

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

Depression Experience of Blacks

Personal Experience

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EDWARD STONEWORK, JR.

Interviewed

by

John A. Parker

on

July 18, 1989

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INTERVIEWEE: EDWARD STONEWORK, JR.

INTERVIEWER: John A. Parker

SUBJECT: Campbell, Welfare League, bootlegging,  
Ku Klux Klan

DATE: July 18, 1989

P: This is an interview with Reverend Edward Stonework, Jr., for the Youngstown State University Oral History Program, on Depression Experience of Blacks, by Sandy Parker, at 219 Lettie Drive, Campbell, Ohio, on July 18, 1989, at 10:20 a.m.

Reverend Stonework, I'd appreciate it very much if you could tell me a little bit about yourself and your family and anything about the history of your family that you'd like to tell me.

S: All of my family, both sides of my family came from Alabama. My father came here in 1919 from Pittsburgh. He came from Pittsburgh, here. I think there was a small strike going at that time, and he went to work in the mill as a scab.

P: Which mill was that?

S: Youngstown Sheet & Tube. At that time, they didn't hire Negroes in any of the . . . All they had was Negro laborers at that time. So, my father went in the mill, and he went on the machines. He took up machines and made pipes. That was the first time they went in and worked on machines. They turned out so much production when the strike was on that they kept them

there, because they had never made that type of production. This is the thing that people didn't understand. They did produce. My father was a big man and the pipes, he would turn them out with one hand. So, after he came out of there, he got set in the community there in 1919-1920. They organized the Campbell Welfare League in about 1922 or 1923. They organized that at my father's house. I never will forget it. I was there. I was serving the lemonade and keeping them cool. It was hot in the summertime. So, they organized the Welfare League; and he, then went into politics from there. At the next election, they organized and had the election in Campbell. I think they elected three councilmen. First, second and third ward, and one at large.

This is the true history. That was the beginning of Negroes in politics in the Mahoning Valley. We were the head of Youngstown. Everybody was concentrated down here. In our area, the foreign population consisted mostly of Central Europeans, and Southern Europeans. That is, Slovaks, and Italians. Most of them were just coming over from the old country and a lot of them couldn't speak English. They were smart, too. They began to educate their children and everything and so they educated their children and years later they took over. But, the Negroes, in the meantime, they had the welfare organization. We brought in from Chicago men like DePrise. He was a Congressman. He taught the Negroes how to organize like they were in Chicago. So, we came out of it pretty good. My father was put on the police force. I was the first water commissioner. We didn't have no water during the strike during the Depression. I set up the first Welfare station in Campbell for the poor because my job was the only job they was paying after the Depression started, because we were the only boys that took in any money. So, I was paid to be a Welfare man and everything else until people lost everything they had. Everybody lost everything they had. They lost their home; they lost their property, and everything in a period of years. So, we had to give these folks welfare. So, folks were living in houses, and they didn't have to pay anything. The city gave them water. I was a water-click. I know every empty house in Campbell. At that time, they had to come to me to find out what houses were empty because I had the water shut off. That's the way it was. We became part of the politics of Campbell; and throughout the Depression, everybody suffered together.

We had a pot down there. We had what we called the community pot, where we were getting free meals, or soup, and a loaf of bread every day. It was bad. The city paid off in script. They didn't have money. The situation was very bad down here in Campbell after the

mill shut down during the Depression. But, during this time, people raised their gardens, whatever it was, and chickens, and things. Folks were stealing and going on out of the country. They'd go out of the country to steal these chickens. You'd come back and cook them. It was bad. They'd get on the freight train down there and throw off coal. They couldn't buy coal; so when these freight trains come by, I was supposed to go down. If the train slowed up, they'd go down there and throw off a ton of coal. So, this is the way the folks would live. It was tough, really tough.

As far as rent was concerned, there was no such thing. Folks were glad if they were living and if the house was being kept from being torn down, keeping it from being vandalized. That's how it was all through the Depression. I stayed in that job six years, and I saw that everybody had water and [looked after] those who were on welfare, until they established county welfare. Then, we looked after some of the folks until they were in a position to look out for themselves. It was tough. We looked out for everybody. Black, White, everybody was suffering. They needed a place to live. We had houses that we just tell them to go and live there, because the folks would be dead [or] because they didn't want the house vandalized. It was tough.

