

WALTER REID CLARK: LEGENDARY SHERIFF OF BROWARD COUNTY

By

William H. Kramer

A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of The
Schmidt College of Arts and Humanities
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Degree of Master of Arts

Florida Atlantic University
Boca Raton, Florida
August 1993

© copyright by William H. Kramer

WALTER REID CLARK: LEGENDARY SHERIFF OF BROWARD COUNTY

by

William H. Kramer

This thesis was prepared under the direction of the candidate's thesis adviser, Dr. Donald Curl, Department of History. It was submitted to the faculty of The Schmidt College of Arts and Humanities and was accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

Supervisory Committee

Donald Curl

Thesis Adviser

Raymond A. Moll

Kenneth L. Hoing

Kenneth L. Hoing
Acting Chairperson, Department of History

J. F. Schwallie
Dean, The Schmidt College of Arts and Humanities

John E. Garing
Dean of Graduate Studies

7/28/93
Date

ABSTRACT

Author:	William H. Kramer
Title:	Walter Reid Clark: Legendary Sheriff of Broward County
Institution:	Florida Atlantic University
Thesis Advisor:	Dr. Donald Curl
Degree:	Master of Arts
Year:	1993

Walter Reid Clark was the colorful and controversial sheriff of Broward County from 1933 until 1950. The son of poor dirt farmers, Clark won a surprising upset victory in the 1932 election and began serving the first of five consecutive terms in office. Noted for his personal generosity toward residents, Clark became politically powerful in the state and used his influence to provide economic benefits for the county. He also permitted illegal gambling because it provided revenue and jobs for residents. After the Second World War, many residents wanted illegal gambling to end. Clark was suspended from office by Governor Fuller Warren after a U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee investigation exposed his ownership of the Broward Novelty Company, which allegedly owned slot machines and administrated an illegal lottery.

Table of Contents

Introduction:	1
Chapter 1: The Formative Years	5
Chapter 2: The First Term in Office	16
Chapter 3: Clark's Political Power Grows	33
Chapter 4: The War Years	47
Chapter 5: The Post-War Years	59
Chapter 6: Clark's Final Years	72
Endnotes:	96
Bibliography:	119

INTRODUCTION

The name of Walter Reid Clark, when mentioned to an old time Broward County resident, invariably invokes a defensive response that includes an admonition that he was a generous man who helped the needy. Unfortunately, most current residents have heard of the former Broward County Sheriff only in occasional contemporary newspaper accounts that tell of Clark's alleged complicity in gambling operations, the hearing before the Kefauver Committee investigating organized crime in interstate commerce, or his implication in the county's only lynching. Rarely, if ever, is Clark remembered for his seventeen years of service as Broward County's chief law enforcement official who brought economic benefits to a county sunk in the mire of the Great Depression.

Walter R. Clark was the first of four sons born to James and Annie Miller Clark. The Clarks were farmers who eked out a living in Broward County, before moving near Lake Okeechobee. When James Clark died after being bitten by a rattlesnake, Annie Clark moved the family back to Fort Lauderdale. Walter and his brothers helped their mother operate a boarding house and restaurant. When Walter became old enough, he began working as a butcher at a local meat market.

In 1932 Walter R. Clark was persuaded by friends to run for the office of sheriff. In a surprising upset victory, Clark won the

election, and began serving the first of five terms as Sheriff of Broward County. At first, many residents questioned whether Clark could operate the law enforcement agency. The Sheriff faced two major challenges during his first term in office. The first was a murder case that dragged on for years in the Florida court system. The second resulted in Broward County's only lynching, although Clark and his staff were absolved of all blame. During his first term in office the sheriff proved to doubters that he was a capable law enforcement official.

Prior to the 1936 elections, Walter R. Clark publicly supported Fred Preston Cone for Governor. Clark easily won the election, and began to serve a second term as sheriff. When Cone won the gubernatorial race, he remembered Clark's early support. The Sheriff asked for and received a number of economic benefits for the citizens of Broward County. Walter R. Clark's popularity grew.

During the war years, the Sheriff helped local businessmen deal with military personnel. Clark established a counter-espionage agency to protect citizens from covert enemy operations. Walter R. Clark was also suspended from office by Governor Spessard Holland for alleged non-enforcement of the Florida gambling laws. After reinstatement by the Florida Senate, Clark continued to serve the citizens of the county.

After the war, Sheriff Walter R. Clark, along with many members of the community, began to invest in land and other

business opportunities. Clark became a partner in the Broward Novelty Company, which rented and serviced coin operated machines. He also became vice-president of the Ribbonwriter Corporation of America, which manufactured a device designed to eliminate carbon paper. The Ribbonwriter investment was a financial failure.

The prosperity of post-war Broward County caused many residents to view illegal gambling as a barrier to further economic growth. Gambling establishments had steadily grown in number since the mid 1930s. Although Clark easily won the 1948 election, his victory was marred by allegations that he was supported by the gamblers. After 1948, active measures were taken by many residents to rid the county of illegal gambling.

In 1950, Senator Estes Kefauver began an investigation of illegal gambling in the United States. His committee came to south Florida twice. At the second hearing in July 1950, Kefauver exposed Clark's involvement in the Broward Novelty Company. The Novelty Company allegedly owned and operated slot machines and ran an illegal lottery. The Sheriff was immediately suspended from office by Governor Fuller Warren after the revelation. He then was indicted by the Broward County grand jury. At the trial, Clark was found not guilty as charged on all counts. Before Walter R. Clark's reinstatement hearing by the Florida Senate, he was stricken with leukemia, and died on April 26, 1951.

Sheriff Clark's seventeen years of service to the community helped to shape the future of Broward County. He provided able leadership for the citizens, and economic benefits that allowed the county to grow more prosperous.

CHAPTER 1

THE FORMATIVE YEARS

Walter Reid Clark was born into an impoverished Broward County family which during his youth faced many economic hardships including the loss of his father. Walter learned to overcome the hardships, and developed a rapport with people while working at his mother's restaurant and later as a butcher. In 1932, friends urged Walter R. Clark to run for the office of sheriff. In a huge political upset, he won the election and began to serve the first of five terms as Sheriff of Broward County.

James and Annie Miller Clark, moved to the Fort Lauderdale area shortly after the turn of the twentieth century. At that time, what would become Broward County was still part of Dade County. The Clarks, newlyweds seeking to make a living as farmers, chose to homestead inland on New River, about two miles from the center of the nascent community.¹ Once the Clarks cleared the land they found the location ideal. Although no road existed, New River served as a highway to transport goods to and from town. A small ferry boat made the rounds every few days. By raising a flag on a pole, the settlers could signal the captain to stop.²

The Clarks built a small sturdy cabin on the edge of the river. An unusual but practical feature in the design of the house was a door that opened directly onto the water from the kitchen.³

The door had three purposes: it gave access to the river, allowing a person to get on and off boats directly; it provided a convenient means of getting rid of garbage; and it ventilated the kitchen, especially important during the summer months. The Clarks lived in this cabin until 1914, and it was here that the four Clark children began their existence as offspring of dirt poor parents.⁴

Annie Clark gave birth to her first son on December 11, 1904. Walter Reid Clark, if not the first white child born in what later became Broward County, was certainly among the first. The Clarks had three more children, all boys, over the next six years. Robert Lee was born on August 15, 1906, Howard James on August 11, 1908, and Frank on September 4, 1910. During this period, Walter narrowly escaped tragedy. One day young Walter, seeing the door in the kitchen open, crawled through and fell into the river. Fortunately, Annie was nearby and pulled the toddler out of the river before he drowned.⁵

Although living in the days before compulsory public school attendance, James and Annie believed in the importance of education.⁶ Consequently, when both Walter and Bob became old enough, their parents sent them to Fort Lauderdale School for the first few years of their education.⁷ Both youngsters also enjoyed the untamed Florida wilderness. After school hours and when they finished their chores, the boys loved to hunt and fish. These pastimes continued throughout their lives, although later Bob concentrated more on hunting.⁸ The untamed land around their

cabin provided many adventures for the boys, as well as lessons in self-reliance.

By early 1914, the family's fortunes took a turn for the worse. The small farm was unable to support a family of six. Try as they might, the Clarks could not earn enough money from the farm to survive.⁹ Friends and family suggested that they might have better luck in the Lake Okeechobee area. Recently drained land was now open for settlement, with the construction of the North New River Canal.¹⁰ After discussing their economic plight, the Clarks decided to make the move. They purchased a tract of land outside of Okeechobee City, and after constructing a cabin the family moved to their new farm in late 1914.¹¹

The new cabin provided little comfort. Its dirt floor was cold in winter, wet during the rainy season, and dusty during dry spells. But it was home. The lands near Lake Okeechobee were rich and productive, and it appeared the family's fortunes would improve. Clark began to raise wild hogs along with his crops, and Annie Clark grew her own vegetables to reduce living expenses. The Clarks' economic problems seemed to be behind them. For the next few years, the family settled into a rather quiet routine. After helping to establish the farm, the two oldest boys, now joined by their brother Howard, began to attend school. During their free time, Walter, Bob, and their father continued to hunt. Howard who disliked hunting, rarely joined them. Walter often took Frank out fishing.

But this idyllic sounding existence came to a shattering end on September 29, 1917.¹²

Early that September Saturday morning, James left the cabin to tend to his hogs and to make the normal rounds on his farm. At the barn he saddled his horse, mounted, and rode off. When he approached the hogs, he heard an awful commotion. One of his dogs had bitten a hog and refused to let it go. Clark yelled at the dog to release the razorback, but the dog refused to heed. Infuriated because the dog refused to obey, he dismounted to separate the two animals forcibly. With all of his attention focused on the two animals, he never noticed the rattlesnake lying nearby. The snake struck, sinking its fangs into the calf of his leg. After the initial shock of being bitten subsided, Clark had the presence of mind to put a tourniquet on his leg. He then climbed back on his horse and rode back home. Annie Clark immediately sent one of the boys into town to summon the doctor to the farm. The boy soon returned, without the doctor, who for an undisclosed reason, refused to come out to the farm. A concerned citizen, however, sent a car to the Clark farm in order to take Clark to the next nearest doctor, who lived forty miles away in Fort Pierce. Although he was whisked to Fort Pierce at the greatest possible speed, when he arrived there early Saturday afternoon, it was too late.¹³ Friends in Fort Lauderdale learned of his demise through a short note in the Fort Lauderdale Sentinel.¹⁴

Unable to run the farm by herself, lacking the money to hire help, and with her oldest son still too young to do the farm work,

Annie Clark faced a serious crisis. The Clark family had continued to maintain its ties with Annie's brothers and sisters living in Fort Lauderdale. They now urged her to move back there, so that they could help. In late 1917 she sold the farm and moved her family back to Fort Lauderdale.¹⁵

With the money from the sale of the farm, Annie Clark bought a two-story house on the corner of South East Second Street and Second Avenue.¹⁶ At this time, Walter, now in the seventh grade, decided to quit, believing he needed to work in order to help his mother support the family.¹⁷ However, Mrs. Clark insisted that her other sons remain in school.

Unfortunately, Walter's salary proved insufficient to support the family. In order to supplement his income, Mrs. Clark then conceived the idea of converting the first floor of their house into a restaurant. Fort Lauderdale had grown in importance and population since 1915, when Broward County was created and Fort Lauderdale became the county seat.¹⁸ The Clark house, near the center of town, seemed in an ideal location. She thought she could keep her family together by attracting people going to work for breakfast, serving them a lunch at noon, and then drawing other people for a large dinner. With Walter's help, she completed the conversion of the first floor into a dining room within a few months.¹⁹

Her dream of keeping the family together was realized. For the next twenty years, Annie Clark's restaurant remained a popular eating spot in town.²⁰ Catering to working people, the price of a

full breakfast was only seventeen cents. If the price alone failed to attract a customer, the aroma of cooking food wafting out of the kitchen window next to the main sidewalk, did. Mrs. Clark also left a tray of bacon by the window during breakfast hours as a final lure.²¹ Dinners were fifty cents, for all one could eat. Many people around town saved up for weeks in order to enjoy one of these huge meals.²² There were no complaints of her skimping on the food.²³ For the next few years Clark worked full time with his mother, waiting on the customers while she cooked. Though still attending school, his brothers also helped out. During the years that he worked with his mother, Walter Clark developed a personal rapport with people. This particular skill, which enabled him to keep in close touch with people, later aided him while running for office and became his trademark once elected. The diner provided a comfortable living for the family and when it became apparent that Walter was no longer needed full time, his mother agreed that he should learn a trade.

Sometime prior to 1920, Bert Lasher, who ran a small meat store next to the A & P on Second Street, hired Walter Clark. The store resembled a lean-to shack, supported by the larger A & P building, rather than an independent structure.²⁴ Inside, the butcher shop was strictly a no frills affair dominated by the large meat display coolers. Although Clark learned his trade and could dress various types of meat, he spent much of his time talking with customers and others who passed by. During this time he began to build a following with women from all over town coming to the

store to buy their beef, pork, and chicken. He steered them away from inferior quality meats and instead directed them to superior products. They believed that he would always show them the best buys. Undoubtedly, Clark learned in his mother's restaurant that people had long memories when they received poor food. She also taught him that a volume business was a successful business, a lesson that he learned well. In order to ensure that his customers returned again and again, Clark developed the curious habit of placing his thumb underneath the scale's tray. His customers knew a good deal when they saw one. Word quickly got around that Walter R. Clark at the butcher shop "would take care of you." His employment at the store lasted until 1932 when he was elected to the office of Sheriff of Broward County.²⁵

In early 1927, Clark married the former Avis Mae Mull.²⁶ The couple purchased the old John W. Needham House at 828 Southeast Fourth Street.²⁷ The following year, she gave birth to their only son, Curtis, on October 2, 1928.²⁸ During this period, Clark also became actively involved in the Croissant Park Christian Church. Besides regular attendance at the Sunday morning worship service, he also assumed a leadership position in the church, teaching young people in the Sunday School. Clark was held in high esteem by members of the church. As his Sunday School Superintendent put it: "If there was a Christian young man in town, it was Walter Clark. Walter was as straitlaced as anyone could possibly be".²⁹ By the end of the decade, Clark was well known by residents as a Christian family man and church leader.

Walter R. Clark's exemplary image and the multitude of friends he made while at work as well as on the street encouraged many to urge him to run for sheriff in the 1932 election. One late afternoon early in 1932, while returning home from the butcher shop, he stopped G. Harold Martin on the street to ask for advice. Martin, a fellow church member, was a successful Fort Lauderdale lawyer knowledgeable in local politics. "Harold," Clark began, "I need some advice. Some friends and a few politicians are urging me to run for sheriff. As you know, I don't know anything about that office, but they say I can run it. What do you think?" After a moment's consideration, Martin responded that, yes, he thought Clark could run the office, but cautioned Clark "to get a good professional lawman to run the office, and a good secretary who is honest to do the secretarial work. And get [the sheriff's office] out of the liquor business."³⁰ With these words of wisdom fresh in his mind, Walter R. Clark returned home. Later that month he filed for the office of sheriff, and began to organize his campaign.³¹

Broward County by 1932 was in the midst of the Great Depression. This followed the economic and demographic boom of the early twenties. In 1920 the county had 5,135 people, but by 1930 the population had nearly quadrupled, to 20,094 people.³² As the population grew, land prices skyrocketed. Enormous amounts of land speculation occurred. But the land bust of 1926 brought population growth and the state's development to a screeching halt, and the Wall Street bust of 1929 deepened the economic problems. Property values plummeted. Broward County real estate tax

assessments in 1931 amounted to \$6,173,640, but by 1932 they had dropped to \$5,616,500.³³ Many speculators simply walked away from their real estate investments, unable to pay the property tax on their land. The Fort Lauderdale Daily News reported that a delinquent tax sale would auction nearly two-thirds of the county land on August 1, 1932.³⁴ The lack of revenue caused undeserved hardships for many county officials, which included non-payment of salaries, and reductions in necessary services. One such service, the maintenance of prisoners in the county jail, nearly ended completely because of the lack of sufficient funds. Fortunately, county officials scraped together enough money to temporarily maintain the jail until more funds could be appropriated.³⁵ However, even these shortcomings failed to prevent an avalanche of entries for office in the county primary elections.

The first Democratic primary ballot of 1932 listed eight men for sheriff.³⁶ The acknowledged front runners were J.R. Barnes of Hollywood, and A.W. Turner, the incumbent. Barnes received political and financial backing from the powerful Rogers and Morris law firm that had supported several other county officials in successful campaigns prior to 1932.³⁷ Barnes, the county commissioner from the Hollywood district, was considered the leading candidate for sheriff.³⁸ Turner, his main opponent, had been appointed Sheriff in 1915. Although the Governor had removed him from office in 1922 for allegedly failing to enforce the gambling laws of the state, he was re-elected in 1928.³⁹ He was now fighting for his political life. Others in the multitude of sheriff candidates included

William Budd, Brack Cantrell, Lucien Craig, W.M. Johnson, C.M. Moseley, and Walter R. Clark. Although virtually a political unknown, Clark had received public recognition during the 1931 River Revelry Celebration for being the first white boy born in Broward County.⁴⁰ Using this recognition to his advantage during the campaign, he promoted himself as the "pioneer candidate." He also refused to make promises of any kind to anyone concerning deputies' jobs.⁴¹ In the June 6 election, Clark received 861 votes to finish a surprising second to J.R. Barnes, in a major upset.⁴²

In the second primary, in the battle for the Democratic nomination, Clark's campaign again focused on his pioneer roots, but with new emphasis on his independent candidacy, "not controlled by any ring, faction, or clique."⁴³ Barnes countered that he was more experienced, and had "no strings or promises tied to his going into office."⁴⁴ On June 28, the voters once again gave Clark an enormous political upset. Although Rogers's and Morris's backing of Barnes divided Broward's populace, Clark's victory strongly signaled the desire for a politically unencumbered sheriff. In the November election, Walter R. Clark's nearly thousand vote victory over the Republican candidate, Joseph P. Moe, initiated a political career that lasted to the end of the following decade.⁴⁵

Walter R. Clark's humble origins gave no indication of his destiny to shape the political and economic future of Broward County. Clark's endurance of personal tragedy and hardship during his youth shaped his development as a young man. He learned to

overcome the hardships, and developed into a well liked, moral individual. These traits proved significant factors in his victory in the 1932 election.

