

VOICES FROM THE PAST

**HENRY ALVIN “HARRY” MUNNS
LIFE STORY**

By Alvin W. Munns

March 16, 1969

Tape # 136

Oral Tape by Harold Forbush

Transcribed by Louis Clements

January 2003

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.

HF: Today is the 16th day of March, 1969, here at Rexburg; it is my pleasure to welcome to my office, Alvin W. Munns of Madison County. He will relate to us the story of his illustrious father, the former Sheriff of Madison County, Henry Alvin Munns, commonly known as Harry Munns. Alvin, as the son, the eldest son of Harry Munns, we've heard a lot about the legends of your father. Legends of a great and very daring lawman. Legends of his appearance and by reason of his appearance his capacity to induce better law enforcement or as a deterrent to law enforcement violations. Over the years I have heard so many very noted, outstanding, thrilling stories of your father. So it's with a genuine pleasure that we welcome you here today. Incidentally, you're, as I understand it, in your seventy-second year of life, you're a farmer here in Madison county. Many of your brothers and sisters still live here in Madison County. We were overjoyed a few months ago when the Upper Snake River Valley Historical Society featured the life story of Harry Munns. I remember you making some statements. So with real joy and satisfaction I welcome you here today. First of all we should like to inquire of you by asking and suggesting you give the full name of your father, his date of birth, and where he was born?

AM: My father's full name is Henry Alvin Munns. He was born March 4, 1872, at Argyle Shire, Cambridge, England.

HF: Now if you will just state his father's name and his mother's name and when he was married?

AM: My grandfather's name was James Munns. My grandmother's name was Elizabeth Collins Munns. They were married March 7, 1894, in the Salt Lake City temple.

HF: Well now, can you recall some of the early episodes, let me ask this way. What are some of the earliest recollections of your father?

AM: Well I have a life sketch here. Some of the first things I can remember about my father was when he gave me a ride on a horse. The next incident was when the wind blew the gable end of the house in on us while we were eating supper. When the gable end of the house blew in, my sister went to the door to let the cat in. The gable end of the house was brick. The brick filled the chair my sister was sitting and after the excitement was all over, none of us was hurt but father. He was cut with falling brick. The next thing I remember was when father was working for the sugar company. They built the factory at Logan. They then sent father to Logan to start the factory up. Maybe I had better explain how my father got started working for the sugar company. I have heard him tell of his experience, as a young man, when he was working in Cookeville, Wyoming. They were building the railroad through. They were using horses to pull the plow and scrapers. My father was herding the horses at night. He would bring them in early in the morning in time to go to work. He tells of a thrilling experience on night when he was herding the

horses. Along came an awful rainstorm that was driving the horses with the storm. He came upon a cabin out on the desert. He got in the cabin out of the storm. There was no latch on the door. So he got a piece of wood to prop the door shut to keep the wind and storm out. After that was done, there was a knock on the door. My father said, "Who is there?" No answer. Everything was quite for a few minutes. Then another knock came on the door. He asked again, "Who's there?" No answer. You can imagine how this can make a person feel. Father was around eighteen years old at this time. A third knock came on the door. Father fired a bullet into the lower part of the door. When daylight came he could see a porcupine track near the door. It was while Father was working on this job that he came down with typhoid fever. They put him on a pack horse and took him to where they could send him home to Lehi. Father was more than a year recovering from this sickness. Father's brother was field man for the Utah Idaho sugar company. He gave father a job putting the steam line. He was too weak to stand hard work. When they were ready to start factory up, they gave father the job of boiler tender. That was about the time that father met my mother and was married. As I mentioned before, they sent him to Logan to get the factory going. This was when we moved to Logan, Utah. A few years later we moved to Smithfield, Utah. The sugar company built a sugar factory at Lewiston. They sent my father to Lewiston to start this factory going. Father worked there for a few years and then he bought a farm, forty acres, in the southwest part of Smithfield, Utah. He leased a dry farm between Hyde Park and Smithfield on the east side of the highway. This is when I began to enjoy the companionship of my father most. He was home most of the time. We worked together on the farm. A year or so later father took the job of City Marshall in Smithfield, Utah. He had a few interesting and exciting experiences. Father was a boxer and a wrestler in his younger years. In those days we had to furnish our own entertainment. The city would have horse races, pulling matches, boxing, and wrestling. Burt Danford, Mr. Rogers, and Vern Wilcox were some of the best men we had at that time. My father, George Toolson, and Joel Gudkey used to box and wrestle with these men to help keep them in shape. After the races and pulling match they had a Negro Minstrel show. This nigger was a slight of hand performer. He could through how voice and make it appear as if a dummy doll was talking. Everything was going fine until Burt Danford decided to lasso this Negro. Burt was pretty well liquored up. He brought a lariat rope and climbed up a telephone pole right next to the platform and roped the Negro. But couldn't pull the Negro up the pole but he was hollering for help. Father jumped up on the platform and cut Burt's rope. This made Burt unhappy. Burt came down the pole as fast as he could. Burt said to my father, "You old black s or b, you can't cut my rope and get away with it." Burt made a pass at father. He ducked Burt's blow and knocked Burt to the ground. Every time Burt attempted to get up, father would give him a push and a kick in the pants until he got him out of the crowd. Then he put the handcuffs on Burt and took him to jail. Through the event of the days, a gypsy had a pulling horse and a race horse. He bet the crowd that there was not a horse in town that could out pull this little brown horse of his that pulled him out of the holes. So George Toolson and Ev Smith were pull horse men. They had some awfully good pulling horses. The gypsy put this little brown horse right about 1400 pounds against this horse that weighed seventeen or eighteen and they got up quite a purse to pull this little horse up out of the holes. When they got ready to pull Ev Smith asked the gypsy who was going to drive them. The gypsy told Eve Smith to drive them. So Ev drove the team. When he spoke to them this little