P: Why were these houses empty? Did the people move someplace?

S: Yes. Folks moved out. Some of them moved out and went other places. They couldn't pay rent, and the man didn't bother. He didn't bother anybody for rent because he wasn't going to stay there in the house. You know, empty houses get vandalized. That's what it was. You may ask questions, lots of things I've run across. This Welfare League in Campbell that bought the Negroes permanence in Mahoning County, because they went into politics. They were in politics before Youngstown. Youngstown is way behind us in politics.

P: You said this was about 1922 or 1923; and in the election, they elected four councilmen out of seven?

S: Yes. Out of seven.

P: You said your dad was the first Black policeman?

S: Yes. He was one of the first ones. A fellow by the name of Fowler was the first one. C.W. Nelson was another one. I think my father was the third one, but he was the man that originated all of them. See, he was the head of the organization. So later on, he came out of the mill and took the police job. Joseph Julius, they were contestants for mayor, backwards and

forwards, you were either for one or the other. So, it was under these mayors that the Negroes had great power in the town at that time, great political power, because there was nobody else here that could vote, but the Negroes. Most of the foreign population was unable to vote. They were just coming in, some of them. The kids--don't make no mistake--there were lots of them, but the Negroes had the majority.

P: This is when Campbell was still called East Youngstown?

S: That's right, when Campbell was still called East Youngstown. You're right.

P: Approximately, how much population was there, and how much of that was Black at that time?

S: Well the truth of it was, there were more Whites than there were Blacks, but the Blacks were American citizens. It was estimated . . . there was not much over seven hundred or eight hundred or a thousand Black people in Campbell at that time . . . fifteen hundred-something in that neighborhood. Sheet & Tube Quarters just got finished up there. You know, the old Sheet & Tube Quarters out there, they had not too long to finish up there. Lots of them moved up there, but so far as the town was concerned, the Negroes lived in the East end of the town. That's where they were. They were together, and they were the majority of these wards that they elected.

P: You said your dad and mom were both born in Alabama. Tell me a little bit about where they were born in Alabama and the history of your family in Alabama before they came to Campbell?

S: After the Civil War, there was lots of confusion down there. My father's mother was Irish, folks . . . that was only the paternal side of the family. She was Irish. As I said, my grandfather, he was a run-away slave. And, my father and mother--her family had been wiped out during the Civil War. She had all this property. Then my grandfather came along and started looking after it for her, and he was the one. . . . They had three kids between them. My father was the oldest. So, it was down there that they raised . . . he stayed there. He grew up on his mother's farm, and they had so much property it would take a half a day for a mule to go over it, almost. But, things changed down South, down there. The Ku Klux Klan rolls up and everything else rolls up down there. There was confusion and all that kind of stuff. My father told me . . . he said, "Ed, you know, we're fighting down here, and you know you can't say you killed a man or nothing like that. You can't say that because a man

said. . . . A night rider, he would come at night, get into the house, and we'd shoot them. Then, we let them pick up what knocked over the horses." My father said that you can't live like that. She was White and she knew all of the White judges and things like that. So, her son would get out from the judges, and she was a woman that had influence and money and stock. And, she lost all of that on account of her boys, because her boys fought these people. Anytime they would get in trouble, she had to get them out, and she had to petition. If she didn't have money, she had to give livestock [or] a piece of land. I said that's the reason why my father decided he would leave. He said, "I can't raise my kids like this." Those Klansmen down there in fact say, "Don't fool yourself." They killed them. But in the paper, they never printed it. They would print some things, but, when they would look at the papers, they would say, "There ain't nothing in there about who was knocked off." It was terrible down there for a while after the Civil War, in the beginning of the 1900's. The press was good for the press. The fact of it is that a lot of it was never known. The press was only going to print what was good for the people that they were selling the press to. "Don't fool yourselves. Those Negroes fought down there like everything." Some of them left down there because they wanted to raise their kids up in an atmosphere where they could educate the children. That's why my father said he left there and he brought his mother. He took his mother. His mother died in Pittsburgh. She died in Pittsburgh in 1917, I think.

P: What about his father?

S: His father had already died when he left there. He had already died. But, he looked after the family after that. They said it was turbulent down there. They still really don't print the truth about a lot of that stuff.

