

Voices from the Past

Athletics and Physical Education at Ricks College from 1917 to 1939

Interviewee: Clyde Parkinson Packer

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Tape #51b

Oral Interview conducted by Harold Forbush

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Harold Forbush: Transcribed from the reel to reel tape onto cassette this 15th day of November 1982.

Oral History of the Upper Snake River Valley, concerning historical data of Ricks College and the Rexburg area as presented by Clyde P. Packer, the coach and instructor and head of the physical education department at Ricks between 1917 and 1939. Mr. Packer was interviewed by Harold Forbush, an attorney at Rexburg on this 24th day of April, 1968 at Rexburg.

Harold Forbush: It is a real pleasure for me to welcome to my office this afternoon a man in his 77th year of living abundant life. One whom I think has contributed so much to Ricks College and to the Rexburg area as a farmer, as an outstanding citizen, and as a teacher and a good influence on young people. So, it is my privilege today to interview Clyde P. Packer. There are few questions, Brother Packer that I should like to put to you to guide you as we proceed with this interview. And I sincerely hope that this will be a fine session for us both. First of all, please state your full name and the present address of your home, the place of your birth, and the date of your birth, and a little background on your parents including their origin, which country they came from.

Clyde Parkinson Packer: Clyde Parkinson Packer, born February 2nd, 1892 in Franklin, Idaho [inaudible]. Married Dora Merrill September 9th, 1914. A friend of my father who Osteon Leonovich Packer, he was born December 10th, 1961 in Franklin also. And I understand he was the first white child born in Idaho and only have a date up on the hill there by Franklin when the town was settled in 1860. My mother was Annie S. Parkinson, born October 15th, 1867.

HF: Now Brother Packer, would you kindly tell us about the schooling you obtained as a youth in the Franklin area and then going on into you higher schooling?

CP: Yes, I would be glad to. We had, some of our grades were in state schools, and I took my third grade in the Oneida Academy. And Arthur Porter, who had just died recently, was my teacher. And I took my regular other grades in the county schools. I took my seventh and eighth grade however in the Oneida Academy again. They were teaching at the church school there. And then my four years of high school was at Oneida Academy. They didn't play football at the Oneida Academy, so I didn't get that experience with putting my first athletic coach was when I was a sophomore in 1909. Joseph Fore Jensen who later coached BYC and the Utah State University, and we had quite a good success there the first year, first game we played was over at Fielding Academy. They beat us 29 to 13, and then looking up at the score I found out that I had made all 13 points for the Oneida Academy. And then, later on we won the Southeastern Idaho Championship beating this same Fielding Academy in the playoff with Logan in 1911. And I went to the BYC at Brigham Young College in Logan, and they permitted me even though it was my first year of college, they permitted me to play with them in the state high school tournament. We won the state championship, and I was honored with being placed on the first All-Star Team of the state. Then I returned to the Oneida Academy to teach. The President, John Johnson, came to me when I was down in the

bottom of a sewer line and peaked over the edge, and asked me if I wouldn't come and teach there for two years. We were badly in need of money, so I agreed to do it. However, it didn't increase my finances very much because they only gave \$500 dollars for the first year of teaching and \$800 for my second year teaching. However, living at home with my parents, I did save up a little money. And I went into a dry farm adventure with my brother and my father, and I saved and sold that interest in 1914 and got my first start at \$1200 that way to start me out. And I married Dora Merrill September 9th, 1914, and we went the next day to the University of Utah to school.

HF: Now, when you let's see, 1914, this would mean that you're about 23 years of age, approximately when you went to the University of Utah. Is this correct? Let's see, 1914, no let's see, you were born in 1892, so this would mean that you were 22 years of age.

CP: Twenty-two, yes that's correct.

HF: And at the University of Utah as I understand it from local talk and so on, Brother Packer you turned out to be quite a basketball star and possibly in other fields. Why don't you share with us some of the wonderful experiences you had at the University of Utah?

CP: Well before leaving my experiences there in Preston, when I coached there we won the church school championship and the teams included LDS Salt Lake. We were of Ogden and BYC of Logan and Oneida Academy. We won that title in the last two years I was there. And we also won a game, two games, over the Utah State. The one at Logan and the one at Preston, and we beat them both times. And we played the BYU right after they had won the state championship, and we beat them 26-25, within one point. By agreement, I was permitted to play with my team in that game, however, we did beat, and they were state champs, they had won it sealed and won it Friday and Saturday previously, and I refereed the games for them in Logan when they won it. Then going to Utah, John Nelson [inaudible] had just come from Chicago, he was a four year letterman to coach us and in the first year we played eight games...seven games, and won all seven of them. Then I was declared ineligible for having coached. But I had been advised would be all right inasmuch as I did grade, I did a subject of teaching and the way I was poorly advised I was advised that it would be all right. But they objected. The AC objected to me playing at the U, and I was ineligible for the rest of that year. The next November the AC changed their vote and ruled me eligible, but that was after the football season was about over, so I didn't get any football experience at the U that year. However the first year I went out for freshman football and won my letter. And in that year at the, my second year at Utah, we won every game that year, climaxing our season with a national championship in Chicago. I was fortunate in winning and pitching in the last two field baskets that won it for Utah. When the game was about two minutes from being over our center, Van Pelt, was taken out on personal fouls, and in those days as some of you may remember, they did have the center jump, and our center was a very good man, a fine athlete, about six foot four and he was getting the tip all the time and our plays made it good for us in our offensive play. And they said that their man went out on foul about the same time, but their substitute was better than our substitute and at

