

**Faye Wanda Newman**  
**Narrator**

**Michael Russert**  
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**New York State Military Museum**  
**Interviewers**

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**Elderwood Center**  
**Hamburg, NY**

**MR:** Could you give me your full name?

**FN:** My full name is Faye Wanda. Then my married name is Newman. And of course, I wasn't married in service.

**MR:** What was your maiden name?

**FN:** Brown. Faye Wanda Brown.

**MR:** Where were you born and when were you born?

**FN:** I was born in Warren, Ohio. August 11, 1918.

**MR:** Do you remember where you were and how you heard about Pearl Harbor?

**FN:** Yes, I was working at Cook County Hospital in Chicago. And it was Sunday morning, and I was getting the report from the night nurses because I was a nurse in charge that morning. And we heard they said that Pearl Harbor had been bombed, but it took a little bit of time to let it sink in because we were surprised. And it was after that, that I went down and signed up to go in the army nursing work.

**MR:** Now, you already gone through nursing school, then? Where did you go to nursing school?

**FN:** York Hospital York, Pennsylvania.

**MR:** Now how long had you been working as a nurse when you heard this?

**FN:** Oh, let see I don't know. What do you want?

**MR:** Well, when do you graduate from nursing school? Do you remember that?

**FN:** In the nursing [unclear]. I went down the next day and got ready to go as fast as I can.

**MR:** So you went down after Pearl Harbor then?

**FN:** Yes.

**MR:** Why did you decide the army nursing [unclear]?

**FN:** Because I felt very patriotic. Extremely so.

**MR:** where did you sign up?

**FN:** In Chicago.

**MR:** Where did you go for training, do you remember?

**FN:** What?

**MR:** Where did you go for training? Did they give you any extra training?

**FN:** Camp Grant, Illinois which was outside of Chicago.

**MR:** Now you already been a nurse did they give you any specialized training?

**FN:** Yes.

**MR:** What kind of specialized training did they give you? You already had been a nurse.

**FN:** Nothing special until we went into the service. We had to learn to crawl on our bellies [laughed] so that we could be of some use. We learned to carry a gas mask. All the little things that we had to be taught we were taught right there at Camp Grant.

**MR:** So it was like a boot camp then?

**FN:** Yes.

**WC:** Did they commission you as an officer?

**FN:** What?

**WC:** Were you missioned as an officer?

**FN:** No.

**WC:** You weren't a lieutenant?

**FN:** I went in as a lieutenant. Went to Camp Ellis.

**MR:** Now when you were in these camps what kind of buildings did you live in? Did you live in tents?

**FN:** We lived in [unclear]. Regular [unclear]. And then when I finished my boot camp training, then I was sent to south. And I got down there and they sent me to Puerto Rico. So Puerto Rico was a place where they bringing them back that had been injured.

**MR:** What were some of the duties that you performed there?

**FN:** [laughed]

**WC:** Did you start working as a nurse down there?

**FN:** What?

**WC:** Did you work as a nurse down in Puerto Rico?

**FN:** Oh yes. I was very proud to be in Puerto Rico even though it was like being in the States. I enjoyed it.

**WC:** Now were you treating soldiers that been wounded and brought to Puerto Rico?

**FN:** Yes. Also the soldiers that were hurt right there because they were preparing to go overseas. Lot of them were injured right there in boot camp training and we took care of them.

**WC:** Now did you work in the operating room at all?

**FN:** No.

**MR:** Now what kind of duties do you do in Puerto Rico?

**FN:** Unfortunately, I'm always the one that gets to lead the pack.

**WC:** You were the head nurse in other word?

**FN:** Yes. That's exactly what I was. Head nurse.

**WC:** How many other nurses work with you?

**FN:** Well, they came and went so fast. That they needed three nurses, three were gone before you knew it because they lacked people.

**WC:** What about doctors? Were there a lot of doctors there?

**FN:** Hmm?

**MR:** Were there a lot of doctors there?

**FN:** No. There were doctors there but they were training and sending them on.

**MR:** Oh it was a training center also?

**FN:** Oh most like a training camp.

**MR:** Did you help train nurse also?

**FN:** Yes. I got to know all about that.

**MR:** What were some of the things you did with the nurses as you train them?

**FN:** My training was setting up the hospital and then going on to the next one and setting that up. Get things ready for the ones that are coming in and to stay.

**MR:** What was your equipment like? Did you have good equipment?

**FN:** Well, we had good equipment. We were very proud to be part of the nursing [unclear]. It was a wonderful experience, that something you never forget. I'm sure [laughed].