horse just squatted down and they couldn't pull the hoses out of the holes. When they got ready to pull Ev Smith to drive them. So Ev drove the team. When he spoke to them this little horse just squatted down and they couldn't pull the horse out of the hole. They tried a second time and they couldn't pull him out of the hole. He won the money on the pulling match. He had some horse hair wrapped around the ankle, the front foot of this race horse. Then he bet Halliards, they were the race horse men, that his horse could outrun anything in town. So they got up another course for this race. This horse was on the three legs when they went down to the starting point. He slipped off and cut off this horse's hair from around the top of his ankle and jumped back on him. When he came through he outruns them two or three lengths. That was when there was such a feeling stirred up about this gypsy that father told him to get his things and get out of town. So they gypsy left town. But he had all the money that was loose floating around town. This Joel Gudkey was a butcher for Bob Griffith working there in Smithfield. They asked him to go on a mission. So Joel accepted a call. They sent him to down in the Ozarks in Kentucky on a mission to where there hadn't been a missionary there in seventeen years. They had tarred and feathered them as fast as they went down there and they couldn't get anyone to go in there anymore. Till they sent Joel Gudkey down there. He hadn't been in town only a few hours when the word got around the grapevine that there was a Mormon Missionary in town. Well five of the biggest, burley men they had started to look for this Mormon Missionary to tar and feather him. Well Joel was given this information by a widow ladies granddaughter. She said her grandmother had sent her out to find this missionary to tell him they were after him. So he went to this grandmother's place and asked where these men here. He wanted to meet them. So she told him. So he went and fount these five men. He said eh understood they were looking for Mormon Missionaries. They told him yes. Well, he said, I'm your man. He said I understand you are going to tar and feather me. They said, yes that's what were looking for you for. So he said, surely you are men of fair play. I can whip all five of you if you will come at me one at a time. So they decided that was fair enough. So they put their best man up against Joel and he whipped him without getting a scratch on him. Then they put their second best man up and he whipped him the same way. They put their third man up and he whipped him the same way. Then these five men got in an argument to see which one took him home to supper and to take care of him. Joel did the best missionary job that was ever done in Kentucky. Now Joel's son was the coach at Ashton, the basketball coach. So that might give you some idea who he was. Then another experience I have heard father talk about was in Smithfield while he was City Marshal. Charlie Jueshaw used to own this home that Hilliard's bought. He was mentally ill and had lost his home and had to move into a cabin down on the creek. While he was uptown one time, every time he came back, this seemed to be his home and he would go in there and go to bed and just make himself to home. He scared Mrs. Hilliard so bad she called my father. He went up there to get Charlie. He had left the house and gone down to his cabin. So father went down there after him. He had the door locked. Father knocked on the door. Charlie wanted to know who was there. Father said, it's me. Charlie said who's me: He said, open the door and see. So Charlie opened the door and peeked out and saw it was father, and he had his double barreled shotgun in his hand. The barrel was pointed at the door when he opened the door. Quick as father saw that he grabbed the end of that gun. Charlie hanging onto the gun got pulled into the doorway. Quick as Charlie saw he couldn't get the gun away

from father, he just dropped the gun and grabbed father both legs. Father stepped inside where he could get braced against the wall. Charlie was a painter and he had a painter bench just about where it struck fathers shoulders. So he just braced himself and just let Charlie lift and struggle and work on his legs until he eased up a little. Then he reached over and took him by the seat of his pants and lifted him off the ground and then dropped on him. Then he drug him outside. Charlie stayed there until he fainted and passed out. When he came to, he said, have you got a warrant for my arrest? Father said, yes. He said you get your things and come and go with me and he took him downtown. Another experience I heard him tell about, I didn't see this. Mrs. Walman (?) Was an elderly lady and she had gone mentally unbalanced. Her father was quite a hand to drink. He was up to the saloon most of his time and would come home drunk. He was up to the saloon most of his time and would come home drunk. I think that's what helped to make her into the shape she was in. When father went to get her to try to take her back to her home, she refused to go with him. She said I will go under one condition and that is if you will waltz with me. So father took a hold of her and waltzed a little ways down the street with her and then she went home with him peaceful. A few days later my sister, Lou, and I were coming from the farm that my father had bought in Smithfield. She was sneaking away from her son. She saw us coming in this buggy and she came out and hailed us and stopped us. She jumped right into the buggy and took the liens away from me and kept and looking back. We didn't know why she kept a looking back. We looked back and could see a team gray horses coming with a wagon just as fast as they cold run. That was her son who saw her get in this buggy. He was trying to catch her. She came to a corner and instead of going around the road; she cut across the corner sidewalk between the tree and the buggy. She just happened to miss all the trees. She gave us a quite a thrilling ride too. About two years later we moved to Idaho. Father drove a team of horses and a buckboard buggy from Smithfield, Utah, to Downey, Idaho, looking for a dry farm. After looking around Downey for a couple of three days, he left eh team in the livery barn and took the train to Rexburg, Idaho. My uncle, John Weekes, showed him around the Rexburg bench. They located a dry farm in the Herbert area on Lyman Creek. Father took the train back to Downey, drove the team back to Smithfield, sold the home and the farm, and loaded his belongings in a box car. The household goods were in the other end of the car. The machinery and implements were in the doorway. I came along with my father to help water the livestock as he had to carry the water from the steam engine back to the car. He would hand the water up into car for me and I could pour the water in to a tub for the livestock. We left Utah on the 25th day of April, 1910, at noon. Mother and the family left April 26th and passed father and I in Pocatello. Father and I arrived in Thornton, Idaho, at noon April 27, 1910. Mother and family lived in Archer the first year we were here in Idaho. Father and I went to the dry farm. We stayed there all summer until the crop was harvested. When the crops were sold we lacked \$450 of making enough money to make the first payment on the farm. Father sold the best team he had for \$500 to Lew Burn. He gave mother the \$50 that was left and went looking for a job. When spring came father came back to Idaho and went to work driving a steam engine plowing sagebrush for Karen Rowbery up on the Rexburg Bench. That fall he went to the sugar factory to work. When Madison County was organized in 1914, I. N. Corey was the first Sheriff with Floyd Nichols as Deputy Sheriff. Sometime the next spring, Mr. Corey asked my father to be deputy. I don't know just why Floyd Nicholas asked to be released

