

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY
ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM
World War II at the Home Front

Personal Experience

O.H. 920

ROGER POWELL

Interviewed

by

David Powell

on

October 26, 1986

ROGER POWELL

Roger L. Powell is an eighty-three year old widower. For forty years of his life he was employed at the West Warren Post Office. He had started working there when only seventeen years old by lying about his age. He took early retirement from the post office and then worked in construction work for five years as an apprentice for his sons. He then moved to California and worked five years at a hardware store until he retired again at the age of sixty-five.

For the next ten years he and his wife divided their time between Warren, in the summer, and California, in the winter, where they visited several of their children who had moved there. After his wife died his health made it impossible to do much traveling so he has spent the last eight years in Warren at his home.

He and his wife had a large family of six boys and three girls. Eight of the children are still living; five in Warren and three in California. They lost a son after he had come home from the war. The son's ship had burned and he had a narrow escape from it. Soon after coming home he had a nightmare and hurt himself thinking he was escaping from the ship again. He died three days later in the hospital.

Roger Powell was not in the war because he was married. He was thirty-eight years old when Pearl Harbor was bombed, and had eight children.

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World War II at the Home Front

INTERVIEWEE: ROGER POWELL

INTERVIEWER: David Powell

SUBJECT: rationing, censorship, job market, entertainment

DATE: October 26, 1986

DP: This is an interview with Roger L. Powell for the Youngstown State University Oral History Program, on the home front during World War II, by David Powell, at 883 Bonnie Brae NE, Warren, Ohio, on October 26, at 5:45 p.m.

First, would you tell me what were some of the things you remember about during the Second World War at the home front?

RP: Well, I remember rationing coupon, gas coupon. That is about all I remember about it now. I don't remember much of that stuff.

DP: Tell us a little bit about the rationing coupons. How were they gotten and what were they for?

RP: Well they came in books and they were for anything that you had to buy; groceries, clothing, gasoline, and anything of the kind. Each person had their book with their name on it. No one else was supposed to use that book.

DP: I know at that time that you lived out in the country. Did you get enough gas, and tires, and so forth, so it was easy to drive to work?

RP: That is the reason we moved back into Warren. I couldn't get gasoline. So we sold at Braceville and moved back into Warren. Then when I started another

job, besides my regular job, I wasn't getting enough gasoline. So I had to go and ask for more, which I was given.

DP: What was your regular job?

RP: My regular job was working in the post office at Warren, Ohio. During the war then the two of us, Carl Hayes and I ... Hayes was a carrier so he worked the first four hours in the afternoon and I worked the other four hours after that at the Youngstown Press Steel, making and inspecting shells.

DP: Now what do you mean you didn't have enough gas to get to work on the second job?

RP: Well, where I lived in the time between getting from ... I worked at the West Warren branch for the Warren post office. I didn't have enough gas to get me home, get my supper, and get to the Youngstown Press Steel. They would just give you what they figured you would need for the one job. But after I explained it, why I got more gasoline.

DP: By the way, did they ration things like tires, and things like that?

RP: Oh everything was rationed. Gasoline, everything was rationed.

DP: Now if you needed more meat for something was it possible to get it?

RP: No.

DP: Okay. I noticed that on the rationing I heard that some people would occasionally sell things they weren't supposed to. Did you ever know that this happened?

RP: Oh, yes! Some people got the rationing coupon for the farm use and they got more than the one living in town. A lot of times they would sell those coupons.

DP: What could you buy with the coupons?

RP: What ever it was for. For gasoline, or whatever the coupon was for.

DP: Did you ever hear of any stores or anyone else taking advantage of this?

RP: No. I didn't hear of any, no.

DP: I noticed that during the war ... I remember at our house we always had a little banner that had gold stars

on it, or blue stars. I don't remember too much about it could you tell me a little bit about that?

RP: Well, if you had boys within the service you had a blue star that you could put in the window. Now if something happened and they were killed during the war then you had a gold star that you used.

DP: Did you have anyone in the service?

RP: Oh, yes.

DP: Who did you have?

RP: We had three sons in the service, in the Navy.

DP: Could you tell us a little bit about how they got in the Navy and so forth.

RP: They didn't want to be drafted into the Army. So just before each one reached eighteen I went with them to give my consent and they joined the Navy.

DP: Were they all stationed at the same place?

RP: Well, no. One went through the training period at Fort Pierce, Florida and the other went through Chicago. I forget the name of what the place was.

DP: Did you ever go visit them?

RP: Yes, I went to visit the one boy in Fort Pierce. My wife and I went down on a bus which was quite a trip during the war.

DP: Tell us a little bit about the trip down there.

RP: Well, it was an old broken down bus and it was too full to start out with. The colored sat all over the bus. When they got down into Virginia they stopped the bus and told them, "You colored folks know there is a law." And they all got into the back seat of the bus and the whites then spread out. When you got to Florida then you didn't have that discrimination like you did through the other southern states.

DP: Did it take very long to take this trip?

RP: Yes it did. If I remember correctly from Warren to Fort Pierce, Florida took three days and nights.

DP: The buses, were they somewhat like the buses we have today or were they different also?

RP: They were practically like they are today only not

nearly as modern. There was no comfort station on the bus, whatever.

DP: What if you needed a comfort station what happened?

RP: You waited until you got to the bus station stop or else.

DP: During the war then, you said you moved into Warren because of the rationing. If you had the choice would you have stayed at Braceville do you think?

RP: Oh yes. We liked that place out there and we would have stayed if hadn't been for the gas situation.

DP: In other words rationing actually made you move?

RP: Right.

DP: Once you moved into Warren then you could go ahead and work and they had you working at the Press Steel and so forth. I know we asked about victory gardens. Did you ever have a victory garden or know people who did? Could you tell us something about what was the program?

RP: We didn't have any victory garden after we moved into Warren. While we were living in Braceville we had a very nice garden. We had no place to have it after we moved into town. They did have different places that they turned over and fixed for gardens for the people. Each one of them had a certain amount of land to put their victory garden in.

DP: How would you get these spots that they were preparing?

RP: It was by luck. You would apply and whatever was available would be allotted to you.

DP: I remember when I was really little mother saving grease. Can you tell me why did people do things like that? They would save cans of grease.

RP: Well, what they used it for I don't remember but it was. Everyone was supposed to save it at the time. Why, I don't remember.

DP: Where did you get the grease from?

RP: Well, from our cooking.

DP: You had three boys in the service then. They were in the service most of the time?

RP: Yes.

DP: How did you find out news from them, or how did you keep in contact with them?