that point we were three points ahead. So they went to, they got two baskets and that put them one point ahead in those last two minutes. And then I remember getting the ball on the foul line, and I was all alone and I just made a right turn and pitched for the basket. The ball lit on the right side of the basket and went up in the air and come down on the left side. Went up again and came down through the basket. And then in a few moments later, my man had the ball out of bounds under our basket, and we were drilled to guard our men very closely on out of bound plays. And, so as I was guarding, I blocked the pass as he threw it in. I picked in, it the floor, and I picked it up and put it in the basket. I was right close to the basket. And then when I looked around, why the ball was going up the center again, the ball was at its highest point, the gun went off, and we had won the game 27-28.

HF: Now Clyde what position did you play on the team during the years, the two years that you were at the University of Utah. And give us your weight, your height and some of these other vital statistics about yourself.

CP: Well, I played right forward and Bunny Clark played left and forward, and Roger Van Pelt—center, Bill Goodrich—guard, and Dick Romney who later coached at Utah State for thirty years was the other guard. And after the game was over, that being, there was only one national championship played in those days, this was the AAU championship. And they, so they chose an all-American team from those two final finalists in that tournament, Illinois Athletic Club and the University of Utah. And I was fortunate enough to be chosen as forward on that all American team and Van Pelt was chosen for center and Dick Romney for guard. And I don't just remember the names of the Illinois Athletic Club members who had been, who finished out the roster of the team. When we returned to Utah, I think we had the greatest number of people out to receive us as we went up the street, the main street and down Main Street as we'd ever had turn out in Utah for a parade. And it was a great welcome.

HF: Now this was in the spring of 1916?

CP: The spring of 1916. And I might say that my son, my first son was born on March 11, while we were back there and while I was witnessing a game at the University of Chicago a boy brought a telegram to me stating that my oldest son, Clyde Dean Packer was born. And the boys there being ten of them chipped in a dollar a piece and gave him a ten dollar gold piece and he has it to this day.

HF: Now, Clyde, I'd like to almost call you coach here this afternoon.

CP: It's fine with me.

HF: [laughs] I'd like to know something about your height and weight at the time that you won this championship.

CP: Well, I was about six feet tall, somewhere right around there, and I weighed about 170. My greatest asset you might be interested in was the fact that I was ambidextrous. I

used both arms, hands in both passing the ball and shooting baskets. And, I could get out a many a difficult situation because of that asset and that talent.

HF: Now, there were other sports in which you somewhat excelled too there at the U. Could you tell us about those?

CP: Yes, I'd like to go back to, well when I was in Preston we had quite a lot of experience in track. We won our \$75 dollar cup there by winning a track. It was a church meet, an MIA meet. We won it three consecutive years, and therefore, they gave us the cup. I played baseball a lot. I played semi-pro, and I was captain of the team in the Cache Valley League one year. I felt that I had as much ability in baseball as I did in basketball.

HF: And, what position did you play in your baseball activity?

CP: I played first base. First base—and I was captain of the team, and I enjoyed fielding the ball, and I batted 400% that year when I was captain.

HF: Now, I think you mentioned that you know a little, quite a little about the art of tennis, that game? Tell us how this came to be and what experience you had and you have had in the years prior to coming to Ricks in tennis.

CP: Yes, I've always liked tennis. We started there in the Oneida Academy playing out on the dirt ground. And we, while I was there, we put in some cement courts and made sort of a bowl out of it. The ground was put in the lawn and all the sides were raised, and the court was down in the bottom. And, they had two courts there, and I played it; I liked it a lot. And Orville Christensen taught at the Oneida Academy and later came up here to Ricks. He and I were close competitors. We liked to play together, and he made the AC team in tennis. And, he and I would win off and on over a 20 or 30 year period there we played, one winning one time and one another. When I was at the U, I went in the single's tournament in tennis at the U and beat all of my opponents until the last man. His name was Little, I forget his first name, but he won the Rocky Mountain Championship later in that year.

