

Interview of Dean Joshua Morse by Kate Medley, camera by April Grayson  
September 29, 2007

(camera starts recording in the middle of a preliminary conversation)

Joshua Morse: We had admitted Cleve, though, and I did it. And John Fox was the acting dean.

**Kate Medley: I was wondering who that was—John Fox was there.**

JM: And the, there was a university regulation against carrying any kind of a deadly, concealed deadly weapon on campus, and the regulation provided that the person, any student who did that would be expelled, and so that's what we did. (Reading a paper) They say "but it does not mean automatic expulsion." I thought it did.

**KM (to April Grayson): What is it, the 29<sup>th</sup>?**

**AG: Um-hmm.**

JM: I can't think of anything else to add to that. John, I remember, I asked John what he recommended, and he said that he thought that since they had a jail penalty of 90 days that, that if they would waive that and let Cleve withdraw, that he would recommend it, so I told him go ahead.

**KM: Yeah, I just found those [papers]. I thought you might be interested to see some of them.**

JM: (Quoting) "5-0 decision ousts McDowell" "Five member student judicial council"—I didn't even know they had that. "Headed by Champ Turney, son-in-law of Senator Jim Eastland." Champ and Woods were good friends of mine and helped us a lot during that time there. I'm not sure that Woods, whether he came a year after Champ or at the same time. They were there at the same time anyway. (Hands papers back to KM)

**KM: Alright, well, we're here in Tallahassee, in the Law School, the Dean's Office conference room, with Kate Medley interviewing Josh Morse, on the 29<sup>th</sup> of September—October? September—**

**AG: September (laughter). I'm just going to pause. (03:36)**

**KM: Ok, um, and to get things started, I'd love to hear about growing up in Poplarville.**

JM: Growing up in Poplarville. It was, Poplarville was a small, hung-over sawmill town, and Edward Hines was the largest owner of yellow pine saw timber in the world. And he had, in Pearl River County, he owned over 500,000 acres of virgin saw timber. And they were, they were, they had so much of it on hand 'til they were leasing it out and

letting other mills operate and cut it and remove it, and there were nine sawmills operating within 25 miles of Poplarville. And it was a robust, rowdy group. And, but great for kids. We grew up there, and played all kinds of games, and did the usual things.

(05:15) The Batsons, John and Blair—John’s grandfather was a fellow named Ran (R-A-N) Batson. I think the Ran may have stood for Randolph, and he married some—I can’t remember who his first wife was, but his second wife was a Parker, and her brother was my dad’s law partner, Hubert Parker. And they owned about 200,000 acres of pine saw timber. Pretty well fixed. When, when Ol’ Man Ran died, his son Claude ran the, the operation until he died, and I can’t think of anything that happened of any surprising nature there.

**KM: Did it have sort of a small-town feel, I presume? The area when you were growing up?**

JM: Yes, it was—Bilbo lived in Poplarville, and he built his dream house, he called it, down South of town, and my wife lived right across the street from the dream house in, both of them were in Savannah, about six or seven miles south of town. Can’t think of any, anything that stands out in that though. (07:39)

**KM: Tell me about your parents.**

JM: My father was big. (laughs) He was six—when he, when he got out of the service, he was 6’4 ½” and weighed 235 [pounds]. And he had been a first sergeant, and he came to Poplarville—and I asked him, I said “Why in the world did you come to Poplarville to practice law? And he said, “Well, I came there to sue Edward Hines.” And that’s what he did. My mother was, before they got married she was a music teacher, and she had studied music and Meridian College, which was a Methodist-run college in the state of Mississippi at that time for women. Millsaps was a men’s college, and Meridian College was a women’s college. Her sister went there, and all various cousins and other people went there.

**KM: Did she continue to teach music?**

JM: She taught music for a couple of—maybe as long as five years after they got married, even after I was born, but she finally quit. She tried one time to teach me, and I remember she got me as far as the piano, and I looked up and the book she was going to teach me out of was “Teaching Tiny Fingers to Play.” And I rebelled at that. (laughs)

**KM: Thinking back, is there—do you remember anything that first influenced your ideas about, about race and racial differences and—?**

JM: No, just something that built up over time. We, my dad and I did, did criminal work, primarily as a way to advertise. People paid attention to criminal cases, didn’t pay much attention to civil cases. And so they would watch and see who was doing what in the criminal cases, and we did a pretty good job of defending them. (10:44) But we had,

we'd had two cases in particular that I remember. I can't remember the names of the people, but one was a black man who cut a deputy sheriff and was charged with assault and battery with intent to kill, and the story that he told us was that this fellow, the deputy sheriff was beating him with a piece of pipe, and he cut him really just to save himself. And so we defended him successfully. We, he had been, he had worked for L.O. Crosby, Jr., the—the Crosbys bought out Edward Hines when Hines cut out. They bought all the cut-over land, and they had close to a million acres, I guess, of cut-over land. Well-to-do. But he, he testified that this man was a good worker and well-behaved and had never done anything like that before. And he just told his story, and the jury acquitted him. (12:20)

And we had another case involving something very similar to that where a, a deputy sheriff had beat or shot a black man who was charged with some insignificant crime. And we had, had a time with that one. The district attorney for some reason didn't want to allow him to plead to a lesser offense and get rid of it, and we persuaded him that he ought to.

**KM: So mainly as your professional career started, more so than when you were, when you were—**

JM: Not so much—we had, one of my playmates was a black boy named Roosevelt Parker, and he played with us after school everyday. Lived in the back, on the back lot of my closest friend's house. And he became a Pullman porter, and I don't know what he's, what finally happened to him. I tried to trace him one time and got nowhere.

**KM: And what about the Batsons in Poplarville? Were y'all's families close, or?**

JM: There were, there were about six or seven of those Batsons. Every one of them had close to a hundred thousand acres of land, and every one of them had close to a million dollars. And there was one or two over in Wiggins, as well, that were kin to the Batsons, too. And it was a fellow named—state superintendent of education—I can't think of his name, but he wrote a book called "I Had a Friend," and it was a book about, his friend was Ran Batson. And he told the story of growing up in Ran Batson's, with Ran Batson's family and so forth.

**KM: And John Batson seemed to think that your mother and his mother were close.**

JM: (15:10) (Nods) They were very close. The Batsons lived in—Ol' Man Ran lived in the big manor house, up in—oh, what was the name of that? I can't think of the name of that whistle stop where he lived up there, north of Poplarville. He lived about 10 miles out. And John lived at Orvisburg, where they had another mill at one time. And John's father lived there and ran the—he was the, the old man's presence everywhere in the area. The Batsons formed—Ol' Man Ran and his group formed a p—a corporation with another large family, the Hattens. They formed the Batson-Hatten Lumber Company and then the Phoenix Mineral Corporation. And somebody's supposed to have asked Ol'

Man Hatten what they were going to call the mineral company, and he said Phoenix Minerals, he said, “how do you spell it?” He said, “I don’t know, F-E-N-I-X, I guess.” (Laughs)

**KM: Is that what it was?**

JM: It was P-H-O-E-N-I-X. (Laughs)

**KM: Well, wait, did you tell us about their mother—your mother and his mother?**

JM: Oh, I didn’t. I would just affirm what you did. They were very close, and they liked, both of them liked to read, and they would meet and discuss what they had read and so on. I think maybe there was a book club that they all joined, but I can’t remember that. I read the books myself because they were good books. “Drums Along the Mohawk,” one I remember that I read. Mrs. Batson was a woman of tremendous energy and, and comprehensive knowledge of everything under the sun. Good person to talk to anytime, good, good conversationalist. And she and my mother were very close, and after, after her husband’s death and after they sold the timber land, she moved to Atlanta, I believe, and she came back a number of times and she would visit my mother, and they would get caught up to date on what was going on. But some of the books that they, they read in this book club and that they were discussing among themselves were books where the race question arose, and it caused an awakening in me that I might not have had otherwise. But I knew that we were doing the wrong thing. (18:50) And, not much I could do about it then, but later on I was able to do some things.

