RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY

NEW BRUNSWICK

AN INTERVIEW WITH EDNA M. NEWBY

FOR THE

RUTGERS ORAL HISTORY ARCHIVES OF WORLD WAR II

INTERVIEW CONDUCTED BY

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TRANSCRIPT BY

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Kurt Piehler: This begins an interview with Edna M. Newby on February 21, 1997 in Metuchen, New Jersey with Kurt Piehler and ...

Barbara Tomblin: Barbara Tomblin.

KP: I always start off interviews by asking people about their parents, and both your parents were born in Britain.

Edna Newby: Correct.

KP: Why did your parents decide to come to the United States? Apparently, before we had started, you had hinted there was a story that involved, not the First World War but the Boer War.

EN: Correct. My father was, I would think, twenty-two or three at the time of the Boer War, and for some reason or other, he got it into his young head that he wanted to join the British troops in the Boer War. Perhaps it was Mr. Churchill's dispatches that interested him. Do you remember that?

KP: Yes, yes.

EN: … His father didn't want him to go, and so his father said, "I'll send you to America if you would give up that idea, and you can work with your uncles in Boston, who are building the East Boston Tunnel." My father was a bricklayer by trade, and so he said, "All right." He'd like to go to America, and he liked it so much that he continued his courtship of my mother in England from America, going back a couple of times and eventually getting her to agree to come and on July 3rd, yes, July 3rd, I think, she arrived. … After a horrible journey, and, by ship, of course, and she was seasick all the way. She wanted to die everyday, she said, even though Father was waiting at the other end. They were not yet married. When she got here, he had the church and the minister and the choir in the church he had been attending all ready for the wedding. He had her wedding dress bought and ...

BT: Amazing.

EN: … I guess, it was the 2nd that she arrived, the 2nd of July, and, of course, they had to be married immediately, couldn't ... put it off as we do nowadays. ... They were married on the 3rd and they spent their honeymoon in the Bronx, because the Bronx was then farmland.

BT: That's right.

EN: … They went to a farm up there and Mother woke up the next morning to the worst noise. She couldn't imagine what was going on, guns and shots. Well, it was July the 4th and those were the days when everybody had firecrackers of some sort. We, as children, had firecrackers all the time. … She didn't like, at all, the idea of eating corn out of your hand. That was something she couldn't believe, but other than that she thought America was very nice. … They had lived in the Bronx for a number of years, and I was born in the Bronx, now, I think, probably part of Harlem.

… We stayed there for, I don't know, two or three years, and then we moved to Mount Vernon, New York, where my only other sibling, a sister, was born four years after me. And that's the story of why he came to America.

KP: Since you spoke of the Bronx, do you have any memories of going to the Bronx Zoo when you were growing up?

EN: Oh, indeed. In fact, I love zoos and whenever I have traveled, and I've done a lot of traveling, I always go to the zoo in the town that I'm in, if I can, because my mother used to wheel me to the Bronx Zoo. … We were close enough to do that, and we didn't have a car, of course, in those days. In fact, there weren't any cars. I think it was several years later … before anybody got cars.

BT: Oh, I don't know.

EN: … Certainly, it was 1920 or '22 before we had a car.

KP: Your father sounds like he was fairly successful as a bricklayer.

EN: Yes. For several years, just before the Depression, he had his own business with another gentleman from our town. By this time, we had moved to New Jersey.

BT: Yes, I remember you were telling me.

EN: Yes. I think I was about eight or nine, when we moved to New Jersey, and so the First World War was in my memory as a child, just soon after we moved to New Jersey and I remember so well. We lived next to a German family. … As children, we would have nothing to do with those German children next door. Isn't that dreadful?

BT: Oh, gee.

KP: What happened to the German family?

EN: I have no idea.

KP: Oh, but they stayed in the house while you were there? Did they move out of the neighborhood?

EN: Not that I recall ...

KP: No.

EN: ... But, remember, I was only eight, or nine, or ten, or something like that.

BT: What town were you living in?

EN: Palisades Park ...

BT: Palisades Park ...

EN: New Jersey.

BT: Okay, up near ...

EN: Not the amusement park but the town.

KP: The town.

EN: Yes.

BT: Sure I get it.

EN: Where my father became a councilman, and we were very proud of him. Let's see, you asked me ...

KP: Well, I guess speaking a little bit about maybe also your mother. Your mother was a teacher in England.

EN: Yes, yes, although she didn't have any college training. She was teaching little children, nursery school, well, I guess it wasn't called nursery school but grammar school. She didn't teach for very long, because they went through this getting married, her coming to the United States, and then she never worked after that.

BT: She didn't?

EN: Except for a brief time during the Depression when my father lost everything, including our house, our car, and everything else, because he had debts that he couldn't pay, because he couldn't get any work. Nobody was building anything. But he had quite a nice business for awhile. We did very well, and that's when I started in college, because that's when he was doing so well. They could send me to college, and I always wanted to go. … My junior year he lost his business, et cetera, and it looked as though I was going to have to give up college, but that was my idea, "I should give it up and come home and help them," but they insisted they would get along. My sister, in the meantime, got a job in the local bank earning fifteen dollars a week, and they lived on that … don't ask me how. I, in the meantime, got one of the two scholarships that were offered at NJC in those days. They didn't have much money. I think I was given a hundred dollars and I borrowed some amount, two or three hundred dollars from the Alumnae Fund, which had started, Alumnae Loan Fund for students, and I was paying that back for years after I got out of college at five dollars a month. When I was earning, you know, ninety-six dollars a month, it wasn't very easy.

BT: No, it isn't.

EN: Well, when do you want me to stop that?

KP: Did your father ever recoup from the Great Depression?

EN: No, he went back to work as a bricklayer for awhile, and then during the Second World War, he went and worked in Raritan Arsenal. As I understand it, he was packing ammunitions to go abroad to Europe. He didn't like that at all. He wanted to go back to bricklaying. After the war, he went back to bricklaying for a brief time, but, by this time, he was well along and not very able to carry it on, although I gather he was a good bricklayer. … Of course, he was a union man. They had a strong bricklayer's-plasterer's-something union, and they managed but goodness knows how. I sent them fifty dollars a month out of my hundred dollar check a month … because they were still living up in Bergen County. They had moved to Leonia ... when he was in his prime business. … He built a house for us in Leonia, New Jersey, a very nice area, and I went to Leonia High School, as did my sister, but he never recovered financially from it at all and eventually it was obvious that he couldn't work anymore. So I moved them down to New Brunswick with me, because by this time I had been called back to the college after being graduated. I was called back to work here … in New Brunswick, and I worked there for thirty-seven years in various capacities by starting out as a clerk-typist and ending up as the associate dean of the college, and I had the pleasure of helping five new deans come in to office and ... carry on.

KP: Yes, learn how to become a dean.

EN: Yes, because they were all teachers.

KP: None of them had been deans before.

EN: All had been professors. I think that's right. None of them had been in administrative work, so it was good for me, because, ... although they had the brains, I had the little bit of the know-how to help them. … Yes, that was, I had a great job, jobs, and I just moved from one job to another. I always say, "As people got tired of me, they asked somebody else to take me," [laughter] and I did pretty well.

BT: I'm still curious about World War I. Was there anything else you remembered? You would have been in first or second grade.

EN: That's about it. Yes, see, I would've been ...

BT: You don't remember anything about the war other than your neighbors?

EN: … I was seven when we went into the war, seven years old. No, I can't say I remember much about World War I. Is that odd?

KP: You mentioned, though, on your survey that you had two uncles that served in the British army.

EN: Oh, yes. Yes, I did, but, of course, I didn't know them.

KP: Yes.

EN: I never met any of my uncles. I met an aunt but years later when I went to England, and she was in a nursing home. … I remember going by train out to … the shore to visit her in this nursing home and she looked just like my mother. I didn't have to ask. I walked into a room where there were four or five women in bed and I knew immediately which one was my aunt. She was a very elderly lady then. By this time, my mother had died, so there we were.

KP: You mentioned that your mother re-entered the work force in the '30s to help out.

EN: Oh, very briefly. She got a job when dad wasn't working and wasn't well, because this loss of everything ...

KP: It must've been very hard for you.

EN: It was not good on his mind. He was always sick with something, always sick, and still out-lived Mother by two years. But Mother got a job. As I recall, it was a stationary store in Leonia. We knew the people and they gave her a job. I'm sure it was only part-time, and I don't think it was for very long, but it helped out. See, I wasn't home then. I was at the college, and I don't know why she left there or when. She was a very bright woman ... a person everybody liked. She put up with an awful lot with my nervous, upset dad in his later years.

BT: Through the Depression.

KP: ... It was fairly rare for women to go to college in your day. What led you to go to college? Did you know very early that you would go to college, or was it something that developed later on?

EN: I just always wanted to go. I don't know why.

KP: Really? When you were very young?

EN: Well, as soon as I knew what there was in the way of education. I was always very curious about it, everything. I always wanted to learn a lot. I never wanted to be a real scholar. I was never so enamored of any subject that I would give my life to it, but I wanted to know about everything. … It seemed to me a liberal arts college, as I understood it, was the place to go, and that's why I went. I went to NJC because my mother was a member of the Women's Clubs in Leonia, the Federation of Women's Clubs.

BT: Right, right.

EN: … Of course, Mrs. Douglass was very interested in the Women's Clubs and she came and spoke at one of the meetings. Now, I had my mind made up I wanted to go the women's college in Connecticut, but just because, of course, I'd heard of someone who went there. I guess that I liked

it. [laughter] You know, you had silly reasons. … Mother came home from this meeting, where Mrs. Douglass had spoken, and she said, "I know where you're going to go to college. You're going to go to that place down in New Brunswick, that New Jersey College for Women," she said, "I think it's called." And, of course, in those days, when Mother said something ...

BT: That's right.

EN: ... one followed the lead. … I didn't know a thing about Connecticut, anyhow, so off I went and loved every minute of my college career.

KP: How good was your preparation for college particularly in Leonia High School?

EN: Oh, very good, very good. That was a community just across the Hudson River, from which many of the not wealthy but well educated men went to New York to work and their children all went to college. However, from Palisades Park, which was the other town I had lived in … [tape paused]

KP: Well, you mentioned that Leonia was ...

EN: Yes, an upper class community. Let's put it that way.

KP: Which Palisades Park, you said was more ...

EN: Was more working man's community … but of the many children in my Palisades Park neighborhood, none of them went to college, that I recall, especially the girls, almost none. No, I don't know of any. But in Leonia, more of them did go. [Of] course, I wasn't … a real Leonian, because I had come from Palisades Park.

KP: [laughter] Were there distinctions made between ...

EN: I think so. Well, of course, those folks in Leonia had lived together for many years. Many of them, their grandparents lived in Leonia, and we were newcomers.

KP: But it sounds like your mother, for example, was active in the Women's Club.

EN: Yes, she was. Yes, she was, and she was a very, very active Eastern Star … something I've never myself joined. But she was a leader in the sense that she could get along with everybody. She was just a fine woman.

KP: And you mentioned your father was in the council.

EN: Yes.

KP: Was that in Leonia?

EN: No, that was Palisades Park.

KP: That was Palisades Park.

EN: Oh, no, he'd never be in Leonia. [laughter] Not a bricklayer. Maybe you ought to take that out. That doesn't sound very nice.

BT: No, I think it's just reality.

EN: But it's the way things were.

BT: Given that not many women went to college, how did you feel about going to NJC?

EN: But when you say, "Not many girls went to college." Let's see, there were a good many in my class that came from all over, mostly New Jersey. In NJC, what were there? About three hundred, I think. Okay?

KP: While you were talking to your neighbor, Barbara and I said we should really ask you some more about the 1920s.

BT: 1920s.

KP: Because most people we interview talk about the '30s.

EN: True.

KP: A student has just asked me about this, about an alleged speakeasy near Douglass, in one of the buildings near Douglass, which was allegedly a speakeasy. I was wondering if you had any memories of Prohibition.

EN: Well, I have vague memories, I must say. My family wasn't a drinking family at all, so I don't think it hit them very hard that they couldn't drink, although I'd suspect that they drank more after Prohibition then they did before. It was the thing to do if you were young people, as they were, young married people. That was quite interesting. No, I don't know anything about that speakeasy.

KP: Yes, I just was wondering, 'cause one of the students, I think, she had visited friends who were living there and it apparently had some things that suggest it could have been a speakeasy.

EN: I'm afraid I was inclined to be a believer in the law. … I just did what I was supposed to do. I didn't smoke and I didn't drink, 'cause we weren't supposed to. … Then in my junior year, which was 1929, they lifted the smoking ban, and, of course, I smoked like a trooper and smoked for years and years and finally decided that wasn't the thing to do so I gave it up ...

BT: Did girls in high school, in Leonia, did they smoke? Did they drink?

EN: When I was there?

BT: Yes, I don't know much about high school life in the '20s. My mother talked a little bit about it but not too much.

EN: I don't really know the answer. I'm sure there was some of it, but I was not one of that crowd to be sure.

