



Elaine Danforth Harmon Oral History Clip #1

ONE GIRL, TEN MEN

HARMON: I was at the University of Maryland and they have a college newspaper called *The Diamondback*. And there was a little newspaper article in there one day about the Civilian Pilot Training Program that the government had started a couple of years before we got into the war. Because [the country was] so short of pilots [the government] wanted to get people interested in aviation.

And they allowed one girl into the program for every ten men. And I was one of the lucky girls that got in. I think there were three of us that got in at the time. So, I got in, it was a great program as far as I was concerned. It cost \$40. We got 40 hours, well I think it was 35 hours of flying time, 35 or 40, something like that....

But I was underage at the time and I had to get my parent's signature. My mother wouldn't approve of it, I knew. So, I sent the forms to my father at his office and he sent them back right away with the \$40, so that was great.

(4:15 – 5:47)



Elaine Danforth Harmon Oral History Clip #2

WE STUDIED WEATHER AND AERODYNAMICS AND...

HARMON: In our [WASP] training we had, it was divided into three phases, 70 hours in each phase. We had 410 hours of, I think that's right, of ground school.

In the ground school, we studied weather and aerodynamics and engines and Morse code and a lot of mathematics with figuring out estimated times of arrival and departure and fitting it all together with the wind effect. And so, we had a lot of ground school training.

(7:15 – 8:02)



Elaine Danforth Harmon Oral History Clip #3

SIZES LARGE, LARGE, AND EXCESSIVELY LARGE

HARMON: We didn't have uniforms until about, I'd say, maybe seven months before we were deactivated, we got these uniforms [referring to the uniform she wore during the interview]. Prior to that, we just put together whatever we could to sort of look military....

[When] we flew, we wore zoot suits, which were just coveralls, but they were made for men. They came in sizes large, large, and excessively large. And we had to roll up the sleeves and the legs and tie them in tightly.

And of course, down in Texas it gets pretty hot in the summertime and when you finished flying you would really be a mess. And we had no place, the sinks were just about so big [indicates small size]. For 12 girls we had two sinks and two showers. So there really wasn't a good place to wash these things. So, we would just climb into the shower and soak down the zoot suit... while we had it on. And rinse it off and hang it up to dry for the next day.

(15:24 – 17:15)



WASP Video



Available on Youtube: <https://youtu.be/gMCqXZEEQuq>



Elaine Danforth Harmon Photographs





Marion Reh Gurfein Oral History Clip #1

THREE MAIL DELIVERIES

GURFEIN: The letters [from Joe and all soldiers] would ... come in huge batches ... You'd wait....

We had three deliveries a day. So, I would be downstairs at 8:00 in the morning, I would be downstairs at 11:00, and downstairs at 3:00. Now either you'd be delirious with joy or you'd have three different opportunities to say, "Oh god, there's nothing from him."

And every now and then a telegram would come from Joe. Now what they did, they had set little phrases. Like #19 would say, "I miss you," and #8 would say, "It's a beautiful day. I wish you were here."

And he would send me these funny little messages, and of course, I'd be sitting in the park. It seems I spent all my time [there] because there was a park right opposite our house. There was a beautiful park.

And we'd sit there with our babies and sometimes someone would say, "Marion, you've got a telegram," and then your heart would just constrict. You'd say, "From the War Department?" "No, it was Joe saying, "I love you and I miss you."

(14:51 – 17:23)



Marion Reh Gurfein Oral History Clip #2

IT WAS AN ALL-WOMAN SOCIETY

GURFEIN: And you did everything for the war effort. And you wrote to your husband every single day. I wrote to Joe. And he tried to write to me, but his letters would have trouble coming through. And I was in a terrible state because...I didn't know if I'd ever see him again. And I'd sit in the park with the other girls. And the telegrams were coming constantly. This one's husband was killed. This one's husband was missing.

INTERVIEWER: Terrifying.

GURFEIN: It wasn't very pleasant.

INTERVIEWER: Well I know it must've been nice for people to be with each other.

GURFEIN: Oh yes, yes. We all sat and we consoled each other. And we'd tell these girls whose husbands were missing in action, "Oh you know he'll turn up." ...

Most everybody you knew—there were no men around. It was an all-woman society.

(8:20 – 10:04)



Marion Reh Gurfein Oral History Clip #3

WE HAD TO CONSERVE EVERYTHING

INTERVIEWER: What kind of feelings did people have about wartime?

GURFEIN: Frightened to death. I used to dream at night that airplanes were coming over. You know, we'd see newsreels. There was no television, so we couldn't see all that. But the radio was very important to us. And I remember General Eisenhower talking to us and telling us how there wasn't enough rubber for tires and how we had to conserve everything.