RP: They sent letters home. Every once in awhile it would be most of it blacked out where they were telling something they weren't supposed to. As far as the mail was concerned we got good mail from them.

DP: Later on were they stationed anywhere or did they immediately put them over into the service where there was fighting going on?

RP: The oldest boy, who went in first, he was stationed in Hawaii for quite sometime because he had construction work before he went in. They put him on construction work in Hawaii.

DP: Was he repairing the damage done to Pearl Harbor or what?

RP: No, they were putting in new facilities for the soldiers to live in, in Hawaii.

DP: Because of that reason he stayed there?

RP: He stayed there for awhile and then he finally asked for a transfer onto active duties on the ship. For some reason he and the younger brother were on the ship together. Which they weren't supposed to be. They served the rest of the war on the same ship. The other son was on a small tanker in the South Pacific hauling oil.

DP: Now you said they weren't supposed to be on the same ship. Why didn't they want them on the same ship?

RP: That was just after the six or seven brothers had been killed on the same ship and they made the ruling that the relatives shouldn't serve on the same ship anymore.

DP: I can see why then. So in case one would be killed it wouldn't be more. Did they all go through the war safely?

RP: Yes they did. They all went through and came home.

DP: I'm supposed to also ask about victory bonds. I know what government bonds are. Could you tell me a little bit about victory bonds? How are they different from government bonds?

RP: I really don't know how much different they were. They had a big sale on. Everybody was supposed to buy victory bonds, which we all tried to do. In fact they had this \$.10 stamp that you could buy and then trade

in on the bonds when you got enough of those together. They did that through the schools. The bond, as I remember, was in \$25, \$50, \$100 denomination.

DP: I know a little bit about them because I've read and I know you had to keep them so many years before they were paid off. Did they encourage even the school children, or was it just the adults, or what?

RP: No, it was everyone, the kids in school. You were supposed to buy so many stamps each week and then when you got enough of those stamps you would turn those in on the bonds.

DP: Now at your job did they have some kind of a set up so that they would take money out like they do today, with-holding and so forth? Or was it strictly voluntary?

RP: That was all voluntary at that time.

DP: There wasn't any pay roll deduction then?

RP: Not through the post office anyway.

DP: As the war went on, of course, I know eventually we started winning and things got better. I know that they had such things as rent control and so forth. Can you tell me a little bit about rent control?

RP: Actually I don't remember too much about the rent control part. I know that they did inspect the houses and they did put a ceiling on what they could charge for rent during the war. That is about all I remember about that.

DP: I know that certain areas had a lot of extra people brought in to help work on the war effort. If you were in an area like that the rent control was supposed to help protect you?

RP: That is right, yes, and also protect the tenant.

DP: Now if there weren't enough homes for renting out what would they do? Or don't you remember that?

RP: Well, I remember when the Ravenna Arsonal arsonalists started not too far from Braceville every place in the vicinity would rent out all the rooms that they possibly could and that took care of most of the people.

DP: Did you rent out any rooms to any of the workers?

RP: Yes, we did. We rented a couple of rooms out nearly all the time we were in Braceville, during the war

time.

DP: What did you use those rooms for before renting them out?

RP: We just doubled the kids up in one room.

DP: I can remember one family that lived out in what I thought was our garage. What was that? Can you tell us about that?

RP: Well it was a three car garage. One room had been put together for a hen house at one time but it was well insulated and warm. During the war a man came and wanted to rent it so we said "Sure." So he brought the furniture in and that was it.

DP: Did you have three cars?

RP: No, we didn't.

DP: Why did you have a three car garage then?

RP: It was that way when we bought the place.

DP: These people lived in what had been like living quarters, or something besides the garage, then the whole time?

RP: Yes. We had different people there. If I remember correctly there were three different families during the war years.

DP: Did they even come in and inspect that before you were allowed to rent it?

RP: No.

DP: In other words then the rent control didn't apply then?

RP: That didn't apply to that, no.

DP: Now out in the country I know that a lot of people have wells for water, how did you get your water for these different places?

RP: There was water piped into the room in the garage.

DP: In other words it was almost like a living place ahead of time?

RP: Oh, yes. It had been fixed up for that.

DP: Then why did you use it for a chicken house?

RP: We didn't have any place else to put the chickens.

DP: Then when you lived out in Braceville I assume if you raised chickens, and you said you had a nice garden out there, did you raise anything else?

RP: We raised all kinds of vegetables, and we had a cow, and chickens, and rabbits.

DP: Had kind of a small farm?

RP: We had about two acres.

DP: How far was it from Braceville into your job in Warren?

RP: About twelve miles.

DP: You couldn't get enough gas to make a twenty-four mile trip a day?

RP: We were afraid ... They came along and talked about cutting how much gas we could use. So we got scared and decided we had better move into town.

DP: If that happened, did you have any trouble selling the house? Or did someone else feel that the rationing would hurt them?

RP: No, when we sold the house the man that bought it had owned property in Lordstown, and his property, with a lot of other properties, had been taken. What in the world was that for?

DP: They had that big arsenal out there but I don't know if that is it.

RP: Well, it wasn't the arsenal property. It was at Lordstown, but anyway it was something to do with the government. They put in different kinds of work there.

DP: So he still wanted to live in the country and Braceville was close by?

RP: Close by, and he bought the place from me.

DP: You moved into Warren, and you say that your boys joined the Navy before they would be drafted. Tell us a little bit about . . . How did they check to make sure that the people who were supposed to be drafted would be drafted? How did they know? Did boys have to sign up or . . .

RP: Oh yes, they had to register. When they got to be eighteen they were supposed to register same as they do now.

DP: How would they determine who was going to go into the services then? What was the system?

RP: I don't know.

DP: Do you know of anyone who you think perhaps did not truly make the system work correctly?

RP: No. The only one I can think of is the one of the rumors that we had when we were in Braceville. He pulled influence and he was kept out of the service for a good many years. They always said that when he did go over he would never make it, and he didn't. The ship that he was on sank on going over. That was it.

DP: Yes, I know. When you are talking about the draft board then, were there any people exempted who were young enough they could have been in the Army, because of ill health and things like that?

RP: Well, my oldest son was exempted on account of his broken leg and broken arm.

DP: Did some people ever make comments or was this just accepted that a boy could not go because he wasn't physically fit? Or would there be comments made?

RP: No comments that I remember of.

DP: I was just wondering if some people would kind of think that maybe there had been favoritism played.

RP: Probably did but I didn't hear of it.