BT: Because what we hear about the '20s, of course, is the, you know, the liberated flapper girls ... and women getting the ... vote and a whole era of women being, I guess, more daring.

EN: Yes, my mother, I'm sure, was in the march for women's suffrage.

BT: Oh, she was?

EN: Yes.

BT: That's interesting.

EN: Yes. More than that, I don't know about women's suffrage. I'm not much help to you on that, am I? I'm afraid I wasn't one of the racy crowd, you know ...

KP: Was there a racy crowd?

EN: Oh, I think so. Yes, I think so, but I was not one of that. No, sorry. [laughter]

KP: Did you belong to any organizations or clubs?

EN: Yes, I loved all kinds of sports. I was a wonderful pitcher. I always won my games in high school and college. I always won baseball games. I liked basketball. I liked track, jumping, stuff like that. I was not very fast on my feet, so I wasn't much of a runner, nor was I much of a basketball player, but I just loved playing. … We had a lot of good athletes. We thought they were good, and we used to have intercollegiate, a lot of intercollegiate sports. Now, that went out for women, later. They stopped having things between high schools. It's coming back again now, but for many years we didn't have inter-collegiate sports. It was just intramural, we called it, between classes. Yes, I was a member of the YWCA, as I recall. Isn't that funny? I can't remember what I belonged to in high school. I can remember better what I did in college.

KP: How active was your family in church?

EN: My mother was very active, yes, indeed. She went to church. We belonged to the Episcopal Church, naturally, coming from England, and I went to church. My sister and I were in the choir. We went to Sunday school. I taught Sunday school.

KP: You mentioned your father took quite a battering in the Great Depression.

EN: Yes.

KP: Did he change his political outlook at all? You listed that he was a Republican. Did he stay loyal to the Republican party?

EN: Yes. Oh, yes. Oh, indeed. He would have nothing to do with Democrats and how he hated Franklin D. Roosevelt.

KP: Really.

EN: Oh, because he took money out of his paycheck, see.

BT: Oh, that's why.

EN: Oh, he had no right to take anything out of the paycheck ...

BT: That's interesting.

EN: … for social security. But I'll tell you, when he no longer could work and he got, he and Mother together got, ninety-five dollars a month, that was their social security check, that was a great help to me because ...

BT: Oh, yes.

EN: … You know, I had to pay the rest of the bills, but I gave them that money. I thought that was for them, and then I took care of the household things. But my father could have his beer, which he loved, and his cigars, which he loved, and that's all he wanted was his beer and cigars and that's what he bought out of his social security money. I think Mother did more in the way of buying things for other people.

KP: But in some ways, the retirement with social security and with your help, they had in a sense a comfortable retirement in the end.

EN: Well, I hope they did.

KP: … Well, I mean it seems like the social security was this big help.

EN: Oh, indeed, indeed. Well, when you realize I was only earning, maybe by this time, a hundred and fifty dollars a month, and they were getting ninety-five dollars a month, you know, it's not much, but we managed on it. … I moved them down to New Brunswick so that we could be together, because my sister wanted to get married by this time and I couldn't see how she could get married and leave them. We couldn't take care of them up there in a big house. The bank that my sister worked in had the mortgage on our house when my father lost it, because he couldn't pay the

mortgage, and so the bank was very good to us. They charged us I think, forty dollars a month rent, which wasn't too bad.

BT: They let you stay in the house.

EN: Yes, let us stay in the house.

BT: Oh, that's wonderful.

EN: But, you know, out of what they were getting, it wasn't very much, 'cause he wasn't retired yet. It was years before he was retired, it seemed to me.

BT: So when you moved them to New Brunswick, you really didn't own a house. I mean, you couldn't ...

EN: Oh, no. No, no. Oh, no. No, we ... didn't have anything … but having them together was easier for me and my mother, of course, and my father, both of them took care of everything in the home. I didn't have to worry about eating or anything. Mother did all the laundry and housework.

KP: So in a sense you could really concentrate on your work.

EN: Yes, and I did. I did. I worked many, many hours overtime just because I loved the work, depending on what I was doing. I liked everything I did, anyhow. Yes.

KP: … Had you traveled much before going away to college?

EN: Oh, goodness, no. The farthest I'd been was New York City. I don't think I'd been anywhere else and that was true for years. I didn't go anywhere. One summer, I remember, or one winter … just after the Depression, a friend and I, a very old friend from, no, she wasn't old in years, but a longtime friend of the family, with the families, decided that we would save our money all winter, what we could, and we'd take the family up to the Poconos for a week, for a vacation, 'cause we hadn't had any vacation. So we saved and saved, and somehow or other I found a place where we could rent a cottage very reasonably. I couldn't even tell you for how much. I think it was something like thirty dollars for the week.

BT: Wow.

EN: … So her mother and two daughters, so there were three of them and my mother, my sister and myself, all went up to the Poconos, all in one car, as I recall, because we only had one car in each family, and we used my car. … Mr. Selltiz was going to come up over the weekend with my father. It rained every single day. It was cold; it was nasty. It was the worst week I've ever remembered. I had a toothache, and it just was awful. But we'd saved that money and we all went. I never wanted to go to the Poconos again.

BT: Did people ever go down to the Shore? You could go on the railroad, I think, in those days.

EN: Yes, when, during the days when my father ... had this very good business, we went to Rockaway Point every summer … I should've said, we did go ... to Long Island every summer.

BT: Beautiful place.

EN: We went by subway and boat out through Sheep's Head Bay on a little boat … out to Long Island. … Rockaway Point was a bungalow colony, just little bungalows, and we had one right on the beach. … I've always credited my good health … to those days. I think it was four or five years, my father rented a place. We paid five hundred dollars for the season, no, two hundred fifty dollars for the season, for this bungalow.

BT: For the whole summer?

EN: Whole summer.

BT: That's a wonderful.

EN: From the minute, the day after school closed we went, and we came back the day before school opened.

BT: Sounds heavenly.

EN: It was wonderful. I learned to swim in the ocean, and it was great. … There were other people there, people from Brooklyn, who lived next door. … There was a boy, I think he was a year younger than I was, but we were inseparable. We tossed a ball on the beach by the hour, one from one jetty to the other, and people used to come and watch us, I can remember. Several men standing watching us, because we got so good. You know, we could catch anything. He was excellent. He was very fast, and I wasn't too bad for a girl, of course. … Those were wonderful days for children, I think, very good. My sister was, of course, considerably younger, and the first year or so, my mother had a terrible time with her, because all she wanted to do was eat the sand. She actually ate sand.

BT: My goodness.

EN: She was a little thing. Yes, yes.

KP: Did your parents ever go back to England?

EN: They went once before I was born. There was another girl. They had a daughter. … When she was quite little, they decided they would go back to stay, and they sold everything they had bought for their apartment, gave up their apartment and started off. … Mother hadn't been on the boat more than half an hour before she said, "I knew I didn't want to go." So, Father said, he was always very agreeable with her, he said, "Whatever you want. We'll stay a couple weeks and then we'll come back again, start over again." … That's exactly what they did. That baby died before I

was born from one of these children's diseases, meningitis of some sort, which was very prevalent in those days, and they didn't know what to do about it. The child just died. So when I came along, my mother said, she had me to the doctor continually and the doctor kept saying, "It's just a sneeze, you don't have to worry about it." No, I was always very healthy, I think, quite healthy.

KP: What was it like to live away from home your first year in college?

EN: Isn't it interesting? I was never homesick. … I was never homesick from that point of view. Two or three years later when I had a spell of appendicitis and I went back to college after I had the appendices taken care of and then I was homesick for the first time.

BT: Isn't that something?

EN: Wasn't that funny? No, I know what homesickness feels like, but I was not homesick the first year … Oh, college was such an eye opener. These people, my teachers knew so much, and they were so nice. We had some wonderful teachers. You're a history professor, right?

KP: Yes.

EN: Emily Hickman.

KP: Yes, you mentioned that she was your favorite professor.

EN: I had her for intellectual history, and I thought that was the most wonderful course I've ever had. Once I corrected her on something. She didn't like that. [laughter] But I think I was right. [laughter]

KP: She was also very active in ...

EN: Oh, very.

KP: ... politics and ...

EN: International things.

KP: Yes.

EN: Yes. The International ... Association of ... I don't know what it was that she was so active in. Now … [were] those the years when we started the League of Nations? No, that was earlier. You know when you [have] eighty years of stuff in your head, you can't always keep them in the right spot.

KP: You mentioned you never really wanted to go to graduate school. What did you think you'd like to become when you entered college?

EN: A doctor. Oh, not when I entered college, I wanted to be a teacher, of course. You either were a teacher or a nurse in those days. You weren't anything else. You didn't [go to] graduate school. … You had all you could do to get through undergraduate school, in terms of finances, you know.

KP: So you really thought you'd become a teacher when you graduated.

EN: Oh, yes, and I took the teaching course. I took education, and I was a math major. I took math because it was the easiest thing for me. I was good in it and I loved the extracurricular activities. That's what I was interested in. … That's what got me my jobs, because ... as I worked on international things, I got to know a lot of the faculty and administration and they knew me, and when they had a job, they'd offer it to me, you know. So that's really what … gave me my career was the extracurricular activities. … Of course, I was chairman of the Honor Board, you know, I was so proper and so good. [laughter]

KP: What other clubs were you in?

EN: International Relations Club, yes. There weren't so many clubs in those days. I was always in the YWCA for some reason. Oh, dear, I don't know.

KP: Were you active in the student government at all besides the Honor Board?

EN: Well, I must've been ... to be elected to the Honor Board my senior year. I don't remember what I was. I suspect I was on the legislative committee. You know we had the honor system, and I believed in that whole-heartedly. It broke my heart when they gave it up …

KP: Since we were talking about the honor code, how well did the honor code work when you were a student yourself?

EN: Very well.

KP: Did you know people who cheated and were reported?

EN: … Oh, yes. ... Well, I had people in my class, who once in awhile would ask me, you know, "Did you get question five?" And I'd say, "You know better than to ask me that. Where's the Honor Board, where's the honor system?" That shut them up. I felt terribly proper, terribly proper, but that's what made it work, of course, that most of us were willing. … We hated to see it go, the alumnae did. I bet some of them don't even know it doesn't exist anymore.

KP: Oh, I'm sure, yes.

EN: Yes, but it's been gone for years.

KP: One of the things my students are impressed with when they read both the Douglass paper and the Rutgers paper, is really the whole set of events that used to be part of college that they don't

know of anymore, the dances and the formal events. Could you maybe speak a little bit about the social calendar at NJC when you were a student?

EN: Well, let's see. There was the occasional fraternity party across town but very occasionally, and there wasn't a lot of dating back and forth, then, in my day as a student. We had a freshman breakfast that was on campus, and then we had a sophomore luncheon and a junior banquet and a senior banquet. At the senior banquet, you had to tell whether you were engaged and occasionally a girl would admit to being married. Oh, dear.

BT: Oh, my goodness. That must have been exciting.

EN: 'Cause you weren't allowed to be married and live on campus. Oh, no. I don't know what they thought you might do to the rest of the group. But, oh, we had Halloween dances, often with just the girls, to tell you the truth. I hadn't realized how strange that was until, you know, more recently.

BT: So you did dance with one another?

EN: Oh, indeed.

BT: It wasn't dancing with men.

EN: Yes, now you wouldn't think of it, would you? I don't know whether they do now.

KP: Well, you also had, which they still do maintain, the Sacred Path.

EN: Oh, yes. Oh, sure. That was a path on which you didn't walk as a freshman, and then at the end of the freshman year, you had a tradition that you were led up the path by, I think it was, your junior sister. We each had a junior sister as a freshman ...

BT: Yes, they did some kind of a ...

EN: … To whom we grew very attached, and, you know, she was very helpful and it was a very good arrangement. Yes, and let's see. We used to, where was it? We used to go to Princeton for one of our, one of these big affairs, meals. … Then we had a Quair. I was the business manager of Quair. That was the annual that the junior class put out … because, unlike many places, because the junior class was less busy, and it was a big project. I was the business manager and I had to raise all the money to run that thing, and we did it through ads and selling. … It seems to me I raised something like seven thousand dollars. Nowadays that doesn't sound like much, but in those days, it was quite a bit of money, and we had a Quair that had color in it for the first time. … Remember, that was 1930.

BT: That seems very early for color.

EN: Yes, we had a printer who wanted to try color, and, as I recall, we based it on an Arabian theme. One wouldn't do that nowadays, would you? But it was really very nice. … This friend of mine, with whom I'm still so close, was the editor, and that's where we got to know each other well, 'cause all year long we were doing that yearbook, you know, making up things for each member of the junior class and the senior class and getting the pictures made and going to Bachrach Photographers in New York to have our picture taken as samples. I didn't feel I was a very good sample. I was very active in all sorts of extracurricular activities.

KP: When you were at school, you knew the founding dean.

EN: Yes, Mrs. Douglass.

KP: Mrs. Douglass.

