

Voices from the Past

Rexburg Policeman and Municipal Judge

Interviewee: John Rolland Clark

July 1, 1970

Tape #153

Oral Interview conducted by Harold Forbush

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Brigham Young University – Idaho

Harold Forbush: The Upper Snake River Valley Historical Society of Rexburg, Idaho is pleased to copy from a reel to reel tape an interview, heretofore done, and now pleased to have this placed on a C-60 cassette this 18th day of August, 1984.

Oral History of the Upper Snake River Valley. The date is July 1, 1970, and I'm here at my law office at 68 E., 1st South, and I'm happy this afternoon to have seated across the table from me, J. R. Clark to whom I'm going to direct some questions about his experiences on the police force and as a police judge, as an employee of Rexburg, the city of Rexburg over the last thirty, thirty-five years. And so Judge, I'm going to call you "Judge" once in a while because everyone in the area knows you as the police judge. I'm going to welcome you here to the office and I'm going to ask you a few little, simple personal questions first, but won't you state your full name and the date and place of your birth.

John Roland Clark: John Roland Clark, and I was born on March the 12th, 1886 in a little log house in Clarkston, Utah.

HF: Judge, what is your present residence here in Rexburg?

JC: My present residence is 120 S 2 E Rexburg, Idaho.

HF: And for the past thirty-five years, more or less, you've been employed by the city of Rexburg have you not?

JC: That's right, that's right.

HF: And you would term yourself as what, a policeman or a judge? How would you like to state your occupation?

JC: Well, I worked about thirty years as a police officer, and then in 1955 put in . . .

HF: As the judge?

JC: As the first judge of the city of Rexburg.

HF: Well, we could probably call you a public employee, and judge or policeman or quite a number—you've had a life filled with a lot of public service have you not?

JC: That's right.

HF: I, of course to commence this, would like to have you tell me something about your father, his name and if you recall, his birth date and where he was born and something about the background of the Clark family.

JC: Well, my father's name was John P. Clark and he was born January the 27, in 1862, and he was born in Logan, Utah. And his folks came from Holland originally and they

settled in Rhode Island. And they were there a number of years and then they—my grandfather met a girl by the way, his name was Michael Joseph Clark, and he met a girl by the name of Susanna Thompson in Rhode Island. And they went steady and were married, and after they were married they joined the church. My grandfather was a Catholic to start with. But after his marriage they joined the church and moved to northern Utah. And there they built a dug out, and they lived in a dug out for a few years. And then they moved to Clarkeston and lived there for a few years, and then the mining boom was on at Virginia City in Montana. My grandfather happened to be a musician and they moved to Virginia City, Montana. And they lived there for a number of years, and then they moved to Harriman and lived there for a few years. And after their family started to get up around ten or twelve years of age, they saw that that was too rough an element up there. They lived up there during the vigilante days, and they come around and searched the homes and took whatever they wanted to. My grandmother at one time had a sack and a half of flour--that was those big, big sacks, about a hundred and fifty pounds in the sack.

HF: Uh huh.

JC: She had a sack and a half of flour, and she knew the vigilantes were coming. And so she decided that she would put this half a sack out in plain sight, and she hid the hundred pound sack. The beds at that time, they had curtains all around the bottom of the bed that drug down to the ground, and she pushed this flower back under the bed just where she could with these curtains all around.

HF: So it couldn't be seen?

JC: It couldn't be seen, so they passed it up. But after they lived there a few years, they decided to move back to Clarkston. That's where they raised their family.

HF: Was your grandfather employed as a musician at these . . . ?

JC: Yes, he was in an opera house while he was in Virginia City. My grandmother used to dance and he was real good on the piano. And they had this opera house, and it entertained troops as they come through.

HF: Now you know they've restored Virginia City quite a little bit. You've probably been up there haven't you?

JC: Yes.

HF: And it runs in my mind that when we were up there, they did say something about an old opera house.

JC: Yes.

HF: Has that been restored?

JC: I think that's the same building.

HF: Where your grandfather . . .?

JC: Yes my grandfather, Michael Joseph Clark.

HF: Isn't that interesting. Well now, do you remember your grandfather at all?

JC: Yes. Oh yes, he lived to be about ninety years old and I knew him for a number of years.

HF: Was he a large man?

JC: No. He was a small man. He wasn't much taller than you there.

HF: Uh huh.

JC: And he didn't weigh over a hundred and twenty-five/thirty pounds.

HF: Really quite a small man then?

JC: Yes. Oh he probably weighed more than that when he was older, but his hair was white and he had a white beard about a foot long--but about eight inches.

