

Interview with

Jack Dean

Texas Ranger Captain, Retired

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Transcript corrected for clarity and abridged for relevance.
Full transcript on file at the Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum, Waco, Texas.

Interviewer: Captain thank you for contributing this interview to our permanent archive. Could you spell your name and tell us where you live?

Jack Dean: Jack Dean and I live in Leon Valley Texas; it's the suburbs of San Antonio.
Interviewer:

Interviewer: Where were you born?

Jack Dean: Born in a little farming community of Green Valley, right outside of Denton, Texas.

Interviewer: And born at home, right?

Jack Dean: Born at home.

Interviewer: How many siblings do you have?

Jack Dean: I have two, a brother who is now deceased and a sister who lives in Houston.

Interviewer: In Houston, do you see them often?

Jack Dean: No, not really. There was so much a difference in our ages. I was gone from home, there's nine years between my brother and twelve between my sister and myself.

Interviewer: Wow.

Jack Dean: I was gone most of time.

Interviewer: So, in a way you're kind of an only child aren't you?

Jack Dean: That's how I was raised, like an only child, as well.

Interviewer: Where did you go to college?

Jack Dean: Two or three places. Went to TCU [Texas Christian University] first, went to Tyler Junior College, and went to [Texas] Southmost College, and went to [University of Texas] Pan-American. I started the college and quit and went to work and then after I got in the Rangers, I started trying to pick up some hours. I think I ended up [with]60 – 70 hours. Never did get a degree of any kind.

Interviewer: What did you want to major in, in all of these colleges?

Jack Dean: Well, I started out majoring in education.

Interviewer: Do you want to teach?

Jack Dean: Well, it was basically what I had in mind at the time. That sort of faded away pretty quickly.

Interviewer: So, education could have been a favorite subject, right?

Jack Dean: It could, yeah.

Interviewer: Were you in any extracurricular activities, sports, anything like that?

Jack Dean: No, I didn't, not in college because I was married and had kids most of the time I was in college.

Interviewer: How old were you when you got married?

Jack Dean: I was 18.

Interviewer: 18, where'd you meet her?

Jack Dean: High school sweetheart.

Interviewer: What's her name?

Jack Dean: Jane, and I guess we're still waiting to see if it's going to work.

Interviewer: Day by day, huh?

Jack Dean: Day by Day. [Laughter] We've been married for what 56 years this year, in December.

Interviewer: Congratulations. Do you have children?

Jack Dean: Have three, I have a son who also was a Ranger and the oldest boy. A daughter and an adopted son. He's a senior at A&M.

Interviewer: He's an Aggie, huh?

Jack Dean: He's an Aggie through and through.

Interviewer: Were you ever in the service?

Jack Dean: No.

Interviewer: So, what made you decide to go into DPS?

Jack Dean: But, part of it was certainly looking for a job. I had been working at Convair [Convair aircraft division of General Dynamics] which is a place in Fort Worth that

makes airplanes. I had got laid off, they had a big lay-off. Anyways, I started looking for a job and I worked around two or three different places and found out that the highway patrol had applications out so I said “okay, I’ll try this”. It was just a good fix for me.

Interviewer: What did Jane think about it?

Jack Dean: She never did worry too much about it. She got tired of moving, I think. We moved five times, I guess, in about 20 years.

Interviewer: That’s a lot.

Jack Dean: Yeah. About every time you would get everything in place, was the time we got to move.

Interviewer: Yeah. What made you want to join the DPS and become a lawman?

Jack Dean: I just sort of fell into it and once I got into it I enjoyed it, and like I said it just sort of the clicked for me.

Interviewer: Where’d you go to school for DPS? Where was the school?

Jack Dean: In Austin.

Interviewer: In Austin. How long was that?

Jack Dean: The class is 16 weeks. We went from Monday to noon Saturday.

Interviewer: Pretty intensive?

Jack Dean: Intensive. They didn’t give you much leeway.

Interviewer: What was the best thing you learned out of that?