EN: Yes, to be sure. I can't remember whether she … was at the commencements while I was still in school. I don't think she was at our commencement.

KP: No, I think at that point she'd retired.

EN: Yes, and she didn't do an awful lot during our years. She was … not too well. … Yes, she was a great woman. We had to wear hats and gloves to go downtown. If we went beyond "Cozy Corner," which is where that drug store is, just a way from campus now, if we were to go beyond that, we had to have a hat and gloves [on] to go downtown.

KP: One of the things that I've read in the history was that she insisted on a lot of formality in college.

EN: Oh, yes. Yes, indeed. There wasn't such a thing as pants suits then.

BT: There are now.

EN: You didn't wear pants. You wore skirts everywhere and dresses. … When you went to her house for tea … She lived, you know, in the Halls-Mills house on Nichol Avenue. … The first year, my first year, Mrs. Hall had a tea for all the Episcopalians and so I went and I met, who was her brother, do you remember her brother? Willie. He had a name as a result of that awful scandal. They thought he might have done it. They never did decide who did the killing there. But Mrs. Hall was a very proper, white-haired lady, I remember. We did an awful lot of tea drinking, it seems to me. People were always having teas for us, one way or the other, [for] which you had to get dressed up. We used to go to Rutgers to the concerts. I went, my freshman year, and then I went for years and years to the Rutgers concerts. We heard, in our early years, we heard Paul Robeson give his return concert, the first time he'd sung at Rutgers since he'd been graduated. Yes, I took part in a lot of musical activities, although I wasn't musical. That is, I didn't play any instrument except the piano and not well enough to be a soloist.

KP: As a student, you had to go to chapel. Do you remember?

EN: Oh, indeed. Yes, but I was a waitress. I had to work, of course, and if you were a waitress, you couldn't go to chapel. But my senior year, Dean Meder, he was an assistant dean, he asked me whether I'd like to work for him. He knew me because he was a math teacher and I … had been in his class. So he said he was going to publish an alumnae directory, the first alumnae directory that had ever been put out, and he needed somebody to do the work. … So as a student, I took on that job and I gave up my waitress job, which was the best job on campus, for paying, waitress job. It took care of the cost of your food.

BT: Oh, that would be an expense.

EN: Yes. I'm not sure we got any money. We just got food in exchange. … So I worked for him, I think, not for the whole year. It was sometime in the fall that he asked me this, and I took the job. … So I was able to go to chapel, and I loved going to chapel. You know, they had good speakers and interesting things. I thought it was very interesting and ...

BT: Do you remember anybody who spoke offhand?

EN: No, I can't say I do. Many of them were ministerial people of some ... ilk.

----------END OF SIDE ONE, TAPE ONE----------

KP: You mentioned that Professor Hickman was your favorite professor. Were there any differences in the way that the men teachers and the women teachers treated you?

EN: I don't know. I had a good many men teachers, whom I liked very much. Mr. Burroughs was a teacher of English literature, very fine. Of course, Dean Meder was an excellent teacher of mathematics. Dicky Morris was a teacher of mathematics. That wasn't your question, was it? Was there any difference? Certainly, I didn't think of it. But you know, we wouldn't have been alerted to it, particularly, because we would've expected, I think, to be treated differently, 'cause we were treated differently by men. In fact, I rather liked some of the things they did, you know. [laughter]

BT: You didn't have any male students in any of your classes. I mean, Rutgers was totally separate.

EN: Not that I remember, not a one. Oh, no, no. That would've been ... quite out of the picture.

KP: You had gone to a public high school that had been co-educational.

EN: Oh, yes, indeed.

KP: What were the differences between going to your high school and then going to a single sex college? What did you like about the experience? What did you dislike? Were there things you disliked?

EN: Well, of course, I like being the president of things and the treasurer of things. You know, you never could be treasurer when there was a boy in the class, but I used to be treasurer of lots of things and I liked that. … I've done it all my life, even after I'd retired I found myself being treasurer of two or three things.

BT: That's the mathematical ...

EN: Yes.

BT: … priority.

EN: I always liked that part of things more than being president. I wasn't a great president ...

KP: Did you notice any difference in the classroom? Were women more willing to speak up in class?

EN: Well, there was a lot of talk about that now, and I don't know when I got the idea that it made a lot of difference.

KP: But at the time you didn't really think of it.

EN: You mean, with a man teacher?

KP: Or even just in general, 'cause you had been in public high school classes with boys and now you go to college with only women.

EN: Oh, yes. Well, I think it, yes, I think you were much freer to talk. I think so. Yes, I can remember being quite shy … in high school, but I don't remember that in college at all. [laughter] Isn't that funny? But, please, remember, it's been sixty years.

KP: You mentioned at the senior banquet you had the scandalous announcements of marriage.

EN: Oh, occasionally.

KP: Yes, the occasional, but which made it even more ...

EN: Of course.

KP: Did a lot of your classmates feel the pressure to get engaged by their senior year?

EN: No, I don't think so, no. No, I don't think here was a pressure about it, as there is now, I suppose.

BT: Actually, there isn't any now. In my era, there was a lot of pressure. … A lot of boys literally went and found a girl senior year … because all their friends were getting married. … I got married

right out of college. There was a lot of pressure in the '60s, I thought. … So it's interesting that there was an era when there wasn't. [laughter] That's great. You know, it kind of comes in time. … I'm curious about what some of your classmates did, if they weren't getting married. They must have been looking forward ...

EN: Oh, they were just teachers.

BT: ... to some kind of a job. Oh, they were mostly teachers?

EN: I think so.

BT: Because …

EN: It never occurred to us to ...

BT: There was a Depression, too ...

EN: No.

BT: … by the time you graduated.

EN: Yes. There were three jobs available, when I graduated, to our class of over 200. There were three jobs, two of which I was offered. One was to teach math in Freehold. They had an opening there, and the other was to take the clerk's job in the personnel bureau on the campus. That was the placement bureau. That one I took, 'cause I was offered that by the placement bureau director, 'cause I had done some work with her during … my undergraduate years. I can't remember what it was, but she was apparently fond of me, and so she asked if I'd like to work for a year only, because the person who did this work in her office was also a graduate from two or three years before and that girl wanted to go to Columbia, I think, and get her Master's degree and so she wanted a year off. … So Miss Belknap said, "If you will take the job for a year." Oh, I'd take anything at NJC just to be back there, you see, so I did that for a year. … Then Marjorie came back, and Miss Belknap had hoped to get another person in her department, because the college was getting bigger and there were more and more alumnae to place. But there were no increases in the staff in those days, because it was the middle of the Depression, and so I left and went home, back to Leonia, where I took a job in a building company, where I was sort of the "gofer girl," you know. I did everything else that nobody wanted to do. But I was glad to have a job … now, and then I worked for the Aluminum Company of America in Edgewater for a short time. … Then I got a call to come back to the college to be the secretary in the physical education department, 'cause they knew me, 'cause I'd been very active in sports, and so Miss Kees asked me if I'd come back and be the secretary. … I went to the man I was working for there, 'cause I hadn't been working very long in the Aluminum Company, and they'd been very nice to me. I was just the mail girl; I went around delivered the mail in the morning. … I told him [and] he said, "You take that job." He said, "Women will never get anywhere in this company," he said, "There's no use." He said, "You could do the work, but," he said, "I couldn't give you a job."

BT: Oh, my heavens.

EN: Like that and so he said, "You go," and so I went back to the college.

KP: It sounds like you very much wanted to make a career at Douglass.

EN: Well, I had no idea that I would, but they kept asking me to do things. Then the assistant registrar got sick and so the registrar asked Miss Kees, in the physical education department, whether she could spare me, since she'd like to have me in the registrar's department. So I was there for a number of years, four or five years.

BT: And you asked.

EN: … I had been very active in the alumnae work, and so I asked whether the registrar would mind if I applied for the alumnae executive secretary job, and she said, "Of course not." So, of course, I got that job, 'cause everybody, all the alumnae knew me. See, that was the value of being very active in extracurricular activities, everybody knew you.

BT: That's really interesting. When you were working, you went home to Leonia and worked in the aluminum company and then when you came back, did you live on campus when you came back? You didn't commute all that way, did you?

EN: Oh, no. No, I lived down in New Brunswick but not on campus.

BT: Not on campus.

EN: No, no. People who worked didn't live on campus. I actually lived in a little apartment, three-room apartment, on Remson Avenue with my dear friend, whom I keep mentioning, and her mother. They had this little apartment, and I couldn't find a place to live that I could afford. … So they said, "Well, come and live with us. We'll put up a cot," and so they put up a cot in the living room and I lived in the living room.

BT: Oh, my goodness.

EN: They had a little bedroom which they used. … We had to go upstairs to the bathroom, because it had been a house, you see, and they made it over into two apartments.

BT: Gosh, wow.

EN: … I don't know, I paid something like five dollars a month, or a week, or something [to] help them out … and we enjoyed it, anyhow. She was working at the college, too, at the time. Yes, those were hard days, but, you know, you learned an awful lot. I remember, does the word, name, Snedeker mean anything to you? No. Well, he was our business manager. He was a very active man in politics, in the finest way, in Highland Park. … Mr. Snedeker called me in one day, and he said, "Edna, are you saving any money?" I said, "How can I save money on ninety-six dollars a

month, and I'm sending fifty dollars home to Leonia?" … He said, "But you have got to save. You've got to start saving right now," and he said, "I run the Building and Loan in town." … He said, "I think you ought to plan to put five dollars away every month." … So that's what I did, and, ever thereafter, I saved money.

BT: Because he told you it would be a good idea.

EN: Yes.

BT: He was right, I guess.

EN: Yes, imagine doing that nowadays. Kids can't get enough for ...

BT: Yes, I know. Most people are in debt, rather than saving.

EN: Yes, oh, dear.

BT: But some people still save. Did you walk to the campus, or was there a bus?

EN: Oh, yes, oh, yes. Oh, talking about that walk, this friend of mine had no ear for music at all, and although I'm no singer, I have a very good tone sense. I'm very good about knowing when things are off-key, and she was an awful singer and we used to walk back and forth to Douglass. We were on Remson Avenue and it was about five blocks to the campus. … I said, "Now Eunice, I'm going to teach you a song, and you're going to learn how to sing it, note by note," and so I taught her. It was an ad, a Tasty Yeast ad. Tasty Yeast was a little candy of some sort. … Everyday we would sing that song all the way, and she never got so that she could sing it. She just didn't know when she was wrong. … One day, we were going by one of these rather dilapidated houses, and there were two or three little black children on the porch, and I heard one of them say, "Look, those are those two ladies that are always singing that same song." [laughter] I'll never forget that. That was so funny.

BT: We've asked other people this. Was it a very safe place, basically?

EN: Oh, I never thought of any problem.

BT: I mean, if you worked late, would you have walked home in the dark?

EN: Oh course, of course, anywhere in that neighborhood.

BT: It was not a problem.

EN: No. There were, well, it was just a poor neighborhood, but you didn't think anything of walking. No, my friend used to go out early in the morning and sometimes walk up to the college alone, because she'd be going to a high school. She was what they called the field secretary, and she would make speeches at high schools and sometimes she'd have to be there at eight-thirty in the

morning, maybe way up in Bergen County or down in Camden County. … She'd walk up to campus and she'd go in the garage and get out the college car and go. I'm sure she never had any problems, nor did she worry, nor did we think about it. No, it's quite a different world, isn't it?

KP: What about when Camp Kilmer came in? Some of the women we've interviewed have said that it changed by having so many GIs around.

EN: Yes, it did make a lot of difference. Of course, that's when USO got started in New Brunswick and they called on many of us as volunteers. … That's when I, let's see, I was, by this time, I was in the office, working there and I'd been there several years and carried out a fairly successful program. … Then the war came along. Of course, my mother and father were very interested and very worried because of their English background, and all their family was over there and their people were getting into the war. We had an uncle who was a postmaster in one of the small towns, Ramsgate, the town that my mother and father came from in Kent. … He would write us about how they were doing without, they didn't have this, they didn't have that, and so Mother started sending "bundles for Britain." She got interested in that. … She would send off something to Uncle Will every month or so, and when I went to visit him years later, he said, "It was your mother's packages that kept us alive during the war."

BT: That's amazing.

EN: … They had a shelter in the back of their house where they had to go down into night after night, and the canned food and stuff my mother sent was very helpful. Well, anyhow, where are we?

KP: So it sounds like you were very much aware of the war much earlier than a lot of your colleagues because of family connections.

EN: I think so, because my mother was very active in the organization called Bundles for Britain, I think it was called, yes. … Of course, she was in touch, by mail, with a couple of these people in England and very worried of what was going to happen over there, 'cause it looked as though England was going to be taken over. Do you remember the war?

KP: No, no.

EN: Not even the Second World War.

KP: No, no, I ...

BT: I don't personally remember it. I heard a lot of stories. I was born during the war, so it was very fresh in my parents' memory.

EN: Dear me, yes.

BT: They were very young.

EN: You are children.