HF: I see. And he was a pianist and his wife danced?

JC: Yes.

HF: Your grandmother danced . . .?

JC: And sang.

HF: And sang. Well, that's interesting. And now this would have been in the '80's?

JC: Yes.

HF: '80's and '90's?

JC: Yes, that'd be way back in about 1870 somewhere.

HF: In the seventies even?

JC: Yes.

HF: I see. But your father was born--you mentioned that. . .

JC: He was born in Logan, Utah.

HF: In Logan, well now, this Clarkston, and I understand this is where Martin Harris . . .

JC: Martin Harris.

HF: Passed away and is buried. However the name, Clarkston, has nothing to do with your people settling that area, the Clarks?

JC: The first Bishop that was set up in Clarkston was named Clark. That's how it got its name, and they weren't related to my folks.

HF: I see.

JC: And Martin Harris, you mentioned Martin Harris.

HF: Uh huh.

JC: Martin Harris, his oldest son married my mother's oldest sister and they lived right on the same block for years. And one of my mother's brothers was instrumental in bringing Martin Harris to Utah.

HF: Now his name was Stephens.

JC: No, his name is Homer.

HF: Homer?

JC: Homer.

HF: That's right. I mean there was an Edward Stephens or Stephenson.

JC: Yes.

HF: Who was a missionary and then there was this—his last name was Homer.

JC: His name was William Homer.

HF: William Homer?

JC: And he used to freight from Nauvoo and had an ox team that he brought immigrants from Nauvoo to Utah. And Martin Harris, because of his son being married to our aunt to his sister in other words, he had quite a bit to do with bringing him to Utah. I think he hauled him out, really, and then he brought him to his oldest son's place in Clarkston.

And he lived there a few years and that's where he died. That's how he came to be buried in Clarkston.

HF: Well, that's interesting. I know he was out of the Church for quite a number of years, but he never did deny his testimony of the Book of Mormon, did he?

JC: No.

HF: And the tradition has it that on his bed and the time of his death . . .

JC: I've heard that; I heard people in Clarkston bear their testimony that said they heard Martin Harris bear his testimony in his home before he died as to the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon.

HF: That's interesting. That's still a quiet, little community or just . . .?

JC: It's a farm town. It's somewhere near about the size of Sugar City, maybe not quite as thrifty.

HF: North of Logan?

JC: It's northwest.

HF: Northwest of Logan?

JC: Yes.

HF: We've talked a little about your father's background; could you give us a little something about your mother? Her maiden name and . . .?

JC: My mother's name is Sarah Homer, Sarah E. Homer. And she was the wife—she was the second child of my grandfather Homer's second wife. My grandfather Homer had four wives, and my mother's mother came from England. And she met my grandfather as they were crossing the plains coming to Salt Lake. And after she got to Salt Lake, she married my grandfather Russell King Homer, and after they were married they lived in Salt Lake for a short time. And they moved up to what is Williard, Utah now. It used to be called Three-Mile Creek. My grandmother with her trim family moved to Swan Lake for a short time and after they'd been there for a while, my grandmother got sick. She was—she had asthma, and she got sick and on the way—they left there they went down onto what is known as the Little Bear River and camped all night. And while they were there she took worse and died. She just had a new babe and my mother was only seven years old at that time and the family - she had two brothers and three sisters by her own mother and after her own mother died then she was moved into the family with my grandfather's first wife and she continued on and raised the family. She was very good to them and she raised them just like her own children. She didn't change, didn't make any

differences between the two families, she just kept them and they grew up and we called her grandmother. Her name was Eliza Homer.

HF: Uh huh, that's very interesting. Now, then, give us the time your mother and father met.

JC: Met in Clarkston.

HF: In Clarkston?

JC: After they'd grown up.

HF: After they'd grown up?

JC: They met, they grew up together, but they never got together very much until they got to be, I think my father was about twenty and my mother was about twenty.

HF: Why Judge, as you look back on your family tree on the Clark side and on the Homer side, can you pinpoint any particular talent or personality trait which carried down, of which you have become a part. On each side of your family tree: your mother's side and your father's side--leadership capacity, maybe music?

JC: Of course my grandfather Clark was a musician; he was really beyond the people that he lived amongst. And they didn't really appreciate his music talent because he'd been trained; he'd taken a lot of music training in Rhode Island before he came to Utah, but his family is all considered musical. Now they didn't train too much at it, but they were all so musical and there's been quite a thread of music through our family ever since.

HF: I see.