P: They don't talk about resistance?

S: They don't print that stuff, because they have to sell the paper to the White majority and that's what the thing was, see. Negroes, I hold this, that the greatest literature of this country is yet to come out of the South. Peachtree is part of it, you know. This "Gone with the Wind," but there are greater stories down there than that [that] don't come out. Negroes got to write them. They weren't so docile down there, down in those spots, out in those countries out there. You know, you would have places as large as Youngstown out there on some of those farms. There wasn't nothing you could do. They could kill a man and nobody would know anything about it. My father said that he got

tired of that stuff down there. He said there wasn't no judge, and [there was] no law for Negroes. The judge, he was never for Negroes that's why they fought so hard. There wasn't no justice.

P: You said he took care of the family. Did he bring his brothers with him?

S: Oh, yes. His brothers were already here. Down there, they were looking for him because you know, he had to fight those Klux's down there. So, they were looking for him, so he left. His brother left before him. There wasn't but two of them. So, he died in New York City, and they have never told the truth of the matter. Lots of things have never been told.

P: You said your father was a strike breaker. Was he part of the big immigration that was brought in by boxcars?

S: Oh, yes. He went down and got some of them when he was in Pittsburgh. He got trainloads. They came up in box cars and other things. But, he said it was a good thing for him. He took them to Pittsburgh. We rented a big house in Pittsburgh; there, it was a terminal inn there. My father took folks in who were coming from the South. This has been a turbulent country. The nation . . . that's the way it was. But don't ever fool yourself. There wasn't no frightened Negroes down there, but there was just no justice.

P: What about your mother's side?

S: Same thing. She came from one side of the family. They weren't as well off as my father's family was, naturally, because his mother controlled so much land. They had all her men killed in the Civil War. She had been left all of that property. My father looked after it for her. But, my mother's family, they rented from somebody. They rented their home. But, my father never rented no farm.

P: You said your grandfather was a run-away slave. Where did he run-away to and when?

S: The Indian territory. That's part of the situation. He was in Indian territory. All you had to do was to cross a few states. You would be out there. So, whether you know it or not, some of the greatest trappers and the greatest . . . the Negroes knew more about out there than most of the civilians who left that were going west. Run-away slaves were always out there. They were the cowboys. They were in all that mess. They were in all that stuff out there. Every once in a while you see some mention in some of this stuff. The Negroes were some of the best cowboys out there. They

were all run-away slaves. After the war was over, some of them came back. My grandfather was one of them that came back from the Indian country.

P: You were born in 1907 in Selma.

S: Yes. I was born in 1907 in Selma.

P: About how soon after that did your dad leave the South to come to Pittsburgh?

S: Well, he left . . . I imagine [that] he went to Mobile, Alabama first; and then, he stayed down there. He went for a while on one of the boats down there. He was a long shoreman. He always made money. Long shoremen always make money, plenty of money. So, he decided to give up the farm and his mother and everything, and he took his mother and brought her North and his family. He came first. Then he came back and brought us all.

P: How many brothers and sisters did you have?

S: I had six brothers and one sister. I'm all that's left. They are all dead but me and one sister.

P: So, you got to Campbell in 1919?

S: Yes. [In] 1919, we came from Pittsburgh, here.

P: You had already gone through the first grades of school. What was the first school you went to in Campbell?

S: Reed School was the first one.

P: What grade was that?

S: I think I was in the second grade, [in] 1920. That has been quite a while back.

P: Do you remember your teachers or what school was like?

S: I remember old man Clover. He was the President. I can't remember what his name was. He was a strict disciplinarian. He was very good; he was very kind. I was never in any trouble; but the point of it is, you knew the nature of an individual. He was nice and kind, and that was it, as far as school was concerned. I did alright. I don't remember none of my teachers, you know. It's been so long [that] I have forgotten them all. In high school I remember two teachers, Jenny Polly and Martha Keck. Martha Keck used to teach English in the high school out here. I give her lots of credit. She was interested in her students; and as a matter of fact, she started me to read and a whole



lot of stuff. I did lots of research in Negro history. She started me reading, and I did lots of research. I was a football star, so she said, "You read these books during the summer, and you'll have to write your book report. Then you won't be so tired." See those days, we played sixty minutes. There was no substitution. If you were a good football player, you were on the field for sixty minutes.