HF: Now as I understand it, in the spring of 1916, you were graduated from the University of Utah in what field of training? And what did you do immediately after graduating?

CP: Well, I went, I graduated in 1916 as you said, and I 'd like to throw in one more little point here in bragging a little that coincidentally or somehow the University of Utah never lost a game that I played in, in two years. And, I've always thought that was quite a thing to be proud of at least. And, then I went back to Oneida and taught there two years previously and President Geddes got in touch with me and wanted me to return in 1916. So, I coached there for the one year in 1917, '16 and '17. We just had a pair year in athletic sports that year. And then in the spring of that year, while we were playing up at Rexburg, we played the town team here in Rexburg and beat them. And, my uncle

talked to me after the game and said they were opening up a lot of dry farm land up here and thought I ought to come up and invited me to do it. I just thought I'd get opportunities. He was one of the big, he and the Webster's were large dry farmers at that time and knowing that the ordinary tenure of offers for an athletic coach was about two, between two and three years on the average in high school in the United States. I got to thinking seriously about my future and what I would do when I left coaching. So, I decided to come up here. I had an offer to go to the LDS Salt Lake and the BYC at Logan at the same time, but I chose to come here. Not because of the athletes being bitter or the athletic prospect being particularly bitter at the time. I thought I'd get out in dry farming as much as I'd had some experience in it and get some of this land and have a somewhat large farm and be able to send my boys on to the University. When I got up here and we had a few bad years from 19—1917 and 1918 was a perfect year and I bought some land in the fall of 1917 and had a wonderful crop in 1918. But, then we had 1919 that was a total failure and from then until 1930 or some odd years. It was depressing years for the farmers, the dry farmers. But, I still staying there two or three years at Ricks, I stayed there 22 years and things looked better for me and anyways up until the end of that time that I resigned.

HF: Well, now, Coach, in 1917 then, you came and was officially chosen by Ricks College then to be the head of the educational department.

CP: Physical Education Department.

HF: Physical Education Department, now could you tell us who made the contact. How did you come to come to Ricks? I mean who employed you, who is the contact individual?

CP: President A.B. Christensen was the president at that time and through correspondents I heard that the office was open. Verns Crookston preceded me and he had resigned as I understand it and they were looking for a coach. And, for the reasons that I have mentioned, the opportunity in case I got tired of coaching that they got tired of me, I'd want a place to go, so then I'd like dry farming. So that was the thing that determined my coming to Rexburg. And I came here with the idea that they had a new gymnasium, but when I got here I was a little disappointed. They hadn't finished it and it was a combination building and never was really a gymnasium. They are just now remedying that fact.

HF: Well, now, actually then President Christensen was the president of Ricks College in 1917. Why don't you tell us just momentarily, we'll digress here a bit, about President Christensen whom you knew and the other presidents whom you've known in the succeeding years, something about their administration, about their personalities? And, I think this would be interesting to us.

CP: I'd be happy to do it. I'll go back just one step. While I was coaching at the Oneida Academy, we brought teams up to play Ricks. And I got acquainted with Ezra C. Dalby, the president of Ricks at that time. And, I found that he was a very fine gentleman. He

was warm-hearted, and he was loved by his students, and I learned to think a very great deal of him. I could see that he had a big heart and that was one thing that made him so popular as a president of Ricks College. And, A.B. Christensen came next of course and I never had much personal experience with him outside of the correspondents and the employment finally that we made and he made with me. But, I understand that he was a fine scholar and a strong disciplinarian in the school. That's about the two outstanding things I would say about him. In the fall of the year, I got a card from President, from George S. Romney, the father of Marion G. Romney. And he said that he had taken over the position from Mr. Christensen that he had resigned. And, he had been appointed president and that he would be happy to meet me when I come to Rexburg. That was my first introduction to President George Romney, and then he stayed at Ricks for, oh about, I believe 14 years. He was also a strong disciplinarian. I learned to admire him however. He was a strong character, very strong in the standards of the church and wanted the students to probably to gain perfection in that line a little faster than they wanted to. His ideas and ambitions were of the very best, and I always respected him for it. When he left, we was called to preside over the Northern states mission and died in the mission field. And, I understand he was actually contacting a man to take an office in the mission there when he died of a heart attack, and he fell right in the arms of this man. Then, following him was Manwaring, Hyrum Manwaring became president. He was a, and then he was president when I left Ricks College in 1939. In fact he was the one who showed me around when I first came to Ricks. It was rather humorous that he had to explain after seeing the building that already there is now, and he took me around. They only had the three. They had the administration building and they were building the gymnasium and music building, the combination building that I referred to a minute ago. And then they had a heating plant and a shop behind. They had top wood work in it and that they use it for a chemistry building some years. So, those were the three buildings on the campus when I went to Ricks College in 1917. John L. Clark followed President Manwaring and that was after I had left of course, but I got acquainted with him. After I left Ricks, I bought more land and decided to live and stay right here in Rexburg. I liked the city, a good place to raise a family and I enjoyed it here very much. I learned to love President Clark a very great deal. He was the one that asked me to be superintendent of the stake Sunday school and also the first Bishop of the 6th ward of Rexburg. And he is a very lovable man and the community all love him both members and nonmembers of the church admire him very much.

