

DNR: My name is Bob Schierbaum, the date is June 21, 2002, and I am interviewing Ethric Brown in Red Oak, Iowa. Ethric, nice to talk to you today.

Ethric: Well, I belong to the CCCs camp back in 1938 and 39. And I went in from Corning, IA.

DNR: That was your hometown.

Ethric: That was my hometown. Adams County. And I went in with Lawrence, what was his name, Lawrence Chaney, from Villisca, no Nodaway.

DNR: Lawrence Chaney?

Ethric: Lawrence Chaney. He and I went in the same day. He was a cat skinner.

DNR: O.K. Tell me what that is.

Ethric: Cat skinner, he operated a caterpillar.

DNR: O.K.

Ethric: He made around these farms.

DNR: Like contour plowing, like contours and terraces.

Ethric: Terraces and stuff. And I worked building fence and planting trees. Osage Orange, thousands of them. And we had a root cellar where we kept the trees. We used to go out on the truck everyday.

DNR: How old were you when you enrolled in the CCCs?

Ethric: Well, I graduated from high school when I was about 18 I think. And I am 82 now.

DNR: What year did you graduate from high school then?

Ethric: 1938.

DNR: 1938. O.K. And you said you are 82 now?

Ethric: Yes, just was 82, June the 4th.

DNR: What did you do before you went to the CCC camp?

Ethric: I went to high school.

DNR: O.K. Did you work at all while you were in high school?

Ethric: Oh yeah, I worked the bowling alley. I fired furnaces, cleared sidewalks. Anything I could get to do, I did.

DNR: What CCCs camps were you assigned to?

Ethric: This one over here.

DNR: O.K. the number on this was?

Ethric: 2723 CCC, Civilian Conservation Corp.

DNR: Were you ever transferred from this camp?

Ethric: No.

DNR: No, o.k. The dates, do you know when you went in?

Ethric: I am not sure, it was in the fall of 38.

DNR: O.K.

Ethric: And the spring of 39 I got out, no it was the spring of 40 I got out.

DNR: O.K. Can you tell me about your first day at camp?

Ethric: I can't remember, man that been a long time ago.

DNR: Do you remember anything about, did you have any shots?

Ethric: Oh, I had them all before I came over here. You see, I belonged to the National Guard.

DNR: Oh, you belonged to the National Guard.

Ethric: Company K, 168th Infantry, Corning, Iowa.

DNR: Do you remember anything like issuing uniforms, issuing your bunk or anything like that?

Ethric: Oh, yeah I drew all my supplies from the supply Sergeant.

DNR: Do you remember what all the supplies were you were issued?

Ethric: No, I don't remember all the supplies that were issued. My clothes yeah, I had my clothes from the skin out. My shoes and well, you can see here what I wore. Here is my work uniform.

DNR: So this was the summer uniform?

Ethric: Yeah.

DNR: And this would have been your winter?

Ethric: Well, that is work.

DNR: Your work outfit. O.K. the work outfit, was it the dark olive? Or was it the suntan?

Ethric: The denim.

DNR: Was it blue denim?

Ethric: Blue denim.

DNR: Was the shirt, was it a button down shirt?

Ethric: Yeah, just like the old military. Wool and scratchy. And here I am in dress uniform. Right there.

DNR: So they made you wear a tie even. Did they issue shaving kits and things like that?

Ethric: No, we had to furnish our own.

DNR: You had to furnish your own. O.K. Do you recall what personal items you brought with you to the camp? Did you bring your shaving kit?

Ethric: Yeah, I bought my shaving kit and my toothbrush. Stuff like that from home.

DNR: Was there anything else that you brought? Did you bring civilian clothes with you or anything?

Ethric: I had civilian clothes. This is what I looked like in civilian clothes.

DNR: But did you bring those to the camp?

Ethric: Oh yeah. I brought civvies.

DNR: Was there anything like an alarm clock or a radio or anything like that?

Ethric: I was a bugler and the guy got me up a half hour before everybody else and I blew reveilly every morning. And when it was cold, he walked through the barracks and blew a whistle. Woke everybody up. About 30 men barracks. We had 30 men in each barracks.

