

Dartmouth College Oral History Project
The War Years at Dartmouth
Interview with Carol Allen (spouse of Robert Allen '45)
By Mary Donin
11/19/07

DONIN: What we'd like to hear first is how you and Bob met.

ALLEN: That is an interesting story because we met when I was 14, and he was 15 in 1938, this was. And his family ran a tourist place in Sherburne, Vermont. And his father was a coach at a high school in Hartford, Connecticut. And so he had the summers off, and they started— And his grandparents lived up in this place in Sherburne. They started off as a boys' camp, and then turned it into a tourist place. And one summer—I guess it was the summer of '38—a cousin of my grandmother's and her family were driving through and stopped at that place overnight. And they went back to New York City, and they said to my grandmother, "You know we went to a very nice place up in Vermont, and I think you and Carol should go for a little vacation. Edith can drive you." That was my mother. So we did that, in that August of '38. And Bob was the only child, and I'm an only child, and so we were the only children up there. So we stayed there for two weeks. It was \$16 a week, room and board. And then there was—so we sort of talked and walked together. And one day we were walking up to the lodge, and he held my hand! And that was big time. When we left in two weeks, we took the train from Rutland, and Bob was there to see me. And my grandmother got on the train first, and Bob kissed me.

DONIN: Wow.

ALLEN: That was really something. So then I didn't see him again until the next summer. I was in boarding school at Northfield, and we wrote letters but didn't see him until the next summer. And my grandmother and I went up again to Sherburne. So that happened. So we did that for several years. And finally I went up alone for the couple of weeks. And then we'd sometimes—I'd go to Hartford for a weekend, or he'd come down to Tarrytown for a weekend. And so that's how that started. He went to Dartmouth—so he went the fall of '41. He went to Dartmouth. I was not going to college at that point because I was—well, I finally did some secretarial things. But I wasn't very interested in it. So then he had that first year at Dartmouth. He roomed with Bob Joy, who is now at Kendal. No, he roomed with Beebe Miller, that's right, from California the first year.

And he lived in North Fayerweather. And let's see. I don't know much. I came up for weekends to visit, for the big parties like Carnival or Green Key weekend. And that was fun. And one Green Key, which is in the spring.... He had gone out for freshman football, and he met me at the train in White River Junction with crutches—on crutches—because he had hurt himself. And I stayed these times at a place—maybe some relative owned it—the Blue Shutters, it was called. And it still is there. It's down, just down below CVS as you're going down the hill to West Lebanon, there's a house with blue shutters.

DONIN: Oh!

ALLEN: Light blue shutters on the right.

DONIN: Oh.

ALLEN: Anyway. But I stayed there. And so poor Bob came down on the crutches because he had no car. We had no car. He didn't have a car. And he walked down there. I don't know how. And then we walked up again. I remember Duke Ellington was playing at that Green Key weekend. That was the spring of '42.

DONIN: Wow!

ALLEN: And Duke Ellington and Johnny Hodges—and what did he play? The saxophone. No, what did he play? Trom—?

DONIN: Trombone?

ALLEN: Trombone, I guess. What did he play, Johnny Hodges?

DONIN: I don't remember.

ALLEN: Anyway, it was nice. So that was the year the war started, of course, December '41. Everybody knew they'd be drafted at that point. And Bob started his sophomore year in the fall of '42 and stayed about two months before he got his draft notice and went back to Hartford. And he applied to go to the Tenth Mountain Division because he liked to ski. And that was interesting because you had to have three letters of recommendation to get into the Tenth Mountain Division. And he did. And in January of '43 then, he went to Fort Devens in Massachusetts, Ayer, Massachusetts. And then out to Colorado, Leadville, Colorado. That winter—that

Christmas—of '43, we became engaged. He was home on leave. And in June of '44 we were married. And so we didn't see each other that much when you think about it. But it's over many years.

DONIN: Mm-hmm.

ALLEN: And we were married in 1944, June.

DONIN: How did he get—he got leave to get married?