KP: Yes, I barely remember Vietnam to be honest. I was born in 1960. I know now, having done 190 interviews, I know a lot and sometimes I feel like I've been through it.

EN: Yes.

KP: At both at Rutgers and NJC, there were active groups both for intervention and anti-intervention. Do you remember anything specific?

EN: In the First World War?

BT: No.

KP: In the Second World War.

BT: … Before we got into the war. … You know, the isolationist and …

EN: Oh, yes, well, sure, I don't know what to say. Yes, there were people who didn't think we should get involved with them, and I think there were a lot of those people, but, of course, my family was all for doing something, you know. We couldn't let Britain go under, that would be awful, and I began to think that, too.

BT: I wondered if they listened to the radio.

EN: Radio. Did we have radio then?

BT: There were.

EN: Yes, of course.

BT: I was thinking, it was Edward R. Murrow.

KP: Yes.

BT: … but I can't remember whether it was before we entered the war or after.

KP: I think it was before.

BT: Before. I was just thinking since you had relatives in England that, I would think, you know, you would be glued to the radio for news, really.

EN: I don't think we had international news like we do ... now ... directly from over there. I think it all had to be siphoned through someone over here. Funny, I don't remember much about it. I do

remember the first time I ever heard a radio, though. I was in the fourth grade, and I remember that, because my teacher said to the class, "We have just obtained a radio in my home." "Radio?" We didn't know what that was in our household. "We have these things we put on our ears and we can hear music through these and it comes through the air some way." And she said, "Whoever does best in … " I don't know what it was, whether it was for a semester, or for a grade, or one course. "Whoever does best I'm going to let him or her come to my home for an evening."

BT: And you did and you got to listen?

KP: You got to listen to radio.

EN: Oh, so Mrs. Dalnodar my teacher, invited me, and she said, "Since I know your family, too," she said, "why don't you bring your mother and father and sister?"

BT: Oh, how nice.

EN: And so the four of us went to the Dalnodars.

BT: And saw the radio.

EN: She had a family, too, and her husband was here, of course. He was the one that manipulated what was, if I recall ...

BT: Pretty big.

EN: I don't know whether it was a little box, or what it was, and he had something that he would go like this and that was a little wire that would go onto a crystal … and that was called a crystal set. Well, only one person could listen at a time, because … there wasn't any loud speaker or anything. It was just this thing. … He would get it and then he would pass it over to you, and you'd say, "I don't hear anything." … He'd go, "Oh, I hear something." I mean, what you'd heard was some few notes, you know. It never ...

BT: Nothing really.

EN: No, but, oh, the idea that this was coming over the air was amazing. You know, we've lost all that, haven't we, all that awe about pictures coming over the air and colored pictures coming over the air. I can't get used to that yet. But that was a great day, you know, or evening. I remember we went in the evening and it was Station KDKA.

KP: Oh, from Pittsburgh.

EN: Pittsburgh. That's right.

BT: From Pittsburgh? Wow. I have to tell Fred that.

EN: I think that was the name of the station. Yes. … Then by the time television came out, we were in the chips, so we had a television quite early then. We had a car very early, too. Nobody else on our street had a car when we did.

BT: Really?

KP: So that was when your father really was doing very well.

EN: Yes, he was.

KP: Yes.

EN: Yes, he was a fine builder, and he was a good, honest man and they knew that. … He'd been active in the politics, not politics as it goes these days, but in those days, so that he had a good business but that went, that went.

KP: One of the things, in terms of World War II, that's gotten a lot of focus was the whole controversy over the Hauptmann-Bergel affair.

EN: Oh, indeed.

KP: What did you remember of both professors?

EN: Oh.

KP: You must have known them, at least in passing.

EN: Oh, indeed, oh, of course. I don't remember what, you don't remember the date of that, do you?

KP: I think the hearings were in 1935 or '36.

EN: Yes.

KP: … I think Hauptmann was hired in 1930, I'm not ...

EN: I was probably in the registrar's office by that time. … I'm not sure. Oh, yes, I knew, because Hauptmann, when he came into the College Hall, where I was working, you could hear him all over the place. He was a very noisy, outspoken person. And, Bergel, I didn't know so well. He was a very quiet. No, but Hauptmann just disappeared eventually and his wife disappeared, and they'd gone, they went to Germany and he … got caught up with Hitler and ...

KP: At the time when he disappeared, what was the speculation among the faculty and staff?

EN: Well, they didn't know what had happened to him, at first, of course, but some of them, who didn't like him, thought they knew and they were probably right. Of course, I wasn't with the faculty. I wasn't of that. I wasn't old enough to be into the faculty as an administrator, you know.

KP: Yes.

EN: I was just a clerk.

KP: When did you get to know the faculty better, more as an equal?

EN: Well, of course, when I became the assistant dean, and when we kept getting new deans, they all got to come to me. … I was their main source of information and help for many, many years, because they knew, I think, they knew they could trust me and I kept my tongue. I wasn't much of a gossip, I hope. … I worked on the budget with the bursar, as we called the business manager, for some years. I just talked to him about a week ago. He's had his fiftieth wedding anniversary down in Virginia, and I called him last Sunday, I think it was. We've been friends for many years, he and his wife. Yes, I've made a lot of good friends.

KP: While you were a junior staff person at Douglass, you also knew Dean Corwin.

EN: Oh, yes. She was the one who pushed me ahead. Then what I was doing when the war started. … Oh, I was the alumnae secretary. … I gave it up to go into USO, because I thought nobody's going to want to do alumnae work. I mean, my family was all caught up in doing war work, and I knew that that was going to happen with Americans once we got into it. … I didn't want to sit in an office that wasn't busy. I had to have busy, I had to have a lot to do, and I'd been running a program of concerts up in Newark for our alumnae ...

BT: Oh, I see.

EN: At that big Newark hall.

KP: The Mosque.

EN: The Mosque.

KP: Yes.

EN: That's where we had them. … I'd been running that for a number of years and I just knew that wouldn't go on, because we couldn't travel very much, so I just had to, I just said, "I have to do something in the war." So I decided, I didn't want to go into the service in the first place. My eyesight was too poor for me, probably, to get in the service anyway.

BT: Oh, I see.

EN: But I never really tried, 'cause I wasn't anxious to be in the service, but I'd heard of this USO organization and so I decided I'd try that. … I also tried one other thing. I think it was Merck and Company, which I now partially own. They didn't want me. [laughter]

EN: They advertised for some sort of a mathematician and I think I didn't have enough background … and so they didn't want me. But USO, yes, they wanted me very much, and so I went into USO.

BT: Where did you go in New Brunswick, to a USO office?

EN: Oh, no. No, I went to New York. ...

BT: They were in New York, so you just went and volunteered.

EN: Well, I went and asked for a job.

BT: For a job.

EN: For a job. I couldn't just ... volunteer. I had volunteered down here in New Brunswick.

BT: Yes, 'cause you had mentioned the USOs in New Brunswick.

EN: Yes.

BT: That's where I was getting confused.

EN: Yes. I had helped down here one way or another, but not very much. … Then I decided I would see if I could get a job, and so I went to the YWCA in New York. You see, the USO is made up of five or six organizations.

BT: Okay.

EN: The YW, the YM, the Jewish Welfare Board, the Catholic Community Service and the Traveler's Aid.

BT: Okay.

EN: Those are the five, I think, and they each hired people to run these clubs and different clubs were assigned to these organizations, so I was assigned to go to Jacksonville, North Carolina for training with a USO there. … When I got there, I found it was just hopping. They had Camp Lejeune, which was the Marine base about three miles away from this little town of seven hundred people, Jacksonville, and there was 70,000 Marines out there.

BT: I can imagine.

EN: … The town was just overloaded with people. They couldn't begin to take care of everything, housing or food … It was just bedlam. … I went into a USO club to work with a woman there who was a director, and the YW would appoint a director and she was from the YW, and so they sent me to her to be trained. ... We had five USOs in that town just to keep the fellows off the streets.

BT: Wow, five.

EN: … So … I'd been there awhile when they sent me out to a town called Lexington. I think that's where I was sent, Lexington, North Carolina, to start a USO there. I was to be the director and to start one.

BT: To start it from scratch.

EN: Well, the longer I was there, and I was there, oh, several weeks, I realized that they didn't need a USO in that town. I never saw, well, I shouldn't say I never saw a service man, but I saw very, very few, whereas Jacksonville was humming and wild with need for people.

BT: Yes.

EN: … I kept saying, "Send me back to Jacksonville where I can work. I don't want to do this kind of thing," so eventually they gave in and said, "Oh, go on back to Jacksonville. As a matter-of-fact, the woman in one of the other USOs is having a nervous breakdown from overwork. Go there and see if you can pull that place into business." So I went there, to the log cabin, in Jacksonville, on the banks of the New River.

BT: New River, right, New River.

EN: … I was there three years, I guess, two or three years.

BT: So you went in 1942, would it have been?

EN: I went in 1943.

BT: '43.

EN: … USO was work, eight, every morning, until eleven at night.

BT: Oh, gosh.

EN: And no days off, because ...

BT: No days off?

EN: No, every day you were open. … I had one assistant, and she came from National Catholic Community Service, a wonderful person, and I had a secretary, whom I hired from among the military wives. I still keep in touch with her, she lives in Pennsylvania. … I had a janitor. That's all there were.

BT: There were four of you.

EN: … We had to keep that place open and clean and working, all those days and nights.

BT: Describe the building. You said something about a log cabin.

EN: It was a log cabin that had been built for the Women's Club, and the Women's Clubs rented it to USO.

BT: They rented it.

EN: For the war.

BT: How big was it?

EN: Well, there was a rather large central room … where you could have a dance. There was enough space to have a fairly nice dance, and there was a piano and a radio. We didn't have television in there, no, no.

BT: No, that wouldn't be.

EN: … There was a little office … where my secretary and I worked, and there was a very important locked closet. … The importance of that closet was that there was no place to go in town to have a drink. … The only thing they had was the ABC, the Alcoholic Beverage Commission, and if you wanted a drink, you had to buy a bottle … take it home. You see, this was before the war came, and they didn't make any change in that.

BT: Oh, they never changed it?

EN: So all these boys ...

BT: I'll be darned.

EN: ... coming into town would have to buy a bottle of liquor instead of going in and getting a beer. … Then they'd want to drink it, and they'd carry on and, you know, they were … You know what drink can do to kids. They were just kids, most of them.

BT: I was going to say, most the Marines, my understanding is that an awful lot of Marines, especially in World War II, were either sixteen or seventeen.

EN: Yes, they were ...

BT: They lied about their age.

EN: … Many of them were kids.

BT: They were very young.

EN: Yes, they were, although many of them were married and had kids.

BT: Did they?

EN: ... We had a military wives' club. … Oh, and we had a big kitchen.

BT: I was going to say, it must have been a big kitchen.

EN: Big kitchen, all along the side of this big room was a kitchen. … Elizabeth, that was my assistant, arrived and I had had a dinner for the men the night before. I always got them to come and help me cook. I didn't know anything about cooking. I'd never cooked. … They'd say, "Could we have a spaghetti dinner?" I'd say, "If you come and cook." "All right." "You tell me what to buy. I'll buy the stuff, and then you …"

BT: And they would cook.

EN: So I would go to Wilmington, fifty miles, to buy the food, 'cause we didn't have any big stores in Jacksonville … that would have as … much food as I needed, and I'd go and get the food and they'd come and cook and they loved coming in to cook, of course. Those boys that liked to cook loved doing that. … Well, we had a dinner, and I had bought some big table cloths to put on these great big tables that we had. … Somehow or other, in the cleaning up the night before, they'd gotten into the garbage and they had been thrown out and taken away by the garbage man that morning. … I had just discovered it, Johnny was my black janitor, fine man, very, very decent man. I'll tell you about him, he was great. There I had to take, I said to Elizabeth, she arrived, first day reporting in, and I said, "Elizabeth, I don't know how you feel about it, but I'm just about to go to the garbage dump to see if I can find my table cloths." I mean, we couldn't afford to buy new table cloths. So she said, "All right, I'll come with you." So that's how we spent her first morning, and we found the table cloths and we brought them home and washed. I washed them, had them washed, I don't know, and that was how we started out. … We were many years together. She was a wonderful girl, came from Boston, Massachusetts, Everett, Massachusetts.

KP: You were two northern women ...

EN: Yes.

KP: … running ...

EN: … Yes, yes.

KP: Well, the Marines were from all over the country. You were still working the southern ...

EN: It seemed to me we met very few southern Marines.

KP: Yes.

EN: I met Texans, a lot of people from Texas.

BT: From Texas.

KP: But you were working in a southern community.

