

-TITLE-MARJORIE BUTTERFIELD  
-I\_DATE-MARCH 13, 1990  
-SOURCE-UNITED JEWISH FEDERATION HOLOCAUST CENTER - PITTSBURGH  
-RESTRICTIONS-  
-SOUND\_QUALITY-GOOD  
-IMAGE\_QUALITY-EXCELLENT  
-DURATION-52 MINUTES  
-LANGUAGES-ENGLISH  
-KEY\_SEGMENT-  
-GEOGRAPHIC\_NAME-  
-PERSONAL\_NAME-  
-CORPORATE\_NAME-  
-KEY\_WORDS-  
-NOTES-  
-CONTENTS-  
0:01:32 Marjorie was born in Pittsburgh in 1920. Her parents were also born in the US, but her grandparents emigrated from Scotland and England. Her family had two children, both girls. Her father was an architect.  
  
0:02:25 The family was Presbyterian. They were not particularly political. Marjorie was trained at Switley Valley Hospital and worked as an RN in Pittsburgh.  
  
0:03:20 In September 1942, Marjorie enlisted in the Army. She spent 5 months in Camp Pickett, VA, and time in 9 other camps before being sent overseas. She landed in Liverpool on June 6, 1944.  
  
0:04:50 The nurses heard about D-Day on the ship before landing. In England, the nurses took courses on plane identification, prepared supplies. Marjorie's unit changed, and was attached to the 3rd Army. They landed at Omaha Beach on July 31, 1944.  
  
0:06:10 The landing took place in the dark and was frightening. The nurses slept on the ground and did not have any supplies yet. They were inactive for the first month because of this lack. Attached to a tank and armored unit, the nurses set up behind the front lines in a field hospital and treated only the serious casualties, the others being taken further back.  
  
0:08:29 Marjorie did not know personally of any collaboration with the Resistance. There were 3 platoons with 6 nurses per platoon and 2 surgical units with 2 doctors and 2 nurses. They worked 12 hour shifts and had a few days off occasionally.  
  
0:09:27 Marjorie read about the concentration camps and Nazi policy in the US papers before leaving. There was a Jewish dentist in the platoon. She couldn't believe the policy could be true, thought that reports must be exaggerated.

0:11:52 The unit moved through France into Southern Germany, through N remburg to Linz, Austria (where the Gusen concentration camp was located) in May 1945 after the war with Germany was over. An American unit liberated Gusen.

0:13:37 Mauthausen was within about 5 miles. When she entered Gusen for the first time, Marjorie saw thousands of starving people, mostly men. later she found out there were also women in the camp. The people were wandering about, those about. Those needing hospitals were separated and hospitalized by the liberating unit. All the women were in one building.

0:15:16 The medical unit concentrated on the sickest people. Marjorie said it was a horrifying experience. They couldn't take care of the victims as they needed and many died. The dead were picked up for burial each morning. There was an interpreter to talk to the people.

0:16:09 Gusen was a large camp with 20,000 people. There was an underground airplane factory which used slave labor. Himmler had given orders to put all of the people in the underground facility and to dynamite it shut when he found out that the Americans were approaching so that no one would know about it. his wife apparently convinced him not to.

0:18:26 There were a lot of Poles and other nationalities in the camp in addition to the Jews. Marjorie was in the camp for 6 weeks. It was a very hard experience for her. During that period, she could not eat because she was disturbed by the fact that the army had regular rations but that they could not get food for the other people. Her stomach problems caused her to be sent away for R and R. Then, the Russians took over the camp and she didn't have to go back.

0:19:28 There was a crematorium and gas chamber in the camp. Marjorie talked mainly to the women. Most were very educated. One who was a lab technician said that her training saved her because she was useful to the Germans. Her family had died there. The main concern of the people was their families.

0:22:02 The women and their families had been tortured. The Americans could not believe what they were hearing and seeing. The medical corps took care of German patients too. One incident occurred in which an SS trooper needed a blood transfusion and only the Jewish dentist had the right type of blood. He agreed to give his blood on the condition that the SS trooper be told who blood he was receiving.

0:26:11 Marjorie was horrified at what she saw. Each person reacted in his/her own way. They arranged to get for the children in the camp. The people of Linz were of all different nationalities and the person employed to tutor the nurses in German claimed the people of Linz did not know what was happening in the camp. No one recuperated enough to be transferred out of the camp

while Marjorie was there.

0:28:25 The soviet Army took over while the Allies were in the process of dividing up territory. After leaving Linz, Marjorie went to Marienbad, Czechoslovakia where they set up a hospital for the armies of the occupation troops.

0:29:30 The Czech people knew about the camps and claimed that the Russians were as bad as the Germans and had camps too. Marjorie spent 16 and one half months in Czech and then went home.

0:35:50 Marjorie's attitude towards the Jewish people was that she felt sympathy for them for the horrible thing that happened. She personally hopes to have no prejudice against any group.

0:38:25 She thinks the Holocaust should be studied in American schools and gave a copy of a confession of a German soldier she had to a school. The experience was so traumatic for her that she could not talk about it for 20-25 years after the war. It was too horrible and she felt she shouldn't talk about it. After she saw a revisionist on television, she changed her mind and contacted the Holocaust center.

0:45:45 Marjorie gained the rank of First Lieutenant in the war. She was struck by The Hiding Place, the story of Corrie Ten Boom. She couldn't read the Anne Frank story for years. She was greatly affected by the experience and still finds it hard to talk about.

0:46:30 She started to re-read the confession of the German Soldier, but couldn't.

0:48:40 (Passage for her journal) The nurses nicknamed Gusen "gruesome." They cared for several thousand patients. The camp was 1 mile long and 1/2 mile wide.

0:49:42 There were buildings of different sizes on all sides and an underground factory in the back. The Germans didn't have the supplies to continue operating the factory. They were supposed to hide the Jews in the factory when the Americans were coming. The confession of the commandant would make anyone shudder when reading of the horrors.

0:51:04 Entering the camp was a verification of the newspaper stories. The patients were skin and bones like in the US newspaper pictures. She never got accustomed to the sight of the victims in her two and 1/2 months in the camp. They took care of the patient as well as they could. Marjorie was on a different ward each day. The nurses took German lessons because it helped to know the language of the patients.

0:51:58 There was at least 1 interpreter per ward. She liked the women's ward the best. There were about 65 well-educated women, some of whom spoke English. They endured unbelievable hardship and wanted to be reunited with their families. The women did not know

what had become of their families unless they saw them killed.  
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