

IRENE CULLY

Denver, Colorado Unit

Transcript of an Oral History Interview

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Irene Cully

## PREFACE

This transcript is the product of a tape-recorded interview conducted on 4 March, 1986, for the Women's Overseas Service League.

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

Transcribed by Patricia Siggers  
Lansing, Michigan

10 May, 1988

IRENE CULLY

2 Denver Unit

MB: What is your name, please?

4 IC: Irene Cully.

MB: When did you join the Denver Unit of WOSL?

6 IC: In 1970.

MB: What branch of the service did you serve?

8 IC: Army Nurse Corps.

MB: When did you go into the Army Nurse Corps?

10 IC: August, 1939.

MB: What influenced you to go into the service?

12 IC: Probably the benefits I would receive.

14 MB: Before you went into the Army Nurse Corps, what did you do?

16 IC: I was working in Omaha at the Lutheran Hospital in the operating room.

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

18 IC: I was a nurse anesthetist.

MB: How long were you in the Army?

20 IC: Twenty-two years.

MB: Where did your travels take you?

22 IC: Germany, Okinawa, were my overseas assignments. Madigan:  
I was at Madigan for five years. I was on the east coast  
24 at Fort Devins; Fort Sill, OK; Fort Riley, KS. I guess  
that's it.

26 MB: When you were in the Army - tell me about your housing?

IC: I lived in nurses' quarters, and at that time it was  
28 adequate, I guess.

MB: Tell me about the medical care that you were able to get.

30 IC: Very good.

MB: Can you describe some of the uniforms that you wore?

32 IC: The taupe uniform during the war--no, we wore the pinks  
and greens, which is the best looking uniform the Army  
34 has ever had. Then into the taupes; and then the blues.

MB: Do you have any special experiences that you'd like to  
36 relate?

IC: Well, about being scared right after D day. We went to  
38 France on D-7. We were set up in tents. They were

40            strafing the area, and I was giving an anesthetic in a  
tent. The strafing seemed to get closer and closer, and  
I kept leaning nearer and nearer a tent pole, which was  
42            probably about 4 inches in diameter. I have no idea what  
protection I thought that would give me.

44            MB: You were in a field hospital, right?

IC: Yes.

46            MB: How long were you in with that particular unit?

IC: Two years and a half, I think.

48            MB: Now, you lived in tents all that time?

IC: Most of that time. At times, during the Battle of the  
50            Bulge, we were at Metz in a building. However, most of  
the time was in tents.

52            MB: When you were in the tents, how many nurses to a tent?

IC: Four.

54            MB: Did you all get along pretty well?

IC: Yes, we had to. (Laughter)

56            MB: When you went into the service, what was the greatest  
adjustment you had to make?

58 IC: I don't feel that I had much of an adjustment to make.  
It was community living; I had been used to that. I  
60 hadn't been out of training long. I had lived with  
another girl in an apartment, and I enjoyed it.

62 MB: When you went into the Army, did you plan to make the  
Army your career?

64 IC: I don't suppose so, but I'm glad I did.

MB: When did you decide to stay in the service?

66 IC: After the war was over. By that time, I had enough  
service which was counting toward retirement, and I  
68 couldn't afford to give it up.

MB: After you left the Army--after you retired, what did you  
70 do?

IC: I've been doing volunteer work, and I did work for a  
72 little while part-time in a nursing home.

MB: What has being a member of WOSL meant to you?

74 IC: Good friendship.

MB: O.K. Thank you very much.

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