

**Interview of Viola E. Baas on her experiences as a teacher at
U.S. military bases in Japan during the Korean War and later in Germany**

1
2
3
4
5Interviewer: This is July 16, 1984. Viola Baas is recording her experiences overseas. Vi lives
6 at 2009 Pattengill, 48910, Lansing, Michigan. The area code of her telephone is
7 517; her number is 482-0933. And she may be located at this, uh, by telephone
8 and at this address. [0:44] Uh, Vi, uh, when did you go overseas?
9

10Viola Baas: Uh, August 1954. I w-, left Lansing, Michigan, uh, by train and traveled across
11 the United States to Seattle, Washington, and, uh, there we had 3 or 4 days of
12 orientation. And we would walk down to the, to the ship, the [Mitchell 1:09],
13 which we rode across the Pacific Ocean to Yokohama. I might say, too, that, uh,
14 Ruth [McCullough], a member of WOSL, who is now deceased, went with me
15 that very same day. We, I knew that she was planning to teach overseas in Japan,
16 and she knew that I was, and I'm not s-, I don't recall how we knew, how we
17 knew each other was going, but anyway, we talked on the telephone several times,
18 but we did not meet until we met at the railroad station here in Lansing, Grand
19 Trunk Station, and both our families were there to see us off. and we had a great
20 time traveling together. She was a great traveling companion, and, uh, we were
21 together, uh, all the time until, uh, [tsk] we got to Yokohama, and she was
22 stationed in Yokohama, and then I went on into the northern [inaudible 2:12].
23

24Interviewer: [2:12] And she was stationed there in 1954?
25

26Viola Baas: 1954 and 1955. She stayed just 1 year.
27

28Interviewer: Mm-hm. [2:19] Um, what made you d-, decide to go overseas?
29

30Viola Baas: My friend Sally [Hansen 2:26] who was a t-, well at that time was a teacher in
31 [Langda 2:28] and had a friend who was, uh, [inaudible 2:32] elementary teacher
32 in Japan and worked for the army, and, uh, she wrote interesting letters to Sally
33 about her experiences overseas with the army. So when I visited Sally one
34 summer at Bell's Lake here in Michigan, we talked about these fun things she was
35 doing, and we decided that's something we might like to do. So we decided that
36 next, uh, when there was time for us to make application, [tsk] which would be in
37 the winter of, um, '53, uh, we, uh, got our applications from Ann Arbor and went
38 to Ann Arbor in January I think it was, and we had our interview there, and, uh,
39 then waited until March, until we were either, our applications were confirmed or
40 rejected. And so that's the way it all happened.
41

42 And the day that I got the telegram that I had been accepted, uh, I came home
43 from school, and my mother was living with me then, and she said I had a
44 telegram from the Department of Army and that I had been accepted to teach

1 overseas. And, uh, I didn't say very much, and she said well, um, they have to
2 have an answer within 24 hours, what are you going to say? And I said well, I'm
3 not sure. And she said well, that's what you want to do isn't it, and I said yes, and
4 she said well, that [would be fine 4:18] if that's what you want to do. And that
5 made me feel good because I didn't want to go if my family was not in favor of it
6 because my parents were aging, and, uh, I felt that I had an obligation to them as
7 well as the rest of my family, but I did want to have this experience, but I wanted
8 to go with a good feeling, so I replied that I would accept the job. [tsk] And I
9 immediately called Sally to see if she had heard. She had and she accepted too.
10 So...
11
12Interviewer: [Inaudible 4:52] a minute here. It was very interesting to me because I met Vi's
13 mother, uh, not too long after Vi was in Japan, and I had been there, and her
14 mother was very anxious to come over to visit me to see, uh, uh, some pictures of
15 Japan and to tell me about my experiences over there.
16
17Viola Baas: Yes. I remember she wrote me about that. Um, our trip, uh, my trip across the
18 United States was interesting too. I had not traveled by train this distance before.
19 And we went through Montana and the, we-, this was the last part of August and
20 the wheat was being harvested, and, and as I rode along I thought well, it's gonna
21 be another year before I see my Country and I just want to drink it all in. And I
22 left, uh, my home and my school, my family with all my business in order so that
23 I could go with a free, free-mind, and, and I felt really good about it. We, I had an
24 exciting time, and, and, uh – Where did I say [inaudible 6:08]? In Seattle, Seattle,
25 Washington. That was a whole new experience, and, uh, some of the people
26 dropped out because they really gave us a rough time during orientation and told
27 us all the things that would happen to us that we may not like and now was the
28 time for us to drop out, but that didn't discourage me. That, it's, it was a
29 challenge. I thought they're not going to discourage me because I want to go, and
30 I don't care what the experiences are, I'm willing to endure any burdens that
31 might come my way.
32
33Interviewer: [6:44] Did you stay at the, uh, Richmond Hotel?
34
35Viola Baas: Yes, the Richmond...
36
37Interviewer: [6:47] In Seattle?
38
39Viola Baas: ...Hotel in Seattle. I think that was pretty much where everybody stayed.
40
41Interviewer: [6:51] Were you there for about a week, Vi?
42
43Viola Baas: I think so. Close to a week.
44

1Interviewer: Mm-hm.
2
3Viola Baas: And, uh, I remember the day that, uh, Sally and I walked, Sally and I rode across
4 the United States together, and, uh... No, we didn't either. No, we didn't. We
5 met, we met there. We met in Seattle. That's how it was. I rode with Ruth.
6
7Interviewer: It was easy, easy to meet the girls because, uh, uh, they sent us a complete
8 itinerary...
9
10Viola Baas: Yes.
11
12Interviewer: ...with the people going from Michigan. Uh, the lady in Detroit who processed us
13 did this for us.
14
15Viola Baas: Yeah. There was another, uh, gal from Michigan too, who, who, uh, was on, on –
16 there were, in fact, there were a lot on the, on the train that day, lots of people
17 from, lots of Michigan, uh, teachers.
18
19Interviewer: [7:39] And you had a [inaudible 7:39] too, didn't you?
20
21Viola Baas: Yes, and we, uh, we got to know each other even before we reached Seattle.
22
23Interviewer: Oh, yes. I remember when I went, uh, the first thing I did was here I had my
24 itinerary of the people going, and when I went into the, uh, club car, uh, I looked
25 over the group...
26
27Viola Baas: Yeah.
28
29Interviewer: ...and was able to, uh, locate a number of them, and one found another, and
30 before we knew it, we were all together having a good time.
31
32Viola Baas: Yeah and wondering where we were going to go and hoping we'd all get the best
33 assignment because we all wanted to go to Tokyo. I didn't and I was glad
34 afterwards that I didn't. But, uh, after we received our assignments as to, um, the
35 part of Tokyo that we would be stationed, and it was, we did that onboard ship,
36 and, uh, those people who were assigned Tokyo were so happy or Yokohama
37 because that was a big metropolitan area, the largest city in the world at that time.
38 Everyone was really happy, and I was disappointed because I wanted to be with
39 Sally. She had an assignment in Tokyo. But my assignment was in the
40 northernmost island of Hok-, uh, Hokkaido, which w-, turned out to be a
41 beautiful, beautiful spot. I wouldn't have traded that experience for anything.
42
43Interviewer: [9:02] And it was like northern Michigan [inaudible 9:03].
44

