

CHURCH STUDY
Ms. Knutson

i Here we go. Okay. Can you tell me a little bit about your life before you entered the ITS school?

s Well...

i Where you grew up?

s I am a graduate at Yalesburg High School. A four year graduate and I grew up in a little town of New Windsor. It's about 35 miles southwest of Moline. Population about 600. And after I graduated from High School, well the first year, the last year I was in HS, the superintendent of schools from Ercher county came to the HS and had an interview with me and he said that several of the school, little country schools around the Winsor had requested that I come as their teacher. And he wondered if I was interested in teaching. Well, in those years, you know, there wasn't much that you could do. That was 1913 and um....I said I would let him know after I had graduated. Well, I accepted one of the country schools at a magnificent salary of 50.00 a month... I was to do the janitor work and take care of the old coal stove in the middle of the little old school house and I had a three mile walk one way...over country roads that weren't paved (laughed). Well, I taught country school for four years and I thought I'm just not going to get anyplace. And ah..., I didn't really like teaching...because I felt so frustrated. At eight grades, one pupil in each class, there was no competition. What could you do. And un...unless the student wanted to compete against me. And I, I really didn't like it. I finally gave it up and we had a little old doctor by the name of

Dr. Rafen-- and he said to me one day...I had to go because my grandmother lived with us and she had to have treatment for her -- and ah... "Why don't you go into training?" Well I said, I don't know whether I would like that or not. I would rather be a dietician and what I would really like to be is a doctor...of children. That was my ambition in those days. Well he finally talked me in to going into nursing and at that time I went to the...and then I went to the minister and I talked to him and he wanted me to come in to the Luthern School of Nursing. That school was only 2 years old and the more I thought about it...it had to have, you had to have an affiliation in pediatrics and then surgery and I forget what else. I finally sat down and I wrote to several schools in the east...where they cataloged. And I wrote to the ITS. Well Dr. Rafen gave me the name of the ITS. And u...the ministry kept on my back about going into training up here and finally one day I told them, I said, if I'm going to spend three years in preparing for my life work, I am going to the school that has prestige, a school that has everything in it that I don't have to go traveling from one place to the other to get my complete training. And I have made up my mind that I am going to the ITS. Well, he was very disappointed but I couldn't help him on that. Then one of the...my last years before I went into training...I couldn't, I wanted to go in in the Fall class. The Fall...you see, it was wartime. The Fall classes were all filled. Would I be interested in coming in the February class. Yes I would. Well, I didn't teach school that Fall. I worked in a little grocery store until February and ah...a girl that was

working in the grocery store became quite interested so she applied to the ITS and she was excepted. So the two of us then left New Enger one very stormy snowy day. Snow all over, oh my God. We went tot he station on February 6th. Then a little train that we had to take to make connection with the train...Chicago train was delayed for a couple of hours because a troop train was going through. They were picking up the boys in the little towms, you know, taking them up to Chicago for their physicals. Well after it went by and loaded up there in New Windsor with the boys that were going up ... then our train was able to proceed on up to the next little town where we transfered and went to Galesburg and then we got the mainliner from Galesburg to Chicago. We were quite late getting into Chicago and there was just snow all over everything. Well, we went to information to find out how we were going to get out to the ITS and were advised which street car to take...and we had to make arrangements to have our trucks transfered from the station out to the school. Well, we were taken to our room and we found that we had to share our room with...well, there were four beds in this room. We were living over in what they call the flats at that time. There were four beds...cots really; two dressers and some chairs and a closet and a desk. Two of the girls were there came from Minnesota...from around the mining country and there...then there was Dora and myself.

i What was you friend's name? Ms. --, what was your friend's name?

s Dora.

i Dora what?

s Lockgrin.

i Dora Lockgrin.

s She died about four years ago.

i Oh, okay.

s So, she's no longer around. The fact is...if you wanted to interview, you couldn't interview because her mind just went. And ah...toward the end, even her sister didn't want to see her...because of...well, her sister's up in years and ah...it was a long drive from Galesburg up to Chicago where Dora lived and they just couldn't make it all the time to see her. So she finally was put in a nursing home and that was it.

i Can we back-track just a minute...and can you tell me just a little bit about your family?

s Well, I had one brother and one sister. I'm the only one left in the family now. My father and mother seperated when I was five years old. AND uh...my mother moved out to Clarendon, Ia. to be with her sister. I believe we were there a year and that's where I started school. And that's where I saw my first black person. It was a pupil in the same class that I was in. And then my mother moved back to Illinois and bought a home in New Windsour and in order to keep us going why she did housework for other people around the little town. There were quite a few wealthy families in New Windsour and she did alot of housekeeping and house cleaning and things like that in order to keep us together. Her mother came to live with us and grandmother spoke nothing but Swedish...so that when I started school, I didn't know any English at all and I had...the first two years I was in

school I really had a very difficult time.

i I can imagine.

s When I was in second grade my brother started school and we put our heads together and decided that grandmother was going to learn to speak English. Well, she finally did. She was a very sweet old lady and had alot of patience with us and we liked her living with us. She didn't live with...around with the rest of her children...but she didn't like to live with my aunt because she was to particular and picky and my aunts and uncles, the others had two big families and she wasn't use to all of the comotion with all the younters around. So she liked to be with us because there was only the three of us. And that was the extent of my family.

i Hum. How did you family...how did you mother and grandmother and brother feel about your going away to school? How did your family feel about your going away to school?