JC: But my mother was a good singer; her mother was a good singer that sang in the Salt Lake Choir at one time, or no, at the choirs back East where she came from.

HF: So you'd mention the musical talent as a trait coming down through your lineage?

JC: Yes. We're not trained, we're not trained musicians.

HF: No, but just as a latent ability there, to accept and blend music and have it. I see. Well that's very interesting. Well now, as to yourself, what induced you to come to the Upper Snake River Valley? When I ask that, I'm assuming that your father and mother never did come.

JC: No, they never did.

HF: At least they didn't move up here.

JC: Correct.

HF: Maybe they visited here, but they . . .

JC: When I was seventeen years old, I decided that I wanted to get a little education so I went to Logan I went to the old Brigham Young College that was there at that time; it belonged to the Church. Now I went to school there four, about five years, and that's where I met my wife. She was attending school the same time I was, and after that Ann quit school I went home and I was there—we lived on a farm. That was our way of making a living was on a farm. My father homesteaded ground out there.

HF: Around Clarkston?

JC: There at Clarkston, and he moved his family, eleven children on this farm. Well, after I had gone home, that was in 1909, I tried to quit school to go on home. My wife, Dora Redford Clark--well she's Clark now--she came there to teach school. We didn't go together when we were in college, but she came here to teach school. And after she'd been teaching there for about three months, we started going together and then she taught there—finished that year of schooling, of school, and then the next year she went to Richmond, Utah to teach school. And she taught there one year and then we got married and moved out to Raft River on a homestead.

HF: So you would be in Raft River, Idaho?

JC: Raft River, Idaho, that's off south of Malta.

HF: Is that in Cassia County?

JC: Cassia County. And it's south of Albion. Or it seems south to me at least.

HF: Uh huh, that would be how far from Tremonton, Utah?

JC: Oh, about seventy-five miles.

HF: About seventy-five miles southwest I guess--south or southwest?

JC: Mostly west.

HF: Mostly west?

JC: Yes. Well, I had this homestead when we got married. That's one thing I did when I quit school, is I got a bug and was encouraged to go and homestead this land. This land was thrower open, and so I went out there to homestead this land. And I tied the knot there about a year, and then I came back to Clarkston and that's when my wife and I decided to get married, and then she moved out there with me on this homestead.

HF: About what year was that?

JC: Oh, that would be--we were married in 1910. And that's when we moved out there was 1910, and we stayed until the spring of 1915. And during that time, in the wintertime, they had a short school, a four month school session right close to where we lived so I taught school for three years this little—it was only four months of the year, but I taught school for three years. And then after that, there were some people by the name of Johns that used to live in Sugar City, Tom Johns and Walter Johns--two brothers. Walter came out there and bought a big tract of land and they put him in as presiding Elder in the ward out there, and we got acquainted with him—my brother Dave and I—he was living out there on a homestead too. And Brother Johns told us that he had some property up here, and so we decided to trade him our homesteads in Bridge, Idaho and my brother got a piece of ground out at North Salem. And we lived out there for a number of years, and he got that from Tom Johns. And I got a piece out on Canyon Creek from Walt Johns. We traded our property for this up here.

HF: Uh huh.

JC: And that's how we came to Idaho. We came up here; we loaded our stuff in our wagons, and drove up here. It took us four days to get here, and we came down through the Raft River Valley, down to where we met the Snake River. And then we followed the Snake River over to Pocatello.

HF: Up through American Falls?

JC: American Falls and Pocatello and then straight back into Idaho Falls, and my brother Dave--he landed in North Salem. And I moved into Canyon Creek, and we landed here on the 28th of April in 1915.

HF: Now were you on the west side of Canyon Creek within Madison County?

JC: Yes, yes. I was on the west side.

HF: Who owns that ranch up there now, do you know?

JC: Well, I believe Seth Ricks.

HF: I see.

JC: I believe Seth Ricks owns it now.

HF: Uh huh. You know this is very interesting. I'd like to kind of back track if you don't mind and ask you a little about Brigham Young College. When you and your wife were attending there can you describe what facilities they had and how far advanced did you go in college, you and your wife? What did it offer, what did the institution offer?

JC: Well, of course you started in over there after you got out of the eighth grade and then they had what they called a two year preparatory course. And then you'd go into what you would call a senior high school now. And then the Brigham Young College at Logan, they give--started in and give one year of extra college work, and then they give two, and then they give three. And by the time they got up to three, the Church decided to discontinue the school so they turned the buildings over to the city of Logan and discontinued the school, and that's when I quit school.