1 Viola Baas: It was like northern Michigan, and, um, uh, we, it wasn't crowded like [inaudible]
2 9:12].
3
4 Interviewer: [9:15] Now you went to Tokyo right after they received their independence?
5
6 Viola Baas: Yes.
7
8 Interviewer: 195-, eh, or, uh, 2 years after?
9
10 Viola Baas: Yes.
11
12 Interviewer: They received their independence...
13
14 Viola Baas: Ah.
15
16 Interviewer: ...in 1952 in May.
17
18 Viola Baas: Yes, this was in 1954, and, uh, the, this was a time when the American army posts
19 and air force bases [inaudible 9:39] was pulling out, and the posts were being
20 turned over to the Japanese, and, uh, because of that, I was stationed at 4 different
21 areas and each time the, the posts were closed down. My first experience...
22
23 Interviewer: [9:55] You closed down 4 schools, Vi?
24
25 Viola Baas: Four, four schools.
26
27 [laughter]
28
29 Interviewer: I closed down 2. [laughter]
30
31 Viola Baas: And that, that was, uh, a poem experience because our friends, we were close,
32 very close together, and we learned to like each other and, and to have to be
33 pulled away from the friends was a very difficult thing to do. And I remember
34 especially the first school. Uh, that...
35
36 Interviewer: [10:24] How long did you teach in the first school?
37
38 Viola Baas: Uh, 3 months.
39
40 Interviewer: [10:28] Is that all?
41
42 Viola Baas: Yes. This was Camp Crawford, a beautiful post, uh, in sa-, near Sapporo on the
43 Island of Hokkaido. That was third grade. It was elementary and high school, and
44 there about 12 of us altogether.

1
2Interviewer: [10:42] Then you weren't too far from the Ainus were you?
3
4Viola Baas: No. We did visit [those people 10:46].
5
6Interviewer: [10:46] You did visit the Ainus?
7
8Viola Baas: Mm-hm. Yes. It was [inaudible 10:49].
9
10Interviewer: [10:49] And they were near Noboribetsu weren't they?
11
12Viola Baas: Yes, they were [inaudible 10:52].
13
14Interviewer: And the Ainus are an unusual group of people, uh, in that they're the oldest living
15 race of people in the world.
16
17Viola Baas: I believe so.
18
19Interviewer: They're the original, uh, Aborigines of Japan.
20
21Viola Baas: Yes.
22
23Interviewer: And they are probably comparable to our American Indians.
24
25Viola Baas: Yes.
26
27Interviewer: They drink the blood of the bear, and they have, uh, quite unusual, uh, uh, oh,
28 characteristics.
29
30Viola Baas: Yeah.
31
32Interviewer: They tattoo the ladies', uh, lips...
33
34Viola Baas: Yes.
35
36Interviewer: ...to indicate that she's married, and they, uh, there's some other – oh, uh, they,
37 uh, are not m-, they're more a cross between a mongoloid and a Caucasoid person.
38 [11:40] They don't have all the mongoloid features, and they're bigger aren't
39 they?
40
41Viola Baas: Yes, larger. Uh, actually there are very few [true bloods 11:47] left of the
42 Aborigines. They've intermarried with the Japanese so much.
43
44Interviewer: Mm-hm.

1
2 Viola Baas: The, uh, Japanese look unkindly upon them [inaudible 11:57].
3
4 Interviewer: [11:57] They look what?
5
6 Viola Baas: Unkindly upon the...
7
8 Interviewer: I see.
9
10 Viola Baas: ...Ainu [inaudible 12:00]...
11
12 Interviewer: Mm-hm.
13
14 Viola Baas: ...referred to them as Ainu Indians, which was incorrect. We should not, but I
15 think we cons-, consider them as our American Indian and Aborigines in this
16 Country.
17
18 Interviewer: Mm-hm.
19
20 Viola Baas: But we did visit those, those people. It was very interesting. I was happy that I
21 was placed on Hokkaido because it had so many interesting places to visit, and
22 the, the fall was beautiful. The weather was beautiful. Almost every weekend,
23 we'd travel some place. It was really good, a good area to visit, lots of hot springs.
24 Eh, the school was, um...
25
26 Interviewer: [12:40] There's an old sulfur, eh, eh, eh extinct...
27
28 Viola Baas: Eh...
29
30 Interviewer: ...volcano area there isn't there?
31
32 Viola Baas: Yes. Hot sulfur springs. It's very interesting. Eh, with the, week-, weekends you
33 could go to Nobu and [inaudible 12:53] or almost any place and have a hot
34 springs bath with sulfur in it.
35
36 Interviewer: [12:59] You lived there then when?
37
38 Viola Baas: In December of 1954.
39
40 Interviewer: [13:06] '54?
41
42 Viola Baas: Uh-huh. When we was given this assignment, we knew that some of us would be
43 having to leave. There were 12 of us, and, uh, 4 of us elementary teachers hit it

1 off right from the beginning. We had a, a great time together, and we had a super
2 principal.
3
4Interviewer: [13:24] Vi, how many, uh, teachers were in this first school?
5
6Viola Baas: About 12.
7
8Interviewer: [13:28] About 12?
9
10Viola Baas: Mm-hm. Mm-hm.
11
12Interviewer: [13:30] And you were a closely knit group?
13
14Viola Baas: Yes, we were. Even with the high school people [inaudible 13:34].
15
16Interviewer: [13:33] And what were your living conditions like?
17
18Viola Baas: We, we had excellent living conditions. This army post was built by the
19 Americans for the Americans. It wasn't something that was taken over from the
20 Japanese. They were, uh, the, the housing for the dependents were apartment
21 houses 3 stories high. The, the, uh, dependent school, uh, [inaudible 14:00] was,
22 um – [tsk] Well, let's see. There were framed, white, wood-framed buildings, and
23 they housed 4 teachers.
24
25Interviewer: [14:14] Did each of you have your own room?
26
27Viola Baas: We, we shared a bedroom, uh, or, or we had our own depending on how, how
28 many people they had at the time. I shared with, uh, s-, a special services gal, and
29 we had, uh, we shared a bath with 2 other gals, and we had a living room. It was
30 very pleasant and private.
31
32Interviewer: Mm-hm.
33
34Viola Baas: And, uh, we enjoyed it very, very much. Then, um, as, as we...
35
36Interviewer: [14:46] You said 12 teachers?
37
38Viola Baas: Yes.
39
40Interviewer: [14:48] D-, was there a high school there?
41
42Viola Baas: Yes, there was a high school too.
43
44Interviewer: [14:50] And the 12 included the high school?