s Well, I attended school in New Windsour...through the 10th grade. That was two years in high school which was really..didn't amount to very much. And one summer I was helping out a little old lady there in town and her daughter from Idaho came to visit her and she had a young baby and so...they arranged with me that I...would I mind coming and babysitting with baby Mary while they went socializing. And one day Ms. Holly said to me, "What do you want to do with yourself?" And I said, "Well I certainly don't want to just stay here in New Windsour doing nothing but babysitting and housework." And I said, "I want a four-year diploma...I only have a two year diploma." So, low and behold she made arrangements with the

family in Galesburg where I could work for my room and board while went to High School. I went to the H.S. and saw the counselor and...they gave me one year's credit for the work I had done for the work that I had done at New Windsour High School because my grades were high. And then I said I didn't know whether I could manage to take three years of HS in Galesburg. Would it be possible for me to take 2 years to three years in two years there? So they worked out a schedule for me. I did two years work in one year and then I had the...my senior year as ah....just one year HS work. Well believe it or not, you had to have 140 credits for every subject that you took. For every month you got one credit and you needed 140 to graduate from HS. With very few exceptions, all my grades were in the 90's. I think my lowest grade was in math. And ah...I graduated with a 151 credits for the three years that I did in Galesburg. My mother objected very strenueously to my going to high school. See, she was from the Old Country and I was to be married. --. She'd even picked out the man I was suppose to marry. I went to high school and when I started teaching school she was...became more adjusted to the fact that I had alittle better school way and that I was able to make a living for myself. But she objected strenueously to my going to Chicago. Chicago was such a wick town she didn't want nothing to happen to me. But I proceeded on, doggily, got my trunk and filled it up with the necessary supplies...and went on my ah...I finally heard from Ms. Wheeler that I was excepted and I last year when I was getting my material ready to send to the--Cook County Hospital

Library, I came across a...little note that she sent me that I was excepted. That was 1917. So I sent that along with the rest of my material--because I had quite a bit of resource material there and ah...but she wouldn't go with me to the station the morning I left. So I...when I left New Windsour for my journey into Chicago, I went alone for the exception that my friend was with me.

i How did she feel about you being a nurse?

s Well, it wasn't until after I was ready to retire that she told me...one day, that ah...she was very happy that I had chosen to do what I had done. Because those four years that I spent in Chicago...I spent very little time with my mother and I really retired 3 years before I needed to but my mother was 95 and I felt that I hadn't spent very much time with her and at that time we were begining to have to do to much paperwork. And that was taking us away from the patients. I had been trained to take care of patients. Not to do all that paperwork...which I had plenty of during my working years. So, I went home and she...by then she was living in a little town not far from Moline. And ah....it wasn't even a corner drug store in that town. It was a post-office and a grocery store. And after getting used to being around so many people all the time and...having places to go like the Art Institute, Orchestra Hall and all those places, you know, I finally one day...I said to her, "I'm going in and ask the nurse ah...head nurse, -- if she would like to have me come to work." So I came into Molines...and I came and saw Ms. Johnson and...right away she had a supervisor job for me. And I said, "Ms. Johnson, I don't want

any more of that." I'm just am tired...of pushing people around to do...get the work done the way it should be done and all that paperwork. I just don't want it. But I will come in on Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday, because I know those are your most difficult days of the week to cover." So she excepted me on those grounds. Well I was at Moline Public almost 2 years when I came down to this --. I may --. But I never regreted one single day. Not one single day.

i Ah...it sounds like it. Can we get back to your ITS days.

s Well...

i You talked about...you say that you chose to go to the ITS because ahhhh...you didn't get sent out...they had everything that you needed for your training right there.

s I didn't have to go out for my pediatrics or my obstetrics or my surgery.

i And also, it had a very good reputation?

s Yes.

i Right. Did you have any other expectations about the school?

s Well, I knew that it had a very good reputation. And ah...that is..I found it out and when I talked it over with Dr. Rathman about my choice of schools, he was very pleased. But he said, "You're going to be working in the county hospital and you will never work as hard in you life as you're going to work there." But he said, "I'm going to tell you something, it will be worth it." So that's about all I knew about the school. I

hadn't read anything else about it. I had ah...catalogs from Masschusettes General and Bellview and John Hopkins and they didn't appeal to me as much as the ITS did. And ah...well I think probably because it was in the Midwest. And ah...I had good transportation for one thing and ah...going that far East is New York and Baltimore and those places ah...I was just a little bit leary about those distances. I knew nobody in Chicago...well I did have a cousin that lived there and I was able to visit her quite a few times. So that I had contact with the family that way.

i Did the school meet your expectations?

s What?

i Did the school meet your expectaitons?

s Yes it did. It really did. We don't...didn't have all the training the Cook County did, but we...what was...what we had was very thorough. Now you see, I entered training during the war years. You go to class one day...about the only person that we had was a probational officer and she taught us all the uh...techniques of bed making and all those things. And ...by the way, I'm looking in ah...my book there and there...we had no nursing technique book. Everything was oral...but we had to write all that down and then of course when the book came out and we could purchase that, it was so much easier because you could read the directions...sometimes you couldn't read your own writing after taking notes, you know. And ah...Ms. Robinson was...I'll never forget her. She was a little short lady...she was the sweetest lady, and she had snow white hair. And she was as...well I don't know...you had...everything had to be so. Adn

you'd...sometimes you'd come off duty after making alot of beds over in the hospital and find your own bed already stipped. She made rounds in our rooms and stip our beds to see if we made them right...ha...ha...ha... That was the kind of a supervisor she was. Well, that first year in training was really something. The food was rationed. We got a teaspoon of sugar for our coffee andthis was for breakfast...one teaspoon of sugar for our cereal and then at noon we got a teaspoon of sugar for our dinner and then our evening meal, another teaspoon of sugar. These were all in little envelopes.

i Was that because of the war? Did you have the rationing because of the war?

s Yes.

i Okay.