DNR: Based on the pictures, it looks like a peaked roof to it.

Ethric: That is about all, if it was 20 degrees below outside, it was 25 below inside.

DNR: I see. O.K. Real nice.

Ethric: No insulation.

DNR: No insulation at all.

Ethric: None. Just boards.

DNR: Were there any items you were not allowed to bring to the camp?

Ethric: Oh yeah, there were lots of things you couldn't bring to the camp.

DNR: Can you remember anything you were told you couldn't bring or?

Ethric: I don't know. Ethric, talking to his wife, said – You ought to know as much about it as I do. I was going with her at the time. We were dating.

DNR: Can you describe the barracks you lived in?

Ethric: They were just plain old barn boards and about 30 man barracks and

DNR: What was the floor? Was it like plywood?

Ethric: Wood.

DNR: Just a wood floor?

Ethric: Just a tongue and groove.

DNR: O.K.

Ethric: And we had to scrub it every night. In the wintertime we kicked our shoes lose from the floor in the morning.

DNR: Because they would get frozen to the floor.

Ethric: They would get frozen to the floor.

DNR: O.K. I have heard that story before so.

Ethric: We had one guy that wouldn't get up so we drove nails down through his shoes and climb under the barracks and clamped them.

DNR: That would take care of the shoes wouldn't it?

Ethric: Yeap. I took the bugling job on a count of the guy that was the bugler left the camp.

DNR: I see, so they needed a new bugler.

Ethric: They needed another bugler.

DNR: Had you bugled before?

Ethric: I played in the band at Corning in high school. I played trumpet 14 years.

DNR: O.K. Going back to where your bunk and stuff, who provided the blankets, sheets, whatever.

Ethric: That was all supply sergeants. They had a supply sergeant at the camp and he had all the supplies, sheets, pillowcases, and blankets. The bunks were metal but they collapsed. They folded.

DNR: Folded metal bunks. You didn't have one on top of another.

Ethric: Single bunks. And we had spaces in there that we had to take care.

DNR: Your area. Were the heads of the bunks all the same direction?

Ethric: No, alternated. One one way and the next one the other way so on down the line.

DNR: Do you remember any of your bunk mates?

Ethric: Oh yeah, Lawrence Chaney from Nodaway was bunkmate on the left. He was on the end and I was second. And we were bunkmates all the time I was in there, except when I run the canteen. I was canteen steward part time.

DNR: Do you remember anyone else that bunkmates?

Ethric: Oh yeah, there was one from Clarinda, Chickie Travis. We called him Chickie. I don't know what his real name was. He was from Clarinda. Oh, I don't know. There was Lastly, he was from Villisca. And the guy that took care of the latrine. He was from Villisca. I can't remember his name. He was a big guy. He was a \$36 a month man.

DNR: He made more because he took care of the latrine?

Ethric: Yes.

DNR: So how did you guys get along?

Ethric: Fine. We had a barrack leader. He was from Imogene. We had one from Council Bluffs. He was a prizefighter. No one gave him any trouble.

DNR: The prizefighter was he a barrack leader as well?

Ethric: Yeah.

DNR: From Council Bluffs.

Ethric: Yeah. Wayne Chute was his name. Wayne Chute, C h u t e.

DNR: Can you tell me about the food in the mess hall?

Ethric: Oh it was good food. We had a mess sergeant and he was responsible for our food and everything. He bought from Red Oak wholesale mostly. And that is down where the motorcycle shop is now. There use to be a grocery store right there.

DNR: The motorcycle shop is that the Harley Davidson?

Ethric: The Harley Davidson, well where they are now was a grocery store. The Red Oak Wholesale.

DNR: I see, who did the cooking?

Ethric: Well there was a kid by the name of Bruce, Mike Bruce he was a cook. He was killed in a car wreck right west of town. Christmas eve. He was one of the cooks and Hank Duran was another one. I forget, there was several cooks. Then we had steady kp. There was kp all the time and then when we drew extra details than they would give you kp duty.

DNR: You mention this Mike Bruce was killed in a car wreck. Was that during the CCCs days or was it later?

Ethric: Later.

DNR: Can you recall anything about Holiday meals?