CHAPTER 2

THE FIRST TERM IN OFFICE

Walter R. Clark faced enormous challenges when he became sheriff. Budgetary limitations restricted his office's efficiency and two criminal cases tested Clark's ability as a lawman. Broward County's weak economy left many residents without jobs, although Clark gave many individuals money and helped others find jobs. Some residents sought employment in gambling, a growing illegal industry. The Sheriff allowed gambling to continue, claiming it provided needed employment and encouraged tourism.

The economic plight of the Broward County sheriff's office grew worse after the second Democratic primary. Sheriff A.W. Turner ran the affairs of his office as normally as financially possible, but money was unavailable from the County Commission. On August 2, 1932, Turner complained publicly in *The Fort Lauderdale Daily News* about his office's fiscal problems. "The county owes the sheriff's office \$5,048.99 as of today," he declared, "and most of that sum is in turn owed by my office to various agencies and groups which have extended credit in carrying on the sheriff's office's work." He explained that if a prisoner wanted in Broward County was arrested outside of Florida, he would be unable to send anyone from his office to get the prisoner. The sheriff was

forced to buy finger printing equipment "with \$500 to \$600 of my own money," because the sheriff's department lacked the equipment of this crucial branch of criminal investigation. In addition to these problems, Federal Judge Halsted Ritter was considering a transfer of federal prisoners from Miami to the Broward jail. Turner declared he "would be glad to accept the prisoners, as long as the government would pay for their keep, because the government has always paid promptly." Finally he would be forced to close the jail, if the County Commission was unable to provide funds.¹

A.W. Turner's comments prodded the County Board of Commissioners to transfer \$1,790 from the county's building fund, to the fine and forfeiture fund, from which the sheriff's department operated.² Many Broward County residents believed the money would allow the sheriff's department to operate at least semi-efficiently, but Turner demurred. The money only paid for maintenance of the Broward jail and a few other outstanding accounts. The salary of staff members had been neglected. The sheriff pointed out that he already owed his staff \$2,500 as of the first of August.³ By the end of 1932, Turner was weary of the budgetary shortages. He willingly entrusted Walter R. Clark with the sheriff's office.

Walter R. Clark's first major decision as sheriff was the selection of a staff. The people of Broward County demanded that public officials run efficient offices. The financial restrictions caused by the Depression, made efficiency even more imperative.

Clark's happy-go-lucky attitude as a butcher, worried some members of the community. These skeptics questioned whether or not Clark could run the sheriff's office in an efficient manner. The residents of the county knew that Clark was a good man, however, with a good platform in the election. His honesty while a butcher, convinced people that Clark could be trusted to select the appropriate members for his staff.⁴ The rumors of potential Clark appointees were not answered until Walter R. Clark was sworn into office on January 1, 1933. Clark announced the official list of deputies, clerks, and other assistants only after he took the oath of office.⁵

Clark reappointed A.D. Marshall as warden of the Broward County jail. Marshall, a resident of Fort Lauderdale since 1899, and a friend of Clark, had performed his duties admirably for Sheriff Turner. He continued to live in the courthouse where the jail was located, and to be on call twenty-four hours a day.⁶ Clark also realized he needed an expert bookkeeper. Mrs. Sarah Freeman was reappointed to the position.⁷ She had distinguished herself during the Turner administration, while working with inadequate funds. Freeman's role in the sheriff's office expanded during the subsequent years to include all of the clerical duties.⁸

The next appointment surprised many Broward residents. Clark ignored G. Harold Martin's advice of finding a professional lawman for the position of head deputy. Instead, Sheriff Clark chose his brother Robert. Bob Clark achieved a degree of fame as an athlete at Fort Lauderdale High School. He had played a key role in the

defeat of Miami High School in football during the early twenties.⁹ Since then, Bob had worked as a soda jerk and was currently a delivery man. Although Bob Clark was inexperienced in law enforcement, his athletic prowess, size, and strength aided him in the execution of his duties as a deputy. Sheriff Clark knew he could implicitly trust his brother. Clark also knew that his brother could intimidate malefactors, and the sheriff hired men with reputations as tough guys as deputies. W.C. Goodrich was the last deputy appointed on the first day of the Clark administration.¹⁰

Sheriff Clark left unnamed the final deputy for his staff. The additional deputy-at-large was especially necessary when the sheriff was out of town. Bob Clark's position as head deputy demanded his presence in the sheriff's office, while tending the daily affairs of the office.¹¹ Sheriff Clark, after carefully considering a number of men, chose Virgil Wright. Wright was over six feet tall and stocky, "with a look that could freeze you in your tracks."¹² He had worked for Sheriff Paul Bryan, and could be depended on to maintain order in the unincorporated area of northern Broward County around Pompano. Wright had acquired a reputation for being hard on African-Americans.¹³ He used this reputation to his advantage throughout his career. Clark's selection of Wright strongly signalled his intention to maintain the racial status quo by keeping African-Americans in a subservient position. Most African-Americans lived in northern Broward, which was Wright's patrol area.

Sheriff Clark's first major test as a law enforcement officer occurred in May 1933. The Darsey murder case at first appeared to be relatively uncomplicated, until it became entangled in the Florida legal system. The case is closely associated with Broward County's only lynching, in mid-1935.

Robert M. Darsey was a white, sixty-four-year-old owner of a fish market located in Pompano. At about 10 p.m. Saturday, May 13, 1933, after closing his market, Darsey was attacked and brutally beaten while walking home with daily receipts. He was robbed of about seventy-five dollars.¹⁴ Darsey managed to stagger or crawl home, where he collapsed. He died the following day, having never regained consciousness. A young African-American man who was a friend of Darsey, and an eyewitness to the vicious attack, ran to Virgil Wright's house.¹⁵ Wright rushed to the scene of the crime, after telephoning for medical assistance for Darsey. Once the comatose Darsey was being treated, Wright searched for eyewitnesses, and found at least a half dozen.¹⁶ Wright also detained fourteen other individuals, including the four suspects.¹⁷ Wright detained the large number of individuals, hoping to prevent the culprits of the crime from intimidating the eyewitnesses or fabricating an alibi. He took the twenty detainees to the Broward County Courthouse, where each signed a statement.¹⁸ By the next day, only the four suspects, Izell Chambers, Jack Williamson, Charley Davis, and Walter Woodard were still in jail.²⁵

The murder infuriated white Pompano residents. They went on a rampage Saturday night, threatening numerous African-Americans

suspected of participating in the crime. On Sunday, rumors circulated throughout the Pompano area that a mob would go to the Broward County Courthouse and demand the immediate release of the four suspects into its hands. When Sheriff Clark heard the rumors, he transferred Chambers and Williamson to the Dade County jail for their own protection. On Monday, an angry crowd of fifty white Pompano residents arrived at the County Courthouse, and demanded the release of the four prisoners. They were assured by W.O. Berryhill, the respected County Tax Collector, that the suspects had been removed. Soon after, the crowd dispersed.²⁰

The Sheriff's foresight saved the four men from a likely lynching. The following day, the two suspects were returned to the Broward Courthouse for interrogation. Early Sunday morning, May 21, 1933, confessions were obtained from all four suspects. The unusually successful interrogations caused Assistant State Attorney Louis Maire to ask the defendants about the methods used. Each defendant was asked whether force, or the threat of force, was used by the Sheriff in order to obtain their confessions. All four men answered, "no."²¹

Chambers, Williamson, Davis, and Woodard were each charged with five counts of first degree murder. After an arraignment hearing the trial was scheduled for June 12, 1933. During the trial, Judge George W. Tedder, Sr. asked each defendant whether threats or force had been used to obtain the confessions. Once again, they replied "no." The jury was sent out of the courtroom after testimony had been heard. Within thirty minutes, the jury returned with a

verdict of guilty without mercy, for each defendant. Judge Tedder sentenced the defendants to death in the Florida electric chair. The Judge believed Sheriff Clark's methods of gaining the confessions were within the limits of the law. Tedder commended Clark and his deputies for the professionalism displayed in gathering evidence and obtaining the confessions.

Sheriff Clark and his men had enforced the law by gathering the evidence needed to bring about a rapid decision in the case. Their efficiency as law enforcement officers allowed the Judge to mete out justice, during a trial that lasted only one day. The expense of the legal process had been minimal, especially important due to the county's current financial crisis. Moreover, the quick removal of the two prisoners prevented an almost certain lynching. The Darsey murder case, however, had not ended.²²

D.W. Perkins, a Jacksonville African-American lawyer, became interested in the Darsey case following Tedder's ruling. Perkins charged that Sheriff Clark and his men had used threats and torture to obtain the confessions from Chambers, Williamson, Davis, and Woodard. Clark's response to the allegations was "I didn't beat them, I protected them." The Florida Supreme Court believed enough evidence was available to substantiate Perkins's allegations, and ordered stays of execution on August 5, 1933. The allegations were based on scars found on the backs of several of the defendants, and medical examiner's reports that the scars had come from a blunt object. For the next two and a half years, the four defendants were retried time and again. The case eventually was heard by the United

States Supreme Court, which accepted the defense's allegation that Clark and other members of the law enforcement community had mistreated the prisoners. The confessions were ruled inadmissible as evidence. Two years later, the case was retried after new indictments were issued. Judge Tedder ordered a change of venue and the trial was moved to Palm Beach. Louis F. Maire tried to introduce evidence that Davis had led law officers to the place where Darsey's wallet was hidden, but Judge C.E. Chillingworth ruled that this was a part of the original confession, and thus inadmissible. Then the defense lawyers made a motion for a directed verdict of not guilty, which Chillingworth granted.²³

The legal imbroglio of the Darsey murder case outraged the population of Broward County. Many whites believed the evidence for conviction of the defendants to be overwhelming and did not care how the sheriff secured the confessions. Residents were especially unhappy with the continued deliberate delaying tactics used by defense lawyers. The expense of the numerous hearings in the Broward Circuit Court angered many members of the community, who wished to see justice served quickly. The Sheriff and his deputies became aggravated, due to the allegations of their use of torture to obtain the defendants' confessions.²⁴ The Sheriff and his deputies denied using brutal tactics throughout the appeals process although evidence suggested the contrary. The defendants originally stated that force, or threats of force, had not been used by the lawmen.

In the midst of the lawsuit, during the summer of 1935, Clark faced a second major test as sheriff. This time, the defendant

would not go through the Florida legal system. On Tuesday, July 16, 1935, Mrs. J.L. Jones was attacked by an African-American man with a knife at her home on Davie Road. She managed to protect herself, and the man ran off. Mrs. Jones telephoned Sheriff Clark, and a massive manhunt began. Numerous suspects were brought to the Jones's home for identification, but the assailant eluded law enforcement officers for several days. Early Friday morning, a man fitting the description of the assailant was seen south of Deerfield. Constable W.D. McDougald, Leonard Justice, and Leo Jones captured Reuben Stacey after firing several pistol shots at him. Stacey was then delivered to Sheriff Clark, who took the suspect to the Jones home. The suspect was positively identified as the perpetrator of the crime by Mrs. Jones, George Washington, an African-American eyewitness who saw Stacey fleeing the crime scene, and Jones's young son who exclaimed, "Here is that man, mother." Stacey's shoes also matched the footprints that had been found in the Jones's yard.²⁵

Sheriff Clark was absolutely certain that Reuben Stacey committed the crime. Clark took the suspect to the Broward County Courthouse, where Stacey was fingerprinted and photographed. The Sheriff telephoned Assistant State Attorney Maire and Circuit Court Judge Tedder to inform them of the positive identification of the prisoner by the victim. An arraignment hearing was scheduled for later in the afternoon.

The news of Stacey's capture spread quickly throughout northern Broward County, where many residents were still angry

with the legal delays in the Darsey murder trials. Within hours, rumors circulated that a mob planned to march on the Broward Courthouse to demand the release of Stacey into their hands. They planned to lynch the prisoner. When the threatening news of a lynch mob coming to the Courthouse reached the Sheriff, he again conferred with Maire and Tedder. The Courthouse provided inadequate protection for Stacey, and many deaths would result from a gun battle with the mob. All the Broward officials agreed that Stacey should be taken to the Dade County jail for safekeeping. The transfer of Chambers and Williamson two years earlier had prevented bloodshed, the men reasoned, thus this transfer would also protect the life of the prisoner. Judge Tedder advised Clark to proceed with the transfer without a formal order, due to the urgency of the situation. Tedder told Clark to get a formal transfer order later, once the prisoner was safe.²⁶

The Sheriff ordered his brother, Bob, Virgil Wright, W.D. McDougald, Ben Turner, and I.G. Shuman, to take Stacey to the Dade County jail late Friday afternoon. The Sheriff believed five armed deputies could protect the prisoner, should trouble occur. The Sheriff hoped to avoid the mob, with his quick transfer of Stacey. The prisoner and the five deputies crowded into a single car, and proceeded south on Federal Highway at the greatest possible speed, with Virgil Wright behind the steering wheel. When the car was outside the Fort Lauderdale city limits, it encountered the first roadblock. Wright avoided the blockade, and Bob Clark told Wright to take an alternate route. The car then traveled west to West Dixie

Highway. Unfortunately, the lynch mob had anticipated this tactic, and had set up a blockade on West Dixie Highway, which Wright also managed to avoid. He continued driving south toward Miami at breakneck speed. Near the Indian Reservation the lynch mob, which was in hot pursuit in a number of cars, forced the deputies' sedan into a shallow drainage ditch.²⁷

Once the deputies' car was stopped, the masked, heavily armed members of the mob jumped out of their vehicles and demanded the immediate release of Stacey into their hands. As the minutes dragged on, the crowd slowly grew in number, as other people caught up to the parked cars. The mob members had the foresight to cover their vehicles' license plates to avoid identification.²⁸ The deputies were in a quandary. If they resisted the demands of the crowd, and used their weapons to defend the prisoner, they placed their own lives in jeopardy, as well as the lives of members of the mob, who might possibly be friends. On the other hand, they could surrender Reuben Stacey, and hope for reinforcements before the mob could hang the prisoner. The Sheriff's deputies chose the latter solution. The mob then took Stacey to a tree near the Jones's house, and hanged him with a wire. Members of the mob then shot the prisoner numerous times. The lynching occurred at about 4:30 in the afternoon.²⁹

Meanwhile, as Everett Clements and J.G. Gallup, one a Florida State highway inspector and the other a railroad inspector, drove on West Dixie Highway, they discovered the nearly wrecked deputies' car in the drainage ditch. After helping the deputies pull the vehicle

from the ditch, the seven men pursued the lynch mob. Unfortunately, they arrived at the scene of the lynching too late to prevent Stacey's murder. They could only return to the Broward Courthouse and report the incident.³⁰

When Sheriff Clark received the news of Stacey's death late Friday afternoon, he immediately ordered the corpse taken from the tree, and the body sent to a mortuary. Cars filled with hundreds of people who had driven to view the grisly scene or obtain souvenirs, jammed the road leading to the lynch site, preventing the removal of Stacey's body until 7:15 in the evening.³¹

The following day, a coroner's inquest was held. Eleven witnesses, including the five deputies and the two state officials, were heard by the six-man panel. The jury deliberated for forty minutes after the testimony ended, and then absolved the deputies of all guilt in the crime. However, the matter, had not ended. Governor David Scholtz sent telegrams to both Assistant State Attorney Maire and Sheriff Clark. Maire was to make a "searching investigation" of the lynching, and Clark was to "cooperate fully" in the investigation. The inquiry results were reported directly to him.³²

Judge Tedder ordered the grand jury to investigate the affair on Tuesday, July 23, 1935.³³ It summoned fifteen witnesses for the first day of the inquest, which lasted two days. The five deputies were questioned, along with the two state officials. Mrs. Jones, Dr. J.A. Stanford, the county physician, John J. Cordner, who operated a West Dixie Highway gasoline station, and David Domineck, who lived by the road the mob had allegedly traveled, were also questioned.

