

Interview with Marion Lyons Clover
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Interviewed by Nancy Baker

Baker: Marion, why don't you talk a little bit about where you were born, your education and so on when you were younger?

Clover: I was born in Valley City, North Dakota, on the third of March, 1918. And all my early life was spent at Eckelson, went to school there, grew up on a farm and was a very bashful girl (laughs). But then, after finishing high school, I was sick for a couple of years and then I went to college down at Wahpeton Science School for two years--took business administration. And it was after that I got a job in Valley City. And that was in about 1940. And worked there for three years. And then I joined the service. And during that time we had to go to Minneapolis for our physicals.

Baker: What made you decide to enlist in the service?

Clover: Well, there were so many people gone. And I didn't really feel that the work I was doing there was that important. There were about six of us in the office. Three got married and three went into the service (laughs). So that was the turn of events.

Baker: So, when you enlisted then, did you enlist there in North Dakota and then you had to go to Minneapolis for a physical?

Clover: That's what we did. We enlisted there.

Baker: Where did you go in Minneapolis? Fort Snelling?

Clover: I don't know, now that you mention it. I don't remember where we were. It seems to me we stayed at the Leamington Hotel.

Baker: Well that was nice. This was what year? 1943?

Clover: Yes that was in 1943.

Baker: And you enlisted with the Army?

Clover: Right.

Baker: Did they have people come around and recruit?

Clover: Yes. There were a lot of people out recruiting at that time. They had a lot of recruiting people. They needed a lot of help. They had draft boards at that time too, and the draft boards weren't really--they were getting down to where they didn't have the people to fill the quotas. But of course, the women didn't count on the quotas. They didn't include them on quotas.

Baker: So, you went and had your physical in Minneapolis and then what?

Clover: I think I must have been overweight, because they didn't swear me in down there (laughs). And it wasn't until later on that I got a waiver and I was sworn in at Bismarck, North Dakota. And then in January, 1944, I went to Fort Des Moines. And with me in that group were, we came from Minneapolis and there was a bunch of people from Minneapolis or the Minnesota area that went down to Fort Des Moines together.

Baker: Is that where you had basic training?

Clover: I had my basic training out at the old Fort Des Moines. It used to be a cavalry station.

Baker: What was that basic training like? What did it consist of?

Clover: Mainly teaching discipline and a few things about the military.

Baker: How long were you there?

Clover: I must have got there about the middle of January and I think it was about the end of February when I left there. Then I was sent to Great Falls, Montana.

Baker: So, that was after your basic that you went to Montana?

Clover: It was getting right about Ground Hogs Day. I mean right around the last day of the month and if I remember correctly, there were twenty-nine days that month, in February. And then I was assigned an office job.

Baker: What kind of ranking did you have at this point?

Clover: Private. I was a private yet. Earning \$50 a month at that time.

Baker: So, you were sent to Great Falls, Montana and you worked in an office on a base there?

Clover: Yeah. That was at Gore Field. Gore Field is now where the Great Falls airport is.

Baker: What kind of living situation? Was it barracks?

Clover: Barracks--open barracks type.

Baker: Were there a lot of women?

Clover: Oh, yes. I think there were four barracks and I don't remember how many women we had in each barracks. They had these barracks, one here and one here and in between here, is where the latrine and the showers were. You know, that type of barracks. They were tar-paper shacks, really. They were covered with tar-paper on the outside.

Baker: Did they have a tin roof?

Clover: No. They were made of wood, but the outside was covered with black tar-paper. Beautiful scenery, you looked to the west there and you seen the plateaus and the sunsets. We were the furthest barracks to the west.

Baker: What kind of office work did you do there? Did you have a variation of duties?

Clover: No. The job which I had was, I was doing, preparing furloughs. Typed up the furlough papers.

Baker: That's mainly what you did there while you were at Great Falls?

Clover: Yes, while I was at Great Falls.

Baker: How long were you there?