s We had all kinds of food substitutes. Everything went over seas to the soldiers, you see, and we had so much mutin that I can't even stand lamb to this day, ha..ha...ha.... And I'll never forget the Sunday when we were...and the girls came back on duty and told me I was a little late and told me that I'd better hurry over to the dinning room because we were having chicken. I got over there and what do you suppose I got? There wer three necks left, ha...ha...

i Oh no, ha...ha..

s I ate them because they were good.

i Yeah, I bet.

s I was the last one in the dinning room. Well you know...we didn't have...there wasn't any candy available or any

sweets of anykind either because of the sugar rationing. So we got kind of hungry for something sweet. One day we had decided that instead of using sugar in our coffee and our cereal, we would save it and ...there were about 25 of us that sat at a long table and we discovered that under this table was a ledge, about the width of my hand. And you could store things on that. So we decided that we would save our little envelopes, put it under there and then at the end of two weeks we would collect it and make fudge. Well, we had a hard time finding a place where we could cook fudge. But one of the cooks let us into the kitchen and...the matron of the home, a Ms. Stewart, got to smelling this fudge cooking and she got all excited. She ran from one floor to the other trying to find who was cooking fudge. Well, she finally found us in the kitchen and she was....oh, she was so excited. "Where in the world did we get sugar enough to cook fudge." We told her that it was our sugar...that we had saved it for two weeks. And you know, she wouldn't believe us. And finally we had to tell her where we stored our sugar so...a few of us then took her up to the dinning room, she had to unlock the door and we took her to our table and showed her where the sugar was stored. So the...after that she didn't say anything cause we could cook our fudge whenever we wanted it. And that was the way we had candy.

i Great.

s So we did have some fun. We worked hard and ...oh, I forget how many students came in to training at...the sametime that I did and of course they came every three months of the year. But ah...alot of them couldn't take it. The just couldn't

take it.

i Why did some of them...why...how come some of them couldn't take it?

s Hum?

i Why was it that some of them couldn't take it?

s The work was to hard and then we were eating different foods than what we were used to eating at home. We got mashed potatoes with peanuts in them. And all kinds of substituted foods, see. And alot of them lost alot of weight. I lost 16 pounds in two months...which didn't hurt me any and ah...and alot of them were just not suited for that kind of work. We had, in our class, one of the probationers was an actress. She was anything but suited, ha....suited for that kind of work.

i Do you remember how many...

s And one of the girls said she had to come all the way from Montana just to be scrubbing on bums from Madison street. So she quit and went home.

i Do you remember how many people dropped out or didn't finish in the program...

s No.

i ...in your class?

s We finally ended up as 57 in the class altogether. Ms. Wheeler called her...our 57 varieties. Well we were only in the school 6 days and when Valentines Day came along...and there was a group of seniors that lived on the same floor as we did and they were having a Valentine Party, and they invited us to this party. Well during the course of this party one of

the...students came off duty and was all excited that one of the interns had been shot by his sweetheart. Well, it was quite -- over that and...we all went back to our rooms and got to thinking about it. One day we had a little meeting and we...wondered whether we ought to stay in a place like this where people were getting killed. Then we finally decided to stick it out.

i --

s Well, see ah...unit 12 was organized over at ah...the Presbyterian and a good many of the interns and the nurses had signed up...to join Unit 12 along with Presbyterian...unit 13...unit 12 was at Northwestern and some of them signed up over at Northwestern. And as they were mobilized...see they were called in the service. While among alot of those people were supervisors who were instructors. So, we'd got go class one day, you'd have an instructor maybe ...ah....contagion and the next time you went to class you had another instructor and she'd start over where the first instructor started and that kept on until the flu epidemic when the classes were discontinued altogether. And it was the sameway that the interns had taught us chemistry and -- and biology...backteriology. I don't know...I didn't have to take diatetics because I had already had it at high school so I was excused in the diatetics class. And all the time the course, little Ms. Robinson was along with us and giving us demonstration in this thing and that and in the other. Like, dressing and ah...and ah...she had the nerve...on a medical ward and you had a --, in stead of using a diauretic like you do nowadays, you had a great big craddle that was fitted out with electric lights and you covered this craddle with all kinds of

blankets and rubber sheets. And then you put a moist sheet over the patient and he was suppose to ah...sweat out his neubritus. That was the way neubritus was -- in those days. When a diabetic came in, he was treated with one ounce of alcohol on one hour. The next hour he got an ounce of hot coffee. And that went on...that was the way he was treated. We didn't have insulin until 1921...or 22, I forget...--22. Many of them, of course, many of the diabetics were alcoholics and of course they died. And ah...infections were treated, of course with hot packs and I suppose that...nowadays they have antibiotics for infections so that I suppose the hot packs have been discontinued. And patients ah...oh yes, and I'll never forget this...the summer when ah...I guess that was the summer after the flu. When they got all those heat cases. Well, finally we just didn't have enough bathtubs in the main hospital so they had to go over and take those patients over to psychopathethic hospital where they had all these tubs that they could...and those patients were put in tubs of hot...of ah...ice water to bring down those temperatures. They'd come in with temperatures of 107 and 108 and you had to bring that temperature down so they were ...and that water kept flowing on them all the time.

i Why do...were they running such high temperatures? Why were they running such high temperatures?