DP: During the war of course I realize a lot of people had to make an effort to help win the war. Buying Victory bonds and so forth would have been one of the things, can you tell us about some of the other things that people would do to help win the war?

RP: Well, like I held my regular job, and another job on the side working in the Youngstown Press Steel plant. A lot of people did that.

DP: Would they be paid overtime when they would have a job like that?

RP: Oh, no.

DP: No overtime.

RP: Just straight time.

DP: It was done with the idea of helping the war effort then?

RP: Right.

DP: Can you tell us some of things the schools helped do? Did they have the children . . . Surely they must have had the children doing something.

RP: I don't remember what it was now.

DP: You have already mentioned that sometimes you would get mail and it would have spots . . . What would they do just black it out or would they cut it out?

RP: Some of it was cut out but most of it was just blacked out.

DP: Could you read it if you really held it up to a light or something?

RP: No, no way.

DP: They did a good job then?

RP: They did a good job.

DP: Would there be a way for your sons to tell you without being obvious?

RP: Oh, yes. They would have their codes that we could interpret what they were trying to tell us.

DP: So even though they censored the mail at times you still pretty well understood where they were?

RP: Right.

DP: Can you tell some of the things they would do so that you could tell where they were?

RP: Well, when they were at home from their boot camp they kind of gave us a few code words so that we would know what part of the country, and what ship they were on. They would bring that into the conversation and we could tell from that.

DP: So even without writing the actual names down you still would have some idea where they were?

RP: Right.

DP: Your boys who were in the service did they see any war service where they were actually shot at?

RP: Oh, yes. There were two of them that were on a ship together. They were in the invasion of Iwo Jima and all of those islands going into Japan.

DP: Now during the war I remember going down to theaters and they would have a little bit of, I guess, a preview of what had been done overseas. I know that I was young enough that I did not know where most of the places were. When they showed those places had you heard about them or did you need to learn because of the war?

RP: Well, you had to learn on account of the war because so many of them were small, out of the way places that you ordinarily didn't hear of.

DP: As the war went on of course then you would become much better at geography.

RP: Right.

DP: I know that the different things they talked about and the draft boards and so on. I was curious about a couple other things too. What did you do for entertainment? If you didn't have gasoline you couldn't drive very far. Tell us some of the things people did for entertainment.

RP: Well, we used to have pot luck suppers, card parties, and so forth. The neighbors would get together.

DP: Now these pot luck suppers where would they be at?

RP: Well, they would be at the different homes.

DP: Was there an attempt to raise money or anything or just for fun?

RP: Just for fun.

DP: And you say you played cards and so forth?

RP: Yes.

DP: What would you do, spend the whole evening just playing cards?

RP: Well, they would have a lunch of some kind. I remember one time I had that big boiler of water getting ready to have oyster stew. I forgot it and it boiled over. Had quite a time in the kitchen.

DP: If you had a big pot like this then would more than just a few people come?

RP: Oh yes, you would have maybe ten, twelve, fifteen people come in to play.

DP: You would spend the evening playing cards and just

talking and so forth?

RP: In those days you didn't have a television that you do now and your radio wasn't nearly as good as it is now.

DP: Tell us a little bit about the radio. How much war news would you get and so forth?

RP: Well, the war news wasn't . . . You didn't get much until everything was over because it was pretty well controlled, any news.

DP: Now, you have lived in Ohio then all during the war. I know Ohio was a long way away from the Atlantic Ocean. I know a little bit about the war so I know Ohio was in no danger. Did the people in Ohio prepare in case there would be an invasion?

RP: Oh yes! We had blackouts and drills and things that way. I remember we lived on Washington Street and the sirens came on to black the place out. We had everything blacked out but a little radio. Then we heard a whistle from the street. Everybody could see the little light from the radio clear from the street. They made us turn the radio off.

DP: Who do you mean by "they made you turn the radio off"?

RP: The wardens that went around to see that everybody was controlling their lights at night when they had these drills.

DP: How did you get to be a warden or how were they chosen?

RP: Most of them volunteered I imagine. I never thought much about that.

DP: They could actually see a little radio light and told you to close it up then. Did you have to close all the drapes?

RP: You were supposed to, yes. You weren't supposed to have any lights whatsoever while the drill was on. You would hear the siren when it started and they blew another siren for that all clear sign.

DP: I assume if they had a drill they must have figured they could tell when enemy planes were coming or something, did they have a system of some type so they would know?

RP: We never had any enemy planes. It was all just drill.

DP: In other words they were drilling for something that never really happened?

RP: Right.

DP: Now I imagine that, during the war especially, they would have parades and so forth to try to encourage people to be more patriotic. Can you tell us a little bit about some of the parades?

RP: I don't remember too many parades.

DP: What did they do to get the people excited and ready to help the war effort, and so forth, and so on?

RP: Papers always came out telling them what they should do. As far as parades are concerned I don't remember any.

DP: As you are thinking back is there anything else that you haven't talked about that maybe I have forgotten?

RP: Not at the present I don't remember, no. Seems we are pretty well covered.

DP: As the war went on, it lasted about four years didn't it?

RP: Yes, four to five.

DP: During the war did you really have any idea how it was going, whether we were winning or loosing? Or did they just always sound like we were winning?

RP: It always sounded like we were winning. The papers always came out with it after it was over that we had won, whether we did or not.

DP: For example like the Philippines I know we didn't win there. How did they present something like that?

RP: They told pretty much about that; the death march and all. We heard about that through our newspapers.

DP: I wonder how they found out about that.

RP: I wouldn't know.

DP: As the war went on then did they tell how we were building up better, or just that everybody had to keep trying?

RP: Everybody had to keep trying.

DP: I know we landed our first troops over in Africa, and so forth, and at first we didn't do very well. When you followed the campaigns in the paper and so forth

you said it would be completely over before you would hear about it?

RP: Mostly, although they did tell about Rommel's move across Africa, and the British, it usually had them on the good side, that they were winning.

DP: How did they explain then, because I know from what I have read, Rommel pushed the British all over Africa? How would they explain that on a good side?

RP: They were regrouping.

DP: Oh, they regrouped huh? In other words then as they told the news it was always on an upbeat that we would win and so forth?

RP: Right.

DP: Did they ever ask you to work more than just four hours?

RP: You mean at my extra job?

DP: Yes, on your extra job.

RP: No, I worked the four hours and the other man worked the four hours. That was it, it would be eight hours.

DP: Would that be just five days a week?

RP: Five days a week.

DP: I was wondering on your regular job there must have been less people to help if there were many men in the service. How would they pick up the extra work they would need?

