Arkansas Supreme Court Project
Arkansas Supreme Court Historical Society
Interview with
Justice John Stroud
Little Rock, Arkansas
November 7th, 2013

Interviewer: Ernest Dumas

Ernest Dumas: This is November 7th, 2013. This is Ernie Dumas and I'm at the Little Rock home of Judge John Stroud at the Round River Condominiums in Little Rock. Judge, I need to ask your permission for the David and Barbara Pryor Center for Oral and Visual History and the Arkansas Supreme Court Historical Society, which will have ownership of this tape, to use it on the web or in the archives or whatever.

John Stroud: You have my full permission.

ED: OK.

JS: And this isn't my home. I have lived for a long time and still do in Texarkana, Arkansas.

ED: Yes.

JS: But this was my abode during the Court of Appeals and I've just kept it.

ED: And so for convenience sake today.

JS: Right.

ED: Rather than my driving down to Texarkana we're doing this here in Little Rock.

JS: Right, absolutely.

ED: Well, Judge, you had a long, long career not only in the law but in a lot of other civic activities, but we're going to concentrate on your life and the law and the courts. Let's start with your birth. When and where you were born and your momma and daddy.

JS: I was born on October 3, 1931, in Hope, Arkansas. My father was John Fred Stroud. He went by Fred and I'm the junior.

ED: The F in your name is Fred as well?

JS: Yes, but I go by John.

ED: OK.

JS: But I'm a junior. And my mother was Ella Clarine Steel.

ED: How do you spell Clarine?

JS: C-L-A-R-I-N-E.

ED: Steel.

JS: Steel.

ED: From that part of the country it's no E on the end of it.

JS: That's right.

ED: It's S-T-E-E-L.

JS: That's right; it's S-T-E-E-L, yes. My grandfather was a judge, a circuit judge and then a chancery judge, and my great-grandfather was a circuit judge. Then there's the Nashville branch. Those are a brother of my grandfather with all of those Steels. Bobby Steel was a judge, Don Steel was, and Jetty Steel and his son George all practiced over there, and we're all kin.

ED: So all of the Nashville Steels are related?

JS: That's right.

ED: In Howard county Steels, you're all related. I don't know how many but many Steels have been prosecutors and circuit or chancery judges.

JS: Oh yes, in fact many of them were. My great-grandfather and my great, great grandfather were both prosecutors before they were judges.

ED: Your grandfather on your mother's side?

JS: Mother's side, right.

ED: What was his name, your grandfather?

JS: A.P. Steel.

ED: A.P. Steel.

JS: Albert Percy, but he went by A.P.

ED: All right.

JS: He lived in Ashdown when he was circuit judge. Those counties were basically north and east of Ashdown, but when he switched at the end of the term and ran for chancellor his district embodied Miller County, Texarkana, and on up clear to Arkadelphia, all the way across to Mena and down, and everything in between.

ED: All that was one chancery district back in those days?

JS: One chancery district with one judge, so he moved to Texarkana then.

ED: So your father was John Fred.

JS: And he just went by Fred.

ED: He just went by Fred and what about his forbears? He was not a lawyer?

JS: He was not a lawyer. They came to Arkansas from Georgia and, their ancestors came from England to Pennsylvania and then to Georgia and then to eastern Arkansas. Actually, there are two Stroud, Englands. I've been to both of them, Marietta and I. I don't know that that's where the lineage came from, but there probably is a connection.

ED: So what did your daddy do?

JS: When I was born he was a salesman for Nabisco to stores, but in 1931 the Depression was big time and so that job evaporated.

ED: Was he a salesman for the territory?

JS: Yes, he had southwest Arkansas…

ED: Southwest Arkansas territory.

JS: …territory and we moved from Hope. I remember a little bit about Hope but not much. When he was unemployed he was looking for work and I didn't even know it at the time or think about it, but we went to live with my Grandmother Stroud in Valiant, Oklahoma, for a year.

ED: V-A-L-I-A-N-T?

JS: Right.

ED: That was when you were very small; you don't have any memory of that?

JS: Yes, I do remember playing with kids. I had one particularly good friend who lived a block up the street and all that. I saw my first movie there in a vacant lot in downtown Valiant. I remember the weeds were up where you'd get the chiggers. It was an outdoor film called "Biscuit Eater" and I remember it was the saddest story.

ED: You mean you saw the movie outdoors?

JS: Yes.

ED: In a field or something?

JS: An outdoor theater.

ED: Did they raise a screen or something they had?

JS: That's right.

ED: Watch it at night?

JS: Yes, Idabel was the nearest town of any size.

ED: Idaville or Idabel?

JS: Idabel, I-D-A-B-E-L.

ED: Idabel, I-D-A-B-E-L.

JS: At Valiant a brother of my father owned a drugstore there. There was just one drugstore, of course, in Valiant. After that, we were in Ashdown for about a year. I didn't really know why, particularly, we were there, but we lived with my Grandfather A.P. Steel, Judge Steel. I started the first grade there. My dad had a brother in Orlando, Florida, who, I recall, wrote him. This was way before Disney World or any of that business. But he had an opportunity and wanted him to come down, so we lived in Orlando for about a year and I attended the second grade there. My uncle owned a drugstore, but that wasn't why he called dad down. They were beginning discovery of these bricks that began to be used in homes that let light in but you couldn't see through. I don't know any of the details but it didn't work out, so we eventually came back to Arkansas.

ED: You were driving an old truck or something? How did you travel?

JS: It was a car. I don't remember what.

ED: Your dad had some kind of old car.

JS: I remember my granddad always drove Packards, always. But it was a car; it wasn't a truck or a pickup or anything. Then we came back to Texarkana and were there when I was in the last part of the second grade and the first part of the third grade. Then we moved to Little Rock. I lived the rest of my schooling in Little Rock, went to Pulaski Heights Grade School, Pulaski Heights Junior High and what was Little Rock High School then, now Central High. And then went to Hendrix College. That was my next stop.

ED: OK. Let's go back now. Did you have any brothers and sisters? Or were you the only child?

JS: Only child. I never knew the specifics, but I remember them saying that my mother couldn't have any more children, so I've always been the only child.

ED: Do you remember what your dad did while he was in Texarkana? Did he get a job down there or was he still struggling to find some kind of work?

JS: I'm not sure. I don't specifically remember what he did. I know in Little Rock he sold real estate with Faucett & Company. I believe that is what it was called. After that, he went to work for the U.S. Department of Labor, Wage and Hour Division. He did that pretty much through my junior high and high school days. He would go inspect sawmills particularly— check their books and see if they were in violation of the federal wage-

and-hour law, and many were. I've skipped but somewhere in there he worked for Jack Holt [Sr.]. My dad, as I say, wasn't a lawyer but he worked for Jack Holt when he was attorney general.

ED: All right. Jack Holt was –

JS: And I was in high school at that time.

ED: Jack Holt was attorney general in about 1940 or so.

JS: '40, yes.

ED: He served a couple of terms and then he ran for the U.S. Senate.

JS: Yes.

ED: …in 1942.

JS: Against McClellan.

ED: And got beat by John McClellan.

JS: Right, I recall that.

ED: Then Holt ran for governor in '48. In some period in between, Jack Holt was in the Army, so your dad worked for him during that period.

JS: When he was attorney general.

ED: When he was attorney general.

JS: And when he left that it was because a number of the lumber companies, particularly lumber companies in south Arkansas that he called on and examined their books, asking him if he would consider leaving the government and work for them to keep them out of trouble, to keep them from unintentionally failing to pay time and half overtime and

things of that nature. Finally, when enough of them made such an offer he left the government. He asked my mother and I, "Would you rather live in Texarkana or Arkadelphia? Either of those towns would be real handy to what I'm going to be doing."

ED: Because that work would be all over south Arkansas.

JS: South Arkansas.

ED: Which is where all the timber industry is.

JS: And we both said Texarkana. So that's when we moved there and that's where we lived with both of my parents until they both died.

ED: But that was after you left high school?

JS: They actually moved there after my freshman year at Hendrix.

ED: OK.

JS: I finished high school here in Little Rock and went to Hendrix College and after that spring they moved to Texarkana. That's been home ever since.

ED: Let me reach back about your mother. Did she work outside the home?

JS: No, she never worked.

ED: Never did, OK.

JS: Never worked as I recall. Never drove a car.

ED: Really? Never drove a car?

JS: Except one time she borrowed a neighbor's when I had a bicycle wreck and skinned my face. She borrowed a car to take me to the hospital. I was much more concerned about her getting us there safely than I was about my bike accident.

ED: And in those days you didn't have automatic transmissions.

JS: No, she would've had to shift.

ED: So she had to use that clutch and brake and gearshift.

JS: That's right, that's right.

ED: That had to be scary.

JS: Yeah. She never drove.

ED: Wow. Tell me a little bit about your daddy. What kind of—was he a strict disciplinarian?

JS: No, I think I had the only-child circumstance.

ED: OK.

JS: Spoiled. Anything that I could want or do, he provided if it was affordable. He loved to hunt. He used to bird hunt and quail hunt a lot. That was really while I was younger and hadn't started hunting. I later hunted a lot but mainly dove and ducks but, at any rate, he loved to fish. He and Jack Holt did a lot of fishing together. That was when the lakes were beginning; the artificial lakes were beginning to be built all around Arkansas, and they would always go to one of the new lakes, because I gather they were all probably stocked right at the beginning with fish. I've got several pictures of them holding up strings of fish.

ED: Pictures of your dad and Jack Holt?

JS: And Jack Holt.

ED: This is Jack Holt Sr. we're talking about?

JS: Yes.

ED: So where did you live in Little Rock?

JS: In Little Rock, when we moved here, we lived on Cedar Street about half a block South of Kavanaugh and then in three or four years we moved further south on Cedar—two or three blocks North of Markham [Street]. The first was a duplex, and the second one was a house. They were rentals. Then we bought a home when I was probably in early junior high. It was the first house south of Markham [Street] on Valentine Street. That was home until my parents moved back to Texarkana.

ED: Those are my old stomping grounds when I came to Little Rock. We lived just off Markham on Crystal Court for a while and then on Ridgeway.

JS: Yeah.

ED: So we've spent most of our life in Little Rock in and around that territory.

JS: Crystal Court was just a half a block before that.

ED: Yeah.

JS: I had a good friend, Luke Quinn, who lived on Crystal Court.

ED: Luke Quinn later became a—he was a real-estate guy, right?

JS: Yes, yes. In fact we were in the same class and roomed together at Hendrix the second year.

ED: You went to Pulaski Heights Elementary School?

JS: Yes, from third grade on.

ED: And then the junior high school.

JS: Yes.

ED: And then what later became Central High School.

JS: Right.

ED: Were you involved in athletics?

JS: At about age five I had polio in my right leg. I guess you would call it was a light case, but I had a knee that would go out of joint fairly easily so I played softball and hardball and things like that but football… I'd love to have played, but I couldn't do it. Then when I went to high school I joined a fraternity and in those days they were frowned on. They hadn't gotten to the point where you would be expelled if you were a member, but you could not do any events, you couldn't be homeroom president, you couldn't be in the band, you couldn't be on any athletic team, you couldn't hold any office.

ED: Yeah.

JS: And a few years after I left high school they said if you are in a fraternity and we learn of it you will be expelled. But when I went through high school it was great because we had parties and dances. I wore a tux more in high school than I ever have since, because we'd have a formal Christmas dance. It was always at the Lafayette Skyway.

ED: The Lafayette Skyway was on the top floor of the Lafayette Hotel.

JS: That's right. They were all there and there was a spring formal where you'd wear a white dinner jacket. I dated Peggy Holt, who was Jack Holt Jr.'s sister. She was my high school girlfriend. Of course, I got to know her, I guess, when dad worked for Jack Holt. Anyway, we dated and went to the dances. There was another sorority—there were two more, but there was another sorority and most of the time you'd have date, or, if not,

you'd be invited stag to come where they had some alternate dancing partners. So it was more fun in high school than I think could've happened anywhere else or any other time, really.

ED: At that time, of course, Little Rock High School was the only white high school.

JS: Right. Dunbar was the…

ED: Dunbar was the black high school.

JS: …school for blacks and Little Rock High. It was called then the largest high school in the South. Now, I don't know about statistics but it was certainly a big building at that time for us.

ED: And it was, of course, supposed to be architecturally the most beautiful high school in America at that time.

JS: Uh-huh. A very pretty place.

ED: Let me go back. You mentioned polio. You had polio and that would've been – how old were you then?

JS: As best I can recall, five.

ED: That was a terrifying disease back in those days.

JS: Yes.

ED: Because I remember I came along a few years later and everybody lived in horror of getting polio because it was frequently fatal and they had no cure for it.

JS: That's right. And the iron lungs, and don't go swimming in a swimming pool, or don't go in crowds.

ED: Yes.

JS: In the summer particularly. And they didn't know what caused it. This is probably faulty memory, but the only thing I remember was being barefooted out in the front yard and going in. I think I stepped on a bee and it stung me on the bottom of my foot. I was young enough, probably four or five. We had been in Little Rock a short time right across the street from where the Justice Building is and the original Shack Restaurant. So that's my only memory. We weren't there very long because that's when we actually went to Florida.

ED: So you're diagnosed with polio. You didn't have to go into an iron lung or anything like that? You were able to –

JS: No iron lung and no prosthesis. The only thing is my right leg. The muscles are smaller and weaker.

ED: OK.

JS: And never grew the same amount, so I've never been a sprinter. I jog, all that sort of thing, and I was a fighter pilot in the Air Force. But I remember I had to walk all the way across…

ED: Really? They took you in?

JS: Yeah, across the floor with two flight surgeons looking at me carefully. They looked at me and finally decided "I believe he can handle it." So, yeah, I flew fighters for three years.

ED: Well, that's amazing because they rule people out…

JS: Oh, that's right.

ED: …for almost anything, particularly for the Air Force.

JS: We had to press down hard on the brakes before we took off in a jet and I had no trouble doing that. I flew the first fighter that had an afterburner. When you put it in afterburner it really wanted to go. You had to mash very hard with both feet until you got it all at full blast, and then you let go. So I haven't really had any problems. There's a thing called post-polio syndrome. In the last five years I've noticed some problem when standing and lifting my right leg with my hand for certain things.

ED: I have a friend who's not quite as old as you, but he in the last seven or eight years has developed some problems. He had polio as a very small child himself and he got to be an athlete, but he's had some real problems in the last few years. He's probably in his sixties, mid-sixties.

JS: I played intramural softball. I played on the church softball team and so I did some athletic things, but the football contact I just couldn't do.

ED: Sure. Well, Central High School was the big school and there were big athletes there.

JS: Oh, absolutely.

ED: It wasn't like a small town.

JS: Absolutely.

ED: Where anybody could play.

JS: That's when they just rarely lost a game.

ED: Yeah, they would go undefeated.

JS: That’s right.

ED: They played the biggest teams in this part of the country for years at a time.

JS: That’s right and went to and won a bowl game, a high school bowl game. I’ve forgotten the name of it.

ED: Yeah.

JS: But out of state, which was unusual.

ED: And who was the coach? Was Quigley the coach in those days?

JS: Yes. And Matthews was the assistant.

ED: OK, Wilson Matthews was the assistant.

JS: Wilson Matthews was the assistant. In fact, I believe in my senior year he was the head coach, I think.

ED: OK.

JS: Rabbit Burnett had left and Wilson was probably the head coach my senior year.

ED: Yeah. Well, were you a good student?

JS: Yes, I say good. I was not excellent. I was good. I was an honor-roll student, A’s and B’s. When I got out of service the first year I had fifteen hours of A and three hours of B but I was a little older then.

ED: Right.

JS: A little more dedicated. “I’m ready to get on with this,” you know. But I was a pretty good student.

ED: Right after high school you went to Hendrix, right? Did you interrupt your career at Hendrix to go in the service?

