

John H. Clark

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John Houston (Hout) Clark was among the first members of the Utah Association of the Deaf (UAD) when it was formed in 1909. John H.'s first cousin was Elizabeth DeLong, the first UAD President (Banks; UAD 1909 Minutes). Their mothers were sisters.

John H. was born hearing in Panguitch, Utah on May 17, 1880 to Riley Garner and Margaret (Houston) Clark. Together, they had 10 children and they were: Arthur, Riley Garner III, John Houston, James Cecil, Joseph Clark, Ernest Clark, Margaret Fern, Ivy Amanda, Stanley M, and Elden Dewey.

When John H. was 10 years old, a spinal meningitis epidemic took the lives of two of his brothers, Arthur and Ernest and left him profoundly deaf. For the first year after John became Deaf, he was tutored and attended school in Panguitch. At the age of 11 in 1891,

John began attending the Utah School for the Deaf (USD) in Salt Lake City, housed at the University of Deseret in Salt Lake City, Utah as a student in 1891 (Dr. Thomas C. Clark, personal communication, November 13, 2008). His cousin, Elizabeth Delong, known as "Libbie," with whom he had a close association, also attended the USD at the same time



John H. Clark as a boy and his father

(Banks). John's son Thomas recollects that John was enrolled as "student #70 on September 12, 1891." During his time at the School, John H. was one of the editors of the student newspaper, The Eaglet (Dr. Thomas C. Clark, personal communication, November 13, 2008). In 1893, John



John H. Clark is an editor of the student newspaper, the Eaglet

H. and Libbie, as members of the Student Literacy Society, were storytellers in the meeting (Banks).

John H. was a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. While the Utah School for the Deaf was housed at the University of Utah, John H. was likely one of the original Latter-day Saint Deaf Mute Sunday School pupils (The Daily Enquirer, February 11, 1892). When USD was relocated to Ogden in 1896, he continued to attend and even teach in the same Sunday School organization, held in the old Ogden Fourth Ward Amusement Hall (Deseret News, November 21, 1896).

On June 8, 1897, John H. and Libbie were the only two members to graduate from USD (The Ogden Standard, May 8, 1897). They were the first students to enter Gallaudet College that fall. On September 15, 1897, Frank M. Driggs, superintendent of the Utah School for the Deaf and the Blind, accompanied them by train to their first year of Gallaudet for four-year course. He was taking a one-year teacher's course at the same time (The Ogden Examiner-Standard, September 15,

1897). John H. and Libbie probably would not have had the opportunity to go so far away if he hadn't been there as well.

While at Gallaudet, John H. was a good student who was active in all sports and was a spiffy dresser. He was an assistant manager of the Gallaudet Football team (The Silent Worker, December 1900). During his senior year, he was elected editor-in-chief of the college publication, Buff and Blue and also wrote stories for it. Libbie, also a senior was elected an associate editor (The Ogden Examiner-Standard, June 19, 1901; Dr. Thomas C. Clark, personal communication, November 13, 2008). According to the Ogden Standard article (1901), “To be elected editor-in-chief of the college paper has always been considered one of the highest honors, and it is of special note that Utah students obtain two of the positions (1.)”



John H. Clark walking by Ole Gym at Gallaudet

According to the article entitled, “From Washington” published in “The Deseret Weekly,” John H’s presence of a Mormon boy in that college [Gallaudet] was new, and his experience so far from home was novel to him. In this article, he, as a sophomore basically stood up for his faith of the LDS

Church when a well-respected Gallaudet professor made false claims about the doctrines of



John H. Clark (right) at Gallaudet with his friend

Mormonism and a Gallaudet junior for presuming that Brigham Young had ordered the infamous Mountain Meadow Massacre under the commonly presumed (yet unproven) leadership of John Doyle Lee (The author’s husband, Duane Lee Kinner is a direct descendent of John Doyle Lee). John H. stated, “It is perfectly astounding how little most of the eastern people know about our faith

(Clark, *The Deseret Weekly*, January 15, 1898).

At Gallaudet, John H. majored in mathematics. He was personally tutored by Percival Hall, the second President of Gallaudet University. John H. received a bachelor's degree in 1902 and later a Master of Science degree from Gallaudet on June 7, 1924 (Dr. Thomas C. Clark, personal communication, November 13, 2008).

John H. was a Fellow in the American Society of Civil Engineers, a member of the American Military Engineers and a certified professional engineer and land surveyor in Utah and New Mexico. In 1906, he was appointed by the United States government as surveyor for some special work in Southern Utah. His appointment came as recognition for excellent past service in surveying for Uncle Sam (The Silent Worker, June 1906).



