

8-4-1987

Interview with Sherman Moffitt Regarding CCC (FA 81)

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TRANSCRIPT

RECORDING NO.: Tape 9 SideAandB

INTERVIEWER: Kelly Lally

INTERVIEWEE: Rev. Sherman Moffit

DATE OF INTERVIEW: 8/4/1987

PLACE OF INTERVIEW: Horse Cave, KY

OTHER PEOPLE PRESENT:

EQUIPMENT USED:

AMOUNT OF RECORDING (TAPE/MINIDISK) USED: 55:01

DESCRIPTION OF CONTENTS:

TRANSCRIBED BY: Christie Burns **DATE:** July, 2007

Transcribed with the support of a Transcription Grant from the Oral History Commission of the Kentucky Historical Society.

KEY: K=Kelly Lally

S=Rev. Sherman Moffit

Italics= emphasis

// = overlapping or interrupted speech

[] [not part of recording]

Lapsed time represented in left column by minutes and seconds (i.e. 5:50)

? or * = transcript needs to be checked

0:00 K: This is Kelly Lally, and I'm here in Horse Cave, Kentucky, with Reverend Sherman Moffit. Today is August the 4th, 1987. When were you born, Reverend Moffit?

S: September, '21. September the 15th, 1921.

K: 1921, okay. And where did you grow up?

S: In Park City.

K: Park City?

S: Glasgow Junction, at that time.

K: How many people were in your family?

S: They were four boys and one girl.

K: What number were you in that group?

S: I was the third.

K: Third?

S: Mm-hmm.

1:06 K: What were times like for you and your family during the Depression?

S: Pretty hard.

K: What kind of—Did your family make a living by farming?

S: Farming, mostly, yeah.

K: What kind of things did you farm?

S: Uh, we raised tobacco and corn. I guess that was the biggest profit then.

K: How did you hear about the CCC?

S: Uh, seemed like to me there was a setup in Glasgow at the time. It was—Maybe I was contacted personally. I don't exactly remember. And you know how rumors get around, you know, when somebody hears about something and the boys uptown was telling me about it too, I think. Joining the CC camp. I had an older brother. He heard about it. And he joined also, long before I did. He might've spent three or four years in there.

K: Was he at Mammoth Cave also?

S: Mm-hmm, yeah.

K: So when, when was the date again that you entered the CCC?

S: Um, it is December the fifth, 1941. Pearl Harbor was bombed on the fourth, I went to CC's on the fifth.

K: And how old were you?

S: Uh, twenty.

K: And you stayed in the CCC until it finally closed down?

S: July, in July, '42.

K: And which camp were you in?

S: Number one.

3:18 K: Do you remember how you felt when you left home for the CCC?

S: Um, well, I felt like it's gonna be something new, you know, something different from what I had been doing, you know. And I found that it was. It was all new to me, you know. Meeting

new faces, you know, getting acquainted with people. Some of them I've never seen before. Haven't seen since, you know. It was a great experience to me, you know.

K: Did you ever get homesick?

S: Uh, no, 'cause just nine miles from home, you know.

K: You could go home when you wanted.

S: Every weekend, if we desired, we'd get some way to get there.

K: Did they give you any sort of special training before you went in?

S: We first took a basic training course. Before we were assigned any jobs, you know. And I don't remember just how many days or months it was that we would've taken basic training. But we had to take all of this before we could be assigned to a job.

5:04 K: Do you remember your very first day in camp, getting ready to start work?

S: Um, sorta. Not too much. I believe we had to, we get up early, you know, in the morning, before daylight, you know. Roll call, whatnot. And then soon after we'd have breakfast, you know. And then we were called out and we were assigned to each truck, you know. That was our transportation, by truck, you know. CC. They'd cast to these jobs. I think the first job that I had was kind of mason, masonry work, you know, building foundations around, you know, in the cave area. They used sandstone then, you know. Not concrete, you know, like they would now. So I think they redid them now with concrete instead of using sand rock, or sandstone, we called it. And my employer, he thought I was real good at it, you know. 'Course I'd had some experience with it at home. My dad used to do a lot of that, you know. And we used to dig cisterns and he uses concrete, you know, wall it up to keep it from leaking. He built foundations for houses and things like that. So I kind of had experience in that. That wasn't new to me. Masonry work. I kind of enjoyed it. It's hard work, but you know, something you like to do, you enjoy it, you know, even if it is hard.