ALLEN: Well, it was a furlough every six months. So he had one in December when we were engaged, and then he had one in June of '44. And we were married on Saturday, June 3rd. But on Tuesday out at Camp Hale—this is the Tenth Mountain Division, Camp Hale—the officers in charge or whoever decided too many people were on leave. So they cancelled all the leaves. And that's when he was due to get on the train and start out from Colorado back to New York. My mother was very upset. And I said, "Well, I'll marry him whenever he gets back. It doesn't matter."

DONIN: Oh. [Laughter]

ALLEN: It doesn't matter even though we had the big wedding planned. So I think on Thursday morning, she hadn't heard—we hadn't heard—and the wedding was Saturday. And so my mother calls up the chaplain at Camp Hale and told them the story. He said, "Oh." And he checked. He said, "Oh, he's on his way." So that was good. So he arrived the day of our wedding. And in those days you had to have a blood test and everything. So we did all that, and then we got married in the afternoon at Pocantico Hills Church—do you know that?

DONIN: Mm-hmm.

ALLEN: The Rockefeller church with the Chagall windows. So that was June. And we went on our honeymoon to Lake Mohawk Resort in New Paltz, New York. Then, let's see, he had a week or two. I've forgotten how long it was. Then I went back to Colorado with him and stayed a few days. They had a guesthouse there at Camp Hale. Stayed a few days and came back to New York. And I was working then at American Airlines. In August I went down to—I took a leave-of-absence—and went down to.... Oh, they were switched from the mountains of Colorado where they had been a mile high or however high to Texas because the Army thought they'd send the

mountain troops to Indonesia. So they sent all to Texas in the middle of the summer. Some of them died because they went on hikes, and they just died because they couldn't take it; it was awful. Anyway, I was down there in August and spent the month. And then came back to Tarrytown. He said that he was going to be sent—going overseas soon. So I left my job. I quit the job. And went back down again for Thanksgiving of '44.

DONIN: Mm-hmm.

ALLEN: And he was shipped out right after that to Italy. That would be November or December of '44. And he was wounded by a landmine in January of '45, right after he got there. He was in the medics, and some fellow had gone out and got into a minefield. And the medics were sent out. And out of seven or eight people there, only two survived, Bob and somebody else. They were all in a big landmine, these Bouncing Betty things that they had. And so then he was in the hospital for a long time.

DONIN: In Italy?

ALLEN: Yes, in Italy. And then he was—Oh, I was home when I got the letters telling me about this. And that was hard. But he was put on limited duty. And the interesting thing was that he was put in as a medic. He was in the medical unit of a disciplinary training camp, which is where they would put soldiers who got into trouble in the service. They might be—oh, I don't know what.

DONIN: Insubordination or something?

ALLEN: Well, more black market things.

DONIN: Oh, I see.

ALLEN: Black market and things like that.

DONIN: Uh-huh.

ALLEN: That they had. Or they might have shot somebody or whatever it was. And one night Bob said they.... There was a lot of activity around the camp. And they put on big lights and so on. And they were bringing in a very special prisoner. And they had built a cage for him to be in, in the daytime. And it turned out it was Ezra Pound, the poet.

DONIN: Oh!

ALLEN: And it was because they got him for treason. You know he was saying all sorts of things in Italy against the United States. I guess he was, I don't know, fascist or whatever that they had him there for. But anyway, at night he was allowed to go into the medical office where Bob was and do typing and write. And so he also wrote letters for some of the soldiers there. They would ask him to write a letter to their lady friends [Laughter] or girlfriends or wives back home, which he did. And so Bob got to know him, and we have some letters and postcards from him. Then he went back to St. Elizabeth's Hospital, Ezra Pound did, and was there until he was released, I guess. So then Bob finally— Oh, the war ended in August of '45, and I thought, oh, I'll go up to Hanover. Bob will be right back to finish college. I'll go right up to Hanover and get a job. And so that when he gets back for the fall semester, I'll be right there. Alright. Well, I went up, and I got a room on Pleasant Street in Mrs. Lewin's house on Pleasant Street. But Bob did not come home. He didn't get home until January or February of '46.

DONIN: Oh, goodness!

ALLEN: So I was up here working for George Colton.

DONIN: Mm-hmm.