Ethric: No, we had special meals though. They roasted turkeys and pumpkin pies things like that during the holidays.

DNR: Do you remember when payday was?

Ethric: It was always the end of the month. I always blew pay call.

DNR: You blew pay call. So that was another bugle thing you had to do.

Ethric: Yeah.

DNR: O.K. and how much were you paid?

Ethric: I was paid \$30 a month to start and then I got \$6 extra for keeping another set of books and being bugler. And I had no detail.

DNR: So you are keeping books.

Ethric: Oh yeah, I kept books all the time. Canteen, stuff like that.

DNR: And of the \$30 you got –

Ethric: \$5 stayed in the camp and \$25 went home.

DNR: And how did you spend your pay? The \$5 you had.

Ethric: I took her to a show a couple of times a month. .15 cents each time we went to the show.

DNR: .I see, 15 cents huh.

Ethric: Yip.

DNR: Do you remember any particular shows that you saw that was fantastic?

Ethric: No, we saw them all didn't we, just about.

DNR: You probably just walk to the movie theater?

Ethric: Oh yeah, we didn't have a car; you could not have a car.

DNR: Couldn't have a car. O.K.

Ethric: Could not have a car of any kind. Some of the guys had cars and they kept them in garages around town so they wouldn't be seen.

DNR: Anything else you remember spending your money on other than going to shows.

Ethric: No, well we got married. We had about a hundred dollars I think when we got married. We were married in 1940.

DNR: So you were able to save some of the money you got.

Ethric: Well my mother sent back some of the money, she didn't spend it all. I gave it to her and she put it in the post office. That is when they had postal saving.

DNR: As far as your family at home, were you of a large family?

Ethric: No, just my sister and I, the only ones. I have 3 brothers(?) and a sister buried at Brooks. And she was one of 6, I think. Got a picture of her here with her family. She was the only girl. That was her folks and she is the only one left. There is a set of twins there. Len and Guy.

DNR: She was from Red Oak then?

Ethric: No, I met her in Villisca in 1936. I was in high school, a sophomore in high school. See I graduated in 38.

DNR: Do you recall what days off you had?

Ethric: Just about any of them I wanted, I guess.

DNR: But, the work at the camp and stuff, was it Monday through Friday?

Ethric: It was Monday through Friday and we didn't go out of camp if it was below 10 above. 10 above was our chopping off place or whatever you would call it. We didn't go out of camp when it was too cold in the wintertime.

DNR: I see. How did you spend your weekends then?

Ethric: Oh, usually with her.

DNR: I see. All right. How was the Sabbath observed in the camp?

Ethric: Oh, I went to the Methodist Church and I sang with Judy Stuart. He was a color boy. Had a beautiful voice. He lives in I think, Kansas City, Judy Stuart. And then Bob Cozad was another guy that I used to sing with. We sang over at KFNH and KOIL in Council Bluffs.

DNR: So did you have trio or quartet or how many of them sang?

Ethric: We had a whole bunch of them that sang. We even had a instructor by the name of Dale - what the hell was his last name - Dale somebody - but anyway he was an instructor, voice instructor. I even went down to Shenandoah and sang one time at the church. I was tenor. I sang in the Blue Jacket Choir in Chicago during the war.

DNR: Oh, really. O.K.

Ethric: It was 200 voices.

DNR: All right. Was there any sport activities at camp?

Ethric: Oh, some of the guys played ball or something like that. We had a ballpark at the south end of the camp. We built it ourselves.

DNR: Was there any traveling teams or anything like that?

Ethric: No, no, there wasn't any money for travel.

DNR: How about other activities like was there any pool tables?

Ethric: We had pool tables in the canteen. We had 2 pool tables and we shot pool until somebody beat you and then you had to sit down.

DNR: Was there ping pong tables too?

Ethric: No, you could make ping-pong tables out of them by laying a sheet of plywood over the pool table.

DNR: How about like cards, did a lot of the guys play cards?

Ethric: Yes, we played pitch; we played all kinds of poker, stuff like that. And they played poker for nickel or dime.

DNR: So there was a little bit of gambling?