s Because they had heat strokes...overcome by the heat it was so hot. Most of the men were truckers. They drove those great big trucks, you know, with the horses. Well, in the first year then...that was my second year. In that first year....with

all out...all the going on of the war, along comes the flu epidemic. Well, I was on night duty and in ecology and then it was decided that the...we were to...the hospital was to admit only emergencies. People that had to have immediate surgery. But had to admit all the flu patients. Then, as the men were...two trains were coming into Chicago, all the service men that were ill had to come to the hospital...the County Hospital. So, there weren't too many patients over in the old T.B. hospital which is on the corner of...which I had charge of incidently for awhile...ah...it was on the corner of Polk street and Lincoln. It was emptied out and all those patients were sent to sanitariums around the Chicago area and ah...it was cleaned up and beds were gotten and set up and ah...a place was made available for...it filled up in no time with all these Servicemen that came in. Well, they...they were just beside themselves about having nursing help with all those flue patients. So ah...Ms Wheeler ah...applied to the government for help. And they sent 60 coremen from Great Lakes. Jackies, we called them. And they were housed in our classrooms. Beds were set up in the classrooms for them, so we had no classrooms except our practical duty on the wards with the patients. That was all the training we got during that period. And ah...corement were under the direction of Ms. Wheeler...the Great Lakes had nothing to do with them while they were there helping out to take care of the Servicemen. They did night duty and afternoon duty and ah...7-3...and ah...then they were housed over in our classrooms and they got their meals over there and what laundry had to be done...and ah...they were a tremendous help. They were medical

coremen and they had...were a great help. And it was ah...quite traumatizing for some of the nurses because when...you never knew who you were going to find when you went on duty over there. Whether it be an uncle or a cousin or a brother or what. Many of the girls did find relatives when they...went back on duty in the morning -- breakfast. Well, little by little, after the war was over the supervisors began coming back...but...my training was so broken up that we really never got back into finishing anything. Then our senior year...we had ah...the choice of...of three specialities. Public Health...and ah...Obstetrics...at Lying-In Hospital and...private duty training on the Highland Park Hospital in Highland Park, IL. I was quite a knew hospital, it was a very small hospital but a very nice hospital and well organized. Most of my classmates liked obstetrics. I just hated it. In the first palce, I was introduced to obstetrics in a very...to me...I've always thought was kind of a very rough way because I was on pathological O.B. at that time...and ah...there was a delivery going on and the resident was very insistent that I observe this delivery....and I had had no instruction what-so-ever in obstetrics. I didn't even know how a baby was born. I'd never seen a kitten born...or any animal born for that matter. And when I walked into that delivery room and saw that baby's head coming from where it was coming, I almost collapsed. I just couldn't believe my eyes...ha...ha... But that was my introduction to obstetrics and from then on I just didn't like it but I got more obstetrics...it just, I....wherever I went, I got obstetrics. Well, most of my classmates liked it...and they

wanted to go out to the Lying-In Hospital, so they went. They wanted the prestige of working with Dr. Davee's Lying-In Hospital so they went. They wanted the prestige of working with Dr. Davee and hearing didn't...ah...lecture. But the funny part of it was...when I, ha...when I laugh about it this day...when I went to Lying...ah...Highland Park, I got alot of O.B. out there. And low and behold we had a women come in who had been in labor for several days and her baby was crosswise in the Uterus. They couldn't delivery. Labor had ceased, so the doctor he was...he was really up desperate. So Dr. Davee happened to be on vacation and was spending his vacation at the Morane Hotel in Highland Park. And he called Dr. Davee and told him...asked him if he would please come and consultation and help him out and Dr. Davee did. Well, I was on night duty at that time and I got a call to come to the hospital because I was on call in the operating rooms. And low and behold, who should I walk into the...the delivery room and there stood Dr. Davee. Well I helped him with the...get set up and get everything already and after the...after the baby was delivered which turned out to be a terrible monster...mother never saw the baby, the father did. And you're a nurse aren't you?

i Yes.

s Dr. Davee asked me for a tape...and in the bundle there was a black tape and I handed it to him. I didn't...I said I don't know whether this is waht you want...but this is all I have in the line of tape and he said, "That's okay." We tied that so that...there was a foot presenting and he tied that to the foot and he did a -- and extracted in just no time at all.

After...when I was cleaning up the...after I had gotten the patient to bed and then...he was cleaning up the delivery room, he came into...he had showed and dressed and was ready to go back to the hotel. He came in and thanked me. I was so taken by surprised because I had never been thanked by an attending man before. And ah...I just didn't know how to conduct myself hardly. Well...his vacation wasn't over with when they had another patient come in who was in trouble and he was called by this attending man to..come and help him. Well I went back to County and finished my training and...where did I go...back to O.B. And one night we had a little lady come in and I said to the man who brought her up in the...receiving department...I said, "Well, I don't think...I think you have this patient in the wrong department." He said, "I don't think so. She's on a card." And ah...she was Polish. She didn't understand one word of English. I examined her and there was a hand presenting. So I had him take her into the labor room and got her on the table and then called the resident. Well, she'd been in labor and had a Midwife for several days and here was this dead baby. And he had to do decapitation. I had to set up to -- him and ah...he didn't say anything to me but...and I reported to the supervisor in the morning before I went off duty that we had this decapitation and that everything went okay and ah...but this resident went to the supervisor and wanted to know where I'd had my training. And she said, "Well, she's an ITS. Why?" She said, "If I had been at Lying-In I wouldn't have had better service than I had during the night from her." So when I came

on...to--over there, she wanted to know how come I knew so much about setting up for something like that. And I had to tell her that I had worked with Dr. Davee. So she reported to Ms. Wheeler and then in the meantime my grades came from Lying-In in a report that I had scrubbed for Dr. Davee twice. And Ms. Wheeler wanted to know why I hadn't told her of it. Well I said, You know Ms. Wheeler, how many of my classmates went to Lying-In that didn't see Dr. Davee? I said, they went to Lying-In to hear his lectures and to scrub for him. I went to Highland Park to get away from him and I scrubbed for him twice. Now how do you think they're going to feel when they find out...ha...ha...ha.... She laughed. She was a wonderful person, a really wonderful person.

i Can we get back to your ITS Days. Ah...can you describe a typical day for me?

s Yes. We....