whether it was illness or what it was. When Mr. Corey declined to run for Sheriff was when my father was elected Sheriff in 1916.

HF: Now, can you give us a couple of illustrations of how enthusiastically your father performed his services as a Deputy Sheriff? I understand he was Deputy Sheriff under Corey for about a year and a half. Maybe a couple of illustrations.

AM: Billy Latham was arrested for moon shining and bootlegging. He was caught and taken into custody. Mr. Charlie Poole was prosecuting attorney. He asked permission from I. N. Corey to take this man down on the street to see if he could find someone who would go his bonds. While looking for someone to go his bond he gave Charlie Poole the slip and got away from hi. Mr. Poole came back to the Sheriff's office and told Mr. Corey what had happened. My father motioned for him to go and see if he could pick Billy up again. As he came down the stairs, I was standing on the street. He called me by name and motioned for me to come with him. I hurried around and went down the street just as fast as he could drive it. When we got going down the state highway along the track he told me what had happened, that he was looking for this man. He said, when we get to Thornton, we'll stop that train and search it. He said, you take one side of the train and I'll take the other. If he comes out of a car on your side nail on to him and hold him till can get t to you.

HF: Now let's see, your father was armed, he had a gun. Had he given you a gun?

AM: No, I didn't have one. He wasn't on this train. So father turned and asked me if I knew the road across the desert. I told him that I did pretty well as I had crossed there several time driving cattle. So he got in the car and we went to the Carter Bridge across the North Fork of the Snake River. We went down to that irrigation ditch where the crossing was and started out across the desert. We got to the cross roads and father said if he's come this way we should be able to see some tracks. We drove slowly and he told me to watch one side of the road and he did the other. We saw the footprints of a man. So we turned back onto the road that went to Hunt's well. When we got to the brink of a low basin we could see this man walking across this basin. Father hollered for him to stop. He broke into a run and father fired a shot right closer to his feet and told him to come back. He kept running and the next time he shot closer. He turned and came back as father had told him too. Father brought him back to Rexburg and put him in jail.

HF: Was this particular man pretty well known in the community at that time?

AM: Well, I couldn't tell you that. They used to live in Butte, Montana. He had only been here a shot time. He was a barber, working a barbershop when this took place. Another incident, there was a man working for the Chambers people down here in Burton. Their hired man borrowed their saddle horse to come to Rexburg one Saturday evening. He didn't come home Saturday night. Chambers wasn't much excited about that so they didn't do anything. They waited for him to come back Sunday and he didn't show up. Monday morning he hadn't showed up. So they came to Rexburg to the Sheriff's office and told Mr. Corey what had happened. This man had borrowed their horse and hadn't

returned. So Mr. Corey told father to go and see if he could find this man and the horse. So father went out and started looking for this man. He went down through the pool halls and the business houses in town and couldn't find him. Then he started looking for the horse. He found the horse out north of town near the Thompson's place. He had sold the horse to Mr. Thompson for seventy-five dollars and left town. So when he found out he had sold the horse, he went down to the depot and asked the agent if he had seen a man of this description or if he bought a ticket out of town. The depot agent told him that a man of that description had bought a ticket for Idaho Falls. So father went to Idaho Falls and asked the agent down there if a man of that description had got off there. They said he had. He asked if he knew which way he went or if he bought a ticket out of town for some other part of the country. He went and looked at his records and he had bought a ticket for Pocatello. He went to Pocatello and asked the same question down there. He had bought a ticket for Montpelier, Idaho. SO father went to Montpelier and looked around town for several hours and he ran onto this man. At least one who filled this description. Father never saw the man and didn't know just exactly who he was looking for only from the description that had been given him. This man was in the pool hall. Father buddied with him for a little while and told him he was looking for a job. He said, they tell me there is a big sewer project going in Rexburg. She said, I was about to go up there looking for a job. This fellow said it won't do you any good to go up there. He said, I just came from there and you can hardly buy a job up there. So he was pretty sure that he knew that he had the right man. So he buddied around with him and bought him dinner. Just a few minutes before the train pulled in he asked this man if he would mind going down to the depot with him to meet a friend. He said, no, he wouldn't mind going with him. So he went down to the depot with father to meet this friend. Just as the train was pulling in he served the papers on this man and put the handcuffs on him and brought him back to Rexburg.

