

## Westman Oral History collection

<b>Interview Date:</b>	<b>1981-11-11</b>
<b>Narrator (interviewee):</b>	<b>Violette Chapman</b>
<b>Interviewer:</b>	<b>Irene Brown</b>
<b>Location:</b>	<b>Glenboro, Manitoba</b>
<b>Transcriber:</b>	<b>Sydney Wright</b>
<b>Date Transcribed:</b>	<b>2023-01-27</b>
<b>Recording Format</b>	<b>Cassette</b>
<b>Length of Recording</b>	<b>00:15:00</b>

[00:02:28]: [static, audio clip doesn't start right at the beginning]

Irene Brown: Today is the eleventh of November, 1981 [pause] and I Irene Brown am ready to start an interview with Mrs. Violette Chapman in her home in Glenboro, Manitoba [pause] she was twenty-three years of age when she came to Canada from England and still retains much of her English accent [pause] pride in her heritage shines through along with the determination to be independent [pause] She is proud to participate in the Westman Oral History project, "Voices of Yester Year"

[Pause] [static humming sounds]

Question: Irene Brown: Mrs. Chapman, it is a real privilege to interview you for our oral history program [pause] you told me your first name is Violette, spelled in a rather romantic way.

Answer: Violette Chapman: "mhmm"

Question: Irene Brown: How is that?

Answer: Violette Chapman: [...] Vio – LETTE was took from a novel

Q: Irene Brown: "hmm" What was that?

A: Violette Chapman: The novel name is "Violette" [...] between an actor or actress I guess

Q: Irene Brown: I see. And how is it spelled?

A: Violette Chapman: [raises voice] V – I – O – L – E double T – E “mumbling” [static]

Q: Irene Brown: And why was this name chosen? [static]

A: Violette Brown: [pause] Well it was chosen after the [...] [coughing] then I was “ah” named after Ettie Jones [pause] as a [...] name you see Ettie and “ah” [...]

Q: Irene Brown: “ahh hah” And ‘uh’ do you have any objections to telling your age? [pause]

Violette Chapman: Pardon? [static]

Q: Irene Brown: You have any objections to telling your age?

A: Violette Chapman: [pause] “mumbles” No, I’m eighty-three

Irene Brown: Well, you’re pretty wonderful for eighty-three, look at your hair [excitement]

Violette Chapman: Eighty-three “uh” yeah, eighty-three will be eighty-four next year

Q: Irene Brown: What colour was your hair when you were a girl? [static]

A: Violette Chapman: [pause] dark. [...] hung down to my waist [...] [laughter]

Q: Irene Brown: Well, it’s still long but still quite dark “mumbling” [pause] [rustling papers] [...] and what was the first job you had while you were in England?

A: Violette Chapman [static] [pause] Well it was [...] when I was thirteen.

Q: Irene Brown: When were you an apprentice?

A: Violette Chapman: When I was sixteen. I was an apprentice for six months [...] needle envelopes, “yenno”

Q: Irene Brown: Envelopes to put [pause] Envelopes to put needles in?

A: Violette Chapman: “Yep”

Irene Brown: [excitement] Oh!

Violette Chapman: “mumbling” You would have put them on sheets, big sheets [...] put them all up and “uh” turn them up and everything [...] and “uh” turn the whole thing up

Q: Irene Brown: And it wasn’t long after that met Mr. Chapman?

A: Violette Chapman: Well, I was “uh” sixteen or about sixteen when I met “uh” Chapman [...] about sixteen

Q: Irene Brown: And how long before you were married?

A: [00:05:04] Violette Chapman: “uh” [pause] “umm” twenty “umm” [...] twenty-one without marriage [static] [...] marriage certificate

Q: Irene Brown: Well, you told me something about having the [...] published

A: Violette Chapman: [static] well yeah, that was “uh” “um” Reverend Compton [pause]

Q: Irene Brown: And how [...]

A: Violette Chapman: He wrote and told me if I’d get married if he came back for leave and I wrote him and told him yes [...] fixed up [...] and “uh” Well he was in the army in that time

Q: Irene Brown: And how long was he in the army?

A: Violette Chapman: He was in it for four years and twenty-one days [...]

Q: Irene Brown: Well, he served his share, didn’t he?

