I think that he came into my father's office, with everybody that used to come in. Harry Joffe was one of his friends. ... He was very brilliant, Class of '40, he was the editor of the *Targum*, outstanding, and he went into the Air Force, and we lost a great many people during the war, and he was a navigator on a B-24, and he was shot down. ... They take it for granted, he just never came back from over Germany. My brother's best friend was a pilot, he's Class of '41, and he didn't come back. My cousin, Douglas, was a bombardier navigator on a B-29, which is a huge, new plane. They had to run over, bomb Japan, but, ... the plane was badly damaged, and they never got back to the base. They all crashed there. Found the plane, but, the men, ... they couldn't even recognize them, and so, they put all the body parts together and they're buried in a grave all together in Kentucky. That was the most central place. ... We lost an awful lot of people. One thing I forgot was about, Sylvia Blacker, '39, said that I followed her, and, when she was about thirty-six, she had a little boy who was about four or five. Anyway, she was in Guam and all over the Pacific, in the ... Army hospitals. She called the doctor, and said she had a terrible headache, and he told her to just lie down, take it easy, but, she had a stroke, and she died, and they thought it was from all the shots she had gotten before she went. They had enormous amounts of shots against the diseases. There's a scholarship that her sister has for her, but, I didn't know about it 'till recently. I read it in the *Alumni Bulletin*, the Sylvia Blacker thing, and I plan to send a donation to her sister for the scholarship thing. ... I would like to send you some of the menus. They were quite simple. ... They were for special diets, they're all different,

if you didn't mark your menu, ... the dietitian would just have something that's good for you, low salt, diabetic, ... whatever it was. We knew down there. We would just send it up if they didn't choose and it was amazing ... how many people didn't choose it. It went up on the lunch tray, was supposed to come back, and then, you counted it all up, and so, you knew how much food preparation there was for the next day. Now, when I graduated, ... Mel asked me to the senior prom and I was sort of surprised about that.

LM: Where was that held?

DSW: ... I know where it was. It was at the Molly Pitcher Inn. ...

ES: In Red Bank?

DSW: Was it?

ES: There is a Molly Pitcher Inn in Red Bank.

DSW: Yes, there is. ... I have been there with him and with his college roommate. We went together, but, I think that that was it. We'll have to ask him.

LM: Did you make that dress?

DSW: That's the only one I ever made. [laughter] Well, see, ... after your sophomore year, ... you have cooking, and sewing, and all that stuff, but, then, you split off your junior year, and that's when I got into the trouble with ... some of the chemistry and stuff like that, and that's when they really got down to business, and I said the chemistry lab was four hours, and you couldn't move. ... There were no stools or anything in there, but, there were, ... like you have over a stove, sometimes?

ES: A vent?

DSW: A vent, yes, and you could turn that on. Well, one of the girls went over to ... the teaching assistant, and she said, "You know, my thermometer is going down and I'm heating this," and she was stirring it with a thermometer, which you don't do, broken the bulb, and we were all getting poisoned. The teacher went bananas, teaching assistant. The fumes, ... everybody had to get right out and turn on all the things. The other thing that happened at the Atlantic City Hospital, this had ... nothing to do with nutrition, but, ... the interns and residents were sort of smart alics and liked to show off. I mean, a lot of them did. I found that more in Philadelphia. There was a hot tub thing someplace in Atlantic City, and ... the water heater was on top, and they had very bad politics, and they ... just let things go. ... Anyway, we were going home, right after Labor Day, and that Labor Day Weekend, they were very busy. That thing came crashing down and all these people burned up in their little things. ... Well, their bodies were in the morgue, so, one of the interns came and said, "Want to see these dead people?" They were all blackened and everything and ... Pat and I went. That's the only time I saw them, in a hospital or anyplace else. ... After graduation, ... as a dietetic intern, ... it's a full twelve month

course, I went to where Sylvia had gone to, Jefferson Medical School Hospital, which was the big teaching hospital.

LM: Where is that located?

DSW: Philadelphia. ... Those days, you lived in the Nurse's Home, was 127 South 11th. [laughter] My husband plays bridge all over and we go to Philadelphia. We were in Philadelphia recently to meet my granddaughter, too. They took down the old hospital, which was really magnificent, and put up a new one after the war.

ES: Did you have an internship at the hospital in Atlantic City?

DSW: Yes, but, that wasn't an internship. That was just a project that you had to do to see just what was going on there. ... It was more for the cooking, and, I mean, it was more for the food preparation, and to see how it worked, and everything. That was nothing like Jefferson Hospital, where you had extra courses and things like that. They were teaching you things and all, and that was very serious, and very hard there. I think of Atlantic City as being more of a fun thing, ... going down to the beach, and everybody being there, and all that. Jefferson Hospital, ... we lived right behind the hospital and ... we worked six days a week. Everybody did. I don't know about teachers, they didn't, but, like, salespeople and all that. It was a six day week, and the shifts at Jefferson were six a.m. to two p.m., or six a.m. to six p.m. with four hours off, or seven a.m. to seven p.m., ... but, they covered all the bases. ... We had all of our meals there. I mean, you didn't have to go there, like, if you wanted to go out at night, but, if you wanted to, you could eat all your meals there. There were five of us, four from Pennsylvania. ... I had a wonderful experience with everyone I worked with there. ... There was a main kitchen and that started at five forty-five a.m. You had to go there, and one of the reasons was that ... when you came into the main kitchen, you went by the doctors' dining room. Everything was the doctors' dining room, main kitchen. They got chicken when everybody else got chicken wings and stuff, [laughter] chicken ala king, and you had to turn the water on. So, when the maids came, ... it was a big coffee pot, ... they didn't have to wait for the water then, that was hot, and then, they just put the coffee in there. Then, we had to check, in main kitchen, the ... produce for the day, all of the things that had been ordered. You also had to, if you ran out of something, there was a big list there, and you had to say if it was running down. Everybody had to write something that they saw that was running down. That was very, very hard work for everybody, and I was shocked, because we had a black dining room and a white dining room there, and, also, at Alexandria Hospital. I worked there almost ten years. When we came, there was a black dining room and a white dining room. There were black and white bathrooms. Not in the hospital, but, in some of the stores. ... Everything was like deadly serious there. There wasn't any fooling around really or anything like that at Jefferson. So, I entered September the 18th, 1941, and my brother was 1-A, and when you were 1-A, he graduated in '41, no one wanted to employ you, because they thought you would be drafted, and so, he volunteered, and was in the service, immediately. He was in until the end. He didn't get out the year, anyway.

LM: At Jefferson?