Clover: I was there until about the Fourth of July. During that time I made P-F-C [private first class]. I think I made P-F-C in May that year. That was really something because then I got \$4 more a month and I could make ends meet.

Baker: That \$4 did it for you, huh?

Clover: Yes. It was enough to buy cigarettes (laughs).

Baker: From Great Falls, where did you go?

Clover: Well, we had the choice of whether we wanted to stay in the states or whether we wanted to go overseas. And I had asked for overseas.

Baker: I was wondering if they asked you.

Clover: Yeah, you had a choice of what you wanted to do. And from there I was sent to Grenier Field in Manchester, New Hampshire. That was the staging area for being sent overseas.

Baker: This was July 1944?

Clover: Yes. Someplace along the line things got fouled up and we didn't leave there until September. And then we flew to Casablanca by way of the Azores. No, we went by way of Goose Bay, Newfoundland.

Baker: But you flew?

Clover: Yeah. Out of New York. We flew out of New York. And never had a lousier breakfast than that food in Goose Bay. Those limeys, I don't know how they survived on it (laughs).

Baker: In Newfoundland--so you stopped there?

Clover: See, we left New York about, oh maybe it was about 11 o'clock at night or something like that, we left at night anyway. And we got up there about breakfast time, 6 or 5 o'clock in the morning, or something like that. It was dark yet. And then from there we flew to the Azores. And we had to lay over in the Azores, because the crew had to have eight hours rest before we went the rest of the way into Casablanca. And the peculiar, or the most interesting thing I noticed

when we started going from out there at the airport into Casablanca was, here is this camel and a donkey hitched to a walking plow.

Baker: What is it like there?

Clover: It was quite desert like. I often wondered why they were plowing out there. You're on the edges of the Sahara Desert there. And there isn't a lot of rain.

Baker: Is it a very hot climate?

Clover: Not really. You got cool breezes from the Atlantic Ocean, and the only time you got any hot weather was when the winds blew in off the Sahara and I think I was there over a year and I think there was only probably two or three days where he had the winds blow in from the Sahara, which wasn't bad.

Baker: You were sent to a base there then, an American base?

Clover: Well, I was sent to work in the headquarters there. Well, at Great Falls, Montana, I was working with the, the ATC was the organization we were with. We always referred to it as the Army of Terrified Civilians (laughs). But, it was the Airport Transport Command. And Casablanca was the headquarters for the Air Traffic Command at that time. And that was where we went was to work in the headquarters there. Most of the gals were secretaries and office workers.

Baker: How many were there approximately? Were there a lot of women there?

Clover: I think maybe we had about a hundred and twenty or something like that.

Baker: Where did you live there?

Clover: We had barracks and it was out on the end of town toward where the train station was. They were long buildings with these red tile on the roof. And they were not built--you could look up there and see light through. And in the winter time, it got kind of chilly in there. It was divided into kind of cubicles like.

Baker: You each had your own?

Clover: Two to a room. And we had a bus service which took us from there into our headquarters, to where we worked. Bus service--it was a truck with a tarp over it. That was the bus service (laughs). It really wasn't that safe to be out walking in the streets. We were told not to. And at night in particular, was worse than the daytime. There were quite a few GIs that were hung from trees. They'd steal their clothes and money and leave them hang.

Baker: What was it like being in this foreign land? Tell me a little bit about the people there.

Clover: They're Arabs, is what they are mostly. And, well really, I mean the fact that our trucks took us to work, our buses or whatever you want to call them, took us to work and brought us home. And we weren't really associating with those people too much. And they did have some of those people working for the United States, the government, you know, on the Lend-Lease deal or some type, you know. But those people weren't always to be trusted. I mean, once in a while, during the night, you'd hear a shot or something, because our compound was all fenced, you know. And you'd hear a shot maybe during the night and it'd be some guy trying to sneak in, to get into the compound. They'd climb the fence.

Baker: Generally, what was the American impression of those people?

