

The Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training
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Foreign Service Spouse Series

DOROTHY M. EMMERSON

Interviewed by: Hope Meyers
Initial interview which you gave in Tokyo in 1964, I have concluded that I should and must reshape the nature date: September 28, 1987

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In his book, *The Japanese Thread*, John K. Emmerson wrote

"By the summer of 1949 our two years in Moscow were up. The tight, closed society in which we were forced to live made us eager for our transfers when they came. Dorothy, especially, suffered in Moscow. Depressed by the atmosphere of fear and suspicion around us, she was yet responsible for maintaining a tumble down house, caring for two active, developing children, dealing with indifferent and untrustworthy servants, meeting the obligations of a frantic, social diplomatic life, and at the same time carrying on her job at the embassy commissary. The requirements, it could be said with understatement, went beyond the call of official duty."

INTERVIEW

Q: Mrs. Emmerson, having just listened to the talk of the interview that I had planned, in terms of the questions I wanted to ask you, at least in the order I wanted to ask them. When I went into the Foreign Service I anticipated that I would in some fashion, receive the kind of guidance that you gave in this talk, not necessarily all in one piece as you have done in this fifty-minute segment which sums up the experiences of your own life, but bit by bit. I have to say that in recollection it was the wives themselves who in the end, at the first post where I served, got together and made their own statements and their own recommendations to each other. It seems to me a tribute to you that you have been able to sum up so well for such a large audience the experience of your long career, so varied as it has been. From whom and where did you learn what you have indicated so clearly are such valuable lessons transmitted in such a wonderful fashion? From whom and where did you learn all that you have learned that you spoke of?

EMMERSON: Of course our first post was Tokyo. As a language wife -- there were four of us, eight officers and four married -- as language wives they didn't know what to do with us. But one thing they knew we needed was protocol education and we got it. That was, I suppose I must admit valuable, not so much with other Americans as with the Diplomatic Corps. It seems to me that over all I remember the British influence in Pakistan. We got very well acquainted with Sir Gilbert Lathwaite, the High Commissioner. I was very comfortable with him because you knew exactly where he stood. His knowledge of protocol and his sticking to the protocol of diplomacy corroborated things I had learned in Tokyo. For example, he gave a lunch one day and I noticed that I was sitting on his right. I was the only woman present. I would have assumed that I would be the first to leave. I knew Sir Gilbert liked everybody to leave early and at one point I said, "I think it is time to go," and he very graciously said, "Yes, perhaps it is, Dorothy, The Governor of Sindh is just leaving." Now the Governor of Sindh was seated at the opposite end of the table. Of course I should have waited until he departed.

And again in Moscow I remember (Moscow was hard for me) we received an invitation

to a small diplomatic dinner. It was foreigners only. Foreign diplomats were not allowed to entertain Russians. I was exhausted, I was tired, I think I was not sick, I just had had it. Madame Pandit, [Madame Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit, sister of Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru. Madame Pandit was head of the Indian Delegation to the United Nations 1946-51 and concurrently Indian Ambassador to the USSR, 1947-49] the Ambassador from India, was guest of honor and she noticed my condition and I think would have stayed longer, but she graciously left early so I could go home. Although at the time it seemed pretty much nonsense, I appreciated the protocol education that I got.

A senior wife in the Embassy assumed the job of educating us four language wives -- both before a diplomatic function -- and in the case of a visit to the Palace -- and after a mistake had been made -- as in the case of mourning dress after the King of England died.

Even with unclassified "C" rank we were on the official diplomatic list and were invited, for example to all "National Days" then represented in Japan. We were told to accept all invitations and do no entertaining because we didn't know how.

We were invited to the Palace along with all Embassy people on the diplomatic list (less than 100 officers in the Embassy at that time). Now the Embassy is large and the entire Embassy (on the diplomatic list) is presented to the Emperor in one large group, or so I understand, but then we were small -- the Embassy officers less than 100 -- and each couple was presented separately. The wife was to wear a long dress - with *train* - long sleeves, high neck, hat, gloves, no white, no black. We had lessons - how many steps to take as we entered the room where the Imperial family stood - how to back out with the dress train. The Imperial family stood on a platform in the middle of the far side of the room in the middle. We went diagonally from the right back corner of the room and stood in front of the Emperor and Empress, bowed to each in turn, then a bow to the men of the imperial family - to our left - and a bow to the Imperial family women to our right. We then backed out to the exit obliquely to the far corner of the room to our right, counting again the number of steps. I had to manage my train so it took some practice beforehand. We went directly to the taxi which was waiting for us. As we drove away I realized that I was so busy concentrating on my feet that I had seen nothing in the Palace!

When the King of England died, the Diplomatic Corps went into mourning. We went to a function - I don't remember where - and the senior wife came up to me and asked why I was not in mourning. I told her I did not have a black dress - I was wearing a dark brown dress. She told me to go home and stay there until I got a black dress.

In the fall the Embassy diplomats were to wait along a garden Palace path and bow to the Emperor and Empress as they passed along the path. It was very cold. We had been told never to wear a coat in the presence of the Emperor. I put on the largest dress I owned and padded it underneath with sweaters. When we gathered along the path to await the passing of the Emperor, I found that I was the only person present with no coat. Just before the Emperor arrived the others took off their coats and hung them on bushes until he had passed. I was very conspicuous and unhappy.

In subsequent posts, when my husband's rank became more senior, the Tokyo protocol instruction was certainly used, but the teaching could have been more kindly.

Tokyo is perhaps the best place of all the places we served where it could have been valuable at that time, although our rank was so low it wasn't very important, and I guess I do think the Japanese are the most rank conscious people in any country that we served. For example Mrs. Reischauer [wife of Honorable Edwin O. Reischauer, then U.S. Ambassador to Japan (1961-66)] was giving a tea one day. I had been helping her outside of the drawing room and I came into the drawing room -- as I remember there were very few Americans: there may have been only Japanese women present -- there was only one place left in the living room to sit -- I jokingly said, said "Well I can't sit on the right end of the sofa because I'm American Embassy." It was a large sofa, and four ladies already sitting there got up and moved so that I could sit on the left end of the sofa. I was a little flabbergasted.

Later, when we went to Pakistan, my husband was Deputy Chief of Mission and I had never been the wife of a person in that position -- it was the first position as Deputy Chief of Mission -- and I was very fortunate that Shelley Mills [Honorable Sheldon T. Mills, then DCM in New Delhi] -- and his wife, Francesca Mills, were in New Delhi and so I went over to New Delhi and Francesca briefed me on what she thought the duties of a DCM wife were, which basically boiled down to the "esprit de corps" and the kimochi (atmosphere) of the government family, of what was then the Embassy. I deeply appreciated that, and tried very hard to adhere to it because she really was a "simpatico" person and I appreciated it. Those were, I suppose, the two things, and the other, just sort of common sense, I hope.

Q: A great deal of that, obviously, in so many directions that I hesitate even to begin with any. Instead I want to ask you about Prague, Oklahoma where you were born.

What was life like in Prague, Oklahoma at the time you were living there? What led you to Colorado College where you and John Emerson met, and then to New York? In other words the beginning for you.

EMMERSON: Well, I was born in what they called "Preygue" with a flat accent in the middle and we did not live there very long. My father was in the wholesale oil and gasoline business and he would establish a new unit in a growing town and work up a business and when it was a going concern we would move on to another town, so I did have a somewhat nomadic childhood.

From there we moved to various places in Oklahoma and then later we lived in Albuquerque, New Mexico, where I had my last years of high school and my first year of university. My brother had gone to Colorado College and we had spent summers in Colorado -- yes we lived in Lamar, Colorado -- that was one of the places that we lived before high school. I went to Colorado College the second, third, and fourth years. I went

to New York from there after having earned a little more money table waiting at Bishops Lodge in Santa Fe, New Mexico, and went to Columbia University.

Q: And your major there was?

EMMERSON: I went back having earned a B.A. in Sociology. I registered in Sociology and took courses and unfortunately the instruction I found was not so good as it had been as an undergraduate, so part of my hard-earned money for the first semester went down the drain and I stayed out of school for a bit and worked and then I transferred to Mathematics and I finally got my Master's degree in Mathematics.

Q: Did you ever teach, did you have any professional use of that degree or of any of your academic training?

EMMERSON: Well, I had a job lined up later, in 1934 to be exact, and I was going to teach in Horace Mann High School, or grade school it was, and I was going to sign a contract. My husband at that point was in Chicago and we were sweethearts and I gave them bit of information to him and he immediately said, "I think now is the time for us to get married and please don't sign that contract." And I didn't. And that is as near as I ever came

Q: I notice in the information you have supplied us with that you were married in Aurora, Illinois. How did that come about, in 1934 I think? In fact, right then, probably as a result of that contract!

EMMERSON: My husband at that point and Bob Strumpen-Darrie [a classmate of John Emmerson at Georgetown University's School of Foreign service, whose father was then President of the Berlitz School of Languages of America], the two of them, were running the Berlitz School branch in Chicago and when I appeared on the scene it seemed the logical place to get married at his sister and husband's home west of Chicago in Aurora, Illinois and my parents came from Oklahoma and Bob, who was head of Berlitz, was our best man and my sister - bridesmaid - came from Pittsburgh where she was in music school and we got married!

Q: Shortly thereafter then, John Emmerson became a Foreign Service Officer...

EMMERSON: Not so shortly. Yes, it was, about a year.

Q: How did you feel in anticipation about the Foreign Service and your possible participation in it? With anticipation? With some trepidation? Did you have any knowledge of what life in the Foreign Service would be like either for John Emmerson or for you? Were you given, for example, any training, indoctrination, to help you?

EMMERSON: It won't take long to answer that. I knew nothing about the Foreign Service, I had no idea what it was like. I had complete ignorance. I only knew that if that

was what my husband would like to do, that I would like to do it too. I was a little taken aback when I did realize that -- this was when we were assigned to Tokyo -- it would take two weeks by boat from Japan to California and if anything happened to my husband or to the family in the States, that anybody who came to us or we went to the States, it would be two weeks, and that was hard. That was definite knowledge. Otherwise I didn't know anything. Nothing.