P: You graduated in 1927. Were times really good in Campbell from . . . Now you were here in 1919. They had a little Depression in 1922 or 1923; but most of the time, times were pretty good for you, right?

S: They were pretty good. There were times where the mills were running slow, but it was nothing like in 1930. The beginning of 1930 up through 1935, 1936, nothing like that. It was never too good. To tell you the truth, when you were poor, you were just poor, and you would have to write sometimes. My mother, sometimes she would have to wash my shirt. [She would have to] take my shirt off and wash it for it to be clean the next day. She would do that every night, sometimes. You didn't have nothing, but you were clean.

P: Where did you live at that time?

S: I lived down on, at that time, Jefferson Street. We lived on several areas down there. We lived on Adams Street. We were shifting around there a bit.

P: You were renting then?

S: Yes. My father was renting, then. Then, finally, we moved to Ninth Street, and we bought there.

P: What street was that?

S: Ninth Street. That's where my father died. He died when we were on Ninth Street.

P: When was that?

S: [It was] 1935.

P: Were you the oldest of the children.

S: Yes. I was the eldest, and I'm the oldest boy left. All the rest of them are dead.

P: You started out the Stonework tradition of being in Campbell football.

S: Yes. I started that out too. Yes. I was the first to play. The rest of them played. All of them played. All of my brothers played.

P: You mentioned that you played for sixty minutes. Now, you started in 1924?

S: [I started in] 1923, 1924, I think. I started at Penhale. At Penhale, when we got our game going, then they built a memorial. Penhale was our first high school out here. I got some old pictures back in here someplace of those old football games.

P: It was kind of a different type of football game than what you see now?

S: Yes. Brother, let me tell you one thing. It was rough back then because most of those boys, they were men. There was some of the strongest fellows playing on some of those teams than on some of these teams today, I mean these college football teams, because they were big and strong boys. All those boys that played on my team were as strong as mules.

P: Did you do a lot of woodcutting and things like that to build your muscles up?

S: No. We'd practice all the time. We'd run. We were in good shape. We ran around that football area five or six times. We had to run around those areas and do our exercises. You were in shape enough. You were in good shape.

P: Your dad bought this house on Ninth Street. About when was that?

S: I'd imagine that was in the 1930's, I guess.

P: So, this would be already after you graduated?

S: Yes, [it would be] after I graduated.

P: Did you go to college immediately after getting out of high school, or did you work for a while?

S: I went to school one year after high school. I went to Lincoln University. I came back. Then, the stock market hit us, and I couldn't go back. I went to work, and I became Clerk of the Water Works, or the Commissioner of the Water Works. My father, got the right man in office. I think it was Joe Julius. He was in office. My dad, he went with Joe, and Joe got me the Water Commissioner [job].

P: You said this was in 1930. You graduated in 1927, and you went to college for. . . .

S: I worked one year before I went to college.

P: Was that at [Youngstown] Sheet & Tube?

S: Yes. I worked there a year before I went to college.

P: Your dad was a policeman in Campbell this whole period of time from 1923?

S: About 1923 to 1935 after that. There. He is over there. That's his picture.

P: Yes. I was looking at that. That was during the bootlegging times?

S: Yes. That would be during the bootlegging times.

P: I suppose being a policeman, he knew all about what was going on?

S: Oh, of course he did. To tell you the truth, it was a bootlegging time. The town was wide open just about. Everybody who had money that could make liquor, made it.

P: Was it mainly consumed in Campbell or did they ship it somewhere else or what?

S: Folks in Campbell was drinking it. They would make it, and it would be all throughout the county and every place else. There were some real bootleggers in this town. I tell you, lots of the new comers from Europe tried to educate their children making liquor. They would make liquors. . . . That's how lots of them--I could call lots of names. I knew whose father's were in that business and educated them making liquor. I've known for years and years and years, but I wouldn't call no names.

P: Where would they make it, and how would they transport it, things like that? Who would sell it?

S: Well, they traveled, individuals, to every house, every other house, almost was selling liquor. Almost. They transported it in their own cars and things. They'd make it out in the country sometime, make it at home, sometime. The Feds would raid every once in a while, but they weren't too bad on them.

