

CCC INTERVIEW WITH CLYDE REICK

Date: March 2, 2002

Location: Bondurant, Iowa

Interviewer: Larry Wilson

DNR: Where was your hometown?

Clyde: Bondurant.

DNR: How old were you when you went in?

Clyde: 20 years old.

DNR: What type of work did you do before you joined?

Clyde: Farming and construction.

DNR: Why did you join the CCC's?

Clyde: Poor. There were no crops to pick. No corn.

DNR: Where was the camp that you joined?

Clyde: Indianola. Fairgrounds. Company 769.

DNR: Were you ever transferred?

Clyde: No. I worked there from October 9, 1936 to March 31, 1937.

DNR: What was the first day at camp like?

Clyde: We got clothes, a kit, razor blades, toothbrush and all that stuff.

DNR: Did you bring any personal items?

Clyde: Just me and myself.

DNR: Were there any items that you couldn't bring?

Clyde: No.

DNR: How were you assigned to the barracks?

Clyde: They just told you. You didn't change around.

DNR: Who supplied the bedding supplies?

Clyde: Government.

DNR: Do you remember the names of the guys in the barracks?

Clyde: Pete Rensfield. He was in a different barracks. He was a good looking Italian.

DNR: How did you get along with others in the barracks?

Clyde: Pretty good. I just got into one fight.

DNR: How was the food?

Clyde: It was the best food.

DNR: Who did the cooking?

Clyde: It was outside cooks. I was in the kitchen three months. I had seven stoves. I had to turn the lids over every day and clean the soot. I peeled the potatoes. I cleaned the stoves. The reason I was in there was I bought a motorcycle and it got away from me. I got a mouthful of gravel and a belly full of gravel. I spent 17 days in the Fort Des Moines hospital.

DNR: How were the holiday meals?

Clyde: We had Thanksgiving. I would ride home on the weekend. There were a lot of WWI veterans in the camp.

DNR: When was pay day?

Clyde: First of the month. \$25 went home and I kept \$5. I painted signs to earn extra money. That wasn't very much money. I worked for .25 cents a day before I got there.

DNR: Did they take you to work everyday?

Clyde: Everyday we went in Dodge trucks.

DNR: How did you spend your money?

Clyde: Candy and beer. We had a PX there in camp.

DNR: When were your days off?

Clyde: Weekends.

DNR: Was the Sabbath observed?

Clyde: I don't remember.

DNR: Did you have sports activities or a rec hall?

Clyde: Nothing like that.

DNR: Did you have any personal conflicts?

Clyde: Just once with someone bullying other enlistees. Once the captain wanted me to pick up cigarette butts in the camp. I told him and the lieutenant that I don't smoke and I am not picking them up. He just smiled at me and went about his business. Another time I walked by him and saluted him. He didn't salute back. I told him, "You have to return my salute you know."

DNR: How did arguments get settled?

Clyde: Everybody got along real good. I never saw any fights.

DNR: Were there any educational or vocational training?

Clyde: Yes. Carpentry and anything you wanted too. It was there. You had some good leaders who knew what they were teaching.

DNR: Do you remember any of their names?

Clyde: Scott was one of them. G. R. Scott.

DNR: Were these held in the camp?

Clyde: Yes.

DNR: What projects were you and your camp involved in?

Clyde: The sewer went bad in the bath house. George tried to dig a new ditch and it didn't work. But I went out there and I fixed it.

DNR: According to these pictures you were building the lodge there?

Clyde: Yes. We had a limestone quarry.

DNR: What did you do on the buildings?

Clyde: I cut the rafters and cut the grooves.

DNR: How did you learn to make those cuts?

Clyde: Common sense.

DNR: Who were your leaders?

Clyde: Sap, Howard Williams and Scott.

DNR: Everybody get along when working?

Clyde: Like one big family.

DNR: How did you get your work assignments?

Clyde: They just sent us out to work. We had a guy who played saxophone. His name was Charles Kissinger.

DNR: What kind of equipment did you use?

Clyde: Chisels, hammers, saws.

DNR: Did you stay in contact with the CCC enlistees?

Clyde: No. I talked to Pete though. His family later said he was dead.

DNR: How did the city and country kids get along in the camp?

Clyde: Okay.

DNR: Were there any minorities?