HF: Now in 1914 when the Madison county was organized and commenced functioning as a county, and then two years later when you father became the elected Sheriff and commenced to served as the Sheriff in January, 1917, where were the Sheriff's offices located here in Rexburg?

AM: On the south side of Main Street in the Thomas or McAllister building, upstairs, now owned by the Webster Family, the office of the Sheriff was moved to the new court house in January, 1921. The offices were later occupied by the W. Lloyd Adams law office.

HF: I see, so from that particular point, your father functioned as the Sheriff and if deputy worked there for about four years, wasn't it, from 1917 to about 1921, when the new courthouse was constructed. What was there about your father's appearance, his conduct, and his demeanor which, let us say, virtually induced people to become better law enforcement citizens, who were more willing to adhere to the law?

AM: Well, he was a large man. He weighed two hundred an ten pounds. He bad a big black moustache, a very long heavy moustache. He wore a big Stetson hat. He was very stern. He usually knew what he was talking about before he talked. He was very stern in

his way. When he spoke you knew he meant what he said. His eyes were black, could burn holes in a blanket. He could almost pierce a hole right into you. So many fellows said all he's got to do is look at me and tell me I done something. I would dare tell him I didn't. He was very kind hearted but very stern in his ways.

HF: Well now with this background of your father, why don't you relate to us some of the experiences he had as a Sheriff? Maybe you can tell us one or two and then we will have some more questions for you.

AM: One experience he had was in Sugar City. When the sugar company was raising beets there on the sugar company farm, they had sixty-five men working there at one time in the sugar beets thinning, weeding, and hoeing. In their fracas this one Mexican got in a fight with a white man and killed him and buried him under the floor of a cow barn in Sugar City. There was a white woman cooking for this crew of men, and it bothered her so bad that she came to town and reported that to the Sheriff. She told him what had happened. She was afraid for her own life if the word ever got out that she had told about this. Father wanted to take her back to Sugar City so that she didn't have to walk or thumb a ride. This lady didn't want him to take her back. She was afraid somebody would see her get out of the car up there. So father talked her into, he said I'll turn you loose somewhere in town where they won't see you. So he took her back to Sugar city. That night when she was serving supper, she told him what time they would be serving supper, and about where this man would be sitting. Father said that he would come in while they were all inside eating supper. So at the set time he opened the door and stood in the doorway while these men were eating. He sized them up until he decided he could tell from the descriptions of the man which one he was. So he pointed his finger at him and told him, he said, you're the man I want. Come and go with me. This man said, I didn't do it, I didn't do it. Father said that makes no difference. You come and go with me. So he brought him to Rexburg and put him in jail. In the cross questioning he admitted that he had killed this man and buried him under this cow barn floor. Another incident with a Mexican. This Mexican man had fought in a fracas and knifed a man until he had died from the results of it. That was two of the experiences he had with Mexicans. This man who had knifed the man got away and father had followed him from one place to another until he finally caught him in Lehi, Utah, working on a section. He was five days in tracing this man down.

HF: Over the years the comments I've heard about Harry Munns, the famous sheriff of Madison County, this man had some kind of an uncanny capacity to do research, to search out his man, and to go find him and track him down, to bring him to justice. Now if you have a story or two that would perhaps illustrate these qualities, this uncanny ability to find, to search out, and to solve these violations?

AM: Yes, I have one here. There was a farmer who filled his granary with wheat in the fall at harvest time. He lived in the Valley and came down for the winter. When he went back the next spring to start farming his grain was all gone. His granary was empty. He came to Rexburg and reported this to my father. My father asked him all the questions that he thought was necessary about it. If he had any idea who did it, and he didn't seem