Q: So you went to Japan. The details of your trip there, or arrival there, of course are in the book that is well known, written by John Emmerston. [The Japanese Thread. New York, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1978] But I would like you, if you can, to put yourself back in that early pre-World War II period, 1936 to 1939. What do you remember most vividly about impressions that you had of Japan which obviously have continued to influence your life? Can you recreate, in a sense, the experience of being in Japan at that period? What it was like to live there, how you found a house, where you got your food, where you were able to travel, what impressions you retain of those early years?

EMMERSON: That's very difficult for me, largely because I think I live in the future pretty much, even now, and I really don't remember too much about my impression of the country and I was eminently practical, I think. Our first house was in Koishikawa-ku which no longer exists. (Kanda-ku was part of it.) It has been split up into other kus. We rented a house. I think my husband must have found it through contacts in the Embassy, but I don't remember for sure. It belonged to a couple named Hagi-wara. He was with the Japanese Foreign Office, assigned to Paris, and we sublet it while they were away.

Q: Your husband says that Mrs. Vaccari [Mrs. Elisa Vaccari, Japanese wife of a distinguished Italian linguist, whose Japanese-English dictionaries, grammars, and texts are still used] helped you find the house.

EMMERSON: Oh well, then she did. You see, now that my husband's gone my memory is gone with him because I used to ask him so many questions and I had forgotten that. Mrs. Vaccari was my Japanese teacher.

Q: And this leads me to another question: Did you have the same Japanese language training as your husband did or was it entirely separate? I have heard many people talk about the excellence of your Japanese, so obviously you had some extended training of your own. Was it with your husband or quite separate from his?

EMMERSON: Well first of all I think I should take exception with the fact that I speak Japanese well. My Japanese is very old fashioned. It is infinitely more polite than the current Japanese spoken. And it is full of children's terms because I learned it when the children were born there.

My husband studied in a very intensive course. It was very intensive. Of course it was reading, writing, and straight across the board. I was not asked to, nor did I particularly

want to share his classes -- his lessons. I think I would not have been allowed to if I'd asked, but I wouldn't have done it anyhow because it was a full-time job and he and the other officers went lickety split, they went so fast! And they learned so many characters each day, extra, extra, extra, and I wasn't willing to accept that discipline and so my Japanese was picked up through Mrs. Vaccari in the beginning, of course. We were in Tokyo after arrival until spring. We arrived in January and we were there until spring. During that period I studied with Mrs. Vaccari, but after that it was going into the marketplace and saying in Japanese, "What's the name of this?" and one learned right away.

We both could count to ten when we arrived in Japan, that much we could do, not both syllabaries but one. From there it was colloquial. I am not eye-minded, I'm ear-minded and so it sunk in because of what I heard.

Q: I had very much the same experience, but did you do any writing at all, any calligraphy?

EMMERSON: I did not. I did tea ceremony in Kyoto when we were there. I think that must be it. I can't remember anything else. I did not do the calligraphy, I did not do the sumi-e painting. I always felt that these were the two things at which mechanically I am not adept -- couldn't adapt to very easily.

Q: Ah, but I have to take exception then to something I think is a speciality of yours. Your mechanical ability apparently is legendary.

EMMERSON: Well, I understand what you are saying. Perhaps in all honesty I should say, my sense of the artistic would inhibit me from having any personal judgement on how to approach the arts -- as a child, it seemed to me that all four-legged creatures I would draw would all look like pigs or cows, and you couldn't tell the difference. I don't have an artistic sense to the extent that my husband did.

Q: But in other ways your manual dexterity is not in any way lacking, as I understand it.

EMMERSON: No, I enjoy it.

Q: It is, as I think it must be, accurate to say that you have done a good deal of plumbing, electrical work, that you are not unacquainted with hammer and nails?

EMMERSON: That goes back to our assignment in Moscow. We were in Washington, DC previous to going to Moscow, and a friend of mine, a wife of a Foreign Service Officer. They were assigned overseas as were we, and she said she was going to the "Y" and taking a course in Cordon Bleu cooking, and so I thought, the "Y", aha, why not. I went down and sure enough they gave courses in electricity and plumbing. And so I took my courses in electricity and plumbing before going to Moscow and it stood me in good stead, because we lived in a house not very adequate in many ways and one of them was

that the electricity was on a fluctuating current and the electrical things, such as heaters, burned up constantly and I was able to fix them. The dacha was pretty primitive. [See Dorothy Emmerson's "Embassy Wife in Moscow", Foreign Service Journal, June 1952, copy of which is filed with this transcript.]

Q: How did it come about, to speak a bit more about your life in Moscow, that you did not live in the same complex that other Embassy families did? Of course I know that there were very few at the time. Was that largely because by that time you had had two children, and needed a larger accommodation then was possible?

EMMERSON: That may have been part of it. The Durbrows had, I think at that time just one child and they lived in the apartment. That may have been part of it. Of course it was very difficult for the American Embassy to find beds for their personnel to sleep in, literally. That's the reason the wives had to work there. They had to fill positions in the Embassy and I suppose that the two extra children needed space, and that's why they rented the dacha for us. Everybody else lived in the apartments. The dacha was a considerable distance away so we had to have a car. I don't remember exactly - it must have been twenty minutes, thirty minutes.

Q: In what kind of a setting was it? Could one call it suburban, or was it still within the city proper?

EMMERSON: Buildings were built up not too far beyond where we were, but somewhat beyond us. Now, of course it is much beyond that, but I guess you'd call it suburban if my knowledge of suburban is what your definition is.

Q: In other words, it was not in the country, neither was it in the city proper.

EMMERSON: It was not in the country but we had quite a little bit of land, certainly compared to the Russians. We had an area where there were some bushes and we tried to grow vegetables in the garden. It wasn't large. My knowledge of space is not so good, but it was adequate for the kids to play and have games in.

Q: And they went to school nearby or in Moscow near the Embassy?

EMMERSON: Oh no, they walked to school. Don went in one direction to his school, a boys school, Dotty went to a school in the opposite direction and the only reason I am led to believe it was for girls is that I don't remember her ever having any talk about any boys. I think it must have been boys and girls separate, Kenneth would know.

Q: They both of course learned Russian, one might say, with the ease of children. Your husband, I believe also studied it assiduously. What about your Russian?

EMMERSON: First of all I should say that I take exception to the concept that children pick up languages quickly. I feel deeply that no child should be placed in a foreign

language school without knowledge of that language to some extent.

I taught them at home for one year, the Winnetka Method, in English. In all honesty I'll have to say that the children did not learn very much. But they studied Russian with private teachers at home and then they had learned enough that with playing in the warm weather with the children in the neighborhood, they had learned enough Russian to cope with school and they went to school only one year in Russian schools. Actually the only American children in the Soviet Union at that time who were going to Russian schools.

Q: I thought that must have been a unique experience. Did you as well have any associations of a neighborhood kind, such as they had with their schoolmates?

EMMERSON: Absolutely not.

Q: Do you think that this was by design, choice on the part of your Russian neighbors, or was it something they were told to avoid? In other words, was this by official decree, if I can put it that way, an isolation of you as opposed to your children?

EMMERSON: May I just tell you a story again about the children. Dotty came home one day. I came back from the office and she said, "You know, Lushka, who lives across the street, had been told by the police that she may not come into the garden any more and play with me." And I said to her, "You know what that means." and she said, "Yes." Time went by and one day when I got home, Lushka was in the garden playing with Dotty and I went out, frantic, and Dotty said, "Don't worry, Mother, one of the other girls wanted me to be her best friend, and so they made up that story and there isn't a word of truth in it." So does that answer your question?

Q: Yes, I think it does to some extent, but of course I realize that your life was very occupied during the time you were in Moscow, most especially because you, perforce, were holding a job that was essential for the Embassy. There was a social life as well. There wasn't much time, in other words, for neighborliness even had it been possible.

EMMERSON: But time had nothing to do with it. We literally could not associate with Russians. It was dangerous for them. One of my most lasting recollections of Moscow was the telephone operator to whom I spoke when I got to the Embassy to work, who came back to say goodbye. We and the wives in the Embassy had given her a few things, maybe a waist that didn't fit us or something. We had given her a little bit, not an awful lot of stuff, and she had accepted it. She was investigated by the police. She was, we heard later, sent, I think not to Siberia, although she was sent into isolation. She could no longer live in Moscow, and when she came to say goodbye to me, my heart broke. I looked out the window and there were two policemen at the exit of the Embassy, and as they left each took an arm and they marched her down the street. And that did happen, and that would happen if we stepped over the boundary line.

Q: That meant that during the two years and some that you were in Moscow that the

diplomatic community as a whole, not only Americans, but the entire diplomatic community, worked at least in social isolation from the Russians who surrounded you in such countless numbers.

EMMERSON: It was necessary. I guess Moscow was so hard for me because I was scared, I was frightened. Members of the British Embassy had been picked up by the police. One I remember particularly -- he was taken away, I think it was to Lyublyanka, I'm not sure. He was held overnight. My husband was very, very considerate of me. If he was delayed or if we did not get together at the appointed time, he would manage to let me know. And I was afraid for the children that they would be persecuted. They were not. I was afraid that my husband would be detained. I was scared. My life was full of fear and we could not know any Russians. It would be very bad for them if we tried to intrude. And we didn't.

Q: This must have made the diplomatic community turn in upon itself in a way perhaps not comparable with other posts where you have served.

EMMERSON: Absolutely, absolutely. For example I mentioned Madame Pandit. She is a very famous lady and was then, and we got to know her really quite well. We got to know the diplomatic community because actually the socializing was part of what we thought would be therapy to keep our chins up and take it. We got together often. As a result of getting together so often I realized if I went out to lunch and I had a cocktail or wine, as the case might be, or if I didn't drink any liquor or alcohol, if I just ate lunch, that that afternoon maybe it could be four o'clock before I could wake up and be bright enough to do any work. And that's when I stopped eating lunch, and to this day I don't eat lunch unless it is necessary. So it was very, very heavy, the social life.