Clover: Well, at that time, I don't think we--our impression of them wasn't, they weren't enemies. But they were just, you know--they were just like--well, like we've still got them here. You know, people who are stealing and doing things like that. Same situation.

Baker: So, you really didn't have that many dealings then with them directly?

Clover: No.

Baker: Did you have social activities or entertainment, anything you did?

Clover: Well, we had our NCO [Non Commissioned Officers] clubs--enlisted clubs is where we went for our entertainment.

Baker: So you really never went out?

Clover: No, we didn't go out and associate in the general public, with the general public down there. But, I did get a French permanent. And back in those--your hair--they burned it. You know, they left the curlers on too long. That's when they had those old fashioned kind where they use electricity and left it on too long and the burned the hair.

Baker: Did that happen to you?

Clover: Um-hm, didn't burn mine quite as bad as some of the others.

Baker: How did that look?

Clover: Well--frizzy (laughs).

Baker: How about your duties at the headquarters--what kind of work did you do?

Clover: I worked in the order section which was mainly typing and checking on--we had to check all this material that came in for orders. And we'd check that stuff before we'd type it up so we wouldn't have to make corrections. We did go down to Marrakech one weekend, they would take a plane and we went down to Marrakech. And Marrakech is the garden spot of Africa, it was the one green oasis, you know. And it was really beautiful down there, much prettier down there. I don't know where they got their water from or anything like that, but they grew lots of garden stuff.

Baker: How far was that about from where you were?

Clover: I don't really know. It's on the map. And also I got to go to Nice, France for a week's vacation.

Baker: How did you get there?

Clover: We flew. Anytime we went anyplace, we flew.

Baker: In your working or social situation, did the officers and regular army people get along quite well? Was there good relationships between the staff?

Clover: Yes, very good. Because during war time, everybody was working for the same reason. And there was a very good relationship. Of course, the enlisted and the officer didn't associate together though, you know. We had our own clubs, they had their clubs. They had their dining room, we had ours.

Baker: Was this a big dining hall?

Clover: We had a dining area there at our WAC [Women's Army Corps] barracks. And we had our own WAC cooks doing the cooking for us. And they sent over, the meat that we got, they

sent over one time, was a boat load of hamburger. And our cooks done everything they knew how to try to make that something other than hamburger, but it always ended up (laughs) hamburger. That was a three months' supply of food.

Baker: Of hamburger?

Clover: Yeah. But I give the gals credit, they tried.

Baker: Was the food good? Did you have what you wanted?

Clover: Yes. We always had peanut and jelly and that on the table every meal (laughs). If you didn't like what else you got, you could eat peanut butter and jelly (laughs). At that time we were getting powdered eggs, powdered eggs weren't--they've improved them. They weren't that great see. And these gals had to learn how to cook with that dehydrated stuff that they sent over.

Baker: How about morale? Was morale fairly good? Were you ever discouraged or disgusted?

Clover: There always comes a time in your life when there is, but I mean, that's your own attitude. You've got to kind of--the morale is what you make it.

Baker: So, you were there for how long?

Clover: I was there until December of '45.

Baker: So, by that time things were pretty much wrapped up?

Clover: Well, while I was there, there was the Battle of the Bulge. Things didn't look good for that.

Baker: You were in Casablanca during that time. What was it like during that time?

Clover: Well, the feeling was that--a little bit scary, you know, because things weren't going well. And how do you know what might happen? And so that was kind of a setback. We never got much news, though. We never knew much about anything. We'd have a piece of paper and maybe there'd be about this much typewritten news on it. That would be what we knew what's going on in the world.

Baker: How about as far as you writing?

Clover: Our mail was censored.

Baker: Was it?

Clover: Yeah. We couldn't write anything we wanted. We couldn't have cameras.

Baker: Did you use V-mail?

