

Interviewee: Lawrence Myking

Interviewer: Thomas Saylor

Date of interview: 24 May 2001

Location: dining room of the Myking home, Cloquet, MN

Transcribed by: Linda Gerber, November 2002

Edited by: Thomas Saylor, December 2002

Lawrence Myking was born on 6 December 1916 in Cloquet, Carlton County, Minnesota. He attended local schools, and graduated from Cloquet High School in 1936. Shortly thereafter Lawrence began working at Wood Conversion Plant (later Conwed and then USG) in Cloquet, first as an apprentice and then as machinist; he remained with the company for more than forty-two years.

Two of Lawrence's brothers served in the armed forces during World War II, one in the Army and one in the Navy. As a skilled machinist, Lawrence received a deferment and remained a member of the civilian workforce. Lawrence met his future wife Georgia in 1937; they were married on New Year's Eve 1937. The couple lived briefly on a small farm on the outskirts of Cloquet before moving into town during the war years.

Lawrence and Georgia continued to live in Cloquet after the end of the war, and they raised their four children there. Lawrence had a number of hobbies, enjoyed spending time with family and friends, and was a member of Bethany Covenant Church in Cloquet.

At the time of the interview (May 2001) the Mykings lived in Cloquet.

An interview with Georgia Myking is also part of this collection.

Interview Key:

T = Thomas Saylor

L = Lawrence Myking

[text] = words added by editor, either for clarification or explanation

(*) = words or phrase unclear**

NOTE: interview has been edited for clarity

Tape 1, Side A. Counter begins at 000.

T: It's the 24th of May 2001, and I'm sitting in Cloquet, Minnesota, on a beautiful sunny day, preparing to have a conversation with Lawrence Myking.

Lawrence, as I mentioned a moment ago, my first question is to ask if you remember what you were doing when you heard the news that the Japanese had attacked Pearl Harbor.

L: It was the day after my birthday. My birthday is December 6th. I had just turned twenty-five years old. I was working at Conway [Wood Conversion Plant here in Cloquet] at the time. At that time I was working in the shop. I'd worked in the finish room and I'd worked in the drafting room. Then I worked in the storeroom, but I wanted to be in the machine shop. Then I got in the machine shop. So I was in the machine shop then. Our son wasn't born until 1942.

T: Do you remember people at work, other guys at work, how they reacted when they heard this news?

L: Not really, no.

T: As a twenty-five year old machinist by 1941, were you concerned that you were going to be drafted?

L: No I wasn't concerned. I don't know why, but I wasn't.

T: Did you think about going out to volunteer? To enlist?

L: I wouldn't volunteer. I had two brothers. One went into the Army, and the other one was in the Navy. I hadn't thought of volunteering.

T: Did they enlist, your brothers?

L: No, they were drafted.

T: They were both drafted. So you never thought of enlisting and you weren't concerned about being drafted, either.

L: No. It was after my son was born in 1942 that I got the notice to report for a physical. I had to go down to the Twin Cities for a physical. A bunch of the guys

from here went. It went all right, I think. It was kind of a deal but anyway, I got through that. I don't remember how long after it was, but I lived up just out in the country on Sunnyside over there [north of Cloquet town]. It isn't country anymore, but it was then. There was a big farm right across the road and a barn. I had a cow and a calf, pigs, chickens.

Like I say, I lived in the country and the other guys lived in town and, of course, we were all friends. They told me before noon that they had called their wives, and that the mail had come in and in the mail was their letter to report for induction. I just went home. I looked in the mailbox and I had the same letter to report for induction. I said, "I'm not going to work this afternoon." Then I waited. Of course, they worked until three-thirty. I waited until about four-thirty. I knew nobody would be there by then. I was a machinist and I had a handbox. My special tools were in that handbox.