**KM: Did y’all talk about that, you and your mother, or your mother—**

JM: No, never did. Didn’t talk about it. I remember (laughs), the only, one of the few discussions I remember was that I had told Ken Vinson, who was a law professor fellow that I’d hired—came from a little town in Texas, Wink. Wink, Texas, named after Winkler family. Winker—I think it was maybe the Winkler Lumber Company or Winkler Oil Company, one of the two. And Ken—I was trying to think of what I was telling Ken about—ummm (shakes hand away). Have to skip that. [Lost his train of thought.]

**KM: Sounded like a good one.**

**AG: We can come back to it.**

JM: Yeah, go ahead.

**KM: Oh, and then I was curious about, you mentioned Bilbo in the area.**

JM: Oh! That’s probably what I was going to tell you. I, I told Ken that when Bilbo retired from his second term as governor, that he came back to Poplarville, and my dad had a, at that time, had an office in the Masonic Lodge there, big four-storey building on

Main Street. And Dad—it was, these offices were like “shotgun” type, if you know what I’m talking about. And Dad had the front two offices—front one was a secretary’s office and a waiting room, and the next one was his office, and the third one was one he used just for junk and stuff. And Bilbo came back and didn’t have any place to go, and Dad told him he could use that [third] office ‘til he found a place. And he, he did that. And Ken somehow got the idea that Bilbo and my father were partners, and you can—almost anything you read about me in that era mentions the fact that my father and Bilbo were law partners, but they never were. (21:36) That’s as far as it got. My dad (laughs), my dad did represent all those Bilbos. They were a large clan and pretty well-to-do. I remember one—Wash Bilbo—was a very wealthy fellow that had a good bit of money and a lot of land, and Bilbo—Theodore Bilbo, the governor—came over to see Dad and brought John with him—I mean, Wash with him—and told him that he wanted to borrow \$6,000 from Wash and Wash had agreed to loan it to him. They wanted, Wash wanted Dad to draw up the note and so on, so they were sitting down, and Bilbo was telling Dad the terms, and he said, “How much interest you gonna charge me, Brother, Brother Wash?” He said, “Aww, hell, Thee, I’m not gonna charge you anything.” He said, “Brother Wash, that’s not right,” said, “if I went to the bank they’d charge me.” Said, “Hell, yeah, but the bank, bank can afford that. I can hardly afford to lose the principal, much less the interest.” (Laughs)

**KM: I bet those were some characters. (to AG) Do we need to readjust anything, or are we ok?**

**AG: We’re ok.**

**KM: Ok. Alright, so tell us a little bit about, you were at Ole Miss for undergrad.**

JM: Yeah, I, I made good grades first semester. I found out you didn’t have to, and I would make, something that interested me I would make a good grade, and something that didn’t interest me, I would make an F. I didn’t, I didn’t know of the penalty that was being applied to you if you made a bad grade. And I had, today I would probably not be admitted to law school. But at that time, when I, when I entered law school, was right after the War, and they were looking for warm bodies. They had been without students for a long time. And I made good grades in law school, because I was interested in it, and the same thing was true at Yale—made good grades there. (24:38)

**KM: What was Ole Miss like? What was sort of the atmosphere there as an undergrad?**

JM: It was—nearly about any law professor you talked to, regardless of where he was, whether it be Yale or Harvard or Ole Miss, LSU, will tell you that the best students they ever had were those immediately following World War II. That they were dedicated and hard-working, drank hard and worked hard.

**KM: Interesting. Now you were, as an undergrad, you were there at the same time as Governor Winter.**

JM: (Nods) We were, I went on Rush dates with Bill Winter.

**KM: How'd those work out?**

JM: Fine (smiles). I got the one I wanted, and I'm sure Bill did, too. I think—is he a Phi Delta Theta?

**AG: Yes.**

JM: I thought, think so.

**AG: What about you?**

JM: Pike. [Pi Kappa Alpha fraternity] We had, we “killed a cat” my sophomore year. We got, I think everybody we offered a—what do you call a pledge offer? Anyway—f

**AG: A what, a bid (simultaneously with KM).**

JM: Bid. Everybody that we bid for, we got. And the result was that *everybody* jumped on us the next time, and we got almost nobody then for the next two times. And it was, it was, it was a bad, bad loss really.

**KM: But y'all were the “Men on Campus” that one year.**

JM: (laughs) Yeah. And we had, we had people that'd come there from Millsaps, Mississippi State, where we had chapters. The president of the student body at Mississippi State was at Ole Miss in Med School, and the president at Millsaps student body, Bo Murray, was entering Med School, as well, from Millsaps. So we had people from all, all schools around.

**KM: Now when we talked to Governor Winter, he said, he kept giving us this little smirk and smile whenever he would talk about the two of y'all as undergrads. And he told us there were a few stories he wasn't going to tell.**

JM: (Laughs) I don't know what, what they could be. But I got caught doing nearly about everything I, that I tried. One thing—I remember one—was, they had closed down—I had lived in Vardaman Hall my, I think my, one of my senior years. And they'd shut down Vardaman because of the draft and people leaving, and they had moved us over to one half of one of the football dormitories. And I can't think of the name of that dormitory, but it's in, it's the opposite, the dormitories are built like a quadrangle. Vardaman was up here, and I can't remember what the other two were.