P: You said every other house?

- S: Almost every other house was selling liquor. I know in lots of the foreign people's homes. They made most of the liquor. Negroes didn't make too much liquor. Negroes never did manufacture liquor much.
- P: What would they sell it for. . . ? We're talking about something that from the time you got here until 1933, liquor was illegal.
- S: Yes. Well, I didn't know too much about the bootleggers. The only way I would know about the bootleggers and the gamblers was how much water they were using. See, I was collecting down there, and the bootleggers, you know you could tell just about what they were doing. But [it was] none of our business. They aren't hurting us.
- P: Boy, that's a humorous way of keeping track of whose doing the bootlegging, for the simple reason that just like the state lotteries, now the gambling sponsored by the state, and during the bootlegging era the Campbell Water Department was keeping the welfare going by the bootleggers using their water.
- S: Well that's true. Some of them was paying. Some couldn't pay. Well, naturally, [there] wasn't, but very few folks could pay. They had the professional jobs, some of them. They paid, and that was mostly in the foreign element. They had some scholars among them, but you would almost know who was making it because of the amount of water they were using. After 1930, I became clerk down there in 1930, after the stock market fell. That's the only thing I know. It wasn't none of my business. They were paying the bills, [and] you don't say nothing. There wasn't nothing for me to say anyway.
- P: Did you ever go and drink some of that bootleg?
- S: No, I never did. That's a strange thing. I never did cared anything about it at all. [I] never did.
- P: Now, the Blacks didn't participate in that? Why was that?
- S: Well, not in Campbell. Blacks didn't participate as much in making liquor in Campbell. I don't know why. But, the foreign extraction did. Some of them made a fortune out of it. Some of them did. I don't know why the Blacks didn't participate so much. They drank lots of it. I'll put that in. They drank lots of it, some of them.
- P: Well, they were working mainly in Sheet & Tube then, right?

S: Yes. That's the only place you worked. That's the only place they had down here to work in machines. Some folks were working at Sheet & Tube, [making] steel, and some folks were building big, fine homes. Poor folks drank the liquor, and some of the other folks got rich. They sent their kids to college and all of that, but Negroes were never in that bootleg set up much. They may have sold some; but they weren't manufacturing any, because I could tell. I was in office.

P: What about the churches in Campbell? Did you have more than one Black church?

S: Well at that time, they had one Black church. It was Shilo Baptist Church down on the ditch where you first come. That's where we started, between Campbell and Struthers. We call it, "Down on the Ditch." That's where they first started at; and then, they moved up on Madison Street. That was the first church. Of course, other churches have come in since then, but that was the mother church of all of them, the Black Baptist church.

P: Who were the ministers there when you were growing up in the 1920's?

S: Well, there were several of them. There were several ministers. Heard was one. Gould was another.

P: These are Black?

S: Oh, yes, these are all Black. I forget the first names, now. Of course there were many others that came after that, but those were the two early ones.

P: What did you do besides going to church on Sundays?

S: In those days, there wasn't no TV and all that type of stuff. We spent lots of time in church studying literature and the bible and things of that nature. Baseball, that was about the only thing outside. Baseball in the summertime and football in the fall of the year. It wasn't like it is now. There was no TV. [If] you didn't go outside to see the game, you didn't see it.

P: What about basketball? Was that very popular then?

S: Not like football and baseball. Nothing has ever been popular like baseball and football. They were always popular. They have too much popularity.

P: What kind of leagues did they have?

S: Now, I'm not going to get into that because I can't recall too many leagues. Well, in high school, they had the normal leagues like they do now. But baseball, everybody played baseball. Baseball was the American pass time. Even at that, it was . . . like baseball. The team, they'd book the schedule, and if you didn't have no money, you'd walk. We'd walk from here to New Castle and play baseball.

P: You walked from here to New Castle?

S: Yes. We'd walk from here to New Castle. We'd walk all up in Hillsville out there. Folks didn't have nothing to do when the Depression was on. All we had to do was to get a baseball bat and a first base glove and a catchers mitt, and there it was. It was unbelievable, but folks had a good time. The gang would follow. If you could get a hot dog, you were fortunate. [We would] walk all up in those hills and walk all the way back home. They were strong then, and hearty. There were very few weaklings there.

