

VOICES FROM THE PAST

POOLE'S ISLAND

SETTLEMENT

By John Tanner Pool
&
J. Rulon Poole

June 25, 1970

Tape # 41 A&B

Oral Tape by Harold Forbush

Transcribed by Louis Clements

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Upper Snake River Valley Historical Society

INTRODUCTION

The Library of the Upper Snake River Historical Society in the Teton Flood Museum contains over 600 video, cassette, and reel-to-reel tapes. These oral interviews have been gathered to over the past years from individuals throughout the Snake River Valley. I had the opportunity to catalogue this collection over the past couple of years and was amazed at the information containing therein.

I decided that it was unfair to the public to have all of this historical information on a tape and only available to a few who had the time to come to the library and listen to them. The library does provide a service in which copies of the tapes can be made, and during the past few years, many have come in and obtained a copy of a particular tape. The collection has a lot of family stories, some pioneer experiences, a few individual reminiscences of particular parts of history, and some recorded individuals have a personal knowledge of a historical event.

I spent a lot of time trying to come up with a name for this series of stories that would describe the overall text of the message contained herein. Since they are transcribed from the actual voices of those who experienced the history the name, Voices From The Past seemed appropriate. The oral history in this volume of Voices From The Past has been taken from the interviewer with it being recorded on tape. Since Idaho's history is so young in year, the oral history becomes greater in importance. Eyewitness accounts rank high in reliability of the truth of events, although the reliability suffers as they interviewee ages or the time between the event and the interview grows. As the age of some of the cassette is progressing into the time period of deterioration of tapes, all are currently (2002) being copied onto audio discs (CD's) for preservation.

I have selected this event as one that occurred in Eastern Idaho which was experienced by the person or persons being interviewed. There was such a vast amount of information available in the library; I had to reserve many of the tapes for inclusion in future volumes. The tapes are being transcribed in order of importance according to my thinking.

Transcribing from a tape to written word is a new experience for me. I have done this on a very small scale before but to attempt to put the contents of a conversation down on a paper requires a great amount of concentration. I have taken the liberty of editing out the many "a's" that occur in an interview as well as other conversational comments. Then comes the problem of the book a challenge from the point of view of making a correct transcription and yet an interesting story. I have made a few editorial changes in view of this problem.

I would like thank the many people who have taken the time to arrange for the oral recording of an individuals story. The information obtained in this manner is, in many cases, not available from any other source. One of the pioneers of oral history in Eastern Idaho is Harold Forbush. Despite the handicap of being blind, he travels around the whole Snake River Valley visiting with people and taping their responses. He began his career of taping while living Teton Valley and serving as the prosecuting attorney there.

His lifetime interest in history got him started and since then he has been a major contributor to the collection of stories in the library. He continued his oral history recording after moving to Rexburg. After retiring from being Madison Counties' magistrate, he moved to Idaho Falls for a time and now has returned to Rexburg to continue as occasional taping session. He is to be congratulated for his lifetime commitment to the preservation of Idaho's history.

There are many others who have done some taping including several Madison High School students. Most of the student tapes are not of the same sound quality as the professional oral history collector, but the stories they have gathered over the years have provided a special look at the Depression, war experiences, farming experience, and many other subjects which can't be found anywhere else. Many thanks to them.

There are some tapes in which the interviewer did not identify themselves. These unknown records have provided several stories which have helped make up the overall history of the Snake River Valley and I thank them even if I cannot acknowledge them personally.

I hope that as you read the following stories you will be inspired to keep a record of your own either in written or tape form so that your opinion of what has happened in the world or in your life can be preserved. Many think their life has been insignificant and others would not want the years and find each other to have its own contribution to my knowledge of what has happened. Idaho is an exciting place to live and is full of stories which are unique to our area. Share them with others.

Louis J. Clements.

(As this tape contains two different interviewees, I will try to designate, as best I can from the sound of their voices, each individual by their first name.)

(Through the facilities of the Upper Snake River Valley Historical Society at Rexburg, Idaho, the following interview first done on reel-to-reel tape is now placed on a C-60 cassette this 1st day of September, 1984.)