JS: Right, to the Air Force.

ED: Were you being drafted there?

JS: Well, I didn't get drafted.

JS: I graduated in '49.

ED: All right, high school.

JS: So in '50 my folks moved to Texarkana and, of course, that's where I went. Around Christmas of '50 a lady named Ms. Purvis, whom I had known, and her son Marshall Purvis was my age and I knew him.

ED: Yes.

JS: And she worked for the draft board in Little Rock, where I registered, and she called me in Texarkana to say "John, I'm dropping yours in the mail today." Now it wasn't a draft. It was to go take the physical. I think in college you could finish the semester that you were in, but this was before they had a draft-deferment program. My dad had been in World War I and my uncles, the two of them, had been in World War II. I thought this was the thing to do and I just didn't want to be in the Army. I wanted to be in the Air Force. After I was an Eagle Scout, I joined the flying portion of the Scouts, Air Scouts they called it, where I could just go ride around with pilots. It used to fly with Claude Holbert, the daddy who had the Central Flying Service.

ED: Flying Service.

JS: And another fellow who owned some movies here. They would just call and I'd just go ride around. I remember I was with Holbert one day. We were in an amphibious plane and landed in the Arkansas River. That was way before dams, you know—logs floating by and all of that.

ED: Yes.

JS: But at any rate, I wanted to be in the Air Force and therefore I decided I would go enlist on the morning of January the second. I cleared that with my parents and they both said if that's what you want to do, son, have at it.

ED: Yeah.

JS: And the two people I was with, my two best buddies, were riding around with me New Year's Day talking about it and they both said, "We'll just do it, too." I said great. Well, I got home and that night one of them called and said, "I can't do it. His dad says you'd be crazy. You're in ROTC."

ED: Yeah.

JS: Of course, he would've because he was in Fayetteville in ROTC and they weren't going to be drafted—those in ROTC—and the other one's father was dead. The other one was my law partner all through the years.

ED: Who was he?

JS: Hayes McClerkin.

ED: Hayes McClerkin

JS: And he told his mother he wanted to enlist on the second with me and she said, "Well, you've got to call your Uncle Fred." Uncle Fred lived in Washington, D.C. He worked in the Senate and was very much on the inside of things. He said don't do it because there will be a college-deferment program coming along. So I said OK. I understood both of them, so I went down on the morning of the second by myself and enlisted. I explained that I was in college and I needed a little bit of time to go get my books and so forth and so they gave me…

ED: This would've been January?

JS: Second.

ED: 1950 probably.

JS: '51.

ED: '51.

JS: So they told me to report for duty on the 13th so I went in January 13th on a Friday. I got on a train and went to San Antonio and went through basic training.

ED: What was the post at San Antonio?

JS: Lackland Air Force Base.

ED: Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio.

JS: Yeah. And one of the most fortunate quirks, a God wink or whatever you wish to call it: We took tests. They called them Stanine tests, a bunch of tests that were all easy. And maybe when we were two-thirds through with the basic training we went over to be assigned. There were long lines and I was there waiting to be assigned, not knowing what

that would be. I looked over at the table across the room and there was the guy that had graduated from Hendrix the previous June named Fred Holt. He saw me and he came and got me and took me out of line. He took me over to his desk and he said: "Stroud, this week the Air Force wants air policemen, cooks or aviation mechanics." He said "there's no leeway except there's one thing. I can put down where you will go." He looked at my grades and said, "Yeah, I can do this, I can put Russian language school." And I thought, "What, Fred?" And he said, "Well, what you do is you go across town to this little Air Force base where you'd have two weeks of English and four weeks of Russian and if you pass those then you would go to a Russian language school, either six months at the Presidio, Monterrey, in California or a one year course at Syracuse University in New York. I said, "Put it down, Fred," and he did. Several days before we finished basic here comes a truck and picks me up and takes me across town. But the reason I say it was the most fortuitous thing is that when I was halfway through that school I had my two years of college. You had to have that to go to Aviation Cadets. I had a year and half, so when I had two that's when I applied. It took the full remaining six months to be processed and be assigned so I finished the school and within three weeks after I graduated from the Russian language school I started flight school. But that was a life-long dream and it just wouldn't have happened if I hadn't seen Fred Holt and if he hadn't seen me.

ED: So did you go to Syracuse?

JS: I went to Syracuse.

ED: So did you get to choose between Presidio and Syracuse?

JS: Yes and I immediately chose Syracuse.

ED: Why did you choose Syracuse?

JS: Because it was a college campus and I could accrue college credits.

JS: I wanted to be back on a campus. I had been off three months, four months, and so I got my choice and went there. It was a great experience.

ED: So how long were you there?

JS: It was a year.

ED: So you attended college a full year then.

JS: Well, eight hours a day, five days a week for the full year, that's right.

ED: And so how many hours, college hours, did you earn then?

JS: Well, they gave me credit at Fayetteville when I got out for forty-something hours, I think.

ED: OK.

JS: Of course, there were many more hours than that but there's just a certain amount they could take.

ED: Yes.

JS: And we were going forty, basically, a week. All of our instructors were Russians. A couple couldn't speak English, because they had come over recently. The head of the school had been a Russian prince, so it was just fascinating. If you do some eight hours a day you can learn it.

ED: They couldn't speak English, but they were teaching Russian?

JS: Well, we had to dig in. I think they tried to start us, at least the very first part, with some that spoke English. Later, as we got along, we had, I remember, a woman who had been a Russian school teacher. At any rate, I had two roommates and we worked hard and we all passed. We bought a 1937 Packard. It cost one hundred fifty dollars, so it cost each of us fifty dollars. One of the roommates was from Washington, D.C., and the other was from north Arkansas.

ED: Who were they? Can you remember their names?

JS: Yes, Leon Combs was the one from Arkansas and Buzz Cummins was the one from Washington, D.C.

ED: C-U-M-M-I-N-G-S?

JS: No. I-N-S.

ED: I-N-S.

JS: No G. And so we drove that old car around. We would go to… Well, the farthest we went was to Washington, D.C., because one of them, Cummins, lived there and we stayed in his parents' condo with him for a long weekend. The other trip was to Montreal, Canada, and then we went over to Cooperstown, New York—little trips like that—to see the Baseball Hall of Fame and then James Fenimore Cooper's home. When we graduated we sold it to an incoming class for one hundred fifty dollars. We had a filling station that would give us drain oil because it burned a little oil, but all we were out was gasoline. It had a radio. It was a Packard and it was a great experience.

ED: I always wanted a Packard.

JS: Oh yeah, big heavy thing. There were a lot of sororities on campus and every Sunday a different sorority would have an open house. We were the only military folks around so we would go to those and we'd put the sticker of that sorority on the window somewhere. We ended up with stickers all over the car.

ED: Well, did you wear your uniform to class?

JS: Yes.

ED: Your Air Force uniform?

JS: Yes, we didn't have to wear it otherwise. And we had activity books so that we could go to all the football and basketball games. I had met some folks at church the first month or two, probably Easter. At any rate, they took a liking to me and invited me to come over and have dinner one day. Then she asked me if I would go with her one night a week to a children's rheumatic fever hospital and I said, "Well, yes." So I did the rest of the year. I'd pick her up and we'd go over together, but she mainly would put on a worship service with children, all of them with rheumatic fever. So I remember years later after law school they came to Texarkana to visit. They've both since died. They had a son who was in Cornell at the time and they took me over there with them on the weekend to see Cornell and it was gorgeous—Cayuga's Waters and so on. That's the only time I met him but I kept up with him a little bit. At any rate, that was just a great chapter with the Air Force. I stayed in the Reserves until I had over twenty years, so it's been a great advantage.

ED: Well, the Korean War was going on at this time.

JS: That's right, and to that the only decision halfway through aviation cadets was, do you want to go to single-engine or multi-engine? I said single-engine. So I got my choice and went to San Angelo, Texas, for three months and then Waco, Texas for three months. I'd been at Malden, Missouri, for the first six months of the basic training. I was still fortunate at Waco. They had us all get out on the tarmac one day for a prearranged view of a F-86D. The F86 was the saber jet that was in Korea, but the D was the one they had taken and added an afterburner to it, and instead of machine guns, it had large rockets that would drop down, twenty-four of them, that you could shoot as six, twelve or twenty-four. Anyway, this plane came and made a dive over the field, went in afterburner and pulled up and rolled almost out of sight. I thought, "Oh, my goodness." It held the world speed record at the time. This was back in '53, so it didn't have to be too fast to do that. It was over six hundred miles an hour in afterburner. I got my choice there and so I got to fly the F-86D for three years. With that plane we went to Panama City, Florida, for three or four months to learn to fly it and then we were assigned and I was sent to O'Hare Air Force Base.

ED: Where is O'Hare?

JS: O'Hare is in Chicago.

ED: OK, all right.

JS: It's O'Hare now, but then it was an Air Force base.

ED: OK, that's where the O'Hare airport is.

JS: It is.

ED: OK.

JS: It's the same place.

ED: OK.

JS: In fact, my first year they had decided to move the airline flights from Midway Airport there because they couldn't expand it. It was totally surrounded by town and this was out at the edge, definitely the edge. So they had begun building the terminal. I think they had built about a fourth of a circular terminal my last year there and began to have some flights out of there. We would dodge airliners that last year I was there. After that I would be going back to school and I stayed in the Reserve not absolutely continuously but pretty much.

ED: So you flew that plane a lot; you flew a lot of times?

JS: Oh, every day, every day.

ED: Did you enjoy that? Was that fun, flying?

JS: I loved it, I absolutely loved it.

ED: Can you describe the experience of flying those things?

JS: Well, in this plane, unlike the later ones, we had radar, a little radar screen. All the planes after that would have a separate radar observer who sat behind the pilot and handled that, so we were the only one that I know of where the pilot did both. But they were such super people I was with in this squadron, about twenty-five of us, all very close, friends until now. We had a reunion about every five years until those of us still around got too small.

The last one was in Phoenix, Arizona, and I knew it was going to be last one. At any rate, the Air Force was just a great time and I enjoyed it all during aviation cadets. I was the cadet major, which meant I didn't march to the flight line. I could just stroll. I had open post, which meant I could go into Waco every night. There wasn't much to do so I didn't. I was offered a regular commission at the end upon graduation. A regular commission is what you receive if you graduate from the Air Force Academy. Well, there wasn't an Air Force Academy, but you would receive a regular commission if you graduated from West Point or Annapolis. I declined it because that was what you would want if you were going to make a career. That definitely was what you would want.

ED: And you weren't thinking about a career at that point?

JS: Well, I loved the flying and I would have accepted it if I hadn't decided many years before that I was going to be a lawyer. For instance, I went to Jack Holt, who had been attorney general, when I entered the tenth grade at Little Rock High, and had him pick all my courses for tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grades. He put me in things I didn't enjoy like Latin, but I took every one: public speaking and English, English, English. I wrote my granddad a letter one time and told him I wanted to be a lawyer. I used to go to court with him in Texarkana and he'd insist that I sit on the bench with him. He'd give me a yellow pad and I'd just watch with my mouth open at the trials—divorced women with black eyes and things like that. So I made that decision and just never varied from it, and that's why I didn't consider doing anything other than that.

ED: OK.

JS: In fact, in Chicago they let me be assistant trial counsel in court martials because I had told them I was going to go to law school. You had to be outranked by the other parties, so I would be an assistant always.

ED: Right. Let's go back to flying a little bit.

JS: Yeah.

ED: How fast did you ever fly do you think?

JS: One time we went through the sound barrier.

ED: Which is?

JS: It depends on temperature and elevation. The official speed record was in afterburner, straight and level over the desert. That's where they had the things that measured it. One time at Tyndall in training, we were told to go up to 35,000 or so, put it in afterburner and dive—we had a mach meter—and go past one mach.

ED: One mach being the sound barrier?

JS: Right, break the sound barrier. And you couldn't go much faster than one mach but you could feel a little vibration. In fact, it got silent. It was not noticeable because you wore a helmet that fit close to your face and over your ears, and you had your built-in headset. That's the only time, and they said you don't need to do it again, but they gave us a certificate of mach-busters club.

ED: So you know you passed the sound barrier when it falls silent?

JS: It wasn't silent because of our helmet and earphones.

JS: And also you get little streamers off your wingtips. Most of the time we weren't at 35,000. We would go to 25,000 or 30,000, and we'd use the afterburner only for takeoff or climb. Our job was to shoot down the Russian bombers, so if you were on a scramble you stayed in afterburner until you got to the bogey. Two of us at all times rotated in the alert hanger down at the end of the runway with two of our planes, and you'd sleep upstairs. It was like a fire pole to get down to it. Your crew would strap you in and check and do all of that was downstairs. You had a TV and a bed and so forth. Your boots zipped up so you didn't have to lace up anything. But that was the mission and the reason I didn't go to Korea. The Korean War ended the month I graduated from Cadets.

ED: Oh really? So what year, would that have been?

JS: That would've been '53.

JS: I graduated that summer and the Korean War ended.

ED: Otherwise you probably would've gone.

JS: Well, that's what they –

ED: If it had gone on another year you would've probably gone over there.

JS: Or if I'd gone to Aviation Cadets sooner.

ED: Yup.

JS: If I had gone to Cadets right out of… I just didn't have two years of college or I would've applied then, but that's where they were sending folks, to Korea, but the whole thing began to change when the worry was Russian bombers. They were convinced they would

come over the ice cap. So all of us were along the northern United States and Alaska but that's where they expected the bogey to be.

ED: When war came you all were going to be the line of defense against the Soviet bombers coming over the ice caps.

JS: Exactly right. In fact, each of our bases had a little unit that would come into action if we shot down a Russian bomber. Strangely the Russian linguist at O'Hare was a guy that I'd been in Russian school with. He was in the crew so he could speak Russian to the Russian pilots that were captured. And then there was a demolition expert and armament, and they made them all learn to be paratroopers. Their job was, we'd shoot the plane down and they would drop out by parachute to get the crew if they were living and interrogate, et cetera. And, if they had a bomb on them, to disarm it. Fortunately, as you know, they never came. I've often said you know we did a good job protecting Chicago.

ED: They never took Chicago.

JS: They never came. But any rate, I loved the time in service and I've enjoyed the remainder. I did switch after law school to JAG [Judge Advocate General Corps] because the only way I could've flown was to be in the National Guard and I didn't want to get out of the Air Force Reserves. They had one in Fort Smith and one here. I didn't want to interrupt my hope of someday being a retired Air Force officer. In fact, the last several years they were going to put me at Barksdale and I requested Little Rock Air Force Base—a little further, but I'd just rather be here than Shreveport. Jack Holt was doing the same thing.

ED: Jack Holt, Jr.?

JS: Jack Holt, Jr. He was out there. My deal was to be there one day a month and I could pick the day. I would just tell them, I'll be there next Wednesday, and I did the same thing the other lawyers in the unit did—meet with airmen and their spouses and give legal advice and draw powers of attorney, , wills, simple wills, whatever. Jack was doing it at the same time. He became a bird colonel and I became a lieutenant colonel. I would love to have stayed long enough to be a full colonel but I didn't. In fact, I asked them if the two weeks that you had to do—the two weeks active duty—if I could split that and do two one-week deals I'd certainly stay in. They said it's never been done and they couldn't allow it. So I would go back that weekend and spend the weekend with my secretary trying to stay caught up, but it was difficult. At any rate, all of it was a pleasure.

ED: So you stayed in the Air Force Reserve for twenty years?

JS: Uh-huh. I think I had twenty-one and half or something like that.

ED: Sometime in the early seventies then?

JS: Or at least mid-70s because I didn't do it every single year. I was in different type units. For a year or two, I was the legal officer at the AC&W Squadron at Texarkana Airport where you see the white bubbles where there's radar and contact with aircraft and all that. I would go out there one day a month and be the lawyer they could come see. But that program didn't last long. I remember that Guy Amsler, Jr., was my boss in the Reserves; he was a good friend for a long time.