DSW: At Jefferson, on the 7th of December, I remember that I worked from six until two, and a friend named Mary Alice Jones, who died about two years ago, ... we were eighty-ish by then, I'm eight-one, she came from eleven to seven. I worked six to two, and it was a Sunday, and we heard about Pearl Harbor, then. I let a lot of things go out of my mind over the years. It was so busy, but, then, a few years ago, I started to think about that day, and I remembered it, but, I didn't remember it clearly. So, I wrote to Mary Alice, who lived in Pennsylvania, and she wrote me wonderful letters. She remembered the details of everything, but, I remember that I went back to the nurses' home, and I had a window. ... A lot of the rooms didn't have windows, they were inside, and I looked down, ... and we were over the emergency room entrance, ... and I remember looking down, and thinking, "Are Japanese going to be able to climb up to the second floor?" What a dumb thing to think of, [laughter], but, I ... was pretty simple minded then. ... I know that I sent this, if you read everything, a very handsome young man came, an Army officer, to try to see if we would sign up for the Army, and I still had the ... application. ... I'm sure that I sent that along. I don't think he got anyone from Jefferson. Sylvia Blacker went, but, she wasn't at Jefferson any more, at that time. She was a year ahead. Another hospital I worked in, somebody named Thompson went, and, at the end, I worked briefly at ... Camp Kilmer, and there were two dietitians waiting to be reassigned, and they were from the Middle West, but, they were on, I'm pretty sure, a Navy ship. ... So, they were with me for about a week. But, anyway, at Jefferson Hospital, once the war broke out, and then, the rations, ... it became more difficult to get food, canned goods, and all those things, especially. The sugar was rationed and all that. The hospital didn't have the kind of problems, but, we didn't get any bacon, a lot of those things, but, it wasn't like people at home. After a while, it became quite difficult for them. Anyway, they told us that it was our responsibility, ... if you went to the USO, or anyplace else where there were GIs, to ask the boys to dance. [laughter] It was almost impossible for us, at that time, ... that they were our guests, we weren't their guests, and we were to go up to them, and not let anybody stand around, or anything. [laughter] Anyway, one time, ... and I was still a student dietitian, this was in March of 1942, the nurses had a roller skating party, and they invited the dietitians. ... They invited other people, too. Usually, the nurses and dietitians didn't get along that well and they certainly weren't too cozy with each other. I mean, they spoke and all, but, we all stayed together, the three of us, Molly, and Betty, and I. There were two from Pennsylvania, we decided to go to the roller skating party, and ... all three of us I think were fairly attractive. We were all slim and everything, [laughter] looked a lot better. Betty died, she had a stroke about two years ago. Molly's still living. She had ten kids. She married one of the doctors from Jefferson, yes. Anyway, there were three young men, and we knew every uniform, we knew every insignia, even by then. We didn't know what the uniforms were. They looked like a Navy uniform and they were not. We knew that, and I said, "Let's go over to them. There are three of them and three of us, and, you know, you're supposed to go over." They were just skating around by themselves. [laughter] I don't know what was the matter with the nurses, and I got the two of them to go, and we went over to them, and just said, "What is your uniform?" ... Oh, they were so happy to have somebody come over. It was a Merchant Marine uniform. They were stationed, they're not supposed to tell you where they're going, but, anyway, [laughter] we saw them every night they were there. Mel called for a date. I was going with a young man who was a doctor. I said, "Every night, we're going to go out with them, as long as they're stationed here." ... We met them on a Wednesday night, and, ... every evening, around six, they called to say, "No, we didn't leave this morning." [laughter] And so, we would go someplace, and ... the

one I went with was John Brewster, and he was from Teaneck. There was one from Chicago and I forget where the third one was from. We went to a Chinese restaurant with them one night. ... The last night, they said, "We really think it looks as if we're leaving tomorrow morning," which you were never supposed to say. Their convoy was going into the middle of the ocean. One convoy was coming from Massachusetts and one from New Orleans. So, they were small convoys to make one big one, but, less apt to be ... shot up, you know, if they were split up like that. ... Wednesday night, a week later, we went to a big hotel, ... was called the Benjamin Franklin, was beautiful. We had dinner, and danced, and everything, and they said, "When we come back, we're going to come to see you before we go to see our families, because we will be coming back to Philadelphia." I had a letter from John, two letters from John. ... They stopped in Scotland. He said, "They took my camera. ... All I had was a picture of the ship's cat," and he was an engineer from NYU. I mean, he was only twenty-three. That's all they were and they were going to Murmansk. May the 25th, one of them came back and called us from the ... Benjamin Franklin. He said, "The other two aren't in yet, but, I'd like you to come up and see me anyway." He said John insisted, ... and he sent me a handkerchief from Scotland, and then, they went off to go. Now, the thing about Murmansk was that the Nazi planes were up in Finland. ... Anyway, they were up here, and they came down, and machine gunned these ships. They were like dead ducks going through there. He said that John was told that there's nothing he could do and that the men could run the engines without him. He said, "My place is with the men in the engine room." He said the ship was sunk. He was from Teaneck. ... He had shown me pictures of his sister. I feel really horrible about this part of it. He put his home address on the two letters. That's something they never did. They always put your APO and all that kind of stuff on there, and, I don't know, I got caught up in my life, and got married, and went to Fort Lewis with Mel, and stuff like that, and I just ... didn't do anything about it. And then, I had a baby in New Brunswick, because we couldn't get a place to live, and I had a ... post partem hemorrhage, and I was left very ill, and another young lady died of it the same week that I did. That was the very greatest danger then, of birth, was to have a hemorrhage, and they didn't have transfusion equipment, or a blood bank, and so, they picked it up where ever they could. Anyway, I had very bad reactions to the two transfusions and I never was really well. For many years, I had an erratic heartbeat and stuff like that. ... Anyway, at Jefferson Hospital, there were four kitchens. ... There was the main kitchen I told you that opened at five forty-five. They're much more ridged there than they are in the hospitals now. ... The main kitchen was for the wards, ... which, I told you, were twenty bed wards, and there were some four bed wards. ... Really, it seems like the Dark Ages now, ... what they had to go through. I remember there was a lady who was dying of cancer, and the nurse said to me, "She's not dying of cancer, she's dying of radiation therapy." There was a young lady who was about twenty-two, and she was a music teacher, and she had nephritis, which, now, you don't have to die of, and she would be coming back and forth, but, there was really nothing they could do. She didn't die while I was there, but, I'm sure she couldn't have lived.

ES: What does that affect?

DSW: Kidney, I think, and one of the girls in my house, ... at Douglass A, she married one of Mel's friends. He was about the Class of '42, and, once she went for her physical, before she got married, they said that she ... had nephritis, but, it wasn't showing yet. You ... used to get it from

childhood diseases, injured your kidney, and then, it would start to show up. ... She also died when she was twenty-eight. She was married to Dick Kleiner, who was the Class of '42, I think, and he ... is also very well known. He, I think, I'm not sure if he was on the *Targum*. Anyway, he was a journalist, and so, we knew a lot of the journalists, and he married later. He's in California now, but, they're very sad things, and the hospital, in the wards, was fifty cents a day. The food was inadequate. They used to beg us for more food. Everything was watched like a hawk. ... They said even an extra piece of bread, everything was counted at Jefferson, and I said, ... "Can't someone bring you something?" You know, if they're on a special diet, you can't say that, but, if it's just a matter of being hungry, you could say, "When your family comes in, or something, couldn't they bring you something?" Incidentally, in China, I had worked with a Chinese dietitian, there's no food served in the hospital. All the families come in, they cook it right beside the patient. [laughter] Her father owned the hospital and her uncle owned one, too. I'm still in touch with her. ... At Jefferson, I think, ... of all the places I worked, that was the most interesting, because it was a teaching hospital, and they had something called the pit, a big room with seats around like an amphitheater. Called it the pit because of that, and then, a platform here. They did the surgery on the platform so that, ... right, everything. Anyone with a uniform could come in and watch it and, primarily, of course, it was for the medical students. I watched only a few. I really didn't have that kind of time, but, the only one I couldn't watch was a tonsillectomy. There was a sort of a sound of, you know, while they were withdrawing the blood there, sort of a slurping sound. I couldn't stand it, and I have my tonsils, so, I didn't have anything to worry about, but, anyway, I had told you this. ... Some of the interns and residents were smart alects, and, on Saturday night, they said, "Oh, the staff doctors don't come in. So, if you want to ... come in to see ... someone in child birth, you could come in and watch that." So, I went to a few of those. I mean, we all went to different ones, ... or something like that, something like a surgery. You wouldn't get in ... to see a regular operation, wouldn't be available to you, but, you could see it at the pit, ... and we did see a number of, deliveries is what I want to say. Well, there was one Southern, Jefferson always took two Southern interns. ... There was one who named the baby before the mother. These were all, you know, poverty stricken people that they called. See, they weren't private patients that they called us to see. He named a lot of them after himself. They just write the name, the baby's name, but, he would say, "What's your name?" to the nurse. [laughter] He would name the baby. I mean, that doesn't happen anymore. ...