RP: Well, as I remember, we just worked a little harder.

DP: They didn't get you any extra help?

RP: We didn't need extra help, no.

DP: Okay, in other words then you worked about twenty hours a week extra. I was curious, I know the war cost a lot of money, did taxes increase a lot?

RP: Well, yes they increased some but not to awful much.

DP: I know coming out of the 1930's there had been a rather bad depression. What did the war do to this depression really?

RP: Well, they started all the war effort and so many of

them were in the service, that it brought us out of the depression in a hurry.

DP: Many of the people then, actually, the war helped.

RP: Right.

DP: If you had more money because you were working could you buy more things?

RP: No, because everything was rationed during the war.

DP: What did you do with your extra money?

RP: Put it in the bank.

DP: So then by the time the war would be over then I would assume a lot of people would have quite a bit of money saved.

RP: When the war was over things really got out of hand.

DP: Getting back to this extra work then, a lot of people were working who had needed jobs before. Did they work them overtime?

RP: Yes, they worked some overtime but not like they have in the later years. In those days there were a lot of people who worked twelve hours a day.

DP: Then what we would consider a lot of overtime today was just normal time for them?

RP: Right.

DP: Oh, I see. I know Warren had a lot of steel mills at that time. I assume the steel mills probably ran around the clock. Do you know anything about the war effort in the steel mills and so forth? What all did Warren do to help?

RP: The mills did, they worked seven days a week. Usually you just worked you five turns a week though; five eight hour turns. Because you were working on the mill they just had that many extra crews on to fill up for the weekend.

DP: Then our country . . . It doesn't sound like our country was ever really pushed hard?

RP: Not too hard, no. Not around here from what I can remember.

DP: Now you say the Press Steel, where you worked the extra job, made shells. What other types of war industries

were in this area?

RP: They had . . . Not really, I don't remember.

DP: Alright, now I know the Ravenna Arsenal was started about this time and it is still in . . . Whatever they do up there now, because you don't know. How much trouble would the government have getting a large piece of land like that together during war time?

RP: Well, they just took it under eminent domain and put the farmers off. They gave them so long a time to get out and that was it.

DP: What about if a farmer didn't want to leave?

RP: Well, you left or else.

DP: In other words . . . Well, like today if you would do something like that a person could drag it through courts for years. What happened then?

RP: In those days you didn't. They came along and offered you a fair price for your place, and you either took it or they put you off.

DP: In other words there wasn't a stalling like there could be today?

RP: There was no stalling whatsoever.

DP: In other words then, the war effort if you did not want to move you really didn't have to many choices?

RP: You didn't have any choice.

DP: Getting back to the different things, you had three boys in the service. As the war went on did any of them get back to visit?

RP: Not after they . . . While they were in training, at the camp, they got home on leave but after they were on the ships they didn't get back.

DP: They were out three, four years, however long it was?

RP: Right.

DP: They trained at Great Lakes and down at Fort Pierce, Florida. How long would the training be?

RP: Most of it was about thirty days.

DP: In thirty days they took a person who knew nothing and made him a sailor?

RP: Thirty days and you were out.

DP: Then what, you get a little time home?

RP: You would get, as far as I can remember, about two weeks home and then you went to your ship.

DP: I know they needed more than just sailors at times, did any of your sons have additional training in the Navy?

RP: Well, Nelson was Bosun mate. He was on the little landing craft, and so was Roger.

DP: Okay, now what was his job if he was on a landing craft?

RP: He was a motor machinist mate. First class I guess was his title.

DP: What did he do then?

RP: Well, after he was on the ship he was in charge of the air conditioning . . . Not air conditioning but your refrigeration. He did the repairing on everything that way.

DP: Once the boy got drafted, or joined the Army, Navy, or whatever it would be in, chances were that they would be gone. At the most you could see them would be probably a couple weeks vacation.

RP: That is right.

DP: Did they ship them anywhere else for any extra training or was it just a quick basic training and then over-seas?

RP: The only one that had any extra training was Roger, when they sent him to Hawaii. He got extra training while he was working on the construction there.

DP: You said that they would write home. How often would you expect to receive letters?

RP: Maybe once a month.

DP: Was that because they wouldn't write very often, or because they would hold them off and send them all at once?

RP: The mail came through pretty good but they were pretty busy. If they had a chance to write they wrote but if they didn't, they didn't.

DP: You say that he received extra training when he was over in Hawaii, what type of extra training did they give him?

RP: Well that was the training for the motor machinist classification.

DP: Now I know you were what - you would be in your forties during the war.

RP: Right.

DP: Alright, now there were men forty years old, and so forth, drafted. Why weren't you?

RP: Well, I had a big family.

DP: In other words there were . . . If you had certain restrictions they would not draft you. What were some of the things that you would not be drafted?

RP: Well, if you were in farm work, or if you were in an essential industry, or if you had too big of a family.

DP: What did the too big a family have to do with it?

RP: I don't know but we had eight.

DP: Anyway it was too big for them, huh?

RP: Yes, right.

DP: When you realized that you wouldn't be drafted and so forth, did many people your age get drafted?

RP: Don Long, who worked with me in the post office, he didn't get drafted. He was in his forties and he enlisted in the Navy.

DP: So you could enlist if you wanted to?

RP: You could, yes.

DP: I was just curious if some of your friends had enlisted and so on.

RP: Don Long did, he was about the only one that I know of from the post office.

DP: A lot of the young kids enlisted but the older men waited.

RP: Right.

DP: You were telling me that you worked in the post office,

can you tell me what it was like during the war years?

RP: Well, there were a good many things sent to the boys overseas. One thing especially that they used to send was a loaf of bread. We had to watch that very closely because they hollowed out the bread and put a pint of liquor in the bread. That kept the liquor from getting broken on the way over and it was against the law to mail it in the first place. But there was a lot of it that got through.

DP: I assume then that after awhile you realized if it was a loaf of bread what it was probably for.

RP: Right, but they wouldn't tell us what was in it.

DP: Oh, I understand that. What other types of things would they send the boys overseas.

RP: Boys always wanted goodies from home. I remember my wife sent some Spam over. That was a bad thing to send because they had plenty of Spam over there. They soon told us about that, so we didn't send anymore Spam.

DP: Like goodies, what do you mean by goodies?

RP: Cakes, cookies, candy, anything that you could send. It usually got there in fairly good shape.

DP: How would you send a cake and get it there in fairly good shape?

RP: Well, you had to put it inside of a tin box and send it.