Clyde: All white.

DNR: Did you learn any specific skills in the camp?

Clyde: No. I liked to show off and do the heavy work.

DNR: Did you do any carpentry work when you left the CCC's?

Clyde: All my life. My son is a carpenter and electrician.

DNR: Were there any injuries in the camp?

Clyde: No.

DNR: Was there a doctor or nurse there in camp?

Clyde: They had a hospital.

DNR: Were you ever injured?

Clyde: No. But they quarantined me once.

DNR: Were there any diseases in camp?

Clyde: No.

DNR: Were there rodents or insects?

Clyde: No.

DNR: Did you do any work in the local community?

Clyde: No.

DNR: Did you have contact with the local community?

Clyde: No.

DNR: Were there any Masonic or similar organizations?

Clyde: No.

DNR: Were there contacts with females?

Clyde: Well we would go to Second Street where they walked up and down in Des Moines.

DNR: Were there any problems with the local boys in Indianola and the CCC guys?

Clyde: No.

DNR: How did the local folks view the CCC camp in Indianola?

Clyde: They treated you real nice.

DNR: Do you have any memorable experience in the CCC?

Clyde: One time when I was on KP, the guy in there needed to get a pail of milk and he spilled it everywhere. He was a good guy. He was one of the cooks. We had a baker in there.

DNR: Did you have any odd experiences in the camp?

Clyde: Just me being there.

DNR: What was your biggest accomplishment at the camp?

Clyde: Learning the rules and to obey.

DNR: How was your life changed by going to the CCC's?

Clyde: It was a good life.

DNR: What did you do after the CCC's?

Clyde: I went to work on the farm. Then in Des Moines I worked construction. In the winter I would shuck corn by hand. I shucked 180 bushels of corn. One bushel is one hundred ears. Every two hours I had 45 bushels. It takes a while to learn it. Grandpa ploughed 28 acres by foot in eight days. He could kill anybody. During WWII we transported hogs. Some of them weighed 900 pounds. I rode freight trains to the West Coast and to the Dakotas. I retired when I couldn't get on a ladder anymore; I was 75 years old. I retired completely when I was 80. But I still paint walls. I had an Indian motorcycle. I was 21. Two or three times I rode out to California. I liked riding in the reefers, flat cars, and utility cars.

DNR: Did you have to shower every day and go to bed at a certain time?

Clyde: Yes.

DNR: Did they do inspections?

Clyde: Yes. Sometimes they would come in the middle of the night.

DNR: Did the bed have to make a quarter bounce?

Clyde: Yes. You had to clean the mattress everyday.

DNR: Were there pranks?

Clyde: Yes.

DNR: Do you remember LEM's?

Clyde: They were in the CCC camp.

DNR: Do you remember any of them?

Clyde: No.

END OF TRANSCRIPT – SAM J. HAIM – SCRIBE

Reviewed and some grammatical changes made by Larry Wilson on August 9, 2005 after talking with Mr. Reick's daughter. Mr. Reick passed away in September, 2004.

[illegible][illegible]

Yrally, Elmer W.
 Yarnall, Joe A.
 Yaulis, Joe
 Yeakam, William M.
 Yett, Elbert
 Yibba, Robert E.
 Yimney, Donald E.
 Yirfoss, Robert E.
 Yocum, Rex E.
 Yager, Carl J.
 Yaiterman, Gerald M.
 Yarriss, Verita W.
 Yarbrough, Dallas R.
 Yarbrough, Paul F.
 Yarbrough, Paul W.
 Yarbrough, Gerald A.
 Yarbrough, Norma
 Yarbrough, Clarence
 Yarbrough, Charles E.
 Yarbrough, Rex E.
 Yarbrough, John J.
 Yarbrough, James D.
 Yarbrough, George D.
 Yarbrough, Paul C.
 Yarbrough, James L.
 Yarbrough, Frankie
 Yarbrough, Vincent R.
 Yarbrough, Boyd E.
 Yarbrough, Charles
 Yarbrough, Roy W.
 Yarbrough, Alvin W.
 Yarbrough, Harold
 Yarbrough, Albert
 Yarbrough, Dick E.
 Yarbrough, Gustav
 Yarbrough, Burton
 Yarbrough, David G.
 Yarbrough, Gilbert