LILLIAN KIUELA

Lansing, Michigan Unit

Transcript of an Oral History Interview

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PREFACE

This transcript is the product of a tape-recorded

interview conducted on *EE*January, 1986, For the W Overseas Service League.

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

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| **Transcribed** | **by Patricia Lansing,** | **Siggers Michigan** |
|  | **ES July,** | **1988** |

LILLIAN KIUELA

2 Lansing Unit

NOTE: Lillian Kivela is being interviewed for her service

4 overseas, and she is a member of the Lansing Unit of the Women ’s Overseas Service League.

6 This is Elsie Hornbacher talking, and I live at 2114 Meadowlane Drive, Lansing, fl 48906.

a My telephone number is C517) 321-2453.

EH: Lillian, what is your address?

**10** LK: 4644 Grand Woods Drive, Lansing, Michigan 48917. Same area code Cas yours) C517) 323-2422.

12 EH: Lillian, where did you serve overseas?

LK: England, mainly.

14 EH: What made you decide to go overseas?

LK: Oh, I don ’t know. Of course, I went into the Army first.

16 That was the first decision to make, and I was going because everybody was going into the Army. I thought,

IB well, it ’s my chance; I ’ll go too.

EH: Things were a little different back in that day and age,

20 weren ’t they?

LK: Oh, sure. I had two brothers in the service.

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| **EE** | LILLIAN**EH:** | KIUELA, Lansing Unit £**Oh, you did have two brothers?** |
|  | **LK:** | **Yes, and I Joined also.** |
| **£4** | **EH:** | **How long had they gone before you went?** |
|  | **LK:** | **They were in quite early. fly one brother went in, I** |
| **£6** |  | **think, in ’40, and my other brother went in, in ’41.** |
|  | **EH:** | **And you went in— what year?** |
| **£8** | **LK:** | **In 1843.** |
|  | **EH:** | **You were in the Army Nurse Corps? Then you said you** |
| **30** |  | **decided to go because you had two brothers, and it was** |
|  |  | **the trend of the day to go overseas— and to help in the** |
| **3£** |  | **war effort. I think America was quite different back in****those days than it is now. We were much more patriotic.** |
| **34** |  | **Had you worked before you went into the— ?** |
|  | **LK:** | **I had graduated from nurses’ training a year before, but** |

36 I had not worked except private duty occasionally. I went to college, and was going to get a degree in nursing

38 education at that time. But I dropped that and went into the service.

40 EH: Where were you inducted?

LK: At Schick General Hospital in Clinton, Iowa.

4£ EH: Iowa. Were you born in Iowa?

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|  | LILLIAN**LK:** | KIUELA, Lansing Unit 3**Yes, I was; but I grew up in South Dakota.** |
| **44** | **EH:** | **Just ramble on and tell me about your beginning experiences, and trace it through the war.** |
| **46** | **LK:** | **At Schick General? Well, that was Just a relatively new** |

general hospital because the nurses’ quarters still were

48 not equipped with furniture. I remember arriving there in the middle of the night when I First went into the

50 service. The night duty nurse took me over to a room with two sheets. It was chilly, and I didn ’t know

58 whether to use my Jacket for a pillow or a cover. It was very miserable the rest of the night. After that, we

54 had— there were about ten or twelve of us— arrived there about the same time. We did our basic training and all

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| **56** | **EH:** | **that type of thing together.****What was your housing like there?** |  |
| **58** | **LK:** | **Barracks type. We had a room of our own with a between two rooms.** | **bathroom** |
| **60** | **EH:** | **How many people in a room?** |  |
|  | **LK:** | **Just one.** |  |
| **68****64** | **EH:** | **Oh, you had a private room then, and a bathroom and a roommate on the other side. Did you have****uniform then?** | **between to wear a** |

LILLIAN KIUELA, Lansing Unit 4

LK: Well, actually, not all the time because they didn ’t have

**66** uniforms For everybody. They did give us— actually when I got there, they gave us the old World War I blue

68 uniforms. They ’re beautifully made. I ’ve still got some of them. Later, they went to the 0D Cor the olive drab

70 uniforms). But I have several pictures taken in those old blues.