Jack Dean: Gosh, I don’t know, take care of myself, I guess . . . and learned to take care of your partner.

Interviewer: I see these Troopers out on remote highways. Did it ever get lonely out there?

Jack Dean: You are usually stopping somebody to talk to. [Laughter] But yeah, it can get lonely. I’ve had stretches where you go several hours. I was first stationed at Pecos and for one year I worked by myself west of Pecos.

Interviewer: West of Pecos?

Jack Dean: West of Pecos...

Interviewer: Not much out there.

Jack Dean: This is 1962 and the world was a lot different then. There was a two-lane highway and I had about 80 miles on that highway. I went two or three hours without seeing a car. Just a few jack rabbits, deer, and rattlesnakes, that's about all.

Interviewer: What made you want to become a Texas Ranger?

Jack Dean: Well, I guess when I really decided I wanted to become a Ranger, I had transferred to Tyler from Pecos. I had known some Rangers, when I was at Pecos, but they were older gentlemen, I mean quite a bit older. For then, not near as old as I am now. They were in their 60's and they didn't have a retirement [pension] then. I was 23-24 years old, so you know, so for them to speak to me was unusual. So, I really didn't think too much about the Rangers at all, at the time.

I went to Tyler and there was a Ranger there named Jim Ray who ended up being the head Ranger or Chief of criminal law enforcement. Jim impressed me. [Ranger] Red Arnold was there. Red was probably in his forty's then. Glenn Elliott, he was very impressive. Then low and behold a young Ranger named Bob Mitchell showed up at Tyler. He and I became friends. I had sort of thought about the Rangers a little bit. Then, Bob came to me one time and said "Hey, we're looking for some good people and I want to recommend you for the Rangers. And so, he and Bill Wilson, Bill was the captain of Dallas at that time, and they talked to me, and so anyways I said "Well, this is good, what Mitchell thinks is probably a good idea".

Interviewer: You said they impressed you ...how were you impressed?

Jack Dean: Well now, like I said Mitchell became one of the best friends I ever had in my life. They [had an unusual] sincerity, common sense, strength of character, they were just unusual men. All of them, that whole bunch impressed me. I said yeah, I'd sort of like to be like these people.

Interviewer: Were they like mentors to you?

Jack Dean: Mitchell and Bill Wilson especially. Mitchell recommended me for the Rangers going to the [Rio Grande] Valley. Four years later I made Sergeant, Mitchell made Captain, I ended up being Bob's Sergeant in Waco. We were there together for four years.

Interviewer: In Waco?

Jack Dean: In Waco, yeah.

Interviewer: That's great.

Jack Dean: Then, I made Captain, and after that we were always sort of joined at the hip until I lost him a couple of years ago.

Interviewer: You miss those people sure. What was the most important lesson you learned from [Bob Mitchell]?

Jack Dean: I would say Bob was one of - always seems that take care of your people. I've always said, that was the big lesson and if you talk to anybody about Mitchell, he's probably the best thought of Ranger Captain in the last 50 years. Just far as people respecting him.

Interviewer: That's high praise.

Jack Dean: Well, he deserved every bit of it.

Interviewer: What was it like at Ranger School?

Jack Dean: [Laughter] There wasn't any Ranger school. At that time, they gave you a pistol and a badge, and it was go to work. Actually there wasn't, at that time, much [training] at all. They had little orientation a couple of days with reports and what have you. They just turned you loose and you leaned on your fellow Rangers.

Interviewer: So you really needed Mitchell at that point to learn the ropes.

Jack Dean: At that time, when I first went to work, I was about 650 miles away from Mitchell. [Laughter] We talked occasionally but you learned on your own. [Captain] John Wood, who you'll interview later I think today, John was my first captain well actually my second. [After] one month John became Captain. And John was a big influence on me. John was the one says "If a man's doing his job get out of the way and leave him alone". I found that to be very true when I became Captain. Don't bother anybody if they're working.

