

CCC 8
Sam Taylor
March 23, 1999
17 pages – Open

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Interviewee: Sam Taylor

Interviewer: Jay Langdale

Date: March 23, 1999

L: Today is March 23, 1999. This is Jay Langdale, and I am in the home of Mr. Sam Taylor. We are going to be talking this afternoon about his experiences as a member of the Civilian Conservation Corps. Mr. Taylor, when and where were you born?

T: I was born in Mackville, Kentucky, 1919.

L: Did you grow up in Maxville?

T: No. I grew up in Boyle County, near Perryville, Kentucky.

L: What kind of place was the area you grew up in, around Perryville? Was it mostly farmers?

T: It was mostly farmland. Then, on back closer to where I lived at that time, it was kind of rough country. They called it nobs or small mountains, so it was hilly and rough ground, kind of hard to raise a crop on it, it was so rough.

L: Has your family been in Kentucky a long time?

T: Yes. They were born in Kentucky and lived there all their lives.

L: Did you have brothers and sisters?

T: I had a brother and one sister. After my mother passed away and my dad married again, I had two stepbrothers.

L: So, you had a large family?

T: Yes.

L: What did your father do for a living?

T: He was a farmer.

L: What type of crops did he grow mostly?

T: Tobacco was our money crop, and we raised corn, wheat, and sugar cane. We had sorghum cane too. Basically, that's what it was, just a small farmer in a garden with potatoes and tomatoes and all the things you can grow in a garden.

L: Can you describe a typical day on the family farm? What kind of things would you do there?

T: Well, we'd get up early in the morning before school. My job was to milk the cow. I had pretty good experience with this old cow. It would be cold, and I'd stick my head right up in her plank when I was milking the old cow. I not only got lice, but I carried it to school with me and gave it to a few of the kids who'd sit around and go to school with me. So, I wasn't too popular when they found out what was going on.

L: Did they let you come back to school?

T: Yes. We finally decided that we'd get the old cow rid of the lice. We put some stuff on her. It was a little bit strong, and it took the hair off of her. She didn't like that too well.

L: So, your job was [to] milk the cows, and then you would go to the school for the day?

T: Right.

L: How far along did you go in school?

T: I went to three years in high school. I finished my final exam. Then I came out and went into the CCC.

L: Was that as far as you could go in school at that time?

T: No. I had one more year, but I forfeited my last year. We rode a school bus for seven miles [to school].

L: You say you took your final exam, and you joined the CCC. Tell me a little bit about that time in your life. What year was it, 1936?

T: Yes. I think I went into the CCC in 1937, so it must've been the latter part of 1936 when I got out of school.

L: How did you hear about the CCC?

T: I don't remember exactly how it all came about. I know some of the boys from around the neighborhood had gone in. They'd come in, and they was telling about what they did. I was more interested in that dollar a day than I was [in] whatever they had to do. It did not matter to me what the work was.

L: How was your family affected by the Depression?

T: Like you heard before, there wasn't any money. I didn't ever see any. I might've seen a little change, but they had what they called script. My daddy, he worked right at the WPA. They had a job, and they built roads and grew crops. It was all hard work. Anyway, he got whatever they gave him as a substitute for money. You could buy groceries with it. Most of what the script went for was food to eat. Then, we always had a garden, and we had a farm. So, we had plenty to eat, but we didn't have any money.

L: Did any of your other family members work with the New Deal programs? You mentioned your father worked for the WPA.

T: I had two stepbrothers. One of them, later on, joined the CCC too. He never did get out of Kentucky. I think he went to London, Kentucky [and] spent his time there.

L: How did your father and your family feel about Franklin Roosevelt?

T: They loved the man. There would've been a fight if anybody would've said anything against Franklin Roosevelt. It is my opinion [that] he was the best president that we have ever had and ever will have. He did more for the working man.

L: What made you decide that you wanted to join the CCC?