Forbush: It is my real joy and privilege today, this being the 25th of June, 1970, to have come to my office here at 68 East 1st South, Rexburg, Idaho, a father and son, both of Menan, within Jefferson County, Idaho. They are living on what is commonly known as Pooles Island. The father's name is John T. Poole and the son is J. Rulon Poole. Brethren it is a real fine experience to have you here today. We would like to consider some of the information that both of you have relative to the settlement of Poole's Island and the early days of this area of Eastern Idaho. Mr. Poole, I would like first to ask you your full name and the date and place of your birth?

John: John Tanner Poole, born September 21, 1887, at Menan, Idaho.

HF: Could you tell me a little something about your father, his full name, and his birthplace and then we'll go into the background of the Poole and Rawlston families?

JJ: My father's name was Rulon Mack Poole; he was born in Ogden, (Utah), in 1865.

HF: Well now, you have here a prepared journal or diary concerning the Pooles. Perhaps we could read that first page giving some of the background of the Poole and Rawlston families, how they came to America? Something about their early background and the comments of the writer?

Rulon: The subject of this sketch was an American born of American parents. His father and mother were both American born. Little is known by any of the family in Idaho of the history of the Poole family. Early in the settlement of the Atlantic, seaboard and family by the name of Poole came over from England and settled in Pennsylvania or Virginia. A family of Ralston's came over before the War of Independent also. Both families spread over considerable part of the country. John Rawlston's Poole, the first child of Micajah Poole and Rebecca Rawlston Poole, was born May 13, 1829, in the state of Indiana. The family has no account of the town or the country in which he was born. When he was eight years of age, his parents moved to Iowa. It was in that state in the vicinity of Farmington, Van Buren country, where the family lived and John Ralston grew to manhood. It was where also he met Janette Blasedale, the daughter of William and Margaret Blasedale. The Blasedale's were English people, converts to the Latter-day Saint faith and resided upon the farm of Micajah Poole. The young woman, Janette, had been employed in the family of Joseph Young, a member of the Mormon church, and spent the winter of 1847 and 18 at Winter Quarters on the west bank of the Missouri River. In the spring of 1848 she returned to Farmington in south Iowa where her parents spent the winter. There she met John Rawlston Poole. They were married on July 6, 1848. John Rawlston Poole was also converted to the LDS Faith at or about the same

time of their marriage. The young people remained in Iowa until the spring of 1850. On the 24th day of May, of that year, they began their journey to Utah arriving in Salt Lake City about September the 30th. They made their journey by ox team in company with the parents of Janette. ON the way across the Plains cholera broke out in the camp. Mr. Poole suffered an attack but the infant daughter of the couple died of the disease.

HF: Now this doesn't bring the Rawlston family to Utah, however, does it?

Rulon: No, it doesn't.

HF: We don't know anything about the Rawlston family other than has been indicated?

Rulon: The Rawlston's as far as we know at this moment, at this time, did not come to Utah or did they become members of the LDS Faith. When John Rawlston Poole, in fact when he joined the Church, he more or less was excommunicated his family circle. His father would never claim him anymore.

HF: now, can you recall any physical aspect or attribute of your father or grandfather, John Ralston? Were there rather large men or maybe just kind of medium? What would be your response?

John: Well, Grandfather John Rawlston Pole was a medium sized man. He probably was five foot ten, weighted a hundred and sixty-five, seventy pounds. But my father, Ruben Mack, was a larger man. He weighed two hundred and better most of his life that I knew him. He was six foot one or something like that.

HF: Now how old a boy were you when your grandfather passed away?

John: Grandfather passed away in '94 and I was born in '87 which would make me seven years old when he was. I was privileged to be and remember very distinctly his funeral there at Menan.

HF: Can you remember his appearance?

John. Yes.

HF: Did he wear a beard or...?

John: Yes, he did. He wore a beard. Grandfather Poole, at one time, set me on his knee when I was about six and told me all of this experience when he was on his mission back in Iowa. He went to his father's home along in the evening just about sundown. His father was out along the street along a row of trees with a long pole poking chickens out of the trees. They wanted to roast there. His son, John Rawlston, came up. He spoke to him and how do you do father? He looked at him and said, "That you John, "Yes." Well he said, "You'll have to go right on. You can't stop here." So there was nothing for John Rawlston to do but go right on down the road. But the purpose of his going his old home

was that he wanted to see his mother. But at that time he wasn't privilege to visit his mother. But before his mission was completed he had the privilege of meeting his mother.

HF: And it had been several years since father and son had met, I suppose?

John Yes, you see he had left Iowa in '47 or '8 and he was on this mission.

