

MARGARET PATRICIA PHILLIPS

Denver, Colorado Unit

Transcript of an Oral History Interview

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Margaret Patricia Phillips

PREFACE

This transcript is the product of a tape-recorded interview conducted on 1 March, 1986, 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*

1 May 1988

MARGARET PATRICIA PHILLIPS

2 Denver Unit

MB: When did you Join the Denver Unit of WDSL?

4 MP: I believe I joined in about 1969.

MB: What branch of the service did you serve in?

G MP: I served in the Army Nurse Corps.

MB: What influenced you to go into the Army Nurse Corps?

B MP: I graduated from nurses training in 1944, and I joined
for patriotic reasons.

10 MB: What did you do prior to enlisting in the Army Nurse
Corps?

12 MP: I graduated in '43, and then I worked on staff duty at
Grace Hospital, Northwestern Branch, in
14 Detroit, Michigan, prior to coming into service.

MB: What did you do in the Army Nurse Corps?

IG MP: I had varied positions. I came in a second lieutenant
and did staff duty and later worked in the 91-C
18 and after that became chief nurse at various hospitals.

MB: What do you mean by the 91-C courses?

20 MP: A 91-C course is very similar to a licensed
practical nurse course. When students graduate From
this Army
EE training school, they're eligible to take a licensure in
the state.

24 MB: How long were you in the Army Nurse Corps?

MP: I was in the Army Nurse Corps thirty-two years, ten
26 months, and seven days.

MB: How many hours? (Laughter) Where did your travels take
28 you?

MP: My travels took me to Hawaii, Europe for seven years and
30 two different assignments, Korea, Uietnam, and
various stateside assignments. I think I had about
seventeen
32 different assignments within the USA.

MB: What kind of housing did you have when you were in the
34 Army Nurse Corps?

MP: My housing varied. When we started out, it was barracks
36 with many people in one room. Then, we graduated to
two in a room. Then, later, it was
share-a-bath; then we
38 were able to live out on the economy.

MB: What was your uniform dress?

40 MP: That, too, varied. I 've worn fatigues, the brown
 seersucker uniform (wrap-around): Then we had
 the

42 starch-white uniform and up to the present day
uniform, which is more of a polyester drip-dry, along
with the
44 slacks.

MB: What was the nature of the medical care that was
46 available to you?

MP: I always had very adequate care from the Army, and I
40 still appreciate anything that I get from Fitzsimmons.

MB: What were your memorable experiences?

50 MP: Memorable experiences were numerous. The one that
comes to mind is when I was in Uietnam. We were
supposed to
52 leave early in the evening from Bien Hoe, and at that
time we were being bombed. We didn't get out till about
54 five o'clock in the morning, and I always remember when
the plane went up, everybody started clapping. They
put
56 off the lights on the plane; we knew we were on our
way home.

58 MB: Can you compare service careers then with the
present time?

60 *MP: Yes, there have been many, many changes in the*
 medical profession- including nursing. I think the
 nurses of
62 *today are very technical-minded, and are certainly very*
 proficient in monitoring and doing a lot of technical
 work
64 *that wasn't even available in our time. However, I do*

think there is good and bad. I do think that the
nurses GG of our time were more patient oriented.

6B MB: What required the greatest adjustment For you when you
came into the Army Nurse Corps?

70 MP: Probably community living, but I can't say that was a
great problem because I didn't have that much trouble
adjusting; but I 'm sure it was very difficult for
some
7E people.

74 MB: When you came into the Army Nurse Corps, did you plan on
staying in the Army Nurse Corps? or did it Just sort
of grow into a career?

7G MP: It actually grew into a career. I had no intentions
of joining the Army Nurse Corps. I knew very little
about

78 it. I 'm sure when I came in, in 1944; if the war
hadn't been on, I
never would have made a career of it. I
came

80 in, and then in 194G, everybody was left out of
service because they didn't realize how large the nurse
corps

8E would be; nor did they have the funds.

I had no sooner got out of the service than I got all

84 *kinds of information in the mail, asking me to come*
back in. Although I hadn't seen much of the world with
the
86 *exception of Okinawa and Japan, I thought: Well, I'll*
come in for another two years, and perhaps be
fortunate
88 *enough to go to Europe.*

MB: What did you do after you retired From the service?

MP: Actually, after I retired from the service I really
S
O enjoyed my civilian life as much as I enjoyed my military
life. I 've been involved with all kinds of
S
E organizations, most of them patriotic and I have enjoyed
that time very much.

34 MB: What does being a member of WOSL mean to you?

MP: I 've enjoyed being with WOSL because I think it's a
SS patriotic organization, and it's very interested in doing
activities to help society.

98 MB: Thank you very much.

Transcribed by Patricia Siggers

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Lansing, Michigan