1
2 Viola Baas: Mm-hm. The high school.
3
4 Interviewer: [inaudible 14:52].
5
6 Viola Baas: At one time, it was much larger.
7
8 Interviewer: Mm-hm.
9
10 Viola Baas: But this was in a transition period.
11
12 Interviewer: [14:58] And about 4 teachers in high school?
13
14 Viola Baas: Uh...
15
16 Interviewer: [15:01] Five?
17
18 Viola Baas: Probably 4.
19
20 Interviewer: [15:03] Four?
21
22 Viola Baas: Four or five. The, um, probably the most interesting thing that happened to me
23 that fall as far as the school was concerned, I think it was in October when the
24 Americans turned over the, these to the Japanese, and school was excused, and we
25 had a very interesting moving ceremony. Uh, parade grounds. All the kids came,
26 and we watched the American flag come down and watched the Japanese flag go
27 up [inaudible 15:38]. That was very moving, and I, I guess for the very first time I
28 realized how important my national flag was to me. After the flag was lowered,
29 we had, we had to, uh, be under all of the regulations of the Japanese, and the
30 MPs and everything were all Japanese. And when they said halt, we had to stop.
31 You didn't ask questions, and it was a little, a little scary at first because the post
32 wasn't lighted as well. There were lots of things that happened after the Japanese
33 took over that were unpleasant because they just didn't have a good a, as good a
34 facilities.
35
36 Interviewer: The same was true in Tokyo. Uh, when the Japanese received their independence
37 in '52, in fact, uh, there was rioting.
38
39 Viola Baas: Mm-hm.
40
41 Interviewer: There were, uh, there were machine guns in front of our hotel, [sadly 16:39].
42
43 Viola Baas: But we got through it all right. And then, uh, the, in December, I was transferred
44 to Camp Haugen, which was about halfway between Tokyo and, uh, and Sapporo.

1
2Interviewer: [16:55] Well then you...
3
4Viola Baas: [inaudible 16:55].
5
6Interviewer: ...were away from the, uh, rigorous winters in, uh, Sapporo?
7
8Viola Baas: Yes. I never really got to see the rigorous winter. We had the first snowfall on
9 November 11th, and I was in the City of Sapporo. I went by myself that day. It was
10 on a Saturday. And, uh, I usually didn't go any place alone, but for some reason
11 there I was alone that day, and, eh, it started to snow, and I've never seen such big
12 flakes in all my life, and it just came down so fast, and before I knew it, there
13 were 3-4 inches of snow on the ground, and I had all kinds of trouble trying to
14 remember where I was, and everything was so different, covered with snow. So I
15 finally found the train station and, and, uh, that's where we picked up the busses,
16 and I hightailed it back to camp. And w-, we had 11 inches that day.
17
18Interviewer: [17:56] Now w-, are you still in, uh, and Camp Haugen is still in...
19
20Viola Baas: No.
21
22Interviewer: ...Hokkaido?
23
24Viola Baas: No. No.
25
26Interviewer: [18:01] Or is it in, um...
27
28Viola Baas: This, this was, eh, just the snow was at Sapporo, Camp Crawford.
29
30Interviewer: Oh.
31
32Viola Baas: But we had a lot of snow at Camp Haugen too, about the same as we do here on
33 the Michigan lakes in Michigan.
34
35Interviewer: [18:15] How do you spell that camp?
36
37Viola Baas: Camp H-A-U-G-E-N. Haugen.
38
39Interviewer: Haugen.
40
41Viola Baas: It was named after...
42
43Interviewer: Mm-hm. Uh, there's one thing about that area...
44

1 Viola Baas: ...[inaudible 18:21].
2
3 Interviewer: ...it's so close to the water. They have a great deal more snow than Michigan...
4
5 Viola Baas: Yes.
6
7 Interviewer: ...but the temperatures don't get as low.
8
9 Viola Baas: Camp Haugen was, was right on the ocean.
10
11 Interviewer: Mm-hm.
12
13 Viola Baas: It was a good place.
14
15 Interviewer: [18:33] Now at Sapporo, you were only about 95 miles from, um, [inaudible
16 18:39], weren't you?
17
18 Viola Baas: Uh, well, eh, possibly around that, a hundred miles. That was one place that I
19 wanted to, to visit. I wanted to. I...
20
21 Interviewer: [18:50] You couldn't, could you?
22
23 Viola Baas: No. I, I wanted to. We could take a train a-, and it was a 24-hour ride to, um, I've
24 forgotten the name of this, this tiny village [inaudible 19:05]...
25
26 Interviewer: [inaudible 19:05].
27
28 Viola Baas: ...outpost.
29
30 Interviewer: Mm-hm.
31
32 Viola Baas: American outpost. And there is where, uh, most American teachers did travel, and
33 I didn't go because I didn't have time. [inaudible 19:17].
34
35 Interviewer: [19:18] Then you would take a boat over to it?
36
37 Viola Baas: No, no. You, you couldn't leave...
38
39 Interviewer: Mm-hm.
40
41 Viola Baas: ...Japan.
42
43 Interviewer: I see.
44

1 Viola Baas: But it was only 50 miles across the Isthmus, and you could...
2
3 Interviewer: Mm-hm.
4
5 Viola Baas: ...see the soviet really near, and, and with binoculars, you could watch the
6 Russians with their binoculars too.
7
8 Interviewer: Mm-hm.
9
10 Viola Baas: It was that close. I didn't go over. That would have been a very interesting
11 [inaudible 19:40].
12
13 Interviewer: [19:40] And Camp Haugen is still in Hokkaido?
14
15 Viola Baas: No, no. Camp Haugen is on Honshu.
16
17 Interviewer: [19:05] Oh, it's on Honshu.
18
19 Viola Baas: Honshu.
20
21 Interviewer: ...the Island of Honshu, which is halfway between Sapporo and, um...
22
23 Viola Baas: Tokyo.
24
25 Interviewer: Tokyo. Okay.
26
27 Viola Baas: But, um, there...
28
29 Interviewer: [Tokyo 19:53].
30
31 Viola Baas: ...there I stayed from December 3rd until the end of the school year in 1955. I
32 taught 3rd and 4th grades and some of the time 8th grade. The, uh, housing was very
33 good. We had, um, billets, dormitory-type housing. Um, we had a really good,
34 good time. We had a nice dayroom. And we got along real well together. Our
35 school, my building was a, a Quonset hut. There were 4 or 5 Quonset huts and a
36 main building that held a couple of classrooms. Then, uh, I decided that it would
37 be fun to teach in Tokyo for the summer because I wanted to climb Mount Fuji.
38 So I made application to teach in an elementary school there, and I was accepted.
39 So I got on the train...
40
41 Interviewer: [20:59] Summer school...
42
43 Viola Baas: Mm-hm.
44

1Interviewer: ...in Tokyo?
2
3Viola Baas: Mm-hm. At [inaudible 21:01] Elementary School.
4
5Interviewer: [inaudible 21:02].
6
7Viola Baas: At that time, it was the largest elementary school in the Far East.
8
9Interviewer: Yes.
10
11Viola Baas: And, uh, I taught 6 weeks half a day and rode the bus from downtown Tokyo.
12
13Interviewer: [21:16] Where did you live in Japan, in Tokyo?
14
15Viola Baas: At the Osaka Hotel.
16
17Interviewer: So did I.
18
19Viola Baas: And, uh...
20
21Interviewer: Room 212.
22
23Viola Baas: I don't remember the name of the room now.
24
25 [laughter]
26
27Interviewer: [21:25] What floor were you on?
28
29Viola Baas: Well I think it was 6th floor [inaudible 21:29].
30
31Interviewer: [21:28] Oh, you were way up?
32
33Viola Baas: We were – I think it was 6th floor. I think there were 7 floors. Uh, most buildings
34 were only 7 stories high then.
35
36Interviewer: Mm-hm. Yes.
37
38Viola Baas: ...and I was near the top.
39
40Interviewer: That's because of the earthquakes.
41
42Viola Baas: Yeah. That was an – no, it wasn't either Osaka. It was the old Keio.
43
44Interviewer: Oh, the old Keio.