The following day, several Pompano residents, including John Darsey, the son of murder victim Robert Darsey, also appeared before the jury. When testimony ended, the grand jury had heard testimony from twenty-nine witnesses. At 2:50 Tuesday afternoon, the grand jury issued a "no bill" finding, after nearly four hours of deliberation.³⁵ The lynching had been perpetrated by an unknown group of individuals, and the deputies were not blamed for the death of Stacey. Assistant State Attorney Maire told the Fort Lauderdale Daily News that if additional evidence concerning the Stacey lynching were forthcoming, he would recall the grand jury.³⁶ Although Walter R. Clark deeply regretted the incident, nothing more could have been done to prevent the lynching. He had acted quickly once he heard of possible mob violence, and he sent five men to guard the prisoner during transportation to the Dade County jail. The lynch mob proved too large and too well organized for the five deputies to carry out their duty. Although Clark believed enough evidence had been gathered to assure the conviction of Stacey, Broward citizens apparently had lost faith in the Florida legal system, and had decided to take matters into their own hands. These residents feared a skilled lawyer would defend Stacey and cause delays in the justice system, similar to the ongoing appeals in the Darsey murder case.³⁷

The budgetary restrictions hampering the courts and law enforcement agencies continued as the economy of Broward County failed to improve during the years from 1933 until 1936. Many residents owed ad valorem taxes on their homes. In an effort to

provide some financial relief, Representative Dwight L. Rogers, Sr. sponsored the Homestead exemption bill in 1931, which provided for complete relief of ad valorem taxation for the first \$5,000 of the assessed value for a resident's home. The exemption did not apply to outstanding tax debts. The bill was finally adopted in a general election held in 1934.³⁸ Homeowners welcomed the tax relief, but residents who paid rent received no benefit from the state. Sheriff Clark addressed their need by refusing to evict people from their homes when they were temporarily unable to pay their rent.³⁹

The most fundamental economic problem in Broward County at the time, was the lack of available work. Sheriff Clark, along with Fort Lauderdale City Commissioners, used personal influence with businessmen around the county to obtain jobs for their constituents.⁴⁰ The residents of Broward County knew that they could go to the courthouse to see Clark. He was almost always at his office, and spoke with them about jobs.⁴¹ Clark remembered his own hardships as a young man, and located work for financially troubled people. He gave people money from his own pocket, if he was unaware of available work.⁴²

The Sheriff took a special interest in helping the widows of Broward County, because of his own boyhood experiences. Clark knew widows faced bouts of loneliness, and women with small children were especially vulnerable to economic ruin. Clark gave many widows food and money.⁴³ During holiday seasons, truckloads of food baskets purchased at Walter R. Clark's personal expense were delivered to the widows with a simple note attached: "From

Walter."⁴⁴ Throughout the years of Clark's first term in office, the Sheriff grew more popular with the residents of Broward County. Gradually, he became the most powerful politician in the Broward Courthouse.⁴⁵ His reputation for toughness while enforcing the law, along with his generosity, contributed heavily to Clark's popularity.

The financial woes of numerous businesses were partially resolved when the Florida Legislature legalized slot machines in 1933.⁴⁶ A fifty dollar license fee per machine allowed owners to install the devices in stores and hotels. A portion of the machines' profits augmented the daily receipts of merchants and hotel owners. The legalization of slot machines sharply divided public opinion in Broward County. On January 3, 1933, the Broward Ministerial Association requested the Fort Lauderdale City Commission to remove all slot machines from businesses in the city, whether the city had collected the license fees or not.⁴⁷ The City Commission agreed to the request and ordered the police to remove all the slot machines within the city limits.⁴⁸ Slot machines and other gambling devices continued operating throughout Broward County, outside of the Fort Lauderdale city limits. The legislature's action, without a popular vote, left a serious question about the legality of slot machines. This was compounded by the inability of the Florida court system to render a definitive decision on the matter, which left law enforcement officials in an awkward position regarding enforcement, or non-enforcement, of the gambling laws.⁴⁹ Legal wrangling over slot machines continued for the next two and a half years. On May 31, 1935, the Florida Legislature allowed Florida

voters to decide the outcome. If twenty percent of the voters in each county signed a petition authorizing a referendum by the June primaries, the issue would be included on the November 1936 ballot.⁵⁰

Gambling grew more popular during the Depression years. Sheriff Clark allowed gambling devices to operate because they provided revenue for the people. Gambling also provided jobs. Gambling was not an isolated occurrence in just Broward County. It was common knowledge that several casinos also operated in Palm Beach County. Although they knew the Sheriff failed to fully enforce the gambling laws, the people of Broward County supported him.⁵¹

As the June 1936 Democratic primary drew near, only Brack Cantrell challenged Walter R. Clark for the sheriff's office.⁵² Clark's campaign emphasized his past record as an able and efficient sheriff. Clark favored the adoption of modern crime prevention systems to improve the efficiency of the Sheriff's office. The Sheriff also publicly endorsed Fred Preston Cone as Democratic nominee for Governor.⁵³

Cantrell, owner of a Fort Lauderdale Buick dealership, and a Democratic candidate in the previous election, promised to run an efficient, businesslike administration and to hire no relatives for jobs in the sheriff's department.⁵⁴ Cantrell hoped to gain votes from residents who opposed Sheriff Clark's nepotism in choosing his brother for the chief deputy's position.

The result of the June 3 primary surprised even the most ardent Clark supporters. Sheriff Clark defeated Cantrell by over

1,800 votes.⁵⁵ Fred P. Cone also received considerable voter support in Broward County.

In the November general election, Joseph P. Moe once again challenged Clark. In the largest voter turnout in Broward County history to that date, Walter R. Clark easily defeated Moe by over 3,000 votes. Fred P. Cone handily defeated E.E. Calloway for the office of Governor. The contest drawing the closest attention in the election, however, was the referendum concerning the legalization of slot machines. In Broward County, over a 1,000 vote majority called for revoking the state law that had legitimized the machines.⁵⁶

Walter R. Clark's continued support for Cone played a pivotal role in Clark's career as a politician. Cone remembered Clark's support during the election and in the next few years the Sheriff of Broward County became a powerful political force in the State of Florida. Walter R. Clark proved to be a capable law enforcement official in the opinion of white residents during his first term in office. Judge George W. Tedder, Sr. commended Clark for his efficiency in the Darsey murder case. The Sheriff tried to protect Reuben Stacey, although the effort failed and led to the county's only lynching. Clark helped people who struggled economically, by finding them jobs or giving them money. He was re-elected to a second term as Sheriff for these reasons.

CHAPTER 3

CLARK'S POLITICAL POWER GROWS

Walter R. Clark's political power grew during his second term in office. Clark used his influence to acquire needed improvements for Broward County, whose economy remained poor. At the same time, the Sheriff and other law enforcement officials ignored the state's gambling laws, and residents seemed to accept illegal gambling. This created an atmosphere that permitted gambling houses to thrive, and allowed organized crime members to become involved in their operation.

Clark's early political support of Fred. P. Cone was immediately rewarded once the newly-elected Governor took the oath of office. Cone appointed him a Lieutenant Colonel and aide on the personal staff of the Governor, on January 5, 1937.¹ Although an honorary post, it still assured Clark of a personal meeting with Cone virtually on request. Within a few weeks, Governor Cone publicly announced, "Those who supported me in the first primary will sit at the first table."² The declaration was of consummate importance, because one had to receive prior approval from Clark and the other men seated at the "first table," for an appointment with the Governor.³ Clark's incipient influence with the governor caused the Sheriff to become a force in Florida politics. The new demands of state politics forced Walter R. Clark to increasingly rely on his

brother Bob to fully operate the daily affairs of the Broward County Sheriff's office.⁴ During the next four years, the Sheriff often traveled to Tallahassee to meet with the state elective officers concerning political matters.⁵ Bob's role in the Sheriff's office grew enormously with his brother's extended absences from Broward County.

Walter and Bob Clark also became personal friends of Edward Ball, who managed the DuPont interests in the state including the Florida East Coast Railway. Ball relied on Bob Clark to deal with F.E.C. railroad problems in Broward County. Walter R. Clark's friendship with Ball was more politically motivated. Clark depended on Ball's continued support to help maintain his own political power on the state level.⁶

With the support of Cone and Ball, Sheriff Clark became an influential politician throughout the State of Florida. In Broward County, Clark's political strength was nearly unchallenged.⁷ Only Robert H. Gore, owner of the Fort Lauderdale Daily News, had equal political influence.⁸ Gore, who firmly believed in using his newspaper as a political weapon, blasted his political opponents in newspaper headlines.⁹ Although Gore also had supported Fred P. Cone, Clark had been more active, and probably procured more votes for Cone, therefore giving the Sheriff greater influence with the Governor. While Cone was Governor, R.H. Gore chose not to publicly challenge Clark, creating a political alliance between the two that lasted until 1948.¹⁰

Walter R. Clark's growing political influence failed to prevent the problems that beset his personal life. His marriage to Avis Mull Clark began to crumble prior to the 1936 elections, and soon a divorce followed, forcing Clark to care for his young son by himself. The Sheriff remained a bachelor for only a short time. He developed a friendship with Odelle Pitts, who worked in Tallahassee, during his many trips to the city in 1936 and 1937.¹¹ In July 1937, the two were married in a simple ceremony in Jacksonville.¹²

The result of the 1936 referendum on slot machines seemed to answer the question of the legality of the machines. Thirty-three Florida counties revoked the state law legalizing the one-armed bandits. The gambling devices, however, remained in operation until their state licenses expired in October 1937.¹³ Once the machines became illegal to own and operate, enforcement of the Florida state statutes was left to local law enforcement agencies. Many Florida counties failed to enforce the laws regarding gambling paraphernalia.

In Broward County, public sympathy for local gambling operators rivaled that for the bootleggers of the previous decade.¹⁴ Although Broward residents disapproved of gambling devices, the gambling operators were not blamed for their chosen occupation. The Broward Sheriff's Office allowed gambling to operate unopposed because it was a source of revenue for local residents.¹⁵ The proprietors of gambling establishments knew they had to keep the games honest, and avoid public scandals.¹⁶ As long as they observed

these guidelines, the Sheriff's deputies ignored the businesses. As long as local residents ran the gambling houses, R.H. Gore never used his newspaper to criticize the laissez-faire attitude of the law enforcement officials or the gambling proprietors.¹⁷ Although illegal, gambling provided regular income for a number of residents, who otherwise would have to rely on the pittance supplied by one of the various New Deal agencies. Because no official pressure to curb gambling existed in Broward County, the number of taverns with horse-book operations and places with roulette wheels and craps-tables dramatically increased.¹⁸ Before long, the lucrative gambling businesses in Broward County attracted the interest of several members of organized crime families. In early 1936, the Plantation opened for business in Hallandale.¹⁹ Although in operation for only a few months, it marked the beginning of a change of ownership of gambling establishments from local residents to members of organized crime.

The Plantation had originally been a packing plant for the produce of the Hallandale farming community.²⁰ The depression forced the packing plant to close. In early 1936, two local gamblers, Frank Shireman and Claude Litteral, became partners with Julian "Potatoes" Kaufman, a Chicago professional horse bookmaker, to buy and refurbish the building. A blackboard was put on an inside wall for the horse racing betting odds, while in another section of the structure, roulette wheels and gaming tables were installed. A third portion of the building was rebuilt as a bingo hall.²¹ Loudspeakers

attached to the outside walls of the building allowed people to remain in their cars in the unpaved parking lot and still hear the bingo numbers. The Plantation proved to be an immediate success. Local residents and tourists flocked to the casino hoping to win \$2,000 for the cost of a dollar bingo card. The popularity of the venture ultimately led to its closure. In late 1936, through the efforts of several local residents, a state injunction closed the Plantation.²²

Before the Plantation closed, Vincent "Jimmy Blue Eyes" Alo, a member of the New York crime syndicate, suggested that Kaufman needed additional partners to expand and improve the gambling establishment. Kaufman agreed to the suggestion. Soon after the Plantation closed, Meyer and Jake Lansky, two other members of the New York crime syndicate, joined the partnership. After studying the injunction carefully, Meyer Lansky discovered that it covered only land and not the building. The entire structure was torn down and reconstructed on an adjacent lot. Now renamed the Farm, it opened for business in December 1936. Within a year, numbers of new gambling parlors complete with restaurants and floor shows opened throughout Broward County. The Colonial Inn, the Beach Club, the It Club, and Club Greenacres were partially or wholly owned by Lansky and his partners. Lansky avoided unwanted publicity through generous donations to charities and by using local residents as fronts.²³

Local residents also became proprietors of casinos. Frederic H. Beck, owner of the Deck bar in downtown Fort Lauderdale,

discussed the opening of the Alamo Club with R.H. Gore in 1940. Beck planned to include a gambling room in the supper club, operated by his wife Eve. Gore asked Beck whether local residents or outsiders would run the gambling operation. After being assured local people would run the gambling, Gore promised that he would print no derogatory comments about the club in his newspaper.²⁴ Beck also received the Clarks' permission to run gambling in the Alamo club.²⁵ In return, Beck agreed to work as an unpaid special sheriff's deputy anytime the Clarks asked.²⁶ The largest nightclubs and casinos depended on increasing numbers of tourists during the winter season. They closed during the summer months, the smaller locally owned clubs operated throughout the year. Good dinners at reasonable prices drew local residents during the hot summer months. As the county's population grew, the smaller nightclubs made a small profit and remained in business.

Throughout the thirties, Broward County's population continued to increase. By 1940, the population of permanent residents reached 39,794, nearly double the number of people living in the county in 1930.²⁷ Although gambling provided an income from tourist money for some residents, the economic problems of the rest of the residents in Broward County remained unresolved.

The lack of adequate tax revenue continued as the greatest problem faced by local officials. Tax liens were placed on many parcels of land. After the land bust of 1926, the owners of these plots ignored their tax bills. The county received no tax money from the owners, and the land remained unpurchased by prospective

buyers, often because the title holder could not be found. Local government needed land returned to the active tax roll. This issue was addressed in the 1937 session of the Florida legislature when the Murphy Act allowed the purchase of land for the cost of the taxes owed to the government.²⁸ If the original owner of the land failed to pay the back taxes within two years, the title to the property was transferred to the new owner.²⁹ Numerous people took advantage of the new law. Some 60,000 parcels of land changed ownership during the next few years.³⁰ As tax money became available once again, local government agencies began to function properly.

In 1938, however, the funds for needed Broward County roads and other improvements were unavailable. The state maintained a few of the major thoroughfares, such as Federal Highway, but new road construction was necessary to relieve the traffic congestion on locally maintained roads. The traffic on East Las Olas Boulevard was an acute problem. City officials and the State Road Department chose Northeast 10th Street as the new route to the beach in northern Fort Lauderdale. The plan included widening the existing road, and extending it east and west. Broward County residents endorsed the new route in a referendum on October 1, 1938. Funding the project became the next major issue. Fort Lauderdale City Attorney George English, Walter R. Clark, and Commodore A.H. Brook made numerous trips to the nation's capital to receive federal approval for the sale of revenue bonds by the city for construction of the causeway. Both English and Clark used their political

connections with various legislators, to gain approval of the project. While the legislature approved the bond issue, it also called for tolls to pay for the bonds. However, city officials did not want a toll road. The solution to the funding problem came from the Florida State Road Department. Clark persuaded Florida officials that the causeway would benefit the state because it connected Federal Highway and State Road A1A. The local Road Department Agent, Guy W. Stovall, convinced the Road Department to pay off the bonds by using a portion of Broward County's share of the state gasoline tax. Through the efforts of Clark and Stovall, the funds for the new road became available. When a delegation of city officials met with Hugh T. Birch, the reclusive millionaire who owned much of Fort Lauderdale's beach property, to obtain land for the highway's right-of-way, the Chicagoan presented it to the city as an outright gift. Construction of the road began on December 29, 1938, and the new Sunrise Boulevard opened on February 25, 1940. The new highway relieved the traffic congestion on East Las Olas Boulevard. More importantly, the road construction provided jobs for local residents. After completion, many new businesses and homes were built along its path.³⁷

Sheriff Clark realized Broward County desperately needed other road improvements to promote economic growth. Tourists complained of the narrow, unmended roads, and the farming community called for highways to haul produce to marketplaces. The county had no funds to provide for these improvements. Clark reasoned that if the Florida State Road Department could be

persuaded to take over the maintenance duties of several existing highways and rebuild others, the local economy would continue to improve.

Once again, Walter R. Clark traveled to Tallahassee. In meetings with Florida State Road Department officials he discussed the advantages of state maintenance of East Las Olas Boulevard, Hallandale Beach Boulevard, and the Dania Beach Road. These three vital Broward County thoroughfares connected Federal Highway and State Road A1A. Tourists traveled extensively on these roads, and many refused to return if the roads were in disrepair. Each road served as escape routes for beach residents in the event of a hurricane. Clark's persuasive arguments soon saw all three causeways under the jurisdiction of the State Road Department.³²

The farmers of western Broward County also needed a well maintained highway to truck their produce to market. West Dixie Highway was filled with potholes from the heavy trucks and farming equipment that traveled on it. Once more Clark traveled to Tallahassee to discuss the problem with Road Department officials. With all the potential construction and maintenance of the various state roads in Broward County, Clark also called upon the road department to construct a new prison compound to end wasting traveling time bringing prisoners from Miami to work on Broward roads. Road Department officials agreed to reconstruct West Dixie Highway and build a new prison compound.³³

The farmers who lived in northern Broward County needed an improved marketplace to sell their produce. The existing structure

had been built in the early thirties, next to the Florida East Coast railroad tracks in Pompano and was little more than a platform. By mid 1938, it failed to meet the needs of the area's farming community. The Blount family pledged to donate twenty-three acres of land to the state, if it agreed to build a new marketplace for the farming community.³⁴ The money needed for construction of a new platform was the problem. Walter R. Clark considered the matter for several days. If state money was needed for construction of a new platform for the Pompano growers, why not build a larger structure that could be used by all the Broward County farmers, and enlist the aid of the Works Progress Administration? Clark discussed his idea with several state legislators and the Governor. The Sheriff cited the numerous economic advantages for a new structure. They assured Clark of state cooperation.³⁵ The Works Progress Administration was also urged to cooperate with the State of Florida, to provide economic relief to Broward County's farming community. The W.P.A. agreed to support the project.

