

NARRATOR: Koehler, Patricia (Pat)
INTERVIEWER: Ellen Haffner
DATE: August 5, 2005
LOCATION: Parma, Idaho
PROJECT: Women in WWII/Veteran's History Project

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TAPE ONE

[The first tape of this interview is somewhat difficult to hear. It is recommended that the tape be used with the transcript to better understand what is being said.]

0009	1	Introduction.
0014	1	Koehler spoke about her experiences as a child growing up in Oporto, Portugal. She had a nanny and a governess along with several other servants. Her father decided that she and her sister should attend school when their last nanny got married. They attended Oporto British School, which had been only for boys until just before the time they attended.
0050	3	Koehler continued by telling about her time at Oporto British School. Her first day there was terrible because one of the servants sewed the shield on her jacket upside down, and the other children made fun of her. She spoke more of the work her nanny did and explained the difference between a nanny and a governess. Koehler shared the subjects they studied both with their governess and when they went to school.
0100	5	Koehler shared a story about the first time she got in trouble in school. They had been making animal noises as they learned the animal names in Latin. Koehler had to go to the headmaster, and everyone was curious to see what would happen since a girl had never been punished before. The boy got three hits with a paddle. Koehler just got talked to and then the headmaster gave her a kiss on the cheek.
0140	7	Koehler explained her father's decision to send her and her sister to boarding school. She talked more about the subjects she studies at Oporto British School and the teachers she had. She also described their uniforms. She told about being surprised later in life when the boys at her college in America were not able to tie their own ties because she had been tying a tie since she was a child.
0190	9	Koehler talked of the clubs that the school children tried to organize. The club Koehler and her friend started tried to teach people to be kind to animals. One lady was carrying a chicken by the feet when

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		Koehler told her she shouldn't treat her chicken that way. This made the woman unhappy with her. Koehler also shared details of her typical day. She spoke positively of their chauffeur and the nice things he would do for the children, including helping them have a proper funeral for the pond fish that died after the dog got into the pond.
0240	12	Koehler shared how the English community segregated themselves from the Portuguese people. Other than interacting with their servants, the children rarely dealt with the Portuguese people living near them. Koehler also talked about not spending much time with her parents. They would share their meals with their parents. Koehler described the different types of food they would eat when she lived in Portugal.
0300	14	Koehler talked about her father and his travels. He planned to join the Royal Canadian Police, but he had to stay home when his father died to care for his mother. He worked in Portugal in shipping until World War I broke out. He returned home to service in the British Army. He was wounded in the Battle of the Somme, and received decorations because of his service and injuries including the Distinguished Service Cross. He was treated in a German hospital.
0370	16	Koehler told a story of being amazed after seeing a man working at a restaurant door wearing a Victoria Cross. She thought someone who had earned the most distinguished medal in England should not be a doorman.
0390	17	END OF TAPE ONE SIDE ONE TAPE ONE SIDE TWO
0390	17	Koehler continued to talk about the medal her father received. She described herself as a snob with other children. When she found out the fathers of other children didn't do anything in World War I, she would refuse to play with them any more. Koehler explained the layout of her home in Portugal. It was a 300 year old, two story, gated home.
0430	20	Koehler talked about how she followed around one of the gardeners because he had a dimple in his chin. She remembered the rhyme that said, "dimple in chin, devil within," so she wanted to see if the devil would pop out. She spoke about the different servants they had. Koehler shared that once a year the priest from the nearby catholic church would come and bless their home. They attended the Church of England while there, but it wasn't allowed to look like a church because they were in a Catholic country. They didn't mix much with the Portuguese while there, but Koehler's best friend had a