78 EH: How long were you in Iowa? And what was your basic training like there?

74 LK: Oh, we had two weeks of marching and drilling and hiking, and then w e ’d go to training films Just like other

76 soldiers did. It was a two-week affair. We didn ’t really go to— where they shoot the bullets over; we

78 didn ’t do that. I c a n ’t remember what they call that.

But then we worked on wards, and I think I worked on a BO cardiovascular ward there— took blood pressures all day

long. There were a lot of rheumatic Fever patients.

88 Then I think I went on night duty on the officers’ ward.

EH: Who were these patients? Soldiers who had returned?

84 LK: No, they hadn ’t gone overseas yet. I think a lot of them came from Fort Leonardwood and around that area, that had

**86** gotten severe— had flu epidemic there that was terrible.

Then afterwards, they had a lot of rheumatic fever and

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| **BB** | LILLIAN | KIUELA, Lansing Unit 5**problems that followed that in that area down there in** |
|  |  | **Missouri.** |
| **BO** | **EH:** | **You were there two weeks?** |
| **BE** | **LK:** | **No, I was there longer, but our basic training lasted two weeks. I was there from June until October.** |

EH: 1343?

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LK: Yes. Then I was transferred to □ ’Reilly General in Springfield, Missouri.

EH: Springfield, Missouri, now. OK, and what did you do at Springfield, Missouri?

LK: Well, I started working on a cardiovascular ward there. Then I moved to a surgical ward and went on night duty. Uery interesting. I noticed Dr. Meade, who died Just recently, was at O ’Reilly General. That surprised me.

Anyway, I was there until— November. Then my orders came to go overseas.

EH: Until November of 1343?

LK: So I wasn ’t there very long; at O ’Reilly General. Just a couple of months, I think.

EH: What about friendships, etc., during that period of time?

You probably didn ’t— ?

LILLIAN KIUELA, Lansing Unit 6

LK: I d o n ’t have any continuing friendships From O ’Reilly.

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Of course, some of them at Schick General— when I ’d been there— eventually Joined the same unit I went overseas with, so I knew people from that time that continued on. Well, we returned to Schick General, surprisingly enough, and the 91st General was forming there. Actually, they

had been training when I was there before. The corpsmen were training at Schick General for the Slst, so it had been forming for some time. June Elst, I guess, was when they started, so it was Just about the time I went into the service that the Slst started training. Then they all came back to Schick General. They picked up their nurses and doctors, and they arrived there.

From there, we went to our station where we went overseas which would have been at Brunswick, New Jersey. We were there in Brunswick for several weeks at that point until they were waiting for a ship to take us overseas.

We got into New York two or three times, and I went down to Philadelphia twice. So we got a little bit of sight­ seeing in there.

EH: You were able to entertain yourselves, rather than work at that period of time. Were you afraid of going overseas?

138 LK: N o .

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|  | LILLIAN**EH:** | KIUELA, Lansing Unit **7****No Fear at all. Were you anxious to go?** |
| **134** | **LK:** | **Well, sure. (Laughter) Sounded like a good idea at the** |
| **13B** |  | **time. We went to overseas and Finally got on the Aquitania, which is a sister ship oF the Lusitania.** |
|  | **EH:** | **Is this a big ship or a little ship?** |
| **13B** | **LK:** | **It had eight thousand troops on it.** |

EH: That ’s a large one, isn ’t it?

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LK: It was a large one, although they were crowded.

Normally, it wouldn’t carry that many people. I would say it was Four times as many as they normally carry.