K: Did you stay with the masonry work the entire time, or did you move on to something else?

S: No, I moved on to—I was so good at that, they wanted to give me something easier. So they gave me a job driving the ferry down at the Green River. And I liked that, 'cause that was all, just easy. Real easy. Yeah.

K: So what did you have to do? Did you just have to //

S: Ferrying people across, you know.

K: The CCC workers, or tourists, or what?

S: No. Tourists.

K: Tourists?

S: Tourists, mostly. Well, anybody that come along. Civilians, you know. Anybody that—A lot of people lived across the river, you know. And still do. So whoever wanted to go across, it was free of charge, you know. We'd ferry them right on across, and we'd stay on that side 'til somebody come up from that side. And then we'd ferry back across the other side, you know, and wait 'til somebody come, ferry them across.

K: So you didn't have a certain time that you left? You just went whenever somebody was ready to go?

S: Mm-hmm. Right, right. It was all free, you know. I enjoyed it. Met a lot of people. People from different states, you know. And one man come by, he wanted me to go with him, you know, go and live with him, you know. He left me his fishing equipment, you know, if I wanted to fish, while they were going across. And uh, he was really concerned. I think—I wished a lot of times I had considered it, you know. They lived way up north somewhere. It was a great experience.

K: Did you stick with the ferry job then until the camp closed?

S: Not quite. Almost. I kind of fouled up on that job. [chuckles] I failed to get back in camp on time, you know. I was supposed to went to work at six o'clock, and I didn't make it back. I'd been out—this is on the weekend, you know. And transportation wasn't too good back in those days, you know. You didn't catch the right truck or bus, you'd be left out. So I missed the truck, you know, didn't get into camp 'til late Sunday morning. So I lost my job.

10:08 K: So what did you do then?

S: Well, put me back on //

K: Stone masons?

S: Yeah, mason work.

K: How did you get paid for your work? I know that it was thirty dollars a month.

S: Yeah. I think we got paid by the month, I believe, best I can remember.

K: And some was sent to your family. Is that right?

S: Yeah, I helped them out, yeah. But then make [unintelligible].

K: Some people had said about twenty-five dollars was automatically sent to your family, and that you had a little bit left for yourself. I didn't know if they kept doing that towards the end or not. Sometimes they changed some things.

S: Yeah. I don't think they—I don't think they followed that procedure all the way through. I don't exactly remember right now.

K: That's okay. I think they changed it a lot towards the end. How did you spend your personal money that you kept for yourself?

S: Well, I don't guess I could tell all of that. [laughs]

K: [laughs]

S: You know how young people are.

K: Yeah.

S: They like to have what they call "big time" you know, so I guess I kinda throwed some of it away.

11:40 K: How much free time did you have?

S: Um, well there was times when we didn't have to go out, some weekends, you know. We were free from Friday night—I don't think we worked on Saturday. Saturday and Sunday. Well some had to work on Sunday. You know, like those that worked in the kitchen, and places, and run ferries worked Sunday. It's the only thing I disliked about it, working on Sunday.

K: What did you do with your free time?

S: Well, when I wasn't going out, I laid around in the barracks, read different kinds of books, you know. I didn't [unintelligible].

K: Did you go into town very much for movies or fun?

S: Not a whole lot. I never did care for movies. I went to them occasionally. Really it's something I never did.

K: You went home lots too?

S: Yeah, go home about every weekend. That we could, you know, allowed to go.

13:14 K: Did you participate in any of the recreational or educational programs that the CCC had?

S: Um, uh, no. Yes and no. It wasn't too—really going on at that time. Just certain things, you know, to participate in. I'm not sure just now how they were.

K: Did they still have all the baseball teams and—

S: Yeah, they had some of that, I suppose. I never did play ball. I wasn't a real sportsman, I guess.

K: And did they still have lots of different classes?

S: They had some, yeah. I think if it had stayed open longer, I would've gotten into more, you know. It was kind of closing down, and everything gradually moving out, you know.

K: Did the CCC guys that you know play many pranks on each other?

S: Oh yeah.

K: [chuckles]

S: Lot of mischievers, boys in the gang, you know.