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		Portuguese mother. Most of the entertainment was English, and they used English doctors. After the War no one could not get a job in Portugal unless they had gotten a degree at a Portuguese university.
0480	22	Koehler explained that most of the homes in Portugal had walls around the house. She had one friend in Portugal who was surprised to see pictures of their wall-less home in Parma. She talked more about the types of entertainment they did in Oporto. They usually had parties in the houses including fancy dress parties for the children. The English community would always have a picnic once each year.
0515	24	Koehler shared more about the work her father did. He worked for a freighting line. She was able to visit one ship called the <i>Dorino</i> with their father. Koehler talked about her mother. She was married before World War I, but she worked tinting pictures for a living. Her first husband died in the War, and she met Koehler's father at a party in 1920. Koehler thought her mother was a very talented painter
0545	26	Koehler talked about learning to ride a bicycle in Kensington Park in London. Once Koehler's parents married, her father wouldn't allow her mother to work or to sell her paintings. Her mother did not spend much time with Koehler and her sister. She would play bridge and garden a lot. She always wanted to go back to live in England.
0575	27	Koehler did not remember much of an impact that the Great Depression had on their lives in Portugal. However, her father's partner had gambled away much of their money. When World War II broke out, her father got a job working for the Admiralty. Koehler talked about going to boarding school. She was excited to go. She talked about the daily schedule at the school. She liked the strict schedule of the place. They didn't have sports that competed with other schools. Instead, they had different houses at the school that would play against each other.
0630	29	Koehler explained that they really only had free time on Sundays. They were allowed to go out three times a term if they had friends that invited them to leave the school with their families. While at the school, they didn't have much access to the news. When major events occurred, like the death of the King, they would hear about it from their teachers.
0670	31	Koehler talked about the limits on sweets the school had for the children. If parents sent more than one sweet a day, the school would send the extra to the orphanage behind the school. She described their tea times. Koehler also shared a story about getting a cake from her parents for her first birthday at the school. Koehler

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		explained what the living quarters looked like. She shared a bedroom with either two or three other girls while there. They just had the bare necessities there.
0720	33	Koehler talked about a typical day at boarding school. They met each morning in an auditorium that they called the big. They sang hymns and made announcements. They also asked if anyone had spoken after lights out. If they had the student would stand up because they had a strict code of honesty. The students would remain in one classroom throughout the day, and the teachers would change from room to room. She also talked of some of the desserts they would eat at the school.
0775	34	END OF TAPE ONE SIDE TWO TAPE TWO SIDE ONE
0000	34	Tape two introduction
0007	35	Koehler began talking more about her time at boarding school. She talked about the sports they would play, and the way that they did their prep or homework time. She also spoke about her favorite subjects like history and geography. For punishment the students would lose some of their weekend free time and had to study spelling for half hour periods. They had to keep their rooms clean and could not talk after lights out. There were three grades per class.
0050	37	Koehler liked many of her teachers, but she especially enjoyed studying scripture and history. All of the teachers were women because so many men had died in World War I. Most of them were old women who had either never married or had lost their husbands to the war. They had to study French or German, and Koehler took French. Koehler talked about some of her friendships in boarding school. She especially liked one girl that she played tennis with and admired because of her horse back riding. This girl had a lottery for one of the derbies. Koehler drew the winner, and she now always bets on a grey horse after that.
0100	40	Koehler talked about being stuck in her room whenever she got sick. She was not allowed out of her room the first time it snowed. She was disappointed because she had never seen snow before. Koehler talked about her best friend Annette Gooch. She always walked with this friend and spent time talking with her when they were not studying. They were roommates. Annette's mother was a medium, and she would go to London to talk to the man who was going to be her husband but died in India before they could wed. Koehler would sometimes visit this friend's house for holidays. For most holidays, Koehler would travel back to Portugal by boat. Often for Christmas

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		they would stay with their grandparents because the seas were rougher at that time of year.
0150	42	Koehler talked about the boat trips they would take. Usually they would land in Leixoes, but a boat sank and blocked the harbor so they started traveling to Vigo, Spain, where their parents would come to pick them up. The girls at boarding school never had any interaction with boys other than when they were traveling on the boat to go home. They did not have problems with practical jokes. They did not allow the girls to lie, cheat, or steal. She spoke about students who came from India to study in England. These girls would not see their parents for several years at a time because the journey to India took so long.
0200	45	Koehler described the process of taking examinations at the end of school. The exams came from either Oxford University or the University of London. They didn't have a graduation ceremony, but they did have a prize giving ceremony where they would award top students in different subjects. Her last year of school, Koehler went to public school in Kinnaird Park. Her parents had moved back to England by this time. After finishing secondary school, Koehler went to Pittman's Secretarial School to study. It normally took her half an hour to get to her school each day. While at Pittman's she learned typing and short hand. She had already taken language courses so those were boring to her.
0260	47	END OF TAPE TWO SIDE ONE END OF RECORDING

NAMES AND PLACES INDEX

Cockram, Fredrick Sydney

Gooch, Annette

Hamilton House Boarding School (Tunbridge Wells, Kent, England)

Heatherly's Art College

Kinnaird Park School (Bromley, Kent, England)

Oporto British School (Oporto, Portugal)

Oporto, Portugal

Pitman's Secretarial School (Lewisham, Kent, England)