Jack Dean: So, John was good. I'd say I know John called me one time said "I'll see you next week" and I had a big week, a couple of murders, everything fell into place. Did some good stuff. John sent me a message said "Well don't look like you need me, I *won't* see you in a week". [Laughter] So, he didn't come. But if you're smart you'll try to pick up the good points of everybody you work with and if they got something that you don't think works and doesn't work for you, don't use it. But, try to, you know, pick up with their good things.

Interviewer: The first time you put on that badge and belt and gun and hat, what did it feel like?

Jack Dean: Gosh, it's been so long, I'm not sure I'd remember. I know I was awful proud and still am. I was very proud to be a Ranger. I was a Ranger for 23 years and you know sometimes I think I left too soon. I was 57 when I retired but I had a golden

opportunity. I went on to be a US Marshall for Western District for ten years, which was...

Interviewer: That's a presidential appointment right?

Jack Dean: A Presidential appointment . . .

Interviewer: That would've been hard to turn down, for sure.

Jack Dean: Yeah, you know, I haven't thought about it. It didn't do anything but double my salary . I had a six year old at the time, I think he was five or six, and so it was a good move. Mitchell had left, Wilson was gone, [and] my contemporaries started to fade away. I was the young one of that bunch. All that bunch was gone, either passed away or they retired. And so, it was a good time for me to go out on top, I guess.

Interviewer: Was that under Clinton or...?

Jack Dean: Yes, I was a Clinton appointee even though they read in the paper that they had checked my voting record and I was a registered Republican. But, I had a good friend that I had developed over the years and then Frank Tejada. Frank had been a state rep. whose office was not too far from mine, there in San Antonio. I had done some things for him. And then Frank wins a State Senator and then he became a US Congressman. So, Frank was the one that carried the ball to get my Presidential appointment from you know. President never knows who he is appointing it's supposed to be a Senatorial appointment. And Bob Krueger was a Senator at the time, and actually he and Frank pulled it off, to get me appointed because they'd catch some flak from Democrats when they saw I was a [Republican], but it was Frank mainly. Frank said "This was a job, I'm going to get this done," and he did, another good friend and he died young. Cancer has really tore up my plans with friends.

Interviewer: Yeah. Go back in time to when you were with the Texas Rangers, what was your most interesting case?

Jack Dean: Oh, there are several, but I guess the one that seems to carry on and on was the Charles Harrelson's murder case. I'm sure most people are familiar with [his son actor Woody] Harrelson. I guess he's a famous star, Woody Harrelson...

Interviewer: Of "Cheers"?

Jack Dean: Yeah. He was in "Cheers" and I guess he made a ton of movies. Come think of [it] I've seen him maybe a couple of times. Charlie was an old boy from East Texas that had a gambler's personality; in fact he was a good gambler but became a hit man. When I first met him, was in September probably early October of 1970, I'd been a Ranger about 30 days. He was in jail around Houston and the DA sent me and this Deputy Sheriff to get him [so they could] try him for another murder. There's another murder in the [Rio Grande] Valley. Rangers Skippy Rundell and Toll Dawson had

worked the case [which] had happened two years before. We brought him in, and for the next four years I was doing something [on the] Harrelson [case]. I went all over the state chasing evidence and looking for people and checking out bonding agencies. Finally, after two trials, we had a mistrial; Percy Foreman was his [defense] attorney.

Jack Dean: A lot of people wouldn't [remember Percy] but in that day in time Percy was pretty well at his peak and very well known.

Jack Dean: It was an experience. We finally got Harrelson convicted; [[he got] 15 years for that murder. Anyway, he went off to jail and then the Feds had a shotgun [related] charge on him and they got him. He finally got out and low and behold he shows back up in Texas and gets in trouble again. He's living with a lady, the Fair Family, from the Fair Clothing in El Paso. Anyway he gets strung out and I run into him. [I had a friend who was] a lawyer there in the Valley. He owed some people some money, and they sent Harrelson to collect it [from my friend]. He called me; I said do you owe him the money? He said "well yeah, it's their money." I said "Then you're lucky to be alive."