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| **144** | **EH:****LK:** | **But a big ship rides better than a small one, doesn’t it?****Well, that ’s a matter oF opinion. (Laughter) It was** |
|  |  | **pretty rough. No, I didn ’t get seasick. I reFused to.** |
| **146** | **EH:** | **What kind oF Facilities did you have on the ship? Were you down low or up above?** |
| **148** | **LK:** | **I c a n ’t even remember what— we never stayed in the rooms.** |
|  | **EH:** | **I see.** |
| **150** | **LK:** | **W e ’d always go up on deck. That way, you didn ’t get sick** |
|  |  | **up there.** |
| **152** | **EH:** | How many were in your rooms in the cabin? |

LILLIAN KIUELA, Lansing Unit 8

LK: We had a cabin For— would have been for one person, but

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there were three bunks in it. So there were three times as many in the room. We turned on the water— the fresh water— an hour in the morning and an hour in the evening.

EH: Then you could take your showers?

LK: Yes, you had to do everything in that hour. They did have salt water; but I tried to shower in that, and that was pretty terrible. CLaughter)

Then we had two meals a day; two sittings. That ’s all

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| **162** | **EH:** | **you had.****You didn ’t have breakfast?** |
| **164** | **LK:** | **No, Just two meals.** |
|  | **EH:** | **You mean, you got up in the morning? And how long did** |
| **166** |  | **you have to wait to eat?** |
| **168** | **LK:** | **I d o n ’t know. They had four sittings. They had people****divided into what they called four sittings so whatever sitting you were at, you went at that time. I have some** |
| **170** |  | **stuff at home that tells me about when it was, but I** |
|  |  | **didn ’t bring it.** |
| 172 | **EH:** | **Was the food good?** |
|  | **LK:** | **No. CLaughter)** |

LILLIAN KIUELA, Lansing Unit 9

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EH: You had enough of it though, didn ’t you?

LK: It was pretty terrible. For breakfast, we were served kidneys and liver and stuff you were not used to. And the problem was, people would get sick; and they didn ’t clean it up. They would Just throw sawdust on the floor.

EH: Oo, you mean in the kitchen? And in the dining room?

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| **180** | **LK:** | **Yes, that ’s right. And if you weren ’t ill when you went****down there, you were— you almost got ill down there, but** |
| **182** |  | **I survived.** |
|  | **EH:** | **How long was this trip?** |
| **184** | **LK:** | **Ten days.** |
|  | **EH:** | **Ten days at sea?** |
| **186** | **LK:** | **Normally, it would be a— I think when I came back, it** |
|  |  | **took five days. But they zig-zagged. They said they** |
| **188** |  | **went down as far as the Azores because it was a long troopship.** |
| **190 EH:** | **Did you** | **go across the sea— the Atlantic— blacked out?** | **Or** |
|  | **did you** | **have lights on your ship?** |  |
| **192 LK: Oh, they had it blacked out.** |
|  | **EH:** | **They had it** | **blacked out— right.** | **See, I have never** |
| **194** |  | **experienced** | **that.** |  |

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|  | LILLIAN**LK:** | KIUELA, Lansing Unit 10**Oh, yes. You didn ’t have any lights, but they would let** |
| 136 |  | **us up on deck at night. You felt your way around deck.** |
|  |  | **It was kind of interesting. One night we decided— they** |
| **198****800** |  | **had a lounge. It was almost impossible to get a seat in the lounge, so one day we sat and saved this table all****day long so we would have a place to sit at night. It** |
|  |  | **wasn ’t worth it. CLaughterD Ule took turns holding this** |
| **808** |  | **table down so w e ’d have a place to sit that night.** |
| **804** | **EH:** | **Were the officers and the enlisted men separated on these ships?** |
|  | **LK:** | **Yes.** |
| **806** | **EH:** | **Were you with the officers or the enlisted men?** |
|  | **LK:** | **I was with the officers. Out of those eight thousand** |
| **808** |  | **troops, there were only two hundred and twenty women on** |
|  |  | **board so it was kind of interesting.** |
| **810** | **EH:** | **Could you play Bridge all day or something like that?** |
|  | **LK:** | **I remember playing cards occasionally in the lounge, but** |
| **818** |  | **we stayed out on deck because it was a lot more pleasant** |
|  |  | **out there.** |
| 814 | **EH:** | **You went over during what month?** |
|  | **LK:** | **March. It was rough.** |