P: That is amazing that you'd walk all the way to New Castle just to play baseball.

S: Sure, we walked down there to play baseball sometime. Walk all up in Hillsville, all back up over there. It didn't make no difference.

P: What were the dances that you're church had, the socials, like?

S: Our church never sponsored dances. Our church was not like a Catholic church. It never sponsored dances. It never did. If you had a dance, it was an independent dance.

P: Who were to sponsor those?

S: Well, any group that would want to sponsor the thing. Duke Ellington, then was getting his start, back then. Count Basie hadn't come on the scene then, but Duke Ellington and Benny Goodman and those fellows, they were back there. It was twenty-five cents to go to a dance and stuff like that.

P: This was in the 1920's or 1930's?

S: This was in the 1920's, way back then, man. You got racism in the 1930's.

P: What about radio? Did many people have radios?

S: Radios come now, about 1927, 1930's. A few had them. Folks got to have something that they want anyway.

Folks would gather in certain places, and they'd have a radio. But, they didn't come on strong until in the 1930's.

P: Would the church sponsor picnics or dinners?

S: Oh, yes. Those were the great times. The great times were when we would have church picnics and things where we would meet everybody. We used to go out to some lake up here, Meander, on the side of the lake. We would have all day. Every year we would go out to these lakes and places and have our places and lunches and take our children out for a day. You used to have these amusement parks.

P: Where was that at?

S: That was way out.

P: Did you go to Idora?

S: Yes, we went to Idora. We had our day at Idora Park. Every nationality has their day out there. We would go, and we'd have a big time. People would come from every place, New Castle, Youngstown and fill up the park. We had a good time. We had simple fun, but good fun, clean fun. We had much better fun than we have today.

P: You mentioned Duke Ellington. Where would you hear him play? Someplace here in Campbell?

S: New Castle. Some dance hall down in New Castle. He was just beginning then. At the park in New Castle, folks would go down there once in a while, and you'd hear him when he would come. He was just beginning.

P: In the 1930's, you said you worked for the Water Department? Why did you lose that job? Was that because your dad died in 1935 that you lost out on that?

S: Well, no. The next man that came in was appointed his man. That's all. A new man comes in, and he brings somebody with him. That's the way it happens.

P: Your dad was in charge of the Campbell Welfare League from 1922 until. . . .

S: He was a member of it, and then he was a part of it. See, they had different presidents. Most of the fellows are dead. I forget their names. There are so many of them. That's been a long time and they were elderly folks, then. I was a kid, fifty or sixty years ago.

P: When did the Blacks lose their clout in Campbell?

S: Well, they lost their clout because lots of them didn't have the education. Most of them came off the farm, but they were energetic. They lost their clout because the White population began to grow. After several years, all of the hills built up up there. We were just on that side over there. But all of this stuff all over Campbell, they were building up then and that was it. We were just outnumbered, that's all. If the mayors ran, they elected them all; and then, they were sending their kids to school, too. These boys were going to school. Local boys were going to school. That's what made a lot of the difference.

P: Did a lot of them start becoming citizens, too?

S: Yes, sure. You know after these boys go to school, they come back and teach the other folks what to do.

P: After 1935 was when you didn't have the clerk's job anymore?

S: No, 1935, that was my last year.

P: So then, what did you do?

S: I went on to G.A. there was nothing else to do. The program for WPA, a work progress program. The Federal government had lots of programs. Welfare, I was on that until I got off of it. At that time, I was a clerk in the public library up there. They had all kinds of everything, work progress. Wherever they thought you would fit in, that's where you were. But, things weren't high. You could still make it.

P: What kind of money were you making as a clerk and also with the WPA, working for the library?

S: I made \$150 a month. When I got on WPA, I made \$96 a month. That was a whole lot of money, but we wasn't getting but fifty [or] fifty-five dollars.

P: Give me an idea of what that would correspond to as far as an income, today?

S: It would correspond to . . . you could go out and buy a car for seven hundred dollars, a brand new Ford.

P: Did you save a lot of money during this period of time?

S: No. My father, he got sick there. We had a big family, too. I helped my family with all of my money.

P: How many children did you have at that time?



S: I didn't have any at that time. I got married later.