to know a thing about it. His grain had been hauled away in the wintertime by sleigh. Father went down to Main Street here and picked up a man accused him of stealing this wheat. At that time you could pick up a man on suspicion and hold him for thirty-six hours. Then if he wouldn't break down you would have to turn him loose for thirty-six hours. Then you could go pick him up again. Father did this three times. The third time that he picked him up he said, now listen, this would be a lot easier on you if you will confess stealing of this wheat than it will be if you have to go to court. It will be cheaper for you and cheaper for the county. This man said he never did it. So father said you may as well own up to this because I have your fingerprints from the army and they correspond with the fingerprints on that granary door. He was asking this man these questions so fast that he hardly had time to answer one till he asked him another one. This man says that's a lie, I had my glove on when I done that. He had the deputy taking this all down in shorthand the other room. The door was just ajar so he didn't know he was in there. When he found out that father knew for sure that it was him and the he wasn't going to turn him loose, he owned up to it. He called the deputy out of the office and read his own statement back to him so he admitted that he had done it. There were two other men implicated in the stealing of this wheat. In some of the questions father asked him, he said, which load was that you tipped over on the Bybee Dugway? He said, I didn't tip over. This same man later served a year in Boise. These other men paid wages while he was laying it out in Boise. He made the remark that he had been away to school. Well, the next summer was a moon shining and bootlegging case. Father drove in there and went to his place one evening about five o'clock. He thought it was someone coming in to buy a bottle of booze. He called, here I am. He was abounding in the barn milking a cow. Father went around there and set there and visited with him till he finished milking. Father said, hand that milk up and get up here on the step. He said I understand you are moon shining or bootlegging. He said, no I'm not. Father said well if you are, I've come to notify you to clean up and otherwise I will have to take you to jail. He said, Harry, if you can catch me moon shining or bootlegging we'll be just as good a friends as we are now. So the next night father came out there and asked Eb to help him get up on the haystack and tip that barrel of mash over. So they got up and tipped the mash over and poured it out on the ground and father took him to town and locked him up. Then the boys were pulling pranks out in our area. Five of the boys moved a footbridge out into the middle of the road. Father and his deputy were the first two to come along to drive over this footbridge. He had an old Dodge car. They were going out to get a young fellow who was drunk and raising cane at his father's place. His father had called and asked them to come out and take him to jail. So when they got out and looked at the car to see that nothing was hurt too bad, father told his deputy to go on up and get this boy. He said, I'll stay here and pick up these kids who have pulled this prank. So the deputy went on up and got this boy and father stayed there. Pretty quick the boys came down out of the trees. They had climbed up in the tree to see what happened when they went over the ridge. Father stood there until he thought they were all out of the tree then he told them to come to him. He said, come here. They just scattered and went in five different directions. He pulled his gun out and fired a shot in the air and said, come back here. They all came back with their hands in the air. Don't shoot Mr. Munns, don't shoot, I'll come back. He put the boys in the car and took them to Rexburg. He locked them up for two or three hours and then gave them a talking to. Then he brought them back out home

and turned them loose. Then there was another experience herein Rexburg. There was a mental man in the Teton River. He got out there to get away from the city officials who wouldn't wage out there to get him. He just stood there. They come and got my father to go out there. He finally persuaded this man to come out of the river and he'd take him to the café and get him soothing to eat. So the man confided in him and came out of the river. When father got around behind the building where the jail door was, this fellow saw that he had framed him. This fellow began to fight. My father knocked him down just as fast as he could handle. Lloyd Ricks came along to see what was going on he said, Harry, let me take him on for a while. So Mark took him on for a while and he was wearing Mark out. So the two of them had to just pick him up and carry him to the jail and lock the door on him. Another experience. There were two men stealing wheat up in the Canyon Creek area. They had stolen quite a lot of wheat and two or three of the farmers had discovered the grain was gone and knew or thought it was them that was doing it. So father went over to the livery barn, hired a team and sleigh, and drove up to Canyon Creek looking for or pretending to be looking for someone else. He pulled up to this place and these men both greeted him and asked him if he had been to dinner. He told them no. He said I'm looking for Herb Freeman's place. Can you tell me where it is? They said, yes, and pointed across the country to where it was. They said the roads are not open up that far. So they took, one fellow unhooked the team while they got him and bite of dinner. He ate his dinner and visited with them for a while and then said he's better hook up the team and get over there and get back to two before dark. The fellow said, stay here in the cabin and keep your feet dry and I'll hook up your team. So he went and hooked up the team for him and drove them back up to the house. He served papers on both of them and brought them back to town. Another boy's experience out in our ward. There of them got together one night and stole some chickens. They were having a chicken supper down to one of these boys' homes. One of the neighbors saw one of these boys walking down the road with a chicken under one arm, so he called my father and told him what he saw and where the boys were. SO father gave them time to get their chicken cooked and supper over with and then he went in on them. There weren't quite through eating. They all stopped eating. He said, go ahead boys and finish your supper. But they weren't hungry anymore. SO he said, if you're not a gonna finish your supper, come and go with me. So he brought them over to Rexburg and locked them up for four or five hours. He went back in there and gave them a right good talking to and brought them back out home and turned them loose. He said, now don't me ever catch you fellows in trouble again. Then another incident that happened right here in Rexburg. After the car licenses expired the mayor of the city came in one time and gave him quite a bawling out for having so many cars parked around town without a license on them. He went downtown and bought one padlock and one chain. He went and put it on the mayor's car. He had a ten dollar license for a truck and a car, a Model T Ford. He used the same license on the truck. He said, you'd better put that on the car where it belongs and go and buy another license for the truck. Of course that made the mayor kind off unhappy. Then I'll have to tell you one on my Uncle George, father's brother. He was along in his eighties and was up here staying with my father for a while in the summertime. He had the blues and was feeling bad for himself. He had lost his wife and most of his family in death and was wishing he could die and get out of his misery and wouldn't be a burden to somebody else. He was riding with father out around the Teton

River north of here. He was a grumbling about and wishing he could die. Father said, get out of the car and get in those willows there and I'll put a shot through you and take care of that. It startled him. He said I believe he'd done it if I had got out of the car.

HF: Prior to the time that the automobile came into usage in the Rexburg area, how did your father as sheriff perform his duties as sheriff in going out serving papers, making arrests, and the other functions that were required as a sheriff?