1
2 Viola Baas: But we did go to the Osaka a lot...
3
4 Interviewer: Mm-hm.
5
6 Viola Baas: ...and eat, but it was just down the street.
7
8 Interviewer: [21:45] You could eat there?
9
10 Viola Baas: Yeah.
11
12 Interviewer: Mm-hm.
13
14 Viola Baas: But we, we could eat [both 21:48] places. But, uh, this was an interesting
15 experience, too, because the metropolitan area was entirely different from the
16 rural area in which I had been before.
17
18 Interviewer: [22:01] And you couldn't go home during the summer on reassignment like I
19 could?
20
21 Viola Baas: No. No.
22
23 Interviewer: Mm-hm.
24
25 Viola Baas: No. I [inaudible 22:06].
26
27 Interviewer: [22:06] Uh, in 195-, uh, uh, '50 and 1951, we could go home during the summer.
28 Uh, then in 1952, I was able to go home because it was a reassignment...
29
30 Viola Baas: Mm-hm.
31
32 Interviewer: ...and the same was true of 1953.
33
34 Viola Baas: Yeah. If – we could go home, but we had to pay our own way. I wasn't interested
35 in...
36
37 Interviewer: Oh, well that was not true...
38
39 Viola Baas: ...going home anyway because I wanted to travel as much as I could...
40
41 Interviewer: Mm-hm.
42
43 Viola Baas: ...and have as many experiences as I could. So before we, before I climbed the
44 mountain, we, well, 2 other girls and I went. We, uh, [tsk] were given some

1 training by the [inaudible 22"5-]. Japan [inaudible 22"51] and told us all about
2 what to do to get ready. So we walked up the stairs into our rooms rather than use
3 the elevators, and we were very glad that we were conditioning our bodies
4 because when we actually got to the mountain to climb, it was very, very rugged,
5 and those people who hadn't conditioned them-, their bodies at all were having a
6 really rough time and never did make it to the top, and we felt that that was one of
7 the main reasons we were able to climb to the summit is because we were in
8 pretty good physical shape. Anyway, we finished the s-, I finished the 6 weeks,
9 and we, uh, then I was assigned, uh, the same school I requested again, Camp
10 Haugen Elementary School. I liked it there. I liked the people. Most of the
11 teachers were returning. I liked the principal. I was very happy in the area.
12
13 So we, uh, those of us who headed north, we all got on the train together and took
14 our 12-hour ride back to Camp Haugen, and, uh, our billet was very nice. They
15 had, uh, cleaned it all and had done some painting and really fixed it up nice for
16 us and put a little kitchen in besides the bigger dayroom, and it was very, very
17 fine housing that second year. Then, uh...
18
19Interviewer: [24:32] Did you make your own meals?
20
21Viola Baas: No. We ate at the club, but we, we could make them if we wanted to.
22
23Interviewer: [24:38] When you were in Japan, did you have a maid?
24
25Viola Baas: Yes. We had a little maid, and we paid her \$5 a month, and she...
26
27Interviewer: Five...
28
29Viola Baas: ...cleaned our room.
30
31Interviewer: [24:44] For how many?
32
33Viola Baas: [inaudible 24:48].
34
35Interviewer: [24:48] Each of you paid 5?
36
37Viola Baas: Each of us paid \$5 [inaudible 24:51].
38
39Interviewer: [24:51] Then she earned about \$40 a month?
40
41Viola Baas: Well she worked for about 3 or 4 other people besides.
42
43Interviewer: Mm-hm. [24:57] [inaudible 24:57] about 20?
44

1 Viola Baas: [inaudible 24:58].
2
3 Interviewer: Oh.
4
5 Viola Baas: Well she didn't make much.
6
7 Interviewer: Mm-hm.
8
9 Viola Baas: [Inaudible 25:01].
10
11 Interviewer: We paid ours \$10 a month, uh, and I think 3 people shared her, which was
12 roughly \$30 a month for her, and she was really a personal maid.
13
14 Viola Baas: Mm-hm.
15
16 Interviewer: She would also hang up our clothes and, uh...
17
18 Viola Baas: No, she did many of these, and she didn't...
19
20 Interviewer: ...straighten up [a room 25:15].
21
22 Viola Baas: ...need to do as many things for me as she did some of the others because I was
23 pretty independent and took care of my own things.
24
25 Interviewer: Mm-hm.
26
27 Viola Baas: And, uh, uh, she was quite a little gal. I liked her a lot. So, uh, then, uh, as soon as
28 we arrived, as soon as I arrived back to Camp Haugen in the fall, the second fall,
29 [tsk] I was told immediately that I probably would be leaving sometime during
30 the year for another assignment. You know how rumors fly? Well in April, the,
31 uh, I left. I was the last teacher to leave. The principal and I were the last to leave,
32 and, uh, all the other teachers left, and there were about 8 of us [inaudible 26:12]
33 started [inaudible 26:13].
34
35 Interviewer: [26:14] You said you were the last to leave, then did you have 2 or 3 different
36 grades to teach at one time?
37
38 Viola Baas: Yes. Well, of course, the, the school population kept dropping...
39
40 Interviewer: Mm-hm.
41
42 Viola Baas: ...as the families moved out. The families, most of the families moved to Camp
43 Sendai, which was, which was south of us, or to the, to the, uh, air base, which
44 was at Camp Nozawa.