T: I don't know. I guess because there just wasn't anything to do except, maybe, you would get a job that was real hard dirty work that somebody didn't want to do. Then, they would hire someone, but the money was scarce. You'd work from daylight until dark, and you'd only get a dollar a day. They'd get you for seventy-five cents if they could. So, that was a sure thing, three meals a day and \$30 a month. It sounded real good to me.

W: You had clothes to wear, too, didn't you?

T: Yes.

L: Was your family supportive of your decision to join?

T: Oh yes. My daddy, he was kind of tender-hearted and when I went away, he cried, but you have to sacrifice something, you know, when times are rough like they were. He hated to see me leave.

W: He got \$25 a month, and you only got \$5.

- T: Yes. He enjoyed that. He was wealthy whenever he got that.
- L: This was with the WPA [that] he got \$25 a month?
- T: Yes. He worked on the WPA, and he got some money.
- W: The CCC is the one that gave you \$30 a month.
- T: Yes, [and] \$25 of it went home.
- L: When you signed up, did you go to an office in Perryville?
- T: No. I don't remember where I signed up. All I remember is that I didn't really get inducted until I got to Fort Knox. That is where we all got together and got all the troop training, there at Fort Knox.
- L: How did you get to Fort Knox?
- T: We went on the train.
- L: Tell about what happened when you got to Fort Knox. What did they do? Did they interview you?
- T: Yes. When we got to Fort Knox, we stripped off all of our clothes and took a real good bath and lined up. Then they came down and gave us inspection from head to toe. That was kind of comical. Two things happened that I won't mention.
- W: Tell him. I think he'd think they're funny too.
- T: Anyway, they came by, and they gave what was called a short-arm inspection, to see whether you had any venereal disease or not. It seemed that everybody passed that. You had to urinate in a little old cup, and they'd test it for whatever. Anyway, one old goofy-looking boy, he was way back out of the hill somewhere, and he said, urinate in this? The guy was standing back about that far, and he said, from here? Things like that, I never did forget. He said, hell no!
- W: He's no ham putting stuff in that bottle though, huh?
- L: What did they tell you about the CCC when you signed up?
- W: They didn't tell us much of anything except [that] where we went would determine what type of work that we did. Some of them stayed around there in Kentucky. They built fences and planted trees and built little dams and stuff like that.

Where I went [in California], they were building a road up in Kern's Canyon towards Mt. Whitney. They wanted to get timber out of there. There was a big bluff on one side, and Kern's River was right down below. We just cut a little old road. There wasn't hardly room to pass. They'd have these special places for people to pass, if they ever met anybody. There wasn't much traffic up in there.

L: Did you have in mind a particular place you would like to go?

T: I wanted to get as far away from Kentucky as I possibly could get away. I was real happy when I found out that we were going to California because that was about as far as you could go. I had never been over fifteen miles from home, because that old car that I drove, why, if I went over twenty miles, it'd have two or three flat tires before I got there.

L: Were you given a choice of places where you could go?

T: No.

L: They told you [that you] were going to California?

T: That's right. We didn't know where we were going. They had a whole bunch of guys on, and they dropped them off as we went across the country, some [in] one place, some in others. I wanted to go as far as I could go. When I found out we were going to California, I was happy.

L: So, they took you by train to California? Where in California did you end up?

T: We went to a place they called Kernville, and that went right on up Kern's Canyon. It goes up the river there to Mt. Whitney. There was just a little old—you could hardly call it a—road. It was kind of bulldozed out of the side of the mountain and went around. We finished building that and built a bridge that crossed the river and went on up to Mt. Whitney.

W: We were looking at an address in California a week or two ago and were thinking we might go back over there. His daughter lives in Los Angeles. He thought he would like to go back to Kern's Canyon where they started the CCC and all that and see if he could remember any of it. We looked at this atlas, and there is still a Kern County, I believe. I know there is still a Kern's River there.