Work began on the Pompano Farmers Market in early 1939, and the dedication ceremony was held on November 16, 1939.³⁶ The new platform was over a thousand feet long, and nearly two hundred feet wide. A marketing shed nearly three city blocks long was built on top of the platform. Next to the platform, an administration building was constructed.³⁷ Five thousand area residents attended the dedication ceremonies, which featured one of the largest barbecues in the area's history. Walter R. Clark's political influence helped Broward County gain the largest marketing platform in the United

States.³⁸ The Pompano Farmers Market allowed Broward County growers to sell their produce in a central location. The platform's proximity to the Florida East Coast railroad tracks allowed farm products to be transported easily to northern cities, and to Port Everglades. This was especially crucial when the United States entered the Second World War.

A month after the dedication ceremony of the Pompano Farmers Market, residents of Fort Lauderdale saw the first of many wartime incidents. On December 19, 1939, the British cruiser Orion pursued the German freighter Arauca toward the Florida coast. The Arauca avoided capture by entering Port Everglades, where it was interned.³⁹ Broward County residents had mixed emotions about the German sailors. It was the Christmas season, and the German sailors were far from home. Yet, residents did not want to appear to be supporting the Nazi cause. "Cotton" Mather, who owned a furniture store in Fort Lauderdale, asked Frederic Beck, owner of the Deck, whether Mather could bring the crew of the Arauca to the Deck bar for a Christmas meal. Beck answered "No, I won't do that. People would think I was leaning toward the Germans." Mather then asked Beck to deliver twelve to fifteen turkeys, along with vegetables, to the Arauca. Beck replied that he would consider the request.⁴⁰

Beck conferred with Sheriff Clark about the matter. The two men had developed a friendship over the past several years. Clark pondered the request for a few moments, and then decided the delivery of goods might be a good method to obtain information from

the Arauca crew. After receiving Clark's approval, Beck procured five hundred dollars from Mather for the supplies, and delivered the goods to the Arauca.⁴¹ The fifty two German sailors were soon permitted to have an extended shore leave. Some obtained jobs in Fort Lauderdale.⁴² When the Germans drank at the Deck, Beck listened to their conversations and relayed any important information to Sheriff Clark. The German sailors were permitted to roam freely throughout Fort Lauderdale until April 1, 1941. On that date, United States Immigration Department officials removed the Captain and crew of the Arauca from the ship, and took them to the Fort Lauderdale Coast Guard Base. The Germans were held on a technical charge regarding their length of stay in the United States.⁴³ They were eventually taken to Ellis Island, after brief stops in the Broward and Dade County jails.

Walter R. Clark's crowning achievement regarding the Florida State Road Department, was the relocation of the Fourth Road District's divisional headquarters from Miami to Fort Lauderdale, in April 1940.⁴⁴ In early 1939, Clark discussed the matter with Governor Cone. With the construction of the Pompano Farmers Market in progress, the new fuel storage facilities at Port Everglades, and the enlargement of Port Everglades, Fort Lauderdale deserved to be the site of a new, expanded Road Department headquarters for south Florida. Cone was persuaded by Clark to approve the construction of a new two-story building located on South Federal Highway and Fourteenth Street, using Florida State Road Department funds.⁴⁵ A year later the building was completed,

and the Fourth District headquarters was transferred from Miami to the new location. The relocation of the headquarters was important to the local economy because the state accounts were transferred from Miami to Broward banks. The Broward economy sorely needed a boost, as it took a turn for the worse in 1939.⁴⁶

Although the economy was in poor shape, the county population continued to grow. With the increased number of residents, the Sheriff's Department needed additional deputies to provide effective law enforcement. A.M. Wittcamp was hired in the late thirties to patrol the south Broward area.⁴⁷ Soon, Sheriff Clark added a professional criminal investigative staff, which included Roy May, a highly respected detective from New York, and Gene Ryan, hired to head all criminal investigations.⁴⁸

As the May 1940 Democratic primary drew near, Walter R. Clark was challenged by two men for the office of sheriff. Brack Cantrell once again entered the race, along with R.B. McDonald, the Fort Lauderdale police chief.⁴⁹ Cantrell was Clark's main adversary during the campaign. Cantrell emphasized the non-enforcement of the state's gambling laws in a subtle manner. "Elect Brack Cantrell and assure Broward County of a wholesome, efficient, and economical administration," and "Brack Cantrell for a New Deal in Law Enforcement."⁵⁰ McDonald chose not to advertise at all, apparently hoping to receive enough votes from those residents who were dissatisfied with the other two candidates. Clark's campaign emphasized the numerous benefits to the county that he had provided. The tabulation of the votes from the May 8, 1940 primary

showed Sheriff Clark had won the election easily with over 1,500 more votes than Cantrell and McDonald polled together.⁵¹ Clark's victory was so overwhelming in the Democratic primary no Republican candidate challenged him in the November election.⁵²

Walter R. Clark became a force in Florida politics during his second term in office and used his influence with Governor Cone to get needed improvements for Broward County. While organized crime members built and owned several Broward casinos, the Sheriff's office and other law enforcement agencies allowed gambling to continue because it provided jobs during times of economic hardship. Many Broward citizens also believed that tourists demanded gambling establishments. Even the Publisher of the Fort Lauderdale Daily News willingly overlooked the casinos' activity for what he saw was the good of the community.

CHAPTER 4

THE WAR YEARS

When the United States slowly geared for war following the 1940 election, Walter R. Clark's contribution was forming a counter-espionage agency to seek out German spy activity. During the war, Clark faced his first major political setback in 1942 when Governor Spessard Holland suspended the Sheriff from office. Nonetheless, the Florida Senate reinstated Clark the following year, and he ran unopposed for office in the 1944 elections.

Prior to the 1940 Democratic primary, the State Attorney's office began restraining illegal gambling activities in Broward County. Assistant State Attorney Louis Maire and State Attorney Phil O'Connell of Palm Beach County conferred on Friday, April 19, 1940, on a plan to place permanent injunctions against ten gambling establishments.¹ The Silver Moon and the Farm were the major targets. They ignored the most notorious locations in Broward County, probably because they were open only during the winter season. It took eight more years before injunctions were placed against the Colonial Inn, Club Greenacres, and Club Boheme.

Florida's constitutional limit of one term as governor meant that Fred P. Cone could not seek re-election. He decided instead to run for the vacant Senate seat in the 1940 primary. With Cone gone as Governor, Walter R. Clark realized he needed the support of the

future Democratic party gubernatorial candidate to maintain his own status in Florida politics.

Walter R. Clark and his brother Bob conceived the idea of supporting two gubernatorial candidates during the 1940 Democratic primary. Bob had grown politically powerful in Broward County, and had many influential friends.² As Broward residents believed they operated the sheriff's department effectively, the two brothers were virtually guaranteed of maintaining their respective positions as sheriff and chief deputy after the primary. What the Clarks needed was the future support of the Governor. Walter Clark threw his support to B.F. Paty of West Palm Beach, while Bob publicly supported Spessard Holland.³ With Holland's election, the Clarks assumed they would have his full cooperation in political matters. The Clarks' concern about the governor's support soon changed to concerns about war.

Although most Broward residents had treated the crew members of the Arauca with courtesy, they realized the United States was slowly becoming involved in the European conflict. As the United States government took measures to prepare for war, the German government also began preparations for a conflict with America.

By mid 1941, a number of German tourists began arriving in Broward County. The tourists were mostly men of military age. Many of these men frequented the local taverns, including the Deck. The Germans chartered fishing boats during the day, and sometimes would be out on the Atlantic ocean fishing for days at a time. The

sheer number of German tourists, coupled with their recreational activities, alarmed a number of citizens in the county. As one of the few residents aware of the German activity, Frederic Beck, owner of charter boats used by the Germans, became especially alarmed. Beck spoke to Sheriff Clark about his suspicion that in reality, the tourists were submarine commanders studying the coastal areas of Florida. Clark carefully listened to Beck's allegations concerning the German tourists. With the United States gradually gearing for war, Beck's theory was plausible. The question was, what could the sheriff do to keep the tourists under surveillance? At first, Clark sent a few of his deputies to the Deck during their off-duty hours. This measure proved entirely inadequate, as he had six deputies to patrol the entire county, and his men were all well known. Whenever an off-duty deputy sat down, the German tourists either carefully guarded their conversation or left the tavern.⁴

Walter R. Clark pondered the surveillance problem for several weeks, talking with both Bob Clark and Beck about the situation. Clark tacitly trusted Beck's advice. They had known each other since 1927, and Beck had been a special deputy in the late 1930s. The three men decided the best way to watch the tourists was to create an undercover organization using men that Walter trusted. The covert operation would be unknown by residents and tourists coming into the county. Eventually, if the need arose, the organization could observe other subversive activity. If one of the members uncovered subversive activity, the sheriff's office could arrest the individual under the provisions of the Smith Act.⁵

Clark next needed to enlist men into the organization. The Sheriff advertised a meeting to be held in the Broward County Courthouse. He invited all retired lawmen living in the county to attend the meeting. At the meeting, Sheriff Clark explained his idea to the assembly. The threat of the United States involvement in the war made necessary the creation of an organization that could report suspicious activity to the sheriff's office. Clark told the audience that the agency would act as a reporting organization with no arrest powers. The Sheriff would organize anyone willing to join the agency. Clark had each man write down his name and address on a piece of paper that was passed around, and told the group that someone would talk to them in the near future. With that said, the meeting was adjourned. But retired lawmen only could observe some enemy activity. They would be unable to observe enemy financial transactions. To address these issues, other members of the community had to be recruited into the organization.⁶

The Sheriff and his Chief Deputy then listed people whom they knew and trusted. Taxi cab drivers, bus station agents, bank managers, night club owners, air raid wardens, gas station attendants, and people who worked at Port Everglades and the railroad stations, were all included on the list. For the next six months, Bob Clark and Frederic Beck spoke to various people on the list in an effort to recruit them. A number of the retired lawmen were also enlisted in the organization.⁷

Soon after the United States entered the Second World War, the Broward County Bureau of Investigation was nearly ready. Beck was

appointed Chief of the Bureau by Clark. All the agents were sworn to secrecy and each member of the agency was given a secret number, the last four digits of his social security number. Each man was given the telephone number of Beck's office and told to report any suspicious activity. Beck agreed to work for the organization without pay as a service to the United States. He was also appointed a chief air raid warden at large to investigate the reports without arousing suspicion.⁸

The Broward County Bureau of Investigation, unofficially known as "Operation Ajax," gave individuals involved in the organization a sense of purpose, knowing they were helping their country. Unbeknownst to Broward residents, the handful of German submarines that hunted in Florida's coastal waters benefitted more from the coastal lighting that silhouetted ships against the night sky, than spy information.⁹ Nevertheless, Broward officials felt more secure knowing that the sheriff's investigative operation might reduce shipping losses. "Operation Ajax" functioned for the first few years of the war before the organization's defense role was questioned by the Federal Bureau of Investigation. While the Broward County Bureau of Investigation operated, its members sought out suspicious activity and reported it to the sheriff's department. The sheriff's department investigated the reports and arrested several people involved in unlawful acts against the United States. Although the sheriff's department arrested a few people engaged in subversion, F.B.I. officials questioned the legality of the Broward County Bureau of Investigation. The organization could be

used against law abiding citizens. The F.B.I. pressured Clark to end the organization's investigations. In two years, the Broward County Bureau of Investigation ceased to exist.

During the first year of the war, Broward County's urban economy seemed destined for disaster because of the lack of tourist trade. When the military recognized that the region's climate was ideal for recuperation in the numerous hotels and flight training at the existing county airfields, military personnel began arriving in large numbers, salvaging the economy.¹⁰ The servicemen needed recreational activities during leaves from their training at the naval air station. Survivors from torpedoed ships off the coast of south Florida needed places to calm their nerves. Sailors who had spent months at sea, needed entertainment when their vessels docked in Port Everglades. Clark recognized the necessity of these requirements. He permitted many of the smaller gambling establishments to continue operating, partially because most of the places also served food and liquor. The Sheriff, however, closed all of the houses of prostitution.¹¹ The brothels were too unpredictable and many residents objected to these illicit operations.

Although Sheriff Clark maintained a degree of control over the servicemen in the night clubs, he was especially concerned about the sailors who had been at sea for extended periods of time. When he learned that a ship was arriving at Port Everglades, Clark contacted local night club owners and warned them. Clark often telephoned Fred Beck, because the Deck was a popular serviceman's retreat. One day in mid 1942, Clark telephoned Beck, letting him know of the

impending arrival of a submarine that had been at sea for four months. Beck asked Clark, "Do you want to let them come in here and do some drinking?" Clark told Beck "to get rid of all the women [in the Deck], take out the bar stools, [and] let them come in and give them what they want." Two groups of sixty sailors came into the bar that evening, and spent four thousand dollars on liquor. When a sailor lost consciousness due to intoxication, he was carried out of the Deck and returned to his boat. Although not a prestigious aspect of Clark's career as a law enforcement official, Clark provided a solution to the problems created by the war. Unfortunately, the Sheriff was unable to maintain complete control over all the drinking and gambling establishments, which eventually led to Walter R. Clark's suspension as Sheriff of Broward County.¹²

In mid 1942, state officials secretly came into Broward County to investigate allegations of wide-open gambling.¹³ A gambling-related murder further exposed the illicit business to the public.¹⁴ Rumors of an impending suspension of the sheriff circulated around Broward County in mid-July 1942. An editorial in the Fort Lauderdale Daily News alleged a political double-cross at Clark's expense.¹⁵ It suggested that Clark had been assured by state officials close to the Governor that horse-bookmaking had received the Governor's tacit approval.¹⁶ On Monday, July 20, 1942, Governor Spessard Holland suspended Walter R. Clark from office on charges of "allowing open and notorious gambling operations" in Broward County.¹⁷ Publicly, Clark remained stoical, partially because he was participating in a massive manhunt for a fugitive who had murdered

four Miami residents.¹⁸ Privately, Clark was outraged. He apparently had been selected as a scapegoat for unchecked gambling, while similar conditions continued in Dade and Palm Beach Counties. Prior to the suspension, Sheriff Clark had offered to resign from office, and wait until the 1944 elections to run for sheriff on a platform of vindication. After his suspension, Clark again offered to resign from office, with the understanding that he would not seek re-election. Both propositions were refused by Governor Holland.¹⁹ When the Governor refused to allow Walter R. Clark to leave public office gracefully, Clark decided to fight the suspension. Clark announced he would appeal to the Florida Senate at its next meeting. The next day Edward T. Lee was appointed Sheriff.²⁰

During the next ten months, Walter R. Clark pondered his future. He realized that political friends could not be trusted completely. He had known this, but assumed he had enough important friends for protection. At the time, Clark had a few speculative land investments in Broward County. These investments were insufficient to assure a comfortable lifestyle for Clark and his family. If reinstated, Clark vowed to continue investing in land as his brother Bob had. Walter joined Bob in land purchases because the ability to purchase land at tax sales made such speculation profitable. Land would be worth large sums of money, once the population of the county increased. Walter R. Clark searched for other investment opportunities because of the county's economic potential.²¹

On Monday evening, May 24, 1943, Clark testified before a Florida Senate subcommittee, which was reviewing his suspension.

The charge leading to Clark's suspension was his permission to gamblers and bookmakers to continue their operations. Testimony was submitted from Leonard M. Shaw who was the Governor's special investigator. Shaw stated he played slot machines in two Broward County night clubs. R.G. Danner, former special agent of the Miami bureau of the F.B.I., stated "gambling flourished in Broward County and was about on a par with Dade county." Danner also questioned the choice of Frederic Beck as chief of the Broward County Bureau of Investigation.²²

C.L. Chancey, the lawyer representing Walter R. Clark, submitted affidavits to the Senate subcommittee. They stated slot machines used by Shaw were licensed by Broward County and the taxes paid. Chancey also presented a number of letters protesting Clark's suspension written by Broward County public officials and citizens. The affidavits regarding the slot machines partially eliminated the charge of allowing gamblers to continue their operations without restraint. The subcommittee members directly questioned Danner on the extent of gambling in Broward County. Danner admitted the illegal enterprise "had decreased markedly since the United States had entered the war." Although some forms of gambling remained, Clark had restrained the enterprise.²³

Frederic Beck also traveled to Tallahassee with Clark and Chancey, to vouch for Clark's character. Beck explained the purpose of the Broward County Bureau of Investigation to the subcommittee. It was not, a "sort of vigilante committee", as R.G. Danner stated. Its purpose was to relieve the sheriff's office of some of the burden

of investigating complaints of subversive activity. Beck further testified that he had resigned as head of the bureau, when his character was questioned by the F.B.I.²⁴

Finally, Walter R. Clark took the witness stand to testify. He stated he made every effort to follow the recommendations of Governor Holland regarding gambling. He also told the committee he offered to resign from office, which Holland had rejected. After Clark had finished testifying, the Senate subcommittee adjourned the meeting, promising to take the case under advisement. It would report to the Senate later, when all of the state senators met in executive session.²⁵

The issues leading to Clark's suspension were addressed. If Clark had enforced the Governor's restrictions on gambling, and gambling activity had actually been reduced in Broward County, how could the Governor suspend the Sheriff? Also, if gambling continued in other south Florida counties, why were no other sheriffs suspended? The Florida Senate reflected on these issues, and voted unanimously to reinstate Walter R. Clark on June 1, 1943.²⁶ The Senate's decision allowed Clark to collect the pay owed to him for his ten month suspension. The decision to reinstate Walter R. Clark as sheriff angered Governor Holland. On Wednesday, June 2, Holland questioned the Senate's decision. "The Senate saw fit to make a decision which they thought proper but which I did not think proper."²⁷ On Monday June 7, 1943, Sheriff Clark resumed his duties as a law enforcement official, and commended Edward T. Lee on the fine job he had done as sheriff.²⁸

Once Walter R. Clark resumed office, he immediately reappointed Bob Clark and A.D. Marshall to his staff.²⁹ Clark had been exonerated of the gambling charges by the people of Broward County, when they wrote letters of support for the subcommittee hearing. Many residents provided moral support during Clark's suspension. Sheriff Clark continued to have the strong support of many residents for the rest of his life.