**AG: Longstreet, maybe?**

JM: No, Longstreet was down near the cafe—near the—

**AG: Hill? Maybe Hill, maybe?**

JM: No, Hill was up on the Hill, I think. I lived there one, one semester. Anyway. I came in one, one night, been down drinking beer, a bunch of us, and I started to go to bed, and a bunch of law students next door to us. And they were up—this was about midnight—and they were up study—just beginning their studying, and they were typing and talking, and we hollered over to them to be quiet, and they wouldn't, so I had an air rifle that I kept hidden around there, and I got my air rifle out and started shooting their windows out. And so they called the campus cops, and then they, they all ran out when the cops started up there, and when they did, one of the cops named Babs came—he was kind of fat—came running up the walk coming up to Vardaman, and I took the air rifle and shot him. (Laughs) And I hit him, every time I hit him, he'd jump that high (holds hand off ground). (Laughing) And when he came on up, got a little closer, I slid the air rifle out the window, and it fell down, there's a big, big thing where the pipes come out, got valves and one thing and another, air rifle fell down there. They found it a day later, down in there, and Mr. Howerton was the man in charge of student discipline at that time, and he told me that they were going to make me live off campus, that was going to be my punishment. So I lived at the Pines, a boarding house up town, and it was cheaper, food was better—whole thing was anything but punishment. (Laughs) (31:26)

**KM: You were a hell raiser from an early age.**

JM: (Laughs)

**KM: What about Governor Winter? Are there any tales that you want to tell—**

JM: I can't think of any about Governor Winter. He may have—a buddy of mine, Bill Stewart, from Poplarville, was up there on a football scholarship. And he and about 10 others—I wasn't in this at all, never did, I don't know why I wasn't, except I was living up town, that was probably the reason—and they would tell these stories about these girls that they were going to pick up, and the girls were free and easy and all you had to do was push them and they'd fall over, and so—they'd take one person and then another out to see these girls—Elaine was one—and then the father would come out with a shotgun and shoot a couple of times, and the one, the one that was carrying them out there would fall over, and blood would squirt from all the pores of his body. (laughs) And the victim then would run. And one I remember was a track man named Harvey Goffey. They—I came back and they told me that Goffey, when he ran, there was a big curve in the road, and the curve went back, and it left a bluff up there. And they—so—he, he, Goffey was running so hard until he didn't make the turn, just ran straight on, and he had glasses on, like I do, and he hit that bluff on the other side of the bank, buried his head up in the clay, and just had clay caked over his head. (Laughs) Now Bill may have been in that—I don't know.

**KM: Well, you know now the William Winter Institute for Racial Reconciliation is in Vardaman Hall.**

JM: Is that right? That's a fit place for it. [Vardaman Hall is named for late-19<sup>th</sup> and early-20<sup>th</sup>-century Mississippi politician James K. Vardaman, known for his harsh white supremacist politics.] I was in Vardaman when I was, right after I got married. (34:00) Came up to law school, and they didn't have any place to put married students. They had not yet built the Veteran's Village over there, they call it. And I, my wife and I stayed in one room in Vardaman, that was, oh about 30 feet from where I'd stayed as a freshman.

**KM: Hm. Might be April's office now. (Laughter)**

**AG: Might be. (Laughter)**

**KM: Alright, so tell us about, you finished up your undergrad at Ole Miss—**

JM: Um-hmm. When I came back and was chosen Dean, I heard this tapping coming up, coming up the hall—I was sitting in my office—and I looked up, and it was Mr. Howerton. And he said, "Morse? Morse, is that you, boy?" Said, "I just wanted to be sure that was you, boy. I didn't—they told me that you'd been chosen Dean," and said, "and I didn't believe it." (Laughs)

**KM: This was the, the guy that had punished you?**

JM: Yeah. Two or three times.

**KM: Well, so you went to Law School at Ole Miss, right?**

JM: Yeah, yeah.

**KM: And what years were you in Law School there?**

JM: I believe '45, '46, and '47. But I'm not sure about that. That's close.

**KM: All right. And then you went back to Poplarville, is that right?**

JM: Yeah, I, I didn't—I never intended to. My wife and I had talked about my going to Pascagoula, and we had thought that's where I would go. And my dad had, in the meantime he and Hubert Parker, Mr. Parker, had retired, and my dad was practicing by himself then, and he offered me a place to come and practice with him, and I did.

**KM: And what kind of—what were y'all—what kind of cases were y'all—**

JM: Mostly, all kind, but I kept up with what we did and so on. We, we took every kind of case there was. We made more money—I'll put it this way, we, about 10 percent of our cases were personal injury cases, and about 90 percent of the money we made came out of personal injury cases. So about the third year, I talked my dad into dropping all of

our retained clients, insurance companies, and the railroad and the bus company, and simply sue them. And that's what we did.

**KM: Do you—what was your father's approach? I assume you were sort of taking his lead and learning from him in these cases.**

JM: He was a preacher's son. And, uh, with all that entailed. High moral standards and meanness. (Laughs) Combination. There were four of those brothers and one sister, and the sister married a druggist, John Culver. She had four boys, I believe, and the oldest was named Ger—Ger—German, Gerry. And he went to, Bilbo gave him an appointment to West Point, for some reason. And he played golf, was on the, was captain of the golf team at West Point. And was a, stationed at the Pentagon during most of World War II and stayed, after the war, he went to Japan and was flying a jet. Something went wrong with it, and he had to eject, and the ejection mechanism that blew the canopy off didn't work, and so his head knocked the canopy off, and the result was it killed him. (39:23)

There were—the oldest son—I got that wrong, he's the next oldest—the oldest son was named John Morse Culver. He was a lawyer and practiced law in New Orleans with Pierre Bienvenu. And there were two more, Marion, named after my father, and William, named after Uncle Gene. And they all—Marion stayed in the Army and retired finally, and William worked for McKesson Parker Blake and died there.

What, uh, what did you want me to tell you about the, my dad and his bunch?

**KM: Well, when you were talking earlier about the two of y'all together defending the black man who had cut the deputy—**

JM: Yeah.

**KM: —I'm just, I'm more curious about that. I mean, what, what sort of—how did that play out in the community?**

JM: Well, it, it, it's a funny thing, it did play at all in the community. It, I, I was surprised. I thought there would be torchlight parades condemning us and a lot of things like that, but apparently nothing. Nothing happened. We, we had thought that we might be appointed as defense counsel in the Mac Charles Parker case as a result of that, but we were not, and Parker got his own defense, got Jack Young, who was, who was Reuben Anderson's sponsor at, at Ole Miss. Jack Young was a pretty good lawyer, he was, he, he knew what he was doing. That, Parker—Mac Charles Parker—was a black man who had been all drinking all one day, he and five others, I think it was. And they had drunk I don't know how much whiskey, just an enormous amount, almost unbelievable. (42:20) And they were going home to Lumberton—they had been down to Slidell, Louisiana—going to Lumberton, where they lived. And as they came near Orvisburg—Hillsdale is the place Ol' Man Ran lived—and, and the road that turned off to Hillsdale, they saw a car there, and it was a woman and a child in it. And Parker said he—he was driving—said he told the rest of them, said, "Who is that?" "Don't know." Walked on a little bit

further and they saw a white man walking toward Lumberton, and they passed him. And Parker told the rest of them that he was going back and pick the woman up and have intercourse with her. And they told him he was crazy, let them out, and they did. He went back and took a towel he had in his car and wrapped his fist in it, and had his gun in there and knocked the window out. And those were facts that were generally known. The FBI had investigated the case and had made up a pretty definite statement of facts as to what happened. And that's what they, they said had happened.