Q: What was the kind of work, the nature of the work that you did in Moscow? I know it had something to do with the Commissary in Moscow.

EMMERSON: Yes, I inventoried the stuff as it came in and proportioned it to our people, although I don't remember having said to anybody, "You can't have this because Mrs. X wants it." I think it must have been a very democratic distribution pattern. I kept the books, how much was coming in and how much was going out. There wasn't much coming in most of the time because the Russians would hold it up a lot. A lot of the stuff that came in arrived in gallon tins. I remembered the children liked peanut butter and it stunned me to buy a gallon of peanut butter but I did -- and got rid of it. Actually, there wasn't an awful lot available through the Commissary often. We'd get a shipment in and then it would go quickly. What we would have left would be not very much and not attractive to people.

Q: When the supplies in the Commissary were not very plentiful, was it possible to buy anything of consequence in the Russian market, and how did you manage for food, in any case, both in a general way and in particular as far as your family was concerned?

EMMERSON: Well, there were of course possibilities to buy food. Vegetables were -- let me think back -- carrots or onions were available the year around. Almost everything else was seasonal. There were cucumbers I remember, because that's what Dotty used to take in her lunch to school. The other vegetables were seasonal, and as I said, our gardener and chauffeur, and ourselves to some extent, did grow some vegetables in a small plot of land that we had on the premises. So vegetables were not too difficult to come by except the fact that in the winter time you didn't have the seasonal vegetables unless they came through the Commissary in tins. In those days we didn't have anything frozen in the Commissary.

As far as meat was concerned, I recall that it was rationed and I recall once that there were three couples of us. I don't remember whether we were all Embassy or not, but we all had ration books and we decided that if we put our coupons together we could buy a leg of lamb. And so we tried very, very hard to get a whole leg of lamb, but they were very persnickety about this and they insisted in cutting it into three pieces for three people with coupons. So when we got home we sewed it together again and then we had our leg of lamb. The reason I can remember it was rationed is because of that incident.

Q: I don't want to spend too much time on your Moscow experience. I know that it was a very difficult one for you, but there are certain things I would like to have you talk about. How large was the American community as a whole in Moscow at that time, as you recollect, and of whom did it consist? Were there any business people, for example?

EMMERSON: There were a few fur buyers. There were some correspondents. Walter and Betsy Cronkite were there at that time, I guess as CBS Junior Correspondent. It had to do with whoever there was in the Press Corps and a few fur buyers. That was the American community aside from the Embassy.

As to the size of the Embassy, I don't really remember. It was not very large, but on the other hand large against what? And I think our Mission was probably as large if not even maybe a little larger than some of the other nations. But I don't remember.

Q: What was your contact with the Ambassador and his wife at that time?

EMMERSON: I must say now that we had two Ambassadors. First of all we had Bedell Smith [General Walter Bedell Smith, ambassador to the USSR, 1946-48] and then we had Admiral Kirk [Admiral Alan G. Kirk, Ambassador to the USSR, 1949-51]. People who know Bedell Smith know that he was an Army man and he was a disciplinarian and my personal contact with him was very sketchy. Spaso House, the residence, would show movies, Sunday or Saturday nights. From time to time they would get in American movies, and again, it must have been a small community because the Ballroom which was not enormous, could seat us all. So it couldn't have been a very large Mission, and the Ambassador, Bedell Smith, would be there, as I remember it, although I don't specifically remember seeing him there. The only contact I do remember definitely will take a little time. Is that all right?

Q: Yes, please.

EMMERSON: My husband in 1948, the year before we left, was assigned to the UN in Paris -- temporary duty -- no, it was 1947. In the fall he went to Paris to fulfill this assignment. I was left at the dacha with the two children. Don got scarlet fever. We had an Embassy doctor. The Embassy doctor came out and diagnosed it as scarlet fever. He told me that the Russians by law, by international agreement could come and get Don and take him to a communicable disease hospital. The doctor said that he would always leave me his phone number and where he could be reached. As a matter of fact, he had been due for a vacation about then. He postponed his vacation. He was available to me at any time of the day or night.

He said he would come immediately, hopefully before they took Don away, and try to follow them and find out where they would take Don. And the most I could know would be where he was. So I went through that period and it was very difficult. I took care of Don myself, sterilizing as the doctor had shown me.

Don was not taken away to the hospital and when all this was done there was a plane going out, don't ask me exactly, it seems to me it was actually the Ambassador's plane, going to Berlin, and it was arranged that I should get transportation from there to spend, before Christmas, about ten days in Paris with my husband. Before I left, I saw Ambassador Bedell Smith and I was very touched. He put his arm around my shoulders and said, "We all know what you've been through." It must have been at the Sunday night movies that that happened, and that quite honestly is my only memory of him. My husband, of course, mentions him in his book.

When the Kirks came -- they were there a shorter period of time -- they accepted the American Embassy family as their own. They came soon after arrival to our dacha to see the conditions under which we lived. They were in every way very simpatico and I visited Mrs. Kirk at her apartment in New York a few times. I was able to see her there later on after Admiral Kirk passed away.

Q: Have you read her book? [Lydia Kirk, Postmarked Moscow. Published for the Peoples Book Club (Chicago, Ill. and Toronto, Canada), Charles Scribner Sons, 1952]

EMMERSON: I do not have a copy. I have to admit that I have read it sketchily and it doesn't mean so much -- I'm not sure, maybe I did read it -- but I'm the kind of person who can read a mystery story and if I wait two or three years, I can read the same story and it is all new to me again. (laughter)

Q: She mentions in that book Brewster and Ellen Morris who were of course well known to you and John Emmerson, and, if I am not mistaken, on that trip to Paris they took care or at least were in charge of the children whom you left behind in Russia.

EMMERSON: They moved into the dacha and they took care of the children. The only thing I did for the children before I left was to get passports for them. They had been on my passport, so we got passports for the children in case they had to get out quickly, and they could go without our having been there. And to this day I feel guilty when I wear a pair of earrings which I bought for Ellen Morris -- I bought some other things -- and I loved them so much that I never gave them to her. To this day those earrings mean Ellen, who has now passed away.

Q: Yes, I am aware of that.

That experience of isolation wanders as a thread through the experiences, of course, of almost everybody who has ever served behind the Iron Curtain. Not necessarily only in Moscow, but in other countries as well. Certainly the experience of isolation in a way is the experience of the Foreign Service, unless one exerts the effort to take oneself out of isolation. By that I mean one must really, it seems to me, make a considerable effort to achieve meaningful contact with people of another country, especially of another culture. And you have experienced that repeatedly in the course of your career. That is to say, not only the physical isolation in Moscow, but differences of rather an extreme nature on the basis of your own experience, in Pakistan, in Africa, in the Middle East. How have you managed to take advantage of what each of those experiences had to offer? Did you approach the country where you were with knowledge of it before hand? Pakistan, for example, before you went there were you a graduate of the Wives Course or some instruction that the Department might have offered to wives by that time?

EMMERSON: That was what I was about to say. We had the Post Report and the Post Report was our Bible before we got there. We were very fortunate. Pakistan was the only post, as I remember it, in which, when we arrived we had no friend or contact. We didn't know anybody in Pakistan. I remember we were met at the airport, taken to the hotel and dropped, and I was a little bit unhappy about it. It was a very difficult night. I felt abandoned. The children, my husband and I stayed at the Metropole Hotel where we all got sick. There was an orchestra playing -- it was a miserable night and I found out the next day that the reason no one had stuck around to say hello or be helpful was that there was an enormous party being given by a very important Pakistani to which they all had been invited. Of course it was protocol, and it was necessary and it was advisable that they go. But nobody had told us that. Otherwise, we were always very fortunate that there were people at the post who met us. Friends from before -- I think always we had friends at every post, even in Nigeria there were friends. I can't remember who.

Q: Do you remember having any knowledge of instruction from the Department? I believe you yourself were in Washington only at very brief intervals during the course of your entire career.

EMMERSON: I worked it out some place. We were there from after the war ended until '47, for a year or so. That's when we bought our house on Jenifer Street. Then we were there from Moscow '49 to Karachi '52. Then the last time, when my husband was retired,

we had been out fourteen and a half years, with home leaves of course.

Q: Which brings me to yet another question which I have about your own experience and that of the children. When you left Tokyo the first time, war was already on the horizon and as you said your husband left at almost the last moment it would have been possible for him to leave, but then he was in China, of course, for a long time, during that long war period. Where were you and the children?

EMMERSON: I was evacuated a year before Pearl Harbor and we came back to the States to my mother and my father. They were in Colorado at that time, in Las Animas, Colorado, and I stayed with them for about a month. Then I rented an apartment in the same town and the children and I lived there until my husband came back just before Pearl Harbor.

Q: But then you went to Peru.

EMMERSON: And then we went to Peru, and so I stayed with my parents during that period, I must have, until I moved into my own apartment, and then it was a later separation that I stayed in Colorado Springs.

Q: But there again, speaking of Peru, another continent, another culture, another language, for a brief period of time, comparatively speaking, and under rather extraordinary war time experiences with rather extraordinary responsibilities which your husband had to discharge. These changes require, it seems to me, a great deal of equanimity on your part. Did you look forward to going to Peru, for example, or did you think better that, then something else?

EMMERSON: It was part of the job! I think I probably never got beyond that. Work had to be done, getting ready to go. We had then rented a house which we stayed in a month or less out in Arlington [Virginia] because we were sent so quickly to Peru, and you get very busy, and I don't remember resenting it. It was part of the job. You cope with it the best you can. The more you do it the better you learn gimmicks.