I was in getting some other stuff for my other toolbox that wouldn't fit in the handbox, and the personnel manager happened to come by the door, and he came in and asked me what I was doing. I said, "I got one of those letters to report for induction." He said, "It's a mistake." I said, "I'm all set to go, and all the rest of the guys are going." He said, "You'll have to go to the draft board and see." That was just across the street, across the tracks, so I went over there. I showed them the letter. They said, "Yes, that's a mistake. You shouldn't have gotten that letter." I wasn't supposed to get it. I said I'd just as soon go. They said, "It's hard to get out of it. You've got a deferment." They said it's hard to get out of a deferment.

(1, A, 101)

T: How come you had a deferment?

L: I was working in the shop, the machine shop. That was essential work. I don't know exactly why, but I was needed. But something.

T: So there were some other guys from your plant who didn't get deferments.

L: That's right. One of the guys in the shop had been to Dunwoody [Institute in Minneapolis, a technical school,] and he had taken a trade, and he got orders to go.

T: So he didn't get a deferment.

L: No. And another one of my friends from church, Walter Bjorklund, he had to go. He didn't have to go into the military, he just went to Pearl Harbor. I think he just went there to be a machinist at Pearl Harbor.

T: You got your deferment and that was the last you heard from the draft board?

L: I never heard any more from them.

T: The deferment was for the duration of the war?

L: Apparently, because I never heard another word about. Nobody else ever told me I had a deferment.

T: So the deferment was something that you didn't apply for.

L: I didn't even know I had it. And I wanted to go, because I had been thinking all along, when the other guys go, well, I'll go too. I'd just as soon go with them. I was ready to go. That's right. But it was too hard to get out of a deferment.

T: That's interesting. So your life changed pretty substantially then.

L: Yes.

T: You were here on the home front for the whole time. If we talk about the way that life changed after the war started how did things change at Conway, where you worked? Was it still called Wood Conversion Company then?

L: Wood Conversion Plant.

T: How did things change there as a result of the war?

L: There wasn't any change that I could see. The mill kept going and the shop kept going.

T: Did you take on more people? Were there more people employed there?

L: That I don't know.

T: You mentioned that some guys got their notices, so I imagine they had to be replaced by new people?

L: Yes.

T: Were these younger guys, or were they women coming to work there?

L: No. No women in the shop. We never did have any women in the shop. They didn't have women working for quite a while. Finally they got a lady working in the storeroom. I don't know how many they had. They had some women over in receiving, the other department. I don't know if the mill had any or not. I didn't see any on the wet end. The machine shop was the wet end.

T: In the wet end, what do they do there?

L: That's where they formed the boards, the insulation boards.

T: Is that pretty strenuous work, physical work?

L: When they get a plug up then they have to work like mad. Because the board is run through the dryer. For a while they had a different kind of a dryer. The dryer, it had plates, big heavy plates. Eight foot long and twelve foot long and twelve inches wide and about six inches thick. And the steam was in those things and the pipes would come together and press the wood and then pull apart, then glue a little bit, then they come together again. (***) a lot of moving parts, and they would break down and they would plug up. It was more men's work. I don't think ladies could have done it then.

(1, A, 174)

T: Because it was strenuous?

L: Yes. When they had the plug ups it was hard to get it going again.

T: Did it plug up fairly regularly?

L: Yes. That's why they took that machine out.

T: I see. Did you find yourself at the plant working any more hours a week than you worked before?

L: The company gave us a car, and there were five guys. There were some welders, and I was a machinist. At that time you could weld too if you knew how to weld... so there was five of us. They gave us an hour off of work; furnished the car and the gas. We went down and took a welding course, but I never went into welding. I still stayed as a machinist. After a while, two years, then a machinist couldn't weld.

T: Was that a union thing?

L: Yes, I suppose. But we had an acetylene torch and we could gas weld. But the most was silver solder. I was pretty good at that.

T: Were you working weekends then too, at the plant? Saturdays and Sundays?

L: We worked weekends, but I think we took turns. We only had one machinist on the weekends. On Sunday. You took your turn. I think it was like every six weeks or something that you had to go in Sunday.