EN: … Oh, and I'll tell you. Johnny was my janitor, and I would get there around seven-thirty in the morning and Johnny … always had coffee ready, so we always had coffee on hand. The boys would come in for coffee, and we had to have coffee to sober them up, some of them. Well, anyhow, Johnny would come in, and I'd say, "Johnny, sit down and have a cup of coffee with me. There's nothing we have to do right away." … He was always most reluctant to sit down with me. About the third time I asked him, he said, "Miss Edna, I can't do this to you," and I said, "Why not?" I said, "I'm happy to have you sit down and have a cup of coffee with me," and he said, "If the ladies in this town ever saw me sitting down with you, you would be run out of town." … I said, "Oh, don't be ridiculous." I couldn't believe it. He said, "You don't know how they are. They would think I was taking advantage of you," and he wouldn't do it. He said, "I would like to do it for you," but he said, "If I do it, it's just you're the one that would suffer, not me."

BT: That's interesting that he wouldn't ...

EN: He wouldn't do it.

BT: Very interesting.

EN: … Isn't that interesting?

BT: They would have run you out of town.

EN: Yes.

KP: How aware were you of the Jim Crow bias, and so forth?

EN: Oh, yes, I knew. Well, I mean, well, you know, I was old enough. By this time, what was I? I'm ten years younger than the year, 1943, I was thirty-three. I wasn't a child, you know, I knew.

BT: Yes.

KP: But still, this seemed so innocuous to you just to have a cup of coffee together before starting work.

EN: I know. I couldn't imagine why he was always so jittery, the couple of times he did sit down. He was constantly watching the window. Now, I mean, none of these southern ladies would've been around at seven-thirty or eight o' clock in the morning, but he was so afraid that they'd see me.

BT: Yes, small town.

EN: Yes, I think that was, that was an eye opener to me … but the ladies were very nice to me.

BT: Did you have a rented room or apartment?

EN: No, I lived in ...

BT: Where did you live in this little town?

EN: Well, the first part of the time I lived, oh, living was terrible. They used chicken coops and everything …

BT: I was going to say, wartime was ...

EN: … to live in. But the other USO, where I had been sent for the training, had an upstairs and it had a quite a big bedroom. … They had two directors there, and they were using that room and they said to me, "You'll never find a place in this town to live, so come and live with us. We'll put in another cot." … So the three of us lived in one room.

BT: Oh, my gosh.

EN: With, of course, just one bathroom, which was for the whole club, but we never were in the bathroom during the day, or until after the club was closed ...

BT: Closed at night.

EN: … when we'd bathe and all that sort of thing. Now, what more should I tell you about that, those episodes?

BT: You mentioned a wives' club and spaghetti suppers.

EN: Oh, yes. Oh, yes.

BT: I'm just a little curious about what the USO did. I don't think most people, I don't know much about what they even did.

EN: Well, of course, it depended on your club, and, now, we couldn't have great big dances with a big orchestra, because we didn't have enough room, so we had to have little things. Across the street from us, they built a big house, a big building specifically for USO.

BT: For dances?

EN: … That's where the gang used to go, but then the boys, some of the boys, would come over to see what this place was over here, and some of them got real fond of coming over there, because we would, for example, I was known to sit six and eight hours at the piano, banging out tunes for them to sing. … The whole gang would sing for hours, you know, just songs that they knew. … It's really simple things. I remember, Elizabeth, who was so-called program director, she was supposed to think of things to do. … At Christmas time, I remember, she decided we'd get a big tree and she'd get the fellows to make the decorations to put on the tree, and I can remember this one Marine coming in and saying to her, "Miss Gilligan, if you ever tell any of these other guys that I am making angels, I'll never come here again." [laughter] "Don't you dare tell 'em." You can imagine what it would have done to his reputation, but he was making angels. No, we did the simplest things, but they loved it. We had stationary and postage so they could write. … We'd take care of mailing the stuff for them. I mean, we did sorts of homey things for them, you know.

BT: Kind of home away from home.

EN: … I think one of the interesting things that the fellows did, often those that were married, the wife would come down and … they'd know that they were going to be shipped out, maybe in two or three weeks, and they had the wife come down. … We tried to find a place for her to live, not always very successfully, I must admit. That was terrible finding a place for them to live. … They'd say, "We're going to celebrate Christmas tomorrow, and we're going to celebrate my birthday the next day and Mary's birthday the following day," and they'd come into the club and they'd make up something. They did it themselves, we couldn't do much about helping them.

BT: You couldn't help.

EN: But I thought that was such a cute idea.

BT: Cute.

EN: You know, they knew they wouldn't be home for these days and they wanted to celebrate them. I thought that was real nice.

BT: Did you ever get involved in any weddings of fellows that you knew?

EN: No, I don't think we ever did a wedding.

BT: Marrying before they went overseas or whatever ...

EN: I think the big USO cross the way did, but they were a Catholic Community Service and they had a priest connected with their club, and so they had all the weddings.

KP: Was there a separate USO club in your town for black Marines? Were there any black Marines at all?

EN: I never saw any.

BT: Never saw them.

KP: All the USOs just catered to white service people?

EN: I think so. … I don't remember having any black visitors. But, you know, the men would come in with the bottles of alcohol … that they had just gotten up the street.

BT: And they could drink them in your building?

EN: No, no, they couldn't.

BT: No, they couldn't. [laughter] Just wanted to clear that up.

EN: Oh, no.

BT: They couldn't.

EN: … I often stood near the door to welcome them, and if I saw that they had a bottle, and they often would try to hide it, I'd say, "Listen, I have a closet over here, you can put that in there. When you're ready to go, you let me know and I'll give you the bottle."

BT: Oh, I see.

EN: "But you can't have it when you're in here."

BT: I wondered, I didn't think so.

EN: … They would be very reluctant. Occasionally, one would say, "Well, I'm not going to stay in this place," and leave, but not very often. Once they got to know me, you know, I would lock it in there, and I'd say, "Now, you come and you see where it is, yours is, and when you're ready to leave you come get me and I'll let you take it home with you, back to the base." … That's how we worked it. We very seldom had too much trouble. I learned that ...

BT: I wondered if there were any incidents, though, you may remember.

EN: ... tomato juice is good and, you know, coffee is good. … I remember all of, I didn't know about them before, but I sure learned all that business.

KP: … What about your budget …

BT: Yes, I was wondering about that.

KP: … for the USO?

EN: Isn't that funny? I don't remember having any trouble with a budget. Oh, well, the way we ran the kitchen ...

BT: Yes, how'd you get the food … with rationing and all that?

EN: You know, we had to make a monthly report to USO in New York, telling them what we were doing and how we were doing it. I don't even remember getting money from them. We must have though, mustn't we?

KP: Yes, 'cause it sounds like a lot of your services were free. You didn't charge for very much, if at all.

EN: Well, I tell you what we did. We usually had a bowl there with a couple of dollars in it, and the fellows had plenty of money, and, you know, they'd drop money in the bowl. But we had an honor system that I set up in the kitchen, because they loved to come in and cook eggs and bacon. Now, getting bacon was a problem because you had to ration.

BT: Yes, that's what I'm saying. There was a lot of rationing.

EN: Ration slips, cards for that, but some of them, one of the boys, I don't know how he did it. He was more a private, sergeant, I think, and he was a great manipulator of things, and somehow or other, he could get bacon at the PX out at the base and he'd bring us in bacon. … Of course, we all put our tickets in there and bought bacon. The fellows loved the bacon and eggs. … I'd go to Wilmington and buy four or five dozen eggs and whatever bacon I could afford with the tickets. … Then we had an honor system. We had a list. Each egg would be five cents and one piece of bacon would be five cents, and, of course, they'd never end up paying just fifty-five cents. You'd get a dollar or two dollars.

KP: Wow.

EN: So we always made money on our honor system. When I first wrote to New York that I was going to do this, 'cause anything new you were doing they wanted to know about, the director there wrote me and said, "You'll lose your shirt. You better not do that. You'll never make enough to keep it going." I never had any trouble. … We always made money, a lot of money on that. … I think we charged for the dinners, and we had steak dinners. We'd have Kansas night.

BT: Wow.

EN: … We'd ask only boys from Kansas to come, because, you see, they could always go across the street, so we could be a little bit selective without hurting anybody.

KP: So you'd have different state nights.

EN: Yes.

BT: Amazing.

EN: I'd write to the Chamber of Commerce in the state. We'd find out early enough, so that I could write, and I would say, "What would be typical of your menu?" and they'd send me all sorts of stuff, posters of sunflowers from Kansas, I remember getting and things like that. … They'd get interested, you know, out there and ask how it went, and we kept up.

BT: Were most of the boys ...

----------END OF SIDE TWO, TAPE ONE----------

BT: Did officers ever come to the USO?

EN: Not officers, they didn't come in. Officers never came in.

KP: This continues an interview with Edna M. Newby ... on February 21, 1997 in Metuchen, New Jersey with Kurt Piehler and ...

BT: Barbara Tomblin.

KP: You mentioned that officers never came into the club.

EN: Oh, no, no.

KP: Sergeants would, though?

EN: Yes. Yes, well, they weren't officers.

KP: Yes.

EN: … By the time I arrived in 1943 … these USOs had been open, the one across the street particularly, had been open for two years almost, and the volunteers in the town were worn out with it. You know, you couldn't get a girl to come and dance, too many of them had become pregnant. … Yes.

BT: That's interesting.

EN: There was plenty of that that went on, and some of them had just been worn out with going to dances and their mothers wouldn't let them come anymore, so that we had very few. We were always glad when the fellows had their wives there because, you know, it made it so much nicer for them and for us, you know.

KP: So it sounded like there had been some scandal, I mean, with so many men and so few women.

EN: Oh, they kept it very quite. You never really heard the details.

KP: You never ...

EN: No, I didn't know the details. I just knew that when I'd call and say, "… I understand that there's a daughter in your house, this is So-and-So. Could she come and ..." "Well, she's done that long enough. We don't want her to do that anymore." No, it got so that you couldn't get very many girls to come and help you, so that's why we had to work so many nights.

BT: But you worked long hours, seems to me.

EN: Yes. Of course, a lot of it was just standing around talking. For example, I learned to play chess, which I'd never learned before, and the boys loved teaching me, you know. … Of course, it wasn't too long before I could overtake them and I found that was not wise. You know, they didn't want you to beat them. It took me a long while to learn that.

KP: You'd been in sort of an all women's environment at Douglass ...

EN: Yes, oh, I ...

KP: … as a student, and now, you're, it's the opposite you're ...

BT: Now you're surrounded by men.

EN: I loved it. I loved it. I had a great time. … I was old enough not to be pestered by most of them.

BT: I was going to say, did they ...

EN: I was thirty-two or three or something.

BT: You were an interesting age.

EN: There was some older men … but ...

BT: But they weren't bugging you …

EN: No, no, I, well ...

BT: … or whatever.

EN: For various reasons.

BT: Bothering to go out with you.

EN: No, they didn't bother me … but I made good friends. Now, there was one fellow. He was married. He had his wife down, introduced me. She went home, and he'd come walk me home every night. He just thought that … somebody ought to walk me home.

BT: I wondered about that.

EN: Yes.

BT: We talked about New Brunswick.

EN: He was, yes.

BT: This is very different.

EN: I wouldn't, [he] wouldn't have bothered me.

BT: When you have all the service men drinking and ...

EN: Wouldn't have bothered me at all, but he was very nice. He would walk me home, not every night, but pretty nearly every night, and … that was it, you know. There was no more to it.

BT: You mentioned the beverage commission. Were there any bars in this town?

EN: No, you couldn't go and get a drink. You had to go and get a bottle.

BT: There really wasn't a lot of gin to get into.

EN: No.

BT: I mean, I always picture towns near Army and Marine bases as being glutted with saloons.

EN: Not in the South.

BT: I guess not in the South.

EN: This is the Bible Belt and you didn't have drinking, and it would have been so much better if they could've gone in and got a drink, I think ...

BT: Rather than having the whole bottle.

EN: Than having the whole bottle ...

BT: Sure.

EN: … because they couldn't take the bottle back. You see, that was a real problem. You had to take it in your tummy. [laughter]

BT: Did they send in, well, the Navy would call it shore patrol? I'm not sure what the Marines called it then.

KP: Yes.

BT: But were there ...

EN: Yes, they'd come in.

BT: Did they kind of police the town, so to speak, with all those guys?

EN: Yes, I wasn't aware of them too often, but they'd come in and, you know, ask if everything was okay.

BT: That's interesting.

EN: Once in awhile, I had trouble but very little.

KP: Well, it sounded like your main trouble was somebody who had had too much to drink. It sounded like your main trouble was someone having too much to drink or ...

EN: Yes.

KP: ... Were there other incidents that you …

EN: Oh, occasionally a couple of them would get into an argument and start banging each other, but I always stepped in. … They were always very, very nice about the women that were there. Elizabeth I don't think had any problem, either, and she was younger and much more attractive, I may say.

BT: It just remarkable given today.

EN: … They were very decent. No, they were [a] very decent bunch. I enjoyed working with the Marines. We had a fort, an Army fort, not too far from us, not MacGuire, it's a big one, though.

Oh, I can't remember the name of it. It's between Jacksonville and Wilmington, but they'd all go to Wilmington, 'cause that was a big city and there was more to do there.

BT: So they didn't come too much.

