

## War Era Story Project 2012

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Age: 79

While in 5th & 6th grade school during WWII, we were dismissed early a couple Fridays to go into the fields with gunny sacks to collect milk weed pods. The gunny sacks were filled and then taken into the local granary where they were shipped, stripped and the silky interior of the pods were used to manufacture parachutes. I recall, there was competition among classes to determine who had picked the most bags of milk weed pods. This project built considerable pride to know we were helping the service men have the best parachutes. The gunny sacks were imprinted with colorful patterns to make clothing, such as blouses and shirts. At the end of the war, the parachutes were also made into clothing. The 'chutes could be dyed and had great 'wearability.'

During one bitter cold winter night when ice was causing the tree limbs to reach to the ground, our father (Earl Mace) and uncle (Dwight Gardner) went into the woods to shoot crows. The huge flocks of crows were devouring the grain that had yet to be harvested. This was during rationing of food items, and a government agency would pay the hunters a bounty for just one foot of the crow. I do not recall if it was the left or right foot the farmers had to produce for evidence of the kill. Because it was so very cold and dangerous due to the icy conditions, Mother and my sisters were most relieved when Father and Uncle returned early into the morning hours with their two gunny sacks full of crows' feet.