END OF TAPE ONE, SIDE ONE

BEGINING OF TAPE ONE SIDE TWO

i Okay, all set.

s Before we left the residents, we lined up in the hall and we were inspected from top to toe and you better not have a button unbuttoned. Your...your uniform had to be cleaned. Your ah...apron clean. Your bib clean and your cap on straight and your hair up off your neck. And you could...and then you had to wear a hat between 509 Honory street and the hospital. It wasn't even a block. And ah...you never saw...well, I got some pictures

of them in those hats. Then when we got on duty, we went to our respected wards where we were assigned and there would be a line around the head nurses desk and then she with the head night nurse would sit there and report on every patient. And you called every patient by his name. It wasn't #1 or #2 or #3. It was Mr. So and so, Mr. So and so, Mr. so and so. And really, some of those names, especially the Polish ones..ha..ha..were really something. And then...we were given our assignments...we were told how many patients we had to take care of and we had to take their temperatures and we had to give them their baths and change their beds and every patient got a clean sheet. The bottom sheet and a clean top sheet. The top sheet went on the bottom and the bottom sheet was used for a draw sheet and the draw sheet went in the laundry. And they got a clean towel down everyday. If it was a patient that was up and able to be around, she had to help him out and get him into the chair which was at the foot of the bed or in a wheel-chair. And of course, if they were helpless and couldn't feed themselves, we had to feed them. And then if the patient was getting intravenous we had to watch that very carefully because you don't have these plastic...didn't have those plastic bags and that ah..tubing that you have nowadays. You had a wash basin in which was put ah....oh what do you call those ah....glass jars that the fluid was put into...and that was hung up and then you had to watch the drip. Check on the every-so-often. Or if you had a catheter you had to examine that. It was the sameway with the women patients. If you were on dress...assigned to do the dressing and you got a cart...and you didn't do the initial dressings, the

doctors did the initial dressings, I mean the inner.... We didn't take blood-pressures like the nurses did...do now. I didn't become acquainted with a stethoscope I guess until I was in my senior year. And then of course, one other thing that you had to do...inregardless...after you had finished your bed-making and the number assigned beds that you were suppose to do, you had to go over everyone of them and see that the casters all pointed towards the wall... That was very important. That was about all I could tell you. Of course if you had the pneumonia patients or the typhoid patients, which you weren't assigned to do until your senior year, you took their tempratures and if the temperature was above 102, you had to put that patient in a cold pack. You rolled them in cold sheets to bring that temperature down. Or if...you had to give them an alcohol sponge. It was the sameway with the typhoids. And ah...in those days many of the typhoids were hemerragging so you had ice -- that was placed on the abdomen to keep that cold and you had to keep track of that and see that it was running and draining properly. And ah....oh and bed sores. That was one thing that we did not allow. Our part of it was...most of our bed sores that...that we had came in from private hospitals. When a patients funds ran out in a private hospital, he had to come to County. And some of those bed sores were really something. And of course, we had to work on those.

i Can you tell me how much class time you had compared to hospital time?

s How much what?

i How much time spent in class compared to hospital time?

s In class?

i Yeah, in class as opposed to time in the hospital.

s Well, actually I couldn't tell you.

i Did you go to class everyday?

s Yes.

i Umhum.

s It was always something. But of course, but we had a full-time class which was usually an hour. And if you were on night duty, you had to get up and go to that class. I spend 13 months of my 36 months in training on night duty.

i Oh my gosh.

s That was a large number of months. In our senior year, we had two student head nurses. See ah...there was a big ward and a small ward. And the big...and these two wards were supervised by a supervisor and she had....in the big ward a head nurse and herself. In the small ward she had a student head nurse and you were responsible for your time schedules and worksheets and everything that went on in that little ward. That was your responsibility. I ...we usually got just one head nurse -- but I was fortunate enough in getting a head nurse shift on a men's medical ward and a female...surgical ward. So I had two head nurses...to be my...in my senior year. I was thinking of something I wanted to tell you. Oh...one of our instructors ... and I forget in what class it was...couldn't remember names. We had ah...a nurse in our class by the name of Luella Brown and poor little Luella. Wherever she sat in that classroom....she tried so many places...was because this instructor would say, "Will the nurse to the rear of Ms. Brown answer the question.

Will the nurse to the side of Ms. Brown answer the question..."

i Ha...ha...

s "To the left of Ms. Brown answer the question, to the front of Ms. Brown..." She could remember the rest of our names to save her soul. Well, her instruction period was interrupted because she was called by the Army to go to Letterman Hospital in San Francisco...ha...ha.. So when the next instructor came along, she starts at the beginning of the class and then she goes away and that...I don't think we ever finished a course.

i Oh gee.

s Ha...ha..ha..

i What classes did you like the most?

s Well, I like contagious. I like working with children and I liked the children's ward and then of course at that time we had ah...a ward for ah...children that had ah...eye problems ah...that hadn't been treated with silver nitrate. They'd come in with these gonorrhea eyse. And ah..also these pneueddic babies. And ah....we had some training there. Now we didn't get any training in T.B and we didn't get any training in gerology or dermatology. That was all taken care of by ah....aides. There was a head nurse in charge of those departments. And the reason we weren't sent to those departments was because those patients had sinned. Can you imagine...ha...ha...of course those...that was in 1918...the 19's.

i Oh my gosh, wow.

s I don't know when they opened those wards. It wasn't until after I finished training that they opened those wards to

the students. And the patients there had to do everything. They had to mop the floors. Even the janitor wouldn't go into those wards.

