

**Westman Oral History Collection**

**Interview Date:** 1983-06-29

**Narrator (Interviewee):** Violet Leeson

**Interviewer:** Velma Patterson

**Location:** Strathclair, Manitoba

**Transcriber:** Marshall Morrisseau

**Date Transcribed:** 2023-02-04

**Recording Format:** audio cassette

**Length of recording:** [0:10:00]

Speaker 1: don't push the left button if you want to listen to it you push this one, you're recording there

Speaker 2: oh! That's right

End of Clip 1 of 3

Clip 2 of 3

Question: today is June 29<sup>th</sup> 1983. The following is an interview with Mrs. violet Leeson at her home in the senior citizens lodge in Strathclair Manitoba. Will you tell where and when you were born and where you went to school?

Answer: Yes, I Violet [?] was born in Strathclair Manitoba in 1902. My mother was Lucy [?] from Walkerton Ontario, my dad Donald Morrison from [?] Ontario. They were married and raised six children, I was the second oldest and when six years old attended a country school called "Elden". When

it closed we were taken by Vans to Strathclair consolidated, a stone school built in 1898. A new one was built in 1915 and we all marched over to that one on the east side of our town which is still in use in 1983. I married Earl Leeson we had two children Viola Rose and Della June. We farmed on Earls' Dads homestead of 1860 ... 76. From 1922 to 1962, now there is 5 [cough] now there is the fifth generation on the farm. We moved into the carlton lodge ... erm in 1981. My husband Earl Leeson passed away in 1982. My mother passed away in 1951 at 83 years and my father at .. in 1964 at 93 years.

End of clip 2 of 3

Clip 3 of 3

Q: Do you remember when you started writing poetry?

A: I would say in the 20s, 1920s [narrator: ok]

Q: Well will you read some of your poems for us?

A: I will, in 1916 as I recall it was quite early in the fall, a very beautiful clear bright day, we went pick berries a short distance away, our pales all filled up to the [?] and pales in those days were larger built. Now the question was then asked "how do we get home?" so right there and then I started to roam. I roamed around through trees so tall and bushes until I could scarcely crawl. Up to the buildings which wasn't far and backed out a brand new shiny car, an overlamped [?] seven passenger deal with me a mere fourteen at the wheel. Away I went all the way on low, afraid to change gears as too fast I might go. I wound in and out of trees to the spot where we set all our pales of berries we got. I remember my mother she was horrified as the car came toward her with just me inside. We loaded our loot and went back through the woods, everything was unpacked as well as our goods. Next year I attended the school in strathclair and drove a school van for us kids to get there. No highways no license did I have to show but times there were tires to change when they'd blow. You had left you spare tire in town for repair, to

pick up at four but no one was there. No wheel with a tire on tucked in the trunk, you remove the rim with irons and junk. Then pry off the tire and patch up the tear and put it back on and hand pump it there. Then if you were lucky you landed the crew without any rain or mud to go through. But when it rained then my sister and I one on each side through the top to keep dry, fastened in place side [unclear] side curtains put on, now [?] flopped til the rain was all gone. Driving trucks and cars for now fifty years without accident or incident so it appears. And I do plan on driving for many more yet but only a car never a jet.

Q: Thank you, have you another one?

A: Yes I have, a housewife in the thirties. Only a housewife that is true but think of all the things she must do. Breakfast over the dishes all done, now for the others a thousand and one. The man of the house came home almost beat, though he worked all day he sat on a seat, "I'm so tired I could just crawl into bed, you look nice and fresh what have you done?" he said. "Oh nothing much just the regular routine, school lunches and dishes and keeping kids clean, washing and ironing and butter made then, selling it out for five cents plus ten. Baking mending and cutting them on, pulling the weeds in the garden at dawn, nine rooms to clean in the house where we live, fed the chickens and then I picked up a scythe, fixed up a scythe. Carried some water, spaded some ground, planted my flowers all nicely around, cleaned the refrigerator and also the rugs, some electrical work such as fixing up plugs. Prepared three meals, two lunches and so, trimmed all the shrubs to keep them down low, what I did after that would you like to guess? I had five minutes left so I put on this dress."

Q: That's good. Now read us one of your more recent ones

A: Well this is it. Six of us on the eastside of Carlton lodge just wondering if there are some things we can dodge. Should we get a plane to take us up past the dusk and water and snow when it is a must, or slant

the road a bit to the east and then we would find that the water has ceased. Or get sprayers and keep the road watered down, because we like living in our fair town. But people would say [cough] we are using too much, then of course as you know we would all be in dutch, in summer we like to let some air in, but the dust makes us sneeze and cough til were thin. As for snow, some cannot use the door, or climb the banks to get out more, or maybe we will sunlight our day just pack our belongings and move away. I guess really we should not make a fuss because you are all so good to us. That's all for now see you next year [unclear]

Narrator: thank you that was very good.

End of clip 3 of 3

**End of interview**