

INTERVIEWEE NAME: Carl Jetter
PHONE NUMBER: 712-274-2106

Interviewee: Ron Williams

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Carl, Why did you get into the CCC camp in the first place?

Well of course during the 1930's work was not very plentiful and I applied for work at the CCC camp and was accepted and went in on June 3rd of 1933. At first I went to Fort Des Moines and from there we were issued our clothing, told what we could do and where we were going. And of course we were going on June 18 we went to Catalonia Iona at Wabesho, Minn. Now there we worked on protecting the river or the stream you might say we put in a lot of holding dams and slew sways to protect the grounds that were farm land that were going down the streams. We worked on that until the 10th of November when we got out of there it was 10 below zero when we got into the train. And went south to Crossett, Arkansas.

Ok Carl, was your hometown Sioux City?

No, Dennison Iowa

Do you remember how old you were when you went in?

20

And what did you do before going into the CCC camp?

Nothing really, because I had just graduated the year before from there I went into the CCC camp because they were paying \$50 dollars a month. But I was lucky being I was big why they made me a leader, which paid me \$75 dollars a month.

Really

So I was pretty lucky there I was the leader as long as I was in there. We went up to Des Moines and then up to Wabesho, Minn. Winona were our main town that we got our supplies from. We didn't get our supplies from Wabasha because the didn't have the business there to supply us or enough for all the men that was in the camp there.

Did you call the camp Ionia or Winona?

Winona no Iowonia. *Women in the background said "Don't you think it was Winona" I think that is the way we pronounced it if I remember right. Winona. (Female voice.)*

Well he said there was a town up called Winona that they got supplies ok. And then you were transferred at some point?

Well when we got there I think the 18th of June and stayed until the 10th of November. And it was getting cold up there and we were living in tents and we couldn't heat the tent enough at night to keep us warm so we went down to Crossett, Arkansas. Mr. Crossett owned everything in Crossett Arkansas except the post office that was government property. Mobile homes a sawmill the denatured alcohol plant and everything, everything in town was owned by Crossett. Mr. Crossett lived in Chicago.

When you went in do you remember where you went in to sign up for this?

Fort Des Moines Iowa.

How did you make arrangements to get down there do you remember that at all?

I think we went down with other people. They were some from Dodge City. I know Kremer was from Dodge City. Some were from Mapleton and we all went down on a bus. I think there were eighteen of us that went down on this bus if I remember right.

Did you sign up some place local?

Oh yah. You signed up at the courthouse in Dennison. That is for me it was. I'm not sure on the others. I think Kremer did from Dodge City. He signed up I believe in Dennison. But those from Mapleton, I don't know where they signed up at, but they come down there and oh we went down to Fort Des Moines in the bus and from there we a as a group oh there must have been about 50 of us that went from there to Wabesho, Minn. where our camp was. Our Company was 1750 CCC camp and a....

When you, I am sorry...
go ahead.

When you went to get on the bus to go to Fort Des Moines, what kind of things did they tell you that you could take, personal items did you get to take?

Just shaving and your toothbrush, that was about the extent of it. You didn't have anything to take because they furnished your clothing and everything. Your shoes and all of that were furnished.

Do you remember what kind of clothes they assigned to you?

It was kind of a gray pants and shirt, jacket like. You had two pair of underwear issued to you. For dress you had a regular Army uniform. That was for work purposes, you didn't work in that. But shoes they were heavy shoes. They had steel in the toes, which came in handy a few times; when you dropped a rock or something you didn't crush your toes any. But that was later up in Minnesota when we were handling rock, putting up dams or slew ways or what they call blockage. They would make the water go a certain way from eating into banks being eaten away by floods. Every time they had a flood they would loose a lot of ground and the farmer was trying to protect his field.

Do you remember what river that was on up there?

Right that was our main job to put some blockage it was just a means of going down steam but you made the water stay away from the bank. That was the main object if you put enough rock and stuff in to keep it from eating into the bank anymore. I guess it worked pretty good from what I seen. It did save the land from washing away and going down stream.