The tr—John, Jack Young and I can't remember the other black attorney's name—he was older but not nearly as good as Jack Young. The trouble with Young's approach was that he was trying a case for the record, showing that there was prejudice, and they, they had emptied two jury boxes, I think, trying to get, get a jury, and they were still going on it, and the trouble with it was that about a month earlier, maybe two months, the US Supreme Court had decided the Goldman case, in which they held that if blacks were systematically excluded from the jury that the whole panel had to be quashed, which was exactly what Jack Young was proving. Quashing the whole panel wouldn't do a damn bit of good in Pearl River County *because* there was not a qualified black elector in Pearl River County. So there's no way they could get a jury. (45:30) And I, that, that whole, that whole scenario had not entered my mind when I, when Jack was doing his questioning, but later on I thought of it, after the fact. And whoever, whoever was advising these renegades must have told them that—that is that there was no way they were ever going to convict Mac Charles Parker. And so they hauled him off and shot him—beat him and shot him, threw him in the river. (46:15)

**KM: But so you and your father—were you saying that y'all considered taking the case, or—**

JM: We never, we were never approached. I think we would have probably, had we done that. But I don't think we would have challenged the jury panel, so it probably would've been the same thing. He, he really didn't have any defense, and he, he had, the proof against him was overwhelming.

**KM: Where were you when, when James Meredith went to Ole Miss?**

JM: I was—when, when he, when he actually went, or—

**KM: When he was admitted and all the—**

JM: I was, I had pulled out of my driveway and had been in Oxford about three days. Had taken a job as an associate professor at the Law School. Farthest thing in my li—in my mind from what I wanted to do. And I had, I had talked with Bob Farley and with John Fox about coming up there, and they had told me they had a position open, but I had decided against it. And I was either going to go to Meridian and go, go into practice with a fellow that I had tried a lot of cases with down there or go to New Orleans and go with a firm in New Orleans that I had begun to try a number of cases with. And Dean Farley called me and said that he had a position open and no one to fill it and that he had not

followed up on my letters to the Yale Law School like he said he would, and that he would do that if I wanted him to, but he would rather I just come on and stay here for a year and he would—I could go and finish my law practice the way I wanted to or just handle it the way I, however I wanted to do it, which appealed to me a lot. And so that's what I did, and I came up here (sic). And that morning, I got up—everything was kind of like the Mac Charles Parker case, everything looked rosy, it didn't look like anybody was thinking about doing anything terrible that day. And I left about noon, I guess, on Sunday afternoon and drove to Jackson. There was a little, a little motel, right across from the Supreme Court Building in, in Jackson, and I was spending the night there. (49:55)

**KM: Sun and Sand?**

JM: I think it was Sun and Sand, yeah, yeah. And I went through all my records and reviewed—I had four cases I was to argue the next day, and I was ready for that. And next morning I got up to get ready to go over to the Supreme Court Building, and I heard, heard all this talk on the radio. One I heard John McLaurin, lawyer in Brandon, friend of mine. He said, "Look like we turned a corner finally," said, "they'll be a big uprising about this," so on, so forth. And what had happened was the, the people had come here (sic), somebody in Columbus, Ohio—Columbus, Mississippi—and someone from Tuscaloosa, Alabama, had begun to broadcast all day long a cry for help from everyone that would drive from anywhere in the world to Oxford and stop James Meredith from entering the University of Mississippi. (51:25)

Almost everybody that they arrested, and the newsman that was killed, were from out of the state. Most of them were the result of that importuning by that, that, that radio broadcaster. But I realized at once that I tried, tried to get out, and they told me it would be four hours before I could get a phone line, so I just went on and argued my cases and drove home. And I had been bird hunting that weekend, so I still had my gun and game sack and shells in the car, and I drove out—as I went home I drove by my cousin Sam's house, and I stopped and put my gun out there and asked him to keep it. I knew if I went into Oxford with that—they said they were searching the cars—they'd have my gun and I'd never get it back. And sure enough they stopped me, and they had a mirror on a stick and they looked all under my car and over it.

Was that, was that in response to your question? Good.

**KM: Yeah, yeah. How did things, how did things change? How did, what sort of change did you feel in the Law School, if any, after that? After Meredith?**

JM: After Meredith? None. I didn't feel any. There were, there were a lot of people that wouldn't have done anything without that, that were impelled to take some action once Meredith was kicked out (sic). But see he wasn't going to Law School.

**KM: That's what I was saying, I didn't know, y'all might have been too far—**

JM: We were in a, in a very real sense, yeah. And a of people still don't—they think Meredith was going to Law School. He finally went to Law School, but it was Columbia Law School, not, not Ole Miss.

**KM: How did, how did you come to be the Dean at the Ole Miss law school? (54:25)**

JM: Pure accident. Bob Farley had been a thorn in the side of the, the—what, what do you call those people?—the Citizens' Council. And, and, with him, I'm not sure what it was, whether it was a, some kind of personal thing or what, but Bob opposed them at every, every chance he got, but he, he didn't—he never took that step to, to let anybody in law school that—at least I never knew of it if he did. He proposed—what got Bob in real trouble, he said, was that he decided that the thing for Ole Miss to do was to get a, go out and find them a proper candidate, someone that wouldn't cause trouble, and that would go to law school and keep quiet and just do his work and go home, and he found such a person. And he went down to the Citizens' Council and the Board of Trustees—they were meeting the same day in Jackson, I believe it was—and proposed to them that they allow him to admit this black school principal. And they were aghast at the proposal, and they never, they never trusted him again. (Laughs) He was on the, he was on the Citizens' Council.

**KM: Bob Farley?**

JM: Yeah. And he said, he told me that he had a job offer, from the University of Florida, to be an associate dean, and he would be more than that. He would be the speechmaker and the front man for the, the other dean was a kind of a colorless fellow, but a good, good on paper sort of thing. And so that's what he was going to do. And he said he'd always found it was easier to get a job when you had one and that while he had, still had this one, he was going to see about going on and tying up this offer at Florida. So he went over and told the Board—the Chancellor—this, and the Chancellor, trying to head off the Board, appointed a search committee, and he appointed John Fox, Bill Bunkley—two older faculty members—Judge Claude Clayton, the chief, chief judge of the Northern District of Mississippi *and* the commanding general of the 31<sup>st</sup> Guard Division and the best organized fellow you'll ever meet. Well, Claude, of course, immediately set to work to run the whole show and, and did. And he called Myres McDougal and asked him who could—you know who Myers McDougall was? He was the, the head of the Yale graduate program and an Ole Miss graduate. Mac told him, said, "I don't know why you're asking me," said, "you've got the best man for the job on the, on the faculty down there, Josh Morse." (58:50)

And I hesitate to tell you why he said that, but I'm, I'm going to do it. Bob had told me that he'd introduce me to Mac if I'd come up and teach and that Mac would then give me—the other thing that I wanted to do was my Master's degree in studying admiralty law—and he said that Mac would set that up for me, so I, I met Mac, and we got along fine. And while we were talking, John Satterfield came into the room. You know who John is?

**KM: I know the name. I'm blanking.**

JM: Satterfield Ewing and Hedgepeth, it's a law firm, good law firm. John Satterfield was the, if he wasn't on the Citizens' Council, he was right behind the first man standing in line.