Clover: Well, yes, probably, but not necessarily. We just used air mail letters, envelopes. While we were over there, there was another group of army WACS that were up in Italy, in the Caserta area, in Rome and up in there. And Caserta was where Mussolini had his headquarters. But that bunch up in there decided to have a basketball tournament. So, they invited us to come up. And of course, we got to go. And the floor that they played on was an opera house. It wasn't a level floor, see, it kind of sloped so the (laughs)--you bounced the ball and it went over that way every time.

Baker: So, if you were the team down the slope--

Clover: Well, they were playing back and forth, see, so you each had the same slope. But while we were up there we got to see some of Italy on that trip. We got to go to the ruins of Pompeii. And what's the little town below Pompeii? It's a pretty little town. I'm thinking Solvang but

Solvang is in California. I don't know, I don't remember now. But we got to see different things around in that area which gave us--and of course when we flew in there we flew into Naples.

Baker: Now could you take pictures? Did they allow you to take pictures?

Clover: No. *Life* magazine showed pictures--when we came into Naples--they showed pictures of buildings that had been bombed, see, the whole wall was missing. And the bedstead is hanging out. That was shown in *Life* magazine, and that's what we saw, when we came in there. 'Course the kids would beg the American soldiers all the time for candy and money.

Baker: Now how long were you in Italy? Just for this visit.

Clover: Just about, that was probably about four days or something like that. It was just for this basketball tournament.

Baker: Could you go freely and feel safe to walk around there or not?

Clover: No. We never went anyplace unless they took us from here to there, you know. But we had fun on that trip. They invited us up to their tournament and then we won it. They didn't expect us to. They were just being polite (laughs). And of course the Army wasn't that friendly with the people who were in the Air Corps.

Baker: Oh really?

Clover: Yeah. There was a little friction there. I think maybe in the Air Corp we had a little more privileges, I mean, you know a little better advantages than the other gals did. They went in ahead of us. They were there before we were and I think maybe they probably had it a little rougher--living and such as that.

Baker: You were in Africa until December '45?

Clover: Right.

Baker: Then what?

Clover: I came back and was discharged. Came back by boat.

Baker: So on our return trip, you came back on a ship?

Clover: I think it was a boat (laughs). We followed storms all the way. And it was small boat that they used in peace time, it was a two hundred and fifty passenger boat that cruised the Caribbean. And there were twenty-five hundred of us on it. It was a bit crowded.

Baker: How long did that take you to get from--?

Clover: Too long!

Baker: Did you get sick?

Clover: I'm not a good sailor. That was bad. The place where you ate was down--you had to down the stairs to get down there. And you stood at the tables. If the ship rocked, the trays that you had your food on, if you didn't hang on to them, would slide off--on the floor.

Baker: So you're saying that you had to stand to eat?

Clover: Yeah. And there was more than one that never finished their meal.

Baker: How was the food?

Clover: It wasn't good because we only ate twice a day. It would have been as bad, when you go cruising now they feed you five and six times a day, you know. But then, we didn't get that much food and I think we had a lot of sick people on that trip.

Baker: What kind of people were on this, all military?

Clover: GIs and women coming back. Mostly enlisted people, on this. I don't think the officers would have gone that way.

Baker: Where did you end up?

Clover: We landed at Newport News, Virginia. And I think then that we went to Richmond, Virginia, and we were sent to places closer to our homes. And I went to Cincinnati, Ohio. And that's where I was discharged. No, I wasn't discharged there. A group of us decided that we wanted to stay in the service. And then we got a three or four weeks leave and then we had to report to Stockton, California.

Baker: So then you came home then for three or four weeks?

Clover: Yeah and then we went out to Stockton, California. And then we were discharged in, was it March? I don't remember just when, but it was sometime and then we were discharged out there in California, of '46. At that time they were closing so many bases and such as that, they didn't need that many people.

Baker: So you were discharged from the Army--did you come back to North Dakota then?

Clover: No, I stayed out there and worked. I got a civilian job. And I worked out there as a civilian in Stockton. And it wasn't until fall that they decided to close the base. 'Course during

that time these orders came in requesting women to serve overseas. Either the east--in Europe or in Japan.