Was that a pretty good sized river?

It was just a stream. Actually there was very little water in there, but when it rained and down pour of rain that was when it did damage. It would was a lot of the dirt and cave in a lot of the farmland. You can see here how we built the ground up and put the rock so that the blockage would throw it away from the bank.

But the stream never had a name?

No, I don't remember any it might have but I don't remember if it did.

When you slept in the tent there did you have a bunk in there?

Oh yah.

Was it bunk beds or was it a single bed?

No it was a bunk bed, a single bed that was on the ground. We didn't have anything above us as far as a bunk being above us it was all just individual bunks.

Did it have a regular mattress or a corn shuck mattress or anything like that?

No, it had a small thin mattress I wouldn't call it a mattress it probably was two or three blankets thickness, it was comfortable as far as that was concerned.

Probably because you worked so hard that you were tired and didn't even notice.

Probably Not.

As the weather got colder did they issue you more winter clothes?

Yes they did they finally they finally issued us some overcoats, which were heavy and still were Army and some heavy socks and gloves. We were prepared more or less for winter. It wasn't a bad day if you had the clothing on but those night you couldn't get enough blankets or at least I didn't. I was cold most of the time. But you only got two blankets but that wasn't enough for that kind of temperatures up there.

They didn't try to heat the tents?

No, I don't remember any heating at all.

When you got to Arkansas were you in barracks or were you?

We were there, Mr. Crossett had built up a barracks, and I think he had eight barracks for 50 men to a barrack. And then you had your recreation hall, your mess hall and the officer's office and building. All were built by Mr. Crossett, it was his lumber and his mills and so lumber was no problem. We could get any lumber to build buildings and anything you wanted to.

Back to Minnesota, what did you have for a mess hall or recreation hall?

Tents everything was tents. Whether we took them with us to Arkansas or not I don't know.

I was just going to ask you that. Do you remember any of the people that were in your tent, by name at all?

No, I really don't. I have a list here but I don't remember any of them in my tent. And when we got into Arkansas I don't remember any of them.

How did you remember getting along with them? Well as what they call a leader, I was a leader there; I had no difficulty getting along with them. I was more or less the boss they just had to put up with me I guess. I had a good crew we dynamited a lot of the trees because we built a lot of roads for Mr. Crossett. And ah so we would get dynamite and blow the trees. We learned how to fall them so that they fell in a certain place that we wanted too why say you wanted fall them to the east then you would put in 4 or 6 sticks of dynamite depending on size of the tree. The farthest away from the east you would only put two on the east side that was higher up, near the top on the ground. So it would blow the dirt away from that but it leave the tree fall over to the direction that you wanted to fall in. But the 4 to 6 sticks down oh we would go down about 4 or 5 foot. You would blow that bottom root off and then the same time why they two sticks of the dynamite would throw the dirt away from the top of the ground by the tree to the side you wanted to fall on it would fall that way.

Did the tree actually lift up out of the ground?

No, no it just fell over when you would have two people both of them light you had to get the fuses start at the same time. In order to get one to blow, if you could get the top one the way you wanted the tree to fall it would blow just an instant before the one way down on the ground would. You could always drop it just like you wanted to drop it, but it had to be timed just right.

That is fascinating. Tell me about the food in the mess hall do you remember anything about it, the types of meals?

Oh, they were always good. I could never complain about the food in the mess hall. It was good.

What kind of food would they serve you?

Oh, just everyday food that you could buy in any café or any place. It was a variety of food. Potatoes and meat, of course. That was the main meals. You had the different types of food to eat.

So who did the cooking?

They had mess sergeants Army mess sergeants.

Ok did some of the CCC workers have to help once in a while?

Oh yah, we had KP duty as same as in the army they would come in and peel the spuds and potatoes and wash the dishes and gather the dishes up. It was just on a regular Army basis that they fed us.

So you remember being in camp during a holiday time or when you had a holiday meal?

Not especially. I was there all of the time but I don't remember anything particularly outstanding about it.

Now you said you were paid \$75 dollars, how long did you work there before you got that much money?