HF: I see. Did the Church then lose the interest in Brigham Young College and it became kind of a state supported college.

JC: No, a city, a county. It was used the same as one of our high school buildings. The buildings just turned over to the county, the City of Logan. They made a city high school out of it.

HF: Then eventually it . . .

JC: They still use it. The city of Logan still uses the buildings.

HF: If it isn't the Brigham Young College.

JC: It was the Brigham Young College.

HF: But it wasn't the forerunner to the Utah State College?

JC: No, they were both in operation at the same time.

HF: Oh, I see. Well, that's interesting. I didn't realize that. I always had the impression that Brigham Young College was a fore-runner or a predecessor to the AC, Agricultural College.

JC: As far as the day that they opened up, I can't tell you anything about that, but the AC was there at the same time that BY was. BY College, we used to call BY, and we had up to seven hundred students there at that time. And at the time of our graduation, David O. McKay was a man about thirty years old/thirty-two and he gave the baccalaureate sermon when I graduated. And B. H. Roberts gave the graduation talk.

HF: Isn't that interesting, both outstanding men.

JC: Very outstanding. I graduated from a business course, a four year business course at the Brigham Young College. And while I was there I participated as one of the principals in two operas. I wasn't the lead in the operas but I took important parts.

HF: And this is kind of an outcropping of your lineage?

JC: And while I was at the—how my wife came to meet me—I was singing in the Brigham Young College choir. I sang there for three or four years in that choir.

HF: What were these operas, Judge?

JC: Well one of them was Princess Aida and I can't think of the other one. But we put that on at our graduation exercises.

HF: I see.

JC: And I sang in a male quartet.

HF: But down through the years, with that experience and others you've had, you've been interested in music?

JC: Yes, I've sang in choirs all over this valley. I sang in the—we were members of the fourth ward when it was organized and we had a wonderful choir after we got organized. We used to meet in the old college auditorium. And Ellen Brown and Professor Dean, Harry Dean, he was a teacher of music at the college at that time.

HF: Is that the Harry Dean that was the pharmacist?

JC: No. That was a different one.

HF: Oh.

JC: He moved from here and went down to Snow College in Utah as a music teacher.

HF: Ah, that's interesting. What . . .

JC: And another item that I might mention: Our stake used to put on contests, in quartets in the church and our ward. While Harry Dean was here, our ward won the stake here and then we went on to Pocatello and we won the district, this whole Idaho district. And then we went to the Tabernacle in Salt Lake and won the whole church mixed quartet.

HF: Now, this would be yourself as what, the base or tenor.

JC: The tenor.

HF: Tenor

JC: I was one of the tenors.

HF: And who took the base part?

JC: Well, Carl Davenport, he used to be superintendent of the schools so he . . .

HF: That would be Elmo's father?

JC: No, no he isn't related.

HF: I see. And then two women?

JC: The women were Harry Dean's wife and Esther Davenport, no, Mrs. Strong, let's see, Leon Strong.

HF: Leon's wife?

JC: Do you remember him?

HF: Yes very well.

JC: Well, they both sang in it. Leon sang with me in the tenor. Art and his wife sang in the soprano part with Mrs. Bean. Margaret Davis was one of the altos. I forgot the other one, but I have a certificate at home.

HF: That's interesting, isn't it?

JC: It was signed by Heber J. Grant.

HF: Now, this would have been, what, in the twenties, thirties?

JC: No, it would be in the twenties.

HF: Uh huh.

JC: I'm not sure.

HF: Well this kind of proves and brings out the fact that talents or latent abilities do have a tendency to follow through in families from one generation to another.

JC: That's right.

HF: And this is one of the things that I want to point, and sort of bring out in these inquiries.

JC: After I sang in this choir here, I sang in the stake choir, here in the Rexburg Stake for a long time until I was up to about seventy years of age. I've had a lot of choir work, I've sang in quartets all over the valley clear from Ashton, St. Anthony, Sugar City, Rigby, Idaho Falls. We used to have a good quartet.

HF: Well that's—And Harry Dean was your instructor in large measure?

JC: Yes, while he was here.

HF: While he was here?

JC: When he left, while then we just kind of kept it up by--Margaret Davis kind of took charge of it. And she was good; she was a good choir leader.

HF: Now, changing our pace just a moment. Your years as a youth were spent at Clarkston on the ranch?

JC: That's right.

HF: If I were to ask you and this is what I'm going to do. What individual or individuals contributed much to your life as an influence for good upon you and perhaps set your course in following the good life, what individual would you credit?