**KM: (unintelligible murmur)**

JM: And John came in and shook hands with everybody, and he, as he was leaving he shook my hand and he told me, said, said, that's the only thing I learned while I was president of the Mississi—I mean, of the univ—of the nat—of the ABA—American Bar Association—said that is, if you grab someone's hand with your hand on top like that, they can't squeeze it, and you can shake hands all day and not get your hand sore. And as he walked out the door, I said, "I bet that's the damn truth," and Mac said, "What is that?" I said, "that that's the only thing he learned while he was president of the ABA." (Laughs) And that tickled Mac to death. It turned out that he and Mac had been competitors, twice, for the Rhodes Scholarship to Oxford, England. And Mac got it both times. And he and John, there was no love lost between them, so anything he could do that he thought John would be against was, was what he was for. And that's really—I, I really do believe that's the reason I was chosen. (01:01:14) 'Cause I, I, I was just a, an associate professor. That's unheard of to jump that kind of thing.

(END OF TAPE 1)

**KM: Well, we heard a different story about why you were appointed.**

JM: Why was that?

**KM: You may or may not be interested to hear. (Laughs)**

JM: No, I'd like to hear.

**KM: And I'm trying to remember who we heard this from. Well, and we'd, we've also—you're probably familiar with a book by Michael Landon?**

JM: (Shakes his head in the negative) Um-um, I don't believe. What's it about?

**KM: It's, part of it's about you.**

JM: (Laughs)

**AG: We'll have to get you a copy, we'll send you a copy.**

JM: Ok.

**KM: It's a, it's a history of the Ole Miss Law School.**

JM: Oh, yeah, I, I remember seeing that.

**KM: It's sort of blue and white.**

JM: But I don't remember anything about me in there.

**KM: Well, we'll get you a copy. We'll highlight the pages—**

JM: What did, what'd he say?

**KM: Well, I can't remember, this might be from there or it might be from one of our other interviews.**

**AG: I think it is from there.**

**KM: Um, it, it was speculated that you were thought to be a quote-unquote "safe" appointment by the, by the state legislature.**

JM: I don't think, I don't think—they might have done that after the fact. But Claude Clayton had to have bitten his teeth. Nobody gonna head him off.

**KM: Well, and then we hear tale that, that, somebody named M.M. Roberts was involved?**

JM: (Nods) (01:02:43) Roberts was a, Roberts and my dad had a funny relationship. Roberts had been a research man for the firm of Heidelberg and Stevens. Good law firm in Hattiesburg, Mississippi. Stevens retired, went on the bench, I think. Heidelberg got pneu—tuberculosis and was up at the sanitarium, and Roberts, then—Heidelberg didn't believe that Roberts could try cases, so he told, told everybody they represented to get Tom Hanna if they had to try a case. And Roberts found out about it and was mad as hell, and he was telling Dad about it, and Dad told him that he ought to stand up, tell them that either, either, he was either going to try them or they could take it and blow it. (01:04:05) And he tried—he told me that he tried something like 40-something cases straight without losing one. And all he would do, said he would never—never mentioned the facts in the case—and that's the way he tried everything that I ever ran into him—never mentioned the facts. He'd have some, a side issue, and this one was Heidelberg's problem. He said he would tell them not, not to, not to decide this case on the fact that Heidelberg was up in the sanatorium with TB and couldn't be there to try the case, and it, it had devolved on him to, a little third-rater, to have to try the case. Anyway, Robert, Robert, it worked with Roberts, what my dad told him, and he always remembered it, and he, he told me that, he said, he said I'm gonna oppose everything that you want to do, but, he said, I'm gonna also oppose anybody firing you because I think you, you're doing what you think is right. And, that's about it. (01:05:23)

**KM: Did y'all maintain a—**

JM: Oh, yeah. I got letters from him when I, when I was looking through the file, when y'all said you were coming up here. I saw one that was some fellow who had written him from a little one-room church on a circuit over in Wayne County, where my father—my grandfather, the bishop sent him on his first assignment over there, and Roberts was telling me what a great job he'd done and all this stuff.

**KM: Uh—**

JM: But there was no, there was no, no understanding, no, no contact, even, before the appointment. And I don't remember seeing Roberts until, not really until we had the trouble with the, the Kennedys coming to, to Oxford.

**KM: What did Roberts think of that?**

JM: (01:06:46) Oh, he, he thought it was terrible. (Laughs) Everybody on, on there did. They, they, they got me up there, got the chancellor to bring me down there and without telling me what I was, that I was coming, to be offered up on the temple there to, to whatever gods they were. And, anyway. They—I remember the president of the, the board was a doctor—I can't remember his name. But they wanted me to withdraw the invitation to, to Robert Kennedy. And I told them that I had talked with the student committee that had chosen Robert Kennedy and told them that it was going to cause trouble. I had talked with them, tried to persuade them to withdraw it themselves, (shakes his head in the negative) they didn't want to withdraw it, and that I was not going to withdraw it. I said, now, *you've* got the power to withdraw it if you want to withdraw it, so you go ahead. And (shakes his head in the negative), what happened? (Laughs) Like U.B. Parker, the famous lawyer down our way and the, he was my dad's partner, Hubert Parker's brother, older brother. And U.B. was arguing a case, and he sa—he had a, he used the illustration there when, when, when they caught the woman in adultery and brought her before the elders, for their decision, and Jesus told them let, let he who—their, their, their recommendation was stoning, and Jesus said that's, that's, that's ok, let he among you who is without sin cast the first stone. And U.B. add—added to that, he said, “And what happened? Not a god-damn rock throwed!” (Laughs) (01:09:39) And that's what, what happened there.

**KM: And he came.**

JM: Yes, and was a big success, so much so The Clarion Ledger had to get out a story that, claiming that he was brainwashed. (Laughs) He and all his entourage were brainwashed and were jumping up at the, at the behest of a bunch of cheerleaders that we had hired out front.

**KM: Some of those Hedermans were clever. [The Hedermans were the owners of The Clarion Ledger newspaper in Jackson.]**

JM: Well, you know, the result of that was that the Hedermans came over on our side. One letter I've got in there is a letter from, from one of the Hedermans to me after the, after all this went out, and we had a kind of an agreement, that they were not going to interfere with the editorial policy of the paper, but they would talk to anyone that we objected to anything that was in there. And I wrote, wrote one of them and told him about something happening, and he wrote back and said that he had talked to them and they understood our, our point of view. (Laughs) Anyway. (01:11:04)

**KM: I think we just found a copy of that, that speech. I think we just found a tape of it, maybe.**

JM: Oh. Kennedy?

**KM: Yeah, we've been trying to hunt it.**

JM: Yeah.

**AG: Could you tell us more about the atmosphere of that? And—**

JM: Yeah, it was—you know, the amazing thing about that was just the, the political animal. Kennedy and his wife. They were amazing. I, I found the, some notes that I had made of the automobiles and how the seating was to be arranged in the different automobiles, so that when we picked up Robert Kennedy and his wife, they went in one car, I was in that car with them, and then there were other, other people in other cars, so on and so on, right? Well, we drove our cars right up under the wing of the airplane where we could load people—we were afraid somebody was going to shoot at them. And, we, we got out there, and everything was going smooth—Kennedy went right on, leading, leading his wife right on, they were stepping in the car, and when the crowd saw who, who it was, they began to applaud. About 5,000 people at the airport, big crowd. And Kennedy says, “Come on, let's go.” (Laughs) And they headed right out in the middle of that crowd with, right where we had been trying to keep them away from, and right in the middle, just grabbing hands and they had a big time for about 30 minutes. We finally broke it up and got people loaded in their cars, us in ours. And we went around then to the, to the coli—coliseum, where the speech was to be made. Plans called for us to drive under the coliseum, where there was an unloading shoot down below that we could unload our passengers in perfect comfort and safety. Well, we started under the thing, and he says, “Whoa! Whoa! What, what is this? Dean, what is this? Where are we?” I said, “We're going under here and unload.” He said, “No, we're not, we're going to get out right here.” So he and his wife got out and went up, and that's when the, the big applause, *thunderous* applause broke out when he, when he came into the coliseum. (01:14:00)

**KM: Hm. What did he talk about?**

JM: I don't have any idea.