1
2Interviewer: Mm-hm.
3
4Viola Baas: And, uh...
5
6Interviewer: I understand in, uh, giving an assignment overseas in the elementary grades, uh,
7 rural school teaching was a definite attribute. They...
8
9Viola Baas: I think it was too. Yes, I had, I had...
10
11Interviewer: [26:51] Did you teach in rural school at one time?
12
13Viola Baas: Yes, I did. I taught in, in a rural school and had experience in all of the grades,
14 and I was glad I did because I had some strange combinations. Fourth and eight
15 grade was a strange combination.
16
17Interviewer: [laughter]
18
19Viola Baas: I had 5 eighth graders and...
20
21Interviewer: Mm-hm.
22
23Viola Baas: ...uh, 14 or 15 fourth graders I believe.
24
25Interviewer: Mm-hm.
26
27Viola Baas: And, uh, eh, those kids, uh, really weren't compatible. They had almost nothing in
28 common, but my 8th graders were sharp little kids, and they pretty much took care
29 of themselves. At the end of the school year, this was at Camp Haugen, we had a
30 really nice graduation ceremony for those 5 little kids. Um, we, we, uh, had our
31 graduation exercises in the, um, theater, which was the largest theater in the Far
32 East, and it held about 2,000 people. It was a huge room. and we, we had our
33 exercises there. The commanding officer was there and the school's officer and
34 the chaplain and, and, uh, a warrant officer who was the father of one of the
35 children. The school officer was one of the father, father of one of our 8th graders,
36 too, as well as the chaplain and, uh, the warrant officer, and that's why they were
37 there. I guess because their kids were graduating. Anyway, they were all out on
38 the school platform, and we, we moved the, the rest of the s-, you know, the r-,
39 rest of the grades by bus down to the theater and in-, invited all the other parents
40 in the school plus the parents of the 8th graders, and, uh, we had exactly 3 guests
41 besides our school pupils for the graduation ceremonies, which was rather sad
42 because it was a nice ceremony.
43

1 We had diplomas made in a Japanese design, very lovely diplomas, and, uh, we
2 had little speeches by the kids and commanding officer, Colonel [inaudible 29:06]
3 gave a little address and as each one of the, the officers who were in charge did. It
4 was a very nice ceremony. Too bad that more people weren't interested. But
5 anyway, it was a nice thing, and I was glad that we could give these experiences
6 to these children.
7
8Interviewer: Now we had quite the opposite experience at Tokyo. Uh, I was quite surprised at
9 PTAs. Um, it was, they were very well attended. The colonel told the major he
10 expected to see them there tonight, eh, he and his wife, and, uh, the major told the,
11 uh, lieutenant and so on down the line.
12
13Viola Baas: Well that was true with, with our PTAs too, but the graduation ceremony wasn't a
14 command performance.
15
16Interviewer: I see.
17
18Viola Baas: It was by invitation and, and [inaudible 29:57] to come I suppose. It's, it was
19 really too bad because not, not only, only 4 of the, um, uh, parents were there out
20 of the 5...
21
22Interviewer: Mm-hm.
23
24Viola Baas: ...children, and 3 of the mother's came, so the 3 guests were the 3 mothers...
25
26Interviewer: Mm-hm.
27
28Viola Baas: ...which was really sad. But the kids had a good time, and, and I did too. We tried
29 to make it a really exciting time in their life because some of them would be going
30 home to attend high school at home. So then, uh, I had my summer in Tokyo, and
31 fall, as I said earlier, we had another session with elementary kids. And this was a
32 rather traumatic time in the schools because the families were torn from their
33 friends. The children were torn from their friends, and they didn't know where
34 they were going to be assigned, and, uh, this was, uh, uh, an [era 31:05] time too
35 when the wives and children did not travel with the husbands. That came a little
36 bit later, and it was very difficult for the, for the families, and as a teacher, I tried
37 to make the transition for the children as easily as possible and encourage them.
38
39Interviewer: [31:26] This is 1954?
40
41Viola Baas: This is [inaudible 31:28].
42
43Interviewer: [31:28] Eh, is the Korean War over yet?
44

1 Viola Baas: No, the Korean War is in operation.
2
3 Interviewer: [31:34] Did you get any refugees from Korea?
4
5 Viola Baas: No, we didn't.
6
7 Interviewer: [31:38] Um, did, uh, the Korean War seem to affect you in any way?
8
9 Viola Baas: Yes, it did, and it was in an interesting way. Um, [tsk] one, one evening – no, it
10 was in the m-, in the night, uh, [inaudible]. [Yes] [inaudible 31:53] Interestingly
11 one night, I was called to the telephone, this was at Camp Haugen, and, uh, with a
12 call from Korea, and I didn't know a single sole from Korea. This was a time
13 when the telephones were open from Korea to Japan or we could call o-, all over
14 the Far East, uh...
15
16 Interviewer: [32:24] Free?
17
18 Viola Baas: Free, yes.
19
20 Interviewer: Mm-hm.
21
22 Viola Baas: And, uh, it was fall. He was on the line, and he was a soldier in Korea. He told me
23 who he was, and he seemed to know who I was. And, uh, as it turned out in the
24 conversation, he was from Woodland, Michigan, and it was close to my
25 hometown of Nashville, Michigan, and his family knew my family. And I think
26 the fellow was so lonesome. He was young, probably not more than 19. He was so
27 lonesome for a familiar voice from home that he called me to just to talk, and, uh,
28 which we did, and, um, I tried to encourage. He wanted to come over to Japan on
29 R&R, and he said if he did he would try and look me up.
30
31 Interviewer: [33:20] And R&R was rest and recuperation?
32
33 Viola Baas: Recuperation. Recuperation.
34
35 Interviewer: Mm-hm.
36
37 Viola Baas: And, uh, then he called me several times after that. It was always in the middle of
38 the night, but I was patient, and I thought well, I certainly have it a lot better than
39 he does, and if it made him feel any better, that was...
40
41 Interviewer: A part we did for the soldiers. Right.
42
43 Viola Baas: ...part, part of, part of my, my work, and, uh...
44

1Interviewer: All of my ex-students from Rogers City called me when I was over there. I would
2 take then out to dinner when they came over.
3
4Viola Baas: Yeah.
5
6Interviewer: I would say I had 6 or 7 call during that year.
7
8Viola Baas: That's the only – well we had a nurse, uh, transferred to Camp Haugen, who had
9 been in Korea, and that was an interesting addition to our complement, too,
10 because she had many interesting things to tell us about. Uh, some of the Red
11 Cross gals were there...
12
13Interviewer: Mm-hm.
14
15Viola Baas: ...from Korea too, but that's the only way in which the war, the Korean War
16 affected us at all. There was, um, something that did affect me when I was, eh, eh,
17 in my first assignment on Hokkaido.
18
19Interviewer: [34:27] And by the way, Vi, before you go, uh, did, uh, this boy ever come to...
20
21Viola Baas: No...
22
23Interviewer: ...Camp Haugen?
24
25Viola Baas: ...he, he n-, he never did come.
26
27Interviewer: [34:33] He never did get there?
28
29Viola Baas: No. I never h-, heard of him after that at all.
30
31Interviewer: [inaudible 34:36]. [34:37] Have you ever c-...
32
33Viola Baas: No.
34
35Interviewer: ...talked to him since? Did he come back?
36
37Viola Baas: N-, not, not, no, I have no idea.
38
39Interviewer: [laughter]
40
41Viola Baas: No. No. Um...
42
43Interviewer: Okay.
44

