HAZEL PERCIUAL

Denver, Colorado Unit

Transcript of an Oral History Interview

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appropriate Fashion and with due credit to: Hazel Percival

PREFACE

This transcript is the product of a tape-recorded interview conducted on 23 May, 1386, For the Women ’s Overseas Service League.

Signed, dated agreements of release and biographical information accompany the original cassette.

Transcribed by Patricia Siggers

Lansing, Michigan 6 July 1388

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| **E** |  | **HAZEL PERCIUAL**  **Denver Unit** |
| **4** | **MB:**  **HP:** | **What is your name?**  **Hazel Percival.** |
|  | **MB:** | **When did you Join the Denver Unit of WDSL?** |
| **6** | **HP:** | **Roughly, about 1370,— along in there. I ’m not sure.** |

and they were

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| **B** | **MB:**  **HP:** | **What branch of the service did you serve?**  **Army Nurse Corps.** |
|  | **MB:** | **Why did you join the Army Nurse Corps?** |
| **10** | **HP:** | **Well, at that time it was the thing to do, talking about drafting nurses.** |
| **IE** | **MB:** | **Around what date did you Join?** |
|  | **HP:** | **In 1363 CsicJ 1343.** |

into the Army Nurse Corps, what did you

|  |  |  |
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| **14** | **MB:** | **Before you came do?** |
| **16** | **HP:**  **MB:** | **I worked at St.**  **What did you do** |

Luke ’s Hospital, Just general duty .

in the service?

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| **IB** | **HAZEL**  **HP:** | **PERCIUAL, Denver Unit** **2**  **I did a little bit of everything From teaching to** |
|  |  | **training and caring For patients.** |
| 20 | **MB:** | **Horn long were you in the Army Nurse Corps?** |
|  | **HP:** | **Twenty three years.** |
| **22** | **MB:** | **What were your overseas assignments?** |
| 24 | **HP:** | **My First one was to Europe. I went over there in 1943, and was there For two years— came home ’45, assigned to** |

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| **Fitzsimmons.** | **I thought they** | **lost me.** | **I stayed there For** |
| **seven years.** | **(Laughter)** |  |  |

Pretty soon I got orders, and where did I go? Panama!

2B What a delightFul place— once you get used to the heat and the bugs and the animals. From Panama, back to

30 Colorado again. I stayed in Colorado till I went to Alabama.

32 Then I went to Korea; a delightFul tour in Korea. I do say ’delightFul” because war was over, and it was

34 pleasant over there— once you got used to the smell:

From Korea back to Texas, and From Texas to Alabama:

36 From Alabama back to Fitzsimmons, and then I was retired here.

38 MB: Tell me about the kind oF housing you had when you were in the service.

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HO HP: Well, that housing varied from tent to semi-permanent type buildings; quonset huts, old apartment buildings

HE that had been taken over, but overall— I don ’t think me

were lacking in adequate housing. It wasn ’t really what HH we had been accustomed to where we grew u p . Warm but

comfortable, and lacked many of the niceties of life.

H6 CLaughter)

HB: How did you feel about the medical care that you got H8 while you were in the service?

HP: Well, I was so disgustingly healthy, I didn ’t have any

50 medical care other than annual physicals.

n B : Can you tell me about a couple of your memorable 5S experiences; funny, sad, or whatever?

HP: Off hand, I just c a n ’t think of anything in particular

5H that would be interesting— because you ’ve all had so many funny experiences. I guess going over aboard ship was

55 the most exciting because the war was on in Europe then.

UJe went in convoy out of New York; two days later picked

58 up more convoy out of Boston, and then went clear up to Iceland. Then Iceland— made the big bend across the top

50 of the world down into Scotland. We debarked in Scotland; Greenock, one of the towns on the west side of

5E the island there.

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| **64** | **MB:**  **HP:** | **Ulhat date was this?**  **That had to be 1343— toward the end of ’43. I came in in** |
|  |  | **the summer. It was in December.** |
| **66** | **MB:** | **What was your First assignment over there during the war?** |
| 68 | **HP:** | **Well, I went over with the station hospital, and my First assignment was housekeeper For the nurses. (Laughter)** |
|  | **MB:** | **Where was that hospital located?** |
| **70** | **HP:** | **Our hospital was between Barnstaple and BideFord in Southwest England.** |
| **78** | **MB:** | **In those days, a nurse was a housekeeper— right?** |
| **74** | **HP:** | **Yes, we did, and the only reason I got the job was the**  **Fact that I had such a cold they wouldn’t let me go on the wards to work. I thought I was never going to get** |
| **76** |  | **rid oF this housekeeping job; which I did, Finally, and** |
|  |  | **got to be a nurse.** |
| **78** | **MB:** | **When you First went in the service, what was the greatest** |
|  |  | **adjustment you ever had to make?** |
| **80**  88 | **HP:** | **Getting used to so many people around you. I had grown up in a small town with no brothers and sisters, so I was**  **pretty much a loner. Then, to be thrust in with a whole** |

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|  | **HAZEL** | **PERCIUAL, Denver Unit**  **mob; literally, that** | **5**  **was my big adjustment. But, oh! it** |
| **84** |  | **was wonderful.** |  |
|  | **MB:** | **When you went in the** | **Army Nurse Corps, did you plan to** |
| **BE** |  | **make it a career?** |  |
|  | **HP:** | **I sort of did, yes.** |  |
| **88** | **MB:** | **When did you finally** | **decide that you were going to stay** |
|  |  | **in?** |  |
| **80 HP: On board ship, coming back from Europe. In 1845, I** | | | |
|  |  | **decided this is as good a place as any for me. I ended** | |
| **98** |  | **up here at Fitzsimmons and went regular army.** | |
|  | **MB:** | **After you retired, what did you do?** | |
| **34** | **HP:** | **Absolutely nothing!** | |
|  | **MB:** | **You really retired!** | |
| **86** | **HP:** | **That ’s what retirement is, isn ’t it?** | |
|  | **MB:** | **What does being a member of WOSL mean to you?** | |
| **88** | **HP:** | **Well, I think i t ’s some of the finest group of people I** | |
|  |  | **have known in my life. W e ’re not all nurses, but w e ’ve** | |
| **100** |  | **all served our country in some way, shape, or form in** | |
|  |  | **years past.** | |
| **108** |  | **Socially, I think i t ’s a fine organization; and they do** | |
|  |  | **wonderful work, too.** | |

HAZEL PERCIUAL, Denver Unit B

104 fIB: D.K. Thank you very much.

10B Transcribed by Patricia Siggers Lansing, Michigan