Baker: Now this was in '46?

Clover: Yeah. This was for the Army of Occupation. And, well, we tried for the one in Europe, but the quotas all were filled so then we took the one in Japan. And then we had to--it was after that then that I left and went home.

Baker: Did you have to reenlist?

Clover: Then we reenlisted, yes, when we went to Japan. That was another tour of duty.

Baker: So you came home here and re-enlisted here, or North Dakota?

Clover: No, I went back out to California for that.

Baker: They just sent you wherever then? You didn't have to go through anymore training?

Clover: We went to Camp Stoneman. That's where we--I think maybe I might have reenlisted in Stockton, I'm not sure. And then we went to Camp Stoneman and from there we were sent overseas.

Baker: So when were you sent to Japan?

Clover: Well, I was on the boat, Thanksgiving.

Baker: Of '46?

Clover: Yeah.

Baker: And you took a boat over? Was this a boat or a ship?

Clover: I never got to ride the big ones (laughs). This was a merchant marine ship that had been converted for war use. It wasn't too large. It was, I think that was a Marine swallow. And we went by way of, was it Inchon then, I think they changed it to Seoul after that. But anyway, it was over in the harbor there in Korea. We sat over there for two days. While we were there it snowed. We got up in the morning and here the whole deck of the ship was covered with snow.

Baker: When you stopped in those places did you stay on the ship then?

Clover: Yeah. This, in Seoul, we couldn't pull into the docks because our ship was too big. And they used the LSTs [Landing Ship, Tank] to unload it. And they'd go back and forth with them taking them off. And then we had to sit there extra time because there was another one of the ships too, that was coming over, bringing more people that didn't have enough water on board and we had to wait until they unloaded. So we got an extra day in Korea Harbor. Then we went around to Japan, to Yokohama. And that's where we docked. And then we went to Tokyo which is about twenty-five miles. It's not very much distance. And we lived in what had been an airplane manufacturing building. But it was kind of built, you know, in squares kind of like a hotel. And it was one of their newer buildings, it was kind of built so it was a little more earthquake proof than some of the other buildings, you know. And that was where we lived. And over there I done office work as well.

Baker: What were your objectives, I mean for the office work?

Clover: The work I was doing was in regard to meal tickets. Everybody had to have a meal ticket, over there. And this is what we done was kept track of all that.

Baker: Were there a lot of military people over there at that time?

Clover: Oh, yes. There was a lot of military, a lot of civilians. We had quite a bunch of civilians working too, as secretaries and things like that around there. This is where Douglas MacArthur's headquarters was. We even had some of our gals working in his office.

Baker: What was it like being there?

Clover: Tokyo was very interesting. I mean Japan is very interesting. 'Cause it was so different. It was a lot different than Africa, I mean there's no comparison of the two places.

Baker: How about the people?

Clover: The people were nice. They were glad to be free, I think. The fact is, we had it made over there, because we had maid service. They cleaned our rooms, they polished our shoes, they pressed out uniforms, they did everything for us. This was a Lend-Lease type thing, see, and they were hiring these people to help them get back on their feet. And these younger people, they liked our way of living. Therefore, it wasn't too hard to change their opinions. And I don't how many girls worked in that building, there were five hundred women in that building. And I don't know how many maids we had. I know we talked to one of them, that was our maid, and she said, "I live quite a ways out." We asked her where she lived and she said, "I live quite a ways out." She said, "I have to get on the train at--" It was either two or three in the morning to get into work by six or seven o'clock, I guess they went to work.

Baker: So, the Japanese people you had contact with then were--

Clover: They were friendly.

Baker: Were very friendly and liked the American people?

Clover: Yeah. We felt more free to go around over there. And we did. We'd get on the Japanese train and go down to Nagoya and just, two of us, you know.

Baker: So there really wasn't any reason for fear?