T: How about your pay packet during the war years? Were you earning more during the war?

L: When we started there it was forty-two cents an hour. That went up to forty-five. Then there was a cut to forty-three. I know when I was working in the machine

shop, that was sometime afterward, (***)). One of the fellows there was making sixty cents an hour. I thought, boy oh boy—a penny a minute! Wow! And we still had some taken out of our check for a war bond.

T: Lawrence, I'm going to show you a poster (*shows a "Buy Bonds" poster*). I don't know if you saw this one or something similar encouraging you to buy defense bonds or war bonds.

L: Yes.

T: Did you buy war bonds?

L: Yes. You couldn't buy the thing all at once. They took some out of our paycheck each month. Each payday they took some out. When there was enough then they bought the bonds or something and you got the bonds.

(1, A,230)

T: How often were you paid? Was it weekly or bi-weekly?

L: I think it was the 5th and the 20th were our paydays.

T: Twice a month. So on the 5th and the 20th.

L: Yes.

T: Now how do you remember buying war bonds? Was this something that you wanted to do or was there pressure to do this?

L: Nobody pressured us. It was just something that you wanted to do, that you thought you ought to do as long as you weren't in the Army or service or anything. That's the least you could do. Take some of your money for bonds.

T: There were bond drives in the county here, do you know?

L: I really don't know. I can't say. There must have been. But it was through the mills, the bonds I was buying.

T: So through your plant. They set up a way for everyone to have some money deducted?

L: Yes. You just signed up at the plant, and they would take out three dollars every payday, or something like that.

T: And then when enough money had been taken out, then the bond was yours.

L: Yes.

T: Were those bonds that were redeemed, then, after the war?

L: Yes. I didn't have too many. I know I don't have any left. I think it was like, you paid thirty-seven dollars for a fifty-dollar bond. When it was due, then it was fifty dollars, but it was a certain number of years before. I don't even know what that is.

T: But you do remember buying war bonds, though.

L: Yes.

T: Now that was a good story about your deferment, one that you didn't even know you had. But you had it. Also, you had two brothers who were drafted.

L: Yes.

T: Now were they from Cloquet, too?

L: Yes. I don't know where my brother Bernard was working. My brother Cliff was working for an electric shop in Cloquet, Thompson Electric. They went out that way (*points north*) and they also had a store there. Cliff, the youngest one, he was working for them. He went in the Navy.

T: Are they younger than you or older than you?

L: Both younger. (*pauses three seconds*) Bernard, I think he was working at the paper company [here in Cloquet] at the time. But I'm not sure. He was drafted. I know when he came back, he came to Conversion, to my work.

T: So he didn't go back to the paper mill. Now how did your folks react to your brothers being drafted and going into the service?

L: They knew it had to be. I mean, they just couldn't change it, so they accepted it real good, I think. They liked to get letters from them when they were in service.

T: Did they get letters from them?

L: Yes.

T: Did your mom or your dad save those letters?

L: That I don't know. They're both dead now. I really don't know.

T: And your brothers have passed away too, is that right?

L: Yes.

T: Once your brothers had been inducted into the Army and the Navy, did you follow the news on the radio about the war, or follow it in the paper with any greater sense of interest because you now had family involved?

L: No, I can't really say. I know I used to listen to the radio. We always got the paper. I read the paper.

T: For someone like you who was reading the newspaper then, you were aware of what was going on. Now your marital status didn't change during the war, because you and Georgia were married on New Year's Eve of 1937. But two of your children were born during the war, is that right?

L: Yes.

T: Your oldest two?

(1, A, 293)

L: Yes. Larry was born in 1942 and Mary in 1944.

T: That's the information you gave me. Having kids, having a family during the war, did the war make things more difficult?

L: No extra hardship or anything. Gasoline was rationed but, at first we lived in town right close to the mill. That was only a few months. Then we rented a, what we called a shack. It was little house behind a big house, on Fourteenth Street [here in Cloquet, in town]. Then we bought a farm.

