

Interview with: Mrs. Ruth Stolen
your name: Michele Richards

my name is Michele Richards and I'm interviewing Mrs. Ruth Stolen on her feelings of the Great Depression and I'm interviewing her in her home in Ishpeming and the date is January second ¹⁹⁸⁴ and I'll start by asking some questions on her childhood. - Mrs. Stolen

MR. ^{Mrs. Stolen} where were you born?

R.S. - I was born here in the old house where was your home and where ^{auk ha}

MR. were you growing up?

R.S. My home was here ^{pause} on this farm and I was growing up here I grew up ~~there~~ ^{on this farm}

MR. where did you go to school

R.S. well first I went to school at the Green Creek school that was a little school ^{right over on the corner} of our land my father donated land for the school to be built, and auk I attended grade school there. Then I went to high school at 7:30.

MR. - who was the principle of your ^{school}

R.S. - auk there were several super attendents I don't remember the principles names there was one called Mr. ^{pause} I can't ~~think~~ ^{remember} of his name there was one called Mr. Sutt when I was in High School and there was a Mr. Parson ^{on} at that time and there was a Mr. Hiller ^{when I attended the Green Creek School}

he was the Super attendant there, those are the three that I can ~~think of~~ think of

MR. - was there a hot lunch program

RS - No there was not we carried our lunches the children that lived too far carried ~~them~~ ^{away from school} lunches but we could come home for lunch because we lived so close to the Green Creek school. "except" when I went to high school but we carried our lunches when we were out and that was the only ~~time~~ ^{change} we got to play with the other children was at lunchtime + recess time so we often carried our lunch just for that reason.

MR. - were there proms or school dances

RS - no not here and I don't ^{and out} know about ~~the high school~~ ^{the high school} national mine because ~~it~~ wasn't in distance for a very long time before I got to high school so I don't know about the proms there wasn't when I went to high school.

MR - how many kids were in your family

RS - there were nine children in the family

MR - where did you stand

RS - I was the baby

MR - what kind of activities did you do

RS - "Oh" we always helped our mother + father with chores you know there was always little things we could do to help them + if we had any time to play we

went to visit our friends maybe there were
quit a ways away we had to walk so we were
aloud to go there now and then and ~~the~~ the boys
played baseball and of course the girls joined
in and we played hop scotch and all other
games like run sheep run and all for and
geese and oh we played games like hot

MR do you remember when they called T.M
winthrop

RS yes awh ha

MR - Do you remember the day the stock
market crashed?

RS I can't ~~say~~ say I guess I do but it's
very dim in my mind ~~at~~ I wasn't ^{Flint}
at that time

MR where did you live during the Depression

RS - In Flint

MR - How old were you

RS - How old was I then? Lets see that
was ~~1932~~ 1932 so I was awh 18-19-00 "24"

MR - were you working

RS "yes"

MR - Where?

RS - I was teaching In Flint

MR - In Flint

RS - Oh I'm sorry I made a mistake
can you correct

MR Oh yes

RS - I was "well" ^{laughing} I tell you about my age
later I can't ~~think~~ "now"
MR - you were teaching in Flint awh

MR this time

RS yes

MR were the schools different down there than up here in the U.S.P

RS yes they were quite a bit and of course they were city schools that I taught in there and ~~down~~ up here there were so many rural schools but they did have rural schools in the lower peninsula too but I didn't teach many

MR - Did you teach anywhere else

RS yes I started out teaching at Pleasant Prairie that is just south of the S&I store is now I taught there for 3 years

MR - How many years did you teach

RS - all together - 28

MR - was there a dress code or anything really different when you taught

RS - no ~~no dress code~~ you wore what you had to wear that's all be glad you had those clothes

MR - were you single or married

RS - I was out single at that time

MR - when did you get married

RS - 1942

MR - to whom did you marry

RS - to Harold Stolen

MR - Did you have any children at this time

RS - ^{with} no but after marriage we had two
MR - um did any of your family

join the WPA or the CCC
RS - not in my family "no"

MR - were there any "places" closed during the depression

RS - oh there must have been but I was away so I don't know that here in this area but there must have been places that were closed

MR - Did you blame Hoover for anything

RS - "no" I really didn't blame him because "he" was a very intelligent business man and he was doing what he thought was right but there were many many problems that he had to deal with of course we can't blame anyone for anything that anyone can deal with a problem right away ^{absolutely} it takes time and of course he ^{wasn't} in office for 4 years and he had inherited a lot of problems from previous things so I didn't really blame him

MR - Did you like Roosevelt as our President

RS - yes he was a good president, he was very energetic and he did a lot of things & tackled the problems ^{much} before the government & tried to what he could ~~do~~ to solve these problems

MR - was there anything you disliked about him

RS - Well I don't care and answer that completely because that covers a lot of

but awh he was very free with spending
~~the money which I suppose~~ ~~guess that~~
~~what he had to do~~ he probably had to
do because condisions were bad at that
time but he did alot of good

MR - Do you remember anything about
the new deal

RS - well except ^{that awh} it was called the New
Deal it was the way he dealt with the
problems that confronted the U. States at
that time and so he called it the New
Deal it involved alot of different ^{such} segments
that put work into the government

MR - Did you listen to Fire Side chats
RS - Yes

MR - um what type of food items or other
items were hard to come by

RS - Sugar was rationed at that time
and awh some types of flour I don't
remember anything else that was
rationed at that time but gasoline was
~~that~~ that's not a food item but it was
rationed

MR - Was there any help to get food in
this area

RS - Yes there were ^{awh} relief projects + awh
different types of comodaters were sent
out to be distributed along the poor

MR - Did your family grow a garden
RS - Yes awh ha

MR - What types of crops did you grow
RS - Oh (awh) we had potatoes, rutabagas,
carrots + awh sometimes mis-pick

planted oats because that was used for feed for the chickens and all other animals ~~of~~ of course we raised so much of our ^{own} fresh vegetables to eat like peas + beans + the usual standard vegetables that people have for their meals

MR- Do you think there was a rise in crime during the depression

RS- That I can't say I really don't know

MR- were there

RS- ~~Oh no~~ Oh I'm sorry

MR- were there any fraternal lodges

RS- Oh yes there were

MR- what were some

RS- Some of them were the Elks that was one odd fellow that was another and aith woodloom of america I believe it was called + there was the Sons of Saint George that was the English branch + the Vasa lodge that was Scandanavian there were others too but I just can't think any right now

MR- Do you think people helped people more during the depression

RS- more than what more than when before

RS MR- "I think they did 'yes' before"

MR- Does the depression reflect on the way you live now

RS- I don't think so we were always taught to be very economical and all use what we had to the best advantage we always taught that so that has followed me

through my life that's the way I am Pg 8.
economical and thrifty and can be.

MR - OK Thank You Mrs. Stolen

BS - Oh you so welcome