Jack Dean: Then we have the Judge Wood case. At the time, the head of the FBI there, Tony Marr and I were real good friends so. The FBI doesn't know a whole lot about working murder cases. They don't normally work murder cases. So, when the Judge got murdered, well Tony called me and I sent Lefty, Block and a couple of other Rangers out there to help them and we worked the thing around there for a while. And then, didn't seem to have any leads and one day a mysterious day, the phone rings and Virginia Goss my secretary said "Captain" said "There's a man on the phone but he won't give me his name, he wants to talk to you."

So, I took the call and I'll never forget the old boy said "Jack", didn't call me Captain or Ranger, he said "Jack, Charlie Harrelson was in San Antonio the day Judge Wood was killed", and I said "Who is this?" and he said "You know who it is" and I said "No, I don't think I do" and I really was not sure who it was. He said "Just wanted you to know Charlie was in San Antonio the day Judge Wood was killed" and I said "Did he kill the Judge?" and he said "He was in town" and hung up. Never did know [who it was] for sure.

I gave [the information] to the FBI [and they] sent an Assistant Director down to run the case. I get down to San Antonio [to meet with him]. We sit down and go over everything I've ever known about Charlie Harrelson for four or five years, just whatever it had been. Then [the Assistant Director] said "Thank you, we don't need your help anymore." Kid you not, so anyway, they went on to claim [all the credit for the] case.

[Sometime later] on Woody Harrelson, the son, is trying to get him [released], [even though] he's in federal prison for killing a judge. So, we end up going to Denver to hearings. He's at the Super-Max [prison] there outside of Denver. So, I get to talk and visit with Charlie some more. He wasn't a bad guy to talk to. He'd just kill you, you know, but he wouldn't kill you unless somebody paid him too. He wasn't cold blooded,

you know, go stab, kill everybody...that wasn't Charlie. [But] if you pay him a million dollars or \$500k well he would take out anybody.

Interviewer: So he had no qualms about saying he was a hitman?

Jack Dean: No, he never would admit it. Never would admit it. He always said "Jack, I'm a gambler, this is all a bunch of crap, you know." We caught him for three [murders] and we convicted him for two of the three. I don't think we caught him for everything he ever did. I think he slipped one or two around on us somewhere.

Interviewer: So, every once in a while you run into a really smart criminal?

Jack Dean: Yeah, well Charlie was smart and had a personality. You meet Charlie, I mean you'd say "Yeah, he's a good old boy." you know. We parted company the last time he said "When I get out of here I'll buy you a beer", and I said "Charlie, if you get out of here [the Super-Max prison] I'll buy you the beer." [Laughter] But, I've got a nice little note he sent me. He never has seen his grandkids and he had three or four grandkids. I set it up so he could meet his grandkids. And, he sent me a nice little note. [Charlie Harrelson died in prison of a heart attack.]

Interviewer: What was the most frustrating case?

Jack Dean: The most frustrating case, gosh I don't know, I guess, I wasn't really involved in it. It was [Captain] Bobby Prince's case [Henry Lee Lucas]. [Lucas] was the one going across the country, I think it was a hundred and some odd murders, he's supposed to [have committed] you know. [There were] a couple around San Antonio. We knew he did but we couldn't prove it. I guess that was one of the worst ones.

Interviewer: Do you still think about that?

Jack Dean: Oh yeah, [Lucas] took credit for killing a lady that ran a pretty nice restaurant there in town. Her house, her place was right outside of town on one of the major highways. Every time I go past that. [Lucas] said he killed her. We never could make with anything [stick]. Yeah, things like that frustrate you.

Jack Dean: And [another case was a] lady killed in the Valley that I know who did it. I guess really going back that might be one because I was a young Ranger then. And she had been brutally murdered and I think it was a family affair. One of them was a lawyer and just never could make it work. Never did solve that case

Interviewer: Yeah, never did move beyond that. Yeah. What about funny cases? You ever have any funny experiences where it was like just "I can't believe this happening"?