**KM: (Laughs)**

JM: (Laughs)

**AG: Do you think—I've always wondered, do you think he was surprised is that, at that kind of reception in Mississippi?**

JM: I don't think so, but I, I may be wrong. He's like most politicians, I think he thought, thought it was his due. (Laughs) I, I was talking to somebody last night about Boyce Holliman. Boyce was first case that I was ever in that was reported heavily in the news was the Boyce Holliman election contest. Boyce had talked me into going down to Harrison County and investigating the voting irregularities that he claimed were going on down there. And I asked him, I said, "Boyce, why are you so sure there were voting irregularities?" He said, "Because they, they couldn't possibly have beaten me any other way." (Laughs) That's the reason. (Laughs) But he was right. We found nine dead people that had voted. And I think 23 the first day, 23 that were out of the state on the day they were supposed to have voted. (01:15:50)

**KM: But he still lost?**

JM: No, he won. We, it was a very ticklish thing because what we had to do—this was a general election. There was no provision in the Mississippi election laws for a contest. You either, if you, you, you challenged the returns at a particular box—that particular box was the only thing you were contesting. And what happened at that box, then, might, if the return was flawed, if the return was the result of fraud on the, on the election commission, then the whole, whole return fell, and so you were put to the independent proof as to what the true state of the ballot was in that particular box. So, none of us—we lost, we lost three or four to one in each of those boxes. If Lopez had, had grabbed that thing the way he should have and put on the proof, loaded up three or four school buses full of voters, those people had voted for Lopez every time he ran throughout his life, and they would have again. (01:17:17)

**KM: Hmm. Well, before we, before we leave the Robert Kennedy—**

JM: Yes, m'aam.

**KM: —talk. So the reception was positive that night, but not so positive the next day? Or?**

JM: No, it was, it was positive all the time. I, I, I didn't mean that.

**KM: Well, I was, it's, there were several things that, that we've read about the state legislature having a harsh reaction to it, the chancellor reacting harshly—**

JM: Who was, was Porter, Porter Fortune chancellor then?

**KM: I don't think so.**

JM: No, I don't think so. I think it's—

**KM: (to AG) Was it Porter Fortune?**

JM: I think it's Williams.

**AG: I'm thinking it was Williams.**

JM: But he wasn't, he didn't, he never said anything untoward about it that I knew of.

**KM: Hm. And it seems like we read somewhere else that because of that, or following that, they set up, like guidelines for who can, or how someone can be invited to the university.**

JM: (Laughs) They may have. I don't know. I'm sure they did, but it wouldn't have worked, whatever it was.

**KM: Who was your predecessor?**

JM: Farley.

**KM: Farley.**

JM: Bob Farley. And then, I was, I was—Bob retired in, in, in September—(shakes head) December of the year before I became dean. And then, then I was chosen dean that spring, but I didn't take office until—that's, that's not clear, I'm not sure when—I, I started drawing my salary right away, I know that. (Laughter)

**KM: Well, what, what was that, sort of the environment that Farley left? I mean, he retired, but— (01:19:43)**

JM: Good. Farley was, Farley was a master raconteur, and he, he also had a high sense of honor. I think he was a good man. He was, he was a product of his time, so he, he, he could not, could not see, uh, what's, what's happened. No way, no way he could swallow that. There are a lot of people that knew Bob real well that couldn't—they, they couldn't, it'd be impossible for them to say that, but, but it's the truth. (01:20:52)

I liked him. He said (laughs), he came to see me after I'd been acting as dean—I, I think maybe I had been appointed dean, and then they appointed John to be the acting dean in my absence while I was up at Yale. But—I can't, I can't think of what I was trying to say now. I'm—

**KM: Well, tell us about your time at Yale.**

JM: Oh, it was, it was great. Had a good time, lot of—it was a stimulating environment.

**KM: What were you doing up there?**

JM: Well, I thought I was going to study maritime law when I got up there. The two, two main authors of texts on maritime law in the United States were on the faculty at that time. They didn't offer the damn course, neither one of them. Whole time I was there. (Laughs) Had them in the catalog, but they didn't have them on, on paper. They kind of fly by the seat of their pants up there.

**KM: So what'd you do instead?**

JM: I took Mac's course—I can't think of the name of it now—Law, Science, and Policy. I think that's the name of it. And that met every Monday afternoon for four hours, I believe that's right. I took, I had three or four courses on logic in the law that I took just because I was interested in that. Symbolic logic, c-p-q. Symbolic logic is, you, you've got—you make statements and the statements then have a, a logical, uh, symbol substitute, substituted for the statement, and then you manipulate them through different procedures that you learn about. And you can solve simple equations that way. And pretty complex ones, too. It was more, more fun than anything else, though.

I was trying to think what else I did take—I don't know.

[unintelligible murmuring during adjustment of his microphone]

**KM: (01:25:00) Well, tell us a little more about your time at Yale—I mean, outside the classroom, or who you were hanging out with, or—**

JM: I, I hired a number of people that I met up there. Mike Horowitz was one. Mike was one that the, that the students and the general public in Mississippi thought was an awful liberal. And Mike's first, first political job he had when he got out was in Reagan's cabinet. He was the—aw, what was that fellow's name that—anyway, Mike was an archconservative.

**KM: Really?**

JM: Yeah.

**KM: Everything I've heard about him was like you were saying.**

JM: (Shakes head in the negative) What, what have you heard though? I mean, what, what (unintelligible)—

**KM: Well, being—when people have talked all the, all the professors that you brought down from Yale—**

JM: Yeah. (Laughs)

**KM: —they were all just “the liberal Yalies.”**

JM: (Laughs) The only thing that Mike Horowitz ever did that anyone could call liberal was that he was a “liberal” on the race question. He did not believe that you could discriminate in favor of or against any particular group based solely on their race. Now, I don’t think that makes a person liberal, and I don’t, I don’t think that anyone much today does believe that.

**AG: Was there something about he had students write poetry in class? Was he the one?**

JM: (Laughs) Yeah. (Laughs)

**AG: And then the Legislature sanctioned him or something?**

JM: He wouldn’t pay any attention to that.

**KM: What was that story?**

JM: I don’t know. I didn’t know anything about the Legislature sanctioning him though.

**KM: That was a pretty funny story. (to AG) Do you remember any more details?**

**AG: I think it was, was it—who was telling us that? I can’t remember who told us.**

JM: That the Legislature sanctioned him?

**AG: Maybe Dean Davis? I can’t remember.**

JM: Could be.