I think I started at that. Probably the first month I didn't, but actually all the time I was there I got the \$75 dollars a month and the others were \$50.

Most of those had a portion of that sent home to their parents or families. What do you remember about that?

You had to declare so much to go home to your parents. I declared to send \$ 60 dollars to my mother. She wanted*Lady in the background says, "Tell him why you had to give her \$60 dollars." Huh? She repeats this statement twice. "Tell him why you had to give her \$60 dollars!" (Laughter from Carl)* Because she said what do you need money for. You should have everything furnish for yah. I should have \$70. So that led to a discussion about sending her \$60 and me keeping \$15 dollars. But of course she got along with the \$60 dollars better than nothing. She settled for the \$60 and I kept the \$ 15 to myself.

Were there other brothers and sisters at home?

No I had a brother at home. He was too young to go into this. I don't think he cared for it really. I don't know. But he was a younger brother.

Was that \$60 her main subsistence?

Yes for her and my brother.

So what did you do with your \$15 a month?

Oh go to a show or something like that. Ah

Was that paid in cash?

Yes that \$15 at the camp in cash. But my mother was a check.

Some of the camps had coupon book canteen books.

We did have canteen books they were a little bit cheaper. You got those say ah oh something would cost \$ 5.00 but if you have the coupons you could get it for \$3.00 if you had the coupons, they were a little bit cheaper if you took them that way.

Some of the folks said they were paid in coupons and other was paid in cash too. Do you remember any of that?

No I got paid about 15 dollars and I could buy the coupons and that would be a discount buying them that way. If I remember right you bought a \$20 oh I mean a \$15 dollar you could buy a \$20 coupon book. You made a little bit on that.

Is there anything else that you spent your money on?

Well no, shows and probably ice cream and stuff like that were extra.

So when was payday?

That was at the first of the month.

And you made that cash last the whole month?

Not always, sometimes you would run a bit short. Then you would do without or borrowed from somebody and paid him back with an interest rate on that.

Do you remember days off, did you generally have weekend off or other days?

Yes, we had weekends off. Of course Saturdays was inspection day, and a after that we were left off for Saturday and Sunday.

What kind of hours did you work when you went out on a project?

We generally worked from 8:00 to 4:30.

Did they load you in a truck to transport you?

Oh yah, to take us out to different job to where ever we had to go, we generally didn't walk to far. Block or two maybe. But the truck was usually a 4 or 5 mile ride before you went to work.

If you didn't get up in time to make the truck?

You would get up, oh, you would get up. That bugle would sound and you would get up when he sounded off. There was not hesitating where that was concerned.

What do you remember about Sundays in the camp were there service that you could go to?

Oh, there was a church that we could go to. Down in Arkansas we went to a church down there more often than we did up in Minnesota. I think the church in Minnesota was a distance away. So there wasn't too many of that went, but in Arkansas it was near the town there so we went to church quite often.

You don't remember a church service in the camp?

No not in the camp.

What about extra activities like sports activities did you have anything like that?

Oh we had some musicals

**Singing with mikes the organ we had a piano that we brought into our day room. I remember we had to clean that think up first in the middle of the yard and a to clean it up. It was something. **

Where did they find it?

They found it in a hall in Crossett, Arkansas. We took it out of the hall, that a thing was full of bugs and stuff. By the time we made it to the camp why I thing we shook most of them out of there. We got a bunch of guys standing when we unloaded it and opened the drawers and everybody stood around stomping the ground. Getting rid of the bugs. But that was something.

Do you remember any sports activities like baseball or volleyball?

Volleyball I am sorry softball, we played that a great deal.

Did you have organized teams?

No, just be bunch ah if we got enough players, we would organize and take sides. It was nothing really named as far as named of player.

Don't remember playing any other CCC camps?

No, no.

How about boxing? We had some that did the boxing. Did you do that?

No

Was this at both camps that they did this?

Arkansas more so, because it was warmer. Not in Minnesota so much cause it was too cold to do that. But in Arkansas about every night we had enough time to play a game after the 6 o'clock we would get together and have the teams play. We would have a pretty good time most of the time.