EN: I mean, we had one little movie house. I don't even remember that I ever went to the movies. I couldn't take time off to go to the movies.

BT: … I was wondering about the churches. It is the Bible Belt, though I'm sure the Marines on liberty didn't exactly want to go to church.

EN: I don't think they went to church that much.

BT: Did they go to church on liberty?

EN: Of course, they had a big chapel out at the base.

BT: That's true, that's true.

EN: I don't know how much they used that. I don't know.

KP: A lot of your clients were people who, you know, came through for training and then were shipped out, but there were the regulars on base, the people who actually were permanent, drill instructors and others, so you must have gotten to know some of them fairly well ...

EN: Not too many.

KP: Really, you didn't have too many regulars?

EN: No, no. It was mostly these who would come and go, and they'd always slip us the word. We knew when they were going, not that we talked about it, of course.

BT: Bet you didn't.

EN: But those were hard days, and then they'd write to us …

BT: That was my next question, yes.

EN: … from overseas. Yes, they'd write to us.

BT: Did you hear from them and ...

EN: Oh, yes, some of them for years. I have quite a few of their letters upstairs somewhere.

BT: Oh, goodness, don't get rid of those, save those. Were there some fellows that would come back through there having been overseas?

EN: Yes, occasionally. Yes ...

BT: Did they ever talk about their experiences?

EN: Oh, well, of course, I knew all those places. Coral Sea, years later I went to Australia, and I was staying at Cairns, which is up in the northeast corner ...

BT: All right, yes ...

EN: … and we were not far from the Coral Sea. … I said to these folks, "I've got to go to the Coral Sea," so they say, "Oh, we never go down there." I said, "Well, I want to go." I put on my bathing suit and I went swimming in the Coral Sea by myself.

BT: Oh, my gosh.

EN: I don't know what animals were in there with me, but I just thought I've got to do this, you know. It was just the past, because I heard so much about the Coral Sea. No, they would write us and, of course, it would all be ... What was that arrangement? You didn't sent it to ...

BT: The APO box.

EN: APO box, that's what it was.

BT: So you didn't really always know where they were.

EN: No, no. We didn't always know. … When they came back they would've said, "We were in the Guadalcanal, or we were ..." … Then they'd come back, and they'd say, "Johnny got it over there," you know.

BT: That's what I wondered.

EN: Oh, yes. Oh, we lost a lot.

BT: Did they talk about those people you knew?

EN: Oh, yes. Yes, I did. Lost a lot of very young men. There was a big contingent of Dutch Marines down there for awhile. …One of them, I think became quite fond of me in a nice way, and he used to write me very regularly. … When I went to Holland once, I tried to find the family, but I never did find the family, no. Well, I think I've covered most of the little notes I made about USO. What else do you want to know?

KP: When you left North Carolina, did the USO shut down?

EN: It shut, yes.

KP: So you were a part of, in a sense, decommissioning the USO.

EN: Well, I closed that one.

KP: Yes, but the other one stayed open or ...

EN: Yes, that, I think, that was still open.

KP: The big one.

EN: I'm not quite sure. Yes, I think we were one of the first ones to go because ...

BT: Now was this after V-E Day, or did you leave after the war was completely over? When did you actually go back?

EN: I don't remember.

BT: I was wondering if you remembered anything about either V-E Day or V-J Day? I mean, it must have been quite a cause for celebration, especially in a town that was so involved in the war. I've heard a lot of stories about the celebrating that went on, but that was in Europe.

EN: Which was first?

BT: … May '45.

KP: May '45 was V-E Day and August was V-J Day.

BT: That's right, so it would be spring and summer.

EN: I think it was probably after V-J Day that it closed ...

BT: So you stuck it out through the whole war then.

EN: Yes, because most of these Marines went … to that area, not to Europe.

BT: No, most of them did go to the Pacific, almost all of them.

KP: … Were there any big shows that came through?

BT: That's a good question.

EN: Any?

KP: Big shows. A lot of people have talked about Bob Hope.

EN: Well, the USO shows were mostly overseas.

KP: Yes, you didn't get any entertainers ...

EN: No.

KP: … at the training base.

EN: … Very little of that.

KP: Yes. I just was wondering, because it seems like I know most of them were overseas, but yours was such an isolated area that it seemed ...

EN: It was indeed. Yes. No, we, well, we were too small a place to have any really big thing, but we could do the little homey things that others couldn't and that made a big impression, I think, on some of them.

BT: Yes, 'cause that was always my understanding, except for the big stuff, that that's what the USO really did.

EN: Yes, called itself "a home away from home."

BT: It was a home away from home. Yes, I do remember that.

EN: … They had one cardinal thing that you were never supposed to say, "My Club." It was always "Our Club."

BT: Oh, that's interesting.

EN: Oh, yes. Never talked about my club.

BT: You said you went for training initially.

EN: Well, it was just on-the-job training.

BT: Yes, it was kind of ...

EN: What we did was work in that other USO ... and see what you had to do and how ...

BT: I just wondered if there were rules and regulations. It's not military but was it ...

EN: Oh, no.

BT: It's more like the YMCA.

EN: You sort of made your own regulations, you know, what you would put up with.

BT: So you had your own.

EN: Yes, I don't think they ever told us what we could or couldn't do.

BT: That's interesting.

KP: The alcohol ban, was is your decision or was it theirs?

EN: Oh, yes. No, ours.

KP: Oh, so in other words, you could have offered them glasses and ice. It wouldn't have been against national regulations.

EN: Well, I don't know, Kurt. I don't think they would have thought it was a very good idea.

KP: Yes, but they didn't explicitly say, "You're not to allow any alcohol on the premise."

EN: No, I don't recall that they did. … No, I think not. I think we were ...

BT: Yes, yes. It sounds like it was like running your own business. I mean, you could be very creative about the dinners they had and ...

EN: Yes, you had to be creative, because ...

BT: … improvise, and it's just a kind of neat experience ... for somebody who, at your age, already had done a lot of different things … at Douglass or whatever, and that you go could go and kind of invent. You had a lot of responsibility, even though there were four of you.

EN: Yes. 'Cause … I sort of took care of the administration and the buying of things, and Elizabeth did the programming, but these state nights we would work together on, of course. … She was an artist. In fact, she was the head of the art department in the Boston schools. … So she would ... make wonderful paintings to put up around the place and that sort of thing.

KP: It seems like the people must have really liked that home kind of touch. That must have really ....

EN: Well, those that came did. You know, they wouldn't come if they, oh, I've seen some of them look around and say, "What do you do here?" and walk out, you know, when you'd say, "Well, we might sing or we might do this, or we might make angels." Oh, gosh, they wouldn't have anything to do with you. It was a limited group, but it was ...

BT: But it was the good, you really, really attracted the good fellows.

EN: They were really well behaved.

BT: By doing what you did, and not doing the stuff that the younger ones or ...

EN: Yes, I think that's true.

BT: That was pretty smart, actually.

KP: … Coming back, you had left your job at Douglass, or NJC.

EN: Well, I had left the job, and about, oh, a couple months after, I had gone to North Carolina to work, I got a letter from Dean Corwin, then the dean, saying, "We'd like you come back and be the director of admissions. We've decided that we need to have a director of admission. I'd like to give you the job." … I wrote and I said, "I'm sorry but I will be staying in USO until they no longer need me, probably until the war ends," and they said, "We will wait for you." And they waited two and a half years.

BT: Oh, my goodness.

EN: … When I went back, I had the job. Isn't that amazing? Yes, they were good to me at Douglass.

BT: Gosh, yes.

EN: Very good.

KP: So, in a sense, you had a job waiting for you.

EN: I did.

KP: Which must have been very reassuring, that you could do this for the ...

EN: Yes, of course. I wasn't sure they'd wait for me ... but they did. I just called them up. They'd said, "We like to have you so much, we'll wait." See, they hadn't had a director of admissions. … It had been run by a faculty committee.

BT: A committee?

EN: … Not a director, but they called her something else. She wasn't the director of admissions. She was head of the office of admissions or something and she was a perfectly good person, but she wasn't just what they wanted. They really wanted somebody to take the job over, so that's what I

did and I went back and I served it that department for, oh, a number of years. I liked that one the best. That was very interesting.

KP: Well, 'cause you got meet ...

EN: We interviewed every candidate, every candidate. We had two thousand candidates in one year, and we interviewed everyone. I had two other interviewers and the three of us saw a thousand girls.

BT: Wow.

EN: … We would assess them, but along with everything else.

KP: Yes.

EN: How they now decide that they're going to take them on the basis on their scores, I don't know.

BT: What were the kinds of things that, in those days, that you were looking for?

EN: Well, we'd talk about their extracurricular activities. We'd talk about what they'd like to do, what they'd wanted to study. It was just more, I don't know whether it made any sense, I wasn't a trained interviewer, but we seemed to pick some pretty good people.

BT: But you obviously had, you know, some girls made good impressions and some didn't.

EN: Yes, yes.

BT: Was there any, I don't know, I've never worked in admissions, but was there any sense that you were looking for certain kinds of people?

EN: No, no.

BT: You know, "We need people to work on the yearbook, or we need to people that are, we want a balanced ... student body, so we look for different things." Was there much in the sense of that?

EN: No, we'd look for some people that were quiet and thoughtful kids, that weren't very active. No, it was just a … and it was partly to get them to see the campus.

BT: Oh, sure.

EN: … We'd always had guides to take them around. We don't do that anymore. They don't even have interviews. They just go there if they have questions. Well, they don't see our campus at all, and I think it's one of the nicer campuses.

BT: Yes, oh, it's beautiful. Were the guides students usually?

EN: Always. Yes, always students.

BT: See, they still do that in a lot of women's colleges.

EN: Unpaid. They were unpaid. They were just volunteers.

BT: They still do that.

EN: Yes, it's good for them to meet a couple of the students and ask the kind of questions they wouldn't ask a person like me. All through the years, I go back to a lot of alumnae things, and, of course, I know most of them and most of them know me, because I've been there so long, had been there so long, and every once in awhile, at almost every function I go to, someone will come up to me and say, "You're the lady who interviewed me for admission." … I'll say, "Another of my mistakes." [laughter]

BT: Then they look really surprised.

EN: Yes, they do.

BT: I have one question about the war.

EN: Yes, sure.

BT: I noticed in the book that you loaned me on the history of Douglass that Mildred Mackafee Horton, who was the head of the WAVES, did come and speak at commencement. One of the things we're trying to find out is if any of the military services, or the Red Cross, or the USO, actually came onto campus and did any kind of speaking or recruiting, particularly ...

KP: 'Cause we're surprised at how many women served.

BT: In the beginning on the war. Yes, you really had a lot.

KP: It was a large number.

BT: Large number of women who ...

EN: Well, of course, you must remember I wasn't there.

BT: But you were there at the beginning of the war, so I just wondered if you had ... a sense that there was a lot of excitement in '42 when the war first started in terms of encouraging an interest in this work.

EN: Well, I don't remember that.

BT: Okay, well, then maybe there wasn't. ... We really don't know. I'm curious. I've been asking everybody that.

EN: Oh, course, it had a terrible impact on the girls, because some of the girls were, by this time, married. I mean, they'd get married quickly, and then when the fellows were going off ... away, you know, it would be very bad for them. I remember, I was given the job by the faculty, they didn't want to do it anymore, of allowing, giving permission for people to, what was the word we used, put off taking exams for one reason or another. … I remember one girl coming in, practically in tears, and I had to make these decisions, the faculty didn't want to do it anymore. In fact, they didn't want it to happen too often, and that's why they wanted somebody like me to do it, I suppose. So she said her husband was going, was being sent away, or her boyfriend, I can't remember which it was, was going off the day, or the day before, that she had to have an exam … and she'd like to postpone the exam. … I thought, you know, I had to make up my mind right away on these things, and I said to her, "You know, I have a feeling that your boyfriend would feel that you weren't doing your job. He's doing his job, and he's being sent. I think you ought to do your job, just the same as though he were here." … She had to take the exam at a regular time, and she came in later, I was always so pleased, and thanked me for it. She said, "It was the best thing you ever did, 'cause I would've started to want to do all sorts of things." [tape paused]

BT: You were just saying that she thanked you for ...

EN: Oh, yes. Yes, and I was so pleased that she thought enough, you know, to come in … [and] thank me for it, so there are lots of wonderful things that come to administrators.

KP: How long did you stay at the admissions office?

EN: Let's see. I came back in '46, and in '56, that's when I was made an assistant dean, and then I was sort of put in charge of all the administrative offices. I liked that work, too.

KP: You were, in a sense, almost the provost of the campus …

EN: I suppose so.

KP: Yes, executive officer, at least from staff side.

EN: I don't quite know what provost means, but I think ... yes. I mean, I would meet with each one of the directors and discuss their problems and what they were doing once every week or two. … Then about every two weeks, I'd have the whole group of directors together, and we'd discuss what each one was doing briefly, so that we all knew what everybody else was doing and we weren't duplicating and we were covering all the bases and it worked very well. We had a good administration, I think.