Q: Some of those gimmicks, of course, you mentioned on the tape. Perhaps there are others that occur to you. Did you, for example, find books a diversion, are you a person who takes refuge in reading or are there

EMMERSON: I'm sorry to say that I have no hobbies, I have no recreational likes, I seem to be missing that. I enjoy Yoga but that's much later in life. I took up Yoga when we were in the Embassy in Tokyo -- the last Post. I suppose that if there is any recreation I had it's domesticity. Now that I do all my own work I really enjoy keeping the house in order. I hate cooking. I found out at one point in my Foreign Service career that I didn't have to know how to cook in order to teach a cook. That was a great relief for me. To this day I am not a good cook. Keeping an orderly household seems like a pretty feeble way to say that's my hobby. I can't think, by any stretch of the imagination, that I have a hobby. I

read but I don't read an awful lot. As a matter of fact, as compared with most people, I think I read very little. I do try to keep up with the news and that kind of thing. I can think of nothing.

Q: At the same time, in the speech you gave in Tokyo, you suggested that having a hobby for a Foreign Service wife is a very useful thing in one way, in a very practical way, for diversion of course, but also as a device for meeting people of the country to which one might be assigned. Had you no hobbies then, how did you manage? What devices did you yourself use to meet women particularly, of the country to which you were assigned? Did you rely perhaps a great deal on your husband's contacts' wives or were there other means by which you came to know women of whatever country you were assigned to?

EMMERSON: May I first of all say that I don't always practice what I preach. (laughter) For example, in tropical areas like Lagos, Nigeria; like Karachi, I think the office people do take siesta time. I think that the siesta, a period of rest during the day, is wise. I was never able to do it. If I go to sleep in the daytime I don't want to wake up until the next morning. And it is as simple as that. That doesn't inhibit me from recommending it any more than it inhibits me from recommending people to have a hobby, because I think, of the mutual friend we have who does Kiri-e. I think her hobby (if you can call it that, she's professional now) has brought her great satisfaction, and all I can say is "Each to his own." As far as meeting the people of the country, the women of the country, it never seemed to be so difficult to meet people of the country in most of the posts we were assigned to except Paris. I studied French so often and so much but it's pretty bad so the language was a ...

Q: A deterrent.

EMMERSON: A deterrent. Thank you very much. That's exactly what it was, and the people who spoke English were limited to a certain extent. We were surrounded constantly at official parties by -- I don't know where they came from -- the expression was "They came out of the woodwork," but there were many people in France at that time it seemed to me who congregated at these huge receptions. They were obviously French of some social standing, but I never got to know any of them. The only person that I really wanted to know badly was the wife of a French newspaper correspondent with three children, no help, and she quite literally didn't have time to know me, and I could see that. They had us for dinner just once, as I remember. The only women I got to know in Paris was a single women who was head of personnel for Air Liquide and this was wonderful. We never became close friends but she was a help. Otherwise, I don't think I had too much difficulty. Maybe it was because of the children. But I didn't have too much difficulty meeting women of the Post. I knew some better in some countries. I can't remember knowing a single Peruvian women. That was it. I can't remember. In Beirut I knew some Lebanese women, not so many, but some. I was a little resentful of Beirut and the women there. They turned to France for their culture. (I didn't mind Pakistan turning to the British for their culture.) I don't know why I resented it, but I can remember that I did. The Intelligentsia in Beirut were French inclined, as were the Spanish people in Peru.

And that again I resented. Because I thought, we're next door neighbors, but they felt much more akin, of course -- their language -- obviously. I don't know why I should have resented it and I didn't badly. It is only when I dig hard in my memory that I can produce anything to answer your question.

Q: Well, a very effective answer. Of course this leads me again back to your comment on the tape and the difference between acquaintanceship and friendship. It has seemed to me that from the experience of my own and that of other persons to whom I have talked in the course of this project in which we are engaged, that the treasure, that the friendship of the single person is large in the life of Foreign Service wives.

EMMERSON: Absolutely, absolutely, and my two closest friends, I treasure them -- it isn't that I don't have other friends -- but it is almost like family, that even though we don't correspond much, particularly in one case, I know that she's there and she knows I'm here and that if we get together again we can pretty well pick up where we left off. Whereas in the majority of cases, we still... For example, take Nigeria. There's one couple there with whom we still exchange Christmas letters. That's the extent of it. But I'm afraid that if we met, time has passed. There wouldn't be that much in common, but then that is true of life. My childhood friends, their interests are now different from mine and you grow away from these people when you don't actually communicate and be a real friend, in my estimation. You still are friends and understand each other whether you communicate much or not, and that's very rare.

Q: Indeed, it is rare and of course it depends in very considerable measure, it seems to me, on shared experiences. Possibly even more on shared difficult experiences. But certainly both happy and strenuous ones.

EMMERSON: I agree with you completely. Under difficult circumstances -- the "esprit de corps" was extraordinarily good, and we still keep in touch with the people who went through the same bitter experiences we did. A hardship post, of which we had quite a few (Paris was the first post where we didn't have to boil the water, for example), a hardship post brings you closer together. I remember a secretary in the Embassy in Paris who had been at a small hardship post. She was not happy in Paris and she pleaded with the Department to send her to a smaller post which was a hardship post because she knew people -- she was happier there. A hardship post brings you together. Maybe the roof didn't always leak in our bedroom in Moscow, but people sympathized with us when they knew it did. There was a lot of "esprit de corps" developed under hardship circumstances. What to most people would be hardships, but as you know, you get accustomed to them and it doesn't take a lot out of you. It didn't me, I don't think, except for Moscow.

Q: Do you think climate makes a great deal of difference?

EMMERSON: I would think climate is very, very low on the pole. I think climate actually is almost non-existent in terms of importance for a post. I can remember in Lagos. We had cook trouble there which was rather bad. I was in the kitchen making, as I

remember, an angel food cake and I had the bowl on the table in front of me and I had a spoon, and as I leaned over, the perspiration was dropping off the end of my nose, and I had to be careful not to get it in the cake, and I can remember thinking, "I should be utterly miserable, and I'm not, I'm not at all miserable". I just cite that as an example. I just don't think climate is important. Now mind you, if we hadn't been able to keep ourselves relatively warm in Moscow in the winter, I would have been very unhappy if we had had to put up with no heat in the winter; we did a few times, but not often in the winter. But given adequate heating facilities for the winter, I think I can take almost anything that would come up in the way of heat, either summer or year around.

Q: You spoke a few minutes ago about a secretary, and that reminded me that I wanted to ask you about the kind of problems, if there were such, that you encountered as the wife of the deputy chief of mission or another perhaps higher ranking position of that kind, when you had to be responsible, as you put it, for the "esprit" of the entire Embassy community. As your own experience progressed, the size of American Embassies overseas grew larger, and there were many people at a given post, using my own experience as a guide, who had, shall we say, at best, a peripheral relationship with the business of the Embassy in its representational aspect. Did you find that people who occupied those kinds of jobs found their own outlets, their own means of enjoyment of the post, or were they less able to appreciate what a country had to offer?

EMMERSON: To answer your last question first, I think they did in general -- after all they were intelligent people, and they had the same -- let's call it intellectual curiosity about the country -- as the rest of the people did. Not one hundred percent of them had intellectual curiosity about the country, and the same would be true of the secretaries. Stella Nicholson was my husband's secretary in Beirut. She continued with us from Beirut to Paris, to Lagos, Nigeria, to Rhodesia, to Tokyo.

Stella and I have become extremely close. She visited me not too long ago and we regaled each other with the boat trip from Lagos to Johannesburg when we went down together. Whenever my husband had a stag dinner in the Foreign Service, I'd ask Stella to come out and we'd talk girl talk together, and I think she enjoyed me and I know I enjoyed her. She would tell me about what went on with the secretarial staff and sometimes she'd give me leads to something that could be done to ease a situation, and something that maybe needed attention from the section in which the person worked. I kept in touch with that group largely, actually, through Stella. It wasn't that she came often -- but now and then. And I would keep my antenna up to try to be helpful. Now, what was the end of your question?

Q: I wondered whether of the staff support group there was, as I found it in my own experience, a sense of -- I won't call it isolation from the business of the Embassy -- but certainly a feeling that I sensed in later years, perhaps toward the end of your period of service, where there was a feeling among the support people that their activities were quite separate from those of the Embassy and did not really relate to the business of the Embassy except in so far as their job made it so. The Embassy, for example, in Tokyo was

a very large one, perhaps not larger than the one you speak of or spoke to, in any case there were a good many people there who never left the compound, who never made any attempt to learn, except the most minimal amount of language, who never exhibited any particular interest in things Japanese. I wondered if you had found that to be the case.

EMMERSON: I didn't police that section of activity perhaps as well as I should have. I did try very hard to keep track of -- I had "bios" of all the wives and I knew their backgrounds in general, and I did try to do what I could for their period of adjustment, although I will take time out to tell you one very interesting story.

It was not State Department, it seems to me that this couple -- he represented perhaps Commerce Department, I don't remember. He represented another section of the American Government. They lived on the outskirts of Tokyo, some distance out. I tried to approach her innumerable times. They had Japanese community housing. They were the only foreigners, as far as I could figure out, who lived in that area, and I tried to get in touch with her a number of times. I remember even saying to Mrs. Reischauer, "I don't know, I guess I'll just give up on Mrs. X because I just can't seem to arrange anything to meet her and talk." They were later, while we were still there, transferred. We saw in the newspaper, that Mrs. X was being decorated by the Japanese Government. She had integrated herself into the community. She had organized clubs, cooking classes. I never did find out the extent of her activities. But just before they left she received a decoration from the Japanese Government at the American Embassy residence. So it was possible, of course, to get along without my interfering.

On the opposite side of the picture is Jane Withers. Dudley and Jane Withers were in Karachi and they were childless and one of my big projects in Karachi was getting lists for newcomers -- of hospital information, churches, shopping, lists of places to order stuff from, all these things in mimeographed form for the newcomers, and Jane said, "Well, okay, I guess it's all right if that is what you want done and you think ought to be done, but you are taking a lot of the joy of experiencing something and finding out for yourself." She had a point.

I did try very hard once but was completely floored -- in Tokyo this was -- I asked a woman who came from a particular state if she would be control officer for one of the Congressional wives coming through from that state. And she said, "I will not, I am busy." So I said, "Okay, I just thought you came from the same state and I just asked," and she said, "I've been here quite a while now, and my interest is archeology and you have not introduced me to a single archeological person since I arrived." And I said, "I'm very sorry, I guess I didn't realize that, and besides I'm not sure I would have known how to go about doing it, and maybe that's something you are just going to have to do on your own." It was to that extent I think that I got through to her that official business was part of my job which I did try to do. Does that help?