1 Viola Baas: ...I, I have, I want to say that the Red Cross was absolutely super, absolutely
2 super when I was in my first assignment at Camp Crawford. In September, the
3 very last of September, there was a very, very bad typhoon, and, uh, it blew, uh,
4 [inaudible 35:09].
5
6 Interviewer: [35:09] This is in 1955?
7
8 Viola Baas: This is n-, no, this is 1954.
9
10 Interviewer: [35:13] '54?
11
12 Viola Baas: Yes. The, the...
13
14 Interviewer: [35:16] Oh, your first year there?
15
16 Viola Baas: Yes. It blew, uh, many ships in the, uh, straits between Honshu and Hokkaido, the
17 Japanese ships. It just capsized them. And one of the capsized was a Japanese
18 fairy that was carrying soldiers and civilians from Camp Crawford to Tokyo, and
19 all of these people were assigned to go home. Fifty four of these men were lost,
20 and they were all from our camp. Also, on the same ship was an American teacher
21 from Misawa, which was the base next to us, so when the news came home to the
22 states that an American teacher was lost, my parents were frantic because they
23 didn't know, uh, who it was. You know, the, the information was very scanty.
24 And, uh, so they wired through the Red Cross for, as to my whereabouts, and, uh,
25 the Red Cross was just super to keep me informed of, of how my parents were
26 and kept them informed as to how I was. And I, I will just never forget the, the
27 kindnesses shown by these Red Cross workers who went out of their way in the
28 middle of the night or any time during the day, would come to school or come to
29 my billet or call me on the telephone to keep me informed of, for a couple of days
30 as to how things were going so that my parents were at ease.
31
32 Interviewer: I didn't have quite that experience. Uh, when my brother died, it took 5 days for
33 me to get the message.
34
35 Viola Baas: Yeah. Then this, um...
36
37 Interviewer: This may have been in the school system, though, rather than through the Red
38 Cross.
39
40 Viola Baas: Yes. Well then this same thing happened again, ush, uh, well I think it was about
41 a month later, and this was October probably, my sister was extremely ill, and, uh,
42 she wasn't expected to live, and there again, the Red Cross was just very, very
43 good about keeping me informed and keeping my family informed.
44

1Interviewer: Mm-hm.
2
3Viola Baas: And I was requested to come home.
4
5Interviewer: Mm-hm.
6
7Viola Baas: And the Red Cross did grant that. And before I actually got tickets and
8 everything, my sister did regain.
9
10Interviewer: [37:51] Recover?
11
12Viola Baas: Mm-hm.
13
14Interviewer: Good.
15
16Viola Baas: She did so that I didn't have to go home. But they were just very, very fine. I just
17 can't praise the Red Cross enough. They just took so much interest in...
18
19Interviewer: Mm-hm.
20
21Viola Baas: ...in me, and I know that they went beyond the call of duty to keep, keep me
22 informed. It was a very trying time when you're so far away...
23
24Interviewer: Mm-hm.
25
26Viola Baas: ...from your family, and your family doesn't know what's going on at this end
27 and especially when there is danger and they don't know the circumstances. They
28 had all kinds of terrible things going through their mind. And the Red Cross was
29 just as fine here in Lansing, too, as they were in Japan. So I just have all kinds of
30 nice things to say about the Red Cross.
31
32 Now to go back to my second year, I stayed at Camp Haugen until April, and, uh,
33 the principal and I, a female principal, [Lee] [inaudible 38:56] and I were the very
34 last teachers to leave, and all the children were, had been transferred along with
35 their parents to other areas. So we waited, uh, a couple of weeks at Camp
36 Crawford trying to determine where we should be located. We were waiting for
37 our orders. Finally the orders came through that we were to travel to Tokyo, and
38 we would receive our orders there because we didn't have any housing at Camp
39 Crawford anymore, so they had to move us out. So we processed there at the
40 school headquarters, and they still didn't know where we were going to go, but
41 they gave us a week to travel, and then we were to report back, and, uh, by that
42 time, maybe they would know where we were going to be stationed. So that's
43 what we do, eh, we did. We, [Lee 39:58] and I traveled, uh, in the southern part of
44 Honshu and in the southern islands. And by the time we got back to Tokyo, we

1 had our assignments, and I was assigned to [inaudible 40:12] Elementary School
2 near Osaka, and that was...
3
4Interviewer: [40:17] Near Osaka [inaudible 40:18]? The southern part of Japan would include,
5 uh, uh, the isle-, what are those islands...
6
7Viola Baas: The...
8
9Interviewer: ...down there? [Inaudible 40:30].
10
11Viola Baas: [Inaudible 40:30].
12
13Interviewer: [40:31] Uh, well you d-, oh, you went to Kyushu...
14
15Viola Baas: Yeah. Yes.
16
17Interviewer: ...all the way down and, uh?
18
19Viola Baas: And, and visited, uh, Hiroshima and, uh, whatever island the, uh, the other, the
20 city that was bombed.
21
22Interviewer: Mm-hm. Hiroshima.
23
24Viola Baas: Hiroshima.
25
26Interviewer: [40:45] And Nagasaki?
27
28Viola Baas: Nagasaki.
29
30Interviewer: Mm-hm.
31
32Viola Baas: And, uh, that was a very interesting experience. We had about 10 days I think all
33 together through there. It was, it was very interesting, and, uh, I was awfully glad
34 that I got to see those areas. So I, I was assigned then to the, uh, elementary
35 school near Osaka, and I was housed in, uh, hospital nursing, um, quarters for a,
36 an army hospital, which was interesting, too, because I had not been with nurses
37 very much, and all of – I was the only teacher in that area, and that was, that was a
38 good experience for me. The, uh – we had lots of good transportation, and I had a
39 bicycle, and I would put my bicycle, uh, on the, in the truck or a car, whatever I
40 had, would take me to school that day, and then I would ride around the area
41 around the school after my classes were finished, and sometimes I would just
42 leave it at the army post and pick it up, pick up the bicycle when I got home, and I
43 would ride all around and have a great time. The, uh, it was easy transportation

1 into Osaka, and I tried to go some place every weekend because I knew this
2 would be my very, very last time in, uh, in Japan.
3
4 And then I left to come home in June of 1956. Before I left, I knew that I would
5 be transferred to Germany, and I had, uh, there were a lot of us who transferred to
6 Germany, so we had lots of, we made lots of plans hoping that they would work
7 out, and some of them did. I was home. I came home by air, uh, army air
8 transport, and, uh, spent about 6 weeks with my parents in Lansing, and then I
9 flew from New York to Germany, and, uh, there I was assigned a school, uh – oh
10 boy, isn't that awful. I can't remember the name of that school. [tsk] Well it was, it
11 was an area where the solders were trained for heavy artilist-, heavy artillery, so it
12 was way out in the boonies.
13
14Interviewer: [43:54] In Germany?
15
16Viola Baas: In Germany, yes.
17
18Interviewer: Mm-hm. [43:56] Was it Northern or Southern Germany?
19
20Viola Baas: It was in Southern Germany. It wasn't in Bavaria, but it was [inaudible 44:01].
21
22Interviewer: [44:01] Near Bavaria?
23
24Viola Baas: No, it was out of Bavaria a ways. I, I – isn't that awful. That slipped my mind.
25
26Interviewer: Mm-hm.
27
28Viola Baas: And, uh, uh...
29
30Interviewer: [44:11] Were you near [inaudible 44:13]?
31
32Viola Baas: Hohenfels, Hoe-, Hohenfels.
33
34Interviewer: Hohenfels.
35
36Viola Baas: And, and...
37
38Interviewer: Hohenfels.
39
40Viola Baas: ...and I was there about a week. In fact, I taught a day and a half. Our school
41 population was so low that they moved me out, and I was...
42
43Interviewer: [laughter] [44:24] You've been moved around, haven't you?
44