Clover: No. Not at all. I don't think--I didn't fear being over there as much as I had feared being like in New York City, or Minneapolis, in the wrong places.

Baker: Were you in any areas that were bombed heavily, or not? In Japan.

Clover: The bombing had already been done.

Baker: Right I know that, but did you see any of that?

Clover: Well, they had bombed the airport pretty bad between Tokyo and Yokohama. They had that bombed pretty badly. No, I didn't get down to where the A bomb was. Nagoya is down that way, but not that far.

Baker: Contrast the two experiences--Japan and Africa.

Clover: Two entirely different countries. Japan was very interesting to visit, you know, because they're a smaller people and things are done differently, you know.

Baker: How long were you there?

Clover: I got there in the end of November, the first of December, something like that and I was there until May of the next year, '47. Let's see. I came back in '48. I was there over a year. Yeah, over a year. And I came back in June of '48. That was when they gave you the choice, you either had to join the Army or the Air Force. You had to be a regular Air Force or regular Army or

whatever. And you had your choice of whether you wanted to stay in or get out. And so I took my discharge, rather than join the regular Army.

Baker: Did they try to get you to do that?

Clover: Well, not really. Not really pushing it too hard. Because by that time we didn't need all these people in the service anymore. We were cutting back on our military spending, by that time.

Baker: So then you came back to the States?

Clover: I came back to Seattle, on that trip.

Baker: On a boat again?

Clover: No, we came back on the hospital ship. That was a nicer trip. It was in June. There weren't any storms (laughs).

Baker: When you were in Japan, were there medical facilities set up there?

Clover: Sure, we had hospitals and everything. The fact is, while I was in Japan, they were doing war crime trials. And there were a lot of Americans over there, officers in particular, who had their families. And some of our gals who were teachers, would join the service to get away from teaching, ended up teaching the American kids over there (laughs). You didn't always have a choice of what you wanted to do.

Baker: So you came back to Seattle, was discharged--then you came back home?

Clover: Yes.

Baker: Were you in a reserve after--were you put in a reserve?

Clover: I went to St. Louis to work, and I wasn't making enough money working in the Army records depot down there, so then I joined the reserve. And that's how I got recalled.

Baker: So you joined the Army Reserve?

Clover: No, that was the Air Force. And that's when I recalled.

Baker: But you knew that you might be recalled?

Clover: No. We didn't think there was going to be a Korean War. And they only picked certain reserve units, see. And they picked the one there in St. Louis and they picked the one in Minneapolis, and they didn't pick too many.

Baker: So then what happened?

Clover: I went back into the service. I think this is a good place to end. Because now, see, this is a different era. It's no longer World War II.

Baker: That's okay, I want to keep going. So where were you sent after you were recalled?

Clover: California, Riverside. Fifteenth Air Force Headquarters.

Baker: You did the same type of work?

Clover: Yeah, I always done office work.

Baker: What was your rank by this time?

Clover: Well, I had made staff sergeant in Africa. And I had made tech sergeant in Japan. And I made master sergeant in the reserve, before I was recalled.

Baker: So, you spent your time in California, for how long?

Clover: No, I was sent up to Rapid City, Ellsworth Air Force Base up there.

Baker: In South Dakota?

Clover: Yeah. And then they closed that--they closed out the WAC up there. And then I was sent to Omaha, Nebraska, at the Air Force Base.

Baker: So how long were you in, approximately, at this time?

Clover: I got out in '56. When was I recalled? Was it May of '50 or '51?

Baker: So you were in a long time then?

Clover: I was in well, that's a long story. They went very particular in keeping track of your records? I should have only been in for 18 months.

Baker: And you ended up in for how long?

Clover: I reenlisted for three years, besides. And it was beyond the 18 months. And they hadn't done anything about it. I don't how much we ran over beyond that.

Baker: The other woman I've talked to who was also recalled for the Korean, they lost her records. She thinks conveniently but--

Clover: Oh, I don't know. It was a base that was already established. But, why they never--the people that were recalled, they weren't very good at keeping their records up, I guess, or something.