John H. Clark

Some of his accomplishments were:

1. He was the first supervisor of the Kaibab National Forest and Game Preserve.
2. He was appointed by the first Chief Forester, Gifford Pinchot.
3. He did surveys for the U. S. Forest Service in Oregon, Washington, and Utah.
4. He completed the first survey of the Hell's Canyon of the Snake River on the Oregon Idaho state border.
5. He was a supervisor for the Utah State Road Commission.
6. He developed a private practice in civil engineering and completed roads, dams, electric plants and waterworks for communities in southern Utah, northern Arizona, and New Mexico. He was the civil engineer on the Colorado Power and Light Distribution system (Dr. Thomas C. Clark, personal communication, November 13, 2008).

While John H. worked for the Sevier Forest Reserve, he surveyed boundaries and made mistakes, causing inaccuracies in proclamations withdrawing certain areas. He prepared a favorable report on eliminating the Bear Creek Canyon Area from the Sevier in 1907. That same year he prepared a favorable report on the Cottonwood Creek Addition (Wilson, May 2004).

As a civil engineer, John H. was the head of the Clark Construction Company in Panguitch, in Southern Utah in the 1920s and 1930s. He built irrigation projects, roads, dams, and reservoirs. Hearing

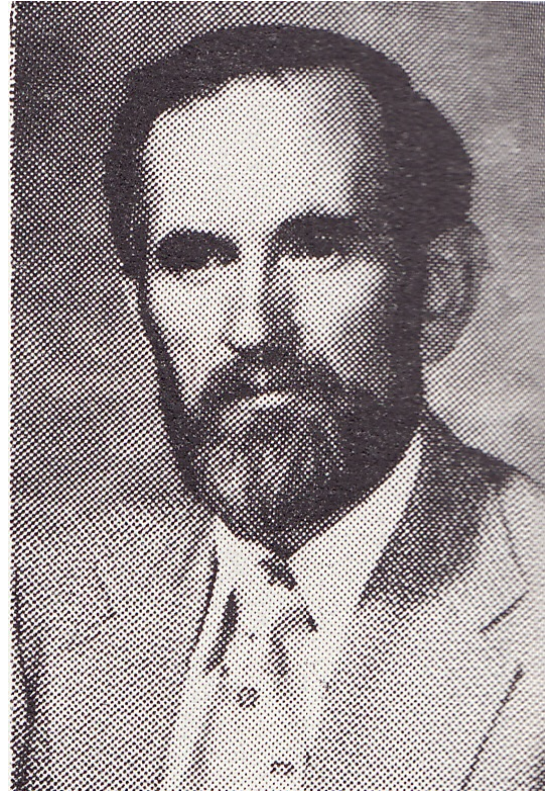
men who were not engineers worked under Clark and were trained by him. He kept the technical and managerial work to himself. Although he graduated from Gallaudet College, he did not learn civil engineering there. All he acquired there were mathematics and the ability to learn things for himself. With his mathematics ability, he started in the forest service and land offices, picking up a little here and a little there, working and studying all the time, until he raked up enough courage and confidence to become a contractor and engineer on his own account (Wenger, *The Silent Worker*, January 1925). Because he was born and raised in the Panguitch area, he was familiar with the roads in southern Utah.



Blanche and John Clark

At the age of 43, John H. married a hearing lady, Blanche Langford on November 28, 1922 and they resided in Panguitch, Utah until his death on May 1, 1955. He and Blanche had two daughters, Rosemond and Virginia and two sons, John H. Jr. and Thomas Cecil.

John H.'s son, Thomas Cecil Clark (hearing), received a bachelor's degree from Brigham Young University, a master's degree from Gallaudet University in Washington, D.C., and a doctoral degree from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. For more than 25 years he was a professor at Utah State University in the Speech Pathology, Audiology, and Deaf Education Department sharing his knowledge and love for Deaf education (Logan Herald Journal, March 17 to March 19, 2010). Dr. Clark was truly a pioneer of Deaf Education and Early Intervention services for Deaf children in the nation. He understood that the key to success for Deaf children was early access to language. He pioneered programs that provided services to families of Deaf children in their homes. He developed the SKI HI Institute at Utah State University that has become the model for early home intervention programs for Deaf children and for children with disabilities in the United States and throughout many parts of the world. Through the Department of Deaf Education at Utah State University, the Thomas Cecil and Bonnie Clark Deaf Education Scholarship was set up to provide future graduate students access to high quality education and training.



Dr. Thomas C. Clark

Note

Dr. Thomas C. Clark, e-mail message to Jodi B. Kinner, November 13, 2008.

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