ALLEN: And I really wasn't a very good secretary. [Laughter] I wasn't very good. But anyway, I did that. And I used to babysit for the Coltons and their two boys and Meg. Or maybe I just—yes, I did for the whole family; I mean for the three of them, I guess. So then Bob eventually.... But in the meantime, all the boys coming back from the war would get, if they were married, they had married dorms in Fayerweather Hall and other places. And so I said to the bursar, Max Norton, I said, "Can't I be assigned one so I could get there?" And he said, "Well, we'll wait until Bob gets back." So I said, "Well, I don't want them all taken up and all of this." He said, "No, no never mind. Don't worry about it." So finally Bob came back. And I said, well, here I am. Here's Bob and everything. So Max Norton said, "Well," he said, "I have this little apartment in our house that I built for my parents." And he said, "They've died." So he said, "You can rent that from us on Choate Road." So that was right around — I think he wanted to wait to see what Bob was like before he

committed himself. [Laughter] So anyway. So we moved into this little apartment that was the grandparents' apartment.

DONIN: Is that house still there?

ALLEN: Yes. Oh, yes. And Mary Norton, who is now Mary Masland, is at Kendal. And she had just graduated from college when we moved in there. And she was working at the hospital here at Mary Hitchcock. So, yes, the house is still there. Anyway, so we lived there, and we had lots of friends. And we had life there.... The boys, the men, who came home from the war really just wanted to study. They didn't want to play particularly. The married ones especially. The others would go join fraternities and so on, but Bob didn't join anything. We chaperoned some of the fraternity parties, which was fun. Here we were not very much older than anybody there.

DONIN: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

ALLEN: But that was interesting to do.

DONIN: Did you socialize with other married couples?

ALLEN: Yes. We had other friends. Some were classmates. But we went to dinner at Fayerweather. One girl, Sue McClenahan—Blair McClenahan; maybe he was in Bob's class, I don't know. And I remember going there, and she said, "Well, we have steak. How long shall I bake it." And she had it in the oven and it was all gray. [Laughs] But anyway, that was something. And at that point also when you went to anybody's apartment there, everybody had ashtrays out for cigarettes because everybody smoked. And sometimes we'd play charades afterwards. It was a very social, happy time. We went to the movies together. The Nugget was in Webster Hall because the old Nugget had burned down. But mostly there was a very—you sort of wanted to get on with your life. I mean it was—it was more serious in that kind of sense. It wasn't a college rah rah rah thing. But, you know, we went to sports events and so on. And that was good. When Bob got back, he immediately wanted to go camping. We didn't have a car, and we walked out. He brought his sleeping bags from the Army and all of this stuff that he could take with him. And we camped right out on the field across from the golf course. There was a ski jump there and it crossed at Balch Hill. But anyway we camped out there one night. Thought that was great. Also he wanted to do rock climbing, which he had

done in the Army in the Tenth Mountain Division. So we went, had a friend who had a car, and we went to those cliffs around Fairlee, you know, if you drive up Route 5.

DONIN: Oh.

ALLEN: They're very steep things. I never did anything like that. But it was sort of fun for a couple of times. But we did that. And as far as.... I remember cooking all of us.... The wives didn't—Of course I worked at the college. But we had these budgets. I mean we had a budget because we didn't have much money. He got \$100 a month from the GI Bill. And the rent was probably \$50. I know we had a budget of \$10 a week for food. And hamburger was three pounds for a dollar. So we had a lot of meatloaf and potatoes and things like that. And one of the things that was fun—I remember this so clearly—I made an apple pie. And it was so good we started eating it just when it came out of the oven, and we ate the whole thing. And we didn't eat dinner. [Laughter] And we said, Oh, can you imagine what our parents would say? [Laughter] We ate the whole pie. And then in 1948 I had a baby girl in March of '48.

DONIN: So you were here.

ALLEN: Oh, yes, she was born here.

DONIN: At Mary Hitchcock?

ALLEN: Mary Hitchcock, yes. Mary Hitchcock. And we got—and I don't know where this went—we had.... They gave all of these women—a lot of people had babies then, the wives—and gave us a little framed certificate that said you were Indian squaw born in Hanover. It was a nice thing, and I can't find that ever. I don't know what happened to that. Somebody must have one. But they gave it to all the babies born.