KP: You also worked very closely with all the deans.

EN: Sure.

KP: It almost sounds like each dean became more dependent on you, because by the fourth or fifth dean you had been doing this so long ...

EN: Well, they knew it wasn't necessary to check up on me too much, I think. We had one who loved paperwork. She loved to have me making reports, and if there's anything I didn't like doing [it] was making reports, and so I retired.

KP: Could you speak about the different styles of the different deans, because you got to know them fairly well?

EN: Yes, yes, I did, of course.

KP: If you want to go in order of the deans ...

EN: I'm not even sure I can do that ...

KP: Well, however you want to ... talk about them, because you ...

EN: Well, I tell you, one of the most interesting ones to work with was Mrs. Bunting, who is now Mrs. Smith. I guess, she has married again, and I think her second husband has died. But anyhow, she was a person with a lot of ideas and good ideas. … Before she came, the college completely consisted of teenage people. There weren't any of these older women, none at all, and it was always understood in ... this University's circles that Douglass was the undergraduate women's college and Rutgers was the undergraduate men's college and then there was an extension division that took care of the older people who went at night.

BT: Oh, I didn't know that.

EN: Well, Mrs. Bunting came in with the idea of having older women come to Douglass during the day, and I kept saying to her, "You can't do that. That's not permitted." … What do you know, the next thing you know … they were coming, and I objected strenuously. Well, that's gotten to be one of the most popular programs in the college.

BT: It sure has.

EN: … I was wrong, very wrong on that, that I objected to it, but I thought that was sort of the understood rule. I never saw it written down. It's just understood by all of ... by me, I guess, period. But it's been such a successful program. Yes, she was a great innovator.

KP: Most of the deans had either grown children, or they had never married, whereas I saw a picture of her. She actually has ...

EN: She had three ...

KP: She had four ...

EN: Four children, that's right.

KP: And in the dean's house.

EN: Yes.

KP: What was that like to work?

EN: Oh, that ...

KP: You said she was a working mother, which was not as common, especially for professional women to combine both.

EN: Yes, yes, and of course, she didn't have a husband.

KP: Yes, her husband had passed away.

EN: Yes. Oh, she was just full of pep and vigor and ideas, and she'd have parties there and the kids would all be there and the children were all very good children, fine children, fine children. I don't know what's happened to all of them, Mary Ingraham. Yes. No, I must admit I haven't kept up with the deans as much as I perhaps should have. I've kept up with many people, but I'm sure they have other things to do. Now, let's see. Miss Adams was a, she was a teacher of English, of course, and rather an intellectual person, very scholarly and interested in scholarship and things of that nature, so she was different in that respect. Miss Corwin, who was my, one of my favorites, let me put it that way, she was always so thoughtful of people. She was a people interested person.

KP: Now you served as assistant dean under her.

EN: No.

KP: No.

EN: No. No, it wasn't until, let's see it was when … Who made me assistant dean? I think Miss Adams, probably.

BT: There's a picture in here.

EN: I really can't remember when I went into that, 1956, I think. I have to leave that, I don't know.

KP: Yes, anything else about the styles of the different deans?

EN: Let me think. Well, Miss Foster was the one who liked to have a lot of ...

KP: Paper work.

EN: ... Paper work done. … For example, she'd say, "I think we ought to have a list of all the rooms and the numbers of seats in each room and what facilities are in each room." I said, "But I know all that without putting down on paper," and she said, "Well, how do you know where to put classes?" I said, "Well, I just know which classes fit." You know, I couldn't, we couldn't agree that you could keep the stuff in your head and it was just as good there. I'm sure she thought it would, maybe she was trying to get rid of me, and she thought she better get it all on paper before she lost me. I don't know, but she got rid of me and retired the next year.

KP: You had seen several deans sort of come and go.

EN: Oh, yes, and they all went to interesting jobs. Miss Adams went to Dartmouth as a vice president, I think, a very good job. Mrs. Bunting went to ...

KP: Radcliffe.

EN: ... Radcliffe and became the president of Radcliffe, yes. Miss Corwin, of course, retired. She didn't go anywhere else. Well, there was Douglass, Corwin, Adams, Bunting, Foster. Yes, there were five that I knew well.

KP: Yes, I think that ...

EN: One of the ladies that I brought from my USO days to the college was Marjorie Trayes. She was the director of the USO where I was sent to train.

KP: Oh, okay.

BT: Oh, how nice.

EN: She had nothing to do with Douglass at the time, never had had. But she came from Pennsylvania, and I thought she was a rather outstanding person. … When there was a job, she stayed on with USO longer, 'cause the club she was in stayed open longer, but then that closed and I knew that she was taking a course in Columbia University, I think, on personnel work. … So when a job came free in … our Dean of Students office, I let our Dean of Students, whom I knew very well, know about Miss Trayes and I let Trayes know about it. She came and she took, she was given that job, and she became the Dean of Students when there was a change. … Now you go to Trayes Hall in ...

BT: So there was some connection between ...

EN: … She knew those deans very closely, because as Dean of Students she worked even closer with them then I did. I mean, I had my own little job, you know, and she was very close to them.

KP: When you went to Douglass, and although it was part of Rutgers, it was really very, NJC was very ...

EN: Very separate.

KP: Very separate.

EN: We had our own budget … from the state. We made our own pleas for budget to the state. We had our own business manager.

KP: Admissions office, the whole ...

EN: Admissions office, yes. All that was done, personnel bureau placement, all was done at Douglass ...

KP: Over the course of your career, although it would really accelerate in the late '70s and early '80s, you saw a lot of power, in a sense, go to Old Queens, which had originally resided ...

EN: Turn that off for a minute. [tape paused]

KP: You'd left in 1972.

EN: Correct.

KP: There was some movement towards federating the departments. Did you see that in '72 when you were leaving?

EN: Oh, I saw it coming. … I saw it coming. I thought, "I don't want to be here when that happens." I retired three years early. That is, I was sixty-two.

BT: Oh, I see.

KP: Because you could see the writing on the ...

EN: I could see it coming, and I didn't want to be part of it, but it had to come. I was just one of the stops, one of the things that stopped it for awhile.

BT: I have a naive question, but maybe it's a safer one. What were the reasons that were being advanced even in the late '60s and early '70s about federating? Was it really financial?

EN: No.

BT: I just kind of wondered why they did it.

EN: No, I think, I think possibly like my objections to Mrs. Bunting's ideas, which I know now were wrong, I think what they believed was … See, we were a teaching school. We were a teaching college. We did not have much research going on. The faculty weren't doing a lot of research … and publishing. That was not considered as important as the teaching of undergraduates and the caring for undergraduates. We knew our teachers. We went to their homes, all that sort of thing.

BT: Yes.

EN: That, I thought, was wonderful for an undergraduate college, but I suppose for the professional advancement for these faculty … Now, they all have to publish, right?

KP: Yes.

EN: That's good, though, and it's quite a different sort of atmosphere. I don't know which is better in the long run. I thought I knew. I thought I knew that it ought to be an undergraduate college teaching the undergraduates.

BT: Well, that's certainly become an issue lately.

KP: One of my undergraduate students is a woman. Actually, all my interns are women ...

EN: Is that so?

KP: … for this project. One of them is doing a study of co-education at Rutgers College, and Douglass was very, the deans at Douglass very much opposed ...

EN: Never wanted it, no.

KP: Did they feel that that would shift the balance between the two colleges?

EN: Of course, of course. Oh, at one time, it was thought, well, now Douglass campus could be the graduate school, and all the undergraduate work can go over to the other, which would make more sense in terms of this running back and forth business. … That's not, you see … when Douglass was formed in 1918, we were given the charter, or given the privilege of opening an undergraduate women's college provided the women understood that there could never be any help from Rutgers in terms of money. … So we, in those early years, were sort of inundated with this idea. We were here to stand on our own two feet, and we didn't want to get taken over, and I never could get over that. I always felt that was my mission and obviously Dr. Gross thought so, too, thought that was my mission, had been my mission.

BT: So in a sense the fiercely independent nature of Douglass was built into its charter.

EN: Yes, right. … Our alumnae ... association was completely separate and we raised our own money, not very much to be sure. We were, never raised an awful lot of money. We're doing a lot

better now with our alumnae, but then everything is looser in terms of money, isn't it? But, no, when I was running the whole alumnae office, I hesitate to say it, I don't think we raised very much money, maybe in the ...

KP: When you were alumnae secretary, you still had a very young alumnae body ...

EN: Yes, of course, of course.

KP: … and not a very flush time to be trying to raise money.

EN: … No, that's very true, but now they're doing very much better, of course ...

KP: You very much liked having a career and it sounds like you enjoy being an executive.

EN: Yes. You see, I didn't marry. I didn't have any children of my own to care for. I had my mother [and] father taking care of things at home. My job was my life, that was it.

KP: But you also mentioned when you first started, how limited your choices were.

EN: Yes, oh, yes.

KP: Over the course of your career, you really saw women having more and more options.

EN: Oh, indeed.

KP: What did you think of this?

EN: I thought, I think it's wonderful, although I'm not really a very staunch feminist. In many ways, I still like men to open doors for me and things like that.

KP: [laughter] What did you notice about the change in women students, in their attitudes? Did you ever just shake your head at changes in attitudes, ‘cause you really, by the time you had retired, life at Douglass had changed quite a bit from your day?

EN: Oh, indeed it had. In the ‘60s, I remember, oh, what a time we had. There was a spell when they would, somebody would call up the dean, usually the dean, not me, and say, "There's going to be a bomb in such and such a building, or in a dormitory tonight." … We'd get everybody out of the place. We'd call off exams, call off everything, get 'em all out, and there never was a bomb. We never had a bomb. … One day, the dean was away, and I got a call at home early in the morning. “There's going to be a bomb in the science building today. You better call off exams.” Well, I got dressed and I went over to science building and I got hold of the janitor and I said, "Listen we're going to go through every room in this building today, and you're to look for anything that's unusual, bag of anything or a box of anything in any room. You must go into the men's rooms and search thoroughly. I'll go into the women's rooms. And you'll take floor So-and-So and I'll take

…" And we went through. We could not find a thing. I never said a word to anybody about my call. We never had another call about bombs. They decided we caught onto them.

BT: Yes, didn't work.

EN: Nope. I never. That's so ridiculous, wasn't it?

BT: Was there in the ‘60s and, really, in the early ‘70s, was there a lot of agitation on the Douglass campus about Vietnam?

EN: Oh, yes ...

BT: Were the women also active in anti-war protests?

EN: Very active, yes, indeed. Yes.

BT: Did that ever really interfere on the Douglass campus with classes or anything?

EN: Well, as I say, they were forever calling up ...

KP: Other than bomb scares?

EN: Yes, well, that was part of it.

BT: Did they have any sit-ins or protests?

EN: That was part of it. … Yes, I went to Vietnam in 1975. Let's see … '75 was when they, that was the end of the war, wasn't it? I went there 1974, in the fall, because, well, I haven't told you about my foreign students.

KP: Yes, yes.

BT: I was about to ask you about them, looking at all the wonderful pictures around the house.

EN: Well, I had a foreign student who lived in Vietnam and went home to Vietnam after she finished, and she was a very fine young lady. … I did a lot of travelling in those days. Whenever I had a vacation I went off to distant places, and so I wanted to go to Vietnam … in '74, I think. … She wrote and said her brother, who was in the Vietnamese army, said he didn't think it was safe for me to come. They didn't know what was going to happen. And they had the … what did they call that when the North Vietnamese did infiltrate down into the South? Very briefly. Then we and the South Vietnamese ejected them. That was in '74. Then in '75, she wrote, and she said, "We think it would be fine for you to come," and so I went. … It was not very long after that that the Vietnamese from the North really did come down and ruin the place. But I enjoyed that trip. It was a beautiful trip to go there. I went to Japan and Hong Kong.

KP: Your student in Vietnam, whatever happened to her?

EN: She lives in Virginia, just outside of Washington. She came over, at the time, when the North Vietnamese were invading. She had been tipped off by our embassy. She was working for our embassy as an interpreter, and she'd been tipped off that they expected this invasion and that if she wanted to, she could take two of her family, two children in her family, not her own 'cause she wasn't married then, and they'd give her space on a helicopter. … So she took two children from her oldest brother. … They are over there. … They were about fifteen and thirteen, and she escaped to the United States. But before she left, she sent me a letter, and she said, "We think we're going to be invaded and we don't think we're going to be able to stop it, but here is a list of my family. I have told them all when they get out. They're all going to try to get out except for my sister," one sister, didn't speak English. She didn't want to get out, so all the rest of them were going to try to get out. … Her brother had been the head of the police on the Mekong River, the military police, so he had a boat, a ship, and he had that boat hidden. … All the family knew where to go to get on that boat, but she took the two children and she sent in her letter to me with this list, and she says, "My brother So-and-So, his wife So-and-So, children So-and-So," and they were all given my name and address and telephone number and told to call me as soon as they got onto American soil, or where they could safely make a call to me. So I had all these reverse the charges calls, in the middle of the night, most of them, because it would be daytime where they were. … One night, I got a call from a sergeant in, an American sergeant in, where was it, in Thailand, I think he said, and he said, "Lady, there's a Vietnamese man here who says he knows you," and, of course, I had met them. … But, of course, I didn't know, couldn't know them by name, because their names were so different. "And he knows you, and I want to know if he knows you and his name is So-and-So." Well, I had the list right there.