**MR:** Were there little stories that you remember? That stands out overall others?

**FN:** No. I can't say that I do.

**WC:** Did you see any USO shows while you were down there?

**FN:** Oh yes. I can't even tell you who we saw. But we saw several.

**WC:** Like Bob Holt and different celebrities?

**FN:** No, Bob Holt didn't make it there. I really can't tell you who was there but we had a nice group of entertainers that came in.

**WC:** Now did you get much time off? Did you work like forty hour work week or a sixty hour work week?

**FN:** No, not off hand.

**MR:** Now do you live in [unclear] while you were in Puerto Rico?

**FN:** Oh, I lived in a [unclear]. First we lived in the hospital, and there was a hospital in the area San Juan that we were part of. And then sent back to the States trained. We did everything because we wanted to help out. [Laughed]

**WC:** Now were in the army as a nurse right up until the war ended?

**FN:** Well some of those nurses were already in the army nurse [unclear]. But they did a lot of things but there were so few of them that they were glad to see us coming.

**MR:** How long did you see in the nurse [unclear]?

**FN:** I think it's three years, I'm really not sure because I got married and [unclear] and behold I also decided to have a child. So they removed you from the army [unclear].

**MR:** So you got married while you were in the service?

**FN:** Yes.

**MR:** Was your husband in the service?

**FN:** Yes, he was.

**MR:** Did you meet him while you were in the service? Did you meet him?

**FN:** Yes. In fact, I got to know him, he went off to England and I stayed right there and trained other nurses was what I did.

**WC:** Now was he an officer too?

**FN:** What?

**WC:** Was your husband an officer also?

**FN:** No. He was enlisted men.

**WC:** Now wasn't that [unclear] of?

**FN:** Oh my. Did I ever get torn down for that marrying enlisted men? But there were a lot of [unclear] people got married that were enlisted personnel marrying officers.

**MR:** He was in the army also?

**FN:** What?

**MR:** Was your husband in the army also?

**FN:** Yes. He was in the air force. He was gone quite a long time.

**MR:** Was he in the [unclear] air force in England?

**FN:** Yes, he was.

**MR:** Did you have to get special permission to be able to marry an enlisted men?

**FN:** [laughed] I got married [laughed] like a lot of them.

**WC:** So you like got married in secret?

**FN:** Yes. [laughed]

**WC:** Now, once you got married were you able to stay in?

**FN:** No then they were asking you to leave. But it wasn't long till they found out that they need those nurses. I was in quite a while. But that's all I had to tell but there are other people around here that I'm sure have experiences.

**MR:** Well your story is very interesting. Did you leave the service, about 1945 then or so?

**FN:** Yes. It would be about that time that I left.

**MR:** Where did you go after you left the service?

**FN:** I went back home. [laughed]. By that time I was pregnant.

**MR:** Your husband was never injured at all?

**FN:** Hmm?

**MR:** Your husband was never injured?

**FN:** He came home with tuberculosis. And was in the Vet hospital in Cleveland for quite a while but everything turned out thank god fine.

**WC:** Was he prisoner of war?

**FN:** Hmm?

**WC:** Was your husband a POW?

**FN:** No he wasn't a POW.

**WC:** What was your husband's name?

**FN:** Harold W. Newman. And he was gone quite a while. I lived in Cleveland because that's where he lived before and his brother and family were there. There were people there that I could contact if I needed help so forth.

**WC:** Do you remember how you felt when you heard about the death of President Roosevelt?

**FN:** The what?

**WC:** The death of President Roosevelt? Do you remember hearing about that?

**FN:** Oh yes. We thought it was great. We got to see him as he rode by on the train on the back part.

**MR:** How did you feel when you heard about him dying?

**FN:** Felt very unhappy. You somehow knew that there was a man that he was going to do the best he could for his country. I felt terrible and so did other people when we found out about his death.

**MR:** How do you think your time in service had a factor that changed your life? Of course, you met your husband.

**FN:** [laughed]. Yes that really changed my life because I cared very much for him. And he just died two years ago. And there again it was related to wounds and so forth and the long [unclear].

**WC:** Now, how many children do you have?

**FN:** We have three. [laughed]

**WC:** Do you have any grandchildren?

**FN:** Yes. We have two grandchildren. We have a grandson who is now in the Delta Forces. Very much involved, he just made first Sergeant.

**WC:** Oh so he is a career soldier?

**FN:** Yes. He really cares about the service. [laughed]

**MR:** After you left the service did you continue in nursing?

**FN:** What?

**MR:** Did you continue in nursing after you left the service?

**FN:** Oh yes. We went back to Buffalo. My husband was from Silver creek NY.

**MR:** So that how you ended up coming to western NY through your husband?

**FN:** Yes because he lived it.

**MR:** Well, thank you very much.

**FN:** Well, you're quite welcome.