DP: I suppose then you would have to put the frosting on the inside.

RP: You didn't put any frosting on it.

DP: All I could see was the frosting getting all over everything.

RP: No, there was no frosting on it.

DP: So the boys would like things from home that perhaps they were used to eating and so on.

RP: Right.

DP: I know the churches and so forth used to occasionally send things and so did other groups. Can you tell us a little bit about some of the things people would send to the boys to help make it nicer?

RP: All I can think of is the food that they sent, and the liquor. I suppose they did send other things but I don't remember what it was now.

DP: What would the young people do if . . . I know now today a lot of the young people like to hop in a car and drive around twenty, thirty miles. If gasoline was short I don't imagine they were doing that. What were they doing for entertainment?

RP: Well they had shows in town. Where you spend \$4 to do a show now they used to for a \$.25 would get them in a show and get them popcorn, maybe peanuts.

DP: How would you get to the show?

RP: You walked.

DP: Even if it was a half mile or so?

RP: More than that.

DP: Did you ever walk to work then to save gas?

RP: Oh yes!

DP: How far was it to your job?

RP: From Washington Street to the West Warren Station it was about three miles.

DP: And you would walk?

RP: I walked there a lot of times to save gasoline.

DP: Did you only walk there on good days?

RP: Oh, on good days and lots of times . . . In those days you had bus for \$.10. Go up to the corner and get the bus over there.

DP: It had good bus service then?

RP: Oh, in those days you had good service.

DP: During the war then, even if you didn't have gasoline then, you could get around?

RP: You could get to town and back, sure.

DP: What about if you wanted to go to some other town?

RP: Well, they had the interurban busses but not like they do now days.

DP: In other words then even without gasoline it was still possible to get around town?

RP: Oh yes.

DP: I know many of the kids today if they go to scout meeting, or something like that, they are always hauled by their parents.

RP: In those days they walked.

DP: What about if it was a couple miles?

RP: That was just a good little walk.

DP: You mean they did a lot of walking?

RP: They did a lot of walking in those days.

DP: Did they have rationing stamps for shoe leather, for shoes?

RP: Oh yes! Sure you had ration stamps.

DP: I was just wondering then they must have worn out a bunch of shoes if they were walking.

RP: If I remember right you could get two pairs of shoes a year.

DP: Now days of course they would have more than that but I can understand why. Alright now, basically then as far as you can see the war really here at the home front, except for the people worrying about their children being hurt or their friends or husbands, really the war didn't seem too bad then.

RP: No. You had restrictions on the amount of food and stuff you could buy. You had to have your coupons but there was never a bad shortage that I can remember of. Once in a while there would be either a butter shortage or milk shortage or something that way, but that would only be for a day.

DP: Then you really didn't worry about food or anything. There was never really what you would call a shortage where you had to worry about eating.

RP: Oh no, not at all.

DP: Many people you said had a job that had needed one. So the war would be better for them.

RP: Yes, because everybody was working those days, whether you wanted to or not.

DP: In other words you could get a job without to much effort?

RP: Right.

DP: These people that were working was there a lot of entertainment then. You said something about you had gone to the movies downtown by walking. Were there other types of entertainment?

RP: Oh, they had their dances. People visited each other and played cards and things that way, much more than they do now.

DP: What would the children do for entertainment?

RP: They would put them in a room and they would play their little games.

DP: I know that monopoly, for example, is still popular and it was brought out about that time. Is this what you mean by types of games?

RP: Right.

DP: In other words the children would sit around and play games and the adults would be playing cards.

RP: Right.

DP: What about churches, did you go to church at this time?

RP: Oh, yes.

DP: Would the churches have any entertainment? A lot of churches today have a lot of entertainment.

RP: Well, they all, at those days, they had things going on at the church.

DP: What do you mean by things?

RP: Well, it had little parties and so forth. They would have church suppers in that way.

DP: Now then, Warren then really didn't seem to have been hit very hard by the war.

RP: Not as I remember it didn't.

DP: Okay.

RP: I know we got along very good.

DP: I imagine there were families though that lost people.

RP: Oh, yes. There was plenty of that.

DP: Now when someone was killed would it be in the newspaper, on the radio, or how would you find out about it?

RP: Well, it would usually be in the paper.

DP: Then of course you said something about the gold stars would be changed.

RP: In the window, blue star or gold star.

DP: Yes. Alright, I know that from what I have read that the people saved things. I remember the one time when I was in school we had to save milkweed pods for the life jackets. I was wondering if they had the adults do anything like that.

RP: Not that I remember of.

DP: Okay, in other words many of the things that I remember . . . Just a few things like saving paper and I was wondering about . . .

RP: Oh, they did have their paper drives at that.

DP: Okay, now how would they conduct those? Like today it is hard to even get people to save paper usually.

RP: They would have a designated place to take them to and people took them there, dropped them off.

DP: Now you said we were short of rubber and I know from what I have read the Japanese grabbed the area that had most of the rubber. Did they do any recycling on the tires and so on?

RP: Very much so. Their retreading tires and everything was a big business in those days.

DP: Didn't they always retread tires?

RP: Not to the extent that they did during the war.

DP: Oh! Now would they be rationed or if you needed a retreaded tire could you just go down and get one?

RP: Not always. They were rationed same as the other things were.

DP: In other words then even if you needed a retreaded tire you still weren't always sure you would get one?

RP: Gasoline, tires, everything that way for your car was

rationed.

DP: I realize we were in war time, how hard was it to get a car?

RP: You didn't get a car during the war.

DP: What did you do for a car?

RP: Well, you made the old one go. You kept it repaired as best as your ability. If you didn't, well, you were out of luck.

DP: What about . . . You said that many of the people hadn't had work. They surely didn't have cars then. What would they do for a car?

RP: Far as I know they walked.

DP: Walked or took the bus. In other words if you had a car you made it last.

RP: Right.

DP: When did they finally start making new cars again?

RP: Well, probably in 1947. I don't think they made any in 1946 but they did start again in 1947.

DP: Okay, then you mean from about 1942, or so, to 1947 they . . .

RP: As far as I can remember they didn't make any cars.

DP: Oh boy, I bet they had a bunch of rusted out cars. Speaking of cars did they rust and so forth. I keep hearing about cars aren't made as well as they used to be, were they really? What was a car like then?

RP: Well, they weren't modern as they are nowadays but it was much heavier, better material that was made. The old Model T's they never rusted out. Any of those cars didn't rust out like they do today. They were much heavier material.

DP: So, if you had a car you had to keep it in repair or you were out.