Jack Dean: Well, [laughter] the one that pops in my mind was, we were working some theft cases and we had an old boy [suspect] in the office and he started raising cane. Me and him, we didn't come to blows, but we came pretty close to it and I talked to him

awfully ugly. Two or three days later one of the Rangers walked in and he said “Gee Cap. I didn’t know if you was mad at” so and so. He had a hammer in his hand [when we arrested him]. [The Ranger said] said “Well, somebody just beat him to death with his hammer, we were wondering, after you talked to him, were you a suspect?”

Interviewer: How have the Rangers changed since you first joined?

Jack Dean: Oh you know, I guess all old timers think our time was the best but I think they are smarter than we were. I know their better educated than we were. They don’t work as many hours as we did because they can’t. In fact, we caught the last part of that, originally the Rangers let you work as long as you wanted to, but then the wage and hour law got into it. [For us it was an avocation] instead of [just a] a job. It was something we did because we wanted to and we wanted to work all the time. It’s a wonder our wives put up with it. All of us, I spent 23 years in the Rangers, I see so many of these young people now that are young Rangers, four to five years and they’re gone. I don’t know what it is but as my wife says “You’re getting old and you don’t understand anymore” and I said “That’s probably right, I don’t understand”. [Laughter] So, best thing we do is just keep my mouth shut about those things.

Interviewer: What kind of cases did you find most and least interesting?

Jack Dean: I guess as far as working, murder cases are generally somewhat easier than most because you start at the house and work out. You know most people that get killed, or the biggest part of them, are killed by somebody that knows them. So, I guess, I hated check cases. I didn’t work but a couple or three kidnappings, that’s spooky.

Interviewer: When you say check cases, are you talking about...

Jack Dean: Hot checks.

Interviewer: Was there ever a time when you were really afraid?

Jack Dean: Several. [Laughter]

Interviewer: What’s an example of one of them?

Jack Dean: I’ve been shot at a couple of times and that lead will get your attention. Got in some situations that I really wouldn’t even talk about so. Most of the time I’d say it’s about 90 percent boredom and 10 percent terror, that’s about what Rangering is.

Interviewer: You said you had a child who was a Ranger.

Jack Dean: Yes.

Jack Dean: Well, he makes you really feel old, he’s retired.

Interviewer: Really?

Jack Dean: Yeah, he spent gosh, 26 to 27 years in DPS. He's retired. He works for the DA's office in Kerrville, but he was a Ranger for I think 17 years and we were Rangers together for my last year. He went on the Highway Patrol, he was in the Highway Patrol for about 10 years and Crockett, when the Rangers went to Denton, stayed a couple of years north of Kerrville and he was in Kerrville for whatever the rest of that time was, 10 to 12 years.

Interviewer: Did you ever worry about him?

Jack Dean: No, you know, I never did worry too much. I worried more about him on the Highway Patrol than I did at the Rangers, of course. My wife did, it was funny, I said "Well you never did worry about me like that" and her answer to that was "I didn't have to take care of you, I gave birth to him and powdered his bottom" she said "So, I worry about if something happens to him."

Interviewer: Yeah.

Jack Dean: A mother's attitude.

Interviewer: It seems that when a Ranger walks in the room in full uniform, that there's a certain aura that goes before him or her. Did you sense that?

Jack Dean: Well, yeah and you never know what it is. I guess Bob Crowder, an old Ranger Captain, said it best. *I don't know what it is but it's something to build on.*

Interviewer: That's a great way to put it.

Jack Dean: It is because it's amazing when, it happens to every Ranger I think, you walk in a place and they all know you're a Ranger and you can be with two deputy sheriffs but they know who the Ranger is. Now, what happens to us I don't know but as Captain Crowder said it's something to build on and you better not lose it because that's one thing the Rangers have got going for them.

Interviewer: Talk to me about the comradery among the Rangers.

Jack Dean: Of course you know, a lot of times, I guess it's sort of like being in the service. I never was, but sometimes you put your life in those other people's hands ... And sometimes it happens, you know, if somebody's shooting at you it really makes you get closer together. There's just something about what a Ranger is and who a Ranger is. I don't say, you know, that I was a great friend to all Rangers or that we were all great friends but they were always Rangers. There's just a bond of some kind that develops when you put on that Ranger badge and again nobody can tell you what it is, it's there.