DONIN: So the babies were called Indian squaws?

ALLEN: I don't know if they were or not. But it was sort of an Indian—

DONIN: The theme was.

ALLEN: —theme on this Dartmouth... But it was just a little certificate. It wasn't your birth certificate. It was something the college gave to—

DONIN: Wives?

ALLEN: To the wives. Yes. So somebody must have one somewhere.

DONIN: Yes.

ALLEN: I wish I had it.

DONIN: Mmm.

ALLEN: Anyway, so Bob graduated in 1948. And it rained. So we only had two tickets. And I was nursing the baby. So I didn't go. But his parents went.

DONIN: Mm-hmm.

ALLEN: I thought that was quite nice of me.

DONIN: Where was commencement held? Was it up in the Bema.

ALLEN: No, it was inside because they only had two tickets. No, it was going to be outside wherever—I thought it was right out in front of Baker.

DONIN: Maybe it was. I don't know.

ALLEN: But it was raining so they didn't have it there. They had it inside the gym or some athletic facility.

DONIN: Oh, I see.

ALLEN: So then in '48 he graduated and was going to Columbia in the fall. So that summer we left the Nortons, and we lived in Wigwam for the summer. And Bob had various jobs then. He worked for Trumbull Nelson. He and this other fellow lived down there with us in Wigwam. He lived downstairs in Wigwam. His name was Phil Chamberlain. He and Bob decided to work for Trumbull Nelson. So they went and applied for a job. And the Trumbull Nelson fellow said, "Well, where's your toolbox? How can you go for a job?" So they went back and bought some lumber and made them. And they had a brand new hammer and a brand new toolbox and then applied for this thing. They worked on a swimming pool in Lebanon. They worked at the Pompanoosuc Dam. They managed to do that and earn some money.

DONIN: Now when you had your baby, did you stop working?

ALLEN: Yes, yes.

DONIN: Mm-hmm.

ALLEN: I stopped working. I didn't ever work again until they were in high school.

DONIN: Mm-hmm.

ALLEN: Those days.

DONIN: Were most of the wives...Was it your sense that most of the wives had jobs while they were here if they didn't have babies?

ALLEN: Yes. A lot of them—not a lot. I don't know. A few I knew taught, were schoolteachers at the Hanover School, kindergarten or something like that. They'd just finished college. Others had other jobs here. I don't remember exactly where. But teachers, I remember a few.

DONIN: Mm-hmm.

ALLEN: But we all had favorite obstetricians. Dr. Boardman was mine. He was the one that was quite well known. And Mary Hitchcock Hospital. But you knew everybody and had all sorts of tales to tell. I see I'm putting a lot of "ands" in here.

DONIN: Oh, that's all right. [Laughter] You know that's the way the mind works. Let me back up and ask you a few questions. Do you remember why Bob chose Dartmouth?

ALLEN: Yes. He had an uncle who went to Dartmouth and who was—and that's probably why. And he, the uncle, had. Who knew.... Somehow, I don't know why, he knew Mr. Hopkins [Ernest Martin Hopkins]. Bob didn't know him. But when Bob came as a freshman, Hopkins was here, and I think they met. Oh, I know, when Bob got back from the war, and I told you he was an English major—did I mention Robert Frost?

DONIN: Mm-mmm.

ALLEN: No. Robert Frost was very interested in hearing all about Ezra Pound. And so he and Bob—he couldn't have enough tales. He couldn't be with Bob long enough to hear all of the tales. That was interesting. And then Mr. Frost said, "Well, when are you going to invite me for tea over at your house and meet Carol?" So he came over to our little place on Choate Road. And we had tea. I had made cookies. I thought, well, I'll make the old-fashioned ginger snaps—ginger cookies. I'm sure he'll like that, thinking of Robert Frost. And Mr. Frost sat in that big chair. He said, "Well, don't make my tea too strong." Or something like this. Just put the bag in once or something like that. [Laughs] I don't think—I think I was making it with regular tea leaves and doing everything properly. And then he didn't want any cookies. He was catching a cold, he said. But that was fun. And that was nice. So we got to know Mr. Frost a little. And Bob really got to know him. Bob was writing stories then, and Mr. Frost would comment on them. And that was a good relationship.