Baker: Back to your experiences in Africa and Japan--What kind of hours, what kind of work days did you have? Did you work Monday through Friday?

Clover: Yeah. And maybe Saturday. I don't know if we worked Saturdays or not. I don't know. I don't remember that part now.

Baker: How long?

Clover: We had eight hour days. There was one time there, after the war was over in Europe, after V-E Day, that in the order section there, we were sending a lot of people back to the United States by plane. And there were times there that there were three of us working in that section and the three of us might work until two o'clock in the morning. Or, whatever length of time it took us to get these orders typed up. The colonel that we worked for, he wanted us to have more help. We said, "No," we didn't want to correct errors (laughs). We'd rather put in those extra hours than have to go through all that stuff correcting things. We were sending an awful lot of people home at that time by plane too. They were coming from Europe down through Casablanca and flying them home. And that's where the Air Transport Command came in.

Baker: So, you were in Africa then when V- E Day happened? What was it like? Was there a big celebration?

Clover: Well, I suppose there probably was. Some celebrating. But nothing too great, because we still had a lot of work to do. There was still things to be done. The time Franklin Roosevelt died through, we had a--we stood a formal retreat at our WAC barracks. We had a formal retreat for that. At the time Roosevelt went over to, that was Yalta, wasn't it, we typed orders on people who went there to serve for that. We knew about things that were going to happen, some of the time. Not very much though. I mean we could only suspect from what we were doing.

Baker: Kind of make like an educated guess on it.

Clover: Um-hm.

Baker: That sounds like that was interesting work.

Clover: I enjoyed it. You had to be very accurate with your typing and this because every time you put down a person's name, you had to put their serial number, too. And all of these things had to be in order.

Baker: So, then you're saying that the Korean experience was quite different?

Clover: I thought it was. There wasn't the cooperation. I mean, that wasn't a war. That's why, it wasn't a declared war. I mean there wasn't the incentive to support your country.

Baker: By the time the Korean War came along, were there more women enlisting or not?

Clover: I really don't know. I really don't know what was going on. Well, they had cut the forces, you know, after World War II, down and I don't remember what percent it was, it was quite low. It was intended to have more just people for cadre work, in case, you know, to keep a small number so that you'd have cadres in case of another emergency. And, see for World War II they had to train all these people for these jobs. But they had cut back quite a bit on the number of people in the service.

Baker: But, just between the women say, that were serving during the Korean conflict, there was a lot of competition to get ahead? Is that what you were saying?

Clover: No, not necessarily--I'm not saying just women. By that time, see, it was the Air Force, and you were considered all equal, men and women. You were put on equal status, then--when they went to regular Air Force.

Baker: But this was not true in World War II?

Clover: No. No, in World War II we were all fighting for the same thing. And there was a different situation entirely.

Baker: You had mentioned before the tape was on about the dog eat dog thing. That was men and women then?

Clover: Yes. It didn't make any difference, I mean. If you wanted a promotion you had to--That was the reason for this.

Baker: During World War II—

Clover: A lot of people never got promotions.

Baker: Sure but what kind of sentiment was there? More patriotic?

Clover: Yes. More patriotic and there wasn't the resentment then because most of them knew the table organization only called for so many promotions and if you were lucky--as I was--and were at the right places at the right times, you got them.

Baker: When you think back to you experience, let's just take the World War II experience, what strikes you the most? What stands out in your mind the most?

Clover: Well, the part I remember the best was the occupation of Japan. We were more free. We could have cameras there. We could have cameras then. I don't know whether our letters were censored then, or not. Not very much anyway.

Baker: Of the experiences, did you find anything very frustrating?

Clover: No.

Baker: Anything that made you angry?

Clover: Your military discipline is supposed to teach you (laughs). You're supposed to learn (laughs). You're supposed to learn. I suppose you could become frustrated because the lights went out too early and you're midway in a story.