HF: Anyway it had been some little while?

John: Oh, yes ten or fifteen years.

HF: All this suggests that his father and mother were quite displeased with him having joined the Mormon Church?

John: That's right.

HF: Do you remember, Mr. Poole, your grandmother?

John: Very well.

HF: Now did she survive her husband?

John: Oh, yes, for twenty-five or thirty years after he died before she died.

HF: This would be your grandmother?

John: Grandmother, Janette.

HF: And what was her, was she a large woman or a rather small woman?

John: She was rather large woman. Very stocky and quite large?

HF: How large a family did this couple have, that is John Rawlston and Janette, his first wife?

John: Now she's a five or sixth girls and three boy of that particular family.

HF: Well, now, it's my understanding from a brief acquaintanceship with the facts that your grandfather came up here into Eastern Idaho when they were constructing this narrow gauge Utah North Railroad. What was his function and purpose in connection with that?

John: Well he had various contracts on that railroad. The first one was in Marsh Valley. He had various contracts on up through clear to Butte, Montana. His last contract was just south of Butte, Montana.

HF: Now you say contracts. Contracts to do what?

John: To build the grade for the railroad.

HF: That would be before the ties were laid and the rails were laid?

John: That's right. He had nothing to do with the ties and rails, he just worked grading.

HF: Is it your understanding that he was up here as early as 1979?

John: Yes, he had a contract just south of Roberts, what is Roberts now, in the fall of '79. When they had ceased their grading work he was looking for a place to put his stock, his work stock. Some trapper told him if he could get across the river east of Market Lake, at that time, he could turn his stock loose and they would be in good feed for the rest of the winter. He found a place where he could get his stock across the river on the ice. He had an Indian herder who was with him. He left his stock on this island for the winter. He let that Indian take care of it.

HF: The attractive feature about the island was the good forage for grass, the abundance of grass?

John: The abundance of grass and feed that was on the island was the good forage for grass, the abundance of grass?

John: The abundance of grass and feed that was on the island.

HF: Can you just briefly detail how this was formed, why and what constitutes the island? How the island is formed?

John: The Island lies between the main channels of the Snake River over on the north by the Menan Buttes. It lays east and west between the main channel of the Snake River and what is commonly known as the Dry Bed.

HF: Now when you say the main channel of the Snake River that is after the South Fork and the North Fork have come together?

John: That's right.

HF: Let's see, did one angle of that triangle be the South Fork?

John: Yes.

HF: Would that be correct?

John: Yes, that would be correct. You might call the east side and the north side of the island and the west side would be the main channel of the Snake River. The south boundary of the island was the Dry Bed.

HFL: But in both winter and summer, there is water in that Dry Bed?

John: Oh, yes.

HF: And especially in the spring of the year, it is really full and over flow?

John: Well, it did at that time. When there was high water, the Dry Bed carried almost as much water as the main channel of the Snake River.

HF: Now in describing this island, as far as its size is concerned, could you give me an idea as to how long it is from east to west and north south or how would you describe it in miles?

John: Well the island proper is about thirty miles long east and west. It would average seven or eight miles north and south.

HF: Now your grandfather was instrumental in colonizing or at least he took an active part. He was one of the participants in the colonization of the island, was he not?

John: Yes, grandfather was called to be the Presiding Elder of the 1st Branch, what they called the Branch, the Cedar Buttes Branch. Grandfather, John Rawlston, was called to be the Presiding Elder of that branch.

HF: Who called him to that position and do you know about when?

Rulon: Apostle Richards.

John: I think it was Apostle Franklin D. Richards about 1879.

HF: Well, now what we might do at this point is to read a little background information as to how Mr. Poole, how your grandfather first learned of the island and what brought him up here in the first place? Now e might read from the journal.