During one of Clark's trips to Washington D.C. after reinstatement, the Sheriff met and became friends with Senator Harry S. Truman.³⁰ Clark invited the Senator to come to Florida as his personal guest, and to give a speech to Broward residents in early 1944.³¹ Clark's friendship with Truman would continue when Truman became President of the United States. The two men genuinely enjoyed each other's company. When Truman traveled to Florida, he always notified Clark of his arrival. Clark and several of his close friends would meet with Truman for an evening of relaxation. Truman often played the piano, which added to the festivities.³² Once Truman became President, they met at the southern white house on Key West.³³

As the elections of 1944 drew near, the main topic of debate was whether Franklin D. Roosevelt would seek a fourth term in office. Although Walter R. Clark's suspension was a temporary setback in his political career, his popularity remained strong. Clark was not challenged by another candidate during the Democratic primary in May, nor in the November general election. Clark officially received 7,671 votes in the November election, a strong

mandate from the people of Broward County to continue his policies as Sheriff during the next term.³⁴

Walter R. Clark provided sensible leadership during the war. He organized the Broward County Bureau of Investigation to control enemy espionage. Clark permitted limited gambling, which gave servicemen a recreational activity and helped to salvage the local economy hurt by the lack of tourism. Although gambling was permitted, it was controlled. Governor Holland suspended Clark from office for permitting wide-open gambling, but the Sheriff was reinstated the following year by the Florida Senate after testimony indicated he had restrained gambling operations. Clark ran unopposed for office in the 1944 elections, giving him a strong mandate from Broward residents to continue his policies as sheriff.

CHAPTER 5

THE POST-WAR YEARS

The residents of Broward County found the years following the Second World War extremely prosperous. While the severe housing shortage that developed during the war continued during 1946 and shortages of construction materials caused housing prices to skyrocket, the owners of existing housing could reap a tidy profit when selling their residences.¹ Moreover, once building materials became available, vacant land also became valuable. Many Broward residents, including Walter and Bob Clark, invested in land and other business opportunities. The growing affluence of many residents after the war also gradually caused a change in their attitude toward illegal gambling.² They began to view gambling as a public nuisance that impeded the growth of legitimate enterprises. By 1948, Sheriff Clark found that gambling had become a major political issue.

The population of Broward County more than doubled during the 1940s. In 1940, 39,794 people lived in the county. By 1950, the number of residents reached 83,933.³ The main influx of people came after the war. The tourist industry also grew enormously. This dual growth caused a divergence of opinion regarding gambling. Many new residents wanted an environment conducive to raising

families. Illegal gambling was no longer needed to provide jobs for the unemployed, and many also saw it as detrimental to wholesome family values. On the other hand, many long-term residents had become accustomed to the laissez-faire attitude toward gambling, while other older members of the community reasoned that the tourist trade needed gambling in order to survive. The diversity of opinion continued to grow more pronounced during the next five years.

The year following the end of the war, however, was characterized by people wishing to have fun. Gambling, whether legal or illegal, was part of their enjoyment. Gulfstream Park, constructed just prior to the war, became a financial success. The horse racing track had originally been constructed by Joseph M. Smoot and a number of investors.⁴ Smoot, who was also instrumental in building Hialeah race track, had gotten the people of Broward County to authorize a new racing track through a referendum. Walter and Bob Clark urged people to pass the referendum, and helped finance the track's construction.⁵ Once completed, they sent friends and others needing jobs, to help run the track.⁶ The racetrack closed after a few days due to insufficient operating funds. In 1944, Gulfstream Park reopened under new management when James Donn, a local florist, purchased the title of the racetrack.⁷ After the war ended, large crowds attended the races, helping to assure the financial success of the enterprise. The Clarks, who had been in favor of Gulfstream Park from its inception,

continued to provide support, by sending people needing jobs to the track.⁸ The Clarks counted on the political support of these people.

The Colonial Inn and other gambling establishments also had record earnings in 1946.⁹ The profits encouraged the Lanskys to renew their efforts to bring in famous entertainers for performances at the nightclub. The Lanskys and other gamblers became more firmly entrenched in the affairs of the county. They continued to operate with little restraint until 1948.

The growing population of the county provided new revenue for older established businesses. The entertainment industry particularly grew. Jukeboxes became popular because they provided an inexpensive source of music. Nearly all taverns, restaurants, and pool halls had one of the machines. The potential growth of this source of entertainment lured Walter and Bob Clark to invest in the small Broward Novelty Company.

Originally, the company was owned by H.J. McLean, who had started the company during the early 1940s.¹⁰ The firm, commonly known as "Music Mac's" specialized in renting and repairing jukeboxes. During the war, the business had barely turned a profit.¹¹ McLean's lone employee was Gordon Williams, who drove the delivery truck.¹² After the war, Williams mentioned the growth potential of the enterprise to Bob Clark, who with his brother Walter, decided to invest in the company. The Clarks and Williams bought out McLean's interest. In 1945, corporate papers filed in Tallahassee for the renamed Broward Novelty Company listed the Clarks as officers in the company.¹³ While McLean remained in the partnership until

1947, Gordon Williams managed the concern.¹⁴ Moreover, the Clarks claimed they never visited the warehouses of the Broward Novelty Company, leaving complete control of the operation in Gordon Williams's hands.¹⁵

During the next three years, the Broward Novelty Company, also known as the Broward Music Company, expanded its operations. Music boxes continued to supply the main source of revenue, although it added cigarette machines and pinball machines to the inventory.¹⁶ While the legitimate business of the partnership netted the owners of the Broward Novelty Company a large profit, Williams decided to increase those profits by engaging in several gambling enterprises. He purchased a small number of slot machines, and began to run bolita in the African-American sections of Broward County.¹⁷

The slot machines, placed in legitimate businesses, provided only a minor source of revenue for the company. While the machines were in public locations, Williams carefully separated the receipts from other company revenue. The company also paid the state tax for the devices. The questionable legal status of slot machines caused Williams to place them only in select locations where he knew the owner of the business very well. When the Florida legislature made them illegal to possess or operate, he returned the slot machines to the company warehouse. Williams kept them in storage for the next few years, hoping that they would become legal once again.¹⁸ The slot machines never left the warehouse until they were sold to people for private use.

Bolita, a Cuban numbers game brought to the United States in the early 1900s was popular in the African-American community. Originally, tickets were sold for ten cents a number. A canvas bag, which held one hundred numbered balls, was passed around a circle of customers. A customer pulled the winning number out of the bag when the money collector signalled. The predetermined payoff for the number was six or seven dollars for the ten cent wager.¹⁹ The Sheriff's Department had occasionally raided bolita games. African-Americans who were caught playing the game were fined five dollars and released.²⁰ Bolita continued to be played despite attempts to end it.

Williams realized the tremendous potential profit for the company if he organized bolita sales. The drivers who collected jukebox receipts in the African-American sections of the county, also collected the bolita receipts. Now players could wager as much money as they wanted on a number. Bolita runners recorded the names and the numbers and collected the money, which they turned over to the Broward Novelty Company drivers. Every Saturday, the Cuban National lottery was broadcast by radio. The third number was the winning bolita number, which paid off at 70-1 odds. While bolita provided a lucrative addition to the company business, administrating the game meant large amounts of nickels and dimes had to be transported to Barnett bank in washtubs.²¹ Bolita sales in 1945-1946 reached \$321,000 and increased to \$780,000 the following year.²²

As sales grew, Williams hired more employees, including a full time secretary; a bookkeeper; two or three drivers, including his brother-in-law, James Johnson; and a mechanic to repair the machines. Although Gordon Williams ran the business, he spent little time at the warehouses, stopping at the office only to see that everything was operating smoothly.²³ The Broward Novelty Compay's illegal operations were a closely guarded secret. The general public only knew the company's legitimate business. Moreover the partnership between the Clarks and Williams was not public knowledge. The Clarks remained non-active partners in the company, intentionally distancing themselves from its operation. They were content in the knowledge that the business would continue to turn a profit. They considered the company another business venture because of their favorable view on gambling.

Walter R. Clark also invested money in several other enterprises. He and his brother Bob entered a partnership with Harry Sullivan to build a Hudson-Dell garage on Federal Highway. Sullivan ran the business. Later, the garage was leased to the Lincoln-Mercury company.²⁴ Sheriff Clark's largest investment was in a new company named the Ribbonwriter Corporation of America. This investment turned out to be a tremendous financial loss. The Ribbonwriter corporation also received negative publicity at the time Estes Kefauver began investigating organized crime in 1950.

Siegfried Becchold, a New York real estate investor, moved to Fort Lauderdale in 1935.²⁵ He and Clark developed a strong friendship after the Sheriff helped release Becchold's sister from a

Nazi concentration camp. After Becchold asked Clark's aid, the Sheriff telephoned his friend Senator Harry S. Truman, who arranged a meeting between Becchold and the Cuban ambassador to the United States. Becchold gave fifty thousand dollars to the ambassador, who in turn, passed the money to the German ambassador to Cuba. After her release from the concentration camp, Becchold's sister was first taken to Cuba, and was then brought to the United States.²⁶

At the end of the war, Siegfried Becchold discussed with Clark the formation of a company to manufacture a device to eliminate carbon paper, the bane of secretaries in the era before copying machines. The Ribbonwriter machine consisted of a series of rollers on arms attached to a typewriter. Each arm printed two copies of the original document. With additional attachments the device could print up to seven copies. Nonetheless, for the machine to function efficiently onion skin paper had to be placed between each ordinary sheet of paper.²⁷

Although Clark knew very little about secretarial work, he became tremendously enthusiastic about the device. Believing he could make a fortune, Clark discussed the device with numerous local businessmen. His enthusiasm persuaded these men to invest in the company.²⁸ To begin operations the company constructed a factory and established a distribution network to market the product nationwide. In 1947 Walter R. Clark invested \$33,000 in the corporation and persuaded Bob Clark to invest \$8,000.²⁹ Siegfried Becchold was president and Walter Clark vice-president of Ribbonwriter Corporation of America. Frederic Beck entered the

company as a sales representative. In Canada after demonstrating the device to businessmen, Beck sold a distribution contract to a Canadian firm for \$60,000. The company also sold franchises throughout the United States. Walter R. Clark's enthusiasm for the machine was so great that he gave two hundred shares of stock to President Truman as a gift.³⁰ Becchold sold company shares to Fulgencio Batista, the Cuban dictator.³¹

The Dania factory was completed in August 1948.³² It employed forty people to assemble the devices.³³ Unfortunately, the machine failed to perform to expectations. Stenographers found the Ribbonwriter devices too complicated to use. The machines jammed easily and were difficult to repair. Often buyers returned half their shipment still in their boxes. They were placed in a corner of the factory. In late 1948, Becchold found a way to dispose of the damaged machines. He invited the Cuban ambassador who had negotiated his sister's release, to tour the factory. Becchold offered to sell the damaged goods to the Cuban government for twenty-five dollars a piece. Becchold offered the ambassador a fifteen dollar kickback for each machine. When the ambassador purchased the machines for the Cuban educational program, Beck immediately loaded the damaged goods onto a Cuban airplane. The sale turned an expected financial loss into a small profit.³⁴

Nonetheless, the continuing financial plight of the company led Becchold and Sheriff Clark to seek additional capital. In February 1949, they applied for a loan from the Reconstruction Finance Corporation of America.³⁵ Their loan agreement called for the

payment of \$400,000. The company received \$300,000 before the R.F.C. cancelled the loan.³⁶ On July 29, 1949, the company was forced into involuntary bankruptcy.³⁷ Litigation began which accused the company's officers of misusing the funds. In addition, Clark was charged with using his friendship with President Truman to pressure the R.F.C. to issue the loan. The Sheriff denied the charge.³⁸ Although the alleged misuse of the funds was never proven, the negative publicity impeded progress in attempts to reorganize the corporation. On July 12, 1950, the Reconstruction Finance Corporation began a foreclosure action against the Ribbonwriter Corporation.³⁹ By the end of the year, it had auctioned off the company's property with the proceeds used to pay off part of the loan. The officers in the company were liable for the balance of the loan, which was paid off in yearly increments. Although the Ribbonwriter Corporation of America ended in bankruptcy, it represented an attempt to bring more industry and jobs to Broward County. A successful company could have provided numerous people with employment, and a large amount of capital to the county's banks.

Walter R. Clark made his wisest investment in land. He purchased, through tax certificates, over one hundred acres of raw muckland along State Road 84.⁴⁰ At the time, the land was under water. After the 1947 hurricanes, the state dug a drainage canal, which drained Clark's land and made it more valuable. When the Arvida Corporation purchased the land in 1955 from Odelle Pitts Clark, Clark's widow, it paid four hundred dollars an acre.⁴¹ Clark

Club Greenacres, he filed affidavits with Rogers who then attached the affidavits to injunctions. Rogers then persuaded ten leading Fort Lauderdale citizens to testify in court that gambling was bad for the community.⁴⁶ On February 12, 1948, Dwight L. Rogers, Jr. and the ten citizens asked Judge Tedder to grant the injunctions. Tedder agreed. The Colonial Inn, Casa Lopez, and Club Greenacres soon closed. For the next three years, civil actions continued to close other gambling establishments.

Illegal gambling was the main issue in the 1948 Democratic primary for the office of sheriff. Frank Tuppen, Pompano Beach Police Chief, and Joseph C. Mackey, Fort Lauderdale City Commissioner, entered the contest in an attempt to unseat Walter R. Clark.⁴⁷ Tuppen, the leading challenger, campaigned on his twelve years of experience as a law enforcement official promising to enforce all the laws if elected.⁴⁸ Although alluding to Clark's non-enforcement of gambling laws, the Pompano Beach Police Chief refused to use mud-slinging tactics against the sheriff.

Joseph C. Mackey, on the other hand, chose an aggressive, direct approach to the gambling issue. Mackey's campaign closely associated gambling with gangsters.⁴⁹ He blamed Clark's non-enforcement policies for the county's wide open gambling. Mackey promised to "stamp out gambling, and run out the gamblers and hoodlums." He also questioned Clark's efficiency in solving crimes.⁵⁰

Walter R. Clark's campaign ignored the gambling allegations entirely. Instead, Clark focused voters' attention on his

accomplishments while in office. He emphasized the county's low crime rate, and commendations by government agencies and officials. The Sheriff's role in the recent hurricane relief efforts were duly noted.⁵¹

The Sheriff's contest appeared to be very close as election day drew near. The candidates and the voters expected a second primary to determine the Democratic nominee for the fall general election. On Saturday, May 1, the F.B.I. announced it would begin an investigation of voting frauds. Mackey's campaign officials charged widespread false registration in the Hollywood-Hallandale area. Both Tuppen and Mackey planned to have challengers at the polls to prevent people from using false registrations to vote.⁵² The bitter contest finally ended on May 4, with an easy Clark victory. Clark received 8,897 votes, Tuppen 4,446, and Mackey finished a distant third, with 3,305, making a second primary unnecessary.⁵³

The November election was anticlimactic. Clark continued to campaign on his past record. George J. Burckel, a retired real estate and construction man from Hollywood, was the Republican challenger. Burckel proposed to involve civic groups as advisory councils for the sheriff's office, and to form a junior sheriff's group to prevent juvenile delinquency.⁵⁴ Burckel emphasized his business background during the election campaign. Clark began his fifth term in office after handily defeating Burckel by nearly 4,000 votes.⁵⁵

During the previous four years, Broward County's population had grown at a phenomenal rate. The deprivations caused by the Depression and war were replaced with prosperity. Walter R. Clark

invested in several business ventures and in land speculation, along with many other members of the community. While illegal gambling became a major public issue and measures had been taken to curb gambling by closing the most notorious casinos by injunctions, Sheriff Clark assumed his re-election meant a public endorsement for his policy of non-enforcement of the gambling laws.

CHAPTER 6

CLARK'S FINAL YEARS

Efforts to curb illegal gambling in Broward County continued after Walter R. Clark's re-election in 1948. Similar efforts were made in Dade and Palm Beach counties as animosity toward the institution increased throughout the state. By 1950, when numerous citizens publicly demanded an end of illegal gambling, the "great clean-up" began. Several of Florida's leading citizens asked the federal government to investigate gambling when Governor Fuller Warren refused to remove Dade County Sheriff Jimmy Sullivan. In Broward County, Sheriff Clark's gambling policies were questioned publicly. Early in 1950, the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee inaugurated an investigation of organized crime throughout the United States. Chaired by Senator Estes Kefauver of Tennessee, the committee held hearings and subpoenaed both Sullivan and Clark. Clark's testimony revealed his partnership in the Broward Novelty Company. This led to his suspension from office by Governor Warren, and his indictment and trial for involvement in the company.