AM: He used a team. There used to be a livery barn herein Rexburg just back of where this First Security Bank is. Mr. Nicolas used to run that livery barn. There was always a tam and a buggy available when he needed it. That was his means of transportation until the car came onto the market. The first car he used was a Model T Ford. From the Model T Ford to a Dodge car. He drove a Dodge car for as long as he was sheriff.

HF: Now do you ever recall, in the early days as a deputy, when he was a deputy. This would have been in 1915 or along in there. Did you ever see him jump on a horse or something like this, you know, and having to get out and serve papers on anybody?

AM: Well, I can't recall him riding a horse. I know that he has but not as recall.

HF: Did he usually get a driver to go with him?

AM: Hardly ever.

HF: He would handle the team himself?

AM: Yes, a time or two I know they made him fetch, that he took somebody with him. As a rule, he usually went alone. He said the men were not trained. On experience I will relate. He took a man with him on time and come pretty near getting shot himself because the man he took to help him got excited. They were trying to stop a man who had a load of whisky in his car. When he pulled up to a place where they knew he was going to stop, father had cautioned this man not to loose his head and get excited. But when he called halt for him to stop, this man stepped on the gas. My father stepped on the running board and took his gun and caved that side of the glass in on him and stopped him. In this fracas, this man that was helping him, tried to shoot the motor car to stop the car. He bounced the tin on the opposite side of the car right against my father's stomach. That was one reason why he wouldn't take anybody with him when he went out on one of these kinds of jobs.

HF: During the twenties, the roaring twenties, was, of course, one of the great problems of law enforcement was enforcement of the liquor laws. The bootlegging was going on. Of course, those were the days of prohibition up until, what, 1932 I believe, and '33. So this particular area was one of the great problems for law enforcement.

AM: That was the biggest problem. They were packing it across the mountains from Monida with twelve and thirteen pack horses at a time coming into the Sunny Brook farm

out here on the desert west of Plano. That's where most of this trouble took place was with the bootlegging, some of them moon shining, and others packing the liquor across the mountain by the horse back so that you couldn't trace them.

HF: Was your father called upon at time to work with federal officers who were endeavoring to enforce the federal liquor laws?

AM: Almost constantly.

HF: Do you recall any particular episode of this type of thing?

AM: Yes, but I don't remember the man's name. They used to leave here in one car and come back in another loaded with whiskey, so it was hard to catch them. When they finally caught this man, where he stepped on the running board and caved the side of the glass in, he said, I've drove through that river bridge time and time again with a load of liquor when you were standing on the other end and you just let me go. The left here in one car and came back in another. That was the car he was looking for and it wasn't there.

HF: Do you recall and remember your father in his dress when he would go out to perform his regular duties? Did he wear any particular type of dress or clothing and did he wear a gun usually?

AM: Well, he used to come out to my place and want an old pair of overhalls. He'd leave his good hat there and take one of my old hats. He always kept me in hats because when he got his hat soiled, he'd give it to me and get another one. I was working out in the field all the time. I two or three hats pretty near all the time. He would come and get tone of those old hats and a colored work shirt and a pair of overhalls. That was the way he went after a lot of these cases that he captured. Pretending to be an old farmer or cowboy was very successful for him. These two fellows that he got up in the mountains were stealing these harnesses, mismatching them so that you couldn't identify them. They would steal wagons and paint them a different color and was selling them. That's the way he found or caught those fellows. He went up there looking for his horses. He rode a saddle horse into where they were. Had dinner with them. Then after the dinner was over he got all the information he wanted, he wanted, he brought them back to town with his overhalls, one of my old dirty hats, and a red handkerchief in his pocket.

HF: They had no idea that he was the sheriff?

AM: No, no, in fact they almost gave themselves away. He was admiring their harnesses and wagons and one thing or another they had there and they didn't have the least idea that he was the sheriff.

HF: Now where was this? Was this maybe up in the Teton Basin Country or Ashton?

AM: NO, it was over here back or Ririe. Back up on those dry farms above Ririe and Shelley and in that area.

HF: Did he always use a gun when he went out?

AM: He always took his gun but he never had to shoot anybody. He said he was thankful for that. He said I'd rather die than come back without the man that I went after. I never knew him going out without having his gun on him at any time. He was an awful good shot to. He practiced shooting quite a lot. I rode with him when he was driving that old Dodge car. He undoes the thumbscrew on the windshield. He pushes the windshield forward and shoots a rabbit going down the road while he was driving the car. He was an awful good shot. I've seen him shoot at coyotes and with that six shooter. I've never seen him kill one but you could see where it would kick up the dirt so close to them even shooting at a long distance.

HF: Was this, what type of side arm, fire arm did he use?

AM: Thirty-six colt.

HF: Those were automatic, I take it?

AM: I've got his gun now.

HF: Well now, as a sheriff, did he bring his family into town? Did they live for a few years right in Rexburg or did they travel back and forth out to the old ranch?

AM: The family lived up on the dry farm or seven years. Then they moved to Rexburg. They lived in Rexburg until they built this new home out here where my sister, Irvin and Mae, lives. Then mother and the family moved out there and father drove back and forth from there a good lot. He stayed there at the courthouse the most of his time so he was available whenever a call came in.

HF: Now this home which he built, where is it located?

AM: Archer.

HF: Who lives on that place now?

AM: Irvin Burns and my sister, Mae.

HF: As a father and as a family man, how would you describe your father?