T: Tell me about that farm. Was that a house you bought out there?

L: Yes. I don't remember what the price was. I think it was six thousand dollars, five thousand, something like that. It might not even be that high. I had a Ford Model A (**). I think it was a 1922. During the winter I was still working at Conway. I was working at Conversion during the winter. I used to drive all winter. Of course it didn't have four wheel drive or anything like that, so I had chains for it. Really a special chain. It had a cross wing on the chain. They didn't have good windshield defrosters or anything like that, either. Just wires in there that hooked up to the battery. You could turn it on and defrost.

T: Now you were living on that little farm outside of town when your kids were born?

L: No. I'm sure we were living in Sunnyside.

T: Your wife Georgia mentioned an apartment building in the interview I had with her.

L: Yes. By the farm. We moved to the apartment around the corner, at Carleton and Laurel Street. It was quite run down. Of course I didn't have the money to buy it. It was in pretty bad shape. I think there were four apartments, but they were too big. There were two on the first floor and two on the second floor. I think it was tall and skinny, but somebody had a (***) . Of course, the long stairway to go up there to the second floor. It was in pretty bad shape.

I borrowed money from a fellow by the name of Reed Johnson, to buy the place. He lent it to me for, I think it was six percent interest. I'd pay him every month. He would tear the interest off and take it off the original amount each month. My balance would go down. Sometime later, I don't know how many years later, I had to put some stuff on the outside of the building, so I just borrowed that from, from I don't know, with FHA or some kind of letter from the government. It sounded good. But when I started paying on it, the interest, they charged the same interest, going to be the same interest, the last month as the first month, so I had to pay all that. I did that for a couple months then I borrowed the money again from the one I had originally.

T: You got a better deal than from the government?

L: Oh, much better. I was really surprised.

T: You know, one might think that the government's going to give us a better deal.

L: It was terrible. To me it was.

T: You lived in that apartment building there during the war years then?

L: Yes. There was a lot of work to do. I fixed it. I fixed the two apartments. The downstairs had four apartments. The same with the upstairs. Sometimes, well, it was a few years after the war, because you still couldn't buy a car. You had to have a number to buy an automobile. You had to have your name in a year or more to get a car. The Ford Garage then was next to our house. That's where I was born. I went over there. They knew I was married. Anyhow they knew I had that building. So the boss came, he was the boss of the mechanic. I don't know what you call it, like the head man. They were going to get a new mechanic. He asked me if I was going to rent [any of the apartments]. And he wanted to know if I would rent an apartment. It was so hard to find anything. We were fixing it, so I said yes. "Then you can get a car whenever you want it." So that was the way I got a new '48 Ford.

T: And that was 1948. So even a couple years after the war it was still not easy to get a new car.

L: You still couldn't find anything.

T: So from your experience, the shortages didn't stop when the war ended.

L: No.

T: So, Lawrence, do you remember it being hard to find a place to live in Cloquet before the war, or was this something that seemed to come during the war years?

L: I don't know. I never ever had any troubles. I really don't know. I would remember looking for a place and couldn't find it or anything.

T: Sounds like if people were willing to make special deals just for the ability to rent a place, that things were in short supply.

L: That did for me. And I got that car. Otherwise I wouldn't have.

T: So even in '48 it was still the case that there weren't enough to go around.

L: In '48.

T: You rented that place. You and Georgia lived in one of the apartments in that building and then you rented the other ones. Did you make some money off that place with rents?

L: I must have, because we had a little store in the front apartment. Had a little store. I don't think we made a whole lot of money, but I think I did make some money. Fixing the apartment, I think I could raise the rent. There was rent control, too. But I apparently made enough.

T: So you were able to raise the rent when you fixed the place up?

L: I fixed it up.

T: What kind of fixing up did you do to the place?

L: Everything. First of all it had a wooden, it had a dirt floor in the basement. I think that was one of the first things I did. They had individual heating stoves, heaters.

T: Wood stoves?