DONIN: Special memory.

ALLEN: Yes, very nice. And we went up—we saw him up at his place in Ripton [VT]. We drove up there. And we didn't, as I said, we didn't have a car. When Bob finished at Columbia, we came back here. And he was going to apply to get a job, a teaching job. And they said, "Why don't you stay here and work for us in public relations?" And that's how we came. We stayed for eight years. And our other two children were born at the hospital here.

DONIN: So all three of them were born here in Hanover.

ALLEN: Born in Hanover at Mary Hitchcock.

DONIN: So when you first started coming up here, before you were married, for Carnival and that sort of thing, that was when President Hopkins was still here?

ALLEN: He was still there, yes. Because when I came up and got the job in '45, it was just when John Dickey [John Sloan Dickey] was coming in. Because I went to the thing at the library when they changed presidents.

DONIN: Oh, the inauguration.

ALLEN: Yes. And they had a reception and everything. I remember doing that.

DONIN: There are pictures of that reception.

ALLEN: Oh, yes.

DONIN: Standing in the front hall of Baker Library.

ALLEN: Yes, yes, yes.

DONIN: And Mrs. Dickey and Mr. Dickey stood there for hours receiving everyone.

ALLEN: Mm-hmm.

DONIN: So you were in that reception.

ALLEN: Yes, yes.

DONIN: How was it coming back here without him? It must have been a little....

ALLEN: It was very strange. First of all, when I lived on Pleasant Street and worked in the administration hall.

DONIN: Parkhurst?

ALLEN: Parkurst Hall.

DONIN: Mm-hmm.

ALLEN: When I walked along Main Street to come to work, there weren't any women in town—girls. And so you had all these boys, and that sort of made me uncomfortable for a while.

DONIN: I can imagine.

ALLEN: And so I took the back street and went to work. Then there were a couple of boys from Bob's class like Paul Caravatt who were back early. And so they would sometimes take me to the movies or something like that. And I got to know—I forgot about this—I got to know some boys that lived in a house near Pleasant Street—I think one might've—through Bob's friends. And anyway, all of a sudden I

had this nice thing going on for several months. I'd go to the movies or go for walks with all these fellows and everything. And they bought me a Christmas present, I remember. And that was nice. And when Bob got back, he said, "How'd you get to know all of these fellows?" [Laughter] I said, "Well," I said, "when you're one of the young ladies in town, nobody else is there."

DONIN: Right.

ALLEN: Except the married ones.

DONIN: Now at that point— This is great stuff.

ALLEN: I don't know. I was trying to think of more things you'd like of the wives.

DONIN: Well, when you were here, when you came back waiting for Bob to return from the war, there must have been tons of military people here as well. The V-12 school was here training. And the V-5. Do you remember any of that?

ALLEN: Well, were they here then? Or had they left?

DONIN: I don't think they'd left yet. Because the war wasn't over yet, was it?

ALLEN: Yes, the war was over.

DONIN: Oh, you came in—

ALLEN: I came in '45.

DONIN: Oh, sorry. I thought you came in '44.

ALLEN: No, no. We were married in '44. Came in '45.

DONIN: Oh, so they had cleared out.

ALLEN: Yes, yes. No, there wasn't any. It was just the returning—

DONIN: The GIs returning.

ALLEN: And the ones who were on a regular schedule.

DONIN: Sure, sure.

ALLEN: Who were here. So the people who came in the fall of '45 would be the Class of '49.

DONIN: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm. What was your sense of sort of class unity? I mean did Bob really identify with his class.

ALLEN: No. This is all—I think everybody felt this way. You met people, married couples, I mean when we were here, but he was only here a year with his class. So he didn't really identify with anybody. We had friends from different classes when he came back. And I think there might, there are some— We never went to reunions really. We went to our 25th reunion, and that was that. And the 50th. Because he didn't have any close friends of that class particularly. Some did. Some kept—some that are still here now.

DONIN: Yes.

ALLEN: Are very close. They have the '45 luncheon every—at the Norwich Inn. And I got to that with the wives. But I didn't—we'd talk about it, but we were there, but I didn't know them particularly well. But some of them know each other quite well. He was never into that.