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| **BIB** | LILLIAN**EH:** | KIUELA, Lansing Unit 11**It uias cold out on deck, wasn ’t it then?** |
| **BIB** | **LK:** | **Oh, yes; we wore our coats and our gear. You had to wear your gas masks, and you had to wear this— and all this** |

stuff. You had to keep it handy.

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EH: Did you have any communications, radio communications as to what was going on? In 1943, I ’m trying to think of where the action was at that time.

LK: I d o n ’t know; I think they ’d had action in North Africa, but they hadn ’t gone into Europe yet.

EH: I see. The Germans were marching into Holland at that time, do you think?

LK: Well, I think they already had.

But it was a very interesting trip, and we met young men. Once a day they made everybody go up on deck to a drill. You had to run around a certain place. They had a path that you had to follow to get to your lifeboat. From what I understand, they had two thousand lifeboats for eight thousand people; so if they had have gone down, it would have been pretty sad. But we didn ’t have any trouble.

EH: Two thousand for eight thousand; that ’s only four to a lifeboat. That isn ’t many, is it?

LILLIAN KIUELA, Lansing Unit IE

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LK: Nq , two thousand lifeboats— enough For two thousand people.

EH: Oh, I see what you mean. I didn ’t think there would be two thousand— that ’s a lot—

LK: No, there were Just enough lifeboats for two thousand. But on our lifeboat, we used to have fun standing out there on deck. We had a Navy beach battalion; a few of them were in our lifeboat. Rather odd; this beach battalion came into our unit— to our hospital later for some training after they had landed on D day. They came back for some more training, and I saw this young man again that had been in our lifeboat assignment on deck. It was quite a trip. There ’s no two ways about it.

Then arriving at Greenock, in Scotland,—

EH: What ’s the name of that place, spell it.

G-r-e-n-o-c-h?

LK: I think that ’s right. It ’s right outside Glasgow, I guess. It ’s way out on the end, and most of the ships that came in landed there because that ’s as far as they could come in. It was quite interesting when we First saw land. That was kind of exciting. A couple of spitfires came out and flew around the ship, and it was

EGO kind of exciting. For spitfires—

LILLIAN KIUELA, Lansing Unit 13

EH: What ’s a spitfire? I ’m not sure.

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LK: It uias the English Fighter plane.

So then we went on, and they took us From the ship onto the— : Going back a little bit, it was interesting loading that ship at New York. We all wound in there;

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| **266** |  | **CLaughterD went in the side door, or the side of the****pier; marched in there. We all had to carry our own** |
| **268** |  | **luggage. We were loaded. CLaughter)** |
|  | **EH:** | **You had to carry your own luggage?** |
| **270** | **LK:** | **Oh, yes. Then we watched. I remember seeing them load** |
| **272** |  | **lockers. Our lockers were put on separately;****footlockers. We saw some dropping in the water. We were** |
|  |  | **hoping it wasn ’t ours. CLaughterD** |
| **274** | **EH:** | **Actually, some of the footlockers were lost?** |
|  | **LK:** | **Oh, yes. They dropped right down into the water when** |
| **276** |  | **they were loading them.** |

EH: In the footlockers, were they Army issue clothes in there

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or your own personal clothes?

LK: Mostly our personal things we took over; although, some were issue also. We had been issued our striped uniforms and capes. What we had on were— I think we wore slacks

LILLIAN KIUELA, Lansing Unit 14

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and our heavy overcoat-type thing and all that when we were going on. We were pretty packed, let me tell you.

EH: Doesn ’t sound like too pleasant of a trip.