ED: So Guy Amsler, A-M-S-L-E-R, Jr. who was a circuit judge in Little Rock.

JS: No.

ED: Was junior the judge or was that his dad?

JS: No, he wasn't, it was his daddy.

ED: Guy Amsler, Sr. was the judge.

JS: Yes.

ED: And Junior was the lawyer.

JS: Yes.

ED: All right, anything else we need to cover about your military experience?

JS: I think that pretty well covers it. It was a big chapter of my life, but I wouldn't take anything for it and I loved it all. I was the first in my group to solo and we flew an old thing called a T-6, which had a reciprocating engine—in other words, not a jet but a single engine propeller plane. They were all yellow, usually called a Yellow Peril, and that's what everybody began with. Later, they went to Piper Cubs and then they went to tricycle gear and a lot of things, but in those days that is what we flew the first nine months. From that we went on to T-33 jets and they were a two seater jet trainer that you were in the last part of basic training.

ED: Well, have you continued to fly?

JS: I kept a license for a few years; I got a commercial license while I was in Chicago because it was so easy to do, and I got the license for single- and multi-engine land and we got certified for all weather. That's what these were called, all-weather fighters. If it was snowing or raining we're going up, you know; that was part of the reason for the

radar, mainly so you could find the bogey in the clouds. But any rate and I stayed in JAG until I retired completely.

ED: All right, so you finished, you did your Air Force duty at O'Hare, and then you got out,

JS: Got out.

ED: And went to?

JS: Fayetteville.

ED: Fayetteville. You went back to college at the University of Arkansas.

JS: I got out about a month before the fall semester, which would've been '56. My folks had bought a place on Lake Greeson; at that time it was called Lake Narrows but later renamed. They called it Narrows Dam, in Pike County.

ED: Yes.

JS: Murfreesboro, Glenwood, Kirby, in that area. So I bought a ski boat the first day I was there with the money I'd saved in service. I had four weeks, four and a half weeks before school started and so I stayed there. I was there every night but one. I think I went to Texarkana for something and that's where I met my wife-to-be, Marietta.

ED: Let's talk about her, Marietta, M-A-R-I-E-T-T-A?

JS: Yes.

ED: And her maiden name?

JS: Kimball, K-I-M-B-A-L-L.

ED: And was she from down there around De Queen?

JS: No, well, that's where I met her.

ED: OK. Give me a little background about her.

JS: I had been to a party, a rush party over at Hot Springs one evening and met several people, one of them named Dub Brunner from Hope. A few days after I got out of service one of my good buddies who lived in Tennessee came and spent a week with me right after he got out. So he was there and that was fun having him. I was out in the boat by myself probably the second week and I saw Dub and he saw me. We waved and pulled up beside each other and a good looking blonde was in the boat with him and he introduced me. I got off to a great start because after we visited a little bit I said, "I'm glad to have met you Henrietta." (Laughing) And she said, "My name is Marietta."

ED: (Laughing)

JS: And so it didn't take me but a day or two to decide to go see if I could find her. I gathered from our short conversations that she was from De Queen, her folks had a cabin at the other end of the lake, and her dad was a doctor. So I went looking. They had these four places on the lake where you could gas up your boat and I went to the one there near Daisy. With my description they gave me directions to the house and by boat I went to it and met her mother sitting on the porch with another lady. Then, you know, "I'm John Stroud and I met Marietta the other day out in the lake. Is she here?" "No, she's in De Queen." I said, "Could I get her phone number?" And they gave it to me. I remember that it was two digits, just 36 or 41 or whatever. So I called her and she said she could come over. I said OK, so she came over. For the rest of that month I would get up in the

mornings and go pick her up, we would go back up where my folks were near the dam and ski, swim and eat lunch and supper with my parents.

ED: Were your parents more or less retired by then?

JS: Yes.

ED: OK.

JS: And we would eat lunch and supper there and then I would take her back up after supper. A funny thing that happened. I told this—and they keep reminding me of it—at Rotary Club. They call somebody to give a synopsis of their life, real short. Anyway, I was telling them that and I said that one night I shut the engine off and we were courting and there was a fisherman over there who saw me and thought I was fishing. He said, "Hey, you having any luck?" And I said, "Not much."

ED: (Laughing)

JS: (Laughing) So we cranked up and I took her home. But we got to school and dated, but we also dated other people. After about a year we got pinned and then the next year we got engaged and married. That was before my last year of law school.

ED: OK. Now when you entered school in Fayetteville in '56, this is still undergraduate, right?

JS: Yes. Well, I went one semester because they counted me, as I said, as having forty-something hours.

ED: You had your Hendrix and your Syracuse.

JS: But I needed one more semester to have three years, which is what you needed to go. So that first semester I was in undergraduate school, which meant starting law school in January, which you could do. I don't know if you can still do that. It would be a real small class and my lifelong friend from high school on—I mean Hayes McClerkin—had gone in the Navy. We had already planned getting a place together, rooming together. So he got out right at the end of my first semester. That first semester I lived in the Kappa Sigma House, but starting law school he [McClerkin] and a friend I had made there in the Kappa Sig House, Phil Anderson [Philip S. Anderson], were going to do the same thing. He was going to law school too.

ED: Phil Anderson is the Philip Anderson who now is with… ?

JS: Williams and Anderson.

ED: Williams and Anderson.

JS: And was president of the American Bar Association.

ED: American Bar Association back twenty years ago or so [1998–99].

JS: Yes. And good friends. Of course, Hayes and Phil didn't know each other until we found a house and rented it. It was a two-bedroom, but one of the bedrooms was large, which Hayes and I shared. Phil had the other one. And we named it Hillside House. It was partially furnished and we… Well, at least I had a TV brought from the service and a hifi [high-fidelity record player] that we played music on, so it was just a great deal. All our dates were at the house. I think one night I went to a night club out of the whole time. We just had the gatherings there, our dates there. We had, I remember, a costume party and

we had Al Witte, a law professor that we played golf and tennis with. He would come. And he'd have a date with a teacher, usually. Anyway, we'd put in a badminton court. That was just a level place where we put wooden posts with two lights on it and put some lime around. So we'd always have a big bunch and have badminton. We lived together and all three went straight through summer school.

ED: Let's talk a little bit about Hayes McClerkin, H-A-Y-E-S, Hayes C. McClerkin.

JS: Yes.

ED: M-C-C-L-E-R-K-I-N, Jr. of Texarkana.

JS: Yes.

ED: Did you meet him when you were in Texarkana? Did he grow up in Texarkana?

JS: Yes. I didn't know him really in the third grade but I met him in high school. The way I met him, as I mentioned, was in the Delts—Delta Sigma high school fraternity. They had chapters all over: Fayetteville, Helena, Fort Smith, Hot Springs, Little Rock, El Dorado, and Texarkana, all around. So I was there visiting my grandparents and I had a book that listed every Delt in Arkansas. I went to the address of the current president and knocked on the door and his mother came out and said, "Bobby's not here." Bobby Poland was his name. "Why don't you look up Hayes McClerkin; he's probably not working. So she told me how to get to his house. I found him and we became very good friends from then on. But I didn't really know him until then.

ED: Now, I should point out here, in case we don't cover it later, that Hayes McClerkin later became your law partner and was in the legislature for some years, was speaker of the House of Representatives in about 1969 and '70 [speaker, 1969–70] and ran for governor.

JS: Right.

ED: In 1970.

JS: Right, he served ten years, five terms in the legislature, was speaker the last, ran for governor, and that's when Bumpers won.

ED: He got beat by Dale Bumpers, who was in the field of eight [in the Democratic primaries] that year.

JS: Oh yes.

ED: In that famous…

JS: [Joe] Purcell and [Robert] Compton and just bunches of them.

ED: And Bill Wells.

JS: Oh, yes.

ED: And Orval Faubus, of course; we should mention Orval Faubus.

JS: Yes, and then the winner was going to take on Rockefeller.

ED: And the guy named Bill Cheek [William S. Cheek].

JS: He never won.

ED: Yes, yes. Jim Malone [James Malone] was a candidate in that election.

JS: Yes. Oh, it was a big race.

ED: Big race, yes.

JS: I think Hayes came in third or something like that.

ED: Yeah, fourth I think.

JS: Fourth, OK.

ED: Let me think, it was Dale Bumpers, well, in the first primary it was Orval Faubus, Dale Bumpers and then Joe Purcell.

JS: Yeah.

ED: And then Hayes McClerkin was fourth.

JS: Yes. I remember we were playing golf together over that spring and I was playing with Brad Jesson and Doug Smith from Fort Smith.

ED: Uh-huh.

JS: At that point, I had never met Dale Bumpers but they knew Hayes was going to be running. Charleston [Bumpers' home] was close enough, and he [Bumper] was in court a lot in Fort Smith. They both said, "Tell Hayes he better watch out because this man is something else." So I met him, you know, later in the campaign, but I had been alerted that he was formidable.

ED: And nobody knew him.

JS: No, at Charleston, Arkansas, he had been on the school board. I think that was the only elected office he had ever had.

ED: Yes.

JS: At any rate, that was a very interesting time.

ED: Had it not been for him, Hayes might well have been—he could've been the governor.

JS: He could've been.

ED: He could've been. It would've been between him and Joe Purcell, probably.

JS: That's right.

ED: Because whoever got in the runoff with Orval Faubus was going to win that primary.

JS: Yeah. Then win because of Rockefeller.

ED: He was going to beat Rockefeller in the fall.

JS: That's right. Yeah, well I was totally convinced he was going to win but anyway it was a great experience.

ED: Yes.

JS: And he wouldn't take anything for giving it a shot.

ED: Yeah, sure.

JS: You know.

ED: You'd always regret it if you didn't.

JS: Yeah.

ED: All right, so you're at Fayetteville and you're in law school. Now, is Marietta a student up there?

JS: Yes.

ED: So she's a student as well?

JS: Yes.

ED: So you're dating her.

JS: We got married with one year left in law school. In other words, that would've been '58.

ED: And she was an undergraduate.

JS: She was an undergraduate and we married June 1st of that year. Hayes McClerkin married Lillian Riggs—Lille she goes by—at the end of that same summer. So we, of course, were living in that house with Phil. We found a triplex a block from law school. That's where we were living. When Hayes and Lille married three months later there was a vacancy and they moved into one of those. There were two apartments downstairs and one upstairs, in that same triplex and it was just a block from law school. Al Witte lived back behind us so that's really where we got big time into playing tennis. A block away there were parking lots and then later dorms, but there was a tennis court diagonally from law school and free so that was our extra activities. So we finished law school and I didn't… I couldn't graduate. I had the ninety hours, but I had what they said was not enough residency. I have always interpreted that to mean I had not paid tuition long enough. So I had to go half the summer. Then I could drop the courses. I didn't need any hours, but I had to be a student. I went to class and all of that. It seems to me one was in the middle of the course and another was just half the summer. Anyway, it was a blessing because Hayes stayed there while I was patching that out. We had already decided that we didn't want to go with a law firm. We were going to be law partners and open our own office in Texarkana. So we studied for the Bar. They didn't have Bar review courses. It wasn't long after that until review courses began. Some law professors went together and started that, which now is standard. Almost every graduate takes some form of Bar review course, but in those days it wasn't [available]. So we took the Bar that July, went

to Texarkana and rented an office. In those days eighty-five percent of the lawyers in Texarkana were in downtown in one of the two banks—one in Texas, one in Arkansas. State National Bank is where we went. Across the street was Texarkana National Bank. So we rented an office there.

ED: In the bank building?

JS: In the bank building.

ED: On the Arkansas side?

JS: On the Arkansas side. It had four rooms. The two that were our lawyer offices had windows to the outside, to a fire escape anyway, one for a secretary, and then another one where we put a table and bookcases, all on the cheap. We got the furniture, the three desks and the chairs from Riggs Tractor Company because of Lille Riggs.

ED: Hayes' wife.

JS: Her dad was at that point the owner. Her grandfather had been—J. A. Riggs. At any rate, they were moving out on I-30 where they are now and we got their furniture at what they were going to be paid for trade-in values, which was way low. We filled up our shelves with books that were in my folks' double garage, where my grandfather's books had been stored. They were mainly out of date, but they were law books, and they looked good on the shelves.

ED: They looked good, yes.

JS: So we filled those up. We didn't have a set; well, in fact at first we couldn't put our names on the door to practice law. We finished in July but we had to wait for the Bar

results. The class was small. I've got something I'll show you when we take a break. It was our class, but it was put out by the Arkansas Bar and not by the University. It had nineteen of us taking it. I assume all nineteen of us took the exam and sixteen of them were from the Fayetteville law school. There was two from Vanderbilt's, and it seemed to me—we'll see, but…—Yale or wherever. Most people wanted a job with a firm and in those days it wasn't that difficult. Now, there's so many lawyers coming out of the two schools plus from out of state that a lot of folks feel lucky to get employed within nine months. That's when they find out how many have a job—they say nine months. Anyway, we had decided we were going to do this, but we sat there and looked at each other for a while. Bryce's Cafeteria, famous for a long time—we were having lunch over there, where we usually did, and I was paged to the telephone. Phil Dixon [Philip E. Dixon] was in our class, one of about five or six who entered in January, because that was out of step.

ED: So Philip Dixon was in your class as well?

JS: Yes.

ED: Dover and Dixon, I guess.

JS: Yes.

ED: A law firm in Little Rock later.

JS: Exactly. I knew Phil through high school and then at Hendrix, you know. He went in the Navy. I mean I've known him since high school. But he paged me to tell me that we had passed the Bar. The way it was first done was to post it at the clerk's office at the Justice

Building. Later, the next day I assume, the paper would have it. But he gave us the call so we were just elated and could now put our names on the door and practice law, even though we didn't get a stampede of clients and Marietta taught school, the fifth grade.

ED: Now, she graduated about the same time you did?

JS: Same time, yes.

ED: In education?

JS: Yes. We both had part-time jobs at least that last year. She worked for the dean of women and I worked for Professor John Anderson. Dr. Anderson had been one of my teachers at Hendrix and I took two of his psychology courses, but now he was in Fayetteville. He hired me to show films, mainly, I think, to show films to his class and also to grade papers, and that was nice. We had the GI Bill, which I think was like maybe ninety or ninety-five dollars a month, and when we married it went to maybe a hundred and ten or fifteen dollars—something like that. We never felt destitute; it didn't cost us much to get by. But we passed the Bar and we began practicing. As a sidelight to that, it was late September when we got the word and we both thought it was unfair. If you're going with a firm you went to work in July and you just didn't practice alone. If you went to court you had somebody else in the firm go with you. It discriminated against those who were going to practice solo or do what we did, start a partnership, and it happened that that year Willis B. Smith, Sr. was president of the Bar [Association].

ED: This is the Arkansas Bar or Miller County Bar?

JS: Arkansas Bar.

ED: Arkansas Bar.

JS: We would never have gone to him except we had passed. We went to him and told him we thought it was unfair. It discouraged people. Many graduates want to go to bright-light cities, but really there was a great need in towns smaller than Texarkana that had a need for lawyers. It discouraged that. He agreed with us and he took it to the Board of Governors or whatever they called it in those days. The Bar petitioned the Arkansas Supreme Court to do something about it, and the Supreme Court did. They doubled the number of law examiners and the way they graded papers. When we took it, graders would take their papers home, the questions that they were to grade, and whoever was the slowest grader when he finished that's when they could add them all up and see who passed and publish it. But the Supreme Court new rule was all of these examiners will meet at the Arlington Hotel the next day or two days or whatever, almost immediately after the Bar exam, and stay there until everyone finished. For a few years, people would get their Bar results the week following when they took the exams. I think it would've stayed like that except multi-state came along where everybody on the same day takes the same test all over the United States. Grading was done by machines, but it slowed it down, not for as long as it had been before, but much longer than getting grades the following week. So that was our contribution to the law students of the future, for a while. Anyway, we practiced there and we decided we did need some more income.