RP: That was how it was.

DP: I hadn't realized that. I knew that probably they had some things stopped. Getting back to the different things people would do then, if you wanted to go dancing--say you were a young guy and you had a girlfriend and you wanted to go dancing--how would you get there?

RP: You walked!

DP: Where would they hold the dances then?

RP: At school, church, or some hall.

DP: You mean it would be held right in here, in the city?

RP: Oh yes!

DP: What if I wanted to go to like Lake Erie and go swimming for the day?

RP: You didn't.

DP: Oh! Where did you go then?

RP: You went in the pond out in the country, close.

DP: You had to pick some . . . What about bicycles? I know the young people today have the ten speeds and I know they didn't have ten speeds then.

RP: You had a great, big, heavy wheel in those days, only one speed.

DP: What about the tires, were they hard to get?

RP: As far I can remember, during the war, they were very hard to get. There was an awful lot of people using bicycles in those days, so they evidently could get them. I didn't use one myself.

DP: I remember thinking back . . . We used to have a little kit to repair the tire. Today I know if a tire goes bad you run it down to the repair shop, why was that?

RP: Well, they didn't have the repair shops in those days. You did it yourself or else.

DP: If I am a young guy at that time, or a young girl, and I can go down like to the church to go dancing . . . Of course you said something about the movies, did a lot of people go to the movies?

RP: Oh, yes. Movies were really popular in those days.

DP: Well, you say that most of the things were right downtown Warren. If I go downtown Warren today I see one old theater front that has a marquee on it still. Was that the only theater around?

RP: Oh, no! There was several; there was a Robin's, there was a Duchess, and then a couple more.

DP: Alright now, apparently if there were that many they had business then.

RP: Oh yes, they had good business.

DP: In other words, basically if the people wanted to go for entertainment in those days you usually stayed at home, or if you went out, you rode the bus?

RP: Right.

DP: Did they have car pooling?

RP: Not to the extent that they have nowadays but they did some.

DP: Wonder why they didn't encourage that more.

RP: I don't know, I guess they didn't realize that it could be done.

DP: Now as the war went on then Warren, Ohio--really except for people getting killed or hurt--Warren, Ohio would never really, really feel the war effect them.

RP: Not like they did a lot of places.

DP: Now today if you come to this part of this area there are companies going bankrupt and so forth. What was it like during the war, what was business like?

RP: Business was booming.

DP: What if you were a company that wasn't too well run?

RP: Well, they had the business even if they didn't run it so well in those days; during the war when everything was pushed to get material out.

DP: What about clothing? I got to thinking about you said shoes were rationed, food was rationed, and so on. Today people, of course, have many clothes--really a lot of clothing.

RP: You wore a suit for a year in those days.

DP: You were required to wear a suit?

RP: Anybody who had a job like I had in the post office, you had a white shirt and a tie, or you didn't wait on the window.

DP: You mean even if you were just a clerk you had to have a tie and jacket and a complete suit?

RP: Right.

DP: What about other jobs? Did they make people dress like that then?

RP: No, different jobs had uniforms for that work.

DP: Oh, and you had to be dressed then.

RP: You had to be dressed for work.

DP: You were talking about sometimes there would be shortages of milk and so on. How did you get your milk? Today if I want milk I hop in the car and run down a half mile or so and get some. How did you get it then?

RP: In those days you had a wagon with a horse bringing it around.

DP: You mean the horse would walk along the city streets and so on?

RP: Right.

DP: What did the milk man do then?

RP: He was running his holder of quart bottles up to the house and the horse would go on to the next house and stop until he got there.

DP: Was that the only thing he delivered, just milk?

RP: Just the milk.

DP: What if you weren't there when he came, how would you get your milk?

RP: You just set it on the porch.

DP: Would it spoil?

RP: If you left it sit to long it would. In the winter time it would freeze and the cream would come out of the top, but if you got there in time you saved it.

DP: How did the man know how much . . . Because I know at those times not many women worked, I suppose. How did the man know how many quarts to leave?

RP: He knew how many that you usually got and if you wanted more you left a note out on the porch for him.

DP: In other words you had like a standing order?

RP: Right.

DP: Were there any other tradesmen that brought things around like that?

RP: Groceries were brought around the same way. You called them up in the morning and ordered whatever you wanted, and the grocery truck brought them out.

DP: You mean home delivery?

RP: Home delivery.

DP: Of course, I suppose then you didn't . . . Did you ever have to go to the market yourself and pick it up?

RP: They didn't have markets like they have nowadays. They just had a little corner store mostly.

DP: So the corner store then gave more service than the supermarkets?

RP: Oh yes.

DP: Getting back to how things were, you could have your milk delivered, and your groceries could be delivered, did you pay extra for that?

RP: No, cost you just the same whether you went and got it or whether it was delivered.

DP: I was wondering if it . . . You know, if you asked a store to deliver today they would up the price a little bit.

RP: No, they didn't then because that was customary to be delivered.

DP: Getting back to the school and so forth, I know that schools today haul the kids all over for things like football games and basketball games. They take the cheerleading squad, and the bands, and so on. Do you remember anything about what the schools were like then?

RP: I don't remember them having any busses or anything of the kind. You walked to school.

DP: Well, what if they had a game out of town, or didn't they?

RP: Well, they had very few games out of town during the war.

DP: So this wouldn't be a problem then?

RP: Wasn't any problem, no.

DP: Warren I know at one time, it was a county seat is what it was, and I know when I was a little kid I can remember going to the fair. How would you get to the fair clear from downtown Warren?

RP: Well, the fair grounds were right in the middle of Warren in those days.

DP: Where was it at?

RP: Close to where the Harding High School is today.

DP: When they would have the fair then most people would then be able to walk?

RP: They would walk or they didn't go.

DP: Why did they move it?

RP: It got too big for the amount of space they had, and people had more cars.

DP: So they moved it out of town then?

RP: They moved it out several miles.

DP: Now if this is so then downtown must have been a lot different then it is today. Today you go downtown there really isn't too much down there. What was it like then?

RP: You had your grocery stores, you had your meat market, clothing store, furniture store, everything was down there then. The Warren Meat Market was on Market Street. They had everything there. I can remember in the early days they had the calla ham, that was the shoulders, they had them up on a big round hook hanging from the ceiling. You took your pick, \$.49.

DP: For a whole ham?

RP: For a whole quarter.

DP: I assume then that you were not paid as much as people are today then.

RP: No.

DP: Everything was downtown, for example like during the war, since people would have more money, if you wanted to completely refurnish your home was it possible?