LK: Well, it wasn ’t too bad. UJe were young. CLaughter)

EH: I know. You can experience those things and enjoy them, then. Hardships are a challenge.

LK: We were all doing the same thing, so that makes a big difference. Anyway, we got over there. Then from Greenock, we went on the train to Llandudno, Wales. This is a resort town in Wales, and it had little hotels right along the beach. That ’s what we were billeted in. These English people Just told them— they were told they had to put up these people. I don ’t know; they had some rough times, too, I ’m pretty sure. I gained about ten pounds almost rapidly there because we were told we had to eat everything we had on our plate. Everything was starchy. There was a real change of diet. We wouldn’t get any fresh things, and it was a real starchy food.

EH: Did you get any meat?

LK: Oh, yes; they had meat. Of course, that was the powdered milk - powdered egg days. CLaughter) Never saw any fresh milk, all the time you were over there.

LILLIAN KIUELA, Lansing Unit 15

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| **315** | **EH:** | **English milk.****Yes. Back in those days, undulant fever was a problem.** |
|  |  | **Now, y o u ’re in Wales. Have you begun working?** |
| **318** | **LK:** | **No, we were Just there. They had us marching a little** |
|  |  | **every day. I think I had a flu, and I went to a hospital** |
| **380** |  | **for a few days, too.** |
|  | **EH:** | **What was your housing like there in Wales?** |
| **388** | **LK:** | **In Wales? Well, it was a hotel— cold. (Laughter! No heat.** |
| **384** | **EH:** | **This is March— April?** |

EH: I know. That ’s the one thing I wanted when I came back from Tokyo, was a glass of milk!

LK: Right. The powdered milk wasn ’t as good as what they have now.

EH: I know; we had the mechanical cow in Tokyo, and it was acceptable. UJe called it the mechanical cow where they reconstituted the milk but it was nothing like the real Mc Coy.

LK: We tried not to drink milk over there because we were afraid of TB, I guess. Some of their cows were not properly tested, or something. We were told not to drink

LILLIAN KIUELA, Lansing Unit **IB**

LK: Yes. They didn ’t have any heat in the hotels. There

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| **330** |  | **remember. There weren ’t too many in there; about ten of****us in one hotel— I guess about ten or eleven.** |
| **332** |  | **Then we had to march clear down— it was about a mile to where the mess hall was.** |
|  | **EH:** | **Do, you had to walk a mile to eat?** |

were several in the rooms. UJe were quite doubled up. We had quite a Few sleeping— you know; if you had a double bed, they would sleep two of you in i t . I don ’t

334 LK: Yes, I had to walk about a mile to eat.

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| **336** | **EH:****LK:** | **Twice a day?****No. Three times, there. (Laughter}** |
|  | **EH:** | **Oh, three times there. Well, you had three meals; and** |
| **33B** |  | **would that be six miles a day or three miles?** |
| **340** | **LK:** | **I suppose it would if you went back to the room. Then we did the marching. We were there Easter, I remember.** |
|  |  | **That was Fascinating. They had an Easter service up on** |
| **342** |  | **this hill in Llangollen, and it was very interesting.** |
|  |  | **They had the Sunrise Service up there on this big hill.** |
| **344** |  | **I think Lewis Carroll must have had something to do with** |

that area because they had a monument with the rabbit by

346 a pond, so apparently Lewis Carroll spent some time in this area; I have Forgotten.

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| **34B** | LILLIAN**EH:** | KIUELA, Lansing Unit 17**Who is Lewis Carroll?** |
|  | **LK:** | **He wrote Alice in Wonderland.** |
| **350** | **EH:** | **Oh, yes.** |
|  | **LK:** | **It was a very interesting place— Welsh; and there’s all** |
| **352** |  | **those odd names.****Now, I guess while we were doing this, the colonel was** |
| **354** |  | **dickering For where we were going to go. He chose Oxford, I guess.** |
| **356** | **EH:** | **Oxford?** |
| **358** | **LK:** | **Well, it was in a suburb of Oxford. Headington was the****name of the little suburb. He chose this hospital; it was a brick hospital with steam heat Cbelieve it or not).** |

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It was an American hospital in Britain. It had been built with American money during the battle of Britain, so they let the Americans use it. It was a hospital with quonsets— they had quonset huts and brick buildings; and with the two, it was a thousand bed hospital.