DONIN: So did he maintain any friendships, regardless of class, did he maintain any friendships with people that he met while he was an undergrad?

ALLEN: That year?

DONIN: Yes.

ALLEN: No, not really. No. We didn't.

DONIN: How did you get sort of reconnected to the class then? It was just through the two reunions you went to?

ALLEN: Yes, yes. Just through the reunions or—that's all. And he said, oh, yes, so-and-so and so-and-so. But he knew the names and everything. But nobody really was close like some people are, you know. You know when we went to—well, Philip Booth we were, because we lived in Lincoln together. So that was one person we knew then because we met him, and they were here in '46 and '47.

DONIN: Living in the same place that you were?

ALLEN: In Hanover. Well, they lived—his family lived here. And the Nortons, where we lived, were good friends—Mrs. Norton was a good friend of Philip's mother.

DONIN: Ah ha.

ALLEN: And she told us, she said, "Oh, Philip is engaged to somebody from the South." That was exciting.

DONIN: Mm-hmm.

ALLEN: So anyway, then we met Philip and Margaret. So those two we kept. As I said, we skied together, and we—and then we lived in Lincoln, Massachusetts. And we didn't do any Dartmouth things in Boston, though. I can't think of any. When we moved back here and worked here, those are close friends, the fifties, all the fifties. Then we really had close—because then we had the three children. Then we had a lot of doctor friends.

DONIN: Sure.

ALLEN: And faculty, just social friends. But while we were here, as I said, everybody was very glad to just—they didn't like the classes to end soon. I guess Bob maybe.... They said, you know, faculty said, "Well, we can go now, it's a little early." And they'd say no.

DONIN: Interesting.

ALLEN: Yes.

DONIN: Do you think they all became better students after the war?

ALLEN: Yes. Oh, yes. Yes. If anything—a lot of people say that that's when you should start. You should do something else after high school and then come back. Oh, yes. They all were much more mature. And that's when they wanted to get on with their lives. They were paying for this, or GI Bill was, and they just wanted to finish. And really I imagine the questions in class were a lot different from their undergraduates. And I think the faculty noticed this, too. I mean it was different having these. I don't know if you've talked to faculty members—

DONIN: Not yet.

- ALLEN: —who were there. But they might remember. They're old now, but the ones who were there might have some insight as to how— The difference in the—I think I've read about this or heard about it, that they were much more—Well, they were. They'd gone through the war.
- DONIN: They left as boys and came back as men.
- ALLEN: Came back as men. That's right. And they weren't that old. I mean they were 21 or 22. But they had a lot of experiences. And there was a lot of— Married people were very happy to be married. [Laughs] It was very nice. Lots of good times.
- DONIN: Special times.
- ALLEN: Special times.
- DONIN: Yes.
- ALLEN: Lots of special times together.
- DONIN: Lots of babies.
- ALLEN: Lots of babies. Lots of all of that going on. [Laughs] A lot.
- DONIN: They also— There's some recollection that some of the wives—I guess probably the ones who weren't working because you wouldn't have been able to do this being as you were working—but some of the women said they were allowed to audit classes.
- ALLEN: I think they were. I think they were. I think people wanted to know if they could take courses, I mean get some college credit, and they couldn't. But they could audit classes. Did I go to a class? Yes, I think I went to a class. Yes. I went to some class, logic or something like that. But I'm not sure if it was after the war. I think it might have been the freshman year, I think. I might have come up and gone to a class with Bob.
- DONIN: Any special memories of President Dickey?
- ALLEN: Oh, yes, he was very nice. We poured— This would be after we lived here, I mean we were living here. The wives— Bob was working for the administration then. We were at different times we

were asked to pour tea at his house, at the house. And we did that. And that was nice. And when Bob was leaving here, John Dickey told him, "Don't go until you really can get a good job." He said, "Stay as long as you want here." You know he was very nice. He said, "Make a good move. Don't just go to anyplace." Because we were making, at that point, this was in '57 or so, something like \$7500 a year. And we decided we couldn't afford to take the children skiing. We couldn't afford much of anything. And our babysitters were coming in lovely cars. [Laughs] We had a second-hand car. So we had to leave. But that was 1958.