Ethric: A little bit. Once in a while in the service, we use to shot crapes.

DNR: Did you ever do that in the CCC camp?

Ethric: No, not me.

DNR: Not you.

Ethric: I didn't have any money.

DNR: Did you take part in any of the sports activities?

Ethric: Very seldom. I was pretty busy blowing the bugle.

DNR: Can you tell me about any personal conflicts you might have had.

Ethric: I had one guy I didn't like him very well. I had a big long parade bugle and one time we were walking back from chow, breakfast I guess. Anyway he said something I didn't like and I turn around and wrapped that bugle around his neck. I had to buy a new bugle.

DNR: What did he do about that?

Ethric: I had to buy a new bugle. He didn't have much to say after that.

DNR: Was you have been disciplined for doing that?

Ethric: No, they didn't. They knew he was kind of an agitator anyway.

DNR: Any other conflicts that you can recall.

Ethric: One of the boys, This Wayne Shoot, going with Irene Franks, and he went home one weekend and there were a couple of boys gave his girlfriend a bad time and he smacked one of them with a ten inch punch right here on the chin and broke his jaw in two places. Had to wire his jaw shut.

DNR: So he was fighting a local boy here.

Ethric: Yeah. Well these two guys were in CCC camp too. One of them was Jack Hatten and I forget the other boy's name. But anyway Wayne found out about it. Boy, he was pretty well off. Quite a fighter. You tried to get along with him.

DNR: Was he the prizefighter?

Ethric: Yes, he was our barracks leader.

DNR: He was your barracks leader and he was dating a local girl, this Irene Franks?

Ethric: Irene Franks and her dad was the fire chief.

DNR: Did they end up getting married or do you know?

Ethric: I don't know.

DNR: O.K.

Ethric: I don't know what happened to either one of them.

DNR: I see. When problems took place in the CCC camp, how were they resolved?

Ethric: Probably the Officers. We had V. W. Packer was the commander and he was from the National Guard. And our doctor, we had a doctor. He was a Lieutenant from the National Guard. And he was N i e w c z a s, Niewczas. They pronounced it Nipczas. He was killed in World War II with the evacuation of Java.

DNR: That was pretty early in the war.

Ethric: Yeah, World War II.

DNR: O.K. What would the commander have done to discipline somebody?

Ethric: Oh probably restricted them to the barracks, didn't give them any liberty.

DNR: I would think that would be a punishment. The type of discipline used to punish rule breakers, would it have been a type of punishment as well?

Ethric: Yeah. Some of them had to take care of the barracks and stuff like that.

DNR: I understand there were some educational or trade opportunities in the camp.

Ethric: You could take extra courses. We had bookkeeping or something like that you could study it. We had education and all kinds of education that you could do. We even had a barber. They had a barber course. We had one guy that would cut our hair for .15 cents.

DNR: Oh, yeah. O.K. Did you take part of any of these trainings?

Ethric: No, I was pretty busy blowing the bugle. I did some of the, I blew taps at some of the, oh local funerals, and stuff like that. I blew the taps. I used that big parade bugle. She could hear it. She worked up on Cubeball Street and in the morning if the wind was right, she could hear that bugle.

DNR: You said you were pretty busy with the bugle, how often a day did you blow the bugle?

Ethric: Oh, twice every day, in the morning to wake people up and raise the flag, that was reveilly, and then at night when they took the flag down. I had to blow the morning assembly, anytime we had an assembly I had to blow the bugle.

DNR: When the flag went down that was taps?

Ethric: Evening colors.

DNR: Evening colors, o.k.

Ethric: Yeah, morning colors and evening colors.

DNR: All right. So you didn't take any of those classes. Do you know who the teachers were for those classes?

Ethric: No, we had a special educator, you know he was hired by the conservation commission.

DNR: He was a special teacher hired by the Conservation Commission.

Ethric: Yeah, for courses you know, like bookkeeping and education and all that kind of stuff.

DNR: So they were not military instructors. They were civilian instructors.

Ethric: Civilian instructors.

DNR: Where were the classes held, do you know?

Ethric: Probably in the barracks.

DNR: In the barracks, o.k. What were some of the main projects your camp was involved in?