HF: Well, that brings us up to quite an important point as we digress just a moment here on a personal thing. What can you tell us about your family, your boys and girls just rather briefly? Before I get back into the subject about Ricks because as we move on now, we want to talk about Ricks College and the type of program you established. But, let's digress momentarily and have you tell us the extent of you family and what your boys and girls have become since getting their education.

CP: Well, when I came back from what used to be the University of Chicago in 1926 to 1927 to school and while there while I didn't accomplish all I wanted to in school. I learned one important point and that was that I was not going to go into school. I did think at that time I would study medicine, but I gave that up because of financial reasons.

And, I came back and enlarged my holdings so that I would have enough finances to help my boys. And, Dean, being the older he wanted to go into medicine. And so we decided to try to help him. That was about the time I was resigning from school, and I was a little bit concerned about the financing part of it. And, we did agree that we would get him through some way and then he would help his brother Merrill and then in turn he would help his brother Alden as they came along to get their college education. And, it worked out just beautifully. Dean specialized in surgery. And he and Merrill, Merrill went to medical school also and Merrill finished earlier than Dean did because Merrill didn't specialize. And, Merrill succeeded very quickly in his new profession. I went with him to Blackfoot, we went down there in 1948, and he was only 25 years of age. But, they accepted him. They were very kindly and friendly with open arms, and he did well financially and did well professionally right from the start. And, then a few years later after Dean got through with his specializing and his service in the army also, he was induced by brother Merrill to come back down to Blackfoot and join him, so that he could do the surgery and go and do a lot of the professional work there in Blackfoot. And, as the years went on, they increased, they have now three other doctors in with them and have a fine clinic. They have done very well. People think a lot of him even now at the present time. That was Merrill. My daughter Clara came in there between Merrill and all of them in birth and she married Dean Preace and they live in Boise, Idaho. She has a fine family. She lost two twin girls, had seven children. Dean had seven children. Merrill had seven, and he adopted one and now he has eight. Alden lives in Hailey. He is a doctor also, and he has the county hospital in charge. He is the only doctor in the county. He enjoys it over there very much and people seem to like him. He was in the bishopric almost immediately when he went there. Now, he is President of the stake MIA. I'm not only proud of my boys in their professional work, but they've all been very active in the church. Dean has been in the stake presidency now for several years. Merrill was Bishop for several years and now in the high council. Alden has been in three different bishoprics and then our youngest child Orlee Walce married Rex Walce. She lives just on the outskirts of Rexburg here, and he does farming on quite a large scale, very successful.

HF: Well, that's really, really wonderful. Now, Coach, let's turn back to the time of 1917 when you came to Ricks and you were going and prepared to formulate a physical education program for the students. Tell us how you went about it and what were some of your theories behind your program?

CP: Well, I felt like I got a pretty comprehensive training in athletics when I was in school. I took two summer schools at the University in addition to what I've already mentioned. And, I took some foundation working in wrestling, and I really specialized in corrective work. We called it Swedish gymnastics. That was all the vogue at that time and that man, Dr. Bolin was at the U. He was a nationally known doctor in physical education. And, so that was the line of work that I specialized in. And, we required physical education from practically all the students and I had two or three sections of physical education students with 40 or 50 students in a class. And, we were able to handle a large class in that corrective work because they all did the same thing. And this corrective work was a matter of correcting, developing the muscles that would hold the

body in proper poise, so that the visceral arteries would have a healthy situation. That the individual himself would be more healthy and would look more like a man. He would have his chest in front of him instead of behind him; he would have his abdomen held in like it should be, shoulders back, chin in, ears high. And, I think that there's a correlation between a good physique and spiritual and mental and attitudes and development and relationships. And, I however, and now in athletics and I now would like to say I've always had an interest in practically all forms of athletics. And, I did coach through all five sports there at Ricks; football, basketball, track, tennis, and baseball. But, that was where I considered that to be for the fellows that were a little better in their activity and their behavior, but the masses of the people needed the corrective exercises. Those who were better physically and had more participation, more practice, more talent; they could represent the school in those competitive sports. And, I was interested in all those sports, and I tried to get a round in pro room through the years that I was there.

HF: Now, when you first commenced your program, about how many students did you have and did you have assistants, others to help you?