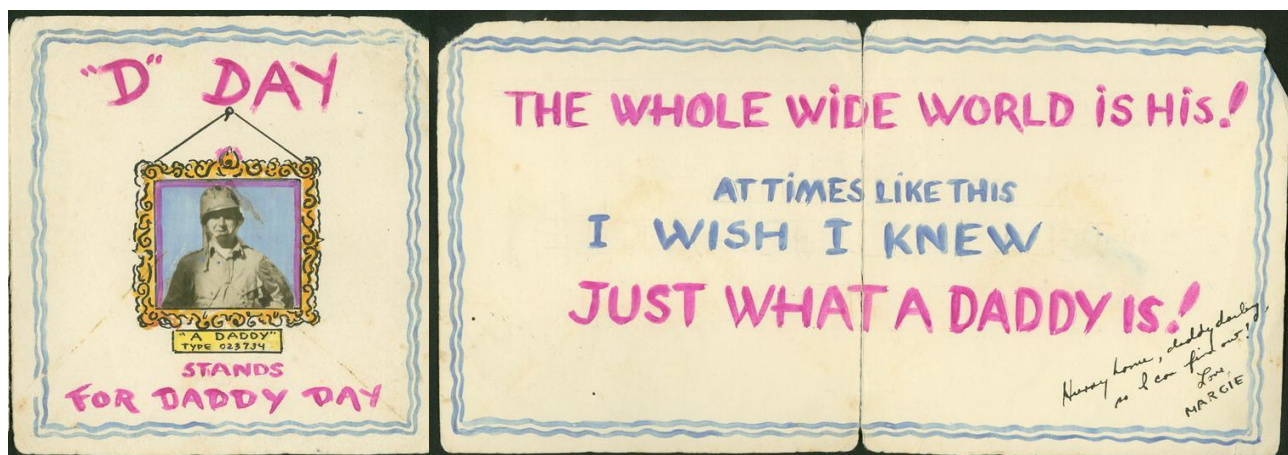
And of course, funny things would happen. For instance...we couldn't get silk stockings. We painted our legs with makeup — orange makeup....

But so many things were disappearing. You couldn't get crazy things like spices, pepper. And you couldn't get gum.... Now we all could've survived without those things. But then meat started to disappear. Sugar. Oh, my goodness, you couldn't get sugar. And you couldn't get canned goods because they were packing canned goods, sending it overseas. And you couldn't get shoes. We were all rationed for shoes because they were making boots for the Army.

(20:48 – 22:59)



Father's Day Card



Handwritten text:

Hurry home, daddy darling, so I can find out!
Love, Margie (Marion's daughter)

Photograph



Marion and daughter Margie, April 1945

Name:



Class Period:

All City 'Lets Go' **Hundreds of Thousands Roar Joy After Victory Flash Is Received**

By Alexander Feinberg

August 15, 1945

Five days of waiting...five agonizing days following the first indication of a Japanese surrender, days of alternately rising hopes and fears — came to an end for New York, as for the nation and the world, a moment or two after seven o'clock last night. And the [city] exploded its emotions, harnessed for the most part during the day, with atomic force.

“Official — [President Harry S.] Truman announces Japanese surrender.”

These were the magic words, flashed on the moving electric sign of the Times Tower, at 7:03 P.M. that touched off an unparalleled demonstration in Times Square, packed with half a million persons.

The victory roar that greeted the announcement beat upon the eardrums until it numbed the sense. For twenty minutes wave after wave of that joyous roar surged forth.

Restraint was thrown to the winds. Those in the crowds in the streets tossed hats, boxes and flags into the air. From those leaning perilously out of the windows of office buildings and hotels came a shower of paper, confetti, streamers. Men and women embraced — there were no strangers in New York yesterday....

By 7:30 P.M. the crowd in the Square had risen to 750,000 persons; by 8:45 it had swelled to 800,000 and the number continued to rise. People were packed solidly between 43rd Street and 45th Street. Individual movement was virtually impossible; one moved not in the crowd but with it.

At 10 P.M. Chief Inspector John J. O'Connell estimated that 2,000,000 persons were in the Times Square area from 40th to 52nd Street, between 6th and 8th Avenues. This constitutes an all-time record, police officials said. At that hour people were still pouring into the Square from subways, buses and on foot.

Source: Alexander Feinberg, “All City ‘Lets Go’,” *New York Times*, August 15, 1945, 1.

Name:



Class Period:

Fifty Years Ago: The End of World War II

No author listed

August 27, 1995

The date Sept. 2, 1945, is important. On that date, 50 years ago, World War II ended. This war had been the most destructive in the history of the world. There may have been as many as 75 million deaths around the world. About 16 million Americans served in the armed forces during World War II. Nearly 300,000 lost their lives.

The war in Europe had ended four months earlier. On May 7, 1945, Germany unconditionally surrendered. The Allies declared May 8 as V-E Day, or Victory in Europe Day.

V-J Day, or Victory over Japan Day, did not come until four months later, on Sept. 2.

On Sept. 2, the Japanese delegation arrived on board the USS Missouri, anchored in Tokyo Bay, [Japan] to take part in the official surrender ceremonies.

President Truman announced Japan's surrender at the White House on Aug. 14, 1945. He later declared V-J Day to be celebrated on Sept. 2.

Harry S. Truman became president when Franklin Roosevelt died in April of 1945. Roosevelt had led the country during most of World War II.

Source: "Fifty Years Ago: The End of World War II," *Washington Post*, August 27, 1995, 5A.

Name:



Class Period:

WWII Source Compare & Contrast

Complete the table below for each article. Include at least one similarity and at least one difference not already covered by your other answers. Include at least one reason you know it is either a primary source or a secondary source.

	Japan Surrenders!	The End of World War II
Article Date		
Year of Event Discussed		
Mainly facts or mainly emotions?		
Other Similarities		
Other Differences		
Primary or Secondary Source? How do you know?		

Name:



Class Period:

Primary Source Analysis

Who are you analyzing? _____

What did they do? What did a typical day look like for them? What historical events happened in their life?

Where did they live? _____

Who did they interact with? This could be specific people (mother or sister) and types of people (teachers, friends).

What personality traits did they have? How would you describe them?

What did they think about? What did they care about?

Name:

Class Period:

ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY

HISTORY EDUCATION SERIES



WWII Historical Fiction Storyboard

Characters

Setting

Beginning

Middle

End

Primary Source Reference #1

Primary Source Reference #2