It's a comradery that between people, you count on them, we watch each other's kids, we watch each other suffer from... Mitchell lost a daughter and I watched those kids grow up and they felt like mine too, you know it. You're just close. It's just a close knit bunch. I think that maybe that's one thing, it don't seem to me that the new ones are that close but maybe I just don't see it.

Interviewer: What do you want to be remembered for Captain?

Jack Dean: Oh gosh, I don't know. I hope I did a good a job. I hope I didn't make too many mistakes. We had to affect a lot of people's lives over the time. Like I said, I was Captain 17 years and had a lot of people work for me and all of them were good. We did a lot of things so, I'd hope that somebody would say he's a man that tried to do what was right.

Interviewer: What sets the Rangers apart from DPS, the police officer on the street?

Jack Dean: It's the people, of course, is the main thing, but it goes back to what we were talking about before it's that aura there somewhere and somebody built it a long time before I came along. It's every Ranger's requirement that they should try to keep that going. Never lose that aura because, like I said... we're better known in Europe than we are in the United States. You go to Europe, which I did for the department they sent me over there for the school for a couple of weeks and people are absolutely crazy about the Rangers over there and know way more about the Rangers than most.

Jack Dean: But it's really amazing that, you know, whether it was movies or I don't think it was T.V. but movies or whatever that carried on the legacy. It's there and it's deep.

Interviewer: You are here for a reunion [the annual Texas Ranger Reunion] in Waco?

Jack Dean: Right.

Interviewer: Who are the people you look most forward to seeing?

Jack Dean: Well, as I was talking to one of the a while ago, Bob Favor. Most of the people that Bob and I worked with are gone and about half of them are going to be here [at the Reunion]. Seeing some of the old timers, you know, and I feel a certain closeness to the reunion. I was Sergeant here in 1972 or 73, when we had the first reunion. It was actually Bob Mitchell, and Alva Stem who was over the [Texas Ranger Museum] at the time. It was their idea, me and two or three other people, we put that deal together for the first reunion. People in Waco kicked in to pay for their rooms and their gifts and what have you. 1976 I guess it was, and then Mitchell and I were the only two Rangers involved when they formed the foundation [Texas Ranger Association Foundation], originally the first time. So, I've been with them since it started, yeah both of us were.

Interviewer: Quick question about being a U.S. Marshall. You know, we see this on T.V. and what were the primary responsibilities there?

Jack Dean: The U.S. Marshalls [are] basically [a] Federal Sheriff. They're responsible for jailing all of the federal prisoners, serving most of the federal process, court warrants and what have you, and they have the best warrant squads in the country serving federal warrants. The other agencies try it first to get their warrants served, if they can't get them served pretty quick then they send them over to the Marshall's office.

Interviewer: What territory did you have?

Jack Dean: Well, it's the Western District of Texas; it was about 460-70 miles across. It went from Brenham to El Paso and from El Paso to Del Rio. I think it was the fourth or fifth biggest in the Nation.

Interviewer: Do you have a favorite gun?

Jack Dean: Yeah, a couple of them. I think it seems like the Rangers mostly favored .45 automatics of some breed, I always carried a Colt. When I was in the Valley I carried a Colt .38 Super because I spent a lot of time across from Mexico and you can't get .45 ammunition in Mexico, you're not supposed to it's illegal. But you can get .38 Super ammunition. So, that was another thing, if you ever needed it you could get it.

Interviewer: Is that the gun you're issued or is that one that you had?

Jack Dean: No, I don't know what they issue now, well, I think you get the Sig .357's I think is what they get now. But when I went on they were issuing Smith and Wesson model 19ss, .357 [caliber] revolvers. I carried it until I got smart and bought another one. [Laughter]

Interviewer: Yeah. It is fascinating to watch the Rangers interact with each other and sit around and tell stories. So, if you had several Rangers here what's the story you'd tell?

