

Norbert Finder 1/15/02

DNR: What CCC camps were you assigned to?

Norbert: Chariton

DNR: You were never transferred?

Norbert: No

DNR: What were the dates when you were working at the camp?

Norbert: 1939, fairly early in the year I started.

DNR: Where was your hometown?

Norbert: New Haven, Missouri

DNR: Did the CCC bring you up to Iowa?

Norbert: When we started in the CCC they would post the location of where we would be heading on the board. Me and a buddy of mine both looked at the bulletin and asked each other: "Where is Chariton, IA?". That's how we ended up here.

DNR: What was your age when you entered the CCC?

Norbert: 19 years old.

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

Norbert: I did whatever you could find. I think that is why they started that. You couldn't find anything, so you would take whatever you could find.

DNR: What did you do on the farm?

Norbert: We cut corn in the Missouri River bottoms. Then we had to husk em' by hand.

DNR: Why did you enroll in the CCC program?

Norbert: To add a little stability. Wasn't nothing else to do.

DNR: Tell me about your first days at the camp.

Norbert: Same thing as boot camp. Got the clothes, boots.

DNR: What kind of clothes were issued to you?

Norbert: Same as the army with the shirt, pants. You had work pants and dress pants. If you had dress clothes you could wear them "in town". Just army regulation.

DNR: Army drab?

Norbert: yes, exactly.

DNR: Did they issued boots, raingear, or winter clothes.

Norbert: We did have winter clothes.

DNR: Describe them.

Norbert: They were made of wool.

DNR: Gloves or mittens?

Norbert: They issued gloves.

DNR: Was there any equipment they would issue when you started? Toiletries?

Norbert: You had to buy toilet supplies. We got \$30/month and I sent home \$22 to my mother. I was left with \$8/month and that was what you bought your supplies with.

DNR: Did they issue things like bibles?

Norbert: They had a library for things like that.

DNR: When you arrived at camp, were there any personal items you were allowed to keep?

Norbert: We were able to keep many personal items.

DNR: Could you have books and pictures?

Norbert: Yes, people would have books.

DNR: Did you have posters on the walls?

DNR: You could have cars at the CCC camp?

Norbert: You couldn't have them at the camp, but you could have them pretty close.

DNR: Were there any items you were not allowed to keep?

Norbert: just the necessary items.

DNR: How was the sleeping arrangements set up?

Norbert: Very plain. Two doors and bunks on each side. I would guess to say there was 30 bunks.

DNR: They provided blankets and pillows?

Norbert: Yes

DNR: Was it very cold in the wintertime?

Norbert: We needed a wood stove to keep us warm.

DNR: That was the traditional GI barracks: no insulation, windows, etc?

Norbert: That is exactly right.

DNR: Did you have a lot of flies and mosquitoes?

Norbert: Barrels of them.

DNR: How was the flooring?

Norbert: Wooden flooring.

DNR: Did you have inspections?

Norbert: Yes, Sometimes they would come in the middle of the night for inspection. You would be under strict military regulation. You would have to be in by midnight.

DNR: Did you guys have showers?

Norbert: Yes, we had showers, they even kept them heated. Showers were in one big, non-private area. Same with toilets.

DNR: Was their any fear of losing any personal things?

Norbert: I never lost a thing.

DNR: When did you get married?

Norbert: 1941. That was when I was promoted to an area in which you couldn't be married. So when I ran off and got married I was kicked out of the program. That was when it was over.

DNR: How did you get along with your bunkmates?

Norbert: Really well, overall. If any argument broke out it would be settled later on that day by boxing. You would put on 12 ounce gloves and box it out.

DNR: How was the food in the mess hall?

Norbert: Food was really good. They started fixing beans and invited those in the square. Good relationship between the city people. The Arkansas boys were rough.

DNR: Who did the cooking?

Norbert: Military people.

DNR: How was the holiday meals?

Norbert: they did have turkey on thanksgiving.

DNR: When was payday?

Norbert: Once a month. \$30 and \$22 went home.

DNR: What were your days off, and how did you spend them?

Norbert: Weekends. We worked 9 till 4, roughly. Lunch was brought out into the field. They had coffee, milk and apples, etc.

DNR: How was the Sabbath observed?

Norbert: We could go to church. You just went to church in the town.

DNR: Any sport activities in the camp?

Norbert: Boxing, softball, billiards, etc. Connected to deals in towns.

DNR: Tell me about any personal conflicts you had, and how you dealt with them?

Norbert: Discipline was dealt with military style.

DNR: How about educational/trade opportunities?

Norbert: You would be taught just the things needed to do during your CCC time. You volunteered to drive those.

DNR: What benefits did you get from your experience?

Norbert: It got me out of doing maintenance.

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

Norbert: One, George Kinsey and Leon.

DNR: How would you describe your overall experience with workers at camp?

Norbert: I got along really good.

DNR: What was the main projects your camp was involved with?

Norbert: 1000 acres at Lucas, moving big logs. Hauling them to Red Haw.

DNR: Did you have other duties besides driving the truck?

Norbert: Just doing the maintenance on the truck. A Chevrolet, gravel truck.

DNR: Who were your leaders?

Norbert: Foresters.

DNR: Did the same groups go to the same area everyday?

Norbert: Everyone went to the same location: Red Haw or the Forest.

DNR: Did you get along with your leaders?

Norbert: Really good.

DNR: Were there any minority groups?

Norbert: Not that I knew of. I worked at the naval air camp and then to John Deere before I entered the service.

DNR: Where were you in the service?

Norbert: The pacific.

DNR: What branch were you in?

Norbert: The Navy. Worked on the USS Triply

DNR: Did your skills you learned benefit you after you left?

Norbert: It definitely help out in my truck driving skills.

DNR: Were their any injuries that occurred while working with the CCC?

Norbert: Yes. There was an ambulance that waited for someone to get hurt or sick. I was sick once for sixteen days. The hospital was the size of the barracks.

DNR: What diseases occurred at camp?

Norbert: One kind of cough or another.

DNR: Did you do any work in the community outside of camp?

Norbert: No

DNR: Did you have any contacts with the local community?

Norbert: I met my wife in the community.

DNR: Is she from Chariton?

Norbert: Yes, Went to dances at the American Legion and movies.

DNR: Did a lot of guy's date the local girls.

Norbert: I knew five guys who dated Chariton girls.

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

Norbert: The Arkansas bunch, you had to be very careful. They caused a lot of trouble.

DNR: What was the most memorable experience at the camp?

Norbert: I don't know. Many good experiences. Not many bad expiernces. I was proud of the many trees I planted in the CCC.

DNR: What did you do after leaving the CCC camp?

Norbert: I got a job at a filling station, \$18/wk.

DNR: What did you do at the filling station?

Norbert: Greases cars and filled gas.

DNR: What did you do next?

Norbert: Worked on the dairy farm in algona.

DNR: Did the leaders live in the same place as you?

Norbert: No, they stayed somewhere else. Military personal were always on the base.

DNR: What did you do during inclement weather?

Norbert: Read books.