Later, when we went to tents, we must have added at least five hundred patients; so we got up to fifteen hundred, with personnel to take care of all of them. According to something I ’ve heard recently, this was the biggest hospital in the European theater that we were in. Of course, the colonel made it pretty much of a showplace.

LILLIAN KIUELA, Lansing Unit **18**

An awful lot of people used to come there. They were

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always having visitors; generals and what-not. Ue were always cleaning, I ’ll tell you.

D day was the 6th. Our hospital was open before that, of course. Our patients would be boys that were— well, I know we had some paratroopers— one that had his hand broken because it had gotten in the way of a propeller;

accidents that had occurred in the normal run of things. On D day, we got our first patient load, which was around three hundred patients. The interesting thing about some of those early cases were they had rifle wounds, not very large wounds. Later, as they went on in to inland, they had shrapnel— which the wounds were much nastier.

For awhile, we were very busy. Ue would work about ten hours a day. Ue didn ’t get our hours off that we had normally gotten, but in time we did, when things simmered down and they had the surgeries caught up and the hospital was full.

Uhen they ’d come to our hospital, they usually came from first aid or station hospitals where they did not attempt to treat the wounds. They would slap a bandage on and then put a cast on it; so when they would arrive at our hospital, the cast would be very bloody. Then they would take them up to surgery and do the first repair work.

Ue had some excellent surgeons in our unit. I worked on an orthopedic ward, and we had many severe bone injuries.

LILLIAN KIUELA, Lansing Unit 19

I remember one case that appeared to have a gas gangrene 39B type thing that started bubbling, and boy, did they take

him up in a hurry! That ’s the only one I saui. They used

400 to have so much trouble with gas gangrene in World War I .

□F course, at this time, penicillin was being used. We

402 had quite a bit of penicillin, and they used it on a lot of patients. I remember penicillin in those days was a

404 bright yellow and smelled to high heaven. It really was a nasty smelling stuff. They got it so it was more

406 refined later on. Penicillin you get nowadays is different. But it did work, and we didn ’t have too many

408 infections. I remember some Russians visiting our ward once to see how come we didn ’t have very many infections.

410 They came and visited the ward.

I stayed on the orthopedic ward almost the full time I

412 was over there with an occasional shift to another place, but not too often. You took your turn on night duty.

414 Off hours were kind of fun. We had a good time over in England. Oxford had a nice theatre, and we went to plays

416 every so often. I saw some famous actors and actresses there. Uivian Leigh was in one play I saw. John

418 Gielgud, who became famous later over here in the U.S.; I

saw him in Hamlet over there. We got into London several

420 times. It wasn ’t a very long run on the train to London from Oxford. It was a short run.

LILLIAN KIUELA, Lansing Unit 20

422 EH: What do you mean by short?

LK: I guess an hour, maybe.

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| **424** | **EH:****LK:** | **That mould be short.****Wasn ’t bad. We had good times in London. When me mere** |
| **426** |  | **in Wales, an officer had made arrangements and ordered a** |
| **428** |  | **lot of bikes; so me all bought an English bike, or many****of us did. Then m e ’d bike around tomn. I had a great** |
|  |  | **bike. It mas a nice little bike. I mish I ’d thought to** |
| **430** |  | **bring it home. Some people did ship them home, but I** |
|  |  | **never did. I Just sold it over there. Maybe that mas** |
| **432** |  | **Just as mell because me mere able to get them, and maybe** |
| **434** |  | **they couldn’t. A lot of people used bikes over there.****They did a lot of their transportation on bicycles.** |

EH: I imagine there mas a shortage of gasoline and supplies

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in general?