AM: Well, I never saw a man who could put on a rougher exterior and be so kind hearted as he was. He never had only just spoken to us and we done what he asked us to. We respected him very much. He was awful stern. When he told you to do something we knew he meant what he said. But I don't think there was a more tender hearted or kinder

man that live than he was and still could put on such a rough exterior that you would think he was as tough and hard boiled as anybody. I don't know of him ever having to lay a hand on one of his kids or give us a spanking or anything like that. He never did me. I don't know of him ever doing that to any one of the kids.

HF: Now with his prisoners, when he would take them into custody, to your knowledge, would he treat them with kindness or was he always stern. Was he always in a position or want to demonstrate authoritativeness towards these prisoners?

AM: No, no. He treated them just as kind as a person could. I'll tell you one experience when that came out real plain. The time that his outlaw shot a farmer in his arm for cutting his fence. This happened in Montana. The farmer was out fixing his fence when this outlaw came along. He just got and cut the fence and rode on through. This man tried to get him through the right arm, right next to the shoulder, and then went off and left him out in the field there. He rode into Dillon, Montana. This man made it to the house and reported to the Sheriff what had happened and they were out there waiting for this man when he rode into town. He put his horse, his saddle horse, in the livery barn and went uptown to get something to eat. The Sheriff stopped him and arrested him. He said if you are going to take me to jail, I'd like to go get my coat off my saddle and some papers and things I've got in there. So the Sheriff let him go back in the barn to get his coat. He had his gun wrapped up in his coat. He just stepped out of the livery barn door and host the Sheriff. Then he run across the road. A freight train was just pulling through Dillon going south. He jumped on the car and crawled between the cars. It is on a grade there on the west side of the track there at Dillon is quite low. There were several shots exchange there, shooting under the car, trying to shoot this man. He got further down the track till they couldn't shoot between the wheels to get him. Then he came back on the grade and caught that freight train headed south. Well, they reported what had happened all the way down the line, if the train stopped to be on the look out for his man. But it never stopped till they got to Idaho Falls. They called the Sheriff's office in Idaho Falls there was a posse out there. They searched that train but this man wasn't on there. As the train was pulling into Idaho Falls there was a freight train heading up to Rexburg. The two outfits passed one going south and the other going north. While they were still in the freight yards in Idaho Falls, he just stepped from one open boxcar door into another one and come north. They called and said that he hadn't got off the train there and for the Sheriff up here to search this train at Rexburg.

HF: Of course, that involved your dad, didn't it?

AM: It involved my father. So he went down to the depot and met this train when it came in. He told the agent down there what he wanted. He told him to go ahead. So he went up the west side of that freight train till he came to an open box car door. This was after night in the dark. He crawled up into this car and went right back into the corner and squatted down on his heels. He knew just as quickly as he got back in there, there was somebody in the car. He had this fellow between him and the light, what light would show through the door. He could see this fellow coming toward him. So he just set there with his six shooter in his right hand and his spotlight in his left hand. This fellow

touched him on the shoulder and said, how far down the line you going, Jack? Father said, Idaho Falls, and turned this light on and a gun in his stomach. He took a forty-four revolver off his hip and an eight inch hunting knife. He put the handcuffs on him in there in the dark. When they got out of the car, they walked back down to the freight depot in front of that light. He had this fellow in front of him. When he got under that light, he turned around and looked at my father and said, you're the slickest old sob I ever saw. He brought him up here to jail and locked him up and called Dillon and told them that he had got their man. The next day a deputy came down on the train. He started to abuse this feller as soon as he saw him. Father said, now look here, that's my prisoner. You treat him like a gentleman. He is still in my custody and he will be until you get on that train ready to leave town. So when he left to take him back, father went to the depot and got him right up in the car with this deputy. Now he said, he is your prisoner. But he never let anyone abuse his prisoners. When so many of these feller's was in jail for this bootlegging, moonshining, he respected them just as if they weren't criminals. He saw that they got something to eat. He never did abuse one that I know anything about.

HF: Well, now, as we approach the closing part of this interview, there are some other questions we would be interested in knowing. Your father, of course, under law had the right to a deputy. Do you recall come of the deputies that he had during those years of service as a Sheriff?

AM: Yes, he had Clarence Hillman and Marion Hacking. Judge Hacking up here was his deputy.

HF: What can you tell us about some of his deputies? About Marion Hacking, for example. Was Marion Hacking one of his neighbors?

AM: Yes, Marion's folks moved from Canada down here. I used to go to school with Marion. As he got older, Marion was a salesman for International Harvester Company and a collector. Then he applied for this job of deputy after Clarence left. But Clarence was deputy with him for a long time.

HF: He got along very nicely with those with whom he worked?

AM: Very well.

HF: There was never any friction or anything of that nature?

AM: Not to my knowledge.

HF: In the various elections that followed 1916, did he have opposition?

AM: Yes, but not very much.

HF: Do you remember some of those who opposed him in running for Sheriff?

AM: Not personally, no?

HF: You don't recall any of the names?

AM: NO, no I don't.

HF: He served continuously, did he not, from 1917 through 1932? Is this correct?

AM: That's right.

HF: In the fall of '32 he didn't run for office?

AM: NO, he wanted to go back on the farm. He said he had been away from his family so much that he wanted to go back on the farm.

HF: What political party was your father affiliated with?

AM: Republican.

HF: All through those years?