Q: That is very illuminating, as everything you have said is illuminating.

One of the threads that we have been following, of course, has been your experience in a variety of cultures and countries in helping Ambassadors' wives. You knew a great many. You knew them well.

EMMERSON: Not really at first. For example, when we went to Tokyo it was a small Embassy: This was in the middle thirties. My husband has a picture in his book of the entire personnel, official men only, although I think the secretaries were present, and it was just not very many people. We were Unclassified C. We were introduced a little bit to the Ambassador and his wife. My husband, of course, was in a position in posts where he met the Ambassador, but the Ambassador's wife -- I did not know Mrs. Grew [Wife of Honorable Joseph G. Grew, U.S. Ambassador to Japan, 1932-41] well. I met her but I did not know her. As a personality she doesn't come through to me. Then after Mrs. Grew in Tokyo came Mrs. Norweb [Wife of Honorable R. Henry Norweb, U.S. Ambassador to Peru, 1940-43] in Peru. She was very protocol conscious and demanded a lot. I was not always very pleased. As a matter of fact I, for the most part, was displeased with the instructions I got from her. I didn't meet her often. For example when we first arrived, of course you call on people, you meet them. I'm sure I met her. I don't remember the incident or the occasion, but I'm sure I met her upon arrival. You leave cards, you don't always get received. But I'm sure she did say hello to me when I arrived and received me. "What are you going to do?" I suppose she said, and I suppose I must have said, "I will take care of the children." But -- I will never forget -- she said, "You may not take care of your own children. You will move up-country." Lima is half fog six months of the year and if you go up -- I think the place is called Isleta, a place towards the mountains where the sun shines every day of the year. And she said, "You will move up there if you want to take care of your children, but if you stay in Lima you will not take care of them because the social life will be extraordinarily heavy." I took this to heart. We hired a person, a maid I guess it was, to take care of the children and then one day they came in and Dotty said, "Mother, the most wonderful thing happened today while we were out." And I said, "What happened?" She said, "You know, we were in the street and a car came along and, Mamma, he stopped just this much before he hit Don. Isn't that wonderful? He didn't hit Don and he stopped."

I said, "Where were the maids?" "Oh, they all get together down in the park." And so I never told the ambassador's wife. I just promptly myself tried as much as I possibly could to take care of the children and this, of course, took priority. Definitely. That is my recollection in connection with the ambassador's wife in Peru, and then after that, of course there was Moscow which I think I have pretty well covered.

After that there was Karachi where Ambassador and Mrs. Hildreth [Honorable Horace A. Hildreth, U.S. Ambassador to Pakistan, 1953-57] -- this was again not a career Ambassador but there never were two people who tried harder to do a good job of representing our country and always gracious. I, by then, was beginning to be perhaps a little more aggressive and I would say that I got along extraordinarily well with her, and the Ambassador accepted much knowledge from my husband.

Then we moved to Beirut where Raymond Hare [Honorable Raymond A. Hare, U.S. Ambassador to Lebanon, 1953-58] (was Ambassador). I remember her well, anyhow they were very nice. I don't remember having had too much to do with her, except in the way of support, of course. You arrive early, you support them, you get guest lists, you memorize the guest lists, you make introductions, all of that goes without saying. That's not necessarily a relationship to the ambassador's wife.

After that was Paris, a very big post and Amory Houghton [U.S. Ambassador to France, 1957-61]; again not a career ambassador but an extraordinarily capable man. She, I remember most for her very efficient way of handling her entertainment, and the demands that were made on me were just routine, as far as I can remember.

Then my husband had his own post in Lagos, and Salisbury, and then there was Mrs. Reischauer and I couldn't say enough for Mrs. Reischauer. She was unique with her knowledge of Japan and her energy which she poured into the job, and the demands she made on me were certainly infinitesimal compared to the demands she made on herself. Does that pretty well cover it?

Q: Yes, it does and it interests me because among those of that list, there is virtually no career Ambassador until (until John Emmerson had his own posts).

EMMERSON: Beirut would have been a career Ambassador.

Q: Yes, but that is the only one out of all of that long list. And Grew was career.

EMMERSON: I never thought of that. Ambassador Grew was of course career, but we were out of Tokyo most of the time those first two years, and then after that, well, you know, temporarily in Formosa, in Osaka, where we wouldn't have the contacts.

Q: That's very interesting, and again rather unusual in the experience of ...

EMMERSON: I suppose it is. Well, we were very fortunate. The Houghtons, for example, became close friends afterwards, definitely afterwards. And they weren't that close, except when Dotty was performing in a show on the road in Corning, New York. Mrs. Houghton had Dotty, instead of staying with the rest of the cast at the hotel, had Dotty stay with them up on the knoll, and so it's been a nice friendly, wonderful relationship. And I still correspond with the Ambassador to Pakistan and his wife, in Maine. They are just sweet people.

Q: Speaking of Amory Houghton, wealthy man that he was, makes me think of yet another subject that we haven't talked about at all.

EMMERSON: May I tell you something in between?

Q: Yes.

EMMERSON: Behind you you will notice two Steuben pieces. Those are gifts from Amory Houghton when we were in Tokyo and he visited us. And I treasure them. The frog, he said, is because we served in France together and of course the other one, the eagle in flight, is our American embassy emblem. And I love them.

Q: Amory Houghton of course, a vastly wealthy man, whose need for representational allowance, shall we say, was minimal.

EMMERSON: Nil.

Q: How did you and John Emmerson manage your lives, both as far as representation and your normal Embassy expenses were concerned, but also the education of your children? How did you do it? Did you find salaries adequate?

EMMERSON: First of all, let's take Moscow. My husband's income as a foreign service officer seemed to pretty well cover our expenses, except in Moscow. Of course in Moscow I had to work. It was the only post in the world where a wife had to work, at that time, and you were told that if you got pregnant you left. If you were pregnant you could not go, and you had to work in the Embassy, and I had an income. I do not remember how much it was. It took all of my husband's income plus mine to meet expenses there, partly because of the living situation. We had to live outside of the Embassy apartments. We did have a Studebaker car, and later borrowed a Jeep from somebody in the winter, because the Studebaker couldn't get over the rugged roads, and we had to have a chauffeur. There was no question. We were not allowed drivers licenses because the Russians wouldn't let us drive, so there was no question. So we had the expense of having to have a chauffeur, so it wouldn't have covered expenses without my income.

As far as representation was concerned, well, it's kind of *comme ci, comme ça*. Sometimes one would resent not getting more help from the government, and on the other hand the amount of representational money, as I understand it -- I don't know too much about how the offices in the Embassy worked -- but, as I understand it, a certain amount of money comes in for representation, and it's up to, probably the chief of the post, or if the ambassador is busy, the deputy to decide how it is going to be split. And there is never enough to go around and, well at least as I remember, there never was, and so it is split according to representational demands made on the individual officers. We were reimbursed some, and I'm sure we were not reimbursed one hundred percent.

Q: Were you ever aware that monies were collected privately for representational activities at any given Embassy?

EMMERSON: To the best of my memory I've never heard of the idea before.

Q: Of course, as you probably remember, there was, about a year or so ago, an example

of that having been done on behalf of Faith Whittlesey in Switzerland. A sum of approximately eighty thousand dollars was collected from gift-giving Republicans who were solicited for money to be used by her for so-called representational activities. There was some question about it. She was cleared of any wrongdoing, but I believe the practice, if I can call it that, was suppressed and has not been in any way referred to since. But there have been other instances, of course, where, quite legitimately monies were collected for Ambassadors. I believe it was mentioned in the context of Ambassador Bohlen in France, and certainly is historically documented going back to World War I, when Walter Hines Page was kept in London through the device of private funds having been collected at the request of then President Wilson. But one hears a great deal about the expense involved in representation and how difficult it is to accomplish.

EMMERSON: Could I just say something here?

Q: Yes, please.

EMMERSON: I'm inclined to have a kind of a one-track mind. I would probably forget if I had known such contributions were made. Just because I would have said to myself this doesn't concern me, and I would probably have gone so far as to have no opinion one way or the other, because it would have been something about which I would have had no information.

Q: We have covered a great many subjects in some detail, I think. Among those that we have touched on but haven't really discussed is the question of the necessity for having servants when overseas, and both the rewards and disadvantages of that necessity.

EMMERSON: For me, it was the most difficult part of the Foreign Service. When I had to delegate tasks to other people and I personally was responsible whether they were done or not, I didn't always handle it very gracefully. I'm sure that my relationship with some of the servants that we had was -- they resented me I think, some times at any rate. I bossed them around too much. (laughter) I think sometimes I was not particularly sympathetic, depending on the country, of course. In Paris we had a fantastic man -- he and his wife came later to the United States and now have American citizenship -- he spoke many languages, he was a chauffeur, he was a cook, he served the table, you can't imagine what he didn't do. The only difficulty with him was, he spoke so many languages that he would take great glee in getting into conversations with guests in their native language, and I took a dim view of that. He was supposed to be serving drinks, or what have you. But he was wonderful and we got along beautifully except when he asked me for a driver's license recommendation as a driver and I wouldn't give it to him because he drove like a bat out of hell. He said, "You should see how fast I drive when you are not in the car." Otherwise we got along fine.

In one post the children were with us and the children's IQ must have been infinitely greater than any one of the servants, and in that particular post I could have coped somehow, I think, if I had just had a person who didn't live in, a person who was so

divorced (from the household) they came in only when I was at home and yet I had to have people in the house and it was awful. It was terrible. But on the other hand in Japan we had excellent servants except for the cook who was temperamental and took it out on the other servants, and that was a big problem. But, in general they were just kind of ... say half the posts were good and half weren't. In Africa they meant well, they were open and jolly.