T: All there was when we got up there was a pack saddle station. Some of them people come out of Los Angeles, [to] rent horses and ride back in the mountains and whatever. So, that was all there. He had a whole bunch of cattle, and he'd run them out across that river, [to] some pasture land. Then, every night, he'd come back. We weren't even allowed to go in the river because it was a certain

time in the year [when] it was at flood stage with snow melting out of the mountains and coming down. He'd give us a dishonorable discharge if we went in the river, which we went in the river anyway. You'd go down in them little old bushes that stick up. It wasn't very deep, and in the water, we'd swim. We'd be naked as jaybirds. We'd be going down the river. We'd come out, and we'd be striped all over. If they gave us an inspection, they would've known where we'd been. The little old weeds or whatever grows in the water [would cut you up].

L: Scratch you up good, would it?

T: Yes.

L: What happened when you first arrived in California? Did they have an orientation period, or did they put you right to work?

T: No. What they did, they just brought us all in and got our names and addresses and everything squared away. Then they pitched us a uniform. It didn't make no difference whether it fit or not. Then, we'd have to trade clothes around until we got some of it that would fit us. Then they fed us, so we enjoyed that part.

L: What kind of food did you have at the camp?

T: Gosh, I don't know if I remember. All I remember is that we had a variety of food, and it was all good. We always had some kind of meat every day and vegetables. We had good food. There was nothing lacking, as far as that went.

L: Your uniforms, what were they like?

T: We had two uniforms. We had one that they gave for summertime. It was kind of a slick-like uniform. Then, we had what we called OD pants. They were kind of wooly, for the wintertime when we were there.

L: Where you were stationed, you had a year-round camp? Or did they have a winter and a summer camp?

T: No. We had just a year-round camp.

L: Talk about your duties in California. What kind of work did you do there?

T: I sharpened these jackhammer beds. Mostly, that is what I did all the time that I was there. I don't know what a jackhammer bed costs, even back then, but whatever it was, it was too much. So, when they would get dull—today they just throw them away, [but] we couldn't afford to throw them away—we had to sharpen them. They had two stones, one for the sharpening and another to ground the

edge on the outside. Me and another kid did that. His name was Taylor also. He was from up in the eastern part of Kentucky. That is all that I did, all the time that I was there.

L: What about the other campers? What kind of work were they doing?

T: They were cutting the brush alongside the road and kept the right-away down to where cars could see around the bend. Once in a while, they had to have a fire spotter. I guess people set them. I don't know how else they would've gotten started. But anyway, they called it the fire spotter, and that was the roughest job that any of them ever had. I went out on the job one time, and I guess they had pity on me and let me stay in camp and help the cook. I didn't have to put that big old water tank on my back and climb up the mountain. That wasn't no fun.

L: Did anyone ever get injured fighting fires?

T: Oh yes. They would fall, and they'd get their elbows skinned. Nothing serious. I think one guy got his leg broke. That was about the extent of it.

L: Describe your living quarters. What were the barracks like?

T: The top part of it was tent, and it was built up with boards about, oh, yea-high. The top part of it was just a tent. We had, I believe it was, four—some of them had six—beds in there, double-deckers, upper and lowers. That was our sleeping quarters.

L: About how many men per barracks?

T: About eight. I think, usually, they had eight.

L: What did you do for entertainment when you were in California?

T: We'd mostly just get our own entertainment. There wasn't anything that we'd do, no place to go, back up there where we were. So, like I said, they told us that we couldn't go swimming in that river, so that is what we did. We went swimming in the river. We enjoyed that. Then, we had baseball and _____ where we could play catch, but we did not have any ground that was suitable for a ball diamond. There was no place there that was big enough for a ball diamond. So we played catch. We had a football ground. We had a basketball and a hoop. We'd get out and fiddle with that for a while. We just had to make our own entertainment. They'd bring us a movie in every once in a while. We would watch a movie. That was about all the entertainment that we got.

L: Did you ever visit any of the surrounding towns or cities for recreation?