JC: I think after I went to college; made an awful lot of difference in my life. President Linford, James H. Linford was the president and he was a very fine man and then there's another man by the name of Jenson, D. C. Jenson, Perscher Millen, there's several teachers that had a lot . . .

HF: A big influence in your . . .?

JC: A big influence on my life because in an old country town like any of them any of these little country towns at that time, there just wasn't hardly anything to give you very much of an incentive to do things.

HF: All these men sort of opened your eyes to the world?

JC: Yes, I'll say, very much so. My life changed.

HF: That's very interesting. This is a good commendation to the teaching profession. What a tremendous influence they can have on young people if they will manifest the right attitude, and by their training and their teaching and the example they set for boys and girls.

JC: That's right.

HF: Well judge, after some years of farming on the Canyon Creek, you apparently decided to move to Rexburg.

JC: Yes.

HF: What brought about that move?

JC: Because of my experience in school, I just had a sort of an idea; I wanted to do something a little different than farming. So I came to Rexburg and I met William Staal.

He was manager of the old Stubaker Company here, that was, they sold buggies and wagons then, harnesses, and done quite a lot of trading, and I talked to him one day and he decided to give me a job in that implement house. And I started to work for him, I quit the farming business at that point and about 1916, I started to work for him and I worked for him for four years. And I lived in Teton City at the time and used to travel back and forth and back up to New Dale from there into Canyon Creek and over towards St. Anthony.

HF: By wagon or buggy?

JC: By buggies. I had a good team and a buggy. And I worked on sales and collections. Sell in the summer time and collect in the fall. And that's how I come to Rexburg; I drifted into town at that time after I quit that job. I came into town here and I farmed out at Burton for a year, And then I--Bishop Wright, now he lives in Rigby at this time he's about ninety years old.

HF: Francis?

JC: Francis' father. He used to be on the city council, and he was chairman of the law and order committee. And Raymond McIntyre was chief of police at that time; he'd been chief for about nine months. And they had a change come in the fire department when the man who was chief of the fire department quit. And McIntyre decided he'd rather have the fire department than the police job, so they were looking for a policeman. So Bishop Wright, I'd only been here for about a year and . . .

HF: By this time you'd moved your family here to Rexburg?

JC: I'd moved my family to Rexburg. I bought a house here and he decided that he'd ask me how I'd like to take the police job. I needed a job and he asked me how I'd like to take the police job on. And I said, "Well I've never dreamed of being a policeman." And I said, "I'll go and talk to my wife about it." And so the next day I told them I'd try it out. So I started as a policeman.

HF: What was your starting salary?

JC: Uh, ninety dollars.

HF: A month?

JC: A month.

HF: And this was in what year?

JC: 1924.

HF: March the 3rd, you've told me I think.

JC: Yes.

HF: March the 3rd, 1924, is when you commenced and what duties did they assign you?

JC: Well, all police work was done on foot. You had to walk everywhere. My job was to watch thorough. There wasn't much traffic at that time, so my job was taking care of drunks, watching the buildings, and see that all the doors were locked at night. I had to check all the doors, front and back. And then walk the alleys two or three times at night and then in addition, I had to walk to the depot, railroad depot, that's about three blocks straight west and then up the tracks. They had elevators and coal yards and so forth all along the track down there and I had to walk those tracks at night to see nobody was stealing coal and stuff out of the elevators. So I'd have to make a trip or two down there every night, this is all on foot, I walked to work and walked home. And my hours were twelve hour days. That's seven days a week.

HF: About what time would you go on?

JC: I'd go on at five o'clock and go until five o'clock the next morning.

HF: Uh huh.

JC: Sometimes later than that if I had to.

HF: Did you usually carry a gun?

JC: Yes, at night most of the time. A lot of the time I didn't carry a gun. I carried a Billy club and a flashlight.

HF: Where was the police head quarters, or your office at the time?

JC: Same building, the old building we've had until we just moved lately.

HF: I see. Now at that time, Brother Clark, were there any businesses to speak of off the main street really to mention?

JC: No, no, only the depots or the grain elevators along the railroad track. There were two or three of those down there. And then the coal yards, there was an awful lot of coal was hauled and everybody burned coal at that time. And they'd bring it in here with a car load, and people would steal it off the cars before they can unload it into the yards.

HF: Uh huh. But in checking the business houses it would be pretty much on Main Street—going up each side of Main Street?

JC: Yes.

HF: You'd didn't see anything down South Center or North Center too much, or any other off streets?

