

**Interview of Dorothy McDonald
on her service in the U.S. Army Nurse Corps**

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Dorothy McDonald: My name is Dorothy B. McDonald. Now, in the service it was Roberts. And my address is 8904 Edgewater Drive Southwest, Tacoma, Washington. Now, what's, what comes n-. [laughing] [0:19] What branch of the service did you serve? I was in the AMC, or Army Nurse Corps, for three years and four months. I was stationed at Camp Carson for 15 months and then we went over to, uh, England, and then from England to Scotland, and then from Scotland to France, from France on up into s-, Germany.

[0:44] Uh, what influenced you to volunteer? Uh, Pearl Harbor. [laughter]

[0:50] What did you do prior to enlistment? I was a, a staff nurse at the veteran's hospital at American Lake. Uh. Tsk. And I did staff nursing in the service. [coughing]

[1:06] Did, uh, did I expect this to, uh, prepare me for a career? No. [laughing] And it didn't. I already had my career.

[1:14] What was your pay? Seventy dollars a month when I started. It was raised to \$150 before we went overseas. Now, uh, they made it, uh, the same as any officer in the army. Uh.

[1:30] Were you given equal opportunities for service and education? Yes. [That's a given] [inaudible 1:36]. Uh. In my branch, of course, the assignments were all nursing assignments of certain d-, of different divisions of nursing. Uh. I do not know what took place in the WACS.

[1:52] What was the nature of your housing? At Camp Carson, we were housed in private rooms and barracks. Overseas, we lived in tents, uh, most of the time. In Scotland, we were in a, in a hospital there, uh, taking care of, of the men as they came off the ships from seasickness. Uh. In – when we went into France, we were in four-bed-to-a-tent accommodations. Uh. Now, our medical care was good. They took good care of us.

[2:29] What was your uniform dress? Uh, when we first, uh, joined the Army, [throat clearing] our uniform dress was the n-, was the Army blues dress uniform. Then before we went overseas, they transferred us to the khaki, tsk, and, uh, our, uh, s-, uh, uniform for on duty was a, a dress, uh,

1 made of seersucker. Striped seersucker. Uh. When we got overseas, we
2 found we didn't have much use for the seersucker. We wore fatigues. Uh.

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4 [3:00] What were my memorable experiences? Well, landing on
5 Normandy Beach made quite an impression on me since I had to wade in.
6 Uh. I can't think of anything very special that came up after that except
7 just taking care of the wounded men as they came into the hospitals. Uh.

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9 [3:22] Compare service careers to [any of 3:25] the present. I, I believe
10 the nurses are far more advanced now than they were at our time. Just as
11 nursing has advanced in all private hospitals, too. [inaudible 3:39]

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13 [3:41] Did you experience conflict between being feminine and being in
14 the military? No.

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16 [3:46] Did you h-, use benefits of the G.I. Bill? No, I already had my
17 education. I had graduated as a graduate nurse from a hospital in Seattle
18 and then I graduated from the University of Washington in nursing.

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20 [4:02] What demands the greatest adjustments in, in going into the
21 service? Oh, it wasn't too much adjustment. Uniform dress, of course,
22 was different but I didn't mind that. Living with others was fine. I'd lived
23 with'm all my life. [laughing] We – uh, I lived in nursing homes in
24 hospitals that I served in, uh, private duty, so, uh, I didn't mind that at all,
25 and I didn't f-, notice any lack of freedom particularly. Uh. Terminology
26 was hard to get along with in the Army at times, uh, especially the initials
27 that they were always using. I used to get tangled up with them.

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29 [4:42] What was the most unpopular rab-, regulation? Well, the one thing
30 I just did not, uh, like was drilling. I went in to take care of the sick. I
31 didn't go in to be a soldier, and so consequently, getting out and marching
32 up and down and doing exercises and things like that didn't go much with
33 me. I was 36 years old when I went into the Army, [throat clearing] and
34 I'd gotten over that stage of enjoying that type of thing.

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36 [5:12] What did you do after your service was concluded? I came back
37 home, was discharged at – uh, down in California and came back up to
38 Washington and went back into the veteran's bureau at American Lake to
39 go to work again. So, and that is it.

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