BT: The list.

EN: … I said, "Yes, I know him, what is it?" "Well," he says, "for God sakes lady, if you could do anything about getting them out of this place. It's terrible here for them." He said, "If you could get them out, you do it for them." … I said, "Well, what do you think I should do?"

----------END OF SIDE ONE, TAPE TWO----------

EN: ... He said, "Well, you go to your nearest immigration office and you get a sponsorship form and you fill it out, and then they'll let you, let these people come out." … So I went up to Newark the next day and I got this form and I filled it out and passed it in and, sure enough, they got out all right. … It went on that way for days, I'd get calls from different places. Well, finally I got a call from Huong, that's the name of the girl that was our student, and she said she was in Indiana, I think. I've sort of forgotten. She was in a refugee camp. … She said, "I have two boys with me," and she said, "We're going to be allowed to go soon." But she said, "I don't know what to do with them." She said, "They are so starved for food. The people here think that all we eat in Vietnam is rice, and they keep giving us rice three times a day and we never had rice like that." They were a wealthy family, and they didn't eat so much rice. … So she said, "I don't know what to do with them because I'm going to Washington and look up some of the people I know and see if I can get a

job and an apartment in Washington, where I know people." See, she'd met these people in the embassy ...

BT: Sure, embassy.

EN: ... and been their interpreter. … So I said, "Well, bring them here," and she said, "May I?" And I said, "Of course, you can," so she brought the two boys here.

BT: Oh, my gosh.

EN: … I had them for six weeks. They spoke no English, I spoke no Vietnamese, and we got along perfectly. They were such good boys and so sweet. They had the upstairs. I have a room upstairs, no bathroom up there, but a room. … They were just darling. We had such a good time. They wanted to learn English, of course. Well, I had a boy across the street, he was a little older than them, and he had come over here not knowing any English, from France. … So he had all these baby books that he had from which he had learned English, so he had them every night. He was old enough to work. He was only about nineteen or twenty, and he would have a lesson every night. … Then he would keep me informed on what they were studying, and then all the next, not all the next day, but some of the next day, we'd spend practicing the words that Claude wanted them to learn, and they'd learned a lot of English while they were here. They never went back, of course. They stayed and they live in San Jose, California. Now they're both married, one of them has a little boy. … When they were here, one day … I said, "Toothpick." They thought that's what it was. So I had a package of toothpicks and "Yes. More, more." … So I said, "How many?" "More." So I went and bought then two or three boxes and I came back. ... "More." Well, I bought an awful lot of toothpicks, and then one day they said, "Come and see," and they had made that little house. You see that little house.

BT: Oh, yes.

EN: That's my house that they had made out of toothpicks ...

BT: That's amazing.

EN: … The Red Cross in Metuchen invited me one day to go and speak. I used to do a lot of speaking about one thing or another, and they knew that I had these Vietnamese boys here, 'cause I had … Oh, I know how they knew. I had asked the Red Cross whether they could make a plea for me to get some clothes for the children ... because the children couldn't bring anything. All they could bring was a little box … little suitcase. … So they had a clothing drive for those two boys that we had so much stuff we didn't know what to do with it. … So they asked me whether I'd come and talk about the boys and so I did. … A couple of days later, I got a call from the *Home News*, and they said they'd like to send somebody out here to interview the boys. I said, "Well, they don't speak any English." … They said, "Well, how do you get along?" I said, "Well, we sort of act out everything," and I said, "If you could …" They said, "If we send you some of the questions in advance, would you do it?" I said, "Well, I don't know whether the boys would want to do this. They might not want to reveal what's happened to them." It was still going on, you know, so I sort

of was not very helpful to that lady who called me. … Then I told the boys later and they said, "We want. We want." They wanted to do it, so I got her to come and she brought a photographer and they took the picture, which they put in the paper. … That photograph that's stuck in the picture that is of those two boys years later when they came to visit here in the United States.

KP: This was all new to them. They hadn't, except for the camp, they hadn't really seen much of the United States, so they must have found ...

EN: Oh, yes.

KP: They must have found Metuchen the most exciting place.

EN: Now 'cause they had a very lovely home … because as I say they were rich people. … They were well taken care of at home.

KP: But still this is a whole new place.

EN: Yes, yes. One night, they came down and they, one day, they came down and they said that they would spell words to me ... They said, "What is B-A-L-L-E-T?" … I thought, "Now how on earth do you explain that?" So I got in the living room and I got as far up on my toes as I could and I ran across the living room. Oh, they knew what it was, and I could hear them laughing all that evening about how my ballet lesson.

KP: You mentioned that you were very much involved with international students. How did that begin?

EN: Oh, yes.

KP: I mean you have sort of given us an explicit story.

EN: Very interesting how that began. It was Miss Adams, I'm sure, that said to me, very early in her career, you know, first few days, she said, "I just had a letter from Betty Boyd," who was the international student advisor, at that time, the faculty advisor. It had always been a faculty member and she asked to be relieved of that. Now she said, "I don't know any of the faculty. I don't know whom to appoint. I wonder if you'd do it for a little while until I get to know some of the people." Well, I said, "Of course," and so I was on it for a little while, for ten years. I always said to her, "If you take it away from me, I'll leave." It was the best part of my job.

KP: You obviously enjoyed getting to know the students when they were here and staying in touch with them.

EN: Oh, sure.

BT: That's fascinating.

EN: Well, you know, these are all, those are all pictures of them now, over there on the sideboard.

BT: I know I was looking at them.

EN: … They've given me most of these things. Now, this was one of my foster children. This wasn't an international student. I've had a foster child for years and years and years, and she was my first foster child. I had her when she was seven. That's a party she went to with her two children and her husband.

KP: Where was she a ...

EN: Hong Kong.

KP: Oh, okay.

EN: … I went over to see them twice.

BT: Oh, really?

EN: Yes, I've been to see them. But all these, you know, all these things are from these girls. They brought them to me. I don't buy things like this. I'm not a thing gatherer. I don't care about things, but they always bring me all these nice things.

KP: As international student advisor, what did you find were the problems that international students had adjusting to the United States?

EN: Well, of course, the women's adjustment, I think, is quite different from men's, because many of them were so protected at home, and when they came here, they didn't know what to do about anything, and so to have somebody they can talk to, I thought was very important. I enjoyed doing that, and then I was right there. I was always there in an office, you know, in College Hall, and they could come in anytime and talk to me about whatever their problems were. … I helped many of them get money when they had problems. I remember, one girl came in one day, one of the Chinese girls from Hong Kong, she was in tears. She had just received a letter from her father. They'd had a terrible strike or something and his restaurant had to be closed, and he told her she'd have to come home. He wouldn't be able to pay her next bill, and I had no source of income, money like that, available. Well, that very night I went to the Lion's Club or the Kiwanis Club, or some club down in Monmouth County, that had asked me to come and speak to their high school seniors, or the ones who had done the best work … in high school. … They wanted a college person to come and speak about college, and so I went and spoke. … In the course of the speech I told them about this girl and what the problems of the international students can be. … A man in the audience came up to me later, a man who was the husband of one of my classmates from Douglass, and he said, "You know, there's a man in this audience who says that he'll help that girl."

BT: Wow, wonderful.

EN: From then on, he gave her five hundred dollars a year.

KP: So she was able to finish up at Douglass.

EN: Yes, and she brought two of her sisters. They came. Once the father got over this ... strike, he was all right, you know. You never know what you can do if you have the opportunities.

KP: ... You mentioned that a lot of these women came from very sheltered background. Did you see the change in some of them, in terms of what they could do and the opportunities?

EN: Oh, goodness, yes, heavens. Now you asked me where this Vietnamese girl is. ... When she brought those two children over, she left them with me. She went back to Washington, got in touch with her friends there, found an apartment, got a job, and she went to school for eleven years at night, eleven years. First … she had graduated as a chemistry major at Douglass. She found she couldn't get a job in chemistry, so she took just a clerical job. … She went to school and she got her CPA, passed the test, had to take the law one twice, because that required too much thinking. She could remember anything. She could memorize anything, but they never were taught how to think for themselves. Well, she got through that. She became a CPA. She's now the bursar, or business manager of a small publishing concern, has been for years, and this is thirty years ago I'm talking about, you know. She kept right on going. She got her real estate license. She sold real estate to Vietnamese families for years as they came over. They'd have money with them. You know, they didn't believe in putting money in the bank, so they'd bring diamond, diamond rings, and things like that, and she sold real estate. She's given that up now, because there aren't anymore Vietnamese coming, but she could help them because of the language and all that, and she could tell them how to get money from the bank, and, with her CPA work, she did their accounting for them. She just never has stopped. I've never been, never stopped being amazed at what she has accomplished and what she has done for her family. She married a retired major general in, from the Marines who had been in Vietnam, and who had loved the Vietnamese people. I think it was more the people he loved … because, I think, he thought he was going to get one of these agreeable little Vietnamese girls, and she wouldn't be that, you know. She would want her own way, yes. Oh, she's been very successful. ... Many of them have stayed, a good many of them are still in this country. They've never gone home, never gone back. … Now with Hong Kong going, I don't know … those who were over there, I hope they'll get out. I don't think it looks very good. Do you?

BT: I don't know. There was one woman at this thing yesterday who says they're all learning to speak Mandarin, because ... of the takeover. She was just back a week ago.

EN: Really.

BT: She had just been there … so I guess some of them are planning on staying.

EN: I remember one time the ... people over at the infirmary called me and said, "Do you have somebody there that speaks Chinese? Do you know. .." cause people knew I … knew the international students. I said, "Sure, I have plenty of people who speak Chinese." "Well, would you send somebody over here. We have one girl and we cannot make out what's the matter with

her, and she doesn't know." She knew enough English to manage classes but she couldn't explain to them what was the matter, what hurt or … "So would you ..." So I said, "Sure." So I got hold of the first one, I couldn't send her up there. "Nope, that wasn't right, she didn't speak the right kind of Chinese." I had to start over again. No, they've been wonderful, those young women, just wonderful, just, mostly, the Orientals, and they're the ones who remember you. As you can see, this is my oriental area.

BT: Yes, you really have a lot of things from ...

EN: That's from, let's see. How did they say that on the radio the other day, "Myanmar." I have been calling it "Myanmar," Burma.

KP: Oh, okay.

EN: You know, [it] is renamed, and I called, but they said, "Myanmar," I think. "Myanmar," that's what the man said. I don't know whether he knew. But that's, she's from Thailand, but she bought that from a Myanmar temple. It's a wall hanging from a temple, and those are all supposed to be semi-precious stones around the outside of it. It ought to be in a museum, not in my little house, but.

BT: The work that's in that.

EN: After all, she sent it to me, you know.

KP: That would actually probably, you know, who would probably be interested in that piece would be the Newark Museum.

EN: Yes, yes.

KP: 'Cause they have a very fine ...

EN: I think they would. I have a collection of Thai dolls that I took to the Smithsonian to give to them that I bought in Thailand when I was there, I bought in Laos, actually, and I thought it shouldn't be here in my house. I had a lot of guests, but I didn't have enough guests to make it a museum. … So I wrote them and asked them if they'd be interested. "Oh, yes," they'd be very interested, so I pack 'em all up and get in my car and rode down to Washington. I have a friend in Washington, who went with me to the museum, and the two of us each take a couple of bags of these dolls in. … I asked for the man who wrote me the letter and he was there, and he took ... us into his office with the dolls. … I showed him what I had and I said, "Now, when would you be able to display them?" I thought, you know, I'd let everybody in that area know. He said, "Oh, madam, we'd never have a time to display them. We have enough exhibits for years in advance, no." I said, "Well, what would you do with them?" "Well, we'd put them into drawers and if somebody came in and asked to see costumes of the" what were they, the, some tribe, or something, "we would ..." I said, "Well, how often would that happen?" "Well, not very often, but, of course, they'd be very valuable to anybody who came in." I said, "You know, I think really more people

would see them in my house, so would you mind if I take them home?" He said, "No, not at all." So I brought them all home again. I've had them ever since. I've given them out now, mostly to the youngsters in the neighborhood, little girls, who, and I explain what they are, why they should cherish them, from Miss Edna, as they all call me. Yes, I have a lot of kids that come and visit me. Now, aren't we almost done?

KP: I think so.

EN: I feel as though I can't talk much more.

BT: We're wearing you out.

EN: It's getting harder and harder to talk.

BT: Well, it's been fascinating.

KP: Yes.

----------END OF INTERVIEW----------

Reviewed by Kathryn Tracy 5/17/01
Reviewed by Sandra Stewart Holyoak 5/23/01
Reviewed by Edna Newby 6/01