How about a recreation hall?

We had one that we built there. We built a recreation hall where we had dancing and music. We had some girls from Crossett come out with their parents and fathers and such and we would have dances in the recreation hall. Every two weeks we would have a dance. We would have soda pop and ice cream and stuff that the Army would furnish us. It was a good time for the members there.

Do you recall if you were a leader you probably had to crack down on some of them? Do you remember any conflicts?

Well just one time that was in Minnesota I had a little guy and of course I was tall. And I don't remember if it was my size that he resented me but he threw a cap away from another man and I asked him to pick it up and he wouldn't do it. And I finally had to put the pressure on him to give the hat back. But that was the only time that I had a dispute with them, they were pretty much all go workers.

Were there any other conflicts with other members of the camp that you knew of?

No, not that I know of.

Do you remember any guys goofing off in or around the barracks?

No.

Or surely there were a bunch of young men there they would have to do that a little bit.

Oh, I they might have but I don't remember anyone getting into trouble or going AWOL or anything.

Ok.

Now in the Army I know that I had to take someone to there quarters and I had to take the train coming so I had to stop. And then I heard a man just scream like mad. And I run down there to see what was the matter and he had stuck his toes underneath the train. Sheared them off! And ah that was in the Army and took him to the hospital and the FBI and I don't know if this was a lot of foolishness or what but ah word got around that the man the got his toes clipped off, why the FBI arrested him for destroying Government property. Well, you were government property as far as that was concerned. We never saw him again.

In your CCC camp you had rules that you were expected to follow, I am sure everybody did not follow them all of the time, what happened to those that broke a rule that didn't make a bed check or?

You know I don't know the answer to that. I don't remember anyone getting into trouble.

Any K.P. duty?

No, I don't remember any of that.

OK

Some of the camps offered some educational opportunities classes. Did you take any of those?

No.

Ah, you already mentioned some of the types of projects that you were involved in. Do you remember any specific duties that you had to do more so than other types of duties?

No mine was a where to place the rocks and stuff. The engineer would tell me what he wanted. If I was puzzled about something I could always ask how it was done. It was mostly building these dams and blockages that we were interested in. We never had any trouble with the work concern.

Were you a leader in the barracks or outside the post?

I was a leader all of the time.

All the time.

All the time.

So did the people that worked on your project did they come out of your barrack or other barracks?

They could come from any barracks. It just depends, we did more or less stay together as one group but we could all intermix in different jobs. Some people are good at concrete we put those just work on concrete. They could choose what job they wanted. If they wanted to haul rock they could hall rock. It didn't make any difference as long as we had the people there to do the work. The engineer we had would oversee it and if he needed a certain type of rock here why we would put that type of rock in and concrete it in. But ah, some were good with the concrete and knew how to mix it. But we would use those people to mix concrete then. Each one had there specialty if you wanted to call it that.

So, if you got new people into the camp, who assigned them to different projects?

That would be up to the commander of the camp.

So you didn't pick them yourself?

No, we didn't pick them they were assigned to us and we had to get them to do the best work we could get out of them.

Now each day you would go out to work on a project, did you pretty much know you had to go out and work on that project that day?

Oh yah.

Or did you get an assignment from the camp commander every so often?

Well if we finished a job up then we would be assigned a new job but as long as we were working on one that we hadn't finished it than we would be assigned to that job to finish it up. When it was done we would be assigned a new job.

So did you have any special type of equipment that you would use?

No, just wheel barrow and shovels.

They are special types of equipment aren't they? *(Laughter)*

How did you get those were they kept in a tool crib or did you keep them in the truck overnight or leave them out on the job site?

Wheelbarrow would be left high and dry in case we got any rain why it didn't get washed away but they could be left on the job. The picks and shovels and stuff that were light we would take them back on the truck then. But the wheelbarrow we would leave there until the job was done.

You didn't have to check the shovels and picks back in?