JC: No, I'd come down to the Taylor Chevrolet that was, those buildings were in, there at that time.

HF: Let's see by 1924, College Avenue had been opened up, hadn't it?

JC: Oh yes.

HF: And also Carlson?

JC: Yes.

HF: Carlson was opened up?

JC: Yes, they were all going at that time

HF: Having started in 1924, on the police force and assigned to night duty, how long did you continue to serve?

JC: I continued until about 1935. Then I started as the day policeman.

HF: In those years, Mr. Policeman, you had occasion of course to work with other men engaged in law enforcement. Would you like to mention some of their names?

JC: Well, the sheriff at that time was Harry Munns, and his deputy was Clarence Hillman when I first started. And Clarence Hillman quit while he was in the Sheriff's office. He passed the Bar Association and he became a county attorney, and then Sheriff Munns hired Marion Hacking, our present probate judge, as a deputy. Marion wasn't married at that time and then he afterwards hired Ross Johnson as a deputy. Conny Nichols was on as a deputy for a short time and then Conny went on as a fireman for the city and he worked part time as a policeman in the city of Rexburg. And then Herschel Digger was sheriff, Charles Belknap was deputy sheriff, and then Harold Madsen and E.A. Hansen were sheriffs during that time. And then there was the present sheriff that we have now.

HF: Uh huh. Ford Smith.

JC: Ford Smith.

HF: During those years, other night watchmen assisted too didn't they around the police force, Mr. Muir?

JC: Yes. While I was working days, they worked nights. We had good cooperation between the sheriff's office and also the Marshall in Sugar City, John Laydell used to

help quite often and if we had anything that needed extra help. And we'd help him out while I was policeman that was during the bootleg days.

HF: In the '20's?

JC: And the sheriff, the sheriff would always call on me and John Laydell to go with him and also his deputy. We'd go on these raids on these bootleggers, where they were making moonshine.

HF: Now this would be Harry Munns?

JC: Harry Munns. One time I went with Marion Hacking when he was deputy on a case where we had to pick up a bootlegger. Bootlegger was one of our principle jobs at the time, catching bootleggers. And . . .

HF: Seems to me like I remember of an episode wherein Harry Munns found the still either in a haystack or a straw stack. They disguised it and put it in there you know.

JC: Well, the Mexicans, they ship a lot of--the sugar company would ship a lot of Mexicans in here every year on the beets when the beets started at the end of the year. And they used to make a big camp out there just off the sugar factory, and we got word of them making whiskey out there so we went out there: Marion Hacking and Sheriff Munns and I. We each took a rifle and went out there, and the sheriff stationed me at one corner and Marion Hacking in another one. And he went through the buildings, the sheriff did and we found three or four fifty gallon barrels of mash. It was all ready to run whiskey so we dumped all of that stuff. In the mean time, when we went out there, Harry Munns says, "Now you watch these birds," he'd kind of swear and say, "You watch these guys and if any of them make a move, let them have it." That was one time I was really hopeful that I didn't have to shoot.

HF: Harry Munns was a good law enforcement officer.

JC: He was an officer that was known all over the state of Idaho. He was fearless. He had a very dark complexion. He had black eyes and black whiskers and he could really look tough.

HF: He looked his part.

JC: He was a real western sheriff, and I'll bet everybody in Pocatello all down through Darcy and Twin Falls--and everybody knew Harry Munns. And even the secret servicemen from Salt Lake City, if they ever needed some help up in Idaho, well, they'd call Harry Munns to go with them. He was fearless; he had a way with him; he put a chill in people nobody else could.

HF: Marion, I'd imagine was a good deputy too, was he not?

JC: He was a good deputy, you bet he was.

HF: Now, those men are big men. I supposed Harry Munns was a big man.

JC: Yes, Harry Munns was a big man. They had the looks and the actions and the strength and everything to make them . . .

HF: And I imagine that you fit in there pretty well too, didn't you?

JC: Well, I fit in pretty good. I got along very well with them. They treated me well and anytime I needed some help. One time, I encountered a Mexican in the pool hall. He was in there and he had a big knife.

HF: In Rexburg?

JC: In Rexburg here. And he was making some trouble over there in a card game. And they ordered him out of parlor and so when he stepped out of the door, I picked him up and started to jail with him. And Harry Munns, I don't know where he came from, but as I walked along the street with this Mexican, Harry Munns, he stepped up behind me and he was only about a rod behind me; and he followed me clear to the jail because that Mexican was dangerous and he wasn't going to let me take any chances. So he just dropped in behind me. I don't even know where he came from.