ED: Do you remember your first case, the first one that walked through the door?

JS: Well, actually the first – no I don't. I remember the first real incident. Lawyers then didn't have public defenders, at least not in our part of the State. But we all would go to court, circuit court, on plea day and then the judge would have a list and call you in and assign you to defend this indigent defendant. The first day we went over there… We had already been sworn in by the Supreme Court, and we were such a small class (all of them were) that after your swearing in you would have a sit-down dinner with the Supreme Court justices. Years later, they'd fill up the courtroom with two groups. There's so many they just don't do that anymore. Maybe they have coffee and cookies in the hall or something. Anyway, we had been sworn in. We were lawyers, but the first time we went to court Lyle Brown, later on the Supreme Court, was our circuit judge.

ED: From Hope?

JS: Uh-huh, from Hope. He typically—and most places did this—had a ceremonial swearing in locally. There wasn't any new certificate or anything but you were presented and sworn in. After the swearing in was all done, he started calling cases. He called one, a murder case, and he called Hayes [laughing] with Charlie Wine, who was an older lawyer but who didn't do any criminal practice. He did civil work. He called them in to go meet with the client. They had a little room where you could do that. When he came back, I've forgotten, he said go get a law book, for all either one of us knew it was going to go to trial that afternoon or tomorrow. See what the range of punishment is and so forth and other elements of it. That was the most memorable but it happened really to Hayes.

ED: But they didn't go to trial the next day, did they?

JS: No, no, no. It would be a month or two or three or whatever. We had very few clients at first and we were looking for income. Leroy Autrey was the City Attorney of Texarkana, Arkansas and I had known him from church, First Methodist. He had decided he was going to step down at the end of his term about a year and a half later. He hired me to do the court work and he did the meetings with the City Council and other matters. My payment was small, but it was regular. Hayes was targeting the office of State Representative. The incumbent, J. O. Moore, was going to run for the State Senate so Hayes was going to run for state representative. He knew he was going to have an opponent who had already announced, but nobody had spoken up about Leroy's position. It paid me a pittance but it was court, constant, you know, and you pick up some clients. So I was going to run for his seat.

JS: I decided to run for City Attorney.

ED: City attorney.

JS: And so the way we did it –

ED: So City Attorney was an elected office then?

JS: It was elected office then. The way we did it I filed and if I got an opponent Hayes wasn't going to file so that we didn't both have an opponent and both try to practice law while running in a contested race. If filed, and on the last day to file, my dad went with us to the clerk's office sitting in the hall. About five minutes ahead of time nobody had filed against me so Hayes filed and we both ran. I ran unopposed and Hays won his election so we both had a salary, which wasn't much but it was something and it was regular.

ED: The legislature in those days—that would've been probably 1962, '64?

JS: It would've been '60.

ED: 1960?

JS: Yes.

ED: I think a House member back in that time would've been paid about – it might've just been $1,200 a year.

JS: That sounds about right.

ED: I think it was $1,200 a year at that time.

JS: Yeah, that sounds about right.

ED: Right.

JS: And they got some expense money.

ED: Yeah.

JS: And living expenses and mileage.

ED: Yeah, you got per diem when they were in session or in committee meetings in Little Rock and you got your mileage back and forth.

JS: Yeah.

ED: And some expenses as well.

JS: But, anyway, those two together were helpful and then we began to get more—some exposure from running.

ED: Yeah, sure.

JS: And business was picking up.

ED: Do you remember your salary as city attorney?

JS: No, I remember Leroy Autrey paid me fifty dollars a month to go to court every morning, but that wasn't the point. I was at least in the courthouse and meeting people.

ED: Yeah.

JS: I think the job paid probably two hundred fifty dollars, but I really don't remember. Everything was going along pretty smoothly and my wife was pregnant, so she was going to have to probably lay out a semester from teaching.

ED: She was teaching fifth grade?

JS: Fifth grade.

ED: In a Texarkana elementary school.

JS: Texarkana, Arkansas, schools and had majored in education.

ED: Elementary education.

JS: Elementary education. So any rate, Hayes and I were going pretty much every year duck hunting together up at Stuttgart at a duck camp of Billy Murphy from Shreveport. He wasn't a lawyer. He was in the oil-drilling business. At any rate, we were going up there. A fellow we knew—Hayes knew him longer I suppose—was named Fred Coleman. You may remember him, he was a lobbyist.

ED: Lobbyist for the railroads.

JS: That's right.

ED: Missouri Pacific probably.

JS: Yes. It could be Cotton Belt, too, but anyway he was a lobbyist apparently in Washington. During the [legislative] session he was very much at the legislature. He approached Hayes and me and said Senator McClellan was looking for a young lawyer who can work for him in Washington and he knows of you both. Are either of you interested? Well, Hayes immediately said no and I really wasn't interested. But I just thought it would be great to go meet him and, you know, be square with him. So Fred set it up and we went out on our duck hunt. On the way back I met with him. They didn't have an office then in Little Rock for U.S. Senators. They later did in the Federal Building on Fifth Street [Capitol Avenue].

ED: He had an office at that time probably with Ham Moses [C. Hamilton Moses].

JS: Right, he was a good friend. Moses and McDermott.

ED: Pyramid Building or the Union Life Building, I forget which.

JS: Moses McDermott and so forth.

ED: Yes.

JS: So that's where I met with him. I told him, "I've just been elected city attorney and I'm really not looking for a job but I wanted to meet you." I reviewed everything pretty much with him, thanked him and left. Then he called about two weeks later and said he wanted me to come work for him. I kind of gulped. But I said, "Well I'll have to talk with my wife and my law partner and get back to you. When are you talking about?" He said, "Now." So I talked with both of them. In the meantime Texarkana, Arkansas had a vote

and was changing from mayor-council to city-manager form of government. The mayor—I say the mayor: the man who had been selected to be the first mayor under the city manager form—had asked me to chair the matter and I was all for it, having a city-manager form of government. I did chair it and it did pass, not because I was chaired it. I was not opposed at all, although I had been elected. Anyway, right at the first of the year when I was going to be appointed the first appointed city attorney, this call [from McClellan] came so we talked about that and decided that it [the McClellan job] wasn't forever and it was a rare opportunity and that I should do it. Take a leave of absence but I'm coming back. So that's what happened. At the same time when the new city manager form came, they had pre-selected people [to be the first city directors]. I won't name them all but they all were outstanding business people in Texarkana, Arkansas.

ED: They were going to run for the city board?

JS: Well, yes.

ED: City manager board?

JS: That's right. And they did and all unopposed. I mean they were just top flight. But I explained that I could not serve. One of that group was Alex Sanderson, who was Willis Smith's law partner. His office was there in the same building. Meantime, his son, B. Smith—he's Willis B. Smith, Jr.—had finished and gone in with them. But Alex was going to be on the city board so he could not be there with his law partner being a director. So that worked perfectly. B. came and met with Hayes and just had my desk, chair and office. So that happened and I went to Washington. I remember Marietta was

too far pregnant to drive up. Her doctor said to fly so I drove up in a snowstorm. I got to Alabama and the state troopers had the road blocked. I got out and he said, “Alabama is closed.”

ED: [Laughing]

JS: [Laughing] I said, “What do you mean?” So I backed up and went north. It was a Southern storm and it took one extra day but I got there on Sunday and checked into the Carroll Arms, which was a little hotel right next door. They had just two Senate office buildings, the old Senate Office Building and the new, and they called it Old SOB and New SOB. That’s what the push carts and everything said. They hadn’t named them after Dirksen and Russell at that point.

ED: Russell, yeah.

JS: So I checked into Carroll Arms, where he had told me there’d be a reservation. There was a note from him that said come over to my office next door, on a Sunday. I thought, what in the world! But I went over and there were several working. I guess pretty much it was unusual; that wasn’t the norm. I went over there and met everybody and went to work. It was one of those special matches, the senator and I. We just hit it off right and I loved it. He had an administrative assistant named Ralph Matthews, who’d been with him since he went to the Senate; he’d been a clothing salesman in Jonesboro until that campaign and then went with him to D.C. He wasn’t with him when McClellan was in the House but went with him when he went to the Senate.

ED: Now Buddy Whitaker [P.W. “Buddy” Whitaker] was not there at that time?

JS: Not yet, no. Ralph Matthews was the only AA he'd ever had. He had had some changes in the L.A., the legislative assistant.

ED: And you were going to be a legislative assistant.

JS: Legislative assistant. There was one there, but he [McClellan] just put me in there with him and he left within a few months and went to Ways and Means [Committee] over on the House side where [Wilbur D.] Mills was. I hadn't been there but a week, I guess, and he took me over to the Capitol and got me floor privileges. It was a tag or a badge or whatever, which meant that I could just walk onto the Senate floor. They had a few chairs in the back and I would sit there. Or I could go in the cloakroom where they were talking and visiting. It was most interesting to just listen and watch, you know. As the time passed, he would tell me to go listen to the debate on a bill. It's the same now. There are very few Senator's who would go and listen to debates. They're busy and with the committee meetings and office work, et cetera. I got to know his views, so sometimes he would just say, "Am I for this?" Not on anything real technical but something where I knew he would be if he had heard all of the debate. I only stayed a year and half. He had told me he wanted me to be his next administrative assistant and that Ralph was going to retire a year from the following December. I first said great and then after serious reflection, I changed my mind. I was really pulled because what a great opportunity it would be. I felt if I did that I'd be with him as long as he was there. I felt he was going to serve until he died. That first fall he brought me to Little Rock with him. By then he had gotten an office in the Federal Building, so that's where we both had an office and shared

a secretary. One day he had me drive him, Mrs. McClellan and his daughter to Eden Isle. He was going to very seriously look at building a place to retire—so he could come to Little Rock to the old law firm for a day or two a week but live up there. Well, I felt he wasn't going to do it. But he looked, and a fellow that developed the thing was giving him… I know his name but I can't recall his name. He had a big entry into his house with a lot on either side available. He told him [McClellan] he could have either one he wanted. But it didn't go, it didn't fly. So I was pulled, because I felt if I stayed very long I'd be there. He didn't retire or die. I hadn't practiced law but a cupful, and the people I knew who went—there was one from Texarkana named Bob Lowe, who went with Senator Fulbright and stayed all of Fulbright's career and stayed there. The second thing was that my father had died suddenly after we moved to Washington and my mother was living alone. When we moved from Fayetteville, we had bought a small house on the same block as my parent's home to be close. We had our first born up there, the second month. I didn't want to raise children there. We were in Alexandria, Virginia. The traffic was horrible from my office to home via Shirley Highway. It was just really a nightmare. You had to not try to go home at five. You wait until six-thirty and maybe it will ease a little. At any rate, I knew if I knew it would likely be permanent, even though it didn't have to be. I just had seen it happen and heard of it happening. So I told him I just needed to go. At the same time, a collateral consideration was that Smith and Sanderson had made a proposal to Hayes McClerkin and B. Smith and me that they wanted the three of

us to come in with the firm because they had just always been partners. They'd never had…

ED: And this is Willis Smith?

JS: And Alex Sanderson.

ED: The first name?

JS: Oh, it's A-L-E-X.

ED: A-L-E-X, OK.

JS: I'm sure that's Alexander but he never went by anything except Alex. I thought they were the best law firm on the Arkansas side. They had a good practice and were well respected and all of that. So was reluctant but feeling it was the best thing to do. I told the senator I just had to go back. I did, and we went in together. They were expanding their offices. I was with them from then until… The firm is still there, but the names have changed. Both Smith and Sanderson later became judges, chancery judges, and Smith for a short time had retired and Sanderson seventeen or maybe twenty years retired.

ED: So it was the four of you?

JS: Five, Willis, his son, Willis B.

ED: OK, Willis B. and Willis Jr.

JS: Yes, two Smiths, Alex Sanderson, Hayes McClerkin and me.

ED: B. Smith.

JS: Willis Jr.'s love wasn't really of the law. He was appointed by [Governor] David Pryor to come [to Little Rock] to be head of the Alcoholic Beverage Control Board and then he

was offered the one that he really loved, being the head of the Department of Public Safety, DPS.

ED: Yes.

JS: He loved that job and did it until David left. Of course, that's when whoever's governor is going to put his own person in, almost always. So he came back after that and really didn't like the practice of law. So he just left and went to work for a construction company, the biggest and best in town, to go check on jobs, be a supervisor, help with bids and all that, until he retired. But he never practiced law again. So it was Smith, Sanderson, Stroud and McClerkin. Stroud and McClerkin versus McClerkin and Stroud was the flip of a coin. B. Smith had a silver dollar that we flipped to pick which name was first and I have the silver dollar in a little frame with our stationary that says Stroud and McClerkin right with it. At any rate, from there we grew. At one time we had ten to twelve, something in that range.

ED: So that merger would have been 1960?

JS: No, I went up in '62 and this was halfway through '63.

ED: All right.

JS: When I came back, the merger was just the five of us. We went several years and then it began to grow.We never had any additions except who I've just mentioned until we hired a lawyer and from there and going on the bench and so forth we grew by adding lawyers.

ED: Before I forget, you mentioned that in Washington there was a second child, so maybe this is a good point to be sure we cover it. You had three children overall, right?

JS: I had three children; the only one born in Washington was my son John.

ED: All right, let's go back and get all three children right here.

JS: OK, John Fred Stroud III and he goes by John.

ED: He's the second child?

JS: He's the first child.

ED: He's the first child?

JS: He's the one born up there.

ED: All right, he was born up there, all right.

JS: Yeah in Washington D.C., at the Washington Hospital Center. And then the other two were born in Texarkana. My middle child is Kimball Stroud.

ED: K-I-M?

JS: Anne Kimball, Marietta's maiden name.

ED: OK.

JS: K-I-M-B-A-L-L.

ED: OK.

JS: But she goes by her middle name, she goes by Kimball. And then Tracy Steel Stroud, Steel from my family.

ED: Right.

JS: And Tracy. I picked the Tracy. I just like it but otherwise it pretty much was family-oriented names. John is three years older than his sister Kimball and Tracey is a year and half younger than her sister.

ED: OK.

JS: Which meant at one point all three were in Fayetteville at the same time. Jack Meriwether [John T. Meriwether, Texarkana city manager and later vice president of the University of Arkansas for governmental relations] came to the house and said the chancellor had sent a tie for me to wear. A suit tie "University of Arkansas" for my…

ED: For your contributions.

JS: Sacrificial expenditures, you know.

ED: Yeah.

JS: That's when he was with the University of Arkansas. But that was pretty much the firm. When I went on the Supreme Court I took a year's leave of absence.

ED: Yes.

JS: And then the same thing, except when I went on the Court of Appeals it turned out to be nine years.

ED: Right.

JS: I decided I would not go back and try to pick up… In one year I had the same clients waiting for me.

ED: Sure.

JS: I wrote memos on all the files but at that stage I didn't try to…

ED: Well let's talk about what kind of law you practiced. I guess at a law firm like that in Texarkana you practiced every kind of law.

JS: Well, certainly in the beginning we did. We'd do plaintiff's work, not much defense because they'd rather have a little older lawyer, but some. We handled pretty much every kind of case. I don't remember ever handling a criminal case for hire. I was appointed a number of times but I don't remember ever having one for hire. The biggest change happened when Alex Sanderson became a judge. His business was mainly oil and gas and estate work. As between Hayes and me, I did more estate work than oil and gas, and Hayes vice versa. So we decided it was too good a business and two such fine clients if we could keep them, so we decided he would do oil and gas and I would do estate work. That's what we did and specialized. I went to Dallas and took a one-week course in estate planning. I was doing it but still I'd never had comprehensive training. Hayes was very much involved in the oil and gas business, did a lot of work before the [Oil and Gas] Commission. I was later admitted to what was then called American College of Probate Counsel. The name was changed, same organization, a number of years later to American College of Trust and Estate Counsel and I served as Arkansas Chairman for several years. Trusts and estates were more what it was than probate—the planning rather than the court proceeding after death.