L: Yes. In the apartments. I had a floor put in the basement, and I had a furnace put in.

T: We hear about shortages sometimes. Did you have trouble getting all the plumbing stuff and the furnace and all that for an apartment building?

L: No. I don't know why, but I didn't.

T: That's interesting. So that stuff was available as long as you were doing the work yourself.

(1, A, 399)

L: No. I had to hire someone, it was too much work. I had to hire the floor put in because that was a big building. I could never have done that.

T: Now this building is still up here, right?

L: Yes.

T: How many units are in that place?

L: I think there's eight in there.

T: And, you said earlier, it's, ironically, owned by the son of the guy that owned it before you.

L: That's who owns it now, yes.

T: Now a lot of things were rationed during the war. What do you remember that was rationed during the war?

L: Gasoline was one of them. You had a ration book. But it didn't affect us, really; we would never have to go very far or anything. It never bothered us. I think like butter was rationed, too. I don't remember all the things that were rationed.

T: Georgia and I talked about sugar and butter and coffee.

L: It affected her [as a homemaker] a lot more than it did me (*laughs*). I just furnished the money.

T: On the job, there, you mentioned the war bonds, buying war bonds, and some new people coming to work because some guys did get drafted into the service. On another subject, do you remember anything like air raid drills or blackouts or similar things here in Cloquet?

L: It seems like they did have some blackout drills, or whatever you want to call them. It was never much... Just vaguely do I remember.

T: The [local weekly newspaper] the Cloquet *Pine Knot* mentioned them [in some editions I read], so I wanted to ask what you remembered. Now Minnesota is in the

middle of this country and thousands of miles from the coasts. Did that make you feel a little more anxious about the war, that the war was somehow real?

L: I really don't know, but I suppose. You were in the middle of the country. We had sirens for a long time, I think, but none of the airplanes and the bombs and stuff like that.

T: I was honestly surprised when I read the *Pine Knot* from early 1942, January '42, and they were talking about blackouts and air raid drills. Air wardens. I thought, wow, here of all places.

L: I suppose.

T: Now you worked at Wood Conversion the whole time of 1941-45, right?

L: Whole time.

T: And you worked different jobs in the plant?

L: I started out in the finish room and then I went to the, I think it was drafting. Drafting. Then I went to the storeroom. That was right next to the machine shop. Then I went to the machine shop.

T: Were you working in the machine shop by the time Pearl Harbor came?

L: Yes.

T: Do you perceive of it having been easier to move from one job to the next because of the dislocation from the war?

L: Yes. I knew the fellow that was the head of the mechanic department. I knew him from when we were kids. We were just a block from there. My parents lived (**). Another street there, and they lived on the corner there. (**) Paul was the head of the mechanic department.

T: So knowing him helped. Lawrence, let me ask you: as you think of your family finances during the war, do you perceive of yourself having been worse off, about the same, or better off during the war years? Take into consideration here your wages, and your real estate.

L: Yes. Most of the time I didn't just work at the mill. I mean I worked at fixing buildings and selling them. Fix it up and buy another one. Fix it and sell it. At one time during the war years, I don't know if that was before we had kids or what, but the shipyard [in Duluth]--relatives were working there. Making a lot of money. Georgia's uncle, who went to California, he was working in the shipyard there. They were making so much money all over, except me. That's what I thought anyway. We

had a couple of bicycles. We didn't have money. Just a couple of bicycles. "Ride out to California. We can get a good job." That's what we thought anyway.

T: So your perception was that people were doing better during the war, but you weren't one of them.

L: Yes. I wasn't making too much money. I never had to borrow any money or anything like that, but...

(1, A, 479)

T: Now were you and Georgia church-goers fairly regularly during the war years?

L: No. I don't think so. Not too much at first.

T: You both were members of Bethany Covenant Church here in Cloquet, is that right?

L: Yes.

T: If you think of the church, did your church sponsor or have any volunteer programs helping with the war effort?

