

1 **Interview of retired United States Army Major Elsie Smith**
2 **on her career in the Nurse Corps and serving in two wars**
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5Elsie Smith: ...Washington. Date of birth April 8, 1925, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.
6 My address now is 7309 43rd Street West, Tacoma, Washington.
7

8Unknown speaker: [inaudible 0:15]
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10Elsie Smith: I had two years in active reserve in the army. Came on active duty
11 December 10, 1950. Was assigned [coughing] to, uh, the Medical Field
12 Service School at Fort Sam Houston, Texas. [sniffing] Tsk, I was there 'til
13 December 12, when I was assigned to Percy Jones. Um. Went to Percy
14 Jones – uh, went home for the, for the Christmas vacation, reported into
15 Percy Jones January 1, 1951. I stayed at Percy Jones 'til 15th of June '51
16 and was assigned then to Valley Forge Army Hospital. Uh. Left Valley
17 Forge and went to the 343rd, which was a station hospital in Korea – or in
18 Japan. It was an old Zero factory. Was there 'til June 24, 1953, when I
19 went to the 25th Evac Hospital in Korea. Was stationed there 'til the 20th
20 of April '54, then I went to Fort Bragg. From Fort Bragg I went to
21 Denver, Colorado, August 27th, 1954, where I took my anesthesia
22 training. I was there from '54 to '55 and was assigned to Valley Forge
23 Army Hospital again. From Valley Forge I went to Fort Ord, California,
24 '57. From Fort Ord, California, I went to, uh, Europe, uh, 20th Station
25 Hospital at Nuremberg. Was there '58 to '60. From there I went back to
26 Fort Sam for the Advanced Nurse's Course. From there I went to
27 Letterman General Hospital in '60. Was at Letterman until '62. From
28 Letterman I was assigned to Fort Polk, Louisiana. Was there to '65. From
29 there I was assigned – reassigned back to, uh, Korea and was there 'til
30 1966. While in Korea I had a heart attack, was air evaced home, was
31 assigned to Madigan General Hospital and got out of the service there.
32 Um. Tsk.
33

34 The awards and declarations: the U.N. Service Medal, Korean Service
35 Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Presidential Unit Citation, and I
36 got a Certificate of Achievement. I have two campaign ribbons: Korean
37 Winter and Korean Summer and Fall.
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39 I joined the Women's Overseas Service League in 1980. Have been
40 president for the past two years. The only other service I have with a
41 government agency is, uh, Coast Guard Auxiliary, and I was a member of
42 the Coast Guard Auxiliary, uh, Puget Sound area, for four years. I was
43 secretary for Division 12-1 a couple'a years. I have a GED level of, uh, 2
44 years'a college. I had 3 years of anesthesia training. Tsk. The branch'a

1 service was Army Nurse Corps. Eighteen years active duty. Uh. Enlisted
2 from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Retired at Madigan General Hospital. I
3 was an operating nurse prior to enlistment and an operating nu-, nurse in
4 the army before I went into anesthesia.

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6 I think when we first went in the army w-, pay was about, uh, maybe \$100
7 a month. Uh. I entered as Second Lieutenant and when I retired, I was a
8 Major.

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10 Unknown speaker: [inaudible 4:42]

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12 Elsie Smith: The uniform was pinks and greens and then they went into the taupe. Tsk.
13 A lot of experiences. Uh. The 25th Evac Hospital in Korea was built
14 right outside'a town and it overlooked the [inaudible 5:17], which was the
15 airforce fighter bomber wing. When I got out, I used my GI benefit to be
16 a highway civil engineering technician although I never worked at it, and
17 since then, I've been retired and enjoyin' it.

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