K: Do you remember any of the pranks that people used to pull?

S: [chuckles] Well I don't—I couldn't say right now.

K: Okay.

14:55 K: Where exactly was camp number one situated?

S: Um, it was about three or four miles, I guess, this side of Mammoth Cave.

K: And um, was there any particular kind of work that camp number one specialized in, or were they like the rest of the camps //

S: They's mostly doing the same things that the other camps were doing.

K: So there was work on the roads, and the telephone wires. Do you know anybody that worked in the cave?

S: Previously?

K: Or, you know, worked as a CCC person in the cave. I'm trying to figure out what kind of work that they did.

S: In the cave.

K: Uh-huh.

S: No, I can't recall anything that I know that worked in the cave. All the boys that I knew worked outside, you know. They had a lot of civilians working in the cave. I think at that time also. Now there may have been some CC's working in the cave. I'm not sure about that. I know there was civilians. I did know some of the civilians that were working at that time. Some of the [unintelligible] were living over in that area at that time. Smiths too, were living over there. They worked in and around the cave a whole lot.

16:43 K: Was there much interaction among the different camps, the CCC camps? Did people associate with each other? Did they socialize at all?

S: Um, yeah. Yeah, there's some of the boys visit our camp. Some of us would visit them, you know.

K: How did the local residents feel about the CCC being in the area, do you think?

S: You mean the towns?

K: Mm-hmm. Do you, um, I heard at some point that the people, a lot of people were displaced from their homes because the park was being developed. Was there any tension against the CCC, or was it mostly against the Park Service and the government?

S: I think there was some of them were against the CC's. 'Course now, some of those boys were pretty rowdy. Pretty rough. They'd go into town, you know, on weekends, and they'd kinda take over, you know. They'd take somebody's girlfriend and things like that, you know. They used to have convoys, you know, a lot in these towns, in the summertime. And I have seen them come in and break it up. Some of them's pretty violent, you know, 'specially after they get a few drinks, you know. For that reason, a lot of people have a sour taste in their mouth when they see a CC coming, you know. They'd say, "Here comes trouble." [chuckles] And sometimes it would be like that, you know. And they'd get into these things, you know, truckload of them, you know. And they'd do the [unintelligible] they'd jump on the trucks and take off, you know. Never could catch them. Police couldn't catch them. One wouldn't tell on the other. They didn't know who'd done the damage. Sometimes it's people get cut up, you know, beat up, you know, on like that. I never did go in like that.

19:12 K: So did a lot of the boys drink on the weekends?

S: Yeah, quite a bit, yeah. Very rowdy.

K: Well that's what young people do.

S: Yeah, you'll have all of those kinds of people. We have them today.

K: Do you remember if, for the park development in general, by the time you got into the CCC, did the people in the area generally accept the park being there, or were they still kind of fighting it on the sly?

S: Well, I didn't hear too much talk against the CC's. I think they done a lot of good work, you know, around there. Cleaned up a lot of parks, and made provisions for the people to come in, you know, like they do over there now. I see, I go over there. [unintelligible] a month or two ago. They had all those terrible crowds over there, and I said, now, this is some of the work that we done. You know, around these parks. People come in the park and go in and see the cave, you know. So I think that we were a great help in getting these, making these preparations for people to come in this day. It's a long time ago. Hasn't been a lot of changes made, you know. And a lot of things that are over there now. They have cottages out there where they don't have no television, no telephone, you know. And they had that then. You know, so those are some of the same buildings that were over there, I presume, that were there when we were over there. Do you like it the old way, you know. Haven't been many changes made.

21:24 K: Did a lot of the—Did the guys date local girls? Go out with local girls?

S: Oh yeah. Yeah. They really loved the girls, you know. Get in more trouble over the girls. Little bit, you know. Those boys always living in town, they was pulling some of the girls up. When those girls see us coming, you know, shoot, they'd go fall for us. We're gonna show them a good time, you know.

K: Love those uniforms.

S: Yeah. They'd leave their boyfriend, you know. That didn't go too good with the boys at home, you know. They'd go with the boys all through the week, but when they see us coming, they'd leave their boys.

K: Okay, I see. That *would* cause some problems. Did many of the guys stay out all night, sneak out of the camps or //

S: Oh yeah.