1 Viola Baas: Yeah. So I wasn't crying a bit because [tsk] I didn't, there was, we had no public
2 transportation from a village to our post, and the only other teacher there was a
3 principal, and she did have a car, but I knew that I wouldn't want to be totally
4 dependent upon her for transportation. So I was glad to be moved out. And a jeep
5 picked me up, uh, at noon my second day of teaching and, uh, took me to the little
6 town of Leipheim, Leipheim Elementary School. I had no idea where this w-. We
7 rode about 4 hours.
8
9 Interviewer: [45:11] Where is Leipheim?
10
11 Viola Baas: It's on the Danube River.
12
13 Interviewer: [45:15] It's on the Danube?
14
15 Viola Baas: It's between – eh, yes. It's between Stuttgart and or Ulm. It's between Ulm and
16 Augsburg.
17
18 Interviewer: Oh, I see. [45:23] It's off in that area?
19
20 Viola Baas: Right in – yeah, right in...
21
22 Interviewer: Mm-hm.
23
24 Viola Baas: ...in here. It was a charming little spot [and 45:29]...
25
26 Interviewer: [45:29] So you weren't too far from Munich then?
27
28 Viola Baas: No. No. Uh, uh, 2-1/2 hours by...
29
30 Interviewer: Mm-hm.
31
32 Viola Baas: ...uh, by train into Munich.
33
34 Interviewer: Mm-hm.
35
36 Viola Baas: And here I stayed in, uh, uh, and we had good housing there too. This was
37 housing that had been created for the German air force, very good housing. And,
38 uh, I met my good friend Phyllis [Donaldson 45:54] there. She and I were the
39 only teachers that were single. Uh, the other woman teacher was married to a
40 sergeant and the fourth teacher was, um, a man principal, so she and I were
41 thrown together and just learned to be very good friends and have, we are good
42 friends to this very day. [tsk] This was an experience that I wasn't happy with
43 because it was so unlike, the army operated so unlike the army operated in Japan,
44 and we were forever comparing things, but [inaudible 45:36].

1
2Interviewer: And Japan was well organized for we Department of Army civilians.
3
4Viola Baas: Yes.
5
6Interviewer: Compared to Italy and Austria too.
7
8Viola Baas: The, uh...
9
10Interviewer: Austria was good though.
11
12Viola Baas: We had a lot more freedom in our schools in Japan to teach the way, pretty much
13 the way we did in, at home, but, um, the schools were organized in a much
14 different manner. We had to go through the army almost every single thing we
15 did, everything we requisitioned, every book, every pencil, every everything,
16 which made it very difficult for us when we tried to be creative teachers, but we
17 got through it all right. I had a nice class of 1st graders and a lot of good
18 experiences there.
19
20Interviewer: [47:21] How many children in the 1st grade?
21
22Viola Baas: There were, we, I had about 20-25 probably.
23
24Interviewer: The classes were smaller than they were in the states.
25
26Viola Baas: Yes. These kids in the army schools had no kindergarten other than a private
27 kindergarten that some of the mothers maintained. So 1st graders were almost like
28 kindergarteners...
29
30Interviewer: Mm-hm.
31
32Viola Baas: ...would be here. And I stayed until June of 1956, and then Phyllis and I came
33 home by boat to Lansing, Michigan.
34
35Interviewer: Mm-hm. [48:05] Um, you are through then...
36
37Viola Baas: I think that's [inaudible 48:09].
38
39Interviewer: ...with your overseas experiences?
40
41Viola Baas: I, think that...
42
43Interviewer: [48:11] What made you decide to come home?
44

1 Viola Baas: Well my family I guess, uh, influenced me to come. My parents were aged, and
2 my father was not very well, and, uh, I had been away 3 years. I'd liked to have
3 stayed in, uh, the fourth year, but I felt that I was obligated to come home and
4 relieve my sister of some of the responsibilities that she had with my parents. So it
5 was a excellent 3 years. It was a experience that I would not give a million dollars
6 for.
7

8 Interviewer: [48:53] When you came back, what, uh, changes did you notice in America, and
9 how did you feel upon your return?
10

11 Viola Baas: Well the, most of the changes were physical changes because there was a housing
12 boom. Streets were being widened and lots of building was going on. I felt, eh,
13 uh, pretty much as a foreigner. I was, eh, it's surprising how you can absorb the
14 culture. I had absorbed the Japanese culture, and I carried it right on to Germany
15 with me.
16

17 Interviewer: [49:32] You wanted to bow to people?
18

19 Viola Baas: Y-...

20

21 Interviewer: [49:34] You wanted them to bow to you?
22

23 Viola Baas: Well, all my Japanese expressions, and then it wasn't long before I had absorbed
24 the culture of the German people, and I enjoyed these cultures so much, and I
25 enjoyed the, [tsk] the, uh...
26

27 Interviewer: [49:50] Were you putting your hand out to shake hands with everyone? [laughter]
28

29 Viola Baas: No. No. But, but I enjoyed the, the, the leisure of living...
30

31 Interviewer: Mm-hm. [49:58] [inaudible 49:58] foreign countries?
32

33 Viola Baas: ...in both, in both cultures...
34

35 Interviewer: Mm-hm.
36

37 Viola Baas: ...much more than I did here. I..
38

39 Interviewer: [Okay 50:02].
40

41 Viola Baas: ...I was fortunate to be stationed in small towns every time...
42

43 Interviewer: Mm-hm.
44

1 Viola Baas: ...except in the City of Tokyo, which was a whole 'nother story all by itself. [tsk]
2 So when I came home, uh, I [inaudible 50:14] had this culture shock, but I was
3 accustomed to having so many things done for me in the army.
4

5 Interviewer: [50:20] That bothered you?
6

7 Viola Baas: And it, I liked it. It was [inaudible 50:24]. So the minute we hit New York, it was
8 another story.
9

10 Interviewer: [50:29] You were on your own?
11

12 Viola Baas: And we were on – there was nobody to carry our bags and nobody to help you,
13 and people in the restraints were rude. It was just a real culture shock. I would
14 have gotten on the next boat and gone right back.
15

16 Interviewer: I don't think, I don't think the independence bothered me at all when I came back,
17 but what did bother me was, uh, if I would speak of my experiences, uh, they
18 looked at me as if I were either, uh, uh, oh, I don't know how to explain it,
19 [inaudible 51:04] probably [chuckle] would be the best, uh, uh, explanation...
20