A: Violette Chapman: Well, that’s what I say he did his share. And “uh” he came back and worked on a farm

Q: Irene Brown: Well, before you tell me that, would you like to tell me about his decorations?

A: Violette Chapman: [static] “uh” [pause] When he was in the army, he took a leave “uh” a last leave for ten days to get married [...]

Q: Irene Brown: But you told me he has some medals? “hm” [pause] You told me he had some medals.

A: Violette Chapman: [static] “uh” yeah there are some medals

Q: Irene Brown: How many?

A: Violette Chapman: [static] Three

Q: Irene Brown: And something else?

A: Violette Chapman: And then [...] [inaudible]

Q: Irene Brown: [static] Well that’s a really good record, isn’t it? He would get an army pension[?] for that then?

A: Violette Chapman: No, he got nothing [static]

Q: Irene Brown: He didn’t get anything?

A: Violette Chapman: No No.

Q: Irene Brown How come?

A: Violette Chapman: "mumbling" [...]

Q: Irene Brown: Well, you're pretty proud of your independence, aren't you?

A: Violette Chapman: [static] Well in a way [laughter]

Q: Irene Brown: [Laughter] Why did you come to Canada?

A: Violette Chapman: Well, we come to Canada, to Canada on "ah" account to [...] large you see [pause]

Q: Irene Brown: You thought it would be different out here? Are you glad you came to Canada? [pause]

A: Violette Chapman: Well, I'm not worried about it [...]

Q: Irene Brown: But you were held up a little while in Montreal?

A: Violette Chapman: Well, we were stopped in Montreal for so many errands "uhm" I don't know if three hours till we had to take the train up here you see to Winnipeg [pause] [...] took the train to the immigration official "oh" "yeah"

Q: Irene Brown: And then you got a job at Mr. Catholics [?] And how did you come up there?

A: Violette Chapman: Well, he [...] at the station there

Q: Irene Brown: Oh, you went up to Mr. Catholics by train?

A: Violette Chapman: Yeah

Q: Irene Brown: And "ah" you were there a week?

A: Violette Chapman: A week, that's all

Q: Irene Brown: And then what did you do?

A: Violette Chapman: "Ah" well we left on the Wednesday [pause] I think it was on the Wednesday in the middle of the week anyway and "uh" yeah a week like Wednesday I think we come up but anyway we stayed up there a week and then "uh" we certainly [...] his wife was going to get the mail so Mr. Chapman said we'd go to the store, he says well the wife would like Mrs. Chapman to stay with us, and I said no I'm not staying, when he goes I'm going [laughter] That's when I walked up the twenty miles you see [...]

Q: Irene Brown: Twenty miles? [...] Out of the track?

A: Violette Chapman: [static] Yep

Q: Irene Brown: That's a longways to walk [pause] what did you take with you?

A: Violette Chapman: Just a kettle

Q: Irene Brown: [excitement] A kettle? "mhm"

A: Violette Chapman: [mumbles] For a cup of tea [static] [mumbling]

Q: Irene Brown: Well, that would be the English in ya [pause] they like their cup of tea don't they?

A: Violet Chapman: [...] There was a little creek, we got the water from there [pause]

Q: Irene Brown: You did? And I understand you slept one night in the [pause]

A: Violet Chapman: In that barn

Q: Irene Brown: Well didn't you say you spent the night in North Field school?

A: Violet Chapman: That is next to [...] South of North Field School

Irene Brown: Oh the barn is south of North Field school, I see

Q: Irene Brown: And what wakened you up in the morning?

A: Violette Chapman: We wanted to see the man that owned the place where we, we didn't think he was up [pause] [00:10:00] but, [static] but all the horses come in "yenno" in the barn and galloping in the barn, so I got up.

Q: Irene Brown: And that's what wakened you?

A: Violette Chapman: Laughter [...]

Q: Irene Brown: And you went on up to?

A: Violette Chapman: Up to I guess it would be Nesbit where we got on the truck [static] [pause] On the mail truck [...] sat on the mail, and I sat in the cab with the driver

Q: Irene Brown: And you went to?

A: Violette Chapman: Well, it must have been "uh" [...] [pause]

Q: Irene Brown: Well, you went on to Souris, didn't you?