K: // barely come back in the morning?

S: Yeah, slip out. Wasn't supposed to be out. Some of us be quarantined maybe then, 'cause some went wrong. Sometimes we'd all have to stay in, something some individual done, make us all stay in.

K: Oh did they?

S: Be sure to get the right one, we'll just make everybody stay in.

K: Did they ever find him?

S: No.

K: Nobody ever told.

S: Nobody would ever tell on the other one.

K: Hm.

22:48 K: Well, how successful do you feel like the CCC was in relieving the effects of the Depression?

S: Well, I think it helped a lot. 'Cause a lot of the boys wouldn't've had a job, 'cause jobs were hard to find back in those days. It didn't make no difference how much you know. It's hard for you to get a job. That was one big reason I think that the CC camp was set up. Give boys a job. 'Cause they just walking the streets. There was a lot more violence that went on, you know, stealing and breaking in, back in those days. People are gonna, they're gonna survive some way, you know. If they can't get it the right way, they'll get it the wrong way. So I think this eliminated lots of stealing and a lot of wrongdoing. It helped a whole lot in that way, I know it did. 'Cause I myself didn't have a job, you know.

K: And you'd do what you gotta do.

S: Certain time of year, you know, you can farm, you know. That is a very small income. I worked for fifty cents a day, twelve hours a day. Don't have money, you work on the farm. Sun up to sun down. So in there, you make a little more money, and you don't put in all of those

long hours either. So it was much better. I thought, for me, and a lot of the other boys too. They'd have something to do and draw a little money. Didn't have to worry about your meals. You're gonna be fed, you know, and clothes, they give you clothes to wear. Those two things you didn't have to worry about. Somewhere to sleep. I think it meant a lot. Other boys, they take advantage of those things, you know, 'cause some don't care, you know. Didn't make any difference, whether they live or die, sink or swim, you know.

25:22 K: Do you think the CCC made a difference in the economy of the local area around the park?

S: I really do, yeah. I do, because, as I said, a lot of these boys that wasn't doing anything, they took these jobs and, I think it made better for the homes, you know, 'cause they were sending the money back home. Back then a dollar, you could really buy something with a dollar. And I think it helped to brighten up a lot of homes. They had more to eat in them, and whatnot. They do a lot of work in and around towns. I mean, they got to where they would, you know. People wanted something done in town, they'd punch those CC boys.

K: Were there a lot of physical improvements then also in the town?

S: I think so.

K: Maybe. What about the roads? Did they—

S: Yeah, they worked, they done a lot of that building a lot of the roads. 'Course it's mostly gravel back then, but that's a whole lot better than a mud road, you know. No gravel. I don't think there was too much blacktop going on back then, you know. Kinda scarce back then. They built a lot of roads back then, though. And cave area, you know. They probably even ventured out into town, I guess, quite a bit. People wanted them, you know, to work on the roads in town.

27:19 K: Do you think that the CCC made a difference when it came time for the war, as far as people going into the military?

S: Yeah. I think it did.

K: Could you tell me how?

S: Well, as I was saying a while ago, getting this training, you know, in the CC camp, it made you automatically ready for the other job being in the Army, see. You wouldn't have to go through this basic training. Officer has you out there drilling you, training you, and he sees you already know it, he says, "This man don't need to be here. See, he needs to be somewhere else, doing another job. He don't need no training. He already knows it." Automatically. [unintelligible] and give him a different job, 'cause there was a lot of prejudice back then, just like we still have some of it to deal with now. And it made it harder for me to get a job than it would for, you know, a guy of another race. It's because of this prejudice. I've seen several jobs that I know I could've done as good, even better than the fella—He didn't know anything at all about it. I'd already had some training. See, but they'd give it to him, whether he knew it or not. He'd have to learn. Hard for him to learn when he didn't have the training, you see, because raw. Giving him a job he never had no experience or whatever. He used to foul up. 'Course, he'd lose the job, you know.

K: Let me turn this tape over real fast.

[break in recording]

29:27 K: This is second, the second side of the tape of my interview with Reverend Sherman Moffit. We were just talking a little bit about training in the military, and how the CCC might've made a difference. Is there anything else you'd like to say about that in particular?