- T: No. We didn't even get as far as Bakersfield. It was not too far from Rhodes Inn. They had a little old village there that was just a little old store for the people who lived back up in the mountains, and there wasn't very many of them.
- L: Did they offer any classes at the camp for you to take?
- T: Yes, they had classes. Like I said, there was some of them who couldn't read [and] couldn't write when they came in, so they had classes for them to go to learn as much as they could. I don't remember going to any. I thought I knew it all.
- L: Did you attend religious services?
- T: Every Sunday, we would have someone who would come in. It wasn't compulsory that we had to go, but for the sake of something to do, we went, most of us.
- L: What were your fellow campers like? Were they from all over the country, or were a lot of them from Kentucky?
- T: Most of them were from Kentucky, like I said, the eastern part of Kentucky, and there wasn't over three or four of them that'd come from the eastern part, that went in with me, that could even read and write at all. There was one guy that had a pretty good education. So, I did an awful lot of letter-writing and read the letters that'd come. Some of them were "Dear John" letters. I didn't read that part to them. I'd look it over, and I'd read what I thought they wanted to hear, let them find it out when they got back home. Well, you know, they were way away from home, and they didn't want no bad news. It would've broke their hearts.
- L: Were there a lot of homesick campers?
- T: Yes.
- L: Most of them, like yourself, hadn't been away from home?
- T: No, they hadn't been anywhere.
- L: Did you know anybody who deserted the CCC?
- T: Well, we called it going over the hill. I don't think anyone from there. There were some later on when I got back. I went to camp there in Kentucky. Of course, there were a few that went over the hill there. They'd get a dishonorable discharge. I didn't think it was worth it. It'd be on their record for the rest of their life. No, there, they didn't go anywhere because they wouldn't have even known

how to get back home.

L: It was far away from home?

T: Yes.

W: If there were any signs, they couldn't read them.

T: No.

L: You're right.

T: I could've eventually gotten back, I guess, being able to read and write and stuff but some of them, they wouldn't have.

L: How long were you in California?

T: Just for six months.

L: And after that?

T: After that, I came back to Kentucky. I stayed out a little while and then went right back in and stayed eighteen months.

L: Were things much different in Kentucky when you went back?

T: Yes. The economy was a little bit better than it was. There were a few jobs opening up. You didn't make much money, but it was something. So things were beginning to get better. Of course, I stayed in when I came back. I stayed out a little while and went back in, stayed as long as they let me, stayed in the CCC.

L: So, you returned to Kentucky, and you signed up again and this time, where were you sent in Kentucky?

T: Shelbyville, Kentucky, and then they moved that camp from Shelbyville to Danville. We came to Danville and did basically the same thing we did in Shelbyville, built fences and planted trees and built dams where the soil was eroded, those sort of things.

W: Danville was closer to where you lived anyway, wasn't it?

T: Yes. It was only ten miles from my home. Like I said, I got married when I was there in Shelbyville. I'd come home every week. I'd come home and see my

wife.

L: Did you get married at the end of your eighteen months in Kentucky, or was this early on?

T: No. I think I was in it about a year after I got married. There wasn't anything else to do, but I could come home most any time I wanted to.

W: Your wife stayed with your dad, didn't she?

T: Yes, and I had an old car. I had an old 1928 Chevrolet that I drove back and forth from camp to home. So, about every weekend, I'd come home.

L: Was that unusual for someone in the CCC to have a car?

T: No.

L: A lot of the guys had cars?

T: A lot of them had cars. They didn't when I was in California. There wasn't any place to go, and there wasn't any need to have a car there. No place to go, nothing to do.

L: Were these mostly native Kentuckians who were at this camp at Shelbyville and Danville?

T: Yes. They were just local boys, most of them.

L: So, you would stay at the camps during the weeks but on weekends, you could go back and take a car and go anywhere you wanted to?

T: Yes, we could really go anywhere we wanted to go. We had to sign out. They had to know where you were at all times.

W: But they didn't even connect you by telephone then, did they?

T: No. There wasn't [but] very few telephones, you'd walk a half a mile to get to a telephone back then.

L: Was life in the camp in Kentucky like it was in California, or were there other differences?