RP: Oh yes!

DP: You mean anyone . . . There was no restriction on furniture or anything?

RP: Well, it might have been some during the war but as far as I remember there weren't any restrictions on furniture and things that way. More in clothing and food and stuff.

DP: So that if I wanted to buy . . . I suddenly got this job and started making money. If I wanted to completely refurnish my home I could.

RP: You could, as far I can remember you could.

DP: What were the homes like? Today, of course, we have air conditioning and central heating and so on. What were they like then?

RP: You didn't even have fans in those days. You opened the windows.

DP: Well, what if it was a hot day and no breeze?

RP: It was bad.

DP: Today when I want to heat my home up I have a gas furnace; I just turn the thermostat up a little bit. How did you do it in those days?

RP: In those days you had a coal furnace.

DP: What would this . . .

RP: You closed the draft you didn't get as much heat, you opened the draft and you got more heat.

DP: Now natural gas, of course, burns completely clean, what about coal?

RP: Coal was very dirty.

DP: When you were done burning it what do you mean by dirty?

RP: Well, you had ashes to haul out. You had soot come up through the registers. Much different from what gas is today.

DP: If you had these ashes how did they handle them?

RP: Well, you hauled them. If you had a car you hauled them to the dump where they had the people with the little trucks that did light hauling. You had them haul the stuff away for you.

DP: Then there were . . . It sounds to me like there were a lot of people that still had gas and things like that to move around because you really needed it.

RP: Yes.

DP: When we talk about homes today we have many things in but in those days then, during the war especially, you would still have people coming home and so on. I assume then they had to get gasoline for their car.

RP: Well, there wasn't too much of a shortage of gasoline over all. They had their coupons and all that but you would go to the board that handled that, and if you could show that you needed more gasoline, you got more tickets to get it with.

DP: In other words it really wasn't that hard to get gasoline if you really needed it?

RP: That was right.

DP: How did they pick out the people that would work on those boards?

RP: They were usually politicians and they were appointed by someone in charge in the town.

DP: Was there ever any grumbling about some of the people appointed?

RP: Oh yes, they just talked about favoritism and all that but I guess that goes with any job.

DP: Yes, I guess so. Getting back to the different things then, do you know of anyone who actually had a victory garden? Did they can the food or what?

RP: I don't remember of anyone close. Of course we had our garden but that was before the war started and we lived in Braceville. After we got into Warren we didn't have a garden. I guess some of the people did have them, they gave them little plots of land but we didn't have one.

DP: Now like today I know Warren has a really nice sports program, you can play softball and so forth, they have lights and everything down at different parks. I assume that naturally they had games like that during the war, what can you tell us about it?

RP: Well, they had their football games and then other ball games but that was during the daytime, usually on Saturday afternoon. In those days Warren, and Niles were big competitors. They always had their game in

the daytime because they didn't have lighted fields in those times.

DP: So then they would have the games and, of course, I assume then the people would have to get there by walking, at least most of them.

RP: Most of them did, of course they had cars too but not like they do nowadays.

DP: I notice that when I was a boy I remember them digging up Elm Road and taking out some rails. I don't remember what they were for but I remember them taking it out.

RP: Oh, that was your streetcar tracks.

DP: Were there still streetcars during the war or had they been long gone?

RP: I think they were gone before the war time.

DP: Then what I remember they were just probably taking the tracks up to remelt them down.

RP: Those tracks were still along a good many years after they quit the streetcars.

DP: Then they were just taking the rails out probably to melt them down.

RP: Right.

DP: I was wondering because that was one of the things I remembered.

RP: As far as I can remember the streetcars were gone in the latter part of the 1930's or early 1940's, I don't remember when. I don't think they had them during the war time.

DP: I remember one time when I was just a little kid they had a really big fire in Warren. It was a big tank plant, where they had tanks of gasoline and stuff down South Street or somewhere.

RP: That was Wadsworth Company.

DP: Oh, was it? Okay, tell me about that. Was it sabotage or don't they know?

RP: They don't know what started it but I know that they had South Street blocked off because they had all the hoses across the street from the water main. It was a big fire.

DP: I was wondering because I can remember a little bit about it. It was a big fire and that is all I remembered. I was wondering if they thought it was sabotage or accident.

RP: No, I think it just started naturally.

DP: Did they ever feel there were acts of sabotage in this area?

RP: Oh, there was but not that.

DP: I imagine they would have people around checking, or didn't they? Did they think they might be and they would have people checking?

RP: They didn't have, like they do today about the arson squad, but they did have one from the fire department that could check.

DP: Now getting back to the different things then, as our war effort went I imagine more and more people moved here into Warren. Do you know if people moved into Warren for the same reason you did because of rationing, or did they move for the jobs?

RP: You took so many people from the southern states moved in here for the jobs, especially the colored. The colored came up here because down in their own home there was very little work. Up here there was . . . During the war there was all kinds of work for them.

DP: In other words there was a big influx of people during the war?

RP: Right.

DP: When the war was over did these people leave?

RP: No, most of them stayed.

DP: So then Warren and the surrounding area grew a lot during the war?

RP: It grew very much, yes.

DP: Did this cause any problems?

RP: Well, it was a little . . . People had to double up in living some, not to bad.

DP: I was just wondering--because I knew that when I was growing up Warren always kept saying it was much bigger than it really was--if they had overestimated. Many of

these people who came from the southern states were they as well educated as the northern people?

RP: No, they weren't.

DP: Well, then how could they get jobs?

RP: Well, in those days the mills . . . As long as you had a strong back and weak mind you got a job.

DP: In other words you didn't need a high school diploma?

RP: You didn't need anything, only a strong arm.

DP: How would you get a job once you got up here?

RP: You walked in and asked for it, you didn't have to go through a hiring hall, or a union, or anything of the kind. If you wanted a job in the mill you went in and saw the roller on the mill and asked him if he needed help. If he did, well, you were hired, if he didn't you went to see another one.

DP: I know we have voting and so forth. What were elections like during the war? Did they still have elections and primaries?

RP: Oh yes, they had the same thing during the war as they do now.

DP: Did the people go around and try to get people to vote for them as much?

RP: Just about, as far as I can remember it was just as bad then as it is now.

DP: Then how did they say, you know, "We are wasting all this gas," and so forth, to be elected or just wasn't it thought about?

RP: I don't think they thought about the gas in those days.

DP: When a person would run for a job then he would go around and try to get people to vote for him and so forth. Was Warren mostly a Republican or Democratic town?

RP: Warren was always a Democratic town, from the time I can remember.