Ethric: Oh, mostly soil conservation. Drop inlets, and we would build fence.

Maybe miles of fence and plant trees. We planted trees by the thousands.

DNR: You said before usually Osage Orange or did you plant different varieties of trees?

Ethric: Different varieties. Osage Orange, was one of the big ones, that is hedge. That is another name for hedge. Two guys could plant several thousand trees per day if they were good at it. You know.

DNR: So what did you have to plant the trees with? Did you have just a shovel?

Ethric: Just a round point shovel.

DNR: You said two guys working together. So one guy carried the tree and the other guy dig the hole. The other one put the tree in.

Ethric: Put the tree in and stomped on it.

DNR: O.K.

Ethric: Several thousand per day.

DNR: Per day. O.K. Do you know where the trees came from that you planted?

Ethric: No. They were from nurseries. Mount Arbor down at Shenandoah used to send up a lot of them. Mount Arbor Nurseries, Shenandoah.

DNR: All right. Some of the specific duties that you did?

Ethric: Oh I did most anything that was bugling, musical mostly. I took care of the barracks.

DNR: So because you were a bugler did you go out on the field?

Ethric: Oh sometimes.

DNR: Sometimes but for the most part you stayed in the camp?

Ethric: Most times I stayed in camp. But I went out in the field sometimes, worked so on and so forth.

DNR: O.K. So when you went out in the field what was the some of the jobs you did?

Ethric: Mostly conservation.

DNR: So that was the tree planting. The drop inlet structure you said, did you have like some pipe or did you pour concrete?

Ethric: We poured concrete. We laid sod on the drop inlets. We laid a lot of sod, we had sod cutter. We built, we had two knives, guys would ride behind the truck and then we would roll the sod, put it up on the truck.

DNR: That was hard work.

Ethric: Hard work, many, many hours.

DNR: Yip, I have done that. What type of skills do you think you learn working out in the field?

Ethric: Ha, most of the skills were hard work. Hard work was most of the skills.

DNR: Did you ever do any wheelbarrow work or anything like that?

Ethric: No, they did that CCC camp that built Lake Ahquabi. They did a lot of wheelbarrow work. They built that dam and that was wheelbarrow. Dirt.

DNR: Sure, Ahquabi, Lake of three Fires at Bedford. A number of those. Did you have anybody that was training you?

Ethric: Oh yeah , we had leaders. We had Pop Brown, and we had dirt work guys, guys that were doing dirt work. He was the boss and then he went up to the bomber plant that was in Omaha and took care of the yard. He was the yard man up there.

DNR: This was that Pop Brown?

Ethric: No, I can't remember his name. Pop Brown was one of the guys that was, he was a leader and he was a civilian.

DNR: He was a civilian. Did you get along with your leaders o.k.? Anything that you remember about them or?

Ethric: No.

DNR: How did you get your work assignment every day?

Ethric: Well, usually the leader would know where we were going to work and what we were going to do. And then we would have to take our orders from him.

DNR: Would the leaders have had a big pow wow someplace or something to decide where they were going?

Ethric: Yes I suppose, Conservation Corp and all that stuff.

DNR: What type of equipment did you get to use?

Ethric: Mostly shovel. Mexican dragline.

DNR: That's what they called it. How was it issued to you? Did you get a shovel issued to you everyday?

Ethric: Every day they had guys that handed them out. And then the same man would take them at night and if they weren't clean he would throw them back out.

DNR: I see, they had to be clean.

Ethric: They had to be clean and oiled.

DNR: What kind of oil would you put on them?

Ethric: Oh just plain motor oil.

DNR: Just motor oil. O.K. Do you remember any of your fellow workers that you worked with out in the field?

Ethric: That's been years and years. I think there is a picture in here of the guys that went out in the field. Worked, here, and then me when I went out in the field, so on and so forth..

DNR: You mentioned barracks, how many barracks were there at the Red Oak Camp?

Ethric: 5. And we had at one time 250 in camp.

DNR: 250 in camp.

Ethric: Yeah, in the whole area.

DNR: Do you have any contact with any of your fellow CCC workers today?

Ethric: No.