**AG: I can’t remember. But they, they used it as an excuse to put some controls in place because it was proof that things were going crazy because some professor was making law students write poetry.**

JM: (Laughs)

**KM: (Laughs, says something unintelligible) Well, who else did you bring down from Yale? (01:27:53)**

JM: Bill Holder, Australian. He came back, in afterlife, as the Associate General Counsel for Foreign Affairs for the World Bank. And he’s retired now from that. He’s living in Thailand with his wife. I went to visit them one time in Washington, and his wife had this photograph, big as, long as this wall, I guess. And had all kind of armed

forces people up there, and I looked, kept on, here was one—I said, “This one seems to be, have more decorations and stars on him than anybody else.” She said, “That’s my father.” (Laughs) I said, “Well, it looks to me like that’s four stars there.” I said, “That’s the general?” She says—I said, “That’s the general? Isn’t it, that’s the highest you can go in our system”—at that time, it was. Or maybe it was five, now I’ve forgotten. She said, “Well,” said, “Yeah, that’s the way it is, that’s the highest you can go.” (01:29:10)

They, they had a little girl, though, that killed herself, just, just last year. Little—she was the apple of their eye.

**KM: (01:29:34) Um, what was the reception—you, you’ve kind of talked about this already, but how did the state legislature, the other faculty, or the students—what was sort of the reaction to having these new professors from Yale that were considered liberal?**

JM: I, I didn’t hear anything about—most, most of the complaints I heard were about they [were] paid too much. We, one reason I wanted to get them was that they were paying John Fox something like three or four thousand dollars a year, when he was a, an outstanding teacher. And I wanted him to get what the going rate was in, in the system—about fifteen to seventeen thousand dollars, at that time. And I paid all these young people right off the bat ten or—twelve thousand, I think it was. And just for pure damn meanness, I appointed them as full professors. (Laughs)

**KM: (01:30:55) And what do you think they brought to the law school? Why was it important to you to have them there?**

JM: Ah, they brought a, a different viewpoint. Every, everybody that I had there represented a different group in the world community, at least. And, who else—Ken Vinson was a Texas cowboy. First, first night we were here (sic), they had a meeting—the, the, the athletic association funded a cocktail party at the country club for people, donors and supporters and so on. I took Ken Vinson with me, and we were out there, and Mike Brumbalow, who was Coach Vaught’s chief assistant at the time, came up to me and said, “Isn’t, isn’t that that Wink kid from”—I mean, “isn’t that that Vinson kid from Wink?” I said yeah. He said, “I’ll be god-damned. I tried to recruit him about six years ago,” and said, “If I could’ve gotten him,” said, “we could’ve done something with him,” but said, “he went with”—I can’t think of the fellow name now, the coach, had been coach at North Carolina. But anyway, and he said—he was one of these people that didn’t believe in babying people—said this Wink kid, there’s always something wrong with everything that you tried to have him do. (Laughs) And he said, “I knew that wouldn’t work out,” and said, “sure enough, it didn’t” but—Ken, though, was—one of the most profound thinkers about legal education is Leon Green, and Leon Green had been chosen dean of the Yale Law School—never served, went, went from there to North Carolina and was dean there, and then went from there to Texas, where he was dean of the law school and then was an associate dean for, oh, about 20, 25 years, I guess, at

Texas. But Ken was one of the few people that understood Leon Green. That's the reason I wanted to hire him.

**KM: Hm.**

JM: (01:34:00) Who else did we have? Oh, Michael Katz. Michael Katz was a Orthodox Jew from Witwatersrand, a university in South Africa. And you can figure out what he represented. (Laughs) But he, he did a good job, he—we had recruited an outstanding female student from Miss—MSCW [Mississippi State College for Women]—first, first female student had gotten a scholarship since long before black students were getting them. And I recruited her, and Mike ran off with her and went to North Carolina and [I] never saw either one of them again.

**KM: And he was her professor?**

JM: Yeah. I think we ought to do something about that, don't you? (Laughter)

**KM: Well, you recruited quite a few people while you were there. (01:34:34)**

JM: Um-hmm.

**KM: From what we've heard. You want to—was it your decision to admit Cleve McDowell?**

JM: Yeah, yeah. I did—that was—(nods)

**KM: You want to talk about that?**

JM: Wasn't anything, not much to it. He met our standards and we admitted him. And that was it. He—I can't think of anything—I can't think of any discussion, really, about him.

**KM: Was there no pressure on you to—**

JM: No.

**KM: Why do you think that was?**

JM: There was a lot of pressure in kidding, after it happened. I can remember going to the bar association and being introduced as Cleve McDowell's dean, by some of my old friends. Uh, it was a new world. (01:37:10)

**KM: Do you remember making that decision? Were you concerned that there would be pressure?**

JM: (Shakes his head in negative) Uh-uh. Uh-uh. I thought, I thought that we would, the thing to do was to make the right decision, be sure we were right, and then defend it.

**KM: Had you ever met him?**

JM: No. I don't think I had met him. I don't think we even interviewed him. John may have. John was a hands-on sort of fellow that if he got a chance, he'd interview him.

**KM: And then how'd it go while he was a student there?**

JM: He was doing fine, but I don't think he was there over a month.

**KM: Yeah, I think it was pretty short-lived.**

JM: Yeah.

**KM: Were you there at that point, when—**

JM: No.

**KM: You were at Yale.**

JM: I was there when he was admitted, but I wasn't there when he was—I wasn't there when the physical admission took place, I was there when we made the legal decision to admit him.

**KM: And what were you hearing while you were at Yale about—**

JM: Not a word.

**KM: —that incident.**

JM: Not a word. (01:38:44)

**KM: What about Reuben Anderson?**

JM: Well, we were looking—when we got the, we got right at a million dollars from Ford [Foundation], and one, one part of it was for recruiting, and we had six, six scholarships, I believe it was. It would amount to three students per year—must have been nine. Three students per year for three years. And I got Bill Miller, Reuben Anderson, and I can't think who the third one was. They must not have been too good, though, they must not have graduated when, when Reuben did. 'Course, Reuben had been, been to school for a year, though.

**KM: Yeah, so he was (unintelligible)**

JM: Yeah, so they may—

**KM: And he, as he tells the story, you, you personally recruited him. (01:40:12)**

JM: (Nods) I think by telephone, though. I think that's, was the personally. I talked with him, and there was a, we had a, we got an LSAT score from a student at LSU, white student, 800, which was high as they reported them. First one I had ever seen. And I called—we had a, we had an alumnus who was practicing law in Baton Rouge in a big law firm, and I called him and asked him would he go and personally talk to this boy and tell him the advantages of going to University of Mississippi over LSU. (Shrugs) About the only thing you can say: small. And it was, it was, it was common law when, even though they had a common law course at LSU, nobody took it. But anyway, he did, and we got him, and we got Reuben, we got Miller, I can't remember who the other one was.

**KM: Who was the one with the perfect SAT score? LSAT score?**

JM: You know I can't think of his name, too. He went to, he went to—he taught, he went into teaching at—you can look back and see who was at South Carolina about ten or twenty years ago. He was an underachiever, though.