T: It was basically the same. What would make it any different would be the personnel that you had. The part of the country that they would come from was

the only thing that would make it different. As far as the camps were, they were basically all the same. They had the same things they did, chow time at certain times, and then they had their schooling and the advantages that you could take up or not. It was not anything compulsory. You did not have to go to class, but there were a good number of them who did.

12: You mentioned the commanders. What could you tell me about your commanders, either in California or in Kentucky? What were these men like?

20: They were just like they have in the Army, like a sergeant or a lieutenant. They were in authority and all. We had to go along with what their guidelines required of us so we got along okay with them. We got along fine. They were good to us.

L: Were a lot of them members of the military?

T: Yes.

L: Do you remember any World War I veterans in the camps with you?

T: No.

L: So, your time in Kentucky was more or less like being at home. The CCC was more or less like a regular job, and you could just return home.

T: Yes. I could come home on the weekends. About fifteen miles, I guess, was about as far as I ever had to drive.

L: When did your enlistment in the CCC end?

T: I wish you had not asked me that. [Laughs.] I don't remember. That was back in, what, 1937 when I went in? I was in six months and then came back out and went right back in and stayed a year.

W: There was a war started somewhere there, in 1942, wasn't there?

T: I don't remember. I don't want to get into that again.

W: Lots of them went out of the CCC into the war.

T: Yes. Into the service.

W: Yes. That's what I meant.

L: Was that one reason they closed the camp at Shelbyville and moved it?

- T: I don't know why. Well, we had the camp there at Shelbyville, and we had all those farms around there. We planted trees. We put up dams where the soil was eroding. We did stuff like that. We worked all the farms around there. Then, there was not much more that we could do. So then, they moved us to Danville. Basically, we did the same thing when we got there, which was to work on the farms, anything that we could help them improve, plant trees, build fences. We put up a lot of fences. Some of them, they only knew that a fence was supposed to go straight and be cultivated in the same way. So, they learned a little bit that farmers did about contour cultivation and, certainly, some of the things that the CCC did, the way that we built the fences and that sort of thing.
- W: Some of the roads that would go up there, I don't know if you built them or not, but they didn't believe in building them straight. They'd go here, and then they'd turn around, sort of like that, lots of them.
- T: Well, in Kentucky, it's kind of hard to have a straight road anyway. You've got all these hills and bends and trees and gullies and mountains, whatever.
- W: But you said that y'all had built those stone roads, stone fences.
- T: Yes. They built a lot. They have these big white, flat rocks. If you've ever toured in Kentucky, you might see some of these fancies that they have. Some of those farms there, they were just covered with these flat rocks, so they made use of them. Instead of putting up a wire fence, they made a rock fence. They're about that high.
- L: When you say you would work the farms around the area, these were private farms?
- T: Oh yes. They were private farms. We didn't do any cultivating or anything like that, or plant any crops, none of that stuff. We just improved the land. If it was eroding, we would put up little dams here and there on the hill.
- L: What did you do after you left the CCC?
- T: Like I said, I got married. Then, there wasn't much to do in Kentucky, so I went and started working for a guy in a rock quarry, driving the truck. I worked for him driving this old truck, working and hauling rock out of the quarry and up to the crusher. Then we'd load these chips. Everyone is on a truck, and I'd go out and spread the rock on people's driveways, for private people. Also, some of the city around there had contracts for rock and all of that. Then, this man I worked for, his daughter lived in California. Things were opening up in California, so he told me I stood a pretty good chance of getting a job out there. So I went to California and got a job at the Texas Oil Company and stayed with them for twenty years. I

came back to Florida and [went to work] for the University, [and] did the same thing for twenty more years. That is about all that I know how to do, boil water. That is what they call me. I was a utilities superintendent. They had, I think, just about twenty-nine men here at the University, workmen there at the steam plant. We furnish the water and the steam for practically all of the University.