Rulon: In addition to this farming operation, Mr. Poole engaged in the merchandising and the market business in Ogden. When the railroad came in 1869 he also engaged in the hotel business and operated what was known at that time as the Globe Hotel. To establish this later business, it was necessary for him to borrow capital. This he did at the rate of interest then prevailing in the West of 24% per annum. NO legitimate business could pay such a rate of interest. The result was that he was forced in to insolvency in 1878. All his real property was sold under foreclosure. While operating his farms and hotel he also had this teams engaged in hauling lumber from the mountains east of Ogden. He made every effort to prevent the coming disaster but was unable to do so. Seeing the impossibility of

redeeming his property from foreclosure, in the early spring of 1878, with one of his sons, Wyatt, he loaded two wagons, one drawn by two horses and were delivered. But in the long journey, most of the trees died and he pocketed nothing in the enterprise. That summer, as he returned from Montana, work on the extension of the Utah and

Northern Railroad had begun. Mr. Poole was attracted by this opportunity and stopped in Cache Valley and completed arrangements for engagement in the railroad grading construction. This first work was under contract at March Creek, west of McCammon, then known as Heart (?). During the summer and fall of 1878 the grading of the railroad was completed to Eagle Rock, the present site of Idaho Falls. Mr. Poole had taken contracts at Marsh Creek, Portneuf, Pocatello, Ross Fork (now known as Fort Hall), Blackfoot, Firth (then called Riverside), Eagle Rock, and the last one that season was a few miles south of Market Lake, now called Roberts. When winter set in, in his camp, it was on the west bank of the Snake River at the latter point. This proved to be a very important incident, not only in the life of Mr. Poole but in the history of the Upper Snake River Valley. When it became necessary to close down the grading operations for the winter, Mr. Poole directed his sons, who were with him in the camp, to return to Ogden. The eldest of the boys, William, and an Indian herder stayed to care of the work stock which had been put out for the winter. There was then an abundance of dry grass in that region. Mr. Poole, in his early life, loved the sport of hunting. This passion continued with him. During the winter he hunted deer in the brush and the grasslands east of the Snake River in the vicinity of the present villages of Menan, Lorenzo, and Labelle. He became interested in the three countries. He was confronted with the necessity of finding a new home for his large family of three wives and fifteen children, the eldest of whom was only twenty-one years of age. The winter of 1878 and '79, being an unusually mild one, Mr. Poole had his sons and some other young men return to the grading camp in February preparatory to resume work on his contracts on the arrival of the boys in the camp, he told them of the country east of the river, which he had explored and that he wished to locate there. At this point his sons, William and Hyrum, his two oldest, with other young men from Ogden visited the region with two purposes. One to engage in deer hunting and the other to pass judgment upon his father's plan. Whereupon, Mr. Poole went by train to Ogden. He reported his purpose to certain leaders of the LDS Church, among them Apostle Franklin D. Richards. This he considered proper because he was a consistent member of the Church and had been considered as a leader for colonizing the valley in Eastern Utah. This plan met with approval of the Church leaders. A meeting was held in Ogden and a large number of people attended. He described the country he had visited. Several men present decided to come and look it over. Among them who did come to look it over were A. M. Stevens and his son, W. well pleased with the country they returned to Ogden and made immediate preparations to move there. In July of that same year they did so.

HF: Now, as I understand from my reading, your grandfather actually did come upon the island and in the spring of that year and wrote a letter of his findings back to Apostle Franklin d. Richards. I think it would be interesting if we could quote from that letter as to his findings.

Rulon: In April of 1879, John R. Poole had done the first plowing on the island. In a letter dated April 20, 1879, John R. Poole had done the first plowing on the island. In a letter dated April 20, 1879, Elder Poole reported to Apostle Richards the prospects for farming. Part of the letter reads, "On Monday April 7th we procured a boat and crossed the South Fork. On that and the following day, with Fredrick Garner and others, I prospected the country between the two forks of the Snake River as far we could in the limited time. The boat with which we had to cross the river was too small to take animals across. On the 10th we selected and located land for farms all of which was done agreeable and to the entire satisfaction of all present. I continued my labors of exploring until the morning of the 17th when I returned to my grading camp. I am informed by a Brother Heath, who is living on Willow Creek that he and other raised corn on that stream last year. In fact they showed me some that was well mature^{3d}. There is a fine tract of land along a Willow creek and also in the forks of the Snake River along the Teton and other streams, as well as, on the north side of Henry's Fork. There are facilities for hundreds of comfortable homes."

HF: Now, according to the journal account, as you have it there, weren't there some families commencing to move up in to this area and Poole's Island as early as maybe March and April of 1879?

Rulon: Right, since back in Ogden he reported his findings to Apostle Franklin D. Richards. Apostle Richards presented John R. Poole with a letter of appointment to act as Presiding Elder until a more complete organization could be made. Elder Poole made speeches in Ogden promoting the new country. At a meeting on March 23, 1879, several families expressed their desire to emigrate to Poole's Island. In April of that same year, Elder Poole with James H. Pincock and other arrived with seed grain and farming implements. The family of Joseph C. Fisher had located near the Butte at which is now Annis a few weeks before. Elder Poole moved his family to the island in the fall of 1879.