AM: Yes.

HF: Now Mr. Poole, of course, was a Democrat.

AM: Well, he was a good friend of fathers. He sure thought a lot of him. Politicians didn't make any difference to father.

HF: Well, he was a good friend of fathers. He sure thought a lot of him. Politicians didn't make any difference to father.

HF: In the years that you were a man with your father and knew him, surely there much have been some companions of your father. Men who you knew were really supporters of your father, who really backed him in his political work and also in his responsibilities as Sheriff. Would you like to mention some of these men that you personally knew who really supported your dad?

AM: Well, Arthur Porter was a good supporter. Sam Hall was a man father thought a lot of. John Clements, Ras Johnson, John Taylor, the county commissioner for a long time. John was a supporter, thought a lot of my dad and he thought a lot of John.

HF: Well, now, you were the oldest, the eldest in the family...

AM: I have one sister older than me.

HF: Let's see, just quickly calculating, your dad couldn't have been much more than twenty-five years older than you, approximately. This meant that perhaps there were times that you and your dad were perhaps buddy, buddy, or at least your dad had occasion to confide and trust you with certain responsibilities? Could you give us some personal reflections, impressions in this relationship?

AM: Father was away to work so much, after we first came to Idaho, father and I were together all of the first summer working on the dry farm. We went over, after we put our crop in, on Moody Creek and done some plowing for Webster's and Parkinson's. At that time we were plowing over there, father's father, my grandfather, James Munns, passed away in Lehi. My Uncle George Munns, my mother's brother, rode a horse home. I told him that by the time I got the horses home you'd be back. I said, I'll just stay her and take care of them. So I stayed over there and batched it and wrangled the horses and harnessed them and kept a plowing while he went to that funeral. My mother got so worried that she got her brother to come over there and see if I was still all right. He rode that horse bareback again to see if I was all right. I will never forget that. He got off his horse...

HF: This is your father?

AM: No, my Uncle George. He knelt down and asked the Lord to protect me till my father got home. Many times before when father went out on these desperate attempts that he's made to go after men, he's come and told me where he was going. He didn't want to worry mother. He said, if I don't get back at a certain time, you'll know somewhere near where to look for me if there had been foul play. Sometimes it seemed like an awful long time before he came back. If mother had known some of the trips that he went on I am sure it would have worried her something awful. He knew it. He was very tenderhearted. When he left me with a plow outfit, when he went to this father's funeral, he was gone five days. When he came back home and found out that I was still out there plowing, when he thought I'd taken the horses and gone on home, he came over there and shed tears plowing, when he thought I'd taken the horses and gone on home, he came over there and shed tears for leaving me so long up there alone. He was very tenderhearted. Anything that hurt the kids or any of the family he just could help but shed tears like the rest of the kids did. I had many, many a good talk with him in helping to direct my life so that I wouldn't be a disgrace to the family which has helped me very much in going straight through my younger life.

HF: How many members were there in your family?

AM: Yen. Three boys and seven girls. I had one sister older than me, and then I have two sisters, then a brother, two more sisters, then my brother, George, and then two more of the younger girls, Eva and Mae. We're all living and all enjoying good health.

HF: Now, after he declined to run for Sheriff in 1932 and wanted to go back on the farm, which he loved so dearly, did he have an opportunity to really get in and do some farm and work and really enjoy himself?

AM: Yes, he did. I let him have four of good gentle horses that he liked. He really enjoyed driving them horses and run his farm all of that summer. That fall, he and my brother-in-law went to Idaho Falls Shopping, came home that night, it was near Christmas time. Irvin and Mae had the tiniest puzzle on the table. They set up there till 11:00 o'clock or more trying to put this puzzle together. They gave it up and went to bed. Mother and father were sitting there watching them so they set up to the table and they attempted to finish it. But they gave it up too and went to bed. As quick as father laid down the pain struck him in the chest. He got up and paced around the house there rubbing his chest. He could hardly get a breath for the pain. He set down on the chair in the hallway by the furnace. He said, I feel a lot better now. Then he just toppled over on the floor dead. Irvin got up and called me and told me that father was awful sick to come quick. I just slipped my clothes on and before I could get out of the house he called and said, your father's dead. So he sure didn't have to suffer long. He always said that when his time comes that he would like to go out like a light. He sure got his wish.

HF: Now, in reviewing for just a moment, the life story of your father as perhaps one of the most celebrated sheriff's of Madison County with the legends and so forth. What do you think made him an outstanding sheriff of Madison County? What were some of the characteristics, some of the impression that comes to you that really made your father an outstanding public servant, an outstanding sheriff?

AM: Well, the way he taught the family would be one of the strongest impressions, I believe. He was constantly drilling into our minds to obey the law regardless of what it took. He said if you promise a man that you'd do something, do it if it takes your right arm off. If you tell him you'll meet him someplace, he said, do it, regardless of what it takes. That has been a characteristic of our family. If it wasn't possible to go, why let them know that you're not a going to be there. Tell the truth. Above everything else, be honest with yourself and with God.

HF: Of course, this is the way that he lived as a law enforcement man.

AM: Yes, that's the way he lived. He lived to honor and obey the law. He wasn't afraid to enforce it. If it took force to do it, why he was prepared to do that to.

HF: It has been a real pleasure for me to have interviewed you this day, Mr. Alvin W. Munns.