P: You said you had six brothers and sisters?

S: Yes.

P: What were they doing? You were the oldest?

S: They were young.

P: So, they were coming a long after you?

S: Yes.

P: You said they all played football?

S: Yes.

P: What did they do for jobs during this period of time? Did they stay in the Campbell area? Or did some of them move out, or what?

S: No, they all stayed here. There wasn't no jobs. Most of them played baseball in the summer. There was no place to go. There was no work. They weren't old enough to get on WPA, they didn't have no family to get on WPA. They had to have some responsibility.

P: Were they that much younger than you?

S: Yes. Some of them were very much younger than I was.

P: [From] 1935 to when? How long were you working for WPA?

S: I worked several years there. [When] I got married, I was on WPA. [For] \$96 a month in those day, man, you could buy a whole lots of things. A poor man, your appetite ain't all that big, you know. It ain't like you rich or something like that. You poor and didn't have that much, so, \$96 was a whole lot of money. \$150 was a whole lot of money. But you know, you couldn't just make that money, and you saw your friends out there, hungry and down. You had to help them some. You had to help some of your relatives. Some of your neighbors you had to help. Lots of folks just fed them. They didn't have nothing. They had kids, big families, and there wasn't any relief in some areas. So, you had to help people. It was real family-like. We'd send food here and, my father and I, we'd send food to this person and that person and think nothing of it. Forget it. Sometimes, you don't even know who you're sending the food to. They're just hungry. You know, I was standing in line for a job, long after the

Depression was over. A man came out of the office and said, "Is your name Stonework?" I said, "Yes." "You know what my mother told me? She said you sent food to us and kept us living when I was a baby." That's what he told me. I said, my mother has been dead now for so many years, but she told me what you did. I said, "Yes. I saw that you folks had water and bread, if that was any way to help you." And then, you had a little cash money and it didn't mean anything because you had to help other people as I said. So, I wasn't saving money. You can't save money when folks are hungry by you everyday.

P: What did you do after you left WPA?

S: [I] went back to the mill. They called back some folks in the mill. They began to hire in the mill, slowly, surely. I think it was \$3.30 every day in those times.

P: That seems to me that it would be less than working in the library for the WPA. Did the WPA just kind of end or. . . ?

S: Well, you know, you get tired of it. It was sort of a relief thing, and you want to get out on your own. So, you would take a job. Actually, a lot of that stuff lasted a long time, but you would like to get out on a job where you would want to be on your own. Every man wanted it that way. [Making] \$3.37, that wasn't too bad. Sometimes, you'd work eighteen days on a pay.

P: This was seven days a week?

S: Yes. You're working down there in the mill in the blast furnace.

P: Is that where you worked, the blast furnace?

S: Off and on, the blast furnace, and all over the mill, labor. So, we made it. You were better off.

P: What about things like benefits, then?

S: They were very small, if any. I can't recall now.

P: They always had a doctor or nurse there, right that could take care of you?

S: Oh, yes. They had a doctor or nurse.

P: They had the company store?

S: Yes, they had a company store where you could go in and buy groceries if you needed help. They did that. You

could get what they called a book. The company would permit you to. You could go down and purchase a book on your time, if you had any time over there and you couldn't make it until pay day. You could go in and get a fifteen dollar book. Fifteen dollars worth of groceries, man, you couldn't carry them home in a paper bag. Now, you can today. In fact, you can, today, put a pound of meat, almost, two packets of meat in a bag is about fifteen dollars.

P: What about the KKK? They weren't so strong in Campbell were they?

S: No, they weren't so strong in Campbell because there was no Anglo Saxons here. Most of them. . . . But, you see that church down there, that is the answer to the KKK burning the cross. The Catholics built that church down there under the hill, there, in 1923 or someplace like that. The KKK, I think they burned the school down there and the KKK burned a cross down there. And, so they [the Catholics] built a church. I forget the name of the church. That's what happened anyway, see. They weren't so Americanized. They weren't going to take over. I can never give the Ku Klux Klan credit for anything. Anytime a man has nothing but hate for another man, I can't give him credit for anything. They didn't last too long around here. In those days, they tried to get started, but they didn't do so well.

P: I understand they had a meeting of fifty thousand of them one time here in out Canfield.