21 Viola Baas: Well I think that's...
22

23 Interviewer: ...but...
24

25 Viola Baas: ...that, that happened to me too.
26

27 Interviewer: I had to sit back and listen to their experiences...
28

29 Viola Baas: That's right.
30

31 Interviewer: ...at all times.
32

33 Viola Baas: Eh, we wanted to tell everybody...
34

35 Interviewer: Mm-hm.
36

37 Viola Baas: ...every experience we had because [inaudible 51:20].
38

39 Interviewer: And they weren't [very 51:20] interested.
40

41 Viola Baas: ...and people, eh, were not interested...
42

43 Interviewer: Mm-hm.
44

1 Viola Baas: ...because they couldn't identify with it.
2
3 Interviewer: Mm-hm.
4
5 Viola Baas: But my family was very interested in everything that I did. They were very, very,
6 very good listeners.
7
8 Interviewer: Mm-hm.
9
10 Viola Baas: And then immediately, I went, uh, into a school here in Lansing, and my kids
11 loved all of the tales, all the pictures, all the slides that I had, and I had a project
12 every year of a, of the culture in Germany and the culture in Japan. And, uh, I was
13 fortunate, too, that my principal was engaged to be married to a, a fellow who was
14 teaching for the army in Germany at the time, so we had a lot of things in
15 common. She was very interesting and interested in hearing my experiences. So I
16 didn't hear and feel as much of that. [inaudible 52:26]
17
18 Interviewer: Of course, I didn't know these people. I mean I came, I had not been in Lansing
19 before.
20
21 Viola Baas: Mm-hm. If you didn't know, if you didn't know someone to tell your experiences
22 to who were...
23
24 Interviewer: Mm-hm.
25
26 Viola Baas: ...really interested, you couldn't engage in a conversation with them because they
27 weren't interested. If you went to Japan, people would say oh, no.
28
29 Interviewer: Mm-hm.
30
31 Viola Baas: Oh, you went to Japan. Ooh, I wouldn't want to go there.
32
33 Interviewer: [laughter]
34
35 Viola Baas: That was their initial response, and I find that that's pretty much the way it is
36 today.
37
38 Interviewer: I was quite shocked when, uh, [throat clearing] it was a teacher, a very well
39 educated person, she told me to ramble on about Japan. When I did, she, uh, said
40 to me you sound like a goldarn Japanese.
41
42 Viola Baas: Mm-hm.
43
44 Interviewer: [laughter]

1
2 Viola Baas: Well people generally travel to Europe. I...
3
4 Interviewer: Mm-hm.
5
6 Viola Baas: ...we can identify with that culture.
7
8 Interviewer: Mm-hm. I don't believe, uh, anyone here really h-, they, eh, had any knowledge
9 of, uh, the graciousness of Japan.
10
11 Viola Baas: No. I didn't know. I had no idea.
12
13 Interviewer: Mm-hm.
14
15 Viola Baas: I, I had no idea what I, what to expect...
16
17 Interviewer: We...
18
19 Viola Baas: ...but [inaudible 53:42].
20
21 Interviewer: Eh, people were educated over there compared to here.
22
23 Viola Baas: Well I, I loved the people. I, I have not returned to Japan, but I would love to go
24 back.
25
26 Interviewer: Mm-hm.
27
28 Viola Baas: They were so gracious...
29
30 Interviewer: Mm-hm.
31
32 Viola Baas: ...to me and honest as the day is long.
33
34 Interviewer: And hardworking.
35
36 Viola Baas: Very hardworking. And they were deprived of so much.
37
38 Interviewer: Mm-hm.
39
40 Viola Baas: And, uh, I just, I just learned to love them.
41
42 Interviewer: Mm-hm. There's no wonder they recovered the way they did. The Germans
43 were...
44

1 Viola Baas: Yes.
2
3 Interviewer: ...very good to me too.
4
5 Viola Baas: Yes. Eh, I found it the same way in Germany.
6
7 Interviewer: [54:13] Especially with the German name?
8
9 Viola Baas: Yes.
10
11 Interviewer: [54:15] Did you have a German name, Vi?
12
13 Viola Baas: Yes. Baas.
14
15 Interviewer: [54:17] Baas, is that German?
16
17 Viola Baas: Yeah, they certainly know how to pronounce it there.
18
19 Interviewer: Oh. [laughter]
20
21 Viola Baas: Uh, and I...
22
23 Interviewer: [54:22] Well that made you really, uh, uh, special to them...
24
25 Viola Baas: Yeah.
26
27 Interviewer: ...didn't it? It did me I know.
28
29 Viola Baas: I didn't have any trouble with that name at all.
30
31 Interviewer: Yeah [inaudible] [Dutch 54:29]...
32
33 Viola Baas: Yeah.
34
35 Interviewer: ...and, when I said [inaudible] [Dutch 54:31] or I, I was just, uh, number one...
36
37 Viola Baas: [Oh 54:36].
38
39 Interviewer: ...on their agenda. [laughter]
40
41 Viola Baas: Because we can identify with Germany...
42
43 Interviewer: Right.
44

1 Viola Baas: ...because we have so many, so many people who are of German descent.
2

3 Interviewer: And the Austrians were totally delightful people.
4

5 Viola Baas: Mm-hm. The, um, school princ-, the school, um, secretary at Leipheim in
6 Germany was just a delightful person.
7

8 Interviewer: Mm-hm.
9

10 Viola Baas: And I struck up a friendship with her and we correspond yet.
11

12 Interviewer: Mm-hm.
13

14 Viola Baas: She is just a fine person.
15

16 Interviewer: [inaudible 55:04].
17

18 Viola Baas: I enjoy hearing from her a couple times a year, and she tells me all about her
19 family. Her little kids were all small at that time, and now they're all grown and
20 gone and many grandchildren. So I, I just, um, enjoyed that...
21

22 Interviewer: Mm-hm.
23

24 Viola Baas: ...so much.
25

26 Interviewer: It was, they were wonderful experiences...
27

28 Viola Baas: Mm-hm.
29

30 Interviewer: ...for us. Uh, it's a little different going as a tourist than going over there as, uh, a
31 member of an occupation force.
32

33 Viola Baas: Yes. And I tried to remember that I was a guest in the Country of Japan, and I was
34 a guest in Germany...
35

36 Interviewer: Mm-hm.
37

38 Viola Baas: ...and I wanted to present an image of an American that would be pleasing,
39 positive for...
40

41 Interviewer: Mm-hm.
42

43 Viola Baas: ...the, uh, the German people and the Japanese people. I wanted them to like me
44 as an American.

1

2Interviewer: Right.

3

4Viola Baas: And, uh, there, there were some negative thoughts with the armies being there,
5 and I can understand that, but I had just positive feelings toward both of these
6 cultures, and I think they did toward me.

7

8Interviewer: Mm-hm. Well thank you, Vi. This has been a wonderful experience interviewing
9 you.

10

11

12/lo