S: Well, there's a lot could be said about it, I guess. You know, thinking about it, had it on my mind, you know, real good—I could say that—As I before stated, there was a lot of discrimination. That kept me from advancing, you know. Like lots of them did, you know, advance. 'Cause we were held back because of our color. That made it double double hard for us. And the other man, he'd be going, moving right along, and see, we'd be held back from advancing. And anytime we'd be rejected, you know, just because of our color. And that was bad, you know. We had that to fight with, and we *still* have it. Not as bad as it used to be, but it's still, you know. Have this to be contending with today. It was then, it was in the CC camp, you know, then. The boys didn't mix like they do now. They had this camp to be for blacks, this camp over here be for whites. See, it was separated like that. And this was bad on both sides. And kept us all from getting really acquainted with one another, knowing that we've got to live together. If we make to success, we have to be together. God has made no difference in man. He has no respect oppressing. He looks on everybody alike. But it's not so in the CC camps, or in the Army. See, I run into this in the Army. Same thing. It's discrimination. Only place that I was at that I didn't run into it was overseas. A place overseas. People didn't make any difference about—you know, color didn't mean a thing to them. You know, I like that. That's the way it oughta be with us today, you know?

K: Right.

S: We'd be much better off today. But we've had these things to contend with, see. And I think it's been a hindrance on both sides. 'Cause if we don't have love, God knows it, you know. And he's the only one that can keep us from advancing, you know, doing good. We are not—If our heart is not right—man, I've got to love you. You've got to love me. As Christians, you know. As human beings. We just must do it. See, I teach and preach that all the time, you know? Love, that's what we need, more love. And then the Lord said for us to “first seek ye the kingdom of Heaven and its races, and all the things that we have.” See, everything else. Whatever we need, God is able to supply. Every need, see. He'll take care of you, he'll take care of me. We please him, he'll please us. This hasn't been taught all along. I didn't hear much about this in CC camp. They didn't have, you know, these places to go. Temples and whatnot. In CC camps, and again, now they might ventured out. I'm sure they have now, 'cause they have them in the Army. But back then, you didn't hear anything about the Lord. And, talk about everything else, but really should've been. Should've had him first. Maybe this would've broke up a lot of this discrimination then. People then didn't talk about God. Not that He makes no difference, 'cause this is what we need today. This is the only thing going to help our society today. Our economy. Both spiritually and physically, government, the White House needs the Lord. This'll solve their problems. Let the Lord come in. See, they're keeping Him out, 'cause they want all the praise for themselves, see. They want to be able to say, “Look what I've got, look who I am.” We are nobody outside of God. 'Til the president and all the congressmen and senators and House realize that God must be first in their life, they'll never be successful, as far

as God's concerned. Might be in the sight of man, but what does it matter? What does profit matter? [unintelligible] you haven't gained anything. We've got to learn to love one another. This is the first thing that the Lord said in His commandment, to love Him with all of our heart, all the strength in our mind, and our neighbor as ourself. On these two hangs all the laws and the prophets. You just must love. There's no other way that we can make it into the Kingdom. We must be borned again. Must be a change in our heart. That's the only way you can get people to do right. You gotta be saved, you know? Just go from bad to worse.

36:22 K: Do you think your experience in the CCC and the Army eventually brought you to this?

S: Sure.

K: To this call that you have?

S: Every bit. Yes, ma'am. I've seen lots of happiness, you know, I've experienced a lot of things. Through the CC camp and the Army, I've learned more than I could in any book, you know, about people. You'd be surprised. Things that I know about people that you won't read about in a book.

K: Alright.

S: That personal experience is the greatest teacher.

K: So you left the CCC camp, went into the Army, had gone to Europe and then the South Seas. Then you came back, and how did you eventually get into your job as a—

S: Minister?

K: Minister.