- W: They couldn't operate at Shands unless they furnished them the steam to operate their instruments. They have to scald them and whatever.
- T: So, that is basically what I have done, you might say, just boil water. They call me an engineer. [Laughs.]
- L: What was the official title for what you were doing? You were a utilities superintendent?
- T: Utilities superintendent. I don't know. There were not many guys working for me.
- W: You were a utilities supervisor. You had twenty-nine men. He got his feelings hurt though, when he retired. They replaced him with a computer. [All laugh.]
- L: They replaced you with a computer, huh?
- T: Yes. They had to. I don't know how many they had in there. It seemed like when we left out of there, in about six months, they had a computer in there, and there wasn't a man there. It took care of the whole business. I don't know how it did it.
- W: You would go and check all of the boilers to be sure they didn't blow up or any of that. I guess the computers did that too, then.
- T: So, my experience that I had as an operating engineer there, for the Texas Oil Company, when I came to Florida, I went into the steam plant, and they made me utility supervisor. They gave me a little bit more money after the guy who was ahead of me retired, so I lucked out pretty good.
- W: He retired. You got his job?
- T: Yes.
- L: Where did you spend the years during World War II? Were you in California?
- T: During World War II, I spent quite a bit of that over in Belgium. I don't know when I went in, but the old ship that we got, well, we went in with a convoy and

got over in the English Channel. There was low tide, and we were carrying so much load that we couldn't get up that Schelde River, going into Antwerp [Belgium]. The rest of the convoy went on, and we sat out there. We pulled over to the edge as close as we could get so that we wouldn't get run into. So, we went in the next morning at high tide. Practically every darn one of them ships that went in, they sunk them. The Germans came out there and on the high tide, they dumped out a bunch of mines. They didn't have to do any more. The tide took them right on up in there, and the ships got hung up, up there in mud. I guess they couldn't get in it. So, they moved up, and we came on in. We were the last one there and the first one that got unloaded. We got in and got out and got back down in the English Channel, and a German U-boat sunk us. A French destroyer picked us up and took us. We wound up the river there, towards Scotland. We got up there to a place where there were guys who were breaking out with venereal disease, but they had a camp up there where they dumped them off. There is where we stayed.

W: With all those guys with venereal disease?

T: Yes. About all I could say about that [was] they had plenty to eat and a lot of good food, so we stayed there for about a week. Then, the commander who was over us was an attorney back in the States. He kind of knew his way around pretty good, and he pulled a lot of strings and got us listed as survivors who were able to work our way back. We came back to the States on *Queen Elizabeth*. Six days running a zig-zag course. Boy, that thing really moved. They'd hit it with whatever they had to shoot into it, but it would just keep going. Knock a hole into it, and they'd patch it up.

L: And you were in the Navy?

T: Yes.

L: That was the extent of your service? You were there in the Channel, picked up and taken north to Scotland, and then returned home on the liner?

T: Yes. We came back home, and that wasn't the end of it. Then, they put us on another ship that was packed solid with ammunition. We got about halfway across the Atlantic, coming back with her big load of ammunition, and they dropped us out of the convoy. We never did know, for a long time, why they dropped us out of the convoy. The reason that they did was that they had some ships that were blowing up, and they didn't know why. They traced it to some bombs that we had on our ship that were faulty bombs, that whenever they reached a certain temperature, they would explode. The war was just about to end in Germany. Anyway, we finally got on across, and then we went on up, way up, almost to Scotland. They had some GIs who had points enough for a

discharge. While they were waiting on transportation, they gave them a job of coming over there, going down in the hole, and searching out those bombs, those particular ones that were faulty. They had these padded deals that they'd place these bombs, about three or four of them, on it. They'd haul them forty miles out in the ocean and dump them. That is what they got to do while they were waiting on transport. So, that is how much our government cares about [them].

L: That was gratitude, wasn't it?

T: You better believe it. [Both laugh.] Anyway, after all that, that guy got us back to the United States. Then, I got duty on the battleship *Iowa*. That was near the end of the war, so thank God I didn't have to ride that thing back over where it was going. I spent my last few days on the battleship *Iowa*. It was a couple of months or something like that.

L: Then you were discharged shortly thereafter, after the war ended in Germany?

T: Yes, after the war ended. Yes, but they still had Japan to fool with. That is where the battleship *Iowa* would have probably gone, back to Japan. The war ended, so I didn't have to go, thank God.