CP: No, sorry to say, I had it all alone. The college had its financial problems, the same as everyone else at that time. They had the high school; the student's body mostly high school when I went there. I think the college was organized just two or three years later after I'd been there a couple of three years. And we had five or six hundred students that were high school students. And we thought it was going to be a terrible set back to us when Ricks Rexburg took over the high school, but they did it gradually, one year at a time, and we never noticed any difficulty with our tenants or activities.

HF: In other words when you first went there, there wasn't a separate distinct Madison High at all then?

CP: Right, no high school at all.

HF: It was the Ricks Academy and then they just finally when the states when the local school district got under way, they weaned away a year at a time students that had formally been at that is a four year schooling program which had been at Ricks, and they took that over to Madison High.

CP: That's right, that's the way it happened.

HF: Well, this is rather interesting. And now once you got into a program which was literally above the high school level on a college basis, about how many students were there at Ricks?

CP: Well, as I recall back in those years, well one year we had 150 was all. We still carried on the program of football and basketball and track, and it was rather difficult. And, we had some difficult years; the college was really on a challenge a testing for a few years there in fact it was about to close because of finances. And much of the money was raised here locally. And still the administration of the school expected me to win the

games so that we could keep the school popular and the church would want to keep it here and all. And it was quite a challenge to me for a few years.

HF: Did you, as you recall, did you have occasional visitors from the church educational department there in Salt Lake to come up and see how things were moving along and can you recall any experiences of this nature?

CP: Yes, there was a superintendent of schools appointed by the church administration. And Doctor Merrill as I recall was one of the superintendents and Dr. Adam S. Bennion was another. I can't just recall now, but they would come up frequently and talk with the students at the school here.

HF: Now, Coach, in the years between 1917 and 1939, in the sports activities, the sport's competition with other institutions, other schools. How well did Ricks do? What championships did you achieve during those years? You reflect as well as you can, I'm sure this would be very interesting to us, if you'd give a resume of what happened in the sports world where in Ricks College was involved during those years.

CP: Well, the first year I came here, it was a little discouraging, the gymnasium wasn't finished. I don't believe we even participated in basketball that year, and football wasn't started until a year or two later. In 1923 the art club was organized in 1920, and it was organized for the purpose of fostering a better athletic spirit with the athletes at Ricks and to interest athletes from other schools to attend Ricks. In 1924, we won the southern Idaho basketball championship, and we also won that in 1923. And, the teams consisted of Caldwell, and Boise Junior College in Albion, and Idaho academy at Pocatello they called it that time, and Ricks. In 1924 was the year we, the intermountain junior conference was organized and operated. Track was also started that year. We won second place in the conference in track that year. Intermountain Junior College Conference began as I said before. And in basketball we finished second to BYC after three extra periods out of the first year of Intermountain Junior College Conference. And down in Snow, we first two extra periods, we got four points ahead and the BYC won. We had two of our best men out on personal fouls. We were very heart broken when we lost that title there. We also started baseball and played baseball for the first three or four years that I came here. In 1925, we won all six Junior College games. In 1926-27, I attended the University of Chicago. I went out for football in the spring in 1927 there at the University of Chicago. That was quite a thrill. In 1928, we organized the Viking emblem was instigated. It was on their literature and yearbooks ever since 1928.

HF: The interview will be continued on track two of this cassette.

HF: Track two continuing the interview with Clyde Parkinson Packer on the 24th of April 1968 here in Rexburg, Idaho.

CP: Track champions won 11-14 games. We won 11-14 games in basketball in 1928. In 1929 we were track champions, runner up in basketball for the third time. That means runner up means we had beaten everybody else in the conference but the last but one.