S: Out there. They didn't come in here. They didn't come in Youngstown. I know one time they tried to have a process to put nails in the road and everything else. They blew out all the tires and everything. I remember that. People were telling me about it. The humanity of man, that has been the curse of this world. You never understand it. Why would a man hate another man just because he's Italian or Black or blue or yellow? I could never understand that. My mentality don't take me that road.

P: Did they have any restaurants in the Campbell area for Blacks to go into in the 1920's and 1930's?

S: Yes. Blacks had their own restaurants back then.

P: What were the names of some of them?

S: Lucky's Place was one of them, I remember.

P: You never had a problem in Youngstown where they had no place to eat outside of the home?

S: Well, Negroes in Youngstown had places too. They had their own places, some of them. Down here, we had our places, just like the Greeks and the Turks, smoking those old deep pipes. They always had their congregation. They had their places where they would get together and discuss their problems, and would discuss things. Greeks, Italians, they had their own place. We had a harmonious situation out here. I'll be frank with you, Campbell has always been a nice place to live. I wouldn't change it for anything. My kids want me to come to California now. I got kids in California. I got kids in Washington. I want to die here.

P: You say you got married when you were on your WPA job. Can you tell me a little bit about your wife? How you met her?

S: I met her, my second wife, she was at a picnic. She had just graduated from college. I was going with her. She was kind of like a girl friend. She came to visit her girlfriend one Sunday, and I saw her. They came to the picnic together. I saw that she was not a part of anything. Nothing she saw. She was just standing, not a part of anything, she was just there. So, I approached her and told her that she was the most unhappy person at this picnic. I started a conversation with her, and I met her. She had just graduated from college.

P: When was this?

S: [In] 1939, because I had been married once before. This one it will be forty-six years. The greatest woman I've ever met.

P: You have some beautiful kids there. When did the kids start coming along?

S: Well, I had two by my first wife, and then four by her. I miss that woman like everything. She died in 1986. She was the greatest friend I've ever known. The greatest woman I've ever known.

P: You were working at Sheet & Tube in 1939?

S: When I met her, I was a clerk at the library. When I met her, she looked after the two kids I had by my first wife.

P: Did your first wife die?

S: Yes. She had died, and so she looked after those two kids for me. We got married in 1939 or 1940. She

looked after those kids, and she had four of her own. She was a beautiful person.

P: Where did she graduate?

S: Wilbur Forbes.

P: Oh, she went to Wilbur Forbes?

S: Yes.

P: She was there about the same time that Jim LaTiere was there.

S: Yes. Jim LaTiere knows her. Central State, same thing. All of them are down there on the same campus.

P: I didn't know that. Wilbur Forbes and Central State are the same then?

S: No, they aren't the same. One is a church school and one is a state school. She came from down there.

P: You said you had two sons that were Captains in the Vietnam War?

S: Yes. I had two sons. One of them, this one here, he's coming home next month. George, he said he stayed out there in the jungles and he said that it was the worst thing in the world. He was out there in those jungles for a solid year without relief. All of his underlings got killed but him, everybody. There was an argument about that Lieutenant who was supposed to have shot those people. They had that controversy for a long time. He said, "These folks don't know what they're talking about. When you get out there on that battlefield, you try to come back alive." See that's the only purpose that they train you, is to live. He says, "When the brushes shake over there, you shoot and think about it later." He said, "That's the way it is." He said that he had an interpreter. He said that he was a First Lieutenant. He said that he didn't know if his interpreter was telling him right. He threatened to kill him everyday, because you know, they were all the same people. When they would take these provinces, he was over at a province for three months. There wasn't anybody out there. He was the only commissioned officer. He was the head man out there. He said he had to sleep behind a tree.

P: I know exactly what you're talking about.

S: Yes. He told me too. He said they tried all they could to get him to stay in the Army. He said, "No

more for me. I've done enough killing." You got to kill to live out there. He said, "That's the way it is."

P: You have a very nice looking family.

S: This one here, he was the one that was out there for a year. He said for a year they didn't even send. . . . He said he would call for reinforcement for officers. He said they didn't have any out there. For a solid year he said he didn't get no relief. That's a long time, isn't it.

P: Well, I sure appreciate everything you told me.

S: You're welcome.

END OF INTERVIEW