ES: Were you at Jefferson during the war?

DSW: I entered as a student dietitian, September 18th, 1941. The war broke out December 7th 1941. This was a full twelve months. It wasn't a nine month. It was just like a resident or an intern. The internship was a full twelve months. It's getting harder and harder to get anyone to take these twelve month people, and I worked at Alexandria Hospital for almost ten years, and they had had a school of nursing, and they even dropped that, because, apparently, it's not cost effective. The girls lived right there at the ... nursing home for the three years, and they ate in the cafeteria, just the way they did, and that was 1960 when I started to work there. What I was going to tell you is that my experience there was wonderful, too. ... I was about forty, forty-two, or something when I went back. Young dietitians, like twenty-three, twenty-two, twenty-four, like that, came, ... that was about the age that they came. They were there for some reason.

There's one from Minnesota, ... her fiancée was at the Episcopal Seminary here. ... She was a college sweetheart, or something. I'm still friendly with them. They've got four kids. They've got grandchildren. They see them in Minnesota and everything, but, she came right about the time that I did, in 1960. She came right after I did. She had just completed her dietetic internship. She went to the University of Minnesota, had a dietetic internship at Massachusetts General, and then, she came here to be near him. ... Alexandria has the oldest Episcopal Seminary in the United States, and it's right near here. There are a lot of things to see around here. I wish I could go with you. [laughter] It's very beautiful there. I pass it all the time. When he graduated, since his mother came, ... he got five tickets, and they invited me to his graduation, which was ... very meaningful. Anyway, she came in, and she was about twenty-two or twenty-three, and she saw the black and white dining rooms, and she said, "This will not do." [laughter] Her name was Madge Nathe and she also was a strong Episcopalian, and she knew right from wrong. So, ... she went up to the administrator, and she said, "They're all to eat in the same dining room," and he did it. I mean, I guess, no one had come along and thought about it. Afterwards, I said to her, "The black employees are sitting together at the round tables anyway, so, ... I'm not sure what you accomplished." She said, "They're doing that from choice. They want to sit together, okay," in the dining room, when we all sat together, they didn't all sit together.... I went back to one of our school events, ... maybe it was my fiftieth reunion, or something, and I said, "Are we going to have a Jewish table?" [laughter] Again, when I went to sit down with everybody, ... that was the same thing, but, we did it from choice, and that's what I didn't quite realize. ... When they had the black dining room, they all had to sit there. When they had only one dining room, they could sit wherever they pleased. If they wanted to sit with their friends, that was okay, but, she accomplished something in about three days. That hospital had been there since about 1914. It was taken down about eight years later. There was a Chinese dietitian, ... with whom I'm still a friend. In the 1960s, her husband was second secretary at the embassy of Taiwan. ... We can't have an embassy of Taiwan anymore. ... Since we recognized China, they just have a mission. He was chief of the mission, but, ... after that, he became an ambassador, worked his way up, Nicaragua, and there was a terrible earthquake then. These people are very, very generous. She sent me one of the plates, ... it was a Chinese plate that had fallen off when they had that, and broken in a few pieces, and her husband pasted it together, and she brought me that plate that had fallen out of the sideboard or whatever, and then, there was another. So, she was here 'cause he was at the embassy. ... Her name was Fay Fang. They're now at the embassy of Canada in Ottawa right now, ... but, I think he's going to be retiring soon. They have two daughters who studied in the United States most of the time. Another one that I stayed friendly with, there was one from the Philippines. ... Now, the Chinese, they stay together. I didn't meet other Chinese, but, the Filipinos, ... a lot of them went to Georgetown, nurses, doctors, all that, and the Filipinos, they'd come over to the house, and ... their parties were nothing like ours. No one thought about smoking, or drinking, or anything, and they ... had a broom dance, I remember, that they did, and had what I called good clean fun. They were really, really nice. ... The young dietitian was named Marylyn Benedicto and she had a sister, Elsa. Marylyn died of breast cancer. She was working in a hospital in New Jersey, around Orange, New Jersey, about five or six years ago, but, ... she never married. Her sister has two sons, and she married a doctor, and her sister was a psychologist. She was getting her Ph. D. at Georgetown. ... She works in a prison near Albany. I said, "Aren't you afraid?" ... It's one of those big prisons. ... She's with them alone. I said, "Alone, with those prisoners?" She said,

“They’re on their best behavior, ‘cause they all know that what I say ... carries a lot of weight.” [laughter] ... I mean, there were others, too. ... Another one was here because her husband, this was long after the war, in 1960, he was a doctor, and he was in the Navy, and he was stationed, but, the Navy staffs the ... Marine hospital. They were down at Quantico, where the Marines are. So, they lived sort of between Quantico and all, but, their wives always, you know, hit the hospitals and started to work there. So, they’re back in Chicago, and have been also for many years, but, this summer, my husband was playing bridge in Chicago, and she asked me if I wanted to ride out to see Madge in Minnesota. They had a summer home there. So, we were all together. We took three days to go to Northern Minnesota and they live in Minneapolis, but, they have a summer home. Anyway, ... I’m telling you some of this not only because it’s part of my life, ... a very important part of my life, but, how important my major turned out to be. [laughter] I can’t think of anyplace more interesting than working the hospital, and living there, and being like that. I had a brother, but, I didn’t ever have to share like I did there.

ES: Since we are the Oral History Archives of World War II, let us go back to your days as a nutritionist during the war.

DSW: That’s what I was thinking that, you know, I didn’t know there would be anything else.

ES: Well, we are very interested in your very long and involved career in nutrition, particularly some of the groups you were involved with in the 1970s. But, let us talk about your time in ...

DSW: The Army.

ES: Yes.

DSW: Okay, well, Mel was drafted. ... I was dating him, but, I was dating others, too, so, I was kind of not serious about anyone. He was drafted in October of 1942. He ordinarily would have graduated in ‘43, but, he didn’t, you know, ‘cause they took that semester away. He was sent to ... Fort Riley, Kansas, the Ninth Armored Division, but, the Ninth Armored went over, and was on something called the Remagen Bridgehead, and they bombed it, and everybody fell into the river, and everything. It was a very bad thing. ... I mean, everybody doesn’t get shipped out. ... He came, I don’t remember exactly, because he’s moved around quite a bit, ... to Camp Lee, in Virginia, and I was in Philadelphia. ... He had a lot of friends in Philadelphia, ‘cause he’d gone to school there. ... He got a three day pass, and I was seeing him more then, and he said, “You know, I could get another three day pass in three weeks.” The three day passes were Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday. They never put them on to a Sunday, so you had a four day, and he said, “Would you like to get married?” So, that seemed like a really good idea. I was having a good time with him then and everything. [laughter] ... So, I said, “Sure.” So, ... he came back up on a Tuesday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, ... and he had, we knew this, ... something called a false positive, which indicated that he had syphilis. He had a four plus Wassermann. ... They had done all these, there were, false positives. He came with a letter from the ... medical general, whoever it was. He had all of his papers and everything so that he could get married, but, somehow or other, he had to see a resident at Jefferson, and he was sort of a smart Alec. He said, “This isn’t enough. You can’t marry her if you’ve got syphilis.” Well, you know, it was

really ridiculous. This is Wednesday morning. We're getting married Thursday at four o'clock. [laughter] ... I'm working from two to six or eleven to seven on Wednesday, Tuesday, Wednesday. I was going to work on Thursday from six a.m. 'till two, get married at four at the Rabbi's study, get the six p.m. train to Richmond, get a bus to Petersburg, where he was going to be. We went to the Petersburg Hotel. ... He had Tuesday, Wednesday. and Thursday off, and I had Friday, Saturday, and Sunday off. ... He had to be at camp on Friday and Saturday, and Sunday, I had to leave for Jefferson. That was a long trip, you know, on the train. Had to take the bus, and then, the train up. I think I skipped something that you asked about. ... Anyway, I did marry him, ... May 25th, 1944, and I remember that I felt very happy. ... Oh, and the rabbi said ... he marries ... a lot of servicemen, but, he said, "You're ... from New Jersey, why aren't you having a wedding?" and we said, "He's going to have a two week furlough." In February, ... we had a big party and stuff like that in New York for both families. ... You were interested in how things were going at Jefferson.