And then in that last game, we got 2nd place three times up till 1929. And, in 1929, they hired Coach Walter Bob Gibbons to coach football. And as much as I hadn't had much experience in football, I agreed with the president of the school that if they wanted to bring in an extra coach for football if they had the money to do it, I'd be glad for them to do it. So, they brought in Coach Gibbons, and he coached two years. He won all football games except one his first year and the 2nd year he won three out of nine. In basketball in 1930, we finally won the championship after having come to the last game previous years. So, that was a big our ambitions were realized and fulfilled as a happy experience in 1930. And, we had won also at track, we had run track five straight years previous to 1930. Track conference championships. In 1931, football was handled by Pete Dow from Salt Lake. He was an outstanding athlete at University of Utah, and might say that Bob Gibbons was all conference football player at Utah State University. In that year, they got 2nd place in football. In basketball, the Idaho Conference, Ricks got 468 points and the pole was 305. [Inaudible] Junior College 2nd, we won 2nd place in the tournament. That's another 2nd place which makes four. In track Ricks got third place that year. In 1932 Ricks won the Junior College Championship in basketball game. In 1933 Ricks was runner up in basketball, that'd be 2nd. Ricks won the football championship for the first time in history in 1934 first time in history in 1933. In 1934 Ricks won the football title again, both titles under Coach Clyde Packer. Ricks also won the league basketball title in 1934. Tennis was begun this year at Ricks. The outstanding athletic event in 1934 was a football game with Honolulu. And that was played here in Rexburg. We had, we were rather fortunate, we were able to talk with Weber College, Coach Swenson there and make an arrangement to bring a team over from Honolulu. And they helped us pay their expenses and then they paid our expenses back there next year. And, we made a \$1000 profit on that exchange. It was well as having a fine trip and a lot of experience in athletics. In 1935 the outstanding athletic event for Ricks was the trip of the football squad to Honolulu. Ricks sacrificed a good chance to win another team title because of the trip. Ricks lost 24-6. In 1936, Ricks won the Junior College basketball again. The personnel of that team consisted of my son Dean Packer, Mark Parkinson, forward, William Jorgenson, center, Ray Clemens, and [inaudible] were guards. Ricks by now had encouraged tennis and entered players in both singles and doubles in conference meet. Dean Packer and Jay Kern formed the double team and won. They defeated successively all in one day Westminster Salt Lake, Weber of Ogden, and Snow of Ephraim, Utah. Burke D. Parkinson represented Ricks in the singles and won all games up to the final where he was defeated by the Westminster challenger of Salt Lake. 1936, Ricks won the conference in basketball again. This was the sweetest victory of all. We were not as well organized as normally, and we had a record of 18 wins out of 19 games. I would say we were as ordinarily 15 points better team. They had beaten Ricks twice. We had to play a three game series with Weber for the title in Ogden. Ricks won the first game 38 to 36. Weber won the second game 21 to 34. Ricks won the third game 34 to 22. I don't have the results of football and track for '37. In 1938 Ricks won second place in basketball 500% of the games won, and in football. Very strong track team. Final stand not published. 1939, Ricks won the basketball title again this year. Coach Packer's lost, and after winning the intermountain junior college championship, Ricks played the Pueblo Junior College, winner in their conference, a two

out of three series for the Rocky Mountain Junior College Championship. Ricks won two out of the three, 46 to 28, and 44 to 37.

I'd like to read the summary of what the editor of the yearbook said of that when I finished my last year of coaching at Ricks if I may.

HF: This one sounds really good.

CP: "The resignation of Coach Clyde Packer, athletic director of Ricks College creates a vacancy that will be hard for anyone to fill. Coach Packer came to Ricks in 1917 after a colorful career at the University of Utah. His record of achievements in winning; six basketball championships, five track and field titles, two football championships, one tennis doubles title, and stands high in junior college circles, as his record of a coach has given a colorful athletic background to Ricks and never to be forgotten by athletic fans and intermountain territory. He has kept Ricks prominent in the athletic picture for a quarter of a century; a dynamic genius, an inspiration of our recording coach is best exemplified in the arrangements for the trip to Honolulu which the Ricks football squad took in 1934. His biggest achievement however, has been in his molding of men to athletic activities. The thousands of men influenced for good through contact with Coach Packer will be in part a compensation for the 22 years of his life he gave to Ricks." I might say in regard to those percentages without being too egotistical that out of the 15 games that I was there when they had the intermountain junior college league, we won seven seconds and six firsts and that only led to two. And, I was away to Chicago the other years, so it was only one year that we weren't right in the either second or first.

HF: Now, isn't that amazing.

CP: In those 15 years.

HF: Marvelous.

CP: And, in departing, Coach Clyde Packer makes this parallel statement, "I have thoroughly enjoyed my 22 years at Ricks. They have been packed with team competition, financial problems in and out of school, and a good mixture of mental, physical, and spiritual experiences. I shall always have pleasant memories of the splendid men I have so intimately associated with on the athletic squads. A fine type of men and women composing the faculty over the years makes me sincerely grateful for their association. The acquaintance of students in classes of religion, health, and physical education, and the joy of participation in those activities with the youth is impossible to express. It is hard to say adieu, but it must be said by all some time. And fate has said June 8, 1939 for me. Success to Ricks all individuals therein. Happy ties shall never be broken formed by you and me. For surpassing will unspoken they'll forever be."

HF: Now, did this statement which you've just read appear in the 1939 yearbook?

CP: Yes, yes, it was tapered by the editor and then my own personal statement at the closing notes.

HF: Now, Coach, considering your own personal illustrious career in athletics when you were in college and your years as a coach. This is going to be kind of a tough question, but I'd like to have you name 10 or 11 men whom you coached at Ricks College as outstanding young athletes.