A: Violette Chapman: Yeah, well from there we got on the train

Irene Brown: Oh, you went by train there [static]

A: Violette Chapman: We got on the train up to Souris, and that's where we stayed from Wednesday to it "outta" be Sunday [...]

Q: Irene Brown: Now who helped you out at Souris?

A: Violette Chapman: Well, Mr. Leverington

Irene Brown: Do you know that "uh" [pause]

Violette Chapman: He was an oldish man [...]

Q: Irene Brown: A lawyer?

A: Violette Chapman: Yeah, Yeah well Mr. Leverington's daughter is married to my brother-in-law

Q: Irene Brown: Yeah, what's her name?

A: Violette Chapman: Alice

Q: Irene Brown: Yeah, That's right [...] and then you came back to Glenboro "mumbling" and how long did Mr. Chapman work on the track?

A: Violette Chapman: fifty-three years [static]

Q: Irene Brown: That's a long time [pause] and what did you do?

A: Violette Chapman: Well, I worked at the hotel, I worked with Mrs. Philosyth [?] [...] and then I worked at the Rainbow with Missus "uh" "um" [pause] "ah" what's her name [static] Derkson with Mrs. Derkson [...] helping to cook [static]

Q: Irene Brown: And you cooked for a lot of people at one time, didn't you? When the pipeline was going through

A: Violette Chapman: Well, I worked at the "stuttering" I cooked at the place of ours for the pipeline [pause] I cooked for sixty-five every morning

Q: Irene Brown: And what time did you go to bed at night?

A: Violette Chapman: Well after twelve and up at half past three [...] for the shift

Q: Irene Brown: You went to bed at 12:30 "mumbling" and you were up at 3:30?

A: Violette Chapman: "mumbling" to serve the first shift [static]

Q: Irene Brown: Well, you didn't have too much time for sleep, did you?

A: Violette Chapman: Oh, I didn't have time to sleep

Q: Irene Brown: Did you have time to sleep during the daytime?

A: Violette Chapman: No "mumbling" [...] Verla was serving at the counter

Q: Irene Brown: Oh, I see [pause] and Verla is your?

A: Violette Chapman: Verla is "uh" worked at the "stuttering" the rainbow right from the time she was seventeen I think, and she worked three years at the Rainbow, three years at the Café [...]

Q: Irene Brown: And Verla is your daughter?

A: Violette Chapman: Yeah

Q: Irene Brown: And you have a son?

A: Violette Chapman: Yeah

Q: Irene Brown: and his name is?

A: Violette Chapman: Sydney Desmond Isaiah

Q: Irene Brown: Sydney Desmond Isaiah [pause] that's quite a big, long name isn't it [laughter]

A: Violette Chapman: "mumbling" named after his father anyway [...]

Q: Irene Brown: And "uh" Mr. Chapman "uh" also took an active part in the legion did he not?

A: Violette Chapman: "mumbling" when the legion did open up, he was on the charter, when they "stuttering" when they went on a trip, they'd take him with them

[tape recorder clicks] [static]

Q: Irene Brown: And has he or you ever been back to England?

A: Violette Chapman: No [static]

Q: Irene Brown: You have any regrets?

A: Violette Chapman: No

Q: Irene Brown: Are you glad you came to Canada?

A: Violette Chapman: I don't want to go back "stuttering" I don't want to go back [...] So I don't want to go back

Irene Brown: and you have a nice little comfortable home here

Violette Chapman: Oh yeah

Q: Irene Brown: And you have no desire to change it?

A: Violette Chapman: Well, this home here [...] my brother helped me out [...] it was quite a surprise

Irene Brown: Well, that's very very nice [pause] and I'd like to thank you very very much for this interview

Violette Chapman" "mumbling" [...]

Irene Brown: That's really great they remembered that

Violette Chapman: With my brothers, being nice to live with, they were always nice to me and that one brother [...] from twelve to sixty-nine to "uh" sixty-seven never drank, never smoked, [...]

Irene Brown: Well, that's very very nice, I hope my memory is as good as yours

Violette Chapman: "mumbles" Well I got a memory, I can remember quite a lot

Irene Brown: You certainly can, and thank you very much

[00:15:00] Violette Chapman: Oh, you're welcome, Irene [static] [tape cuts]

**End of Interview**