LK: Oh, yes. They mere severely rationed. EH: Horn did the English treat you?

LK: Nice. Welsh, I didn ’t get too acquainted mith. We

meren ’t there that long. They mere nice.

EH: Were they glad to have you there?

LILLIAN KIUELA, Lansing Unit El

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LK: I don ’t know. I guess so. They had to put up with a lot, I think, From Americans. I met one couple— I went to a town outside of Oxford. fly cousin had been stationed there, and he gave me their name. I went to visit their home. It was a town called Chipping Norton. Then they came in to Oxford once, and I took them out to the hospital to eat. I met them downtown.

We had this couple— interesting— they had two children that had been evacuated from London. That ’s what they did with a lot of their children. They moved them to the outskirts so they wouldn’t be hurt or injured in London, and they had two children from London there. I thought that was kind of interesting.

EH: Did you see much bombing in London?

LK: Oh, I saw results of it. I wasn ’t there— EH: During the blackout?

LK: Oh, it was blackout all the time we were there, but you ’d see bombed areas. Yes, St. Paul ’s Cathedral— it was flat all the way around it. You c a n ’t see why St.Paul ’s was still there. It was amazing! Here ’s this cathedral right in all this rubble. I guess one bomb did land in St. Paul ’s. Then some man managed to detonate it— what do you call it?

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|  | LILLIAN**EH:** | KIUELA, Lansing Unit 22**De-detonate it.** |
| 466 | **LK:** | **Anyway, dismantle it.** |
| **468** |  | **We went to Madam Tussard’s. We usually stayed at the Red****Cross Hotel. That was easiest; quite easy. We could eat** |
|  |  | **there.** |
| **470** | **EH:** | **Did you have to pay?** |
|  | **LK:** | **Oh, yes. Not much. They had an officers’ mess at** |
| **472** |  | **Brovenor Square and it was at the hotel. I think it was** |
|  |  | **Grovenor Hotel. Huge room; and it was just filled with** |
| **474** |  | **tables of people eating. It was very interesting to eat** |
|  |  | **there.** |
| **476** |  | **As we were there for a long time, we would ride our bikes** |
|  |  | **for miles when w e ’d get off work. We had good times. It** |
| **478** |  | **wasn ’t bad. England wasn ’t a bad place to be during the** |
|  |  | **war, especially where we were. We worked, like you did:** |
| **480** |  | **One thing about it, of course— all our patients were** |
|  |  | **young men, so it was not depressing really. Sometimes it** |
| **4B2** |  | **was, of course.** |
|  | **EH:** | **They had a good sense of humor, in spite of their** |
| **4B4** |  | **diff iculties.** |
|  | **LK:** | **Yes— they were all there, and some of them were kind of** |
| 486 |  | **glad to be—** |
|  | **EH:** | **Back home?! CLaughter)** |

LILLIAN KIUELA, Lansing Unit 23

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LK: I wanted to tell you; some of the visitors we had at this place were very interesting. Queen Elizabeth came. This was King George ’s wife, you know. She came to a tea, and we all shook hands with her.

EH: Oh, wonderful!

LK: You d o n ’t shake hands with a queen very often. In fact, they d o n ’t normally shake hands, but she did. Pretty limp hand but she was very nice; a very nice lady, and

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| **438** |  | **she visited the hospital.****Oh, I think Joe Louis came through the hospital.** |
| **438** |  | **Frances Bolton, who was a congresswoman: She was****instrumental in having the nurses made regular officers.** |
| **500** |  | **Originally, they weren ’t. They were Just— not real** |
|  |  | **officers, but she put through a bill that made them** |
| **502** |  | **officers in the Army. She would visit the hospital.** |
|  |  | **There were others, so it was quite an interesting place** |
| **504** |  | **to be. L e t ’s see. Can I think of anything else that** |
|  |  | **happened in England that ’s of interest?** |
| **506** | **EH:** | **From D day till UE day was, roughly, almost a year,** |
|  |  | **wasn ’t it? But not quite.** |
| **508** | **LK:** | **I don ’t remember when it was. Isn’t that awful? After** |
|  |  | **UE day, our hospital closed down, and they moved us to** |
| 510 |  | **another hospital. We were supposed to go to the China-** |

Burma-India theater.