CP: All right, that really is a tough one all right because to make the record that I made you know that I would have to have a lot of good athletes. So, I guess an arbitrary, blue sky choice here that I am making. I would say Marion Romney, Marion G. Romney, Golden Andretts, Ted Barret, Ferr Robinson, Eldon Watson, Needles Corsby, Kenneth Dock, Melvin Wilcox, Theodore Hanks, Seth Parkinson, Tommy Watts. They were all fine; there were a lot of other extra good ones too.

HF: Well, that's wonderful. Now, Coach, I understand that a couple years ago in the spring of 1966 you yourself out of your own personal funds established an annual athletic ideal athlete award to be presented to the students chosen one individual out of the student body at Ricks College each spring. Why don't you tell us about this, how you were inspired to do this? How it came to be, how you set it up, and the standards, and all about it.

CP: I'd be glad to. I'd been thinking a long time just what kind of an award I wanted to make to Ricks ever since I resigned in 1939. The idea finally came to me of the ideal athlete award. It took the ideal athletic award, it is an ideal athletic award, but the ideal athlete award puts the emphasis upon the individual athlete. And, I like it better, and that's the reason I chose that. I've always had pretty strong feelings about athletics, the value of athletics, participation on the part of students. But, I wanted them to retain the good fine qualities of character; in fact I wanted them to develop those qualities even in athletics. And, that's one reason that I prompted me to give this award, the ideal athletic award. And, so we included athletic scholarship, sportsmanship, moral integrity, and service rendered either civic or religious. Of course, it'd be an athletic award, we'd put the major emphasis upon the athlete first his participation. And, so we gave him 50. We chose the coaches to score the boys 50% for athletics solace, 20% for scholarship, 10% for sportsmanship, and 10% for moral integrity, and 10% for service. And, I think you'd all agree with me that that would make a fine rounded out individual who would succeed in life as a good citizen in most any endeavor. And, the only point now will be to get these coaches to use those criteria in making their judgment and not just be influenced by some fine athlete that's good in athletics only. And, so we in those percentages, they should really consider them, and they should be watching these boys all year round for their showing off whether they have good sportsmanship or not. I noticed this last year one of the basketball players; he's the outstanding basketball player, and in one of the games something happened to him, he got out of patience or something and threw the ball just carelessly gave it to the opponents once and twice he threw the ball clear out of bounds just purposely. And, I can't understand why, but in my opinion that would mark him down just because of that one behavior that drove out 1% in sportsmanship. That

was a poor sport to let that thing happen. Moral integrity, of course we all know what that is the importance of that is many different facets, but it includes clean mind and character and everything that makes for a good moral integrity and character. And, service of course is a final test of one willing to give his life for others, makes a better man out of him. Now, I don't know what else what you wanted me to say.

HF: When was the scholarship put up, and how much, and how did you...

CP: It was first set up in 1965, no '66, 1966, and we've given it now two years, '66 and '67. We give \$100 to the one who wins it in cash, give him an individual plaque. We bought a large plaque to leave in the gymnasium. Oh, it's about two feet, I guess, by 18 inches. It has 25 silver plates on it to have the name engraved each year for 25 years of the winner. And, he had a plaque of his own with name on it and much of the materials I've mentioned today are on that plaque, his own personal value to have in his home.

HF: Now, one of your choice experiences, Brother Packer, I understand it from our chatting previous to taping this afternoon was a few weeks ago when Elder Marion G. Romney who was one of your boys years ago and who is presently one of the members of the quorum of the twelve apostles of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints came to Ricks College to speak. And, as I understand he had you precede him, his old coach, and this must have been a fine experience and I understand you presented him with this ideal athlete award. Why don't you tell us about this experience and what this award stated to him?

CP: I'd be happy to do that. I was asked write a short article for the alumni magazine to be published soon. And probably if I just read that it will answer your question. "During girl's week at Ricks College, February 20, 1968, Sister Rita Romney, the wife of apostle Marion G. Romney, was the featured speaker and received a special award. Her husband was invited to speak at the Ricks College stake MIA that evening. At his request, I was invited to speak for a few minutes prior to his talk. As I was pondering on what to say, the idea came to me as of a flash to award Elder Romney the Ideal Athlete Award which I give annually to the most ideal athlete at Ricks College. Accordingly at the conclusion of my remarks I made this presentation to him. The reward justified its name as it is given on the basis of outstanding athletic ability, scholarship, sportsmanship, moral integrity, and service rendered. When Brother Romney attended Ricks in 1920, he was quarterback on the first football team at Ricks and captain of the basketball team. He was a fine athlete, high in scholarship, sportsmanship, moral integrity, and desire to serve. He is a personification of the ideal athlete. I felt honored to have the approval of the Ricks College award committee and to present the plaque with much of the foregoing material upon it to Marion G. Romney. His name will also be inscribed on the permanent plaque in the gymnasium, five feet back of his coach.