ES: How did you get involved in the Army?

DSW: ... He went out to Fort Lewis, and the problem was that you could go across the country, they didn't tell you when you were going to ship out. ... I mean, I'd never lacked for money and my father would always send me money if I needed it. He had bought my ticket and everything. It was a five-day trip, which was on the trains. You'd take the train the Chicago and get there the next morning, ... leave Philadelphia at six p.m., get to Chicago at nine a.m., and, [at] six p.m., the train left for Seattle. That was about another three days. Anyway, ... I waited until probably, the summer. I was married in May. I left Jefferson, I would imagine, in August or September. I'm not sure. Oh, and the problem was that they had these immense Army camps in the middle of nowhere, with virtually no towns. ... Fort Lewis is a very old and a very large camp. That's where he was. It's medics and stuff. ... There were a lot of other things, too. It was huge. It was between Tacoma, Washington, and Olympia, and then, from Tacoma, you went up to Seattle, which is about another, I think, sixty miles. The camp was thirty from Tacoma. ... What he was doing, another reason ... that I wasn't able to go out there, is he couldn't find a place to live, because the girls came, and the housing was very, very limited for the GIs to have housing for their wives when they came. Mel was always very friendly with the librarians and people like that. He did a lot of reading and the librarian said that, "In November, ... if your wife comes out to work," and, when I did come, my father had given me enough money to stay there. We looked for a few days. There was absolutely nothing, but, Mel had talked to a Doctor Cunningham, Colonel Cunningham. The officers had magnificent buildings. I mean, magnificent homes, and they took the GI and the wife, and then, the wife worked as a maid, and ... her husband, ... got up at five o'clock in the morning, went on to whatever he was doing all day, didn't eat there. I had my meals there. I said, "Okay, I will go to work for Colonel Cunningham and his wife," with only one child. ... It was a six-day week, but, this isn't the only time I got caught in that six-day week. I was off Thursday afternoon and Sunday afternoon. I never had a day off. In the meantime, Mel was looking frantically for a place to live, and the librarian was in charge of a lot of the social services, and she said, "The officer's golf course had three little houses on it," and that, "the employees that kept the golf course going were not in those three houses in the winter. In November, you could have one of the houses." ... I worked for Colonel Cunningham, and his wife, and his three-year-old for only, I think, about six weeks, and I told her that I was a very

good cook and all, but, ... I had my meals with them. ... Someone said she had had seven miscarriages, so, they were well into their thirties. The little boy was ... Charles Donald Cunningham, like his father, Junior, and was a darling little boy, but, I didn't know much about little kids like that. He never got out of the house. She was cleaning all the time and I was. She wanted the carpeting, ... they had five bedrooms and five baths, ... you know, cleaned with the little brush. Every day, it had to be done. ... I really never cleaned in my life. [laughter] Bathrooms, ... I told you, my mother didn't let us do anything. I never cleaned a bathroom or anything like that, and she said, "Well, the ... young woman who was there before, ... she was Swedish and she liked everything immaculate. ... She used to wash down the walls." That's what I needed, was to wash down the walls. I never got that far. [laughter] ... What the librarian said is, she would take me into the library as a librarian's assistant, or something, and we could live down, I guess it was about three miles toward Olympia. ... When I left there, they were very nice, ... and Colonel Cunningham would come home at night, and he'd say, "Did Donald get out today?" "Oh," she said, "we were so busy." I don't remember her ever putting a winter coat on him. It was October and November, never taking him to play with another child.

LM: How old was he?

DSW: Two, not quite two. He didn't really talk. He used to say, "Cookie." That was one of the first things. [laughter] ... I don't remember that he spoke, but, he should have, by then, but, I think he was probably twenty, twenty-one months old, twenty-two. I didn't realize he should have been playing with children outside and everything, and she said to me, "I'm paying you fifteen dollars a month. ... The other girls are getting, some of them have three children in the house, five and ten dollars a month. ... Don't tell them that we're paying you fifteen." So, anyway, they couldn't get too far from there because of that.

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

LM: This continues an interview with Dorothy Salkin-Welles on April 16, 1999 in Alexandria, Virginia with Eve Snyder and Lynn Marley. [laughter]

DSW: ... I forgot to tell you that our granddaughter is named Eva. She's graduating from Mendocino High School in California and she's ... going to go to Santa Barbara College. ... It's part of the ...

ES: University of California-Southern California?

DSW: Yes, and she's offered a package. It's fourteen thousand dollars a year. She's offered a package of thirteen thousand five hundred dollars of grant-scholarship and a two thousand dollar loan. Now, part of that is because she's an orphan, and the orphans get special stuff there, but, we had sixty or seventy thousand dollars for her, so, [we] gave it to her anyway. We do take care of her, but, anyway, she's named for Mel's grandmother, who was named Eva. At Fort Lewis, that was really as close as you could get to the war if you were a civilian. There was a PX there, and we got our things at the PX, and there were things available, like Kleenex, ... which were difficult to get in the regular stores. ... Mel ate all his meals at the Army, except, we would go

out Sunday, ... sometime. That is, after I went to work for the library, after I left the Cunninghams, and we got that little, so-called cottage. [laughter] My mother was on the verge of hysteria. She usually didn't say too much. It had a bedroom, and living room here, and a kitchen, and a coal stove, and then, there was a little runway, and the bathroom was here, but, there was no hot water.

LM: Oh, no.

DSW: Well, ... he went to take a shower in the Army. I had to boil the water on the stove, and run over, and put a pitcher in here, ... I mean, a tea kettle. ... I just wonder about that.

ES: That was in November as well.

DSW: November, December, January. Then, he was shipped back to Virginia.

LM: That must have been a nice change after Fort Lewis.

DSW: Yes, that was a change. ... And then, there was a bus. There wasn't a regular bus service, but, there was a bus from Olympia, ... which was south of Fort Lewis, for the men who lived with their wives off of ... the base. ... So, that would take the men up at six o'clock, and then, there was one that went back to Olympia, Tacoma, and there was one at six in the evening and nine in the evening, I believe, but, there was nothing for me, two, three miles from the base, and no way for me to get to the base, so, I just went out there and hitchhiked every morning. [laughter] ... The library's open from about nine to nine, something like the hospital, so that there were shifts, so, I ... don't remember eating in that little cottage. I hate to call it a cottage. It was really a shack. [laughter]

ES: So, you did not have any problems hitchhiking?

DSW: In those days you could get a ride in almost five minutes, you know. [laughter]

ES: Did you ever have the opportunity to get back to work as a dietitian?