L: So, you were discharged after V-E Day, then?

T: Yes.

L: Just a few more questions, Mr. Taylor. Let's move back to the CCC. What were the most important skills that you learned in the CCC, do you believe?

T: Well, I don't know that I learned any skills. Of course, sharpening these jackhammer beds, I never had fooled with one of them, if you can call that a skill. Well, it was a skill in a way. You had to know exactly how to do it. It wasn't too much to learn.

L: Did you ever read the CCC newspaper called *Happy Days*?

T: No. I don't remember that.

L: Did you ever come into contact with women who worked for the CCC, either in the camps or in the interview process?

T: No. Other than the ones who, maybe, were in the kitchen every now and then. But, no.

L: What about black CCC members? Did you come into contact with any of them?

T: No.

L: It is said that some individuals were sent to the CCC as an alternative to going into jail. Did you ever come into contact with any fellows like this?

T: Yes. There were two or three who had been given a choice: you either go to jail, or you can go into the CCC. Of course, they didn't want to go to jail. So, they were in the CCC. I didn't think they were very bad. Maybe they might have stole something, but that'd be the extent of it. They weren't murderers or anything like that.

L: Do you remember disciplinary problems in the camps? How would they handle those type of things?

T: Well, for misdemeanors, they'd give you extra duty or something like that. You had to do some KP, which was the kitchen place, working in the kitchen. They'd find some jobs that was a little bit dirty that most everyone didn't want to do. They'd give them the dirty end of the stick.

L: Looking back, what did you like most about being in the CCC?

T: I enjoyed the traveling and seeing different parts of the country. Once I was there and settled in, of course, I got a little homesick and stuff like that. But, I hadn't been anywhere. Like I said, I'd only been, maybe, fifteen miles from home. I hadn't seen any of the country, and I enjoyed seeing all the different states as we crossed them. That was a treat to me, a little old Kentucky boy who hadn't ever been anywhere.

L: So, you became familiar with California enough to know that was a place that you'd like to go back to, I guess, later. Would you say that?

T: Yes. It was prosperous. I guess it still is.

L: What, if anything, did you dislike about being in the CCC?

T: Being away from home. I think that was about the worst part. I got a little homesick. Of course, at that time, I was single and didn't have any girls that wanted to be bothered with me. I didn't have any girlfriends, so I kind of missed the folks at home. I enjoyed most all of it. I didn't get homesick, really.

W: Well, you got married and [had] your two babies.

T: Well, at the latter part of it when I moved back to Kentucky after my wife and I got married, of course, then I was close by. I had this old car and would come home every weekend. That wasn't too bad.

L: Why was the CCC important in American history?

T: You know, there just wasn't any money. You kind of were about as low as you could get, I guess.

W: There wasn't any jobs, either.

T: No. If you got a job, it was a dirty something that nobody wanted to do, and you only got a dollar for it, if you went out to work all day long. I know right after I got married, I worked for this guy for seventy-five cents a day and my board. He was one of these guys who wanted to run all the time. He just couldn't get enough done during the day. So, we would work from daylight until dark out in the field, in the corn or whatever he had. Then, you had to help him do the feeding and all of that, get his old horses and everything squared away and his cows milked and all of that. It would be way after dark, and I still only got seventy-five cents for it. I hope you don't ever run into anything like that. I don't think it'll ever be that way again.

L: Do you think they should have something like the CCC today?

T: I sure do. I don't think it would work really. But I think the kids who are growing up now are growing up with a lot more than we had. We appreciated it because there wasn't any money, and we were used to having to work and work hard for what we got. We worked for a man chopping weeds out of corn or whatever, and he expected you to chop an awful lot of weeds and do it from daylight until dark. I just don't think kids today are that work _____. It seems to [be] easy times. It is just a different time now than it was then.

L: We will end on that note. I thank you for your time, Mr. Taylor. It has been a pleasant experience.

T: I hope it will be helpful to you.

L: Thank you.