Public sentiment grew to put an end to Broward County's illegal gambling during 1949. Though at first, only the most notorious locations were targets. Lee A. Wentworth, former county tax assessor initiated three civil lawsuits in July against

Hollywood bookmaking establishments. Wentworth claimed the notoriety of the places caused a public scandal. The Court issued injunctions against two locations, the Valhalla restaurant and Jiggs Farrell's place.¹ In October, Judge George W. Tedder, Sr. impaneled a grand jury to investigate illegal gambling in the county, declaring gambling to be an "unhealthy situation, particularly vicious when mobsters come down and move in." Although just prior to the formation of the grand jury Broward gambling locations closed, within a short time they reopened. Gamblers, fearing a grand jury investigation, closed their establishments as a precaution. When their fears subsided they reopened for business-as-usual. The jury had asked for a recess, in the event of this action by the gamblers. Fourteen weeks later, in early 1950, the grand jury reconvened, and continued its investigation.²

In stories about gambling, Miami newspapers referred to Broward County as an "independent principality" with unchecked gambling activity. Although Dade County also had gambling, occasional raids closed the clubs.³ The negative publicity spurred many Broward officials to renew their efforts to end gambling. The Fort Lauderdale Daily News also carried more stories about gambling. Publisher Robert H. Gore's dislike for the Lanskys gradually caused him to lash out through editorials against the Sheriff's policies of non-enforcement.⁴

In early 1950, the war against illegal gambling began in earnest with horse bookmaking the first operation shut down. Hallandale was one city selected by Florida Attorney General

Richard Ervin because of its many bookmakers. Ervin sent Assistant Attorney General James Torey to Hallandale to conduct investigations. He was cut by broken glass when a bookmaker slammed a window closed as Torey peered inside. The injury forced the Governor to act. On February 1, 1950, Fuller Warren sent a telegram ordering Sheriff Clark to "protect state employees in the performance of their duties." Ervin then sent another assistant to urge Clark to close all bookmaking operations. On February 2, the Sheriff complied with the orders, putting all the horse bookmakers in the county out of business.⁵ Other forms of gambling continued. Two days later, Ervin banned slot machines from operation. The Sheriff acknowledged, "the rest of the stuff might still be running," when answering reporters questions.⁶ Walter R. Clark's continued partial enforcement of the law, left him vulnerable to public criticism. Clark apparently misread public opinion.

Opposition to Dade County's wide-open gambling led to the formation of the Greater Miami Crime Commission. Among its first acts the Commission asked Governor Fuller Warren to remove Sheriff Jimmy Sullivan from office. While Sullivan periodically closed gambling operations, many Dade County residents wanted a permanent end to the illegal activity. The Governor refused to act on the Commission's request, replying that Dade County residents "were entitled to keep the sheriff they have shown in two elections by overwhelming majorities they want."⁷ An outraged C.V. Griffin, the Orlando millionaire who headed Florida's Democratic Fund Raising Committee, ended his support for the Warren administration. Griffin

telegraphed President Harry S. Truman, asking him to act against Florida gambling, "with which the governor can't or won't cope."⁸

The Greater Miami Crime Commission in renewing its efforts against Sullivan asked Senator Spessard Holland to enlist the aid of the federal government. The United States Attorney General responded that the matter was not within the federal government's jurisdiction. The Commission had anticipated this reply, and now urged the government to use income tax and interstate violations as a means to gain jurisdiction.⁹ When Senator Estes Kefauver introduced a resolution to allow the Senate Judiciary Committee to investigate interstate gambling Spessard Holland pledged complete support and helped gain its passage.¹⁰ As the committee began to gather information Holland urged it to begin its investigation in Florida.

Although Clark dismissed the importance of the Greater Miami Crime Commission, events in Miami directly led to his investigation and suspension. On February 21, 1950, Gore, for the first time, openly blasted Walter R. Clark in a front page editorial entitled "Don't forget Broward County, Governor!" The editorial demanded the Governor suspend Clark, if he suspended Sullivan. Gore championed Roland Kelley, the Fort Lauderdale Police Chief, as a successor to Clark.¹¹ At the time, some gambling houses continued to operate in the county.

Two days later, Governor Warren issued a terse order to all county law officers throughout the state to strictly enforce all laws. On Friday, February 24, 1950, the Governor's official letter,

threatening to remove any county law enforcement official who was guilty of persistent neglect of duty, arrived in Clark's office.

Sheriff Clark vowed to follow the Governor's orders.¹² The edict had an immediate impact, and all gambling locations closed.¹³

Although several casinos opened for a few hours, Clark sent deputies to enforce the mandate.¹⁴ The nightclubs remained closed.

During the next two months, Sheriff Clark continued to perform his official duties in an efficient manner and the gambling situation remained quiet in Broward County. In late May, the Senate Investigating Committee subpoenaed both Clark and Sullivan to appear. The committee planned to conduct secret hearings in Miami on May 26 and 27. On Wednesday, May 25, committee members Senator Estes Kefauver and Senator Lester Hunt of Wyoming, as well as Special counselor Rudolf Halley, and committee investigator Downey Rice arrived in Miami.¹⁵

The following day, United States Marshalls were posted outside the Federal Courthouse chamber doors. The entire floor was checked for eavesdropping devices.¹⁶ Sheriff Sullivan appeared before the committee first, for a day and a half of questioning. On Saturday, May 27, Kefauver called Sheriff Clark to testify. After being sworn in, Clark first answered questions about the length of his tenure in office before questioning turned to gambling. Kefauver asked if Clark had to wait for a complaint in order to investigate gambling. Clark responded, "If we have a complaint or anything like that, we are supposed to look after it." Kefauver then asked, "In the absence of complaints, if you know or have reason to

believe that certain transactions are taking place that are illegal, is it your duty to [do something about it]?" Clark answered "yes, sir."¹⁷ The Senator declared that there was abundant testimony that gambling places had operated for years in Broward County, and that organized crime figures were involved. He then asked the Sheriff whether he had any knowledge of these matters. Clark stated "I haven't any knowledge of any gambling." Kefauver continued to press the Sheriff about his answer. He asked about the operations of the Colonial Inn and Club Greenacres, and why they were allowed to continue to operate. Sheriff Clark stated, "I was elected on the liberal ticket, and the people want it, and they enjoy it."¹⁸

Rudolph Halley then questioned Clark about the "liberal ticket." Who knew about the gambling? Did Clark advertise that he allowed gambling? Clark answered "no," and added that the election results indicated a majority of the people of Broward County wanted gambling. He admitted that the gambling issue figured prominently in the 1948 elections.¹⁹

The questioning then turned to Clark's financing for the 1948 campaign. When Clark denied knowing Frank Erickson, a notorious professional gambler, he admitted knowing Jake Lansky who ran the Colonial Inn. Kefauver asked "Do these people pay you off?" Clark denied the allegations, but said they contributed to his campaign. Clark never received any money personally, his campaign manager in southern Broward County took care of finances in that area.²⁰

The committee then delved into Clark's personal finances. Clark said his salary as Sheriff was \$7,500, plus fees, and although he could not remember his exact income, he averaged "anywhere from \$15,000 to \$35,000" as sheriff. When asked about his investments, Clark stated he owned two hundred acres of farmland, a hundred acre farm, a few individual lots, and a half interest in a garage and filling station, along with stock in the Ribbonwriter Corporation.²¹ Although Clark intentionally omitted mentioning the Novelty Company, his frugal lifestyle and miniscule bank account that had \$152.14 in it at the time of his death supported his claim that he received no pay-off.²²

The committee then returned to questions about the "liberal ticket." Clark, admitting the existence of gambling in the county, said the city commissioners determined its openness. When asked who a gambler would approach to open a location, Clark said he did not know, but no one had asked him. The final questions involved the Sheriff's knowledge of gambling at the most notorious Broward locations. Sheriff Clark stated that although he knew gambling went on, he had never received a complaint, and he had never actually witnessed gambling. The hearing then ended.

Throughout the hearing, Clark gave evasive testimony, responding with vague answers and volunteering no excess information. Clark's inability to provide specific information about his personal finances led Kefauver to investigate the matter further. The 1948 campaign contributions and the "liberal ticket" would also be subject to further inquiry. Two days after the end of

the closed hearings, Senator Kefauver announced that his committee would return to Florida and hold open hearings.²³

The war on gambling continued. Within a week, President Truman authorized the Kefauver committee to use income tax returns of suspected gamblers and racketeers in its investigation.²⁴ The federal government could prosecute any person found to be avoiding full payment of his income taxes. On Tuesday, June 6, the Fort Lauderdale Daily News asked "who got \$40,000?" Colonial Inn records showed the money donated to "charity," the article implied it went to Clark, because the Sheriff's office had never raided the establishment.²⁵ The following day, the newspaper published a New York Grand Jury report indicating the Colonial Inn had made \$600,000 in profits. The Fort Lauderdale Daily News again made it clear that the Colonial Inn operated in an area under the jurisdiction of the Sheriff's office. The newspaper's negative publicity pressured the Sheriff's Office to continue its strict ban of gambling. Robert Clark filed charges against Charles Jackson, who operated the It Club on South Federal Highway. Jackson had been arrested on June 6, for operating the gambling club.²⁶

The Kefauver committee scheduled hearings for July 13 and 14 to conduct further investigations. It was unclear whether Sheriff Clark would be recalled, as Kefauver called him an "unsatisfactory witness." Reporters attempting to contact the Senator found him out of town.²⁷

In early July, rumors began to circulate in Miami that Walter R. Clark would be subpoenaed to appear before the committee. "The

way the paper talks, it looks like I'll get one," said Sheriff Clark.²⁸ When the Sheriff finally received the subpoena the following week, he claimed to have no idea of the line of questioning, though he assumed the inquiry would focus on his role in allowing gambling to continue operating in the county. Clark had asked his attorney, C.L. Chancey, to investigate the legal duties of law enforcement officials regarding gambling. Chancey advised the Sheriff that he did not have to enter gambling establishments to search for illegal activity, unless he had a search warrant.²⁹ Clark believed he was under no obligation to search for illegal gambling unless someone filed a complaint.

Once again, the hearings were held in the Federal Courthouse in Miami. Sheriff Jimmy Sullivan was scheduled to appear first, on Thursday, July 13. Clark was to testify the following day.³⁰ Senators Estes Kefauver and Lester Hunt represented the committee, with Chief Counsel Rudolf Halley conducting the hearings. Throughout the proceedings the courtroom remained packed with observers, including many members of the local press, and reporters from New York, St. Louis, and Washington D.C. Sullivan was questioned by the committee for two and a half days about his amazing growth in wealth and his non-enforcement policy, interrupted only by noon and evening recesses. Walter R. Clark, accompanied by his attorney, C. L. Chancey, watched the second day of testimony from a hard wooden bench inside the courtroom. At 6:30 Friday evening, Halley told Clark to come in early the following day, around 9:00 a.m. On Saturday, Sullivan was again questioned

until mid-afternoon. Finally at 2:45 p.m., Senator Kefauver called Clark to the witness table.³¹

The crowds in the courtroom fully expected another session similar to Sullivan's testimony. Amid popping flashbulbs from reporters' cameras, Clark sat down at the witness table beside his attorney. WFTL and WGOR the Fort Lauderdale radio stations, taped Clark's testimony. After being sworn in, Clark once again answered questions pertaining to his age, and how long he had been sheriff. The questioning then turned to Clark's knowledge of gambling activities. Kefauver asked Clark whether he knew of gambling activities at the Colonial Inn, Club Greenacres, Club Boheme, and the Farm. When Clark answered, "rumors but no actual evidence on it," the crowd began to laugh.³² When asked how many raids he made on the locations, Clark answered, "I don't recall. I will have to check up on that."³³ The crowd again laughed. When asked whether he knew Jake Lansky, Clark replied yes, but he was unaware of Lansky's criminal record. Each time Clark answered, "I don't know" or "I'll have to check the record on that," the crowd broke out in laughter and Sheriff Clark visibly squirmed in his chair.³³ Broward County's numerous well-known gambling establishments clearly indicated the sheriff's non-enforcement policy. The crowd enjoyed Clark's evasive answers when the amount of evidence was overwhelming.

Kefauver then questioned the Sheriff about slot machines. "Are there a lot of slot machines in Broward County?" Clark answered, "Not that I know of." "You don't know of any slot

machines in the county?" asked Kefauver. Clark replied, "I don't." The chairman then asked Clark a question that made the people in the courtroom eager to hear the answer. "Sheriff, haven't you been in the slot machine business yourself?" "No," answered the Sheriff. "Never?" asked Kefauver. Again, the response was "no." Kefauver continued, "In the coin machine and amusement machine business?" Clark, who now knew what the chairman was driving at, answered "No. Music boxes and cigarette machines." The chairman asked "Not slot machines, one armed bandits?" Clark responded, "No."³⁵

Kefauver then asked Clark to name and explain the property that he owned. The crowd in the courtroom, sensing that Kefauver knew something that the Sheriff was reluctant to discuss, eagerly awaited the outcome of the questioning. When the Sheriff was finished explaining his property holdings, Kefauver asked, "You have no others?" Clark stammered "I am trying to think." The chairman shot back, "Think hard." The crowd once more broke out in laughter.³⁶ Clark finally said, "no other substantial business; no sir." The chairman continued probing, "How about small businesses such as partnership interests or corporations?" C.L. Chancey asked the Senator if he had something specific in mind. Finally, Senator Kefauver picked up some papers that were lying on the desk in front of him. The investigating committee had taken advantage of the President's approval for the use of income tax returns. They had studied Clark's returns and found the Broward Novelty Company listed as a source of income. Then the committee acquired the tax returns for the company. The income tax returns for the

company, and Clark, were about to become public knowledge. Kefauver made his point: "How about the Broward Amusement Company?" Clark was visibly shaken. "That I mentioned a little while ago," he stuttered. The chairman then began asking questions about the nature of the company's tax returns which showed involvement in bolita and slot machine ownership. He stated the company's gross sales of bolita and Clark's net income from the company. When asked, Clark was unable to answer questions about the company's business organization. When Kefauver established that the Broward Novelty Company was the Sheriff's chief source of income, Clark could only weakly answer "yes." The Sheriff insisted he only knew of the company's ownership of music boxes and cigarette machines. When asked to explain bolita, Clark responded "I never exactly understood. Bolita is a game that niggers play."³⁷ The crowd roared in laughter. Then Rudolph Halley began to question Clark. He stated that Clark had paid construction costs of the Hudson-Dell Garage with five and ten dollar bills, which Clark acknowledged. The clear inference was Clark had invested money received from the illegal operations of the Novelty Company.³⁸

Halley then asked questions regarding Clark's campaign contributions. Had he gotten money from gamblers? "Not personally; no, sir," responded Clark. After further questioning, Halley asked whether Clark knew about the gambling operations in the various clubs in Hallandale. Clark answered, "no." When questioned about why the sheriff's office had not raided the various

locations, Clark again stated that no affidavits had been made out, and so no search warrants were issued.³⁹ Halley asked if a person had to go to court for the Sheriff to perform his duty. Clark insisted that a search warrant had to be issued before law enforcement officials could conduct a raid.