DNR: In the camp, I assume you had some kids that were probably from the city and some kids from the country.

Ethric: Oh yeah, we had them from all over.

DNR: Were there any conflicts in that regard?

Ethric: Some of them you had to put a rock in their right hand so they could tell their right from their left.

DNR: Didn't know right from left.

Ethric: And they would send up a bunch of guys from Missouri. We had to pile brush around a car to get them in it. They were un-educated.

DNR: Was that a problem or not?

Ethric: Yeah, we would usual break them pretty quick.

DNR: Were there any minority groups in your camp? African-American, Hispanic?

Ethric: No, they were all white.

DNR: All white, no American Indians.

Ethric: None that I know of.

DNR: Can you tell me about any specific skills you learned at camp?

Ethric: No.

DNR: You just really perfected your bugling.

Ethric: The bugle was what I was best at.

DNR: Yeah. O.K. Did you ever bugle again after you got the camp?

Ethric: No, well in the navy I did.

DNR: Oh you did. O.K.

Ethric: I was in the drum and bugle corp.

DNR: O.K.

Ethric: We had 120 piece drum and bugle corp. I was the assistant drum and bugle master. Harry Green was the guy that was the boss.

DNR: How many did you say was in there?

Ethric: 120.

DNR: 120. Now did you perform all over the place then?

Ethric: No there were usually inspections and places like that. Sometimes if they would have parties or something like that. We would lead the parade and stuff, so on and so forth. Ballgames, we had ball games over at the main site, and sometimes I would take the whole band.

DNR: I see. So you were, what, the assistant leader you say.

Ethric: Yes, Assistant Drum and Bulge Master. We had one kid, his name Recupado and he was in a movie. Best Foot Forward. He was a drummer. They had them big parade drums, big, hundred and twenty of them. About 60 drums and 60 bugles. There was 120 man corp. And we got no detail being in the drum and bugle corp. No detail, we didn't have any kp or anything like, no detail.

DNR: Were there any injuries at work?

Ethric: No, sometimes if you got a tooth broke off or something like that they would send you up to have it repaired or something. The local dentist or local doctor.

DNR: They didn't have a dentist in the campground then?

Ethric: No, they had one that came around. I had some wisdom teeth, I had some of them dug out. And the dentist happened to be in camp. He dug them out, sewed up the gums. I can remember that.

DNR: Were there any diseases in camp?

Ethric: Oh yeah, all the time.

DNR: Oh yeah.

Ethric: We had a doctor. Dr. Lt. Niewczas and guys that get the measles or mumps or something like that they would put them in the hospital. We had a barracks that was made out for a hospital.

DNR: So one barracks was made out for a hospital?

Ethric. Yeah. Well, it was right down here at the bottom of the hill, right now.

DNR: Is the building still there or not?

Ethric: Yip

DNR: O.K. Measles, mumps, were you ever sick?

Ethric: No, the only thing I had was wisdom teeth dug out. But otherwise we never had any communicable diseases or anything like that.

DNR: O.K. Did you ever have any insect or rodent problems in the camp?

Ethric: No, we were pretty careful, pretty clean you know.

DNR: Sure.

Ethric: Most of it was kept, it's kept self clean, kept everything picked up so didn't have any room for that.

DNR: As far as clean and stuff, did you guys have like showers and that sort of things?

Ethric: Oh yeah, we had showers and we had open pit toilets. And we had a guy that took care of the latrine. He was from Villisca and his name was Wallace. Bull Wallace.

DNR: Bull Wallace.

Ethric: Yeah, Bull Wallace from Villisca. And he was a \$36 man. He got \$36 a month.

DNR: He got the extra \$6 because he took care of the latrine. As far as the showers, would that have been pretty hot water?

Ethric: Hot water. They had hot water heaters.

DNR: Would that have been cold or how would that ?

Ethric: Cold or hot. And then we had a foot bath that they keep Chlorine in, so you would step in that as you went out of the shower to keep from getting Athletic Foot.

DNR: I think you touch on this but I will throw it out again. What work did you do outside the camp for the community during your days?

Ethric: You notice Chautauqua Park here, we made the entrance. And we worked a lot on Legion Park.