DSW: Well, he was shipped back to ... Virginia and I couldn't afford to stay there. He was at Washington & Lee College in Lexington. They sent him there for a course. So, I came back home, too. ... There was no flying then. It was five days on the train, and, when he went back, he didn't know if he'd be shipped out again, but, that ... month, in January and February, whatever it was, I always went back to live with my parents. ... My brother was in the signal corps and, ... by then, he was in the Philippines with MacArthur. So, I lived in Highland Park with my parents and I met someone I knew who ... I'd known her from high school, and she was in personnel at Camp Kilmer, and she said, "Oh, they're looking for a civilian dietitian," which they usually didn't take, but, ... they were liberating the American prisoners of war from Germany, and they were sending them back here, and they were coming so fast [to] the hospital at Camp Kilmer. Camp Kilmer is a point of embarkation, and then, they came back there. I forgot what it's called. They were coming back, and they were very ill, and there ... was a

Lieutenant Robert, who was dietitian, which is fine for when everybody's eating more or less the same thing and there are few people in the hospital with special diets, but, this time, they were getting overwhelmed. So, she asked me if I would go there to work, because I didn't know whether I was going back to Fort Lewis, and that's when I worked in the Army hospital and met the two young ladies who were on, I think they were on, a Navy ship. Funny thing is, many, many of the Navy people came from the Mid-West, where they hadn't ever seen anything more than a lake. ... We have a realtor now who's helping us with the condo, and I said, "Were you in World War II?" He said, "Yes, I was in the Navy." He was from Missouri. ...

LM: My grandfather was from Missouri and in the Navy, too.

DSW: Isn't that funny.

LM: Did you notice anything about the conditions of the prisoners of war, such as signs of physical abuse?

DSW: They said there wasn't physical abuse so much as the fact that they endured hardships. ... I asked them what they ate. They said, "One time, they took a hog's head, and smashed it, and they cooked it, and sort of made soup out of it," but, it was very, very inadequate.

ES: Was that because it was the only food source the Germans could get their hands on?

DSW: That was given to them. They did feed them, somewhat, but, see, we really fed our prisoners of war, and that's what that ... thing is. One of them was a young man who didn't look more than twenty-one or, at most, twenty-two, extremely handsome young man, with blond hair. Oh, he was just gorgeous, ... but, you know, he was all covered up. I didn't know what was the matter with him. He'd stepped on a land mine, and blown off his legs, and he said that when he left, he was from Texas, ... he got married to his high school sweetheart. They're eighteen or nineteen years old, and he said, "Do you think she'll take me back?" Well, I didn't think that would happen. ... Maybe she was twenty, or something, then, twenty-two. So, I told him that what they were doing, the purpose of Camp Kilmer was to take them back, keep them there for three days, hopefully not more than three days, and send them to the closest hospital to their homes that was very good for the thing that was the matter with them, and I said, "When you get there, you'll have gray ladies, and all sorts of people, ... that you can talk to and, you know, the nurses and I were going to be pretty busy, but, ... you'll be surrounded," 'cause that's what we were told, "by the best medicine of the time, that was as close as possible to your home." ... When he asked me if I thought she'd take him back, ... I really didn't, but, I didn't say anything. Of course, I didn't even indicate anything like that. I said everything'd possibly be done, you know, for psychological help as well as physical help and everything like that. Another one, they had escaped. He and a friend escaped from a prisoner of war camp, and they saw some boxcars, and one of the boxcars had sugar, and they hadn't eaten, of course, and they just took their hands and ate the sugar like this, and he became a diabetic, and his ... friend was not, and he said, "Do you think that the sugar gave me diabetes?" I said, "It can't give you diabetes, but, it can put you in an earlier stage. Maybe you would have been a diabetic when you were forty, or fifty, or something, and this just ...

LM: Accelerated it?

DSW: Yes, that's a good word, at a much younger age. The prisoners of war, we had them at Fort Lewis, also, mostly worked outside, on the landscaping, and I remembered, at Fort Lewis, they said that the German prisoners of war steamed the seeds, and they saw which ones would germinate, and just took them, something we never heard of in the United States. I still haven't heard of it. There're gorgeous grounds at the Army camps, and then, when I went to Camp Kilmer, we had German and Italian prisoners there. ... I didn't know anything about their eating habits or anything about them. You just saw them around. Of course, you weren't supposed to talk to anybody. They decided to take some of them, and put them into the kitchen for jobs that they could do, you know, like dishwashing, and all that. We were told, in no uncertain terms, under no circumstances were we to talk to them, were we allowed to let them eat anything else. They were just there, you know, and they were going to be moving along that next day and everything. Well, they lasted two weeks, because you can't find an American that was going to let them be treated rigorously, the way they asked us to treat them, and what they did. Sunday, it seems to me, every place I ever went or ... worked in, we always had fried chicken or some kind of chicken, in every hospital, on Sunday, it was chicken, [laughter] and we used to have these big pans of chicken that were left over, and so, the German prisoners were taking this pan of chicken, and putting it into the freezer, wasn't coming out. When they came out, there were chicken bones, of course, all over the freezer. [laughter] Nobody was going to go say anything to them. One day, ... I was in my office and another, I sort of mix them up in my mind, the American GI who had his legs blown off and this other one was also a very, very attractive young man who had been picked up by the Americans very quickly, and sent out. He wasn't injured or anything. He was fine. He knocked at my door. His English was, here, they tell you don't talk to them, [laughter] ... excellent, and he said, "Can I come in to talk to you?" Of course, I said, "Yes." He said that they had swept through the villages, and they took him, ... at sixteen, and they took his grandfather. That's how bad things were in Germany, but, he was picked up very quickly. ... He said, "They didn't really even teach us anything." ... They put him into the Army without any training or anything. He was picked up, luckily, for him. I don't know where he learned the English. I mean, I did just sit there and talked to him as long as he wanted to talk. I don't remember any of the details beyond that about him. Other than that, I never spoke to them, but, there was one that was washing dishes, and he was enraged, because there were women in charge of him, sort of. [laughter] Lieutenant Roberts, I didn't have any ... authority, but, Lieutenant Roberts was a force to be reckoned with, and then, there was a staff sergeant who was, I guess he was from, I hate to say this, but, he sounded as if he was from New York, I mean, Brooklyn. It was an Italian name, but, I don't remember what it was anymore. ... I said, "Doesn't anybody want these things that I took off?" He said, "No, what do I want them for?" Anyway, there were WACs who were in the kitchen also, working, kind of scut work and everything. They didn't do any important jobs. I mean, it's important, you have to keep the stuff going, but, one of them was an American Indian. I'd never seen one. She was from New York State. Her name was Madeline and, ... the sergeant, who was always roaring around, he's just a little guy, but, he was like a steam engine, [laughter] he called the WAC, "Hey, Indian," and she didn't say anything. Nobody said anything, you know, about that, and I didn't say anything. ... I think it wouldn't happen again, I hope. ...

ES: In the letters that your husband wrote you, he said, "Enlisted men here have got an opinion of the WACs," in want to say North Africa, "just like poison." Do you recognize that statement?

DSW: That's not from my husband though.

ES: Who was it from?

DSW: No, that was from a man named Melvin Gay. ... Oh, that's the Mel. His name was Melvin Gay. You know what's the awful thing, I had a bunch of letters from him, no recollection of him at all, and I hadn't looked at these, you know, for forty-five years, or something. Yes, the Mel is Melvin Gay.

ES: Do you know what he meant about the WACs?

DSW: No. ...

ES: It does not sound like those men had a very high opinion of them.

