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Thomas Gillard, North Sydney: I was in the working battalion, you know. I wasn't in the front lines. There are different working battalions. It takes three men to keep one man on the front line, you know. We were in the forestry, had sawmills, different things like that. (When you volunteered for the army, did you think you'd be sawing wood?) No, no, no. I would never have been there if they'd had a good place in Broughton. See, I came to Cape Breton in 1915--I was 23--the First World War was on. In 1914 I was working in Grand Falls, Newfoundland, paper mill there. And I tried to enlist. I was turned down. My teeth were bad. I said, "I didn't know I had to eat them after I killed them!" And that went through the papers, you know. And young girls would go looking for the man who said he didn't know he had to eat the Germans. They said I was a hero. Anyhow, I came over here to enlist. In the spring of 1916 I enlisted in the 185th. We were out to Broughton--used to be a mining town, and all the houses were there then, but the mines were shut down. Outside of Glace Bay there. And I didn't like it there. It was in the spring, and it was tough there, snow and no water--had to go out and break a hole in the ice there for washing, wherever we'd see a pool. So I was only there a couple of weeks, anyway. I didn't like it there. They wanted a bunch to go overseas, and I volunteered. A lot of fellows volunteered, but there was only me and another Newfoundlander that passed. And the first day of April we sailed, in 1916. I enlisted the first of March, and we sailed the last of March. That was one month! And the 185th never came over till next summer. But I didn't know what we were into when I volunteered. All they said was they wanted people to go overseas right away. They wanted this lumber for trenches and houses and huts and things like that, you know. There were 5 or 6 companies like that. A lot of fellows were taken out of the army and put in there, who knew about the woods. We were cutting up from 75,000 to 100,000 lumber a day. Going in the woods and cutting them out and bringing them out and sawing them up. That was in Scotland. Then we went to France. Eighteen men and three horses in a boxcar went right across France. Right down to Marseille, pretty near down to Marseille, around the Bay of Biscay. And did some more work. All pine lumber, you know, all pine lumber. A big shot, a big millionaire had a forest in France. He'd have planted this forest. Pitch pine. And they tapped the pine, the same as if you tapped the maples over here; you'd get the pitch. And we were cutting that timber down. We cut out the whole forest. And then we shifted again. We cut out a forest in Scotland. Then we cut out another one in France. We had the big crosscut saws. The timber was big. Two men to a saw, saw them down. And then we had railroads, and little diesel engines, had them on trams, you know, just a little small tram, like a little railroad, hooked up together. We loaded the timber on that and hooked them on the little diesel. She'd go out with a trainload of this wood, to the mill. Make them into boards and big planks and lots of big timbers. For the trench work up in the front. That wood was all used for the war. They were big mills. We were cutting up 75,000 to 100,000 lumber a day. That's a lot of lumber. An average small mill would only cut up about--well, if they ever got to 10,000, they'd



be big. (And you did this from 1916?) Yeah, I was still down in Marseille when the war was over in 1918. (Did you work these like jobs, so many hours a day?) No, you had to be working daylight to dark. Never had any 8 hours or anything like that, no shifts. Worked all day, then you rested at night, then you'd go out again and work all day a- gain. We'd work every day, clear of Sunday. (What would you do on Sunday?) Rest up, shave, sometimes we'd walk the 6 or 7 miles to town, get a few beers. (Did you find it boring?) No.- You got tired of it afterwards, so long at it, you know. We were at it for 3 or 4 years, steady, with one thing. But you didn't mind it. It was interesting work. I got the same pay as other soldiers--\$1.10 a day we got then. We were supposed to get the trade pay, but I never did get it. I never' looked for it. I got the same as any other soldier. (Some people might say you weren't really in the war because you weren't in the trenches.) They say that, yeah. I never mind that. (Would you think it was true, that you didn't serve?) Oh no, I was in the army. They could send me where they liked. We trained with rifles. We always had rifles, even there at the mill. We had (17)