HF: Now there is another point that is rather, the first white child, or the first child these families who are settled, was born, I believe, in July of 1880?

Rulon: 1880, it says on July 10, 1880, was born the first child on the island, Alexander B. Stevens, son of Alexander M. Stevens.

HF: You know, it is rather interesting, when we find we find something that appears to be almost perfect, inevitably there are problems that arise. I suppose that the early settlers of Poole's Island, you grandfather, Mr. John Rawlston, found some problems. According to the account here that has been prepared we know of that. Would you like to lead in to some of that?

Rulon: It says the beautiful island was found to have drawbacks, as well as, affects. In the spring, terrific floods washed over the lower portions. Until a bridge was built in 1892 across the misnamed Dry Bed, everything taken to the island had to be hauled in by a boat or taken across in the winter when the ice was thick. Then there were the mosquitoes. Some old timers have said that the mosquitoes were so large that they

trampled flat the underbrush which grows so abundantly in the rich soil of island. John Wright, Eagle Rock's first born white son, once reported that during mosquito season on the island one could swing a pint cup around his head and get a quart of mosquitoes woke up. No one had a light to get their washing out before the mosquitoes woke up. No one had a light in their house after dark. Smudges were burning outside the door to the turn back the hungry hordes. Later, settlers moved their wives and children elsewhere during mosquito season. By Mormon Pioneer Day, July 24th, the mosquito season was drawing to a close. Better drainage in recent years has relieved this condition.

HF: Now from an ecclesiastical point of view, do we have anything in what was done in organizing the two families on the island into Church relationship?

Rulon: According to the journals that we have here, it says that on November 25th, or 1881, President Mariner W. Merrill of the Cache Stake Presidency and Elder William B. Hendricks of Logan arrived on Poole's Island and organized the Saints there in to a branch of the Cache Stake of Zion. John R. Poole was Presiding Elder. Alexander M. Stevens and Spencer V. Raymond were named as Teachers. Elders Merrill, Hendricks, and Poole then went to Egin, now Parker, and organized the few families of Saints who had located there in to another Branch. The name Cedar Butte was chosen for the Branch at Poole's Island. Susanna R. Poole was sustained as clerk of the Branch. Joseph C. Fisher and David R. Carr were sustained as home missionaries. The Cedar Buttes Branch, at this time, included all territories south and east of the Snake River as far south as Pocatello. The first meeting house and school was built in 1883. This was the second Latter-Day Saints meeting house built in the Valley. The first had been built in Egin, which is now Parker. The Sunday school in Menan was organized in 1881 with John R. Poole as superintendent. In 1883 Albert L. Ellsworth became superintendent. A young men's Mutual Improvement Association was organized in 1881. William B. Preston, President of the Cache Stake, of which Cedar Buttes was a part, visited the Branch in 1883. He authorized Robert L. Bybee to build a tithing office on the town site and to collect tithing from the people. The building was completed by December 25th.

HF: Does the journal contain any information about the type of crops that were grown and how well they could mature crops?

Rulon: The journal states that in 1882, a few more families arrived. The settlers planted some grain and a few potatoes. By fall it had been proven that wheat, oats, barley, and all of your hardier vegetables could be grown on the island in abundance.

HF: Now, going along chronologically of the development of Poole's Island around Menan, why don't you quote a little more from the journal?

Rulon: The journal states that in 1883 the Cedar Buttes town side was surveyed by Andrew S. Anderson of Rexburg. In 1885 the people petitioned for a post office. The post office department objected to the name Cedar Butte because of its length. Menan, the old Indian name for Rexburg. Robert L. Bybee was set apart as Bishop on September 28, 1884. Alexander N. Stevens, Spencer V. Raymond, Homer A. Pese, Charles W. Shippen,

Lyman Shurtlief, Frances Gould, Jay T. Caldwell, W. F. Walker, Joseph H. Byington, and Joseph C. Fisher were set apart as Ward Teachers. In October, Thomas E. Ricks visited the island and ordained George Eames and George G. Morgan first and second counselors.

HF: Now Brother John T. Poole, as your recollection suggests or can you recall perhaps the earliest public buildings on Poole's Island as you understand it? Where they used this building for school purposes, as well as, for church? Do you know where those were and about when?