ED: Yes.

JS: But it involved all. Hayes was a Commissioner on the Oil and Gas Commission at one point but did a lot of practice before them. In my case I had another specialty that took a lot of time. It was parallel at the same time and that was water. It got started I believe because I had worked for Senator McClellan so after I came back, I ended up

representing the levee and drainage districts in southwest Arkansas on the Red River. All of them hired me to be their attorney. What it basically involved was to try to get funding for river projects. The river caved badly, but setbacks and revetments were built and there was long-range planning, hoping to become navigable some day and build horseshoe cut-offs.

ED: Right.

JS: We worked toward the desalination of the river and funding these projects. So I began to go to Washington for the hearings once a year. I ended up going twenty-five years in a row and would have longer except when I went on the Court of Appeals I couldn't, so I resigned. I was president then of the Red River Commission, which was the four states of Louisiana, Arkansas, Texas, and Oklahoma. I was president of that probably for five years, when I resigned to go on the Court of Appeals. The year I was on the Supreme Court I just skipped going to Washington.

ED: Right.

JS: And had somebody else do it. It involved other things with water. I was on the Lake Texoma Board, and I was put on the compact commission between Arkansas and Oklahoma on the Red River.

ED: The Red River Compact?

JS: Yes, Compact Commission. It never really functioned, but I was on it for a short time. So water, I guess you could say, was my other specialty. Arkansas had a Water Code Study Commission and I was appointed to that. We met a bunch of times. It was to come up

with a code trying to see that when the water that went down [downstream], whether it be the Red River, the Arkansas River, the White River or whatever and water wells that we didn't drain them all dry so that there's none left for the kids and grandkids. And [to see that] upstream didn't use all the water and the folks downstream suffer. We met, worked and came up with a product that basically required registration so that the usage in times of shortage would be metered and allocated based upon need—not want but need. And the same with water wells. I don't remember the details of that as much, but you couldn't just deplete an aquifer. And they were being depleted. They had tests that could tell that. I was vice chairman. The big meeting occurred during the legislative session—February probably, cold and rainy—and the Arkansas Farm Bureau sent out notices to all of their members. "If you don't want to lose your water rights, you come to this room in the Capitol" on such and such a date.

ED: That was the end of that.

JS: Well, I remember going in there and we had to step over them to get over to where we were to sit. I was chairman of the Water Rights Committee and [state Representative Joseph K.] "Jodie" Mahony was on it and was a great member. There were a lot of good people on it. We had two law professors who were assigned to advise us and who came to all of our meetings. They were Jake Looney and Howard Brill, both of whom later were Deans of the Law School at Fayetteville. At any rate, the objection of the Farm Bureau was that it has to be locally controlled. I remember meeting with them and talking with them saying, "If it's locally controlled, it does nothing for the current problem. The ones

that have the water, the upstreamers, can locally decide we're going to use this and use it all." That's totally incompatible with the purpose of it. And it got beat—not badly—but it got narrowly beat.

ED: You mean before the study commission?

JS: The legislature.

ED: Oh, the legislature, right.

JS: No, the commission was solidly for it.

ED: Yes.

JS: But not the legislature, and I think it was the House.

ED: Did it go before the full House or did it get killed in a committee?

JS: No, it was before the full.

ED: Full House.

JS: Full House.

ED: I remember the fight but I just don't remember much about it.

JS: I don't remember the vote but I know that it was not a stomping but it lost.

ED: This would've been in the '80s, right?

JS: Yes.

ED: Bill Clinton was governor?

JS: Probably. I think he was.

ED: I don't know whether it was David Pryor. It sounds like it would've been.

JS: Yeah, it was right in that era. Anyway, the Arkansas Soil and Water Conservation Commission a few months afterward hired me to come in and work with them on how far could they go with regulations and not legislation. So we worked out a program that they slowly, methodically implemented by regulations. It took some steps in that regard, registering the use of water. I don't know what happened really after that, but that was sort of the end of my water business.

ED: You said in recent years you've seen some effects of not having passed it.

JS: Oh yes.

ED: Over in the rice-growing country where they're having terrible problems.

JS: Oh yes, and trying to cut canals to move water.

ED: Yeah. Now they're depending on federal money to come in so they can pump water to all the Grand Prairie.

ED: Let's take a quick break here and let you rest your voice a little bit.

ED: All right. We're back after a short break. Judge, is there anything else to say about your McClellan years, that year and a half that you were with John McClellan and perhaps even afterward.

JS: I was given so many opportunities and saw so many things mainly because Senator McClellan really didn't like socializing and going to parties and neither did Ralph Matthews. He had done about all of that he had wanted. So they were things that he would be invited to and where they wanted his presence. So Marietta and I would go or I

would, depending on what it was. I really didn't have anything to do with his noted committee, the Special Committee on Investigations.

ED: Rackets, the so-called Rackets Committee.

JS: Right, yes. But it was interesting and I would go to those hearings. I mean not all of them but sit in a little bit. While I was there he had the Billie Sol Estes hearings. He had the TFX hearings and the hearings about AGVA [American Guild of Variety Artists], which was the union of the movie stars, and I would sit in on a little of that. I remember Penny Singleton, who played Daisy in the Daisy and Dagwood movies, was a witness that I watched.

ED: The [Jimmy] Hoffa hearings?

JS: The Hoffa hearings were over.

ED: Hoffa was over by that time.

JS: Hoffa had been over, but I remember him [McClellan] pointing out to me the building where Hoffa had his office. It was across a park about two blocks away, so it was just trees and lawn and the building where Hoffa put his office where he could look out his window and see McClellan's window. He showed me where that was, but those [the Hoffa hearings] were over by the time I got there. I had good friends on the Committee on Investigations. In fact, I had a weekly golf game and one of them [the golfers] was one of their main investigators. His name was Laverne J. Duffy, but he just went by Duffy. The other was a roommate at Hendrix. I knew him in high school—named Bob Stinnett, who was the Comptroller for Southern Railroad. The third was Mickey Ragland. His wife

was Senator McClellan's personal secretary, so we played every week. But because they didn't like to go to many things we [he and Marietta] went to so many receptions that we wouldn't have otherwise gone to. He had tickets to the All-Star baseball game when we were there. Of course, that's when they had the Washington Senators, so we got to see those. The Gala [fund-raising birthday gala for President John F. Kennedy in 1962] was a big deal. He didn't want to go, so Marietta and I went to that. That's the one where Marilyn Monroe sang [lilting voice] "Happy Birthday Mr. President."

ED: Oh really?

JS: Happy birthday, so we got to hear that.

ED: You were there?

JS: Yeah, we were there.

ED: A famous incident now.

JS: Yes but many of those things.

ED: We should point out,parenthetically, that she [Marilyn Monroe] allegedly was having an affair with the president at that time, right?

JS: Certainly allegedly, yes.

ED: Whether that's true or not who knows?

JS: Right. And with Bobby [Attorney General Robert Kennedy], too, at least allegedly.

ED: Well yeah. (Laughing)

JS: Even years later, after I had worked for him, the big game, the 1969 Razorbacks versus the Longhorns for the National Championship.

JS: Instead of sitting in his seats, which were next to [former U.S. Representative and by then U.S. District Judge] Oren Harris and Beth Harris, he was to sit with [President Richard] Nixon, who was coming in by helicopter. He was with [U.S. Representative John Paul] Hammerschmidt, and several were there. But he gave me his tickets, so we sat with Judge and Mrs. Harris. That was the biggest game in the history of the Razorbacks, I guess. It was the hundredth anniversary of football, and after the entire season was over, Army – Navy game everything was over except that heartbreaking game. In such a short time, when I look back, there were so many things that happened. One time he was to make a speech—not a speech but remarks—at a breakfast meeting in Shreveport at the Red River Valley Association. He had me go in his place and I made the remarks on his behalf. So much happened in such a short time. Those were just irreplaceable times.

ED: Now, was Richard Arnold up there the same time you were?

JS: Yes. Richard was with Covington and Burling, which was then and may still be the largest law firm in D.C. I would meet Richard for lunch now and then.

ED: So you already knew Richard from Texarkana?

JS: Oh, I knew Richard from Texarkana and we had even been in lawsuits. The one I remember the most, I was with him and not against him. He was fabulous, bright, bright. You know, he writes—everything is printed and he can print as fast as I can write and take great notes. We tried a couple of big lawsuits together in Washington. He took me by his office and I met his officemate. That was a shock to me. There were two of them with one office. I thought, well there's no privacy. But he would be working a year

maybe on an antitrust case where he wasn't meeting with people all day. He was researching and writing and planning and studying and going. He did things like that. One day at lunch he said, "You know, I'm going to go back to Texarkana and I'm going to run for something. I'm going to get in politics." I said, "Well, good deal, I'm going to be going back, too." So, sure enough, he did and ran for Congress twice. I remember driving him to places to make talks.

ED: He ran in 1966 and 1972.

JS: Yes. And I remember one of them was against David Pryor. Pryor called me before the election [in 1966]. I'd been in school with David. He was in Fayetteville when I went to law school; he was an undergraduate at the time. He was a good friend and I had to tell him, "David, I love you, but I can't do this. I've worked for him and I've got to support McClellan, and I'm going to." One time [1972] Ray Thornton called me and he was running against Richard. I had to tell him the same thing. "Ray, I mean anything but this. This is my hometown, man. I've got to support him [Arnold]." And they both forgave me and we went ahead many years being friends.

ED: Well David Pryor always forgives. He doesn't hold grudges.

JS: Oh yeah, oh yeah.

ED: So in 1966 you had to make a choice between David Pryor and Richard Arnold.

JS: Well, I had to go with Richard.

ED: For Congress, sure.

JS: I mean there was no other way. So Richard was a friend and his younger brother Buzz [Morris H. Arnold] was young enough that we didn't have the same association.

ED: Did he practice law in Texarkana? Did Buzz?

JS: Yes.

ED: Not much though.

JS: There was a firm called Arnold and Arnold that goes back to their grandparents, but when he was there practicing I was either on the court or not there much while he was there. I really not there a lot while Richard was. But Buzz was a good friend and is a good friend. I went to his investiture when he became a federal district judge and when he became a Circuit Court of Appeals judge [for the Eighth Circuit] and the same for Richard. I had a special honor about a year ago when I was asked to come to St. Louis. They wanted an Arkansas attorney. The the Bar president called said they talked about several people but they wanted me to go present Buzz Arnold. This was the Circuit Court of Appeals Historical Society. So I did, I went up and I researched it and I presented him. We've been friends through the years, but I just don't see him very often. I can't think of anything else specifically on McClellan other than… Well, each year those twenty-five, as long as he was alive and even with Kaneaster [Kaneaster Hodges of Newport, who was appointed by Governor Pryor to succeed McClellan after McClellan's death in November 1977] right after him, I would always make a call to him and Fulbright or Bumpers or whomever about the water. They had the hearings but I would always go see them. I remember going always even over to [Congressman John Paul] Hammerschmidt, even

though his district ended north of us. We gave him a plaque one time because he always supported us on the Red River funding. And Senator McClellan would add to the president's budget money for the Red River almost every time. Then, of course, it would go to a conference committee where they would iron our differences but it kept the projects alive. Finally, the entire Red River and Arkansas were stabilized and the cutoffs performed, all in keeping with long-range plans for navigation. They've had several feasibility studies and it always comes up short. Then the cost of construction keeps going up and of late there's no money appropriated because of the fractiousness up in the Congress and shortage of money.

ED: Not likely to be any funding for some years now until we get past this.

JS: No, that's right, that's exactly right.

ED: This stalemate.

JS: Exactly right. One thing I didn't mention. I mentioned that when Hayes and I began we decided we needed some more money, so we got our two elected jobs. The other thing was we needed some exposure, so we both became active in whatever or whoever wanted us. I remember the first one: The superintendent of the schools in [Texarkana] Arkansas asked me to be on the Visiting Nursing Association [board], which I knew nothing about and had no particular interest in. But I went on it and from there became active in civic things through the years. But the incentive was exposure, because we didn't even think about running an ad of any kind; in fact, nobody did in those days.

ED: It was considered unethical in those days.

JS: Yes, I remember when the U.S. Supreme Court said it's OK. I told Mari this is the beginning of the end of law as a profession and the beginning of law as a business, and I still have that feeling. The meaning was that people were entitled to the information, you know. They had good arguments on both sides, but the old school, which I'm a member of…

ED: First Amendment, freedom of speech, [was the new argument].

JS: Absolutely.

ED: Freedom of speech and association, yes.

JS: But we both got into various activities.

ED: Now how did you get to know Jack Meriwether, who came down to be city manager in the early '60s, I guess, or mid-60s.

JS: Yeah, that's right. He was our second city manager. The first one had been there only a short time. So Jack came about the time we had gotten back from Washington. I didn't know him. I didn't know of him even, but he got to town and called and said Phil Anderson, his friend, had told him to call me and had given him the phone number. So I met him, we became very close friends with he and Peggy the whole time there and afterward, but a great guy. One time I had to take a week off. I had some bleeding in my belly so we went to the lake. He took off and went with us. We went over to a drugstore in Glenwood and bought a Monopoly set and we sat and played Monopoly. He reminded me of this through the years: He wouldn't trade, he wouldn't act right, and one day I just dumped the whole Monopoly board on his lap. [Laughing]

ED: [Laughing]

JS: "Oh you poor sport. You're the one that won't play fair."

ED: [Laughing] Well, that was a controversial four or five years, I guess, when he was city manager in Texarkana.

JS: Well, right.

ED: Kind of a tumultuous time.

JS: We became a model city. Tom McRae. He brought Tom McRae in to head that up and there were some, yeah, bumps along the way. Jack had great foresight. They had widened one of our main streets by the school but not nearly wide enough, so he came along later and widened it. When he would build a street he did it with a view to the future. I think, well, it was the smoothest. You obviously read about some of the recent feuds between the Arkansas side and Texas side in Texarkana, but he ran such a great ship. The Texas-side city manager was a guy named Howard Willingham. They had gone to school together, city manager school in Kansas, I believe it was, and were good friends. I think they were in each other's weddings. So we couldn't have had a tenure of more cooperation, and it was just great. I think that was the first time they had ever met together socially. It was out to dinner and, you know, there were no formal presentations or arguments—just a get-acquainted type thing. That was really fine, but Jack and Peggy came to the lake other times. We had stayed at their home both of the places they lived here. We just have been good friends and I was so saddened by Jack's death earlier this year.

ED: I should point out for the record that he stayed at Texarkana for about five years as city manager and then came to Little Rock for about five years as city manager.

JS: He had been assistant city manager there.

ED: Yes.

JS: That is where we got him.

ED: Right. He had been assistant city manager in Little Rock, went to Texarkana for five years, came back and was city manager of Little Rock for about five years and then did a stint…

JS: He went back to Paragould.

ED: Went back to Paragould, was a banker, then he came to Little Rock again as a general manager.

JS: For the *Gazette*.

ED: For the *Arkansas Gazette* and then the last period of his life, I guess, he was vice president for governmental relations for the University of Arkansas. Anyway, he was just a great man. He died three or four months ago, something like that.

JS: Yeah, exactly.

ED: All right. Well, your partner Hayes McClerkin ran for governor in 1970.

JS: Right.

ED: He was the speaker of the House of Representatives, and ran for governor in that famous race when Dale Bumpers [won].

JS: Uh-huh.

ED: Were you pretty active in that campaign?