S: Well, this come about by a call. I've been called or sent by God. Something I didn't want, really, 'cause I felt like that I wasn't qualified, 'cause I didn't have much education, you know. God let me know that when he calls, he qualifies. And this happened back in the early sixties. When it first came to me, you know, that that's what He wanted me to do. I'd been working in church, they made me deacon, I accepted the deaconship. And I used to sing a lot, you know, sing in choirs, thing like that. And I love that. I tried to make a good servant at it. But when this preaching come about, you know, I didn't want that, 'cause I'd had no experience with people, just working with them. And people hard to deal with, you know, some people. But it wouldn't leave me. The Lord just kept bringing it before me, you know, tried to shoo it away, come right back. And then I just wouldn't accept it. [unintelligible] I'm just not fit to be a preacher. And so these things started happening to me, you know, like sickness, you know. I was struck down with sickness. And some people thought I was gonna die, but I didn't think I was gonna die then. I know what was happening. The Lord was dealing with me. And I promised Him if He let me up, I'd go. So He did. He got me up. Got me on my feet again. And I kept my promise. I didn't lie to Him, 'cause I was afraid, you know, I fear the Lord. I accepted the call to ministry back in '63, and been struggling ever since with it. Been preaching now, and pastoring most of the time, 'cause immediately after I was preaching my trial sermon, there was some officer there that night, and they challenged me immediately after that to come and pastor for them. They was without a pastor. Buffalo, Kentucky. So I went and preached for them, and so, soon after they

was wanting me ordained to be their pastor, you know. So they went to the church and asked would they have me ordained. So I was ordained, and I accepted the change. And done real good, I thought, after that. I didn't stay too long. But I done good work while I was there. So I moved onto another church. Well, these churches were just having one Sunday—This church was having *two* Sundays, other church was having one Sunday. So I take them on. It happened one Sunday, I had three churches one time. So it finally boiled down to one church that I'm in now, Park City. It's where I was raised at. They had been praying over this, and the Lord showed them that I should come down there and preach to them all the time. I was going down there two times a month. Sunday, and one Sunday more. So I told them it's a good thing for the church in showing that, you know. They should have a full-time pastor. But I never thought about me going, you know. So I just went on like that, you know. About a month or two, maybe less time, brother come back to me and told me again, said, "Lord showed us that we need to go full time." I said, "Yeah, it's a good thing." But like that, talking casually. And it struck me that time. I said, "But I don't know who your pastor's gonna be." Just like that. Well they said, "We hadn't thought about nobody but you." I said, "Oh oh." I got two other churches besides them. I said, "I'm gonna have to do some praying for this thing. Y'all have been praying, but I haven't been praying over it, 'cause I wasn't thinking nothing about coming down here full time." So they said, "We'll give you all the time you want." So I went, trying to pray over it, about a month. Went back to them, I told them, "If y'all are still considering me, you're gonna have to give me some more time." We'll give you all the time you want. So when I left that time, hadn't been gone from church no time, maybe a day or so, it struck me just as plain as sitting here looking at you. That's what the Lord wanted me to do. So I went back and told them. They said, "Well, we knew it all the time, because the Lord already showed us." So I accepted that church full time. And I'm there for seventeen years, I guess. Haven't regretted it. I gave up a church. Cave City was much larger than it is. But I told them I had to go where the Lord wanted me to go. Some challenged me about that. Said, "You're about to give up that big church." I said, "I have to be led by the Spirit, do what the Spirit says." He'll take care of me. So that's where I am today.

K: Been here ever since.

S: Yeah. Yeah. I don't know how long I'll be there.

K: Long as you need to be.

S: Yeah. Long as the Spirit says, "Stay there," I'll have to stay. Yeah. That's a great experience too, with the Lord. That's the greatest experience.

44:38 S: But when I was in the CC camp, I was a Christian, you know. I was saved when I was thirteen years old. But you know how a person can slip, wander off, you know. We get up to where you think you're grown, and you might take the wrong road, you know, for a while. That's what I did, I guess I drifted off in the wrong road. Because someone come [unintelligible]. One thing I know that the Lord was with me when I went to the Army, see. I saw a lot of my friends that went with me, they didn't come back. The Lord was merciful to me, you know. Went through the whole Army, whole war, without a scratch. I can't never forget Him for that. How he brought me through. That thing has cured me. I didn't know whether I was gonna get back myself or not, you know. Just didn't know. I just didn't believe I was gonna make it at times, feel like that. But I just did. In this war, bombs, and being shot at and everything, lay down in the night, you don't know whether you're gonna wake up. So it puts

you to really think, “Who has brought me through this?” Just think about the Lord. *He’s* the one brought me through it.

46:25 K: A little bit ago we were talking about a few of the problems that the—They were big problems that the CCC had, and one of them was racial discrimination. You know of any other problems that you can think of?