There are two interesting stories about Lagos. One was with my knowledge of electricity and plumbing. First of all there was a wall with two gates and you came in one gate and drove up underneath the sort of porch-like front of the house, and then out the other gate. The gates had lights on them. The lights went out and we wanted them fixed and they couldn't fix them without finding the line from the house to the gate, and so we called in some people to fix it. The first morning they were there we were having breakfast and we saw these people digging up the driveway and we went out and found they were looking for the line from the gates to the house. Well, this went on a considerable length of time and they would come back at the most unexpected times, secretly dig another hole and it was getting to be really bad. And as I remember it, the administrative section rigged up some sort of a thing where maybe they went on batteries. There were lights, but they did not come from the house, and the driveway ceased to be dug up.

There was another thing about Lagos that's interesting vis-a-vis servants. Nigeria had three different regions. We had to have the Ibo from the East, the Yoruba from the West, and the Hausa from the North, so we had to have three servants' backgrounds represented and some of them were not very intelligent and so I devised methods of testing them before I hired them, to do the best I could with not having to fire them later.

We received finally, after much struggle -- that's a whole other story with the Department -- plain glass highball glasses, or you might call them tall water glasses without stems and they came in big cartons, square, as I remember it, and I would take a carton that was empty and fill the bottom layer which was divided into sections with glasses alternately up and down. And I would take the prospective person to the pantry and say, 'Now you see the way the glasses are now. We will take them all out and I want you to put them back in like this, and you take a good look before I leave because when I leave it will be empty. You study it hard.' I would give them as much time as they needed, I would take all the glasses out and retire. And I was stunned that every now and then you would find quite a few people applying for work who couldn't do it. And somehow I kind of felt that was basic. But in general the servants we had there -- they were happy-go-lucky, but I liked them.

We had a chief of mission conference in Africa in Lagos. They brought their wives. The wives had a meeting and got together and agreed on mostly domestic things, like, please send no crested glasses because they crack in the climate and break. Please send us big dinner plates. Everything is buffet and we entertain in the garden. A lot of highball glasses, and that kind of thing. That is the only time in my life in the Foreign Service when I saw a classified document. The document reporting on that wives' meeting in

Lagos was classified, and my husband brought it home to me. He said, "This is a classified document but you figure in it and you are quoted in it and therefore I am breaking a rule and regulation, and I bring it home and you may read it," which I did.

The other story is via-a-vis the servants there. We often entertained out of doors. The kind of poison you spray a garden with which will deter the bugs had just been perfected, and if the garden was sprayed two hours, maybe, before the party it would be safe for the evening. So we would entertain in the garden and have as many as seven or eight bars. It was a huge, charming garden. After the big party I would count the liquor and say to myself, "We couldn't conceivably have used that much. I know we couldn't have." It got so that it just was par for the course. My husband was Consul General and I had the authority. I assigned an officer from the Consulate General to each bar, and it was Roy Fujioka, God bless him, who finally solved the problem. He found out that the moment a glass was put down the servants would whisk the glass away. The glass would go into the laundry room where there was a huge calabash and all of the liquor in the undrunk glasses would be poured into the calabash and then the boys would stop and take a nip on their way to and from the garden and the kitchen where the hors d'oeuvres were. The liquor was usually kept at the bar, you see, and it couldn't have been carted away by bottles. So that's how we found out. You just couldn't get so mad at them because the servants were jolly and they tried, they tried hard. I showed one boy how to dust my kutani (Japanese ceramic) boat. How, when you dust it you put your elbows on the table, you put your hands underneath and you lift it carefully and put it down, and I showed him so well how to dust it because I hadn't much kutani with me. He didn't do it. He broke it and I mended it and now it's okay. It doesn't hold water very well. It's okay. But they meant well. They were okay.

On the other hand from there we went to Salisbury where the housekeeper at Government House said, "The first thing I do every morning is make tea for the boys on my staff." And she thought that was the ultimate. I am convinced that I am the first person in the foreign community in Salisbury who ever gave money to the servants for their food, because the idea was they would go out and use it all and get drunk and starve the rest of the time. I think I did give it to them every two weeks, not once a month. And it worked. It worked fine. The servants were adequate. I was absorbed with my own difficulties there. I found it a very difficult post because they had been so jolly and happy-go-lucky in Lagos. They were serious, in Salisbury. They lived in the black community and when it comes to extracurricular activities for me, I was associated there with the black community. They had a YWCA chapter and I did work with them quite a lot, so much so that when we went to Tokyo I checked in at the Y and said, "I'd been working with the Y. Is there anything I could do?" And very, very politely, believe me, and with great finesse, they let me understand that everything was under control and if I wanted to join they would be delighted. But the Japanese are very efficient, and I had no business taking for granted that I could make a contribution. So that was my fault.

I've deviated so far ... I'm not sure where I was at. (laughter)

Q: No, this is marvelous. We were talking about servants in general and the importance of some kind of assistance when overseas. I see what you mean, I see what you mean.

EMMERSON: Now, of course in Tokyo, as I understand it, the Ambassador's residence and the DCM residence are the only places that have a real staff. There is a bachelor in the Embassy whom I understand has a full time servant -- a housekeeper -- who I think maybe lives in full time. That's what I heard. But, in general now, it's very rare in Tokyo. And of course Tokyo is a very expensive post now.

Q: Yes indeed.

EMMERSON: In other posts I don't know how it is.

Q: I think it's proportionately as difficult. Perhaps easier in certain areas, but generally very difficult and becoming more so all the time, which has led to some observations about changes in the kind of representation that is possible. I won't take the time now to talk about that. Another time we could.

So many thoughts have been swirling through my mind as we've been talking. When did you buy the house where we are now? But before you answer that question, let me ask you the same question about the house I believe you own in Nikko? How did it come about that you became the owners, if, as I understand it correctly, you are the owner, of Kami Akamon (Upper Red Gate)?

EMMERSON: Well I can answer that because I have told it very often. We lived there first when Kenneth was a language student in 1937. Well, it would have been the first winter that we were in Japan. That summer we were in Karuizawa with teachers. That winter we were in Nikko part of the time and Tokyo part of the time and we lived in this house, and my husband ...

Q: How did it come about that that house became available to you?

EMMERSON: Well, my husband went to Mr. Frazer, an American business man, and said, "I understand you have a house in Nikko, and we would like to rent it for a bit of time this winter. Is it going to be rentable?"

After Mr Frazer said it was so cold in the winter, my husband might have had second thoughts, but he didn't. He said, "Please, we would like to have it very much" and we went. That was a very special time -- I think that we lived there about two months, let's say January and February. We might have been there longer, I don't remember.

Q: Did the Nichols already own theirs?

EMMERSON: The Nichols' house -- Shita Akamon (Lower Red Gate) -- was already there, already owned, and of course, you would have thought that we would have known

the Nichols but we were there in the dead of winter and the Nichols' house was a summer house, and they would not have been there. No, we did not meet the Nichols family, although they certainly were in Japan at that time and had the house. Our house was built, according to gossip, in 1895 and the Nichols' house I think in 1875. Walt Nichols I think told me that their 100 year anniversary was 1975. Well, I don't remember now. 1875 even maybe or before. I don't remember. The Nichol's was a much older house. And so we lived at Akamon -- the men's routine with their classes, then hiking and classes, and hiking and then bed.

For me the most difficult part of that, of course, was the fact that I was a language widow. We had a student living with us, and they talked Japanese constantly. And Ishikawa-san was with us every waking minute. [Daisuke Ishikawa lived with the Emmersons for two years] I saw him when I was just in Japan, and he's now retired -- then he was what? eighteen, seventeen, sixteen. Then, of course, the teachers were there. The men would take their kanji cards along and study as they took their hikes, and I and the Scotty dog would trail along. I did a bit of investigating of the town, but I was bored, and I was lonely, and so I don't look back on it as quite the idyllic time as Kenneth did, I think. But it was a fun time, it really was.

By chance, at a cocktail party soon after arrival in Japan (nearly thirty years later) I saw Bill and Dorothy Blake, whom we had known briefly in Tokyo before. To make a long story short, we went up to Nikko, they had health problems, they wanted to sell, they sold us the house and we have owned it since. We do not own the land. The land is temple land. It is quite close to Rinoji Temple and we pay a lot of land rent for it which is covered by the people who use the house when we are not there. And we pay the land rent when we're there, and then they use whatever is in the house. So that is how the history of the house in Nikko goes.

As for this house, Kenneth wasn't so well just then, so I was house hunting and then he would go with me to see anything I thought was possible.

My husband said when we arrived at the genkan, the entrance -- there are medallions, brass medallions on the door -- "I think this is probably the right house." We were very fortunate because the people who had it built had two Munakata kakemono, never been in Japan, interested in things Japanese, and they had the house built for their two Japanese Munakata hangings. And that's one reason we bought the house. We have two Japanese hangings that are Tale of Genji [Generally considered to be the oldest novel in any language. Written in the 10th century by a court noblewoman Lady Murasaki, the story has been the subject of many of the best known Japanese paintings] -- but I don't have those up today -- but anyhow there were a number of things about the house which suited us fine and we've been very happy here. And I've been very pleased.

Q: Did you find that your husband and you had quite different interests during your Foreign Service life? In other words, did he share with you his professional knowledge I don't mean of course classified knowledge -- but did he share with you the kinds of things

that he was concerned with? Were you interested in those things? Or do you think that your Foreign Service life together ran perhaps on two rather separate tracks?

EMMERSON: I think the children have said this and I think it's true that we supplemented each other. I did not want to know classified material. I get very enthusiastic sometimes. My memory is not good now because I am no longer young, but it never was very good, and getting old has not made very much difference, and I sometimes might overstep the boundary, and if I knew classified material I would have to be extraordinarily careful. I did not want to know it, and I didn't know it. He did not tell me (I'm not sure that I told this on the tape or not). Once I heard a wife say someone said to the wife, "Is this true?" Her husband was an officer in the Embassy. And her reply was, "It is not true. Because if it were true my husband would have told me, and he didn't tell me, so I know it's not true." And I was just horrified because I rather thought this was against the rules and regulations in general. But I did not know classified material. I didn't want to know it.