L: That I don't know. I don't think they did... there was a Ladies Aid. They did something, but it wasn't for the war. That was for the poor people.

T: Earlier we discussed cars, you mentioned the difficulty with cars. Do you remember anything about tires being hard to come by?

L: I never had any trouble... I never did notice. It never bothered me.

T: You mentioned you weren't driving much anyway.

L: I think the first car that my dad had, we bought it together. With my dad. A '37 Ford. When I got married [in 1937], of course I couldn't afford the payments, twenty-five dollars a month, so I gave my part to him. He had the car. At first [when we were married] we didn't have a car.

T: So issues with cars and tires didn't impact you.

L: No.

T: Remember anything at your plant or around town about civilian defense, becoming involved in things like that?

L: No. There might have been, but I don't recall it. It didn't affect me much, I guess. I never volunteered for anything. I had enough work to do.

T: It sounds like you were quite busy. Anything at your plant, or around town, or at your church about that? Scrap drives or metal or remember kids coming around collecting stuff?

L: Paper drives or something. I don't know if that's when they started taking paper. Wood fibers. We have relatives in Iowa, and they had children and they participated in the paper drives especially. Talk about that. I never did, though, but...

T: You mentioned being on the farm there. Do you recall anything about it being hard, speaking about farms, to get enough hands during harvest time or planting time?

L: The one that I bought out there, fairly small, it hadn't been farmed for years, and when I bought the other one, it was just three acres. I built a barn there.

T: That was the Sunnyside one.

L: There was a big farm right across the road--many acres, but he had a whole bunch of cows. I knew him. One time I helped him.

T: Did you or Georgia ever plant a Victory Garden during the war, a garden to grow extra food?

L: It seemed like my dad did. I don't remember where it was, though.

T: Your dad and mom were living in Cloquet then?

L: Yes, on Tenth Street there. Victory Garden. But I never did that.

T: That little bit of land that you had out at Sunnyside. You were planting some stuff there?

L: I must have, but I don't remember where the garden was even. I remember we didn't have toilet inside. The one they had there I didn't think was very good, so I built a new toilet and a short seat for the kids so they didn't have to try to climb up on the big one. I can't even remember where we had the garden. Getting too old *(laughs)*.

T: You know what's amazing, I think, is that sixty years later the things I've asked you, you've been able to tell me. You've been able to tell me an awful lot of stuff, and I think when I'm eighty years old like you, if I remember half as much, I'll feel pretty good about things.

L: Well, okay.

T: Lawrence, in your opinion, did the neighborhood change or did the atmosphere at your plant change as the war went on a couple years here?

L: I don't think so. I don't think a lot of people quit or anything like that. I think most people stayed. Not everybody of course, but most people. I thought it was a fair place to work. The bosses weren't bad or anything. I thought it was all right.

T: Were you in a union down there?

(1, A, 552)

L: Yes. I didn't think that everything the union said was right, but you about had to.

T: Do you recall any guys at your plant leaving the area and going to places like California, Texas, or Florida to get better jobs?

L: Just that one fellow that worked in the shop. He went to Pearl Harbor.

End of Side A. Side B begins at counter 000.

T: I have a couple more questions.

L: Okay.

T: Let me shift to a specific event, the death of President Roosevelt in April 1945. (*displays newspaper front page*) This is the headline from the *Pine Knot*, about the day that President Roosevelt died. I'm wondering how that event affected you.

L: I thought he was a real good president. Of course both my parents voted for him, too. He was an excellent guy. But as far as his death goes, I don't remember anything except it was too bad.

T: Did you feel that Harry Truman was just as good a person for the job?

L: No, I didn't think so. But I think he turned out all right.

T: Was there any kind of response that you remember, at the plant or in your neighborhood, about the president dying?

L: I can't recall it. [My wife] Georgia probably can, but I can't.

T: Let me ask you something else. I have another newspaper headline. This is from St. Paul *Dispatch*, August 14, 1945, announcing V-J Day, the end of the war with Japan. What went through your mind then?