HF: Isn't that wonderful. Well now, Coach, since you terminated coaching at Ricks, I'm sure that your love and faithful following of Ricks in its athletics has not ceased since 1939. Undoubtedly, you have been to many of the games; you've followed the coaching

staffs and so on. You've seen it grow. Maybe you'd like to make some comments on the growth of Ricks and its athletic endeavors since 1939 to the present time.

CP: Well, I've been very much interested and very happy to see the growth of Ricks College. Up until 1939, I handled all the athletic sports because of lack of finances at Ricks and the smaller student body. It was chiefly finances really that I had to handle it all alone, and I was very much handicapped as you may no. I couldn't give individual instruction because of that. It had to be more or less group work. And, now that they have five coaches, they have three in football and one in track and one in tennis and golf and one in baseball. And, I'm just happy to know that I don't know the school would have a greater opportunity. These men are all fine men; they're very specialized in their field. And, the athletes have a great opportunity to progress in athletics. The first two years of college would be fun at Ricks.

HF: Now, since you, since 1939, you have been mainly engaged I presume in driving your livelihood from dry farming on the Rexburg bench. Would you like to comment just briefly about this operation on the bench, your dry farm operation?

CP: Well, as I stated before I bought a part of a dry farm of my dry farm that I still own in 1917. Then added to it gradually till I got enough so that it was a unit economic unit that would give me enough net to educate my family. And, that supported my plan, and it helped me to get all three sons a medical education. And, farming has changed materially since I began. 1918 was my first year that I operated the farm. We farmed with horses at that time and it's just been a miracle of changes from that time till now. For a long time I had my combines lined up, the ones that I bought in 1918 and the ones back to now. And, it's a greater change than the old Model T Ford to a Cadillac. It's more of a pleasure now to farm, and of course you can get better crops because they get the farming done on time. I first had had an ace tractor and then a D2, a D4, and a D6, and other machinery to go with it. And I was able to summer up all the 900 acres in better time, and could land in better shape than I could 50 acres in 1918, all the summer that year.

HF: Now, Brother Packer, as I understand at the present time part of your time is in the continuation which your life has been in rendering service. You're working at the temple as I understand; would you care to comment there?

CP: Yes, I've had a rich experience in the church. In this part of story itself I started scout work down in Preston. I was a stake scout master, and we organized scout troops in every ward down there when I was about 20 years of age, 21. And, I was on the stake MIA board, and we had athletics representatives go to Salt Lake. Did a lot further than that and that did more for me for my testimony I feel and most anything else that's happened in my life. And, since coming to Rexburg, I've been active in the church along with these other activities all the time teaching some class, been in the seventies quorum for about five years, in the sixth quorum of the seventy. I was ward superintendent of Sunday school, stake superintendent of the Sunday school, bishop for nine years, high council for three years, and now after being out of an office about three months, I was

asked to be an officiator in the temple, the Idaho Falls Temple. I enjoy that very much. It's a unique and spiritual experience. It's essentially a spiritual experience at the temple as you may know, and it's more so can be felt by me than even among the all the other rich experiences I've had in the church previously.

HF: As we close this interview, I think that there is nothing quite as appropriate as to have Brother Clyde Parker Packer, excuse me; Clyde Parkinson Packer read from a tribute an award which was presented to him by Ricks College through its current president, John Clark. This presentation was made in 1965 and given to Brother Packer. And, so I should like to have him read that award which was given at that time.

CP: Thank you. I've been very proud of it. I think it's a great honor to have it. It says, as follows, "Ricks College Distinguished Service Award. This certificate of appreciation and award is presented to Clyde P. Packer in recognition of outstanding service for your long years of service as a teacher, coach, and leader of youth. Demonstrating always integrity, sportsmanship, and the highest standards of manhood. For your devoted service to church as stake Sunday school superintendent, bishop, high councilman, and counselor of youth, and your stalwart influence for good in your community, for your modest and gracious life as husband and father in rearing with your wife an exemplary family. We are proud to honor you today with this award for distinguished service given on this 26th day of May in the year of our Lord one thousand nine hundred and sixty-five at Rexburg, Idaho, John L. Clark president.

HF: With the transcribing of this cassette recording from the original reel-to-reel tape, a brief explanation is essential. The listening is not too good. One hears the background of squeaks and so on caused from the tape and the machine used in transcribing from the reel-to-reel onto cassette. The master copy of this interview with Coach Packer is placed with the Upper Snake River Valley Historical Society Library, north center, Rexburg, Idaho. Copy or copies of the same may be procured by purchase, \$5.00 each by making contact with the society, thank you.