I think we complemented each other. I took care of a lot of the mechanics and when I say that I do not mean to infer that I did any of the correspondence with the State Department. Of course my husband took care of all that. I took care of maintenance of the household and living, and this kind of thing. He never told me anything, to the best of my knowledge, except that one incident -- the wives' report -- that was classified, and I never had the burden, which to me would have been a burden, of trying to keep things in confidence. I was interested up to a point. I didn't know enough to participate, for example, in political discussions. Once I was sitting at a table at the Residence -- two Japanese gentlemen, one on each side of me, talking Japanese across me quite a little while, and finally one of them said to me in perfect English, "You understand Japanese, don't you?" and I said, "Well, I do understand Japanese pretty well, but I am lost. I do not know the topic you're talking about. I don't know the subject." He said, "We are now discussing the pros and cons of making the Defense Agency into a Ministry." Well, you can see -- I didn't know that kind of vocabulary and I wasn't capable of entering into most of Kenneth's work.

What I knew is what I read in the newspapers. And sometimes maybe I didn't read very much. And I was perfectly content with my role to support him, and I don't think it bothered him too much that I didn't enter into political discussions. Which I did not do. Does that answer it?

Q: Yes, very much so. I think you spoke very movingly, it seemed to me, about your conception of your role vis-a vis John Emmerson's when we talked, perhaps yesterday, in which you said that you felt that the most important thing that you could do was to create a calm and peaceful, attractive refuge for him, from the responsible hurly-burly of his official life.

EMMERSON: When we get to Tokyo of course, there, there was little chance for refuge in our home because we were tired when we dropped into bed. I can't remember for sure

now, but it seems to me that I counted once six weeks with not one single free night, and so we would escape to Nikko. Sometimes I would escape, even for overnight, it would recharge the batteries, and that was where we got our recharging of the batteries because a home in Tokyo was -- we didn't have much time together. Otherwise, I think we did.

Q: Again, a question of your participation in an official life of the Embassy. Did you and your husband travel together in various countries where you were sent as official and wife?

EMMERSON: Absolutely, absolutely, and in Japan, of course, it was great fun. Kyushu, we would go down -- it always amused me. One of the business wives would say to me, "Have you visited any of your installations yet this year?" and of course she meant had we visited the consulate in Osaka or Nagoya, wherever, and it was certainly true in the last assignment in Tokyo. Usually we went together. I got out my cards. I had a separate card file for contacts when on tour. So we certainly went on tour together in Japan.

I don't remember Paris. I remember I wanted to get away. My husband said, "If you don't like Paris you're pretty hopeless!" or words to that effect, and I simply said, "I don't care where you are, you need a breather now and then." Often we had to be official but it was fun.

In Nigeria we went up to Jos I remember for our wedding anniversary. That's in the northern region. That was not official although we did travel officially all over that whole region. (These two stools here were given to Kenneth by the Chief of Bamanke in the Eastern region. That actually came from Accra as a gift.) Nigeria was fun. We had one experience when we visited a big Chief and Kenneth said, "Is there anything you really want and need?" He looked pretty poor to us. And he said, "Yes." He needed a new Chief's chair. But first of all he asked for a medal. He said, "I would like to have a medal." My husband explained that this was not possible. That the American Government really didn't give out medals very much. So then he wanted a new Chief's chair, and his Chief's chair consisted of one of these deck chairs that you fold up on a voyage across the Pacific. His was broken and this is what he wanted most, and so we got him one and that was official. I don't remember -- we probably paid for it, but we got him one. There are many instances that would come to my mind of traveling together as a team on assignment.

Q: One of the times when Foreign Service families do make an effort to join together, certainly is at holiday time. Probably for most Americans, at any rate, Christmas is the time that comes immediately to mind when one thinks of seasonal or other national celebrations. You have recollections of the importance of the celebration of that particular holiday, I know.

EMMERSON: Indeed. The first Christmas that comes to mind is Moscow when we succeeded in getting a tree. It was not a proper Christmas tree but it was the best we could do and the kids decorated it. They made their own ornaments and what not, and before

Christmas we got a package through the mail, through the Embassy, and it came just before Christmas and we put it under the tree and we looked at it. It was sent by my college roommate which puzzled me just slightly. But it was our only Christmas package. Other things we gave to each other and I remember one of the children gave me a little tiny plant because plants were so hard to come by. Anyhow, we opened our package Christmas morning. Fortunately the children were not babies because it contained Halloween decorations and we had black cats, we had pumpkins, we had all kinds of Halloween decorations and we decorated our Christmas tree and the kids got the biggest kick out of that because it was almost more fun than if it had been for Christmas. (laughter) But the mails were very slow when it came to Moscow.

The other time I might mention was when we were in Lagos. There was a small American community, mostly missionaries if not all, although there must have been a few business people. I don't remember. But it was very small and of course, as you say, I get sentimental about occasions -- Christmas being one of them, and the Consulate General had a complete list of Americans resident in Lagos, so I got a list of all the names, sexes, and ages of all the children in the American community. At that time the Goshos, good friends of ours, were in Tokyo and I wrote them a letter and said, "Please send gifts for the following, and I give you their sex and age, and I would like gifts for these kids." Christmas came and I had told the parents I was doing this, and I called the parents and said, "For Heaven's sake, I hope that you have something for the children to put under the tree because the package from Tokyo has not come. I think it's too late now to expect that it will come." It did not come until after Christmas, but when the package did arrive I sorted out all of the gifts, and I don't remember how many there were, but my memory tells me roughly not more than eighteen or twenty. It wasn't a huge number. And so then I gave the gifts to the children -- I had their birthdates from either mother or father or the office -- we gave the gifts to the children on their birthdays during the coming year.

And the sweetest note I got was from a little eight-year-old boy saying, "I appreciated it a lot, particularly because I wasn't expecting it!" Which I thought was sweet. Mostly our holidays overseas were family when the children were with us, otherwise they were very official, and sometimes even with the family they were slightly official.

There is one other thing that comes to mind that might amuse people to hear about. People ask what I did in the Foreign Service. One woman said, "Aren't you sorry you didn't have a career?" Well, I thought I had a career. But one thing in Karachi, our house had a wall -- oh, I don't remember now -- over twelve feet high; anyhow, on the second floor of our residence there I could look over the wall into the refugee camp and the refugee camp was right there, not more than fifty feet from the window where I was looking out, and the refugees were there and they lived there, and ...

Q: These were refugees from ... ?

EMMERSON: Probably from India. Don't pin me down on that. I know they were refugees, it was shortly after the partition. Because Begum Liaquat was our close friend

and her husband, Liaquat Ali Khan was assassinated. [Prime Minister of Pakistan from partition in 1947 until his assassination in 1951]

Anyhow, the refugees were there, and I don't remember that the wives had anything to do with the fact that we got powdered milk. It could have been through the UN. I think it came from Australia, and we got huge quantities of powdered milk to give to refugees. We couldn't give the powdered milk directly to the refugees because they would sell it. Therefore we had to mix it, and so we Embassy wives brought all of our egg beaters. We broke egg beaters. We bought whisks, we worked hard at it and finally one day I got a brain storm. We had what is now an old fashioned washing machine with a center rotating thing that just went back and forth to make the suds; it had a spout down below where you drained water out. I sterilized the washing machine to the best of my ability and we mixed our powdered milk in the washing machine and it worked like a charm!

Q: Anybody who needs instruction on mass feeding would be delighted to hear this. (laughter)

EMMERSON: No, anybody who needs instruction on how to survive or how to cope with problems at a hardship post, they need to put their ingenuity to work, and they also -- this is why I'm a little bit of a pack-rat -- they need to take with them to hardship posts those things which might be difficult to obtain there in order to make maintenance in their house adequate.

Just incidentally and parenthetically, there is one skill which (I don't have) I feel was a great handicap to me, and that is that I never took shorthand. I cannot take down verbatim speeches. I can not do it, I never learned how, and I have been so frustrated that recently I have found a place where I can take old fashioned shorthand lessons but whether I will have the energy to do it or not remains to be seen.

About having children abroad. Dotty was born in Kyoto. I had a Japanese obstetrician, a Philadelphia Medical School graduate, graduate also of Japanese medicine. He was wonderful, but I didn't know any babies, I didn't know any mothers expecting babies or who already had babies. I had nobody in my immediate family. I had never been around babies and small children. I felt very much at a loss so I got the government booklet, and the government booklet has pretty thorough information as to what is normal and logical to happen at certain periods. So after I left the hospital ...

Q: It was a Japanese hospital by the way?

EMMERSON: It was a Japanese hospital and they were very lenient. It had no clients except for pregnant women. Dr. Seiki saw us, the pregnant women, on a certain scheduled basis, and as I remember I figured out at one point that each visit cost the equivalent of twenty-one American cents. I was the only foreigner in the hospital. I yelled like hell. I stayed there three weeks because we lived a long way from the hospital. I never heard a sound out of the Japanese women the entire time I was there. So in that

respect, I am ashamed of the American representation in that hospital. (laughter)

Anyhow, I did use the government book. I tried very hard to do what it said to do at the stages. I was in contact by phone with Dr. Seiki and then one time when the baby got a little older, I found the recipe for cereal feeding. I got Pablum and later I asked the Doctor how long I should give Pablum and he said only until the baby is intelligent enough to know it tastes like sawdust! (laughter).

Anyhow, the first solid food, as I remember, was cereal and I fixed a whole cup of cereal and I poked the whole thing down her at one sitting (laughter) and she started, not too long thereafter, yelling with stomach pains and I thought something terrible was wrong so I called Dr. Seiki and he said, "Now relax, Mrs. Emerson. You go back for twenty-four hours and tell me everything you can remember that happened in your care for your baby." When I got to the cereal feeding he said, "How much did you give her?" I said the recipe in the book was for one cup, and he said that was the trouble. And then he told me what to do to relieve her poor tummy of all this unexpected and painful contribution which Mama had made by mistake. That was my worst blunder, but it was not surprising. I didn't know any children and didn't for some time meet any mothers with whom I could compare notes. There was a family in Kyoto and I did later talk to them.