HF: Do you recall working with and knowing Judge Hansen?

JC: Yes. Judge Hansen was--he was when I came to Rexburg--he was a city clerk and then afterwards he was elected to be probate judge. And he was probate judge for a number of years.

HF: Here in Madison County?

JC: In Madison County. Yes I knew him very well.

HF: Andrew J. Hansen?

JC: Yes. He had a quite a long beard too.

HF: That's what I understand. Pretty keen too, wasn't he?

JC: Yes, he was a smart man.

HF: Now in your responsibilities as a night policeman, did you have much in the way of juvenile problems in those years?

JC: Not nearly so much as they do now. They'd do a little mischief now and then or run a few races on horses or bob sleds or--they didn't do it with cars like they do now days.

HF: As a matter of fact, even in the twenties with the liquor problem, I don't suppose you had the kids involved too much that way, did you?

JC: No, we had a certain number of drunks and so forth loitering around the pool halls and streets. And some of them we had different fellows that'd sell whiskey—moon shiners that'd bring it into town and they'd pick it up and they'd sell it, but a few of the halls. We didn't have too much trouble with drunks. We had a little, a few that would give us trouble, but those a little more for pilfering—taking parts out of cars and maybe stealing chickens or some little thing like that.

HF: Was that somewhat of a problem for youngsters?

JC: No, it wasn't too much. No, we didn't have much trouble at that time off of things like that.

HF: Now, did you commence to note the increase in maybe traffic problems during the late twenties? Had started a little bit by then?

JC: Every year it increased. We'd have a thousand cars in the county and then we got up twelve hundred and then fourteen hundred and then we'd get up to sixteen hundred and eighteen hundred and from there on and it's climbed up now to about six or seven thousand. Licenses, the license plates print out about six or seven thousand. In our own county besides the traffic up and down from other counties.

HF: Right. Now judge, you mention in 1935, you're assigned to day work as a policeman. 1935, is this right?

JC: Yes. Well, we just--we had a cop at that time and whenever there was a problem with a dog or a drunk or a traffic problem or accident or anything like that, well then that would be our job in the day time, to take care it. If we had drunks to take care of or, in those days, we had more drunks than they have now days. But I mean loitering around pool halls and so forth.

HF: Now was this during the Prohibition days or following the Prohibition?

JC: Prohibition and also after World War II. World War II, it was terrible after that for a while.

HF: How do you account for that?

JC: Well, these soldier boys come home after they'd been out there. They'd been allowed to drink beer from the time they was eighteen in the army, and they'd just had all they wanted and it was quite a problem, really. After the war, they just flocked home here. We had somewhere around a hundred, I'd imagine, soldier boys all come home within a short time of each other. And there are an awful lot of them that learned to drink beer while

they were in the army and they were of course, glad to get home and they'd celebrate by drinking a lot. For a long time, they had to ration beer; they wouldn't start selling the beer in the daytime until about five o'clock. And from then to about eleven o'clock at night or ten, well, they'd sell four or five barrels. Each pool hall would sell four or five barrels of beer. Boy, they really sapped it up.

HF: In the forties and following the war, were there more places of business engaged in this type of thing then at the present time?

JC: Yes.

HF: You had a lot more?

JC: Yes, we had about double the pool halls then that there is now.

HF: Did you have any particular liking for day work over night time work?

JC: Well, of course it was much better to live with your family. At night, you see, it was an awful problem for my wife. I had six children and all the time that I was working nights, my wife had to take care of the family. While I was available all the time on the telephone, she still had the responsibility for the family, and it was a real problem to hear her tell it now, it was a real problem.

HF: And now later on, you became the police judge here in Rexburg. Under what circumstances brought that about?

JC: Well, I was old enough to retire from the police force and that's when Fred Smith went in Mayor and Mayor Morrow, Dr. Morrow, was put in as chairman of law and order. He was on the council, so they, well, all of my guys, they decided to reorganize the police force and retire Muir and I. That's when I—and they needed a judge, so I asked them about me taking over the judge job for a while, so they give it to me and I stayed with it for almost fifteen years.

HF: Let's see. You commenced working as a police judge for the city of Rexburg . . . ?

JC: In 1955.

HF: In 1955?

JC: 1st of August.

HF: 1st of August in '55 and you were retired this year, this last fall?

JC: This year, March 1st.

HF: Of this year?

JC: Of this year.

HF: March 1st of this year?

JC: Yes.

HF: So that would be almost fifteen years as a police judge?

JC: Yes, that's right.