DONIN: Mm-hmm.

ALLEN: But President Dickey was very nice. And Bob was— When did the Great Issues course start? Was that when...that was when Bob was a student.

DONIN: He may have been the first one to—he was in the first class.

ALLEN: He thought that was the most wonderful course, that Great Issues course.

DONIN: Mm-hmm.

ALLEN: It was wonderful.

DONIN: So he graduated what year?

ALLEN: 'Forty-eight.

DONIN: Yes, that's about when they started, '47 or '48. It was just for seniors.

ALLEN: Yes, that would be it. That course was really exciting for him.

DONIN: Especially since he was interested in writing.

ALLEN: Yes. Uh-huh. And that was a good course.

DONIN: So would you be allowed to go to one of those lectures that they went to?

ALLEN: No, I—

DONIN: You don't think so.

ALLEN: I don't think so, no. I don't think so. Now maybe I would be allowed, but I didn't. No, I didn't do much with the college. I mean working, I knew that. I don't know, we just had sort of this sort of friends. And they were from— But it was fun. It was nice.

DONIN: Did you feel that there was a differentiation made between the students who had gone off to war and come back and the students who were traditional students?

ALLEN: I don't know as if we ever knew any of the traditional students. I think we were all really with just the couples and the married ones. Except for when we did the fraternity chaperoning.

DONIN: Right, right.

ALLEN: And then there were just— I remember being shocked seeing just rooms full of bodies on the floor with blankets and everything. I thought, Gee! And they would—and drinking! I mean this was, you know, I thought, my gosh! Those were the traditional...or maybe the ones who weren't married when they came back.

DONIN: Sure.

ALLEN: I mean I looked at some of the things that people did in those yearbooks, and I— Like Paul Caravatt. Now he couldn't have been married. I think, if you weren't married.... I don't know if you've interviewed students, I mean people who weren't married and came back?

DONIN: Yes, I have.

ALLEN: And what did they say?

DONIN: Well, they led a more traditional undergrad life. But still with a different focus.

ALLEN: Did they?

DONIN: A lot of them had the same motivation that you talk about. That they just wanted to get on with things. But they did socialize. They took road trips down to the Seven Sisters schools.

ALLEN: Oh, yes.

DONIN: And they hung out. Some of them lived in fraternities.

ALLEN: Yes.

DONIN: So their life was a little more traditional undergrad. And in fact I'm interviewing Paul and Laura Caravatt in a couple of weeks.

ALLEN: Oh, are you?

DONIN: Yes.

ALLEN: See, Paul and Bob lived right next door—on the same street in Hartford. I think they went to grade school together.

DONIN: I'll have to make a note of that.

ALLEN: And I see.... We had a nice reunion now this summer. Bob didn't go. But Rosalie Cutter, you know, had a—she has a place, a camp or whatever they call these things, a little house over by Moosilauke. No, not Moosilauke. The skiway.

DONIN: Mm-hmm.

ALLEN: And anyway, Paul and Laura were there. I said, "Now, Paul, give me some names so I can go back to Bob and tell him on this street." And then he gave me. And then I'd go back to Bob. I said, "I was talking to Paul Caravatt today." And Bob would say, "Paul Caravatt?" And I said, "Yes." (You're never supposed to say "remember" to Alzheimer people.) I said, "We were talking about the old days on Hillside Avenue. And he lived on Ansonia Street." So I'd mention names, and Bob, "Yeah...." Then he'd remember these, so it was nice.

DONIN: It was nice.

ALLEN: Paul was fun. Paul was one that was, as I said, Paul Caravatt was one that when I was here, he might not remember taking me out.

DONIN: That's nice.

ALLEN: He was fun, yes.

DONIN: He sort of took care of you while Bob was coming back.

ALLEN: Coming back. Well, all of these boys. They were nice, you know, it was nice.

DONIN: That was a pretty brave thing for a woman your age back in the forties to do that, to move up to a town where your husband wasn't located.

ALLEN: Yes. I was—it was when I think of it. [Laughs]

DONIN: Yes.

ALLEN: I mean it was sort of.... It was sort of different. I mean you just were there with all of these—

DONIN: Surrounded by hordes of men.