Then Kefauver took over the questioning. He again inquired about the nature of the Broward Amusement Company's business. Clark once again insisted he knew nothing of the illegal bolita and slot machine operations. He stated Gordon Williams ran the business, and Bob Clark was also a partner. Clark only knew that business was good. Then Kefauver ended the inquiry.⁴⁰

When Clark left the Federal Courthouse he looked worn and haggard and refused to answer reporters' questions. The Sheriff knew that everyone in the state would soon know the results of the hearing and that his job was in jeopardy. He went into seclusion for three days to plan for the repercussions that would surely follow. Clark also sent a letter to Broward County Solicitor Otis Farrington asking for an investigation of the Novelty Company's bolita operation. The Sheriff believed he would be cleared on any involvement in the operation.⁴¹

The committee testimony made front page news on Monday, July 17, in the Fort Lauderdale Daily News, WFTL and WGOR had rebroadcast the proceedings several times over the weekend.⁴² An editorial on the front page railed: "Sheriff Stands Revealed As Unfit For Office." The editorial, which never mentioned Clark's gambling policy, argued that the Sheriff was unfit to hold the office because

of his involvement in the Broward Amusement Company. Governor Warren seemed to agree. At the conclusion of the Kefauver proceedings he ordered Clark to appear in Tallahassee at 10 a.m. Friday morning for a hearing on the Sheriff's ownership of a business that violated the state's gambling laws.⁴³

Sheriff Clark's problems also included a possible grand jury investigation. Broward County Solicitor Otis Farrington and Assistant State Attorney Dwight L. Rogers, Jr. promised to investigate the affairs of the Broward Novelty Company to determine if enough evidence existed to go before a grand jury. They had a difficult job because only violations within the past two years could be used, and no testimony from the Kefauver investigation.⁴⁴

The following day, the Internal Revenue Service announced an investigation of Clark's income tax returns for the previous two years for possible violations. With the completion of the probe Clark might have to pay back-taxes and penalties if it proved he had filed incorrectly.⁴⁵

Public sentiment continued to grow against Walter R. Clark. S. Braile Odham of Orlando, the president of the Florida State Junior Chamber of Commerce, publicly asked Governor Warren to immediately remove the Sheriff from office. Carleton Montayne, a longtime friend of Clark, appealed for the Sheriff to resign during a Miami radio broadcast. A rumor circulated on Tuesday that the Sheriff was ready to resign.⁴⁵

Finally, on Tuesday evening, Walter R. Clark made his first public statement following the Kefauver investigation. He granted Carter Holmes, a reporter for WFTL an interview. In the 11 p.m. broadcast, Clark stated that he had no plans to resign from office, and that he believed the Governor would not remove him as Sheriff once he had all the facts .⁴⁷

On Thursday, July 20, Walter R. Clark and C.L. Chancey left for the meeting with Governor Fuller Warren in Tallahassee. On the same day, Dwight L. Rogers, Jr. requested a grand jury investigation on behalf of himself and Otis Farrington. Rogers asked Judge George W. Tedder to call the grand jury to make "a full and exhausting investigation as to any connection of the Sheriff of Broward County and others in the operation of illegal gambling in the County of Broward." He also asked that the jury remain in session and meet as often as necessary to hear evidence and testimony before rendering a verdict. This action allowed Rogers and Farrington enough time to carefully gather evidence and witnesses in order to get a trial. Tedder granted their request and ordered the grand jury to convene on August 3.⁴⁸

The meeting with Governor Warren began promptly at 10:00 a.m. Friday morning in the small cabinet room which was filled with fifty people. Fuller Warren was flanked on either side by Richard Ervin, the State Attorney General, and Reeves Bowen, the Assistant Attorney General. The Governor provided the Senate committee, also assembled in the room, with a copy of the Kefauver committee transcript. Warren began the hearing by saying, "It appears from

this that you are a member of a partnership which since 1945 has been engaged in a violation of the law." Then Warren asked Clark whether he had testified before the Senate crime committee on July 15. Clark answered, "I did." Those were the only words spoken by Clark during the hearing.⁴⁹

C.L. Chancey then began a lengthy argument before the Governor and the Senate committee. He said the Governor could not suspend Sheriff Clark from office for alleged Novelty Company violations of the law because they had occurred before the Sheriff's present term of office. Chancey stated the Kefauver committee had overstepped its jurisdiction when it revealed the Novelty Company's bolita operation. He also claimed a South Florida newspaper vendetta against Clark, aimed at removing the Sheriff from office. Finally, Chancey argued that the Sheriff's duty did not include searching out gambling in the county. In order to show residents' support of Clark, Chancey produced a thick sheaf of letters written on behalf of the Sheriff. The attorney spoke for an hour and twenty minutes.⁵⁰

At the end of Chancey's talk, Governor Warren tersely stated, "an order suspending Sheriff Clark will be made. The hearing is adjourned." As he spoke, Warren stood up. He left the room without another comment. Reporters immediately began bombarding Clark with questions regarding his future plans. Clark refused to comment. Later, Chancey explained to the reporters that the Sheriff could take no further action until the Senate had rendered its decision on the Governor's action. Clark also decided to make a

statement. "I am the same citizen that I was officially. If I can be of any help to the citizens of the state, I will do so."⁵¹

Since no more could be done in Tallahassee, Clark returned home. Over the weekend, Governor Warren appointed a committee in Broward County to nominate a candidate for the vacant Sheriff's position. When the committee and state Senator George Leaird of Hollywood failed to agree on a candidate, the committee asked the Governor to authorize a special primary election, though this was beyond the Governor's legal jurisdiction. Senator Leaird strongly recommended Amos Hall, a former Hollywood Vice-Mayor for sheriff. On Monday, Leaird and Hall went to Tallahassee to meet with the Governor, and that afternoon, Hall received the appointment.⁵²

Since asking for the grand jury, Assistant State Attorney Dwight L. Rogers, Jr. began to procure evidence. When Rogers discovered that Walter and Bob Clark were listed as officers in the Broward Novelty Company on corporate papers filed in Tallahassee, he and State Attorney Phil O'Connell believed this was enough evidence to link the Clarks to the company.⁵³ The rest of the investigation involved subpoenaing witnesses to link the company with running bolita and operating slot machines.

The grand jury, composed of sixteen white men and two African-Americans, began to hear testimony on August 10. Its first task was to determine Walter R. Clark's complicity in the gambling in the county. Then the grand jury would investigate the gamblers.⁵⁴ Judge Joseph S. White presided during the

investigation, held in the county commission meeting room. Rogers called over fifty witnesses to testify during the proceedings. Neither Walter and Bob Clark, nor Gordon Williams were asked to appear before the grand jury.

On the first day, Maxwell Coleman, the certified public accountant who completed the income tax returns for the company, Walter and Bob Clark, and Gordon Williams, testified. Robert L. Hall, the company bookkeeper also appeared before the jury. The jury ordered them to produce company tax returns and records while Coleman was ordered to produce the income tax returns for the three men. Later, Ben and Seymour Eisen, who kept the records for Club Boheme and Club Greenacres, appeared before the jury accompanied by their attorney, Joseph Varon. Although records of the two clubs had been subpoenaed, the Eisens failed to produce them claiming their location was unknown. Judge White sentenced them to ninety days in jail, effective immediately, for contempt of court. Varon found the records in the trunk of his car before the Eisens had spent two hours in jail.⁵⁵ They were necessary to determine if Walter R. Clark was on the payroll of the clubs. On the second day of the investigation, the jury called owners of establishments that had slot machines as witnesses.

In the following week, on Thursday, August 17, 1950, the grand jury issued three indictments against each of the owners of the Novelty Company. The Clarks and Gordon Williams were charged with sixteen counts of violating the state's gambling laws. Fourteen counts involved possession and rental of slot machines.

The last two counts involved operating an illegal lottery. James Johnson, the top Novelty Company employee, and Trueman Lytle, who allegedly ran bolita at Piccolo House located off Northwest Sixth Street outside the Fort Lauderdale city limits, also were indicted.⁵⁶

Once indictments were issued, the matter was turned over to County Solicitor Otis Farrington. As the prosecutor in the County Court of Records, Farrington had to file informations for an arraignment hearing with Judge William T. Kennedy before a trial date could be set.⁵⁷ The legal wrangling between attorneys for the indicted men and the courts began soon after the jury issued the indictments. One motion for quashing the indictments centered on the validity of the grand jury hearings.⁵⁸ C.L. Chancey, Walter R. Clark's lawyer, filed a motion to grant Clark immunity from prosecution because of his testimony before the Kefauver committee.⁵⁹ These motions delayed setting a trial date. The indictments had divided the counts against the Novelty Company partners into two groups. The first trial set for December 6, 1950 involved all the slot machine charges. A second trial on the bolita charges, would be held at a later date. The Clarks and Williams hired a second lawyer, J.B. Patterson, a noted Fort Lauderdale attorney specializing in criminal law. Patterson and Chancey would conduct the defense of the men.⁶⁰

On the first day of the trial, Patterson asked Judge Kennedy for a directed acquittal because the state could show no direct evidence of participation in slot machine operations by the Clarks.

Although Patterson added that a partnership could not be convicted of a crime, Kennedy denied the motion. The state's first evidence was the Novelty Company paperwork filed with the Florida Industrial Commission, which listed the Clarks as partners. Farrington then called H.J. McLean as his first witness. When Patterson objected stating McLean had been a Novelty Company employee prior to 1948, and that the statute of limitations had run out, the judge excused him as a witness. Ely A. Johnson, a mechanic who worked for the company, was called as the second witness. Johnson stated he had worked on slot machines at the warehouse and had also serviced the devices at several places, although he did not know who owned the machines. Owners of businesses where slot machines were located also testified. Their stories were the same. They did not know who owned the machines, and none knew who put the slot machines in their business.⁶¹

On the second day of the trial, Patterson and Farrington exchanged heated words. Because he failed to subpoena the company's records or call James Johnson, Patterson accused Farrington of incompetence, while Farrington accused Patterson of interrupting and coaching witnesses. Judge Kennedy ordered Gordon Williams to produce the company's records. If the records were not produced, Kennedy agreed to allow the testimony of the bookkeeper, Robert Hall, admitted as secondary evidence.⁶²

On Friday, the final day of the trial, Williams still failed to produce the Novelty Company's records. Moreover, Hall's testimony was not damaging to the partners as he stated the Clarks were non-

active partners in the business. James Johnson, who testified as a state's witness, gave testimony similar to the mechanic's.

Although Farrington had produced evidence of the Clark's ownership of the company, the witnesses were unwilling to testify the slot machines were owned or operated by the company. Farrington introduced no direct evidence linking the Clarks and Williams to slot machines. At 6:30 p.m. the jury returned a verdict of not guilty on all the charges. They had deliberated for less than an hour. The courtroom, which had been packed with court witnesses and observers, erupted in applause.⁶³

A month later, on January 8, 1951, the trial on the bolita charges began. Otis Farrington received the court's approval to try Gordon Williams first. J.B. Patterson once again asked Judge Kennedy for a directed verdict for acquittal. Kennedy denied the motion. The following day, Otis Farrington entered county tax roll assessments from Piccolo House into the court records, which showed that Gordon Williams had paid the tax.⁶⁴ Farrington also introduced the sales tax records that revealed the bolita operation into the court proceedings. Farrington believed he had enough evidence for a conviction.⁶⁵ Then James Johnson, the prosecution's star witness, testified that he threw bolita numbers, though he stated he was operating on his own without Williams' approval. He claimed the ticket sellers and the lottery payoffs were paid from his own money. Robert Hall, the last witness, admitted receiving bolita receipts. He did not know where the receipts came from, or where the money went once it was placed in the company safe. The

prosecution's evidence against Williams was circumstantial. Under the rules of evidence, facts had to point to the defendants' guilt and permit no other hypothesis. Late Tuesday afternoon, Gordon Williams was found not guilty of the lottery charges.⁶⁶ Because the charges against the Clarks were the same as those on Williams, Farrington not pressed his case against Walter and Bob Clark.⁶⁷ Johnson accepted the blame for the company's bolita operation because he had been granted immunity from prosecution by Farrington. The profits from bolita were never directly traced to the Clarks and Williams, which allowed the three men to avoid conviction.

The way was cleared for Walter R. Clark's reinstatement as sheriff. His suspension was based on his ownership of the Novelty Company, which allegedly owned slot machines and ran an illegal lottery. Since no evidence directly linked Clark to the illegal activities, many people believed the Florida Senate in its April session, would not ratify the Governor's action. But Clark's health began to fail. He was forced to use crutches to attend the Williams trial because of a serious leg infection. The following month he was diagnosed as having leukemia. As his health grew worse, Walter R. Clark was admitted to Johns Hopkins hospital on March 24, where he remained bed-ridden until his death on April 26, 1951.⁶⁸

Walter R. Clark's body was returned to Fort Lauderdale on Saturday, April 28. It lay in state at the Fannin Funeral home, where over 500 people went to pay their last respects during two

days. The Reverend Clarence C. Stauffer preached at the funeral service held in the First Presbyterian church Monday afternoon. Walter R. Clark was laid to rest in Evergreen cemetery. Both the county court house and city hall closed during the funeral, as a sign of respect.⁶⁹

Thus, the colorful and controversial career of Walter R. Clark ended. He faced poverty and personal tragedy as a youth. These setbacks taught the boy the value of hard work and perseverance. Clark's upset victory in the 1932 sheriff's election led to a career as Broward County's chief law enforcement official that lasted over seventeen years.

Clark faced two challenging law enforcement cases during his first term in office. Although one of the cases led to the county's only lynching, he proved to white residents that he was a capable and efficient administrator, and won re-election. The Sheriff's early support for Fred P. Cone in the 1936 gubernatorial election, led to Clark's emergence as a politician with state-wide influence. He used his political power to provide roads and other improvements when the county lacked adequate funds. Clark gave money to many Broward County residents, or helped them find jobs, which endeared him to his constituents. He permitted gambling in the county to provide revenue and jobs for residents.

Sheriff Clark created the Broward County Bureau of Investigation to thwart enemy espionage activity during the war. He permitted limited gambling to continue for servicemen's recreation and to boost the local economy that lacked tourism.

Governor Spessard Holland suspended Clark from office for allowing the continuation of gambling. Once reinstated, Clark continued his previous policies as sheriff. He also became a friend of Harry S. Truman.

Many Broward County residents became affluent after the war. Clark, along with many other residents, speculated in land purchases and other business opportunities. Although his investment in the Ribbonwriter Corporation of America ended in failure, his land holdings became valuable.

Gambling became a controversial issue after the war. Clark's failure to enforce the gambling laws in the county eventually led to his summons before the Kefauver committee investigating organized crime in interstate commerce. At the hearings, Clark's ownership of the Broward Novelty Company, which allegedly ran an illegal lottery and owned slot machines, was exposed. After the revelation, Governor Fuller Warren suspended Clark from office. Although found not guilty of slot machine ownership in criminal court and not prosecuted on the lottery charges, Clark's failing health kept the State Senate from considering his reinstatement as sheriff.

Although Walter R. Clark's ownership of the Broward Novelty Company tarnished his image, many residents knowingly supported his laissez-faire policy on gambling. He remained a friend of county residents throughout his lifetime. As sheriff he provided needed leadership for the county and his many contributions helped Broward County to prosper and grow.

ENDNOTES

CHAPTER 1: THE FORMATIVE YEARS.

¹Personal interview with Dr. Cooper Kirk, Broward County Historian, Fort Lauderdale, Florida, March 10, 1989.

²Personal interview with Carole Clark Smith, daughter of Robert L. Clark, Tallahassee, Florida, April 8, 1989.

³Personal interview with Dessa Clark, wife of Frank Clark, Fort Lauderdale, Florida, April 14, 1989.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Ibid.

⁶Cooper Kirk, "Public School: The First Twenty Five Years," Broward Legacy, Vol. II (Nos 3-4), 32.

⁷Walter Clark, photograph at the Fort Lauderdale School, Clark Collection in the Broward County Historical Commission, Date unknown.

⁸Clark interview.

⁹Smith interview.

¹⁰Charleton W. Tebeau, A History of Florida (Coral Gables: University of Miami Press, 1971), 349.

¹¹Smith interview.

¹²Ibid.

¹³Clark interview.

¹⁴Fort Lauderdale Sentinel, October 5, 1917.

¹⁵Kirk interview.

¹⁶Annie Clark, photograph of her house and diner, Clark Collection in the Broward County Historical Commission, Date Unknown.

¹⁷ Fort Lauderdale Daily News, April 27, 1951.

¹⁸Allen Morris, The Florida Handbook 1981-1982 (Tallahassee: Peninsular Publishing Co., 1981), 346.

¹⁹Fort Lauderdale Daily News, April 27, 1951.

²⁰Personal interview with G. Harold Martin, Fort Lauderdale lawyer, Fort Lauderdale, Florida, March 7, 1989.

²¹Kirk interview.

²²Clark interview.

²³Martin interview.

²⁴Kirk interview.

²⁵Martin interview.

²⁶Clark interview

²⁷Kirk interview.

²⁸Clark interview.

29Martin interview.

30Ibid.

31Personal interview with Donald Lester, longtime Broward resident and political historian, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, April 18, 1989.

32John L. Andriot, ed., Population Abstract of the United States (McLean, Va: Andriot Associates, 1983), V,123.

33 Fort Lauderdale Daily News, July 27 1932.

34 Fort Lauderdale Daily News, July 27 1932.

35 Fort Lauderdale Daily News, July 20 1932.

36 Fort Lauderdale Daily News, June 13 1932.

37Lester interview.

38 Fort Lauderdale Daily News, June 27, 1932.

39Lester interview.

40Walter R. Clark, photograph in uniform of a king honoring him as the first white boy born in Broward County, Clark collection in the Broward County Historical Commision, March 4, 1931.

41 Fort Lauderdale Daily News, June 13, 1932.

42 Fort Lauderdale Daily News, June 13, 1932

43 Fort Lauderdale Daily News, June 27, 1932.

44Ibid.

45 Fort Lauderdale Daily News, November 12, 1932.

CHAPTER 2: THE FIRST TERM IN OFFICE.

¹Fort Lauderdale Daily News, August 2, 1932.

²Fort Lauderdale Daily News, August 16, 1932.

³Ibid.

⁴Personal interview with Robert Hall, bookkeeper for the Broward Novelty Company, Plantation, Florida, February 23, 1993.

⁵Fort Lauderdale Daily News, January 2, 1933.

⁶Personal interview with Dr. Cooper Kirk, Fort Lauderdale, Florida, March 10, 1989.

⁷Fort Lauderdale Daily News, January 2, 1933.

⁸Kirk interview.

⁹Personal interview with Carole Clark Smith, Tallahassee, Florida, April 8, 1989.

¹⁰Kirk interview.

¹¹Personal interview with Philip J. Weidling, newspaper reporter for the Fort Lauderdale Daily News and co-author of Checkered Sunshine: The Story of Fort Lauderdale, 1793-1955. Fort Lauderdale, Florida, March 17, 1989.

¹²Kirk interview.

13Ibid.

14Donald G. Lester "The Darsey Case: Little Scottsboro Revisited," Broward Legacy, 11, No.1-2 (Winter/Spring 1988), 2.

15Weidling interview.

16Ibid.

17Lester, "The Darsey Case: Little Scottsboro Revisited," 4.

18Weidling interview.

19Lester, "The Darsey Case: Little Scottsboro Revisited," 4.

20Ibid, 3.

21Ibid, 4.

22Ibid, 4.

23Ibid, 13.

24Weidling interview.

25Fort Lauderdale Daily News, July 19, 1935.