DSW: I guess they weren't very attractive. [laughter] Necessarily, I mean, I don't know what they were expecting, a bunch of beauty queens, or something.

LM: Did the WACs treat you differently?

DSW: I didn't have anything to do with them at all. They just were under the control, or whatever you call it, of the staff sergeant. ... They were cooks. They did special diets though, so, I don't know why I didn't have any contact. I have no recollection of ever having spoken to one. They were very nice. ...

LM: They were never mean to you?

DSW: Oh, no, no, no. I never was anyplace where anyone was outright mean to me, or anything like that. ...

LM: Did anyone else fraternize with the German POWs?

DSW: It was only two weeks, and I ... wasn't so much in the kitchen as I was more my office, doing a lot of paperwork, and visiting the patients, that kind of thing. In a regular hospital, you would be in the kitchen, it was just a big kitchen, and that was your headquarters. You didn't have an office. Now, the dietitians have offices. We just had a desk in the kitchen, but, here, ... they had Lieutenant Roberts, and they had the, what's called a mess sergeant, and I guess she was the mess officer, but, maybe, there was a mess officer besides Lieutenant Roberts, I don't remember.

ES: How long were you there?

DSW: I would imagine I was only there about four months, and I often wonder, because I went back to Fort Lewis in about ... May, ... the war was over in Germany. I think that I was still in New Jersey in May and I think I went to work there in January. ... Mel got sent to Washington and Lee College for a month and I couldn't afford to go, for the month, I think it was, of January. None of these things lasted that long, because Colonel Cunningham, and then, the library, and then, that one thing that I think I'm going to have to say something about at Fort Lewis. ... I know that I was at Fort Lewis V-J Day. I was there, ... maybe I went back in June, so, I don't know. I think probably five months. In October of 1945, the war was over, but, no one was being discharged yet, and you were discharged by the points, and Mel was never overseas or anything, so, he didn't have any particular standing. There were some, these men in the Navy, who'd been on their ships for years, or if they had been injured, or different things like that, that they got brownie points for. So, he got a two-week furlough in October. While we were at Fort Lewis, we really just more or less had a good time there. We ... hitchhiked. ... That's the thing that my mother didn't tell me 'till we got back, how she felt bad. [laughter] ... You could see Mount Rainier from Fort Lewis. It was very, very beautiful, and, everyday, it'd be different. Sometimes, there would be a cloud around it here, and sometimes it'd be covering, and sometimes it'd be clear. ... We didn't hitchhike there. We went on a USO bus, and it broke down before we got there, so, we went out, and then, we got a ride with a sergeant up there, up to the top, and then, we waited for the USO bus. They sent another one out to pick people up and brought us back, but, we were there and we climbed Mount Rainier for a while. I think we were there twice. Didn't climb it, I only got to like 6200 feet. The other people we were with got to about 6800. I was just too short of breath. ... 5500 is where the resort is, called Paradise Lodge. So, I didn't get very far up there. We have pictures of a lot of these things. ... V-J day was August, I think it was August the 6th of '45. ... The war was over in Japan, had already been over in Germany. So, he was getting a fifteen day furlough, fourteen or fifteen, and, ... oh, we had hitchhiked to ... Vancouver, Canada, one time. ... There weren't cars very much, but, anyone that came by would pick you up. We took the boat one way and we hitchhiked back, I think. So, we had done some. He had done a lot while he was at college, a lot of hitchhiking. ... He said, "How 'bout hitchhiking to San Francisco, and then, we'll take the train to Los Angeles, take the train back," and then, he wanted to hitchhike down on the waterfront, you know, out along the ocean, and come back through ... well, my granddaughter's in Mendocino, the area of the grapes, and, I think, there're olives and stuff.

LM: Near Sonoma?

DSW: ... Yes, though Sonoma and all up there. Well, I didn't give too much thought to the fact that ... people only got enough gas to go like, maybe, thirty miles a month, or something. I don't remember exactly. ... Well, it depended on what you needed it for, and so, I said, ... "Where is San Francisco?" and he showed me a map, it was like this, I said, "Okay." It was a thousand miles, but, I didn't bother to look at the mileage. I just noticed it was about an inch. [laughter] So, my mother's brother had settled in Portland, Oregon, and he had ... a son and daughter there, and their families. We used to go down to Portland sometimes on the bus, or hitchhiked there. So, we decided to go, and we went to Portland, and stayed overnight with them, and we said that we're going out on the highway to hitchhike. ... My cousin's husband had a pharmacy, and they

belonged to the country club and everything, and they said they'd be mortified, "A lot of people know you, you know, as our relatives." So, I said, "Well, take us a little further out of town." We got picked up by a lumber truck and the load would shift. He said, "Don't worry." These days, they don't pick you up anymore. We were in the cab of the truck. It was chained on there, but, you know, ... it felt as if it was going to go through there. He took us to a place called McMinnville, Oregon, and then, we got out, and a young man came along, and he said, and this was only ... October of '45, he had just been discharged, 'cause he had been in the Navy, and had been on a ship in the Pacific during the whole war, and they had been shooting crap, or whatever they did on there, and he had won a car from somebody who had taken it up there when he entered, and it was parked up there, I don't know how, and so, when he got off, the guy gave him his car. Well, this young man was completely naive, he had no idea. ... I mean, he was from Idaho. He knew he wanted to see the United States before he went home, and so, he was able to get more gas because of his situation. So, anyway, Mel said, "We'll show you where to go." He said, "I don't know where to go." Mel said, "We'll go down the sea coast and see the trees," you know, the redwoods, and the ocean, and all that. Took us to Eureka, I've been there since, which is very far north in California, and, even though we hitchhiked, Mel wanted to stay in a nice hotel. ... He always wanted to stay in a nice place. We went to the Hotel Eureka, and we said to him, "C'mon, we'll, you know, put you up." He said, "No, I'll find a place and I'll meet back here at nine o'clock in the morning." Mel said, "So much for him." I said, "Well, I don't know about that." So, I said, "We better be out there at nine o'clock." Sure enough, he came at nine and he took us all the way to San Francisco. ... You couldn't get a room in San Francisco, the big cities. ... We stayed up half the night, and then, they let us stay in a place that I think was a ... what you call whorehouse. I was going to say a house of ill repute. [laughter] ... Men were coming and going, and there were roaches in there, and everything. We got out of there at five o'clock in the morning. Then, if you looked early the next morning, you could get a hotel room for that night, but, we had gotten in in the evening, couldn't get anyplace to stay. We took the train. We stayed in San Francisco for a few days. We took the train to Los Angeles and stayed there for a few days. We took the train back to San Francisco, and then, we wanted to hitchhike through Sonoma. Well, there was some traffic along the ocean highway. ... Nobody went to Sonoma. We got to someplace and I don't know where we got picked up. This truck, it was a very old car, they were going left off the highway, and there was nothing, and it was late in the afternoon. It was like a "T" shaped road, and there was a farm, way in the back, and the dogs were howling, and everything. There was no way, it was a two lane highway, if a car came, it whizzed by, and it got dark and everything, it was at night, and there was a ditch. There was no place to stand, and if you stood on the road, you were pretty sure to get killed, and everything. I figured that was my last night on Earth. Anyway, 'bout ten o'clock at night, a car came out of that same side road and its lights, he saw us in the light, came over, and picked us up, and took us into the town, and we were able to get a motel room there. ... I have no recollection of the trip back to Fort Lewis, but, I guess, we made it in time, but, that was the only difficult night we had. I'm trying to think of some of the things. People were cheerful. I mean, ... there were hardships and everything and people were cheerful. They worked together. The United States was not the way I have seen it in many, many years, and that was the cooperation of people helping each other, not saying, "I'll get mine," which is what I feel now, especially in California. I spent a lot of time in California. Our daughter was out there. ... I worked for someone who had a hotel there. ... He gave me an apartment in California, but, ... that was in the 1980s, '87. I had an

apartment there. Had nothing to do with the war, it did have to do with the dietitian business. ... At one point, long after the war, I worked at Alexandria Hospital, I told you, for almost ten years, and then, our family doctor said, "Would I open an office?" and he would send his private patients. ... The poor people went to the ... welfare department, and there's a dietitian there, and doctors, and all that, but, the people who had private doctors didn't have anyplace to go. They'd hand them a sheet of paper and they didn't know what to do, and so, I was the first one, really, to open an office. I found one. ... I was also the first dietitian in the State of Virginia for the WIC Program. Are you familiar with that? I must have said it, ... Women, Infants, and Children.