It's surprising how wonderful those government booklets are. Except that later I got a book. It wasn't government, we were in Moscow, and it was Children from Six to Twelve, I guess, and it said children sit on their napkins so they won't escape. I noticed Don was sitting on his napkin and not using it and I said, "You know the book says that's what happens at your age." He wanted to know what book, and he was terribly upset that whoever it was, he didn't know them, and they knew a lot about him. And it was not a good idea for me to have told Don about what the book said was normal at that age.

Anyhow, I have sort of miscellaneous things here which might be of interest. They have more or less indirectly or directly to do with protocol.

In Japan protocol certainly is the right category. Japanese give gifts to each other, but they also work up what they call "on" which are obligations ... that kind of thing. I think that in general the Japanese, at least I hope, are fairly lenient with foreigners about a tit-for-tat, when it comes to gift-giving. However, I do remember that once I was at a tea party; the women were seated at tables for four. I didn't know the three women, all Japanese, I had never met them before, and you tried to get a topic of common conversation, and nearly always it would wind up about children. So I mentioned that our daughter was on Broadway, a singer in New York City, and how proud we were of her, and this one woman looked at me and said, "Oh, oh, our daughter just moved to New York City a few months ago and this wonderful singer in New York City -- your daughter -- introduced her to her voice teacher and she is taking lessons from the voice teacher that your daughter recommended to her." And I said, "Well, I don't know." Anyhow, the woman was convinced from everything I said that it was our daughter who had introduced her. The following day we got a box. I don't know whether you have ever seen a Treasure

Boat or not. They look like gold and silver. It's a little boat with treasures piled on top. This one, as I remember it, was around ten inches to twelve inches long and I knew how ghastly expensive they were, very expensive, and the note simply said, "Because your daughter has helped our daughter so much."

Well, I went to my records. I had a record of when her daughter arrived in New York because I had written that down at the table and I realized that our daughter had gone on tour and was not in New York when her daughter arrived, and was still on tour and had not been in New York. It couldn't conceivably have been our daughter. I called the Japanese women in the Embassy who knew protocol, and I said, "What can I do?" And she said, "The only thing I know is you cannot return it." Well, that left us in the soup. Exactly what could we do? They were having grapefruit at the commissary and I bought her, I think it must have been, a dozen grapefruit and sent them as a gift and thanked her enormously, etc. In one or two days we received a crate of the most expensive choice mushrooms that are grown in Japan and I wrote and thanked her for it. We invited them to dinner and the connection, as far as I was concerned -- I couldn't do anything else -- I had to let the matter drop, because I had had it. I couldn't think what to give them. I couldn't return the gift, and so that's where that incident wound up.

Another pure protocol incident was when we first arrived in Japan (in the thirties). You did what you were told. You called on every person in the Embassy who outranked you, which in our case was everybody. I got to thinking that there are people out in the American community who do a lot and I would like to drop cards -- I chose the wife of the President of the National City Bank whom I had never met. I thought I'll just drop cards on her. And so I took my cards, and the maid, who had the little silver dish you put your cards on, said to me to wait, and she came back and said, "Please come in."

I was taken aback. I had no idea I would be received. The maid ushered me into the living room. It was beautiful. It was cold. There was a beautiful big fire and a settee on each side of the fireplace, and I sat down. The lady of the house came in, was cordial like you can't believe, asked me if I would have tea with her (I must have called at tea time). I said, "Oh, thank you so much." And for the first time in my life I had hot fresh popovers. It was a red-letter day in my calendar. She had been cordial. She had received me but I didn't have the nerve to explain to her what I was doing there. I know she must have wondered and wondered why -- I'm sure my cards said that my husband was attached to the American embassy but other than that she must have wondered why in the name of common sense did I show up. But it was simply my feeble effort to try to recognize the fact that there were other American "ambassadors" in addition to the people connected with the embassy. She was the mother of Barbara Adachi, who is well known in Japan for her newspaper articles and books. I never knew the mother well, and I didn't know Barbara as she was growing up. It was only later when we went back to Japan that we became fairly close friends.

And the other and perhaps the last thing I might mention was the advantage of knowing the VIP's wives who came through. Of course, everybody knows, you have all sorts of

VIPs. I'll never forget the VIP who arrived in Karachi from Delhi minus his briefcase full of classified documents and my husband and the staff had to track down the briefcase. I mean, we had all kinds. In Karachi we all pitched in and took care of each other and there weren't that many women who came through. But a large post like Tokyo -- my husband was DCM there and protocol-wise I had the authority to see if I could find control wives for the wives of visitors, particularly of the Congressional groups that came in, and I do remember well that I had been able to find wives that were free. I'd never ask wives with small children without adding "and absolutely if you are not comfortable about leaving the children, please do not accept." But I was able to get, for a visit of the Cabinet Officers who were due in Japan in November 1963 a control wife for each one of the wives who would be flying in. I had their bios, I had the bios of the Embassy women. I remember particularly the woman who was to have the Secretary of State's wife, Mrs. Dean Rusk. She's a Mills College graduate, and so was the control wife. I had it all set and then, as everybody will remember, the President was assassinated and the group turned around in Honolulu and went back.

I suppose my most famous and most dear and most treasured memory of a VIP was Alice Roosevelt Longworth. I kept her for myself. I didn't ask anybody else to take care of her. She was there with her granddaughter, and she was a treasure that you would not believe. She went up to Nikko with me and spent a few days. I think two days there, maybe it was three. I found out that her light would be on almost all night long and I would say, "Did you sleep well? You know your light was on late." And she would say, "I always read until very late." Her granddaughter, Joanna, was with her, and Joanna and she and I went over to the temples and Joanna was going to take some hundreds of steps that went up to Ieyasu's tomb [Ieyasu Tokugawa (1542-1616), first of the Tokugawa Shoguna who ruled Japan until 1868, when Emperor Meiji was restored] and Mrs. Longworth was to stay down at one of the temples and I took Joanna over to the place where you go up, and left her. She went on to climb and I went back. And there was Alice Roosevelt Longworth up on the roka, the veranda-type place of one of the temples, sitting in the Lotus position. [Mrs. Longworth was eighty-one years old at that time] And I said, "Goodness, I didn't know you could assume the Lotus position -- I'm interested in Yoga." And she said, "So am I. My father taught me Yoga and that's when I first became interested and I have been interested in Yoga ever since." I never thought of Teddy Roosevelt as being a devotee of Yoga. But that's what his daughter said.

And then going back on the train, she and I were sitting, talking, and she fingered her pearls and she said, "People don't really appreciate pearls anymore, do they?" And I said, "Well, in Japan I thought they did." And she said, "No, not really. These were given to me when Nicholas and I went to Cuba on our honeymoon and the Cuban Government gave me these pearls as a gift and they are real pearls." And then I realized that she meant pearls that come out of oysters by chance, will match up or not as the case may be.

Later Joanna wanted to go to see the Daibutsu in Kamakura and I said to Mrs. Longworth, "Do you want to go with her?" She said, "No, of course not, I've seen it." Which brings me to what

happened when we first arrived in Nikko with her and she looked around (we got off at the station) and she said, "I remember this place. There's a river over to the right, there's a long street and then that hotel is at the end of it." This remark was made because she and Longworth had been to Japan in 1906, before she married Longworth.

Q: That was the year of your birth.

EMMERSON: When you asked her about it she'd say, "Oh yes, that was just a junket." But she was along on that trip and that was her first trip to Japan and she had not been back for fifty years. And this is the reason she said, "I'm not interested in the Daibutsu in Kamakura because I've seen it."

Well, the crowning blow was when my husband (this was when Reischauer was stabbed and my husband was in charge of the Embassy) had gotten the Emperor's household to take out books of pictures of the 1906 visit so she could go back and look at them. My husband gleefully intended to escort her. So he told her that the Emperor and Empress would like to receive her and reminisce about the other visit. And her reply was, "Well, I have reservations, I think I'll just go on to Hong Kong. I met the Emperor the last time I was here." And, of course, the last time Alice Roosevelt Longworth had been in Japan was when Emperor Meiji was the Emperor. [The present Emperor's grandfather]

BIOGRAPHIC DATA

Spouse: John Kenneth Emmerson

Spouse Entered Service: October 1, 1935 Left Service: March 17, 1968

Status: Widow of FSO

Posts:

1935-37	Tokyo, Japan (Language Officer)
1937-40	Osaka, Japan
1940-41	Tokyo, Japan
1941-42	Washington, DC
1942-43	Lima, Peru
1943-44	Chungking, China
1945	Washington, DC
1945-46	SCAP (MacArthur's Headquarters), Japan
1946-47	Washington, DC
1947-49	Moscow, USSR
1949-52	Washington, DC, including War College
1952-55	Karachi, Pakistan, DCM
1955-57	Beirut, Lebanon

1957-58 Paris, France
1959-60 Lagos, Nigeria, CG
1960-62 Salisbury, Rhodesia Minister/CG
1962-66 Tokyo, DCM/Minister
1966-68 Diplomat in Residence, Stanford University

Spouse's Position: Minister

Place and Date (optional) of birth: Prague, Oklahoma; November 19, 1906

Maiden Name: Dorothy M. McLaughlin

Parents:

Claude McLaughlin
Maude McLaughlin

Schools (Prep, University): High School: Colorado Springs, Colorado; Albuquerque, New Mexico; University: Colorado College, Colorado Springs, Colorado, AB; Columbia University, New York City, MA

Date and Place of Marriage: August 18, 1934; Aurora, Illinois

Children:

Donald K. Emmerson
Dorothy L. Emmerson

Volunteer and Paid Positions held:

A. At Post: Moscow, USSR - American Embassy Commissary, 1947-49; Although the children were young - allowed to go with husband only if I was willing to work in the Embassy. I was paid. Volunteer work in all postings associated with groups of country to which assigned.

B. In Washington, DC: No paid positions. Volunteer - With 32 ½ years in the FS, we were assigned to the Department only a few months at a time (4 times) until 1949 to 1952, during which period I served on PTA groups for schools attended by the children.

End of interview