DNR: What did you do at the Legion Park then?

Ethric: We built the building at Legion Park.

DNR: Building, o.k. Is that like a shelter?

Ethric: No, it is a long building. It is out there today.

DNR: O.K. And you said you used to blow taps and stuff for funerals, right.

Ethric: Yeah, for local people and for sometimes they had Company M here in the National Guard and some of the guys passed away you know and they wouldn't want to blow bugler so they would get me to go up and play taps. I would have to take a shower and put on a Class A uniform.

DNR: Were you paid for doing any of these projects?

Ethric: No.

DNR: O.K. Did you have much contact with the outside community on your days off?

Ethric: Days off – only her. I was going with her. And I wasn't looking for contacts.

DNR: O.K. Were there any social organizations in the camp?

Ethric: No, not in the camp.

DNR: You touch on this, any contacts with females during your stay, it was pretty much just dating your wife.

Ethric: I dated my wife for 4 years before we were married. I met her in 1936 when I was a sophomore in high school. And we got married in 1940 and we have been married 62 years next month.

DNR: So you guys know each other pretty well.

Ethric: We ought to anyway.

DNR: Were there any problems with the other young men in the community?

Ethric: No, put on a pair of boxing gloves and settle the argument.

DNR: So you would box with them.

Ethric: Once in a while.

DNR: And you mentioned that one that the local guy gave the guy's girlfriend a hard time and they settled that by fist fight.

Ethric: Broke his jaw. Do you remember when Wayne Chute broke Jack Hatten jaw? Broke it here and broke it in two places and had to wire it shut.

DNR: How do you think the community felt about the CCC camp?

Ethric: Well, probably during the war, you see they quit, but they started it about 1934, I think it was.

DNR: What the CCC camps?

Ethric: Yeah.

DNR: I think they originally were started in 1932.

Ethric: 1932, well some places.

DNR: Depends on the place, they started in 32.

Ethric: There was a lot of them. There was one at Bedford and one at Clarinda, and one at Melvern and one at Missouri Valley.

DNR: One at Missouri Valley and one at Shenandoah. And one at Guthrie Center and one at Winterset.

Ethric: There was a lot of them.

DNR: Yeah. What do you think was your most memberable experience in the camp?

Ethric: It was probably living with a bunch of guys.

DNR: Did you have any real odd experiences?

Ethric: Well, some of the guys would get pretty well soused sometimes and we would have to carry their bunk outside and put it in the snow bank or something like that. We did that a lot.

DNR: Bunk in a snowbank, huh.

Ethric: Yeah. We would carry the whole bunk out and put it in a snowbank.

DNR: Was there any pranks in the barracks?

Ethric: Oh yeah, some of the guys would get drunk and come in and we would put their bunks up in the rafters – oh all kinds of stuff. Somebody would snore and we would pour Bull Durham in their mouths or something like that.

DNR: Bull Durham was what?

Ethric: Tobacco. Somebody go to sleep they would put shoe polish on the soles of their shoes and then light it with a match.

DNR: What would that do?

Ethric: It would make a hot foot.

DNR: I see. They had their shoes on when they fell asleep. O.K. any other pranks you can recall?

Ethric: No, probably a lot of them but I can't remember them all.

DNR: How about with water, anyone throw water on anyone?

Ethric: Oh, they did that all the time, throw water on everybody.

DNR: What do you think was your biggest accomplishment in camp?

Ethric: Probably going with my wife.

DNR: O.K. Do you think your life was changed by being in the Cs?

Ethric: Well I didn't have an opportunity for a job so I had to take the CCC camp in order to have money coming in. And then it wasn't much back in those days. \$30 a month don't go very far.

DNR: You probably had to be pretty broke to go into the CCC camp. Was it a situation of people kinda looking down at you because you were broke or was it a case that everybody was broke?

Ethric: Sometimes, nobody has any money back in those days. Nobody so it didn't make any different.

Ethric's wife: I think it was just a part of life for most people and they just accepted it.

DNR: Then what did you do after you left the CCCs?

Ethric: I went to California. I got married. I got married one day and left the next and went to California and never seen her for three months.