Jack Dean: They probably know them all because I've probably told them all several times before. [Laughter] I don't know, there's something you don't really want to tell. Richard Sweaney could tell two or three. We always kid about Bruce Casteel; Bruce and I were Rangers together in the Valley, and he worked for me for seven, eight, or ten years, then he was my Sergeant. Then he made Captain and ended up being Senior Ranger Captain [chief]. Always gave Bruce a fit about a kid that beat his mother to death with a baseball bat. Bruce had a photographer come out and make pictures. I forget, there was four or five hundred dollars' worth of pictures, some ungodly amount, you know. I asked Bruce later, I told him I said "My God they didn't make that many pictures when Kennedy was killed". [Laughter]

Anyways, I'm sure there's a lot other things because there's always something going on. I had Joaquin Jackson and Glenn Krueger, I always said it was like having two pet bears because they was always [at] each other, but loved each other to death. [Tragically]

Krueger killed himself after killing his wife. His wife had terminal cancer and was in [tremendous pain] and Krueger shot her and then shot his self.

Jack Dean: Yeah, we were at the Y-O Ranch and they had been at each other, like I said. Jackson threw a [dead] rattle snake on Krueger Krueger put the rattle snake in Joaquin's bed and Joaquin did something else to Krueger. Next morning Joaquin gets up and he's got no clothes. So, he starts looking for his clothes, we always laugh because he started to sneak out, he had some clothes in the back of his car. He started out to the car and run into one of the maids and all's he has on is his boxer shorts. We always rag him, because really got upset him because she laughed, you know. Because he looked stark, he's six foot six. Anyway, [he found his] clothes on the flag pole out in front. but that was Krueger and [Joaquin]... Snakes, every time we went some place we ended up with a snake.

Interviewer: You talked about just the joy of being a Ranger.

Jack Dean: Well yeah, I never enjoyed anything so much. I always said that the best time was the four years I was a [field] Ranger. Being Bob Mitchell's Sergeant for four years wasn't bad at all. And Captain for 15 years was great. When I was a Ranger I didn't have anybody to worry about but me and you worry about your people. There's a young man named Stan Guffey that I hired and that I'd known. Stan worked for me for three or four years and then transferred up to Brady and he got killed in a gun fight.

Interviewer: That had to be hard.

Jack Dean: Yeah, it was hard on me but the one that it was really hard on was Mitchell. He really took it bad.

Interviewer: Tell me a little bit about Mitchell.

Jack Dean: Well, my wife said, the only thing wrong with Mitchell is his heart's bigger than his body, and he was a big man. Mitchell was just that special person, you know, he commanded respect from everybody. The men would follow him through hell and high water and not even think about it. I don't know that he did anything special, he just had charisma that, that man had. He wasn't the smartest in the world, but he knew how to do things and he knew people. He was just unusual human being.

Interviewer: Sounds like an outstanding leader.

Jack Dean: He was, I mean, he's just natural. Natural born leader, I guess if there ever was one. He was always the first one in line. I'd fuss at him sometimes "Bobby you can't do it all. You can't be there all the time." Bill Wilson, like I said we were both close to Bill, we all used to fish together quite a bit and run together, and what have you. I guess one of the biggest compliments Bill ever paid me, that I thought, he said "You know, you and Bob Mitchell are a hell of a lot alike" he said "The only thing different is

you're a whole lot more of a son of a bitch than Mitchell is." [Laughter] I think it was really sort of a compliment. Mitchell, if he had a fault it was he was too nice and I never had that problem. [Laughter]

Interviewer: It impresses me that the Rangers seem to be very, very polite, very correct, and incredibly difficult, as far as they're tough. Where does that come from?

Jack Dean: I think you emulate the people that go before you to a certain extent. Then, you hope it just carries on. Rangers are the biggest bunch of softies you ever saw, as far as kids...

Interviewer: In certain cases?

Jack Dean: And little animals.

Interviewer: Yeah, dogs and cats.

Jack Dean: I think people depend on Rangers to be the ones that are going to hold things together.