i Oh no.

s I thought I was incharge of those wards for 5 years before I left County and I found them very interesting and then when I learned the most about derology and dermatology. Because I had had no training what so ever in them.

i Can you tell me alittle bit about your relationships with the doctors?

s It was real good. It was really very good because...well, most of the doctors...especially the attending men, as I wuld say had grown up with the school and they knew most of these supervisors and they had been overseas with most of them. And ah...so that the repore was very good. And I don't ever remember having any difficulty with any of them at all.

i Do you think that the doctors respected the nurses?

s Oh yes. Very much so.

i And they thought that you were getting a good education...

s Yes.

i ...at the ITS?

s Yes.

i Okay.

s It was a good education considering the times.

i Can you tell me about... your opinion about the emphasis of the ITS? Was it an emphasis in hospital nursing, community nursing or private duty?

s Toward the end ah...well, private duty was stressed all along, you see, because it would send student nurses out as ah...special nurses when anybody...any of the doctors requested at nurse out into the homes...ah...to take care patients in the homes. So private duty was really one of their priorities to begin with. Well, it wasn't really until...I think probably about my senior year we began having any.....work in ah....social service and ah....public health. You see, we ah...there was infant welfare and there was ah....visiting nursing and Ms. Errands, one of our graduates started the visiting nursing and Ms. Clay started the infant welfare. And I can't give you the years of those either. I don't think the senior class ahead of me had her...yes they did. They went out to Highland Park and I think maybe they might have been the first class that had all these ah...extra or special ...opportunities.

i Umhum.

s We just sort of finding our way....it seemed like...all along.

i Can you tell me about your favorite memory of your ITS Days?

s Well, I think about the funniest one I ever had. Was ah...the Sunday that one of the supervisors took us to hear Billy Sunday. You know who he was....

i I remember the...I remember hearing the name. I don't know exactly who he was though.

s Well, he was a baseball player who turned into an Evangelist.

i Oh, okay.

s And he was one of these people, he didn't stay on the floor. He was always up on a chair or up on the table or going through all sorts of gymnastics. I really wasn't so interested in him converted me as I was in...

i In the show.

s ...knowing whether he was going to be on the table next or on the chair maybe. And then the ride home on the open-air streetcar and I got very, very ill...so that by the time I got to the home I was really very sick. I suffered from car sickness for a long long time. Of course those old fashioned street car, you know, they wobbled along like this and it was enough to upset you.

i Sure. Sure. Do you have an unfavorable memory about your ITS Days? Unfavorable?

s No. I really can't say I did. The ah....the Board, the members of the Board took us on ah...a picnic ah...out past Gary, IN. That was a very nice outing. That was considered out graduation gift from the Board. But I can't remember anything...we were all too tired, I think, after we came off duty because our assignments were big and....

i Can we talk a little bit about the closing of the school?

s Of the school.

i Did you know that...

s I wasn't working in there at that time.

i ...the school was going to be closed.

s Pardon.

i Did you know, when you were in training, that the school was going to be closed?

s No.

i You didn't know.

s No. We had no idea that the school was going to end because we knew that Ms. Wheeler...you then...ah...the Board had bought a piece of property over there across the ...what is now...where the old County Nurses Home was at ah...well between Lincoln and Winchester there on Polk Street...

i Umhum.

s ...where the Student Dormitory and Cafateria the...Illinois ah....Medical School is?

i Umhum.

s Well that was our property at one time and that was where they were going to build a new home. And it was not only to be a nurses' home but it was to be a place ah...where ah...-- educational affair and -- nurses were to be trained to go into areas to start schools of nursing and so on. But then of course, then...I don't know what happened to that. They bought that land and of course, The University of Illinois finally got it. Not Illinois but ah....Chicago. That was a very difficult time for the graduates of the ITS, they were still working at County at that time...when they made that transition or the merger. And by the way, where the University of Illinois is now, that used to be the Cubs Ball Park.

i Oh, no kidding.

s When we went into training, the old bleachers were

still there and the big high fence was all around that area and...there was...for our physical ed...they had a...ah...officer from Ft. Sheridan come and he would line us up on Honore street there....see the Medical School, the University of Illinois was just across the street on Honore street there from the Illinois Training....the old residences. And he would line us up there on Honore street and the medical students all would come out and they would hup us....hup, hup, hup, you know, around the hospital over to the ball park. I tell you, he about ran our legs off over there. He was really brutal. And that's where we got our exercise. After working all day over at the hospital, it wasn't enough exercise. We had to go out exercising over at the ball park.

i Yeah. What about...you said that you were working over at the Cook County at the time that the school closed, at the time of the merger and you said it was hard on the graduates. Can you tell me a little more about that?

s Well, it was just the fact that we were losing our identity. And ah...the University of Chicago really didn't live up to what they were suppose to do. They...see we were given to understand that...ah...with the merger the University of Chicago was going to establish a school of nursing and we who were the graduates of the ITS wouldn't be know as associates of the new school. Well you see, they tried that with ah....what's the name of that medical school that's associated with Pres...that Presbyterian now...

i Rush.

s Rush. See they tried that with Rush Medical, but Rush

Medical, their Board was entirely made up of men and they objected to loosing their identity in going out to the University of Chicago so they reestablished themselves again. Which our Board members were sort of glad to get rid of the whole thing because over the years we did nothing but battle with the County Commissioner. Can you imagineI forget...some of the first directors of the nursing school, in ITS nursing got only \$125.00 a month. And when I left training, we were given \$90.00 a month...but then you have to consider that we had room, board, laundry and sick care. And those were all bit items. And those were big items that came up during the depression too.

i Yeah. Sure.