John: My dates many not be exactly right. Early in '80 they built a log building on the Hyrum Poole homestead on the bank of the Dry Bed that was used for school and church. They held Sunday school and church and school in this building. It burned down and burned up all the school books and records of the church, the Ward. Then they built a log building immediately to the north of the new church building in Menan. It was used for several years for school purposes and a community center and for church purposes. That was used until the rock building that was torn down that the new church was built a community center and for church purposes. That was used until the rock building that was torn down that the new church was built for a community center.

HF: Now, this rock building you refer to, was that the first structure fro the new ward that was created in 1884?

John: The rock building was the first community center, you might say, that we had in the Menan Ward in the early '90's.

HF: Now as a lad, where did you go to school?

John: I started school in the second log building that they built which was immediately north of the Menan Church now. That is where I began school, in there.

HF: The old log one had been burned down, I guess?

John: That was after the one that was built on the Dry Bed that burned down.

HF: Well, now Brother John T. Poole, it's my understanding that when John Rawlston came West he had on e wife. Upon his arrival in Utah, sometime or another, he saw fit to enter into marriage with two additional wives. Could you tell me something about the background of this and something about the background of these two women?

John: Well, John Rawlston Poole married his first wife in Iowa after they had been camped in Winter Quarters on the Missouri River. Janette Blasedale, whom he married first, went back to Iowa after staying in Winter Quarters that winter. They stayed there until the next spring. Then they started west. This would be about 1850. They came on into Salt Lake sometime in September, 1850. Later they located in Ogden. I think it was bout 1852 or '3 when there was another handcart company that came west. In that party

was some people by the name of Bitton. This Harriet Bitton, who John Rawlston married later, was a member of that handcart party. They got stranded over in Wyoming and couldn't get any farther because winter set in. Among others, John Rawlston was asked to go back over into Wyoming and help these people come on in to Salk Lake. And in that group, as I said, was Harriet Bitton. After arriving in Salt Lake he took this party to his home in Ogden. Later he married Harriet Bitton. I want to make a correction first. It was Jane Bitton who came over with the handcart party. Later with another group, her sister, Harriet, and her father and mother came in this party. Of course, when they arrived in Salt Lake City they came to Jane's home. In the short time after they had arrived, John Rawlston and Harriet Bitton were married. I am not up on the exact of the others.

HF: Now is it your understanding that when he moved his family her to Poole's Island he brought his three wives and the children, all three wives and the children?

John: Yes. Jane, with her family, came first. Hyrum was one of the older of the family. Hyrum, at times, was in charge of the construction crew. Jane came along earlier in the season. Then the other two families followed later in the season. But Jane was the first of the family to come up to the island.

HF: Janette did not come up early to the island?

John: Yes, she came that fall.

HF: Now, Janette was his first wife but he brought Jane up with him first?

John: He brought Jane up along with the construction crew.

HFL: Now, after he had settled his families here on Poole's Island, is it your understanding that they pretty well lived together under one roof?

John: No, no they did not. Each of the wives took up a homestead. Jane took a homestead, Harriet had a homestead, and Janette had a homestead. Now it is my understanding that John Rawlston had already used his homestead rights on the Ogden River before they came up here. But Janette had a homestead or 160 acres. Jane had a homestead of a 160 and Harriet had a homestead of 160. Each of them built their homes on these homesteads.

HF: Now were those adjacently located?

John: Yes, Janette's homestead was the furthest one east of the Menan town site. Jane's homestead joined on to Janette's on the west and joined the town site. Then across the road north from Jane's was Harriet homestead.

HF: Can you describe the homes? Do you recall having seen them?

John: Yes, they were all built of cottonwood logs. They each had three rooms in them. All built under the same plan with cotton woods taken off from their own property there.

HF: Can you tell me a little something about the respective families of these three women, the number of children and a little about their training and development? I mean you had three different mothers. What was their particular characteristics and plan of each mother?

John: Well, Janette, the oldest of the three, had three sons: William, Ruben Mack, and Milborn. But William never lived at home after they came up here. He took up land or a homestead of his own. He was old enough to file on a homestead. But Mack and Milborn lived with their mother on her homestead, especially during the time that John Rawlston was on the underground. They stayed with their mother and farmed her property. That was true of Jane's family. Jane's family consisted of Hyrum, Charlie (who lived in Rexburg.)