HF: You know, of course talking about two different branches of government here. The law enforcement is--we refer to it as an executive arm you might say whereas a police judge would be in the judicial arm or branch of government. What comparisons would you--comments would you like to make with reference to the comparison of these two branches?

JC: Well, after '55 when I went on as judge. They hired four new, young policemen. And of course, the traffic was getting heavy at that time, and their principal job was to get out and on traffic, write tickets. And during my time as judge, my main job was taking care of traffic violations. And they'd run--traffic violations would run as high as oh eight hundred cases a year. And that went on nearly every year after the time I got on judge.

HF: Now would you set a fixed time in the morning, every morning.

JC: Yes, I'd be there by nine thirty and the time would be set for ten o'clock on the tickets.

HF: Uh huh. And you'd take them as fast as you could?

JC: We'd take them just as fast as we could take care of them.

HF: Uh huh. Would you make a practice to take a lot of these under advisement or would you fast judge them and pretty much . . .?

JC: Well, if they come in and plead guilty of it. Why, I'd set a fine and they'd nearly always pay it. That was the simplest way out of it for them and me too. So that's the way it is how it happened mostly, through fines. Sometimes they'd go to jail, and sometimes we'd let them work it out. If the person who was up against it offered to work it out; why I'd tell them to work it out.

HF: You felt that that would be one way of punishment as well as correction?

JC: That's right.

HF: Uh huh, now I'm assuming from what you've stated that there weren't too many instances where they would plead not guilty and you'd go through with a trial.

JC: Very few. Maybe two or three a year.

HF: Over the years, has the college, increase population of the college had an influence on your work load?

JC: A lot on traffic. There are quite a few shoplifters at the college too. They'd be brought in. They steal at the grocery stores quite a bit and from drug stores, but that was mostly on traffic. Now my idea with the college students on this traffic, the enforcement is not the same all over the state. You can take these boys and girls that come in from these outlying districts. I don't know if any of them ever knew what a stop sign looks like or not. But they're used to going through it. And then when they come into Rexburg I think it's a good thing to correct them because there's so many of them, and they're all a little bit careless, more or less. And it's very easy for them to get hurt. And now it would be a real problem if they had to write home to their folks and tell them they've been injured in a traffic violation, accident. And so we try to penalize everyone as much as we could. Not be too tough, but let them know that they had to obey the law.

HF: As we come to the close of this tape and we only have a couple, three minutes left. I'd like to put a question like this to you, judge. You've been engaged in law enforcement for the last forty-six years, more or less, forty-three years more or less. And during that period of time, you've had to work with the public a lot. You've had to work with other law enforcement organizations and you've had to cooperate—you're representing the city and working with the mayors and things of this nature. Would you have any comment how the cooperation has been?

JC: I've had very good cooperation from the sheriffs' offices, the deputies, the county attorneys, the city attorney, and all the police officers I've been fortunate to get along, I kind of pride myself on being able to get along with people. And I never have had any particular squabbles with anybody over problems. Anytime that anything came up; why, we were always able to talk it out and feel good about it.

HF: And the council through its committee on law enforcement has always been very fine to back you up on your . . .?

JC: As far as I know, I've never had any trouble with the councils, now I went through a lot of councils in that length of time.

HF: So you have.

JC: And the fact that they kept me that long; why, I think speaks pretty well of the way I got along with them.

HF: Surely does.

JC: They could have hired other men at the same time, I don't know, it seems that I was either lucky or else it was . . .

HF: When you were released in March of this year, you were given a fine commendation for your services and wasn't a little plaque or something given to you?

JC: Yes sir, they gave me a very fine plaque, it was one about a foot one way and about ten inches the other and it had a gavel attached to it, a nice looking gavel. Then a nice little, I guess a brass plaque in there, inscribed with my name on it with thanks from the community and a seal for my service in the city and so forth.

HF: Now Judge, I want to express myself this evening to you for the opportunity of interviewing you and chatting with you and wherein you have shared with us some of the experiences of your life. I feel sincerely that every family has a story that should be told, an interesting and a fascinating story. And I found your story interesting this evening as we've gone through, briefly I admit, and now as we close would you like to just make a little comment about your family: your wife and your children.

JC: Well, my oldest daughter is named Lenore, my second daughter is named Phyllis-- she lives in California. And Devar, he lives in Idaho Falls, he's a merchant. And Laurel, our daughter, she lives in Ogden and her husband is a grocery man. And Maxine lives in Egin; her husband is a mechanic and a mail carrier. Our youngest son is an insurance man and manager in Darcy Idaho.