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| 512 | LILLIAN**EH:** | KIUELA, Lansing Unit 24**Oh, C-B-I.** |
| **514** | **LK:** | **Yes, but then of course, UJ day occurred while we were sitting there. So in order to move people home on point** |

systems, they moved our unit over to Liege, Belgium, to

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the hospital that was called— it was The Citadel. I d o n ’t remember which hospital we took over at that time. I was in Liege From October— about six weeks. I wasn ’t in Liege too long. That was an interesting place. I went on one ambulance trip to Paris to take another nurse to the hospital. I went along with her to go to the hospital, and spent a Few days in Paris then. AFter that, when I came back From Paris, my orders came to go

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| **524** | **EH:** | **home. So that ’s what happened.****When you came back to the States, Lil, did you have any** |
| **525** |  | **particular adjustment?** |
| **528** | **LK:** | **I ’ll tell you; we landed in Boston. We got on the train, I think that night (spent a day there}, went to Des** |
|  |  | **Moines, Iowa, and I was home in three days. It was a** |

terrible adjustment. I think some oF the awFullest times I spent in my liFe was aFter I came back From the service. We came back From all that activity— all the somebody around all the time— to nothing. Nothing!

534 EH: Where were you living then?

LILLIAN KIUELA, Lansing Unit 25

LK: I was in South Dakota. My mother was in Brookings, so I

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stayed there a few months; then decided I was going out to California to look around. So I did: I went out to California and visited my cousins, and I considered going to UCLA to school. The lines were so long with the veterans, to just get a smidgen of information, that I

didn ’t go there. Cl think I ’m pretty close to winding up this, am I not? I ’m back after the war.) (Laughter} Except it was interesting; going to school with all the veterans. When I returned, I came to Michigan State, of course.

There were a lot of good days in there, and I still have friends that I made. Our unit still has reunions, and

w e ’ve had them different parts of the country. Our colonel— h e ’s in his 8 0 ’s now— has attended every reunion. He says this one in June will be his last one. H e ’s an interesting man. He put out a book; he published a book privately and called it Oxford Angels. Reading it, he was in a different place than I was. (Laughter)

Of course, he was with dukes and all the different big­ wigs, and that ’s what his book talks about. It ’s still interesting to have because it has pictures, and it does tell some things that you didn ’t know was going on when you were over there in the unit. So it ’s an interesting book, and I ’m glad I have it.

LILLIAN KIUELA, Lansing Unit 26

560 EH: Then you went to Michigan State, and you finished your degree there?

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| **562** | **LK:** | **Yes. I didn ’t want to go back to South Dakota. I decided I Just didn ’t want to go back to South Dakota.** |
| **564** | **EH:** | **What drew you to Michigan?** |
| **566** | **LK:** | **I had a cousin that was living here, and you could get into Michigan State if you had a place to live. That ’s** |
|  |  | **all they required. Everything was Full; dormitory** |

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housing was very short, and my cousin lived in an apartment not too far from East Lansing. In fact, when I came here she had me all ready to go to school. She had done all my paperwork for me. All I had to do was walk here and look silly and walk in, and I was in school. I went seven terms Cl had gone a year at South Dakota State), and I finished my degree. I chose microbiology Cbacteriology, then) because they didn ’t have any nursing program at that time. If they had have, I probably would have continued with that.

EH: Thank you, Lil. That was Lillian Kivela recording for the Lansing Unit of the Womens’ Overseas Service League, the 22nd of January, 1986. Thank you.

Transcribed by Patricia Siggers

582 Lansing, Michigan