JS: Well, to the extent I could because I was trying to hold down the law-practice fort, but I spent a fair amount of time in his headquarters here. I remember spending several days in Fayetteville doing a lot of things, including handing out pamphlets at shopping malls and so forth. When he lost I was the one that was with him and stayed that night after the results came in. We went to see a movie to get his mind off everything. Then we went back and finished loading up stuff the next day and went back to Texarkana. I would've been more time-involved but for trying to hold our two law practices together. I went to speaking events and, you know, did what time would let me do.

ED: Unfortunately, he chose the year to run when this…

JS: Oh yeah.

ED: …this charismatic figure comes out of nowhere named Dale Bumpers from Charleston, dead last in an eight-man race, and comes on to win.

JS: Absolutely.

ED: And beats Orval Faubus and beats Rockefeller and beats Fulbright and has a spectacular career. Otherwise I think Hayes McClerkin might— it would've been either him or Joe Purcell.

JS: I agree.

ED: It's hard to say who would've been elected.

JS: I agree.

ED: Without that happening. You mentioned the other races. I guess in 1972 you had to be some divided allegiance between your old friend David Pryor and John L. McClellan, whom you obviously felt indebted to, to support. That kind of covers it. What about Bill Clinton? Were you a supporter of Bill Clinton?

JS: Yes. I met him when he was running for attorney general and he came to Texarkana.

ED: In 1974.

JS: Yeah, we had a mutual friend who invited Marietta and me to go to dinner and dancing at a nightclub with him and another couple. That's when I met him and visited with him. I liked him and supported him when he ran. I had, you know, several contacts with him. He appointed me to the Supreme Court and I wouldn't have been there but for his appointment.

ED: Well, let's talk about that. This would've been in 19…?

JS: January. He called me at home in the end of '79.

ED: All right, so in late '79 [Chief Justice] Carleton Harris retired. He was ill and retired.

JS: That's right.

ED: A longtime chief justice of the Arkansas Supreme Court. He retired and Governor Clinton appointed John Fogleman, who was already on the court, to move over and take his position as chief justice.

JS: Right.

ED: Which left a vacancy in John Fogleman's seat. Fogleman had another year on his term.

JS: Yes.

ED: So he appointed you to fill that.

JS: That's correct.

ED: To fill out that term for Justice Fogleman.

JS: And similar to the McClellan call, he called me at home and said he wanted to appoint me to the Arkansas Supreme Court. It would be a one-year term and I said, "Well, Bill, I appreciate it but before I say yes I've got to talk to my wife and talk to my law partners." I did and we all decided that it was one of those things if you can afford to go you've got to go. I certainly wasn't flush, but you make more practicing law in a good law practice then you do on the court. I called him back and said "Yes, I'd be pleased to" and I did. The strange thing is that that the only time I ever got upset with Jack Meriwether was when I was appointed to the Supreme Court. [Justice] Conley Byrd, who used that same opportunity [to retire], so there was going to be three changes on the court because of his ill health. He had been in three car wrecks and had injured his back. It was painful all the time. He wrote his opinions from a standup desk, so he was retiring at the same time. Richard [L.] Mays [of Little Rock] going to be was appointed the same day to his [Byrd's] seat, which had one year remaining. So Bill said this will be announced in the Governor's…

ED: Conference room.

JS: Conference room, right there near the office. He said, you know, get any friends you want to come and I said fine. Basically, it was my family, my law partners and my secretary who had been with Hayes and me since the first year. The only other one I think

I called was I called here [Little Rock] for Jack and Peggy [Meriwether]. I talked with Peggy— either Marietta or I did—and Jack was with Hugh Patterson [publisher of the Arkansas Gazette] in some meeting in New York or whatever so we said, "Well, come if you can at whatever it was, ten o'clock or whatever, at the Governor's Conference Room. It wasn't but a short time after that that Jack called me. "Congratulations," he said. "I'm going to have someone call you from the paper…" I can't think right now, but I think I said, "I Don't you dare, Jack. The governor is announcing this tomorrow and I don't want you ruining that." He said, "Let me tell you. This is the newspaper business. If this were bad news I would suppress it, but it's good news and the *Democrat* doesn't know about it. We're going to run it tomorrow." I said, "Don't you dare."

ED: [Laughing]

JS: I said, "If you do, I'm going to decline." Well, that didn't work.

ED: He knew better than that.

JS: So, anyway, next day it [the *Gazette*] had that I was being appointed. It was pretty much certain that Fogleman was being appointed and it was unknown who the other one would be. It just teed me off something horrible.

ED: Well, good for Jack, though.

JS: Yeah, good for Jack.

ED: He was a newspaper guy.

JS: But he said if this was bad news that would be one thing but this is good news. I knew that the only reason he knew was because I was inviting him to come hear the announcement.

ED: [Laughing]

JS: Anyway, I didn't see Bill Clinton much during that year. He came to Texarkana once while serving as governor and stayed at the house with us. There was a party that we were going to and he was also going, a pool party at somebody's house, and he stayed with us. I met Hillary way before Bill was running for governor. She came to an Arkansas Bar Foundation Board meeting. The board met once a year in June at the Bar and she was teaching in Fayetteville and was asking for some money, which she got. I saw them together that night at this place out on Lake Hamilton, a dinner place, a piano bar.

JS: So anyway, I knew her and was most pleased to see their successes. Bill came one time before he announced his candidacy for President. He had come to Vincent Foster's [Vincent Foster Sr.] funeral in Hope and I were talking with him outside the sanctuary. In fact, Jack Williams [of Texarkana] was standing there too. He asked us both and said: "When I ran this time I told Arkansas folks that I would serve my full term." He said, "If I do run, do you think I'd be forgiven?" And I said, "Yes, I think so. I think people understand that this is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. It's a big step and it's worrisome and all that, but I think you can survive it" or something to that affect. I saw him, you know, numerous times after that, but I don't remember all the occasions.

JS: I think he made a great governor and a great president and he's certainly a valued friend.

ED: You go on the Supreme Court in January. Let me think who would have served with you there. John Fogleman was the chief for that year.

JS: Yes and George Rose Smith was the senior justice on the Court.

ED: Conley Byrd was gone and Richard Mays was serving in his stead.

JS: He came on the day I did.

ED: A civil rights lawyer from Little Rock that he [Clinton] appointed to the court.

JS: Darrell Hickman and I had been in law school with him. I've known him all through the years.

ED: Yeah, Darrell Hickman had been on the court since about '78.

JS: Frank Holt. I'd known him for years.

ED: All right. Of course, he was the brother of Jack Holt.

JS: Of Jack Holt, Sr.

ED: Senior.

JS: I remember one time when I was real young Frank and his wife and my mother and dad took me to a YMCA summer camp in Hot Springs on Lake Catherine, I think it was. So, driving over, I got to know him better, a one-week camp. At any rate, I was very comfortable that he was there and I had a long history with him.

ED: So you had some friendships with several people. Let's see, John [I.] Purtle was on the court, right?

JS: John Purtle was the other one.

ED: He was the other one on that court.

JS: That's right.

ED: Did you know him before that?

JS: Not before I got there. I didn't have any history with him.

ED: John got to be a little more controversial, but I think that was largely after you left.

JS: That's right.

ED: When they had the difficulties with the arson.

ED: And a lot of conflict on the court in the period, I guess '83, '84, somewhere along in there. Until he retired, there was a lot of conflict on the court.

JS: That was after I left, and the only really conflict situations we had were on cases…

ED: Yeah.

JS: …criminal cases that I had with him. For many reasons, he had many approaches to the problem and he had a more lenienct position toward…

ED: Criminal defendants.

JS: Criminal defense. I didn't feel that way so we were on opposite sides many times.

ED: I think he was on opposite sides pretty much with the entire court during those years. I guess it would be fair in describing John that his sympathies were with the underdog and with the downtrodden. It didn't make any difference if it was a criminal or workers or whatever, he sympathized. He was going to rule for them if he could, if there's any way under the law that he could do it.

JS: That's right.

ED: He was going to do that and that was his take. You know, I think he would acknowledge that that's how he felt. If there was any way he could find a way to turn the law in favor of a defendant in a criminal case…

JS: That's the way it seemed to me.

ED: Yeah, I think that's right.

JS: From that side and hearing arguments and arguing back and forth.

ED: I think he wrote more dissents than anybody else on the court.

JS: That has to be true.

ED: In all those years.

JS: That would be true. I had a very fortunate circumstance particularly in retrospect. I didn't realize it at first but after … Well, let me back up. The day I was sworn in, Darrell Hickman left me a note. It said, I have it in there. It says: "Once you get over the shock you're going to love it, Darrell." And I loved Darrell, even when we would argue cases. After the first week Judge George Rose Smith came in my office and asked if I would like to go to lunch with him and Chief Justice Fogleman. I said I'd be pleased and honored. So I did go with them and the next day he came in again, and the next day, and he did it every day that I was on the court except Fridays. The whole court went to lunch together at the same place.

ED: Where did you go to lunch on Fridays?

JS: On Fridays it was Shakey's Pizza on Rebsamen Park Road.

JS: It served pizza and chicken and we would go, the whole court would be invited. Darrell wasn't there usually during the week, but he would be there some on Friday. He was always there when the court sat deciding cases, motions or oral arguments, but he would be back and forth otherwise.

ED: Yes.

JS: At any rate, we would all go there on Friday and have pizza. It was one price to get all the chicken or all the pizza that you wanted. There were just two things. One, Judge Smith had a sack that he would put all the chicken bones in.

ED: Take them to his dog?

JS: No, the raccoons.

ED: Raccoons, yeah.

JS: He fed raccoons. In fact, pizza leftovers. He'd take those and a glass of beer—I mean a mug of beer. I don't know if everybody had to but certainly everybody was encouraged to have one beer, and I always had one. They had a routine that didn't vary. I'm not remembering which days but I know one of them each week was the Baptist Hospital Cafeteria, when the Baptist was walking distance, really.

ED: Yes.

JS: From the Justice Building. Another was the Blue Cross Blue Shield Cafeteria. Another one was a little plate lunch place on Victory [Street].

ED: Yes, that was John and Andy's, no John and…

JS: It seems to me that it was a female name like Lucille's or something but I don't remember. They had a different plate lunch each day.

ED: Is that where you went up to the sneeze guard and told them what you wanted?

JS: Yeah.

ED: OK.

JS: But it had a different special each day.

ED: Yeah.

JS: But we always went the same day, so I always had ham and it was always the same thing.

ED: Yes.

JS: And then one was at this place with the pizza. I can't remember the other except it never varied, but they really liked cafeterias, We went to at least those two. Franke's was one of them. I have eaten there with Judge Smith, but there was one time when he and Peg [Justice Smith's wife] asked me to go to the Planetarium, which was at the college, and I did but we ate there. It was a great experience. I never went to ask is it lunch time or anything like that. Every time it happened with him coming and asking me that day would I like to go to lunch with them. I never said anything but yes. I was always there. It was only one day of that whole year after the first week or so when I didn't eat with them. Judge Fogleman had a conflict so it broke the pattern. We got in the car and Judge Smith said, "Judge Fogleman can't be with us but he named this place that he heard had good hamburgers off Seventh Street." We went in there. It was something tavern.

ED: White Water Tavern.

JS: White Water Tavern.

ED: White Water Tavern down by the viaduct on West Seventh Street.

JS: That's right.

ED: Yes.

JS: Just a little bit off of the street.

ED: Kind of a grungy place.

JS: Yeah. And so we went in there and ordered our hamburgers and they were good. At any rate, we sat down waiting for them to be ready. They didn't have waiters. They called your name or your number. We didn't get a number, but when ours were ready the guy hollered "Ties" because we were the only people in there with ties on.

ED: [Laughing]

JS: Speaking of ties, George Rose Smith reputedly had only one tie. I can't swear that that's the truth but he talked about one. He had been given one. Anyway, well along in the year we were having the Texarkana Country Club redone, refurbished, had a lot of work going on and I would be there often during the summer recess. I saw this same tie that had been abandoned and it had raccoons all over it. So I picked it up, had it cleaned, put it in a box and gave it to him. He adored it and wore it on special occasions. He told Peggy he wanted to be buried in it.

ED: [Laughing]

JS: I went to his big retirement party. I think he had it on that day, but I wouldn't swear to that. I was at his house a time or two when he would feed the raccoons. His home backed up to the Allsopp Park area.

ED: Yes.

JS: He would feed them dog food. He would go out there and they knew him, saw him coming. They'd start coming out of the woods and he'd spill out the dog food on a concrete area and they'd come eat it. He sent a Christmas card each Christmas until he died. The subject of the picture was always the raccoons doing something festive about Christmas. I think the first one, the one I remember because I asked him about it, was he had a raccoon climbing up a little stepladder. It looked like it was reaching to hang an ornament on a little Christmas tree. He said what he did was put a piece of chicken or something up there and the raccoon was up on the ladder to get the food and so he had the raccoon doing something different each year. I cherished his Christmas cards. One day he told me—this was after being on the court—I'm about to run out of things I can think of to have the raccoons do. He might have packages and get the raccoon there like he might have been tying a bow on it, you know.

ED: [Laughing]

JS: It was such a great thing to go to lunch with those judges. If I just listened, it was just a fabulous experience. A couple of things. When you go to his house he'd always have a beer and, you know, bring two beers. He had a little sloped foot stool, not elevated, just

sloped two or three inches where he would sit at this table and type his opinions. It wasn't an electric typewriter. It was an old typewriter. He would type his own opinions.

ED: He did all those at home.

JS: He's the only one who had the law clerk sit in the office with him facing him [laughing]. I felt so sorry for the law clerk because there was a separate office. All the offices were the same. There was a separate office for the law clerk. You just had one in those days. You walk in to a space for the secretary and then there's a little small office for the law clerk and then a larger office for the judge. When it came time to move in, Judge Fogleman told me to take the chief's office. He didn't want it because he wasn't going to move for one year all the law books and all that. He just wasn't going to do that. So I took Judge Carleton Harris's office. It was identical except that it was next to our conference room, which had a door that opened into the conference room. I never used the door. I just pretended that it wasn't there. I went in like everybody else did. In his [Justice Smith's] house—and I was there several times and I knew about this before I was even there—he collected golf balls. He didn't buy golf balls; he collected them. He would walk along Rebsamen Road, across the road from Rebsamen Park Golf Course and Little Rock Country Club, and pick up golf balls. The purpose was to get every letter of the alphabet—a golf ball that started with the first letter would be one of those letters. He had a workshop in the basement, he showed me one time.

ED: Did he play golf?

JS: No.

ED: OK, I didn't think so.

JS: But he built this rack for the golf balls that fit exactly. You could take it off the wall and hold it upside down and they wouldn't fall out. They weren't glued. They were just exact fits. I didn't look at all of them, but they supposedly went from A through Z. How there could be a golf ball starting with Z, particularly if you didn't buy them, I don't know. But he had a real thing about chronology. After I left the court, he called me one day and asked me to be on the lookout for license plates because he had found out certain initials were only issued in Miller County. He was getting license plates and they'd have some numbers with them. It was a family tree he was building with pictures of license plates. And whatever they were—it wasn't GRS, his initials, but it ended with an S—and he had found out Miller County was where they sold that bunch of numbers. So for a good while I carried my camera in the car and finally found one and got close, took a picture and then before I had it developed and sent to him I found another. So I took it. I had two and I sent them to him. Well, he was overjoyed. He was going to get every one of those initials.

JS: He had another alphabet plan. I didn't see it but I sure knew about it. He would go every year to Mount Nebo and at a certain place on the mountain he had found a little cave. I gather it was no bigger maybe than a fireplace. It wasn't a cave you walk into. But he would go up there and put a beer can in it every year. It was a different letter of the alphabet and supposedly he got them all. Richard Allin [columnist for the *Arkansas Gazette*] went with him several times. I heard Richard say the same thing. He would go

up there once a year. He loved Mount Nebo, too, and probably got started with political trips up there for speeches and whatnot.

ED: Richard Allin had a little house up there, I think. No, was it there or at Petit Jean? One or the other.