No, they usual just drove back to camp why they were on the truck until next morning and we would go back out again.

I was going to ask you if you remembered any of your fellow workers?

No, I don't.

Have to look at his book. Mr. Watson has quite a memory book of photos and other things that we will look at in a little bit.

Oh yah.

Do you remember at camp that there were city kids and farm kids, Do you remember groups not getting along at times?

No not really. We never had any trouble with getting along with one another. Unless is was crowding into the food line and trying to get ahead of somebody else instead of going to the end of the line. Why they would try to get up closer in the line and there would be a scramble and he would get thrown out of there or somebody would get him out of there and he would get to the back of the line, but that was the only time in the food line.

Do you remember if there were any minorities?

Nope we had no minorities in it. They were all from Iowa and they were all white.

Were there any specific skills that you learned while there in camp other than balance a wheelbarrow?

No, not really. All of the skills that we used there were probably basic on how to handle a wheelbarrow or to use and shovel and pick axe or something like that. Well I take that back when we were in Minnesota we blew up some trees and we learned through the engineer how to handle dynamite. And that was careful you didn't get to throw that around very much.

Did you ever use that skill after you left the CCC camp?

No I never did. We didn't use many sticks of dynamite in Minnesota we only used about 20 sticks of dynamite. But down in Arkansas we used it by the box full when we were blowing trees up down there. We were careful with it because it was a little more potent than what we had up in Minnesota.

So how did you pick up the dynamite I mean they just didn't leave that sitting around the campsite?

No no that was keep in a car more or less. In Minnesota a car would bring it out, but the engineer would bring it out. But in south we could put in the truck, because it wasn't as sensitive as the stuff in Minnesota was. Minnesota you could get a bang out of that thing. I think it was 60%, if I remember right. And ah but ah they got to throwing it around, but the engineer put a stop to that because he was afraid one would blow up when they through it against the bricks or something. Any he comes to me and I had to go and take the sticks of dynamite they had out. And we didn't bring it and we didn't give it out until we were ready to use it. Then I would issue it to them. We could have probably gotten hurt if they would have got a hold of something that was say 40 or 60%. It probably would have gone off.

You probably learned some leadership skills, being a leader that way. Did you use those later on in the military?

Well yes, I did in the military I did have a crew but they were not as big as in the CCC camp, there we had 50 people to a leader.

In the CCC camp you had 50 to a leader?

Yes, as a rule there was 4 and sometimes 5 of us if there were 250 in the company then we would have the 5 leaders. Our company was 200 people and I was one of the leaders.

Did you ever get hurt when you were working up there?

No.

Do you remember anyone else getting hurt?

No, I remember one man he got hurt falling down. He fell down the incline on the rock that we were building a slew way. And he got his knees banged up and he spent a few days in the hospital. That was

through his own carelessness from stepping on some rock that was not fastened down he thought they were fastened down but he tripped and fell down the slow way and banged his knees up.

Did you have a camp medical facility? No, no. Did you go to a local hospital?

Yah, Yah, in fact I had a toothache so I went to the local dentist.

What did he do to relieve you of the toothache?

Oh he gave me a shot in there. I seemed to quiet it down and seemed to disappear but when I got to the Army then they took the roots out then. But ah they he got quieted down and I didn't have the ached that I had.

Would that have used the Doctor in the community or did they have a camp Doctor or medical officer?

No we had the camp Doctor there if we needed him but I don't remember anybody getting sick except my toothache. I know the used a Doctor from the outside.

Do you remember any disease in camp?

No

How long were you in all together?

I went in on June 18th and we went to Minnesota until the 10th of November and then we went to Arkansas in the.... I was there until 34 and then I signed up for another term. Another year in the so...ah.... I think it was in April of 35 that I came out of the CCC camps.

You were in a year and a half.

Yes

You told us about the insect problem with the piano. Do you remember any insect problems in the barracks or rodent problems?

No, they sprayed those they had a person that went around and sprayed the barracks. He didn't go out with us. He stayed at camp and sprayed that was his job, killing all the bugs; he would go around the mess hall, especially the mess hall. But ah he also went into the barracks and sprayed there.