ES: It is interesting that you were the first woman involved in this.

DSW: Well, Doctor Roark, ... he didn't ask me 'till after that. It was a women's thing, but, when the men started to see there was money in it, and everything, [laughter] it was after I left, that men started to come in there, and be the business end, and all that. Virginia was the forty-eighth state to accept the WIC Program and the WIC Program, Women, Infants, and Children, was a Humphrey-McGovern Bill from about 1968, supplying pregnant young ladies, and they were young, pregnant at thirteen and deliver at fourteen, one after the other there, ... mostly black, really, in the welfare department. You rarely saw white ones. The difference between the white ones and the black ones is, the white ones seemed to be put out by their families when they were sixteen or something, pregnant. The black ones, everybody rallied around them. I mean, they never were homeless or anything like that. ... You had to be a welfare patient of, you know, the welfare department and you came every two weeks for nutrition information. They had to have that teaching, and ... they were given each time, by the clerical department, two vouchers, each one for a week, ... and they had them for two weeks. The vouchers had iron-fortified cereal, eggs, that was another source of iron, seven quarts of milk every day, which was really crazy, or, sometimes, you could get cheese instead of two quarts. A lot of those girls ... couldn't drink milk. ... Well, you're supposed to drink a quart a day when you're pregnant. ... I remember asking one of them, I was sure she wasn't drinking the milk, and I said, "Are you drinking the milk?" and she said, "No," and I said, "Who is?" She said, "Oh, my boyfriend loves milk." ... That was when I was getting a little fed up with this thing, give, give, give and no sense of responsibility on their part. ... I said, "Is he pregnant?" You were supposed to be very nice to them, you weren't supposed to ... shoot your mouth off. [laughter] ... I was only there just barely two years. ... I felt that we're not asking them, that was the whole welfare thing. We're asking for no sense of responsibility, take, take, take and give, give, give and I think that that's what ... was missing from the welfare. I mean, I believe in it very strongly. I believe in helping. ... Most of my money goes to animals, and sea grass, and save the coral, and all that kind of thing. ... I think I got tired of people after a while. [laughter] Anyway, the State of Virginia was the forty-eighth state to accept it and they were very anxious to have it succeed. The State of Virginia, I don't know about other states, has a chief dietitian in Richmond, and then, there are areas, almost like counties, and I don't know how big an area is. I never found out. Each one has a dietitian that's a state dietitian in that area, but, they're large areas, not a city or anything, much bigger than that. One of the young ladies I worked with, Linda Detty, one day, ... I guess I had left Alexandria Hospital in 1969, and this was about 1973, I'm not sure where I was in-between, but, anyway, Linda Detty called, and she said there was a big fight at the ... health department last night. She said, "The chief dietitian came up yesterday with her assistant dietitians. They had

decided that the WIC Program, ... the pilot program, would be administered through the Alexandria Health Department, to see how it would go for the first one. ... Doctor Cardona, who was the doctor at the health department, he wanted you, and Mrs. Milk and her friends had somebody else in mind,” I don’t know. She said, “It was a big fight, and Doctor Cardona won and they want you to be the first dietitian.” ... I was fifty-seven. ... [laughter] You had to start from the beginning with this stuff. I didn’t know anything about it. So, I said, “Linda, I’m disorganized,” ... I forgot which words I used, but, they all went along that way, and I said, “I don’t really know anything about children.” I never worked with children. She said, “You write Mrs. Milk a letter ... and tell her you’re accepting the job, or I’ll come up and bop you one.” [laughter] Now, what could I do? Linda Detty was a lady, too, but, that’s what she said. So, I wrote to Mrs. Milk, and accepted the job, and I went down there, and I found that I knew much more than I knew that I knew. I think what I forgot to tell you was ... the job that I got when I went was ...

LM: At Fort Lewis?

DSW: At Fort Lewis, teaching film slide, and movies, and everything. Well, it’s very funny, I’m seventy years old, and, I mean, I was like twenty-eight when I did this, twenty-seven. I found that I was prepared because ... they gave me anything I wanted, because they wanted it ... to succeed. I found that I knew where to get the materials, ... they had film slides, and films, and stuff, and I knew how to run the things, and it all came together, strangely enough, in there, and I thought I didn’t know anything. ... I mean, I knew enough about pregnancy and all, but, I didn’t think I knew enough, but, everything was written down, ... and you knew what they expected you to do. ... I don’t know, there was a little newspaper and everything that came out of Richmond every week or two of them every month. I think it was about every two weeks or something that told you what was doing in the state. ... I think after eight months, there were thirty WIC outlets in the state, because they felt that this one had worked very well, and they based ... a lot of it on some of these things. I had written a little, ... well, it was just a ... few pages of Xerox, but, I started to tell you, they got eggs, milk, cereal, seven things of frozen orange juice, sometimes cheese. I can’t believe I forgot the other things, and so, what I wrote in there was little recipes for using the thing, so that you didn’t have to drink the milk, or drink the orange juice, or eat the eggs, or anything, but, things that you could put together. My daughter was an artist, and she put little illustrations on, and, at Christmas, I asked her to make me, ... for a Christmas card, ... Santa Claus with a pack on his back, and the gift sticking out said, “Low sodium, and calcium,” and all the things like that. [laughter] ... I had a little cabinet made sort of with her things, but, ... those things I think were in with this, in the drawer with my things. ... There was a publication every year, was dietitians from all the states. Well, the other states had six, eight, twenty dietitians in the state and I’m the only one in Virginia, so, if anybody wants to know. ... You can see that I was first, but, my interest in this, in telling you this, is how much the nutrition meant to enrich my life. I mean, the college training, from the Department of Home Economics, was phenomenal, and it was good wherever I went. I never felt that, “Oh, they didn’t tell me about that.” I felt I was trained to handle everything, the extra six weeks, which were really ten weeks, at Atlantic City Hospital, were excellent for getting started, because that was the first place in a hospital. Of course, here, the training at Jefferson Hospital was superb, and so, that’s why I always feel that I can never, you know, say or do enough for the college. ... What I’d like to do is

leave a fair amount of money, but, so far, we don't have a great deal of money, ... but, I think that we will. I'd like to go over our will, which was done quite a while ago. Mel keeps saying that you don't go change your will every time you want, but, I think that we should, and, in 1972, some of the doctors I went to had bought farms in Southern Virginia and Western Virginia, and I said, "My father was a farmer and I want a farm, too." ... So, I went down to Charlottesville with a friend whose son was an engineering major at the University of Virginia. He said that, if I found a place, he would live in it and fix it up, and the gas shortage was very bad then, and he had a motorcycle. ... He was very, very economical about everything. ... Now, he had two years of college, and then, he had gone into the submarine corps. He never saw his money. It was saved. The others, every time they hit a port, they spent all their money, and he got out of there with a lot of money, and, also, he said, "I didn't know that a submarine stays underwater for three months or more. ... They're no gas station to pull into. ... You got to be able to fix it, anything that happens." So, he was able to fix everything. We've had the little place since 1972. Mel wouldn't get involved in it. He doesn't care what I do as long as I don't bother him with some of the things I go off with. [laughter] I took care of it for about eighteen years and the realtor's taking care of it.