26Fort Lauderdale Daily News, July 10, 1935.

27Ibid.

28Fort Lauderdale Daily News, July 23, 1935.

29Fort Lauderdale Daily News, July 20, 1935.

30Ibid.

31Ibid.

32Ibid.

33*Fort Lauderdale Daily News*, July 22, 1935.

34*Fort Lauderdale Daily News*, July 23, 1935.

35*Fort Lauderdale Daily News*, July 24, 1935.

36*Fort Lauderdale Daily News*, July 25, 1935.

37Personal interview with Donald Lester, Fort Lauderdale, Florida, April 18, 1989.

38Philip J.Weidling and August Burghard, Checkered Sunshine: The Story of Fort Lauderdale 1793-1955 (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1966), 165.

39Personal interview with Frederic Beck, owner of the Deck bar and special deputy for Walter R. Clark, Fort Lauderdale, Florida, March 11, 1989.

40Ibid.

41Kirk interview.

42Weidling interview.

43Kirk interview.

44Beck interview.

45Kirk interview.

46Weidling and Burghard, Checkered Sunshine, 173.

47 Fort Lauderdale Daily News, January 3, 1933.

48 Fort Lauderdale Daily News, January 10, 1933.

49 Ibid.

50 Fort Lauderdale Daily News, May 30, 1936.

51 Kirk interview.

52 Fort Lauderdale Daily News, June 3, 1936.

53 Fort Lauderdale Daily News, June 1, 1936.

54 Fort Lauderdale Daily News, May 27, 1936.

55 Fort Lauderdale Daily News, June 3, 1936.

56 Fort Lauderdale Daily News, November 4, 1936.

CHAPTER 3: CLARK'S POLITICAL POWER GROWS.

¹Certificate appointing Walter R. Clark as a Lieutenant Colonel and aide in the personal staff signed by Fred P. Cone, Clark Collection, Broward County Historical Commission Archives, January 5, 1937.

²Personal interview with Donald Lester, Fort Lauderdale, Florida, April 18, 1989.

³Ibid.

⁴Personal interview with Dr. Cooper Kirk, Fort Lauderdale, Florida, March 10, 1989.

⁵Ibid.

⁶Personal interview with Frederic Beck, Fort Lauderdale, Florida, March 11, 1989.

⁷Kirk interview.

⁸Lester interview.

⁹Kirk interview.

¹⁰Lester interview.

¹¹Kirk interview.

¹²Photograph "Horseplay following the wedding of Walter to Odell Pitts", Clark Collection, Broward County Historical Commission, July, 1937.

¹³Fort Lauderdale Daily News, November 4, 1936.

¹⁴Philip J. Weidling and August Burghard, Checkered Sunshine: The Story of Fort Lauderdale 1793-1955 (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1966), 172.

¹⁵Personal interview with G. Harold Martin, Fort Lauderdale, Florida, March 7, 1989.

¹⁶Personal interview with Philip J. Weidling, Fort Lauderdale, Florida, March 17, 1989.

¹⁷Kirk interview.

¹⁸Weidling and Burghard, Checkered Sunshine, 172.

¹⁹Robert Lacey, Little Man: Meyer Lansky and the Gangster Life (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1991), 124.

²⁰Weidling interview.

²¹Lacey, Little Man, 124.

²²Weidling interview.

²³Lacey, Little Man, 128.

²⁴Kirk interview.

²⁵Beck interview.

²⁶*ibid.*

²⁷John L. Andriot, ed., Population Abstract of the United States. (McLean, Va.: Andriot Associates, 1983), 123.

²⁸Weidling and Burghard, Checkered Sunshine, 180.

²⁹Martin interview.

³⁰Weidling and Burghard, Checkered Sunshine, 180.

³¹Ibid,193.

³²Fort Lauderdale Daily News, May 1, 1940.

³³Fort Lauderdale Daily News, May 3, 1940.

³⁴Pompano Chamber of Commerce.

³⁵Kirk interview.

³⁶Fort Lauderdale Daily News, November 16, 1939.

³⁷Ibid.

³⁸Fort Lauderdale Daily News, May 4, 1940.

³⁹Weidling and Burghard, Checkered Sunshine, 198.

⁴⁰Beck interview.

⁴¹Ibid.

⁴²Ibid.

⁴³Weidling and Burghard, Checkered Sunshine, 199.

⁴⁴Kirk interview.

⁴⁵Martin interview.

⁴⁶Kirk interview.

47Ibid.

48Weidling interview.

49Fort Lauderdale Daily News, May 8, 1940.

50Fort Lauderdale Daily News, May 2, 1940.

51Fort Lauderdale Daily News, May 1, 1940.

52Fort Lauderdale Daily News, May 8, 1940.

53Fort Lauderdale Daily News, November 8, 1940.

CHAPTER 4: THE WAR YEARS

¹Fort Lauderdale Daily News, April 19, 1940.

²Personal interview with Robert Hall, bookkeeper for the Broward Novelty Company, Plantation, Florida, February 26, 1993.

³ibid.

⁴Personal interview with Frederic Beck, Fort Lauderdale, Florida March 11, 1989.

⁵ibid.

⁶ibid.

⁷ibid.

⁸ibid.

⁹Peter Cremer, U-Boat Commander, trans. Lawrence Wilson (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1984), 52.

¹⁰Philip J. Weidling and August Burghard, Checkered Sunshine: The Story of Fort Lauderdale 1793-1955, (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1966), 205.

¹¹Personal interview with Philip J. Weidling, Fort Lauderdale, Florida, March 17, 1989.

¹²Beck interview.

¹³ Fort Lauderdale Daily News, July 17, 1942.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Fort Lauderdale Daily News, July 23, 1942.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Fort Lauderdale Daily News, May 25, 1943.

²⁰ Fort Lauderdale Daily News, July 23, 1942.

²¹ Personal interview with G. Harold Martin, Fort Lauderdale, Florida, March 7, 1989.

²² Fort Lauderdale Daily News, May 25, 1943.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Personal interview with Carole Clark Smith, Tallahassee, Florida, April 8, 1989.

²⁷ Fort Lauderdale Daily News, June 2, 1943.

²⁸ Fort Lauderdale Daily News, June 7, 1943.

²⁹ Fort Lauderdale Daily News, June 8, 1943.

³⁰Personal interview with Dr. Cooper Kirk, Fort Lauderdale Florida, March 10, 1989.

³¹Ibid.

³²Beck interview.

³³Harry S. Truman to Walter R. Clark, December 1, 1948. Clark Collection, Broward County Historical Commission Archives.

³⁴Fort Lauderdale Daily News, November 13, 1944.

CHAPTER 5: THE POST-WAR YEARS

¹Personal interview with Dr. Cooper Kirk, Fort Lauderdale, Florida, March 10, 1989.

²Ibid.

³John L. Andriot, ed, Population Abstract of the United States (McLean Va.: Andriot Associates, 1983), V., 123.

⁴Philip J. Weidling and August Burghard, Checkered Sunshine: The Story of Fort Lauderdale 1793-1955 (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1966), 189.

⁵Kirk interview.

⁶Ibid.

⁷Weidling and Burghard, Checkered Sunshine, 231.

⁸William V. Horsa to Walter R. Clark, May 22, 1948. Sheriff's Office Records, Broward County Historical Commission Archives.

⁹Weidling and Burghard, Checkered Sunshine, 232.

¹⁰Fort Lauderdale Daily News, July 17, 1950.

¹¹Personal interview with Robert Hall, Plantation, Florida, February 26, 1993.

12 Fort Lauderdale Daily News, July 17, 1950.

13 Personal interview with Dwight L. Rogers, Jr., Assistant District Attorney who indicted the Clarks and Gordon Williams in 1950, Fort Lauderdale Florida, April 5, 1993.

14 Fort Lauderdale Daily News, July 17, 1950.

15 Hall interview.

16 Ibid.

17 Ibid.

18 Ibid.

19 Weidling and Burghard, Checkered Sunshine, 160.

20 Kirk interview.

21 Ibid.

22 Organized Crime In Interstate Commerce (81st Congress, United States Government Printing Office, Washington D.C., 1950), Vol. 955, p. 461.

23 Hall interview.

24 Organized Crime in Interstate Commerce, p. 463.

25 Personal interview with Frederic Beck, Fort Lauderdale, Florida, March 11, 1989.

26 Ibid.

27 Ibid.

28Personal interview with Philip J. Weidling, Fort Lauderdale, Florida, March 17, 1989.

29 Fort Lauderdale Daily News, June 14, 1950.

30Beck interview.

31Weidling interview.

32 Fort Lauderdale Daily News, July 13, 1950.

33Beck interview.

34Ibid.

35Fort Lauderdale Daily News, July 13, 1950.

36 Fort Lauderdale Daily News, June 16, 1950.

37 Fort Lauderdale Daily News, June 9, 1950.

38Fort Lauderdale Daily News, June 16, 1950.

39 Fort Lauderdale Daily News, July 13, 1950.

40 Organized Crime in Interstate Commerce, p. 456.

41Walter R. Clark Probate Record (County Court Records, number 7213, Book 69, January 22, 1955), p. 317.

42Organized Crime in Interstate Commerce, p. 456.

43Probate Record, Book 98, p. 117.

44Weidling and Burghard, Checkered Sunshine, 335.

45Ibid, 269.

46Rogers interview.

47Fort Lauderdale Daily News, October 27, 1948.

48Fort Lauderdale Daily News, May 1, 1948.

49Ibid.

50Fort Lauderdale Daily News, May 3, 1948.

51Fort Lauderdale Daily News, May 1, 1948.

52Ibid.

53Official Democratic primary tabulations May 4, 1948. Clark Collection, Broward County Historical Commission Archives.

54Fort Lauderdale Daily News, October 27, 1948.

55Fort Lauderdale Daily News, November 3, 1948.

ENDNOTES CHAPTER 6: CLARK'S FINAL YEARS

¹Fort Lauderdale Daily News, January 31, 1950.

²Fort Lauderdale Daily News, January 30, 1950.

³Philip J. Weidling and August Burghard, Checkered Sunshine: The Story of Fort Lauderdale 1793-1955 (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1966), 267.

⁴Personal interview with Dr. Cooper Kirk, Fort Lauderdale, Florida, March 10, 1989.

⁵Fort Lauderdale Daily News, February 2, 1950.

⁶Fort Lauderdale Daily News, February 4, 1950.

⁷Fort Lauderdale Daily News, February 10, 1950.

⁸Fort Lauderdale Daily News, February 16, 1950.

⁹Fort Lauderdale Daily News, February 18, 1950.

¹⁰*Ibid.*

¹¹Fort Lauderdale Daily News, February 21, 1950.

¹²Fort Lauderdale Daily News, February 24, 1950.

¹³Fort Lauderdale Daily News, February 23, 1950.

¹⁴ Fort Lauderdale Daily News, March 4, 1950.

¹⁵ Fort Lauderdale Daily News, May 27, 1950.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Organized Crime in Interstate Commerce (81st Congress, United States Government Printing Office, Washington D.C., 1950), vol. 955, p.126.

¹⁸ Ibid, 127.

¹⁹ Ibid, 128.

²⁰ Ibid, 129.

²¹ Ibid, 130.

²² Walter R. Clark Probate Records (County Court Records, Number 7213, Book 54, August 5, 1952), p. 17.

²³ Fort Lauderdale Daily News, May 29, 1950.

²⁴ Fort Lauderdale Daily News, June 1, 1950.

²⁵ Fort Lauderdale Daily News, June 6, 1950.

²⁶ Fort Lauderdale Daily News, June 7, 1950.

²⁷ Fort Lauderdale Daily News, June 13, 1950.

²⁸ Fort Lauderdale Daily News, July 4, 1950.

²⁹ Organized Crime in Interstate Commerce, p. 472.

³⁰ Fort Lauderdale Daily News, July 17, 1950.

31Ibid.

32Ibid.

33Organized Crime in Interstate Commerce, p. 454.

34 Fort Lauderdale Daily News, July 17, 1950.

35 Organized Crime in Interstate Commerce, p. 456.

36 Fort Lauderdale Daily News, July 17, 1950.

37Organized Crime in Interstate Commerce, p. 460.

38Ibid, 463.

39Ibid, 468.

40Ibid, 475.

41Fort Lauderdale Daily News, July 21, 1950.

42Fort Lauderdale Daily News, July 17, 1950.

43Ibid.

44Ibid.

45Fort Lauderdale Daily News, July 18, 1950.

46Ibid.

47 Fort Lauderdale Daily News, July 19, 1950.

48Fort Lauderdale Daily News, July 20, 1950.

49 Fort Lauderdale Daily News, July 21, 1950.

50Ibid.

51Ibid.

52 Fort Lauderdale Daily News, July 25, 1950.

53Personal interview with Dwight L. Rogers, Jr., Fort Lauderdale, Florida, April 5, 1993.

54 Fort Lauderdale Daily News, August 9, 1950.

55Rogers interview.

56 Fort Lauderdale Daily News, August 18, 1950.

57Rogers interview.

58Fort Lauderdale Daily News, December 7, 1960.

59Ibid.

60Fort Lauderdale Daily News, December 6, 1960.

61Fort Lauderdale Daily News, December 7, 1950.

62Ibid.

63 Fort Lauderdale Daily News, December 9, 1950.

64 Fort Lauderdale Daily News, January 9, 1951.

65Telephone interview with Judge Otis Farrington, Broward County Solicitor who prosecuted the Novelty Company cases, April 8, 1993.

66Fort Lauderdale Daily News, January 9, 1951.

67Fort Lauderdale Daily News, January 10, 1951.

⁶⁸Fort Lauderdale Daily News, April 27, 1951.

⁶⁹Fort Lauderdale Daily News, April 30, 1951.

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

PRIMARY SOURCES

PUBLIC DOCUMENTS

U.S. Senate. Organized Crime In Interstate Commerce. 81st Congress, vol. 955. Washington D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1950.

Walter R. Clark Probate Record. Broward County Court Records: Number 7213, Book 69, January 22, 1955.

PERSONAL INTERVIEWS

Personal interview with Frederic Beck, owner of the Deck and friend of Walter R. Clark. Fort Lauderdale, Florida, March 11, 1989.

Personal interview with Dessa Clark, wife of Frank Clark. Fort Lauderdale, Florida, April 14, 1989.

Personal interview with Judge Otis Farrington, County Solicitor who prosecuted Walter R. Clark. Fort Lauderdale, Florida, April 8, 1993.

Personal interview with Robert Hall, bookkeeper for the Broward Novelty Company. Plantation, Florida, February 26, 1993.

Personal interview with Cooper Kirk, Broward County Historian. Fort Lauderdale, Florida, March 10, 1989.

Personal interview with Donald G. Lester, longtime Fort Lauderdale resident. Fort Lauderdale, Florida, April 18, 1989.

Personal interview with G. Harold Martin, Fort Lauderdale attorney and friend of Walter R. Clark. Fort Lauderdale, Florida, March 7, 1989.

Personal interview with Dwight L. Rogers, Jr., Assistant District Attorney who asked for the grand jury investigation of Walter R. Clark. Fort Lauderdale, Florida, April 5, 1993.

Personal interview with Carole Clark Smith, daughter of Robert Clark. Tallahassee, Florida, April 8, 1989.

Personal interview with Philip J. Weidling, author of Checkered Sunshine. Fort Lauderdale, Florida, March 17, 1989.

NEWSPAPERS

Fort Lauderdale Daily News, 1932-1951.

Fort Lauderdale Sentinel, 1917.

COLLECTIONS

Walter R. Clark Collection, includes personal photographs, certificates, the 1948 Democratic primary official tabulation, and a Harry S. Truman letter to Clark. Broward County Historical Commission, Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

Broward County Sheriffs' Office Records, includes search warrants, letters from citizens to the sheriff, and a few war agency communications regarding rationing. Broward County Historical Commission, Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

PUBLISHED SOURCES

Andriot, John L., ed. Population Abstract of the United States. McLean, Va.: Andriot Associates, 1983.

Morris, Allen. The Florida Handbook 1981-1982. Tallahassee: Peninsular Publishing Co., 1981.

SECONDARY SOURCES

Brooks, Bryan. "The Day They Lynched Reuben Stacey." Sunshine, July 17, 1988.

Cremer, Peter. U-Boat Commander. Trans. Lawrence Wilson. Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1984.

Cuddy, Don. "Gambling: The Good Old Days in Broward." Florida Trend, April 1978.

Gannon, Michael. Operation Drumbeat. New York: Harper and Row, 1990.

Kirk, Cooper. "Public School: The First Twenty-Five Years." Broward Legacy, vol.11, 3-4.(Summer-Fall), 1988.

Lacey, Robert. Little Man: Meyer Lansky and the Gangster Life. Boston: Little Brown and Company, 1991.

Lester, Donald G. "The Darsey Case: Little Scottsboro Revisited." Broward Legacy, vol.11, 1-2 (Winter-Spring), 1988.

Mason, Raymond K., and Virginia Harrison. Confusion to the Enemy. New York: Dodd, Mead, and Company, 1976.

Mclver, Stuart. Fort Lauderdale and Broward County: An Illustrated History. Woodland Hills, Ca.: Windsor Publications, 1983.

Personal interview with Rodney Dillon, curator of the Broward County Historical Commision. Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

Tebeau, Charleton W. A History of Florida. Coral Gables: University of Miami Press, 1971.

Weidling, Philip J., and August Burghard. Checkered Sunshine: The Story of Fort Lauderdale 1793-1955. Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1966.