L: The Allies smashed the Japanese Empire. I thought that attack they had at Pearl Harbor was the most terrible thing I'd ever heard. That was the worst thing.

T: So how did this make you feel then, in 1945 when we finally defeated the Japanese?

L: A lot better. They certainly had it coming to them.

T: Did you react or did you feel the same way about the defeat of Japan that you did about the defeat of Germany, in May 1945? Did that have the same impact for you?

L: I don't really recall right now. I thought that this [the Japanese] was the worst.

T: So defeating Japan for you was a bigger deal.

L: Yes.

T: What kind of celebration or thing happened? This was Tuesday, August 14th. That means that's a work day. Do you remember what happened at the plant?

L: I went to work. I don't remember anything special.

T: Was there a spontaneous celebration or anything?

L: I can't think of any.

T: How about in Cloquet itself? In downtown St. Paul, like in New York and other places, there were celebrations.

L: I don't recall anything like that here. I never go to that kind of thing anyhow.

T: So Cloquet you remember being different from this picture of St. Paul (shows headline from *St Paul Dispatch*, 15 August 1945).

L: Yes, apparently. I worked that day. That (*points to picture of St. Paul*) was more than we had here, I think. Although I was just talking to my nephew David the other day, my sister's son. He said he remembers... He lived on Cloquet Avenue. If there's a parade or anything, it's on Cloquet Avenue. He says he remembers seeing, it must have been sometime afterward, they were towing a Japanese torpedo, I think it was, right down Cloquet Avenue. I don't remember that.

(1, B, 98)

T: So it sounds like for you, that the end of the war was something that you knew about, but didn't celebrate. It wasn't celebrated in any way like in St. Paul or Duluth or Chicago.

L: Not that I can remember.

T: I'll tell you, that's consistent with what I've heard from every single person in Cloquet that I've talked to. Some other people said that they knew what happened in St. Paul and Minneapolis and maybe Duluth, but here in Cloquet it was just a little quieter. People knew it, and they were happy about it, but...

L: Life goes on.

T: When the war started, Lawrence, you were twenty-five years and one day old, and when the war ended you were a year shy of thirty. Twenty-nine years old. Four years and a half had gone by. How do you think the war changed your life?

L: I was never in the service. Both of my brothers were. I don't think it changed my life.

T: For example, do you feel you were financially better off by the end of the war than you had been before?

L: Now that I can't say, but I think that progressively... Like I told you, I worked on so many houses and sold them for more to other people. The last farmhouse I bought for six thousand, and sold it for eighteen.

T: Eighteen thousand? Wow! Sounds like the conditions of the war, the housing shortage, made those deals a little bit better maybe or easier to make.

L: That could be.

T: When did your brothers return from the war?

L: They came home after the war. I suppose 1946.

T: They didn't stay in the service or anything.

L: No. My son did, but they didn't.

T: Did your brothers come back to Cloquet?

L: Yes. They both got jobs in Cloquet again.

T: Did you talk to them at all after the war about their own experiences?

L: Once in a while. They didn't like to talk about it. Once in a while they'd say something. Cliff said, I think it was him, he was a radioman on a minesweeper, some of them sat with a bucket between their legs and they were vomiting all the time they were there. I don't think it bothered him that much.

T: Now Cliff was your brother in the Navy, and your brother Bernard was in the Army. Did he serve in the Pacific or in Europe?

L: In the Pacific.

T: He was in the Army for a couple of years then?

L: Yes, I suppose.

T: Anything else you wish to add before we conclude, Lawrence?

L: There's one story I wouldn't tell anybody.

T: Anyway, the story, you want to add it to the tape here?

L: No. I don't think... *(pauses five seconds)*

T: Very well. Well, something you do want to add that you think is appropriate or interesting?

L: *(relates story about home repairs, unrelated to topic of this interview)*

T: Lawrence, let me thank you again for your time here today.

L: You're welcome.

END OF INTERVIEW