Sometimes the local CCC camps went down in the local community and did things and helped there like windstorms or some sort of disaster situation or special event.

We never had any.

Did you have any contacts out in the outside community in either of those camps?

No, our activity was in the camp itself. Wabasha, Minnesota we just had tents, but down in Crossett we had wooden barracks there.

But ah they I think we had a few entertainers come out and did comedy and singing at our recreation hall there. I think two or three times.

You said you went to some shows. Did you go to any dances or things like that?

I didn't and I don't remember going to any shows. Some of the members might have. But ah I don't remember any of that.

Didn't you need a girl while you were in camp?

No.

Get friendly at all.

No. Some of the boys did, I was kind of bashful with the girls, but some of the boys went out to the rec. hall they had dances they would come out there on different times. A couple dozen of them would come out. Then we had the young people from Crossett come out and dance and ah.... Taped stopped.

You were talking about gals in the community and ah. Some of the guys met them and was there any sort of conflicts between the young men in the community and the men in the camp?

Oh there was one time we were coming down in the community of Crossett and we came out singing ah songs that the citizens didn't like and they would come to the door and they would holler at us to shut up and get back to camp. And quit our singing and we were singing songs that they didn't like. They were songs. The ones you don't hear anymore. Pause...

Do you remember any of them?

Well, I was trying to remember a one of them was a southern song and we were singing it. But I can't recall the name of it now but... That was the only thing we actually did to agitate the people by singing the song walking out of Crossett.

Some of the camps they had some community groups like the Masonic Lodge or Elks or Odd fellows, do you remember any connection with any of those?

No I don't.

Ok.

Well other than the local community not liking your singing was there any other problems with the local community?

No.

Was the local community glad to have the camp there?

They seemed to as far as I know because we were always greeted civilly in the downtown or shopping they always spoke to us. The only thing was them coming to the door when they didn't like our singing. That was the only thing we had with them.

Of the whole CCC camp experience what is your most memorable experience or if there is more than one rattle them all off?

Well, I don't know if there is just one, it was a good time, we didn't have any trouble that I know of. It was a means of getting some wages and sending it home to my mother because she needed it. I look back on it as pretty good times as having something to do. I was better than do nothing at home.

So why did you get out?

I got out in April of 35 and I went in I listed for one year after my first term was up. An I got out in 35 and went up to Dennison and was looking for a job and went into the telephone office and Delbert Elway was a sportsman and course I had a good showing as a football player. I was probably a little bit outstanding in that so he recognized me and asked me what he could do for me and I said you could give me a job. And he said sure I can do that. I was tickled to death when he said those words because I had a job I went to work for the telephone company.

Were you tired of the being in the CCC camp or tired of the military?

Well I just had enough of the CCC camp, so the pay at that time was \$75 dollars and that was pretty good money. But I had enough of that.

What would you say was your biggest accomplishment over all?

Well I don't know, I suppose the taking care of 50 people or young boys and getting along with them and getting the work done I guess to me was a pretty good accomplishment at that time. I never regretted it, I

always thought fondly upon it spending those two years. I think it would do a lot of boys good if we had it today.

We hear a lot of that from people.

Did it change your like somehow at all?

No, not really it did not change my life any. It probably gave me some experience in getting along and talking with people. But I think it was a good thing. It did a lot of good as far as I could see.

So after you left the CCC camp went to work at the telephone company in Dennison for a while. Did you have to be in the military again?

No I was done with the military as far as military was concerned until World War II.

That is what I meant.