JS: I don't know. Let me back up a little. They had a gathering in Pine Bluff for Carleton Harris in the spring of '80 and everybody on the court went. It was a very nice presentation. He was retired but still living and I was in the car with either one or both of them, I guess. Judge Smith always drove to lunch, by the way, and this was a car he had just gotten. I think it was a used car, but the story was that he had driven the previous car maybe for fifteen years—same car. It was mentioned that maybe this is the first time all members of the court were doing something together, other than conferences. This was in the spring so I had this idea that I would invite all of them with their spouses and their kids and grandkids to come to Lake Greeson. I did and they came. I borrowed a neighbor's house for Judge Fogleman and George Rose Smith to stay in. Ours had dorm rooms with double-deck bunks. Everybody came. Jetty Steel learned of it and sent another boat the size of my boat. We had either two or three boats to take us all from one end of the lake to the other and he had a cocktail party for us. I bought steaks at this great place in Kirby where they cut their own steaks. I went to pick them up and pay for them. It was Ernie Dunlap's store.

ED: Yes.

JS: And it was called Dunlap's.

ED: Right there in the Y [intersection of U.S. Highway 70 and state highways 84 and 27].

JS: That's exactly right. And he said, "Now, who's all this for?" And I said, "the Supreme Court." He says, "Frank Holt's still there, isn't he?" I said, "yes." He said, "Well, you can't pay for these. I love Frank Holt." So he gave me all of those steaks.

ED: Wow.

JS: After we went down to Jetty Steel's—he has the prettiest view on the lake, way up on the cliff that looks down on the lake—we ate steaks and had boat rides the next day. They all appreciated it because apparently they just didn't do social things together.

ED: The party down on the lake.

JS: Everybody seemed to enjoy that and I was so pleased that they all came. One other thing about his [George Rose Smith's] quirks. He liked to work on and make up crossword puzzles and cryptoquotes. They're both in the *Democrat Gazette* every day. He was very proficient. I remember that he sold some to the *New York Times*.

ED: Yes, he did.

JS: He would write one occasionally for a local type publication that was filled with words that fit the organization or the event. He also did cryptoquotes. He made those up and he got me started working cryptoquotes. One day he came in with one and said, "Look at this. It said something and the key was that it ended up saying "John Stroud." I took that as a challenge. I had never made up one but I had to make up one that ended "George Rose Smith" and use those letters to make words that had some semblance of sense. I finally got it. I remember I had one word, but I couldn't find anything. Anyway, I did it

and sent it to him and he said, "Amazing. That's almost the identical sentence my sister came up with when she tried to do the same thing with 'George Rose Smith'." I never tried to make up another one. Anyway, there were so many wonderful things about him. Several years after I had been on the court we had a big to do in Texarkana and they invited the Texas Supreme Court, the Arkansas Court of Appeals, the Arkansas Supreme Court and the local Texas Court of Appeals. Texas has a Court of Appeals that sits in Texarkana, Texas. It's a three-judge court and we at that time had six on the Court of Appeals and both were coming. The Arkansas Court of Appeals lined up an oral argument from this area, which means their expenses, their motel room, their mileage were paid, and they heard an oral argument. The Supreme Court couldn't do that because the Constitution said that they had to meet at the seat of government. I knew that and maybe one of them called about it. Anyway, I said, "OK, all of you can stay at our house with us," and they all did except [Justice Robert] Bob Dudley, didn't because he flew after the party to Dallas. His daughter married a lawyer in Dallas and I think they came and he flew with them to Dallas for the weekend. This was probably four or five years after my service on the court. Anyway, they enjoyed staying at the house and saving their money. That's about it for the Supreme Court years—just great, wonderful times.

ED: Well, when you started there did you understand the internal workings of the court, how you established who was going to write opinions?

JS: I had previously been appointed as a Special Justice when a sitting Judge was disqualified, but the Special Justice was to write the opinion if he or she was in the majority.

ED: That kind of circular thing you had to do learn that at the outset?

JS: I had no idea.

ED: How that worked.

JS: I had no idea.

ED: The George Rose Smith system?

JS: I had no idea and the day we got there they had an oral argument. Well, I know that later, on the Court of Appeals at least, a new judge coming on got briefs about three weeks ahead during the Christmas holidays, usually, to start in January.

ED: And you didn't get that?

JS: We didn't have anything in advance.

ED: OK.

JS: So we went in and heard an oral argument. The oral argument, I remember, it was Phil Carroll [J. Phillip Carroll at the Rose Law Firm in Little Rock] and it involved the *Democrat Gazette*. That's who he was representing.

ED: Well, it was just the *Gazette* in those days.

JS: Yeah, it was the *Gazette*.

ED: The *Gazette*, yes.

JS: Not the *Democrat*.

ED: Yes.

JS: Yeah, it was the *Gazette*. I had a paper route for the *Democrat*.

ED: Yes, OK.

JS: When I was growing up and delivering and collecting from each house.

ED: Was it a libel suit? Let's see, 1980?

JS: No, it seemed to me it had to do with…

ED: FOI? Freedom of Information?

JS: It had to do with a label put on a rapist or a killer but I think it was "The Quapaw Quarter Rapist". Of course, I hadn't read a word except what I had seen in the paper about it, but that's how we started and they quickly got us acclimated. We all had a number and a duty, or at least the newer members did. I was number six and Richard Mays was number seven. Number seven was to hold the door open when we went to oral arguments. The judges passed in because we went in from a little separate room. There was nobody in there except us. Where the rooms were we'd put on our robes and that was his job. Mine as number six was to enter the room at exactly nine o'clock—I believe that was the time—but on time. There was a clock in the courtroom that I could see through the cracked door. It would jump each minute. So we walked in right at the click. One day it was problematic because Frank Holt was late and not there. We all said we've got to go anyway, so we did and he joined us a little later. Something had come up that he couldn't help.

ED: So whose idea was it that you had to go in right on the click. Was that George Rose Smith?

JS: No, I decided that my job was to get us in at nine o'clock.

ED: It was going to be exactly.

JS: I just did it, exactly. But no, I don't know if they had done that before or since or that it mattered. It didn't matter, but that clock was visible and I felt it was better than my wristwatch time. We had, you know, a certain seating. The first part of that year was interesting because the Arkansas Court of Appeals had only been in existence since July 1st of that year.

ED: It was all appointed judges?

JS: Six judges all appointed for eighteen month terms. So we had the job of trying to decide what cases to go where, and we had all kinds of cases. We were trying to balance the workload.

ED: That was the year that you were having to try to establish the jurisdiction of the Court of Appeals?

JS: Right. And to decide which cases go where. Of course, the Constitution sets certain cases that have to go to the Supreme Court. The constitutional amendment that allowed the creation of the Court of Appeals was just barebones, as it should've been. It didn't say how many or anything. It's just stated there would be a Court of Appeals under supervision of the Arkansas Supreme Court. The workload before that was enormous, the Supreme Court being the only court, so no one was there to help or to lateral to.

Increasing it from seven to nine would've done very little to help the workload. It made all the sense to have a Court of Appeals. It wasn't our invention, as other states had done it. But the Supreme Court had began to handle the workload by sitting in three-judge panels, and yet it takes a majority of the court, four judges, to hand down an opinion. So the workable way was to have two three-judge panels with the chief justice being the swing vote unless it was a split and then the whole court would have to be involved and vote. But many of them were unanimous, so if the three judge panel all agreed the chief didn't have to do as much preparation. But he had to do some to be comfortable to vote with them, knowing if the three all agreed the odds are pretty good he was going to agree, and he usually did. But that was a bad way to try to run a ship, you know. So it was more a workload problem than it was jurisdictional, but we explored everything about it. We had to take all the criminal cases that had death sentences because the Arkansas Constitution required it. We could have them handle all criminal cases that don't carry a death penalty. We talked about maybe it could be where sentences twenty years or fewer go to the Court of Appeals, and on and on. It was an evolving thing. We finally came up with something that worked and it was revised from time to time later while I was on the Court of Appeals. One of the biggest ones occurred when I was on the Court of Appeals. I was on a small committee. I think John Jennings and I and David Newbern. I've forgotten who else. Maybe there were three from the Supreme Court and two from the Court of Appeals. We didn't all agree but the Supreme Court had the call to make. Newbern, I think, would've liked it to be a totally *certiorari* court, where everything that

was filed in the Supreme Court they would pass to the Court of Appeals whenever they thought it was appropriate. It ended up being everything was filed in the Court of Appeals except those that the Constitution required otherwise. A screener employed by the Supreme Court would screen all the cases when they came in and select what he or she thought would be appropriate, more difficult, or involved a more major ramification. As far as I know, that's still the way it's done. They get some cases where the Court of Appeals can't be unanimous, or even if they did anybody can file a petition with the Supreme Court asking that they review it, a Petition for Review. When I got to the Supreme Court, we read all the briefs in the cases, but it got to be a more workable number. We averaged [writing] forty-something opinions apiece, something like that.

ED: During the course of a year?

JS: Majority opinions, yes. When you finished writing an opinion, it got circulated among all the judges, who could make corrections and bring it back up and argue a point or whatever, which often led to dissents or concurring opinions. I might agree with the result but I believe there is a better reason for the decision. George Rose Smith had written an article that apparently appeared in the *Arkansas Law Review* years before, but it was so good and so helpful that they printed up some small handbooks, and it tried to help a judge write an opinion. I think it was called "How to Write an Appellate Opinion," something like that. I had gotten one and when we would have a special judge I would lend it to him. Of course, it stressed brevity, as Judge Smith always did. At the end of

each year he computed the average length of each judge's opinions and gave a copy to every judge.

ED: Now how did you rank?

JS: I was ranked for the year 1980… Mine was three and half pages, roughly, where his were two and half pages. Judge Fogleman's were eight and a half.

ED: Oh really? Eight and half?

JS: Yeah, eight and half.

ED: I'm surprised; I would've thought his would be much longer than eight and half.

JS: After the last opinions had been handed down that year, we had a dinner at Richard Mays' house with wives. It was just Richard and I and Smith and Fogleman. He handed those out to us and then I'm sure sent them or handed them out to the other justices. But he started off in the first paragraph: "As usual, Judge Fogleman's are the longest…"

ED: Yes.

JS: Or something like that.

ED: Yes, yes.

JS: And he was definitely the shortest.

ED: Always, yes.

JS: Yeah.

ED: Well, I was trying to remember whether there were any really controversial cases that year. I mean, the school cases were gone. So you didn't have the big property tax or school cases.

JS: No.

ED: I'm sure in an election year there probably were some ballot-title cases. I don't remember whether there were any.

JS: We had some ballot-title ones.

ED: Ballot-title issues.

JS: Absolutely.

ED: That year.

JS: The one that I remember specifically was a usury matter.

ED: Yes, that's right the big usury law was passed.

JS: Yeah.

ED: The legislature referred it in 1979 and it was on the ballot in 1980.

JS: It was the interpretation of that and it was the only time I remember really being crossways with Judge Smith. It was to put it at ten percent per annum or whatever and the legislature if they voted by two-thirds vote could make it otherwise. The old Constitution was just ten percent, period. There were no but-fors.

ED: Yeah.

JS: Until the Congress made a bunch of them.

ED: George Rose Smith saw to it that there was a strict interpretation of that ten percent.

JS: It's fuzzy to me now, the specifics of it. I knew, because of having represented the bank at home, that the interest-rate books of all banks didn't jibe and that if his position won it was going to make problems for banks, even though he applied ten percent literally. It

could've been whether banks used a thirty-day month or a thirty-one-day month, or something. It was some small amount because banks aren't broken down by whether it's a leap year or not. Whatever it was, I could just see all sorts of contracts and loans being voided and litigated as a result. So I made my argument. It was passed and the next Monday he said, "I spent the whole damn weekend at the library looking through interest-rate books and you're right." And he changed his position.

ED: He changed his position on it?

JS: Yeah. He took a literal approach to whatever it was and mine was the practical: what it's going to do to all these contracts that are in existence now. To me, that usury thing was big.

ED: It was a big issue that year and it went on a ballot and voters adopted it.

JS: Uh-huh.

ED: And then there was a suit interpreting it after the fact.

JS: Oh yeah.

ED: And it came down again and the Supreme Court interpreted very strictly somehow and in a way that upset the banks.

JS: Oh yeah.

ED: All the retailers had to scramble around.

JS: Yeah.

ED: And put another one on the ballot in 1984 or '86, I guess. I think Richard Adkisson was the chief when that decision came down.

JS: Uh-huh.

ED: And fallout was so severe that he didn't run again.

JS: Yeah.

ED: Because a lot of his supporters thought that he had betrayed them on it. He wrote the decision, I think, interpreting that usury amendment. Any other cases that you can remember?

JS: Oh, it would be hard to pick one out. To me, the most troubling were death cases. There weren't many, but when you read a brief and are voting and it's a death case, it's just…

ED: Wrenching?

JS: Oh yes it is. There's no easy way or flippant way. You've got to really jump into the middle of it. They were the most troubling to me.

ED: Did you have qualms yourself about the death penalty?

JS: No.

ED: Like Steele Hays did.

JS: I never did. Of course, in Arkansas it's there but it's never used. The death row has been full for years.

ED: Yeah, yeah.

JS: I toured Tucker and Cummins one time when Hayes was in the legislature—J. L. Moore and Hayes and I. Hayes was on the legislature's Penitentiary Committee. We went up there and spent the night at… Not with Henslee. He was the warden, but over at…

ED: The Tucker Unit.

JS: We were at Tucker. I think the warden there was named Bruton and we stayed in that warden's house and saw the electric chair and Death Row. It was a strange experience. Of course, the waiters and the cooks there were trustees all from the penitentiary. I went out and saw them working on fenceposts and fences. They told us, "Well, we just have them do this to stay busy if they're not busy with the farm" because they ran a farm there. After they had them [the posts] all set, then they moved them back a foot. They had one outpost where this fellow raised hogs. We went out and saw that. He was a trustee because he was separate. We went in where they slept. They slept with the lights on, and the guards right up above them with guns were also prisoners. The beds, the cots that they slept on, were single and small, barely room to walk between them. They were overcrowded at that time and needed more space. The strangest thing, though, was that it was a rainy, cold day. They took us out where they had a prisoner and where they had their dogs. They were at a separate place where the trustees, one or two people, lived and took care of the scent hounds. They told a prisoner to take off and we watched him. He started running through the field and got over to some woods. I don't know if it was the warden or the assistant or what, but when he got off into the woods they said, "OK let the dogs go." It wasn't a whole bunch, but they let one or two dogs go and I said, "Well, what happens?" He said, "Well, he'll be up a tree over there. There's no question that they'll go right to him and get him down, nice work, and then they can let him go back." But they were just showing us how good the dogs were. The only thing that kind of fits the stories about that was that on Saturday morning they have all the prisoners line up in

a formation outside. They wouldn't allow us to go to that. I later found out that that's when they give out the belt, the licks. I don't know if it was on the back or the butt—I think the back. If you screwed up they'd tell you you're going to get four licks. They want you to think about it all week and know that it's going to be in front of everybody, because if they just pulled you off and did it, it would be over with. So they saved them up for either Saturday morning or Sunday morning. It was a weekend and they passed them out then. That pretty well preceded the books and even the movie, I think, about Tucker Farm.

ED: Yeah.

JS: And Henslee was a steely-eyed guy if I ever saw one. [Lee Henslee was superintendent of the prisons in the 1960s.]

ED: Yes.

JS: He was tough.

ED: Cap'n Henslee.

JS: Yeah, Cap'n Henslee.

ED: Cap'n Henslee. OK, well, anything else about that year on the Supreme Court that we need to cover?

JS: I think that about covers the Supreme Court. There's no way really verbally to cover it but it was a great year and a great opportunity. I didn't participate in the retirement system because I felt that this one year would be my only time to be a judge.