ALLEN: Yes, yes.

DONIN: Intimidating.

ALLEN: It was. It was. That's why I went the back road for a long time.

DONIN: Right, right. What did Mr. Colton make of that?

ALLEN: George? I don't know. He was nice. I mean they were sort of like parents, you know. They were very nice. I'd have dinner with them and things like that. They were very sweet and very nice. And we got to be good friends. It seems to me I remember Ruth coming—that's Margaret's mother—coming over with her, bringing her to the Norton's house. And I think, I wonder— How old is she?

DONIN: Mrs. Colton?

ALLEN: No, no. I had lunch with George and Ruth just this—we're in the fall. No, where are we now?

DONIN: Yes, we're in the fall.

ALLEN: In the spring.

DONIN: Mm-hmm.

ALLEN: Because they knew I was there, and I got this nice note, just the way George writes in this nice hand. And just the way he phrased what he said, to have lunch. And so we had lunch at Jesse's. And I think Dick—I don't know which son, Dick or the other one. And Ruth. And it was very nice.

DONIN: It was nice because he was able to come. He came in here to Rauner Library with his daughter, with Meg. And one of the sons, the one from California—I guess they're both from California.

ALLEN: They're both from California. It was Rich—Dick—and....

DONIN: I can't remember. But he said to Meg, you know, "I need to make one more trip to Hanover."

ALLEN: Was that that time? Maybe it was the spring.

DONIN: Maybe it was the same time.

ALLEN: The same time.

DONIN: Mm-hmm.

ALLEN: Yes. It might have been. Because—yes.

DONIN: It was very nice.

ALLEN: It was. Yes, because I think they mentioned that Meg couldn't come for the luncheon or something like that.

DONIN: Right.

ALLEN: It was very good; it was very nice. So....

DONIN: So do you need to check your list? Have you remembered everything on that list?

ALLEN: No, I think I've remembered everything, yes, yes. Oh, when Bob was out in the Tenth Mountain Division, Walt Prager the ski coach here, was out there, too. And there were a lot of Dartmouth boys out there.

DONIN: Mm-hmm.

ALLEN: Charles McLane. All the good skiers.

DONIN: The skiers.

ALLEN: And so we got to know.... So Walt Prager was back here when we came back. And that was fun. Charles McLain was the first one who went out to the Tenth Mountain Division, and he got there apparently, and he said he'd like to.... He just came, and he said, "I'd like to know where the Tenth Mountain Division is." And so the captain said, "You're it." [Laughs] Because he was the first.

DONIN: He was the first?

ALLEN: That's what he said.

DONIN: [Laughs] Well, he was a good one to be the first.

ALLEN: Yes, he was, he was.

DONIN: Good one to be the first. Okay, Carol, I think I'll turn off the tape if we've covered everything.

ALLEN: I think so.

DONIN: Okay.

ALLEN: If you have any other questions.

DONIN: I don't think so. I'm looking at my—

ALLEN: I probably didn't have too much to say about, when I think about it, the years, those three years.

DONIN: No, you had some great descriptions, though. You know, while he finished school.

ALLEN: Finished school.

DONIN: Were they still going round the clock, so to speak? Or had they stopped that after the war ended? The college started running around the clock.

ALLEN: No, no. I think they stopped, they stopped, as I recall.

- DONIN: Mm-hmm.
- ALLEN: What did we do in the summers? [Laughs]
- DONIN: Well, you probably worked during the summer.
- ALLEN: Yes. And Bob....
- DONIN: So he was here—he returned in, what did you say?
- ALLEN: 'Forty-six.
- DONIN: January '46.
- ALLEN: So we had the summer of '46 and the summer of '47. Whatever? Maybe they did go to school.
- DONIN: Yes, maybe they went year round.
- ALLEN: Yes, maybe they went to school.
- DONIN: Mm-hmm.
- ALLEN: They may have gone to school.
- DONIN: Because they were anxious to get—
- ALLEN: I don't certainly remember doing anything. [Laughs]
- DONIN: Right, right.
- ALLEN: I only remember that summer of '48 after he finished. So I bet he did.

[End of Interview]