Now he was the lawyer, wasn't he?

John: Yes. Hyrum Poole lived in Rexburg. Ewald was the youngest of three boys. He farmed his mother's farm most of the time. Charlie was instrumental in helping his mother with her homestead. But Hyrum was old enough and he took up 160 acres at the time that he came up on to the Island. Then Harriet, there was Walter, Louis, Benny, and Emmett. Walter and Louis went off to themselves. They were older. They didn't farming much with their mother there. But Benny and Emmett live with their mother until they were old enough to go for themselves. There wasn't any of that family that made a homestead. Walter went to work for the railroad company and he was a foreman of construction for years. Benny went of to himself doing carpentry work. Louis farmed part of his mother's farm but he didn't take up any land. Emmett lived her in Rexburg at one time. He never did do too much at farming.

HF: Well, Mr. Poole, were these ladies possessed of any particular distinguishing characteristics in the way of talents or training their children that should d be mentioned? Was one mother more zealous in getting her children educated than another? Do you have any comments along that line?

John: There are several of the children of the John R. family that are well educated. Charlie attained the distinction of being a lawyer. Hyrum was a very successful man in business. Of Janette family, they were more addicted to agriculture. They were farmer, all of them.

HF: Did the women remain faithful and married to John Rawlston all during their lives?

John: For all I know they were. They were all, and at this present time there are only two of the original families left. That is Ida Smith, the daughter of Harriet, and Ethel Valentine, who now lives in Burley. Ida Smith now lives in Pocatello.

HF: I see. What was the total number of his children, of John Rawlston's children?

John: Around 18 or 19 children they had all total.

HF: Can you call to mind any real interesting little accounts that they had during the polygamist persecution when he had to live underground? Do you recall any particular incident that may be interesting to note?

John: Well, when the polygamy question came into the deal there, grandfather left and went down to southern Utah somewhere. He took up his same vocation that he had when he came up here into southern Idaho of freighting, team work. He worked there during that period. That was there to five years that he was gone.

Rulon: According to the journal, it says in February of 1887, Mr. Poole was forced to leave his home on account of the activities of the government agents and the persecution of the members of the Mormon Church who were living in the state of plural marriage. He was absent until spring of 1890. During that time eh was engaged in team work at points in Utah. That's all the journal mentions on that.

HF: Now turning our attention just a little, for a few moments, to his contribution to the establishment of industry in this area and particularly on Poole Island. Do you understand that he had and did make a contribution to the milling of flour or wheat, as I should say?

John: John R. was instrumental in getting a grist mill built there Menan. He and his son-in-law, Andrew Anderson, were instrumental in getting the grist mill there. But before they had a grist mill there they had to take their grain down to the Marsh Valley area where there was a grist mill. There it was a ground into flour.

HF: That would have required a quite a distance problem in traveling, wouldn't?

John: Oh yes, it would have taken a week to make the trip.

HF: Now this period would be prior to the period of time when Rexburg had a grist mill, probably?

John: Yes, a long time before Rexburg, of course, didn't become settled until around March, 1883, and John R. Poole had been up here some five years before. This is quite a significant point I think. Now pursuing the idea of his contribution to local industry and tyrant to get this going for the settlers is there anything in the journal that considers his effort s in this way.

Rulon: The journal states that in the early summer of 1880, Mr. Poole put most of his teams back to work freighting. His son, Hyrum, was placed in charge of this arduous work. They hauled from Blackfoot to Challis and Custer. When harvest time came that year in Cache Valley, Utah, Mr. Poole took some of this young man of the settlement to engage in threshing. He purchased a threshing machine and operated it through that

season. In order to provide bread for his own families in the new settlement he had a considerable amount he had earned in toil ground into flour and hauled to his new home. Unfortunately some of the wheat used had been frosted and was a poor quality. Again the fall of 1881 he went to Cache Valley and operated his threshing machine and gain provided much of the flour for the new settlement. That year some grain was produced along Willow Creek east of Eagle Rock, as well as, on the island. At the end of the threshing season in Cache Valley, Mr. Poole moved his machine to Idaho. Before the threshing was completed, winter had sent in some of the work was done in the snow. Now Mr. Poole was also influential in building the flour mill in Menan which served the people of the Valley for nearly half a century. Mary Poole Richardson mixed and baked the first bread from the first flour ground through the mill on the day of Mr. Poole's funeral.