ED: Yes.

JS: My shot, the end of it. Twelve years later… Let's see, that was '80. And then in '96 the Court of Appeals was expanded from six to twelve. Jim Guy Tucker was governor and was to appoint three in '96 and three more the next year. The first group was to serve three years and the second group two and then everybody would go forward. Both courts have eight-year terms, normally.

ED: Right.

JS: But under the Constitution of Arkansas you can't run for a judicial seat to which you've been appointed and it just can't be changed. I say it can't; it couldn't then. I was co-chair of the committee that drafted Amendment 80. Sidney McCollum, who had been a circuit judge, and I and tried to see if it would fly to take that out. We're the only state with a pure, total prohibition, I think. Others have some gradations, but as we worked on that amendment I would meet with [Mike] Beebe and [Morrill] Harriman because they were the voice of the Senate Judiciary Committee.

ED: Yeah, that's Mike Beebe and Morrill Harriman.

JS: That's right, Mike Beebe and Morrill Harriman. I think at that time Beebe was chairman and Morrill Harriman was a leading member. They were close then and are close now. I had surmised all of that and was friends with both of them. So that's where we would go to find out what we can do and not do, because if they said it ain't going to fly then there was not much point in pursuing it. In fact, all we'd do is bog it down. When I brought that up, getting rid of that [provision] they said there's no way it would get out of the

legislature. We were trying to make it one of the three constitutional amendments [that the legislature could submit to the voters].

ED: Yes.

JS: That the legislature can submit each two years.

ED: Right.

JS: So they were totally clear about it. But back to the Court of Appeals. Jim Guy appointed three and that would've been Olly Neal, Wendell Griffen and me, and he had three more to do the next year. But before that appointment time came around he resigned, so it fell to the next governor [Mike Huckabee]. It's fairly interesting, the three years were coming up and we could not run for the seat to which we were appointed but were to serve until our terms were up. Until we were redistricted. You know, at the Supreme Court I could've run for one of those other seats rather than Fogleman's seat, the one to which I had been appointed.

ED: Yes.

JS: Because everything was statewide.

ED: Yeah.

JS: But in the Court of Appeals…

ED: But you decided not to do that in 1980.

JS: That's right; I had no intent of being a judge any further.

ED: Yeah.

JS: I had kids in junior high and high school and there were things that I just didn't feel I could even think about. I didn't really think about it. At any rate, it came to the legislature and it bogged down with the legislature. A plan was devised to redistrict the Court of Appeals. One of the mandates, basically, was to have a black-influence district, not necessarily fifty-one percent but substantially black. The only way, really, was along the eastern portion of the state, primarily, the agricultural area.

ED: Yes.

JS: So the committee that drew those lines did that. Part of it was to put Pine Bluff in a different district. I don't remember the specifics except it meant that Andree Roaf couldn't run because she was from Pine Bluff. As I understand it, she first said [it was OK] for the sake of getting to where a black can be elected. There had been several [on the appellate courts] but all had been appointed. Then she changed her mind and I can understand it. She went before first the Senate committee and then, I think, either the full Senate or the full House and made her pitch. So it just bogged down. I met with Beebe and others and it just wasn't going to come out, so it automatically extended my class from three to five years and the other class from two to four. So by the time those terms ran out we had a workable solution and redistricted it. A lawsuit was filed that said that we couldn't run, but it was determined by the Supreme Court that yes we can because the original six had been appointed by districts but we had been appointed at large.

ED: Right, OK.

JS: So we had tried to get that redistricting thing done on a three-year deal and couldn't. We tried real hard. So by two years later we had a redistricting and they said we could run. That's when I decided to run. I was there and I'd already been away from law practice for a long time, five years, and that's too long to go back and pick it up again.

ED: Yeah, you'd have to go back and start all over again, essentially.

JS: Yeah, unless you're a real young kid, you know. So that's why I ran. I ran unopposed and I had the retirement years in, but I went back just to be safe and bought my year on the Supreme Court. They figure out, with interest, whatever I would've paid.

ED: Right.

JS: I served four more years. I was the chief judge the last four years I was there. We needed to redistrict, and I gathered from Beebe and Harriman and others that they weren't going to put up with us all having eight years. So we came up with a plan. It meant two of us would be running for four-years terms and four would run for six years. After that it would be all eight years again, but the terms got staggered. You know, if you had that many running in one year and there were very many with opponents the court would shut down, because you can't campaign with an opponent and do the job you're supposed to do. Anyway, that got adopted. The bill was drafted following the language, basically, of the first Court of Appeals. We would draw straws or by lot as to which would then get the shorter two year terms and which the longer four year terms.

ED: How many years you're going to be serving there, yeah.

JS: Yeah, that's right. But every one of them were two years and they could not run. At any rate, our court agreed and so did the legislature and that's what was done. But before it went to the legislature we drafted it and had two of our group draw and get the short term, the four years. I got to thinking about it after Karen Baker came to me and said she would volunteer for one of the four years. I said why would you do that? "Well, I'm going to run again. I know that. I may just as well get this over with and sooner the better." I got thinking, "Well, I'll just do the other one. It's kind of ridiculous to have one draw, so I volunteered and had them redraft it with our numbers being four and everybody else's six. And that's what happened. And then they were all eight-year terms after that.

ED: Yes. So you served a total, then, on the Court of Appeals, of…

JS: I served nine years.

ED: Right, '97.

JS: '96 to '04.

ED: '96 or '97? January of '97?

JS: No, January of '96, 7, 8, 9, 0, 1, 2, 3, 4.

ED: OK.

JS: Those calendar years.

ED: OK.

JS: January '96 through December 31st, '04.

ED: '04, OK. And three or four of those years as chief judge?

JS: The last four.

ED: The last four as chief judge.

JS: The chief judge of the court. Of course, the Supreme Court is elected and someone runs for chief justice.

ED: Right.

JS: In the Court of Appeals, the chief judge is appointed to a four-year term by the chief justice, and Dub Arnold appointed me as chief judge.

ED: So the chief justice appoints the chief judge at the Court of Appeals.

JS: That's right.

ED: Right.

ED: Well, how did that experience differ from the Supreme Court? Off course, you're taking different kinds of cases.

JS: That's right.

ED: You don't take constitutional cases.

JS: That's right.

ED: Death cases.

JS: That's right.

ED: You take a lot of worker's compensation, administrative appeals and those kinds of things…unemployment.

JS: Well, at the Court of Appeals we would hear a lot more cases.

ED: Yes.

JS: They would not be as far reaching, generally speaking.

ED: But just as important to the litigants…

JS: Oh, absolutely, absolutely.

ED: …as the Supreme Court.

JS: Absolutely, and we viewed it that way.

ED: Yes.

JS: But if it was earthshaking, the Supreme Court likely would've gotten it before it got to us. I mean it would be pulled out by the screener.

ED: Right.

JS: The screener worked with one or two judges in making those decisions about whether this is appropriate. It wasn't just an employee but somebody with the Supreme Court helping with that. We would occasionally have a case that we would certify in the first instance that this really ought to be over there [in the Supreme Court] and we could certify it. I don't remember them ever not keeping it. They could've said, "No keep it," but I think virtually every time in my eight years they kept them. We had a new system where… Of course, it's simple with three-judge panels. The old way on the original six-judge Court of Appeals if the three-judge panel wasn't in full agreement then all six decided. Now we've got twelve judges so by prearrangement, a predrawing of the marbles or whatever, they did in the clerk's office. A backup panel was selected before we even read the cases. If we had a two-to-one split, it automatically went—and they

used the old phrase—*en banc*. That means all the judges but that wasn't what happened. It was misapplied but still they call it *en banc*.

ED: Yeah. It's just a larger panel.

JS: Yeah.

ED: Yeah.

JS: It would go two.

ED: Yeah.

JS: They add three more.

ED: Yes.

JS: Set a date.

ED: Then if they get tied up three to three it would go to an even larger panel, right?

JS: Yes, if you were tied after you had the six…it would be nine and then you would have an odd number.

ED: Right.

JS: Anyway, that worked pretty well. It takes a little longer because its reset and, you know, the larger panel meets again and meets with the hung-up panel and then the opinions follow that. But my experience on the Court of Appeals was very enjoyable. Those were very fine people to serve with and I really did enjoy it. In that four years I guess probably the biggest thing was working out and dealing with the redistricting but I have nothing but fond memories of it.

ED: Let me ask you a philosophical question about judging. That is the old issue of politics and whether an elected system or an appointed system or some kind of merit system makes better sense. Judges that I've talked to are all over the place on that issue, maybe half-and-half.

JS: Yes.

ED: Like Bob Brown.

JS: Bob Brown is very much for the elective system. I've talked with him about it and I was on his task force. As the appointive system wasn't even put before us, we dealt with the elective system only and what could be done to improve the elective system.

ED: Yes.

JS: As to the elective process or the appointee process, I think it could be almost a coin flip except for the way the elections are heading. That is whether there should be unlimited, undisclosed outside money. It scares me about the elective system. The United States Supreme Court allowing it was the worst decision I can think of for the judiciary.

ED: Yeah, the *Citizens United* decision.

JS: Yes.

ED: Well, there had been a series of decisions.

JS: Yeah, that's right.

ED: Over the years.

JS: To take the lid off.

ED: Going all the way back to 1975 or ’76 when they first opened it up and said that the government can’t…

JS: Yeah, *White v. Minnesota* was one of them.

ED: Yeah, a series of those, yes.

JS: And to see it happening in other states. There are instances where a judge was elected and because of his or her vote on one case there was a group that set out and raised a lot of money and beat the judge even if the judge didn’t write the opinion.

ED: Beat him or her anyway.

JS: The anti-group selected the opponent and raised the money that was spent to beat a target judge or judges. Of course, that’s happening now, the expenditures, a group with a target judge. So there’s going to be some who won’t have a chance. That’s the only fear I have with the elected judiciary. However, to be fair, the same thing is happening with the appointee process. The only thing different is that the anti-group can’t select the replacement judge, but they can remove the appointed judge.

We addressed this same issue when we were drafting Amendment 80 – the new Judicial Article. The issue of elected or appointed judges was so evenly divided, we felt the only way to avoid defeat at the polls was to provide that the legislature could refer the matter to the people at any general election and it would not count against the three Constitutional Amendments they are allowed to put on the ballot every two years.

I mentioned earlier major issues addressed by Amendment 80 such as the combining of law and equity with all trial judges being able to hear all cases, circuit judges and chancery judges becoming circuit judges, but there was another important issue – terms of judges. But we then had a disagreement. Chancery judges had six-year terms and circuit judges four-year terms. Doing away with the distinction between law and equity [circuit and chancery], saved lots of time but it went against the grain of some judges. Chancellors now would also hear criminal cases, which they hadn't done. And the circuit judges did not want to hear divorces.

ED: Yeah.

JS: Our proposal would change the terms of circuit judges to six years. That was the way we argued for. But Senator Wayne Dowd, Chairman of the Judiciary Committee had an argument that's appealing and held, I'm sure, by many other legislators. He felt that the people should have a say more often about who their judges were. He didn't want four-year terms changed to six years. I'd go to committee and argue eight, six, four—it makes sense. Anyway, it finally got out of committee and it passed by two votes. Before the legislative vote, I went up to Governor Huckabee and told him as close as this was we needed every single Republican to vote for this. I knew he was for it, but for entirely different reasons. He wanted non-partisan election of judges, and the filing fees made uniform. There were wide discrepancies then. Each county could set filing fee for the trial judges. In each county you've got to pay this amount set but some of them would put the fee much higher. This made it uniform. But he very much favored that and he got every

Republican to vote for it. There weren't that many Republicans, but it made the difference when something passes by two votes.

ED: Yes.

JS: I had known him. Where he lived was next door to our lake place once he left Texarkana, except for when he was in the governor's mansion.

ED: That's right; he had a place there on the lake.

JS: Yeah.

ED: Lake Greeson.

JS: Right next door.

ED: Oh really?

JS: He would come almost every Saturday and fish, even when he was in the governor's mansion. I didn't really know him well in Texarkana but his church was two blocks from where I go to church and he just lived about three blocks away in Texarkana.

ED: It passed pretty handedly in the general election.

JS: Yeah.

ED: It did, yeah.

JS: Yeah, once it got out of the General Assembly.

ED: The politics, yeah.

JS: It passed. It made a lot of sense. Really the only ones against it, I think, were older judges. Another reason I insisted on six years for circuit judges was I didn't want all the

circuit judges out opposing this. I knew if they were going to go from four years to six they would be for it.

ED: Oh yes.

JS: I think that helped with the populace once it got out of the legislature.

ED: OK. Let's see. You left the Court of Appeals in 2004. How old were you at that point?

JS: Well, I'm 82 now and that was nine years ago.

ED: All right, so you were about '73.

JS: Yes.

JS: A year before my term ran out on the Court of Appeals, representatives from ADR Inc., which was at that time the largest private, separate organization of mediators, asked me if I would consider– this was early in the year—doing mediation with them the following year. I said, "Well, it sounds good." I knew I was not going back to law practice, but I also knew I not going to sit home every day. So I went to a program that spring for one or two days and listened and learned about the process. I decided that it makes sense so I told them yes, I would come at the end of the year. I took the one-week course at the Justice Building during the summer recess and then observed the required number of mediations.

JS: It's not a busy thing but I do go to the office every day. I still office with Hayes. He quit practicing law about the time I went on the bench. One of the most pleasurable things is meeting and getting to know lawyers. You really get to know them after you spend all

day, back and forth. You know, you may have met them before, but you really know them now.

ED: Sure.

JS: We've got fine lawyers in Arkansas, I think. And mediation does work. There are no statistics except on appointed cases. Of course, mediators don't mediate anything criminal; they're all civil cases.

ED: Yes.

JS: But a rough figure is about seventy percent. That's about what I think mine might have been for the nine years.

ED: How often the mediation is successful, accept, how often it works.

JS: Yes. And more and more judges—and this wasn't available from day one—are ordering mediation. There's no limit to that, what the court can order except it must be a civil case. When I start a mediation, I point out that this could mean substantial savings because if they can agree it won't be all of what any of you want but it's something that all of you can live with, and then it's over today. We'll draft it right here, the settlement agreement. The lawyers just go and dismiss the case. There's got to be checks from insurance companies or people or whatever, or if isn't money—maybe it's other things. Compare it to a trial: maybe more depositions, and if it's appealed, add another year. Most of that is not after the case gets to the courts but it's getting to the court—it's the transcripts and the court reporters. But there seems to be less and less. I used to have about half of mine out of Texarkana. I've been to Hot Springs and Fort Smith and Fayetteville and

Springdale and Helena and Arkadelphia, but now it's pretty much Texarkana. And, for the most part, court-ordered. But there are more and more mediators each year. It's become a pretty popular place for a retired judge to hang a hat. And just the course here at the Justice Building is limited to twenty-five [mediators] a year, or you can go to many, many places to do the required one week or forty hours. So there are more and more mediators. And for some of those that's their living. Many have tried giving up law and doing just mediation and then go back to doing both, because it's hard, coupled with the fact that there are fewer cases filed and fewer cases appealed. Some of that may be the recession that we've been in.

ED: Sure.

JS: But it is a fewer number lately and an increasing number of mediators available. I'm pleased to have done that and probably will for another year or two. It's enjoyable.

ED: Good. Well, all right, there are a lot of things else that we could've covered. We could've covered some of your other civic activities, church activities and all that but it's getting late. So we'll wrap this up unless there's anything else that you can think of that we haven't covered?

JS: No. No, I can't. Really, it's just been a real pleasure.

ED: OK. Good. We'll wrap it up here. And as I said, when I get the transcript done I'll get it to you and there may be things in there that you want to correct or elaborate on or that needs further explanation. We'll do that. So it's been my pleasure.

JS: My pleasure.

ED: Thank you so much.

JS: Thank you, Ernie.