s Therefore, alot of the nurses worked without any salary. We got little I.O.U's. But, during the depression you were glad to get room, board, laundry and sick care.

i Oh yeah, I bet. You had mentions earlier that you thought that the Cook County School of Nursing got a better education than the ITS graduates.

s Well, for the simple reason that there were more new advances in nursing education...

i Okay.

s ...than there was in ...you see, we were a pioneer school. We were just starting out and gradually kept working up.

i Okay. Do you remember...

s And then to, you see, they didn't have those interruptions that we had....with the flu epidemic and with the ah...with the ah....oh what was I...war.

i Yeah. Well do you think that the CC nurses spent more time in class than you did? Did the CC student nurses spend more time in class...

s Oh yes.

i ...than the ITS students did?

s Yes. And they didn't have the interruption in their class like the....our students afterwards and before had a very training. It was the students that came in around...during the ward years and, and until after the war was over with that the...I really don't feel that I had to much of an education. I dind't...you see, we didn't get to finish anything.

i Umhum Let's see. Ah...do you know who made the decisions about the curriculum and the educational requirements at the ITS? Was it Ms. Wheeler or was it the doctors or the hospital administrators?

s About the education.

i Umhum

s It was the nurses. Nursing School.

i Okay. So it was Ms. Wheeler and the supervisors.

s You see...the nursing school was really a private school under contract to the County.

i I see. Okay. Do you think that a different type of nurse was produced from the ITS compared to CCSN?

s Oh yes.

i In what way.

s I think that after the....the nurses from the County...or ITS were probably more dedicated. ..because...the

nurses from the 18....81 and on came in...to take...they had compassion and they had dedication and they....they wanted to start something here in the Midwest that would be helpful to the entire part of this country. Which it was because so many of the nurses went out and established schools of nursing. And ah...I feel that the older nurses were much more dedicated than the younger ones are today. I feel very much that way because ah...for a good many years after I returned to County ah....I had the privilege of working with man as a student and I think that I...I had the feeling that the majority of them were just working to get through training to get out to earn. And...make money. And ah...many of them had got married and ah...well I just don't feel that they had the dedication to the nursing that they should have. The only time I really found them truly dedicated...to the care of the patients were during that terrible flu epidemic that we had in 1952. We took...in that little contagious disease hospital, we took care of over 2200 polios.

i Wow

s And you had to know what you were doing. That's about the only time that we had any...I had any difficulty with an intern. He was a resident and he was from Egypt. He was a Moslum. -- see that everthing was going smoothly and that...the help was there where it was needed and I would come back to contagious and I would make rounds and see all these patients and I would check on them. We had...have them count to 10. As the students went to this intern and reported anything, he would tell them to go report it to the intern and then the intern was to report it to him. Well, a couple of students complained to me

and so I went to Dr. Horn who was the chief of staff and I told him, "Dr. Horn. You've got to do something about this fellow...who can't...won't put up with this. We got to have a little cooperation here." So he talked to him and he told him, he said, "If you don't listen to these girls....these girls know more about polio than you do. I'm going to have to ask that you be dismissed from the hospital." He straightened up and we got along quite well from then on until his term was over. But that's when I found that those student nurses...and we had alot of affiliated nurses that came from these smaller schools and we had a couple of nuns that were from Peoria...they really got a work-out.

i Did you spend most of your career at Cook County Hospital after you graduated?

s No. I stayed at County until 1931. And...I was still interested in pediatrics so I went out to the...City Contagious at on California I think it is...out there near the Prison. And I wanted more work in diptheria because...ah...it was...diptheria was still quite previlent at that time. And I went out there and stayed awhile and that really was an education, I'll tell you. Cause most of the people were political. Well then I went from there ...I stayed about a year. I got all I wanted at City Contagious and ah...I was asked to come over to a new little hospital that had just been opened at the University of Chicago. It was a little hospital on the corner of Ellis and 59th, for crippled children. And I was there almost 2 years. And I would have stayed longer but the living conditions out there...there

was no place for the nurses to live...except around in these little rooming houses and I had a room over on Greenfield. Well, if I had known before I moved in I wouldn't have gone there because I had to share a bathroom, mind you, with 8 students from the University...males....

i Ha....

s ...what a filthy bathroom. Well, I put up with that for awhile and I finally moved into a little hotel around the corner and then it got so bad with the influx of the blacks in the South, that you...crossing the midway was really ah...something...especially after dark. So I resigned and I went home and I was home for awhile and ah....I heard there was an opening at Passmen Memorial. I think they call it the Northwest Hospital now, anyway, it was across the street from Northwest Medical School. In the meantime I had written to Bellview. I wanted to come in, go to Bellview and take ah...post-graduate work in ah...pediatrics. They didn't have an opening...didn't know when they're be a opening because they had so many applications. Well, when this...I found out about this place at Passerman, I went for an interview and I told them that I had applied at Bellview but I...if they would take me for six months...it was the begining of the depression, I would...I would be happy to come there. So they accepted me on those terms. I stayed 10 years.

i Ha..ha..

s I really like it there. I really did. They were in...they were having alot of difficulty. They -- very few patients and of course it was the beginning of the depression. I

went there for \$60.00 a month, got my room, board, laundry and sick care. Of course, I always consider those. And I really like it...and there of course, I got a lot of O.B. because I was there only just a few months when I was asked to take the afternoon supervisor's job. She was leaving and I had 9 wards to supervise. And I never knew when I was going to be called to...O.B.--. Oh, I was going to show you a picture of those awful hats we had to wear.

i Oh yeah.