LM: Do you still have it?

DSW: Yes.

LM: Where is it located?

DSW: Outside of Charlottesville.

LM: Is it still a working farm?

DSW: No, it's not a farm. It's just two acres and a house. I used to keep it rented. Well, see, the thing is, I thought that we would rent it to the students in the winter and that we would go there in the summer, but, Mel wouldn't go near that either. He said, "I'll take you to any hotel. Don't ask me to go down there." So, I went a few times with friends, and then, started to rent it. ...

ES: You define yourself as a dietitian, but, you started off in chemistry, and you have been very involved in health care, especially women's health care. What changes, either positive or negative have you seen in women's health care over your career?

DSW: I don't want to weasel out of that one, but, you're talking, to a certain extent, ... about medical care, almost. ... This is sort of an adjunct to medical care. ... The WIC people have doctors, and psychologists, and a dietitian, everything that they would need there, but, ordinarily, when you see a patient, you only see their nutritional needs. ... I don't have a direct answer to your question, which is a very good question. Years ago, even from the time I remember eating, we only had food. You went into the grocery store, it was food, and now, you go in, and it's sugar pops, and you can't find a box of cereal that isn't sugar coated. ... Mel likes Raisin Bran and his sugar was elevated this last time. I had to go through, every raisin was jammed with

sugar on it in the things, and I took out all the sugar raisins, and put in plain raisins. After this, I'll just get a box of bran flakes and ... put the raisins in, 'cause, see, he isn't a diabetic or anything, he just had slightly elevated sugar, but, we were careful ... about that. I think, in a lot of ways, things were better, I mean, except for poverty, because there was only food, and now, there are too many contrived things in the grocery stores. Don't ask me what they are, because I can't think of anything right off hand. ... All the additions and subtractions and all that. ... Of course, a lot of it is being done, and a lot of the reason that we are eating better is, those things ... keep the foods fresh longer. ... One of the things that was a problem before World War II, when we didn't have anything, was a lot of rotting, and things did not last. Before that, they had these root cellars that they had under the house. ... My mother had that in Europe. You know, you put beets, and carrots, and things like that down in there. I think that when I go into the grocery store, I spend more time trying to find what I want, because there's so many things with all these additives. ... To ask my friend, Mary Ferron, who was another one I worked with, but, ... she and I are the same age, and she's also from Minnesota. I started at Alexandria Hospital in 1960, she came about '64, and we worked together for many years, and then, she stayed on there. She taught the nurses nutrition. The nurses have to have nutrition, of course, on their things. We worked with the student nurses a lot at Jefferson Hospital, also. There was a kitchen just for the student nurses, and, when they were on that service, you were there teaching them nutrition, as well as some cooking. It was a kitchen just for the student nurses to learn nutrition, and cooking, and all. ... Very little of this is being written, but, sometimes, there's a woman, ... it's usually a woman, who pulls herself together, and says, "Look, you should be home with your children, you do not need that money. That money is going," and I feel myself, though I never said, because I didn't put it into words in my mind, ... "to the transportation, to the child care, to the fast food that you have to use. If you stayed home, and you bought the things yourself, and you weren't out there," and the price of child care is incredible, and they said, "Well, they have ... time with the children," but, that I don't believe, special times with the children. I think the children need their mother to be there right with them, at least until they're old enough to talk, and say what's doing in the child care places, ... or, if you've got someone in your home. It's like that little Matthew (Kepin?), ... that kind of thing, that the child, awfully young to be left alone, ... an eighteen-month-old. I think I gave you a very horrible answer. The olden days were better because the fresh things were fresh, they weren't sprayed, [laughter] and they didn't have DDT on them or anything, and their mothers were home, but, of course, there was a lot of poverty then, which we're not seeing now. Would like to see the mothers stay home until the child is at least three, get a good start like that, be sure of what they are eating. ...

ES: Now, it seems like there is a trend starting towards fathers staying home with the children.

DSW: I think it's pretty rare though. I've never met one. I hear them on the radio shows or something like that. You asked very good questions and I wish I could give you a good answer.

ES: Two of her male roommates ...

DSW: Male roommates?

LM: We do not share a room. They live downstairs.

DSW: No, I understand.

LM: They decided that they wanted to let their wives go to work and be stay at home husbands.

ES: They thought that was a pretty good job. [laughter]

DSW: That's a pretty good job, yes, [laughter] thirty hours a day.

LM: They cook and clean fairly well, but, we will see. Is there anything else you wanted to say?

DSW: I can't think ... except what I said two or three times, and that is, my education made my life better.

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

DSW: ... He didn't have a doctor, and he had just come here, and all. ... There were only two of us. I had the first ... private office when Doctor Roark asked, and then, other dietitians open offices, but, I was there five years. ... I did that while I was working for WIC. The WIC jobs were only twenty hours. He called the hospital and ... they sort of alternated with people calling, you know, asking for a dietitian, the other person or me, and ... somebody there ... recommended me, and he called. He said that he's living here, and he's a widower, and that he just wants to lose some weight, and he'd like to come in. He didn't have a doctor here. He was here from San Francisco. They were real estate investors, and they had just bought two buildings, turned out they were twelve million dollars for the two buildings, right near us. After a while, about ten years later, they're trying to get the other building, and that building they got for eighteen million, ... so, that was thirty million. They sold for ninety million dollars. Anyway, he had a grossly obese daughter, we're talking about 1978. What he was trying to do, really, was to push his daughter off on me. His wife had died young of cancer and he didn't know what to do with the daughter. ... When I met her, she had her arms out and was walking this way, at the age of nineteen. Right now, she must weigh 500 again, but, I did take care of her for many years. I can't do anything for anyone like that, I don't think a dietician can. ... I got her on a program. I called my dietitian friends in different parts of the country, and one of the recommendations was, John's Hopkins had an in-patient sort of a place. She would have a place to live there and be taken care of. She did very well, but, she always slipped back. She met someone from John's Hopkins. He was big and obese, too, but, he's better now. Well, the father was so grateful to me, they're immensely wealthy, they're considered to be billionaires. ... He gave me an apartment in San Francisco and I paid ninety-four dollars a month for it. Completely furnished, and the gas, and electric, and everything, and ... the apartment alone rented for \$500, unfurnished. ... They had to show some income for it. So, I had that for six years. That's where my daughter was out there and everything, but, that ... certainly had everything to do with my major. [laughter] He said to me, "Well, I'm just a ... poor widower and I don't know what to do about eating. ... Would you do my food preparation?" Well, I tried for a while, put frozen things into his refrigerator, and then, I put the menu there, so, he could look at the menu, and then, look in

the freezer. He was ... handy. They owned a lot of hotels, and restaurants, and all, but, since you're a World War II thing, I didn't think it had anything to do with you. ...

LM: We will hear whatever you want to tell us. [laughter]

DSW: Should be more about World War II. ... Seemed to me that I veered off into that quite a bit. Of course, this was a very big part of my life. ...

ES: You can always add more to your transcript when we send it to you. Thank you very much for sharing your stories.

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

Reviewed by Shaun Illingworth 8/18/99

Reviewed by Sandra Stewart Holyoak 8/24/99

Reviewed by Dorothy Salkin-Welles 3/03