Ethric's Wife: He couldn't get a job so he thought, while he was here visiting, he said he could get a job out in the Gold Mines in California. So he came to me and he said I want to go to California. And I said not until you marry me. I didn't want him to find somebody else out there. So we got married the next day in Corning.

Ethric: Got married in Corning in July 1940 and then we went to California and I went to work in the Zybright Mine. 850 foot level, gold mine.

DNR: 850 foot level you said.

Ethric: Yeah. And then I later went into Grass Valley, California and worked in the Idaho and Maryland. I worked the 3100 foot level. And they were gold mines.

Then I came back here and, oh, I sold Mormons and sold W.T. Raleigh.

DNR: Gold mines in California.

Ethric's wife: This is our first home. We bought it for \$200. It wasn't painted inside or out. Right down in the Tahoe National Forest. This is our first car.

DNR: A 35' Ford.

Ethric: Yip.

Ethric's wife: Then he went in the service. Here he is in the service. He was in charge of a bunch of airplanes.

DNR: When did you go into the service?

Ethric: In 1944. I was in for two years. I left her with two kids. We had a girl in California and then we had a boy in Omaha. He lives up at Ames now. He is retired from that animal disease research. He was a micro-biologist, whatever they called it.

DNR: In the service you worked on aircraft then?

Ethric: Yes, aircraft.

DNR: You were a mechanic?

Ethric: Yes. Well I worked at there at the bomber plant first. B-26s. I went to work up there in "42". I help build about 1500 B-26s. And then they re-tooled and built the B-29. And they built 500 B-29s up there. That's where Afton Airbase is.

DNR: What part did you do as far as building the planes?

Ethric: Everything. I worked from the nose to the tail, both wings, engines, I did everything.

DNR: Now what did you do then in the Navy?

Ethric: Aviation Machinist's Mate.

DNR: Looks like you are working on a Corsair there.

Ethric: Corsair there and I had all different types airplanes. I flew in TBMs. Torpedo bomber.

DNR: Were you an observer or a gunner?

Ethric: Gunner.

DNR: A gunner in a TBM.

Ethric: Yip. I fired a 50 caliber machine gun.

DNR: Is that the turret or was that the lower gun?

Ethric: Yes.

DNR: After you got out of the Navy then, what did you do from there?

Ethric: I sold Mormon products and W.T. Raleigh and then I worked the garage over at Clearfield, IA. And then I went to work for Every Ready and I put in 30 years out here. There's what I got when I worked the garage, I cut the end of my thumb off.

DNR: Ever Ready for 35 years?

Ethric: 30 years, she had 28 years. She had a heart attack so she had to quit.

DNR: So you have been retired since when?

Ethric: 1997. It was 79, 1979.

DNR: 1979, that makes a little more sense. 1997 wasn't that long ago. O.K.

Ethric: And I was S V Stores. I ordered all the repair parts for the plant. I have a million to a million and a half inventory every year.

DNR: Well, that is pretty much all my questions about the CCC camp. If there is anything else you can think of .

Ethric: Well, if there is anything else you can think of that you want to know, let me know and I will help you if I can.

DNR: Sure.

Ethric: But it has been a long time. See I got out the CCC camp in 1940 so that been a long time ago.

DNR: It's been 62 years ago.

Ethric: 62 years.

DNR: What do you remember about after the camp closed down? Did those building stand for some time.

Ethric: They made apartments out of them.

DNR: Oh really.

Ethric: They made two apartments. One in one end and one in the other end. And then they sold the building. Moved them out.

DNR: Moved them out?

Ethric: Yeah.

Ethric's wife: Would you like to see one of them?

DNR: What, the barracks?

Ethric: Right over here on 8th Street is one of them. The hospital. A guy bought it and then raised it and put a door in it. Got it so he could drive a truck inside. He hauled milk for a living. He bought the old hospital, bought it for a hundred dollars and then had it moved.

DNR: And then had it moved, huh.

Ethric's wife: We don't know if anybody did anything else with the other building, probably just tore them down.

Ethric: I don't know if they bulldozed them down or what they did.

DNR: When I was up at Pine Lake State Park, we had an old CCC barrack and that was the shop.