HF: Isn't that interesting. Well, now, as we come to a close of this tape, John T. Poole, grandson of John Rawlston Poole, through Jeanette, I'd like to have you tell me a little something about your early impression of Poole's Island out around in the Menan area. As we compare the day which we now live with the excellent means of transportation, cars and airplanes and rail. As you were growing upon as a youngster, what kind of transportation did you have at your disposal there on Poole's Island?

John: Well, in my early life, the only form of transportation that my father had was a team and a tired wagon. Wherever we went, we went in this wagon. That as characteristic of all of the people. Now, as for roads, in the early '90's the roads went wherever the contour of the land allowed them to go. They didn't follow any section lines. We just traveled around among the sagebrush, willows, and hawthorns to get to the various places where we wanted to go. I recall very vividly the school house was only a block from my father's home on the town site of Menan. I had a trail through the sagebrush that I followed to get from my father's home over to the school.

HF: What did you do as a youngster for entertainment? You young fellows, did you get together and do a lot of riding or how did you entertain yourselves?

John: Well, us young fellow, all of us, had a saddle horse. That's the way we entertained ourselves mostly. But I remember very well, as a group, boys and girls, wanted to go somewhere we went afoot. There wasn't anyplace around the immediate vicinity that we couldn't walk and get to such as the little butte east of Menan, which is a mile and a half to two miles. We didn't think anything of walking up there. After there was a bridge put on the main channel of the Snake River, why a group of us young people would walk over to the big butte and think nothing of climbing to the top of the big buttes. That was about the recreation that we had.

HF: What would you do on those buttes? Just climb them?

John: Just climb up there and look back around over the valley.

Were there any artifacts, Indian relics that you ever found over there?

John: Oh, yes, we would pick up some relics. There were places where we would find these flint arrowheads. Little thing of that kind. There was plenty of those around those big buttes but I never seen any of them around the little buttes. That was about the recreation that we had.

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Rulon: Did you ever play any baseball?

John: Well, I happened to be one of those who cleaned the sagebrush off the town square, what we called the town square, and laid out a baseball diamond. That was the first one that was built there in the Menan vicinity. That was built on the church property where the schoolhouse and the church were.

HF: Did any business section develop at all in Menan: In other words, three or four stores. Did you ever have much of a business section in Menan?

John: Well, there were some stores there early. The Raymond people, Spence Raymond, had a store there. I don't recall just who else. But the early store of any size was C. A. Smith's. C. A. Smith's came in from Ogden and put in the mercantile store which supplied a large section of that area for years.

HF: Now did Mr. Call have any properties, stores or anything of this nature over in Menan?

John: Not in Menan. He was in Rigby.

HF: He had a big store, a merchandising establishment in Rigby, didn't he?

John: Yes.

HF: Do you recall who the first postmaster was of Menan?

John: Well, I am pretty sure it must have been C. A. Smith.

HF: The postmaster?

John: Yes, he had the post office in his store in the early days.

HF: Well now, as we close, can you tell me a little something about your own family, who you married, when, and your children?

John: I married Louise J. Lewis, who lived at that time in Annis. We were married in May 23, 1910. To that union we have four boys: John Rulon, the oldest, Cecil Ruben, the second, Lesley Wane, the third, and Alvin E., the fourth boy. Then we had four girls after the four boys. Vera Verle Erickson, the oldest, Marjorie Driggs, the second, Neva Mae Jenkins, the third, and Lorene Beck, the fourth.

HF: It has been a real pleasure to have you come to the office this afternoon. I appreciate your son being here with you. We have called upon him to do the reading from these various; we have two or three versions of journals here. We have been kind of combing through those to get something from them in a chronological fashion. So I am indebted to you Brethren this afternoon for the opportunity of getting material about John Rawlston Poole and the settlement of Poole's Island and the contribution this man and his fine posterity have made to the Upper Snake River Valley Pioneer Heritage. We have a lot with which to be grateful don't we?

John: A lot, I'd say. These pioneers sure left us a great heritage. I don't know of any part of the West here that has been blessed more than the Snake River Valley. We should be very grateful for his heritage that we have. And I'll say this, that if in compiling your records here if there is anything further that we can be of help to you, we'd be willing to come and give you all the information that we have.

HF: I surely appreciate your spirit and your good will. I keenly appreciate both of your men. Thanks a lot to you.