Interviewer: To be a cut above.

Jack Dean: Well, I don't know if it's necessarily a cut above but if you are in a situation, even a sheriff or whoever's with you, are going to look the Rangers for the guidance of that thing. I think that's part of it. You just adapt to that. But yeah, I never saw a Ranger that didn't love kids and all that kind of stuff.

Interviewer: Puppy dogs? [Laughter]

Jack Dean: Maybe Bob Mitchell, I'd say. I've seen him whoop two big men and then go play with a kid. So, it's just something about that, I don't know what it is. There's some things that can't be explained, they just happen.

Interviewer: There are very few Rangers, and haven't been many in modern times?

Jack Dean: Well see this is the difference, when I left there was 93 and when I started out there was 73. So, it probably has really grown since I left [2015 – 150 Rangers]. We were closer, when I became a Ranger, there was 73, and I mean you knew everybody.

Interviewer: And most of their stories?

Jack Dean: Well, I knew what was going on, knew what was happening with somebody if they had a problem. We've had some problems over the years with different things. It's not a job, it's something that you adapt to.

Interviewer: It's been an adventure?

Jack Dean: Well, it's been an adventure, yeah definitely an adventure. I enjoyed every minute of it. If I had to go back over there may be a couple of things I'd change but it wouldn't be very many.

Interviewer: Well, it's easy to see why your son would want to do that, just that kind of love, that kind of passion for the Rangers.

Jack Dean: I was sort of surprised when he did, but he did and I guess he enjoyed it too. He said it's time for him to go when he retired.

Interviewer: When do they call in Rangers? If there's a crime committed, at what point do the Rangers get involved?

Jack Dean: Well, it used to be Rangers were always invited in. Very, very, very few times, unless the governor or somebody sent us in to a town or a situation to take over, otherwise you went at the call of the local police chief or district attorneys, sheriff's. Generally, the Rangers, and that's why I worry that they're changing so, but the Rangers I think have always counted on the sheriff's to be their biggest backers.

Interviewer: Yes, they are.

Jack Dean: And any county you go to. If you alienate your sheriffs then I think the Rangers are going to be in trouble. Yeah, you don't go unless, like I say unless it's something specific. We've been sent into towns by governors or the attorney general and just flat go in and take over. But normally you only go [by request], so the Rangers really depend on their comradery with the sheriffs and chiefs police and what have you.

Interviewer: So, there's a little politics involved in it too?

Jack Dean: Oh sure, you try to stay out of local politics, but as far as getting along, it is part of it.

Interviewer: Let's say a hundred years from somebody picks up a book and reads your name, what do you want after that name?

Jack Dean: Just say "Captain Jack Dean, Texas Ranger" that would be plenty.. They can throw US Marshall in it but that can be down in a footnote.

Interviewer: Anything else you would like to tell people?

Jack Dean: No, I think we said it all. I was definitely proud to be a Ranger. I was proud of the people I served with. It's been a big part of my life and I enjoyed every minute of it.

Interviewer: What are you doing now for fun?

Jack Dean: For fun? Well, I'm on the [Texas Ranger Association Foundation] board and I'm on the museum (Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum]board here, I'm a city council man in my little town I live in.

Interviewer: Are you going to run for mayor?

Jack Dean: No, in fact this is my last term, this is my fourth term. I'm not going to run again. I even took a part time job lately, just at the request of a friend.

Interviewer: Doing what?

Jack Dean: Doing investigation work for an oil field company.

Interviewer: So, you just keep honing those skills, huh?

Jack Dean: Yeah, but I'm about ready to quit honing, you know. But you got to do something. I'm not ready to just sit down.

Interviewer: And you got to do what you love.

Jack Dean: Right, it keeps me in contact... it's real funny, the other four or five agencies or companies where I'm working, their security people are all Rangers, all Rangers I hired.

Interviewer: That's a wonderful way to see, to know that other people are doing what they do best because of you. Congratulations.

Jack Dean: Well, I appreciate it, thank you.

[END]