I was working for the telephone company and I was going to radio engineering down in Omaha. They came in there one day, and I was just about ready to graduate. They came in there looking for people for inspectors and so I asked them. He wanted a radio more than anything, but I said what about telephone men do you need any of them. He said we sure do. So he signed me there to be an inspector in Chicago on telephone equipment. And I went in there and I was there about a year. Looking and inspecting different apparatuses for the Army. I went and got along good with even the ____? What they were trying to sell the government. I can't blame Kellogg because here is a specification this is what you go by. Who ever drew that thing up did not know what he was doing because I wanted to drop test one of those boards and ah it took me a long time. Took me a long time almost 9 months to get a drop test. I was down putting in a switchboard on a DC 3 plane to go to Alaska. I come back and one of the people there work there said they made that drop test. I said where is it at know and he told me that a fellow by the name of Lahmarks had it. And ah when I went to him and of course he denied it but it was just what I expected. It was just junk it would have been junk because they couldn't have used it. If they would have dropped it or even rough handling would have done the same thing. So when I saw it why I turned and well they had 250 of them stacked up against the wall. And they wanted me to accept them and I wouldn't do it. But ah so when the man came down from headquarters he had orders to fire me. And I said I wouldn't even take a written letter. There just junk if they were dropped. I told him to look at them and you decide what to do so he did and he couldn't believe it. He started to tell Kellogg that they should clean it up and they said we are going by the specs. And ah, I tried to get the spec's changed but I didn't have any success at it. I had made one up the way I would accept it and he took that one down. And he dropped it on the desk three times and it worked each time, except on the third time it broke the back lid and it was made out of half inch mahogany. And it broke the closing lid. But as far as working, it still worked. But ah, I understand that after I was in the Army and I was corresponding with this man and he told me in his letter that they were making them now as I had made one up and he thought that it would be a better that way. And I guess it was, because I saw one later on and I looked it over and it was wired about the way I had made it up and made braces and tied them so they couldn't come apart and the screw and to hold them. It was about the size of this coil and this long. About this size and to hold this they had one little screw in the top. You know when they drop that, that screw is going to break loose and your not going to have nothing there but a coil, and different thing like they changed. Now they had all those parts in Kellogg right there I went around and gathered them up and made one that I would accept. But I didn't realize that you just couldn't change this. You had to go back to the guy who did the original drawing to get that thing changed. And it is a job.

Did you continue as an inspector through World War II then?

I was an inspector until I called or wrote the draft board to give me two weeks before they had to go in and well he gave me 10 days before I went in.

The major because of this deal with this BD 71 and BD72 there was 6 in a twelve-volt switchboard. He gave me a letter and I didn't know what was in the letter, I didn't even open it up. And I got down to Fort

Cook and I was going in to the CB's that is what I wanted to get in to. I had talked to them in Chicago but ah he promised me I would be petty officer and then he left. And a younger boy sitting in there he said you get him to put that in writing. He said I didn't talk to you but once you get that in writing cause once you say I do and the Navy or Army you will do as they tell you to do. And he said if you put it in writing then you got a chance to hold them to it. When I asked him to do that, he wouldn't do it. So I didn't pursue it any farther but ah, this letter from the major it when I got to recruiting it said you will go to this man we be assigned to the Signal Corps, Camp Crowder, Missouri. And that is how I got in the Signal Corps. And I became an instructor at pole climbing and that sort of thing. That was another funny thing I ran into Lieutenant Farmer well he was a Captain now when I saw him. He had been in Nebraska and he was way down in Nieber. And he had to go through the town of Grinnell to get long distance or make any calls that he wanted to make and Lieutenant Farmer and I met him down there he was in the Company there and got word over the speaker to tell Jetter, Private Jetter to come to the office there and he appointed me to the Captain and I went up and saluted and told him I was reported as ordered and he got asking me if I was from Nebraska and come to find out he was one of the officers that I was had talked to about getting better telephone connections then what they had. So we had quite a long talk about that. It was amazing to; well I they had me teaching telephone now I told two lieutenant's we will now go to a ground return and I will show you how to do that. And they wanted to know what that meant and I said will put the stake in the ground and you will find a wire and you'll talk through the ground through the wire. He got mad he said are you joking us? If you are you are going to be court marshaled. And ah the Captain Farmer came by and he said are you making fun of them. He told them if he told you that you would be talking into a ground you better take his word for it, he has been doing it for 10 years. What I finally proved to him if you ground one side you could make it work.

I think I will shut this off.