Baker: Were you anxious, like when you were in Japan. Were you anxious to get out of the service?

Clover: Not really. I enjoyed the service. I had jobs that I liked. And I enjoyed it.

Baker: So you felt it was a good experience?

Clover: Yeah. I think its good experience for anybody. A lot of these kids now, I mean, that don't know what they want to do, a hitch in the military would give them an idea of what they might be interested in doing later in life.

Baker: So you think the military experience you had then, definitely helped you?

Clover: It never helped me get a job (laughs). But I don't resent it one bit.

Baker: Do you feel that women were given credit for their role in World War II?

Clover: I've never seen any place where they were. This was back here a few years. The VFW [Veterans of Foreign Wars] never recognized women. VFW is veterans overseas. They never recognized women and there were an awful lot of women that served overseas. Even when I was in Africa they had articles in the *Stars and Stripes* magazine, which was a paper which we got. And there were nurses, many comments by nurses, about this--that they didn't recognize it. I don't know whether they do now or not, but I know I had one fellow ask me, this is after I was out of the service, to buy some tickets for some VFW thing and I said, "When they recognize the fact that I've been in the service, I will."

Baker: So, you weren't involved in any VFW or Legion Club.

Clover: I don't belong to any of those organizations.

Baker: So, once you were out, after this Korean stint, then you weren't in a reserve unit?

Clover: No. I don't think women were required to belong to reserve units until after 1948, maybe after 1948 when it became regular air force and regular army. Maybe they were required to have an eight year hitch in service or something like that.

Baker: I think women have certainly come along in the last years as far as the military in fact I just read in Panama they had women manning machine guns. As far as the paper work went--

Clover: I think the women were more qualified for doing that.

Baker: Were there any men who served in the capacity--doing office work?

Clover: That's what they were all doing until the women went in. They were doing all that work, you know, before we got women in. And then by the women going in, they could do the paper work and the men could go into combat.

Baker: So, you really didn't have any men working in your office?

Clover: Oh, yes. There were two of us girls and one boy working in the office where I was. But, there weren't as many women as there were men working.

Baker: How did the men, any men in the service, military men--did they accept the idea that there was women in the service?

Clover: Some of them were glad because then they could get out of the job they had that they didn't like (laughs). Some people didn't like desk work and that gave them a chance to get out.

Baker: But there was never any feeling like the women shouldn't be there?

Clover: Oh, yeah. You heard that. Same everywhere. Same as in civilian life now, you know how that is.

Baker: But basically then, it was favorable?

Clover: It wasn't any worse there than any other place. Fact is, when I went to Omaha, this master sergeant there was so happy to see me because then he could get out of there, doing the paper work.

Baker: Did you have a fairly strict military atmosphere that you had to adhere to?

Clover: No, overseas wasn't. I don't think it was like it probably was here in the states. Your basic training led you to think that it would be strict. But see, our basic training wasn't very long. I think we only had five weeks of basic training. They had shortened it.

Baker: Can you tell me some of the different duties that women did besides office work?

Clover: Well, there were nurses; there were gals that worked in the hospitals.

Baker: You had mentioned--who was a chiropractor?

Clover: That was when we were recalled, that she was recalled. That girl was recalled then. It was either hospital or office work. Administrative duties and such as that. At that time we did not have MPs and people serving as MPs and such as that. I guess maybe during World War II there was some gals that had different jobs. Fact is, one was telling about training guide dogs. And they had different jobs like that.

Baker: When you were discharged from the service then, you were eligible for benefits like education benefits, GI Bill, medical benefits?

Clover: Not medical. Well, I suppose you did. I suppose you did. But I never took advantage of them. I never took advantage of the education, really. And I guess you could probably get loans. What for, I don't know. 'Cause I never checked into that stuff.

Baker: But they informed you of these benefits then?

Clover: Yes. I kind of thought if I could make it through the service, I could make it on my own (laughs).