DP: In other words if you got nominated by the Democratic party you had a good chance?

RP: You had a pretty good chance of getting elected.

DP: I remember the first mayor of Warren that I remember was a Republican, after the Second World War, and he didn't turn out to well. I was just wondering what politics were like before then. I know when I was growing up Warren had a rather bad reputation as kind of a tough little town, what was it like during the Second World War?

RP: It was just about the same as usual. They had graft then the same as they do now.

DP: In other words you could . . . For example I know that during the 1930's liquor naturally was sold when it wasn't supposed to and I assume Warren was. What do you mean by graft, what were some of the things that racketeers made money on?

RP: Well, I remember, I don't know whether it was during the war or not, but anyway the councilmen . . . There were about seven of those sent away for getting bribes and stuff.

DP: Oh, contracts and so forth.

RP: Yes.

DP: I know that, of course, there are certain things . . . Like I can remember as a kid you were not allowed to gamble in Warren, naturally then Warren had no gambling.

RP: Only at the Hollyhock Gardens.

DP: Okay, then if I wanted to wager something I could?

RP: Oh yes, all you had to do was go down Pine Street.

DP: What did they bet on then, mainly football games or something?

RP: Everything, they had their number rackets and everything of that kind.

DP: What is the number rackets?

RP: Well, the way I remember it a certain number . . . How much business was in the stock exchange for that day would come out in the paper, either in the morning or night. If you had bet that number you won.

DP: Oh, okay and where could you bet?

RP: Most any grocery store or any corner.

DP: I assume that the number racket was illegal.

RP: Yes, it wasn't legal but there was plenty of it done.

DP: So then the war effort did not slow down the . . .

RP: No, it didn't slow it down a bit. People had more money to spend.

DP: Well, they made sure they had some way to spend it.

RP: Right.

DP: Getting back to the different things, you said they had the air raid drills and so forth, did they do anything with the young kids? Did they try to train them to be lookouts or anything?

RP: Not that I remember of.

DP: See I remember reading about in Germany they trained the little kids to do things. We never did anything?

RP: No, no that I remember of.

DP: Then we must have not really felt they were needed.

RP: Oh no, they figured that they would never get this far inland.

DP: If they weren't training the young boys to be soldiers and so forth what could a young kid do? In Germany they had these clubs they could belong to to become a soldier, what did they do here?

RP: Well, high school they had the drilling and things that the kids did.

DP: You mean like for Army drills?

RP: They were Army drills. Walter Zigler at one time had a bunch of the high school boys that they drilled. Why I don't know.

DP: What about the younger boys, didn't they have any organizations to try to get them patriotic and ready to go to war?

RP: Not that I remember of.

DP: Then this is nothing like what Germany had?

RP: Oh no!

DP: Okay then, I was just wondering. Getting back to a couple of the other things, during the war then people

had more money so they did everything including gambling, and of course food wasn't really too bad of a situation, and Warren had a great influx of people. Did the mills get larger at that time?

RP: Oh yes, that was about the time Liberty Steel started up in the west side. Which is out of business today but at one time it was a big mill. The Republic Steel, at that time was Trumbull Steel, they made more mills then to take care of their business.

DP: Then I imagine construction work was pretty good.

RP: Construction was good.

DP: Then you would have needed people for construction too.

RP: Oh yes.

DP: So the job market was really quite good during the Second World War.

RP: As far as I can remember it was good, very good.

DP: You said there would be a lot of these people coming in that didn't have homes, did they build more hotels?

RP: No, the people that had a bigger house they would just fix up furnished rooms and rent them out.

DP: Now before the war this wasn't done very often?

RP: Not very much, no.

DP: Then this is kind of something that the war caused; people being willing to rent out their rooms and so on?

RP: Yes.

DP: Now, we pretty well covered everything I can think of. Is there anything you would like to just tell me about the war that you remember?

RP: About the only thing I remember is what a time I had when victory was proclaimed.

DP: What was the problem then?

RP: Everybody went crazy when they heard, it was . . . A lot of people rushed downtown and had quite a celebration.

DP: Now as I remember we had a victory in Europe and a victory in Japan. Was that the final victory, or was that the one in Europe?

RP: The one in Europe. The one in Japan didn't get near the play that the one in Europe did.

DP: Then most people felt the war in Europe was the big war?

RP: That was the big war.

DP: After the war was over how long did it take them to get the boys home?

RP: Well, as far as I remember our boys all came home in the first part of 1946. So that was just very shortly afterwards.

DP: Did they bring them home on their regular ships or did they bring a few troop ships?

RP: No, they brought one into the . . . Of course they were in the Pacific. They came into San Francisco and they were given their transportation on the train home.

DP: Then if I wanted to take a train ride for any reason during that time would it have been possible if I was just a civilian?

RP: Oh yes!

DP: In other words there wouldn't have been any restriction?

RP: No.

DP: So the boys came home what, about six months later then?

RP: About that yes.

DP: When they came home what was the job market like?

RP: Well, it was still good.

DP: I assume they weren't still making shells and so forth, what were they doing then?

RP: No, but all of these steel mills at that time was where the work was in Warren. They were going fine. All you had to do was to go down there and you got a job.

DP: So we still had plenty of steel mills going?

RP: Yes, you had plenty of work going. Warren, Niles, Youngstown, and Girard, all of those towns along the valley were doing fine.

DP: Now I know, for example the steel mills, we had some building around Warren during the time. For example I know they made Mosquito Lake. Why did they make a lake in the middle of a war, was there a reason?

RP: I don't know, I guess they needed more water and that was the only way they could get it.

DP: You say your one son didn't go to the war, what was he doing during the war?

RP: He worked on construction, and he worked on that Mosquito dam. He helped build the dam.

DP: What other kinds of jobs did he do in construction then?

RP: They were building some at Newton Falls at the time, I remember.

DP: Now Newton Falls is just a little village and I knew it grew a lot during the time, what were they doing over there?

RP: I can't remember the name of that big mill they had in Newton Falls. It finally moved to Michigan, but they had a thousand men working there during and after the war.

DP: Do you know what they were making?

RP: I have no idea.

DP: In other words during the war sometimes it was hard to find out what was happening?

RP: Right.

DP: Just everybody was working?

RP: They were working.

DP: I know I have seen signs like, "Loose lips sink ships." I assume then they encouraged people not to say much.

RP: That was right.

DP: When you were at these parties would people talk about where their children were and what was happening?

RP: Not too much.

DP: They really listened to the signs.

RP: Yes, they did.