s And because it was hung in the office on the first floor. So I asked what became of it. Nobody knew anything about that picture. So...the nurse in charge over there decided to see if she could find it and she did. And she had it cleaned and hung up. Well, when old contagious was torn down, here was this picture...nobody, but nobody knew anything about it and I had written...we... see, our Alumni Association at one time had a report and ah...I had written about it and I had wondered what had happened to the picture. And the ark of this was at...as of County wrote to me and wanted to know about the history of that cartoon. So I wrote back and told him what I knew. And so now, I guess it has a honored place up there in the library. But anyway...this...

i Did you leave nursing at all for any significant period of time? Did you leave nursing for any period of time at all?

s No. Well, yes. Ah...I did because ah...well, my first year in training I had various...case of arthritis and I really was incapacitated. I just couldn't walk. So I was given a leave

of absence for a couple of months and I went home and I came back and... that was the only interruption I had at that time. Well then when I was...came back to County after being at Passerman cause...see...when I was at Passerman my work finally degenerated into...being sort of a hostess or Howdy Doody nurse like the children called me. Whenever they'd see me coming down the hall they'd say, "Here comes that new Howdy Doody nurse." Well, I didn't like being called the Howdy Doody nurse 'cause that wasn't what I was trained for. And then Dean Cutter, who was Dean of the Medical School, she I was on duty in the afternoons...he call and wanted to know about this VIP and that VIP and how everything was going and I just....kind of got on my nerves and finally I just decided to leave. I went back to County then. I found many changes...many discouraging changes. Hardly any nursing staff at all. Well, we had a patient come in and I was on men's...big men's surgical ward...and they had...I ah...a man...45 year old man who was retarded...he didn't have the mentality of a 2 year old baby...and everybody was afraid of him. And I was the only person that could give him his medication. He wouldn't accept it from anybody else. He just fought them. When I was off duty, I don't know what happened to him. And one day when the clerk came to the door and said that I wanted at the telephone and without thinking I turned my back on him...which you must never do with a mental case...and he was on me. Got me by the arm here and I though he was going to tear it out of the socket. I talked to him as low as I could ... and finally I just let out a scream that you could have heard all over the County. And there happened to be three interns working down in the ward

with their patients and they all came running...they came in there and got a whole of him and before they got through, he had torn the sleeve out of my uniform and...from then on I began having problems with my arm and I couldn't raise it. It caused me a lot of pain, I lost 6 months work...because my arm just got useless. I hadn't a nerve injury. That's the only time I had lost any time...in my work.

i Do you remember what...what some of the graduates...what most of the graduates did when they finished training? What kind of work they went into?

s Well, a great many of them went into public health...infant welfare and ah...visiting nurse. Many of them worked in Chicago and many of them went out to other communities and started welfare work and infant welfare work and ah...social service work in their own community...and ah....by the way, while I'm thinking about it... TAPE WAS SHUT OFF...25. Everybody was crazy about it.

i Can we talk a little bit about Ms. Wheeler or Ms. Wheeler?

s Ms. Wheeler?

i Yeah.

s Well, she was a very stern woman. TAPE IS ACTING UP--I could soon find out when Ms. Bookay graduated. Oh, I have several pictures -- collars. This is Ms. Wheeler in her office at the resident with her bird.

i Oh. She had a bird huh?

s Oh yes.

i Whatkind of a bird?

s Oh he died.

i Was it a canary?

s Umhum. She was very interested in crafts. And she used to make figures out of different things and ah...

i Whatkind of contact did you have with her?

s --

i With Ms. Wheeler?

s Everybody got along with her because she was stern. You know, you just had to toe the mark or you were just out of the look that was all. I remember, ha....I remember, I don't what Naomi was...had the classmate by the name of Coustell, Naomi Coustell...she and I had gotten into something...and we had to move out of our...she lived in one room and I lived in another room and we had to move down into a room across the hall from Ms. Wheeler's bedroom...for I think a month. Because we were being punished for some infraction that we had done...ha...ha....Oh dear. And then here's Ms. Miller, she was an instructor and a supervisor. She was very fair but things had to be on the Mark.

i You were saying...I think you said...in...the beginning when we started talking, that you said Ms. Wheeler had a real hard time.

s With the commissioner.

i Huh.

s You see...as the school grew, the school needed more money and the commissioners couldn't understand that. They didn't want to pay all that money, see. And that went on all the time. Every year you had to sign a contract in order to...for

the commissioner to pay and they paid only a certain amount of money for each nurse each day. I think it was \$1.30 or something like that. And then ah....the school...at the beginning...got several donation that were ah...ah...very nice but John Currer who was ah...a very wealthy man in ah...Chicago, he gave...a will...when his will was read, he gave them some...I think it was \$50,000. Anyway, it helped to build a wing.

i Well, I think I'm pretty much done with my questions. Do you have...

s And then, of course every year we had our Annual Banquet and all the classes met...and we used....we met at the Palmer House and ah...one of our graduates was a aunt to an executive there at the Palmer House and after every banquet was over with she'd go to her nephew and....rent it for the next year. Oh and on the day I graduated...this is the assignment sheet. I came across that the other day...that I made out for the day. I got ah...I can't find it and I think I sent it along with some of the rest of the stuff that I gave to the...and then this was the invitation for my class. I had several pictures here of Ms. Wheeler with the long skirts that they had...

i Do you have any questions that you'd like to ask me Ms. Knutson?

s Well, I was just wondering how...are you having any difficulty getting student nurses.

i Umhum. Yeah, we are. Well I was...as I was telling you on the phone, ah...I wanted to talk to Ms. Summie on the sameday. --the one who lives in -- and when I called her she

said no.

s I can't understand that.

i She'd gotten...well she'd gotten a letter....

TAPE SHUTS OFF

END OF TAPE ONE SIDE TWO

END OF INTERVIEW