S: Uh, [phone rings] excuse me.

[break in recording]

K: I was asking you if there were any other problems that you could see in the CCC, in its administration, or within the camps, or—

S: Well, yes. I could see where in even in the midst of our own race, it make a vast difference, you know, if you had pretty good education, they’d always pull for you more than they would that fellow with less education. And I thought that was so wrong, you know, ‘cause he oughta have been helping this man that has less education, rather than pulling for this man so much that has more. I think this is the man that needs it, that don’t have it. That’s why they make them, even amidst your own race, see, they discriminate against one another. If you’re an officer, the other officers are gonna pull for an officer. Set him up. Good work go a long way. God speed for you, ‘cause you’re in a position to take this job. And this fellow’s anxious to learn, but you see, you know, they didn’t give him the opportunity. Real opportunity. So I run into that myself. I had to learn it the hard way. It’s bad. I was talking about it, how the races—But we have it amongst our own self, you know. We try to hold one another down. And I thought that’s awful bad. We oughta be pulling for one another at least, you know. This has also held us down. One being against the other, wouldn’t speak a good word for him. But sometimes a good word will go a long way. If you say a good word to me, you know, it really helps me. I could do the same for you. A whole lot of time, it ain’t what you know, it’s *who* you know.

K: Yeah, you’re right.

S: It really helps. But that, it was in there. It was like that. If you’d butter up to a person, you know, //

K: Yeah, somebody could always //

S: Yeah. Stand a chance, you see. Whether you knew a whole lot or not.

K: So it wasn’t always the ones who needed it, or even, sometimes the best qualified who got things. It was //

S: Right.

K: Okay.

S: And these fellows that buddy up to these guys, they didn’t know how to do anything, you know. Want to act up a little bit, I’ll let you in.

50:21 K: Did camp number one have everything that camp number two, three, and four had? As far as facilities?

S: Well I'm not too sure about that. Don't seem like to me. Don't seem like to me they did have. As I said, they were separated, you know. And I think maybe the other race might've had it a little better. 'Cause we didn't get to visit them. At least I didn't. But I think it made a little difference. I think the others had it better facilities, you know, in some instances. Maybe might've had better training, you know, on like that. At least, that's what we hear. I wasn't there to verify anything. [unintelligible] it's been that way, you know, pretty much.

K: Is there anything else that you'd like to tell me about your experience with the CCC?

S: Well, I don't know—I didn't get to stay in there too long, but I did get a whole lot in a short span of time. 'Course I've forgotten some that I did learn, probably some things that you'd love to hear. As time goes on, you forget a lot of things. Some things you want to forget, you know. There's a whole lot. It's a pretty good deal, I think, at that time, I'm sure. 'Cause today it wouldn't—Maybe it wouldn't profit the boys too much today, because there's too many other things that you can get into today. But then, it fitted in real good in that day, 'cause times were hard, money's hard to get ahold of, you know. For me, I was glad to get into something like that, you know. Why you could have some security. Then, you didn't have no security. You didn't know one day to another how things gonna be with you. But in there, you had an insurance that you're gonna have something to eat tomorrow, you know. Have a job. Have more friends. I had a lot of friends in there. There's a guy down here Smiths Grove, now, he come to my anniversary here about a month ago. He was in there. Britt.

K: Britt? He works up at the park, still does.

S: Yeah, mm-hmm.

K: Yeah, I think I might get to talk with him too.

S: Yeah, he's a real nice man. He was one of the officers in there. He remembered me well. He always gave me a good name, better name than I really deserved. You know, being, you know—But he really thought a lot of me, and he still, he tells his daughters about me. His, his daughter works the same place my daughter is working, down there at the post office. He'd see her about every day, telling her about me, you know, about the CC camp. There's another guy in there, he was a real good officer. Merion Jessup.

K: Jessup?

S: Jess—Merion Jessup. I think he's still living. Now he, I don't know exactly where he lives at.

K: Okay, well, somebody to look up.

S: Yeah, he was a nice fellow. Yeah, he really was.

K: I really appreciate you taking the time to talk with me today.

S: Well I don't know whether I've told you anything you want to hear or not.

K: Yeah, you have, you really have.

[CONCLUSION OF INTERVIEW]