**KM: (01:42:17) What about Constance Slaughter-Harvey?**

JM: I think we hir—I think we recruited her the next year, maybe the year after that. She was toward the end of my tenure. But she was—she and I were talking about what a wonderful thing we did for her. At the time, I remember one time we were in a class, and we were talking about the differences and how we, how, how, how much it meant to have people from different backgrounds as part of a law class, and she started talking, and she was crying, about she and I would never be able to do anything. (Laughs) As a result of us having talked her into going to, to Ole Miss to law school. So she's changed her mind a little bit, too.

**KM: And she was the first black woman law student?**

JM: Yeah, yeah.

**KM: Do you remember any particular points of tension amongst the students regarding the admi—regarding your admitting black students?**

JM: No. The students have got a, ah, biased view about faculty. They think faculty know everything they're thinking about, and faculty don't really much give a damn about what students think about. But they were worried about faculty choosing some of them who had been outstanding proponents of segregation. We had—let's see—we had one student who, who was big in the Ross Barnett campaign and was a dyed-in-the-wool segregationist. And he, I think he was the only one that wasn't, wasn't afraid of getting reported. I think he was hoping he would be.

**KM: You remember his name?**

JM: You know, I can't think of his name. I've gotten several letters from him since.

**KM: You've got a good memory for names.**

JM: (Laughs)

**KM: Seriously. You call them up left and right. Well, there was one guy that we heard a story about from several people. I think his name, the student's name was David Clark—**

JM: That's him. That's him, David Clark.

**KM: He's a district attorney in Rankin County.**

JM: He is, now?

**KM: Actually, he just got ousted. Got beat, a few weeks ago. But he was. (01:45:36)**

JM: District attorney? Or county attorney?

**KM: Well, I might be mangling the—**

JM: Probably county attorney. I can't believe that the district would elect him, but they might.

**KM: That, that's what's in my head, but I might be wrong. But yeah, I thought that—well, I'm originally from Jackson, and I had seen his name, and then several people told us this story about when Aaron Henry came to speak in a law class.**

JM: Yeah.

**KM: Do you remember that?**

JM: I got a letter from Aaron, but I don't remember anything about any—what happened?

**KM: Well, the story we've been told is that he came, he was invited to speak in, I can't remember what class, in 1966. And David Clark—everyone, it was mandatory attendance—**

JM: (Laughs) Sat outside in the hall?

**KM: —and David Clark pulled his desk out in the hall.**

JM: (Laughs) I remember that. (01:46:33) That was Ken Vinson's class, too. Vinson encouraged Clark—he, he loved what he was doing. He thought Clark had ability, writing ability, too. Ken was a, was a fellow that wanted to be an author terribly bad, more than he wanted to be a law professor.

**KM: That didn't work out?**

JM: I got two or three letters from David Clark, indicating changes in his outlook, that he had been wrong, and so on. I threw them away, I don't— (Laughs)

**KM: I was just about to ask you if you still have them. (Laughs) You burned them. (Laughs)**

JM: I didn't believe he'd changed.

**KM: You've heard from a lot of students over the years.**

JM: Oh, yeah. There was another one that was a Barnett campaigner. He was from New York, and he went to the Bronx High School of Science—same one, I think Stokely Carmichael went there. And what was his name? He, he called me one, one night I woke up about 1:00 in the morning, he had called, and wanted to speak to me, and I talked with him, and he was here in Tallahassee about something and wanted to come out and talk, and I talked with him on the phone.

**KM: At one in the morning he wanted to come out and talk?**

JM: Yeah. (Laughter)

**KM: And you didn't invite him right in? (Laughter) (01:48:50) Was Trent Lott there when you were there?**

JM: I hired Trent. Trent, Trent was there when I was an associate professor. And then he stayed on, I hired him as the secretary of the alumni association of the law school, and he did that for about a year, and then Bill Collamer was a very close—had been a roommate of my father. That's, that's how close they were, they roomed together, and Bill was a pitcher on the baseball team at Millsaps, and my dad caught. So they were, another hook. Bill called me and said that he had just, now had a permanent position as chairman of the Rules Committee of the House of Representatives, which was the most important committee in the House of Representatives in Congress because it set the agenda, every, every day and every month and every week. And he needed someone that he could rely on that could follow from day-to-day what was going on in that committee and keep him apprised of it. And he wanted me to represent somebody—recommend somebody to him. And I, at the time, I thought Trent would do him a good job. There was no, no talk of political bias or—really, that, that sort of thing, it was useless. Anybody that would

run on a platform that they were going to encourage people to, blacks to vote, would get the hell beat of them. Nobody was running on that platform.

Anyway, Trent—I talked with Trent and he was interested, Bill Collamer was interested. I called Bill, Bill sent me a ticket, I gave it to Trent, and he went up and took the job.

What is he supposed to have done?

**KM: You mean in my notes?**

JM: (Laughs) Yeah.

**KM: Oh. (Laughs) Well, since you asked. (Laughter) We got our hands on a copy of his, his memoir, *Herding Cats*.**

JM: Herding Cats?

**KM: Have you read it?**

JM: No.

**KM: Well, we were looking for the quote, but we couldn't dig up a copy of his book at the Winter Institute. But he, he makes some mention of his time at the Ole Miss Law School, talking about all the liberals from Yale.**

JM: He wasn't here (sic) when that happened.

**KM: And how their presence at the Ole Miss Law School hardened his conservatism. (01:52:07)**

JM: That could be. But I doubt it. The thing that hardened his conservatism was counting the votes on, which side they were on. (Laughs)

**KM: (Laughing) Well, I'll trust you over him. (Laughter)**

JM: (01:52:30) Trent—I had trouble with the US Navy. They wouldn't—I had signed up with, a bunch of recruiters came through and they were recruiting people to go to Navy JAG. And they took about five of my students, and they were in there, and I was signing things saying they were good students, and so on, so on. And the recruiter said, "Dean," said, "why don't you apply for a commission?" I said, "I was in the Army, and I didn't stay in. I told them that I didn't want any reserve commission in the Army in the infantry." (Laughs) They said, "Aw, this would be, this wouldn't be that," said, "this is high class stuff for high, high powered attorneys." So, so I, I said, "Well, the other thing is that I think that I'll be too old. I won't be able to retire." He said, "Well, that's, you don't have to worry about that," said, "if they accept you," said, "they'll allow you to retire." So I trusted him.

I served about 14 years and had about 2 more to go—I'd, I had 4 in the, in the Army—(thinking) 4, 14—yeah, I had about 2 to go is right. And I, all of a sudden I get a letter from the Navy saying that I was going to be terminated at the end of this term of my contract, which was about a year and a half. So I'd have about, I'd lack about six months. And so, I, I wanted the Secretary of the Navy to give me a, an extension, in affect is what it amounted to. And to do that I had to do several things that were unusual anyway. The, the, all the armed services have a board for correction of records. They can correct your records so that it makes you 100 years old or makes you 5 years old. It's got nothing to do with anything except that particular record. Doesn't have to do with the reality of life or anything else. And I called Trent and told him that I needed help. And he helped me. That was about 10 years ago. (01:55:19)

**KM: Well, sounds like he owed you.**

JM: He did. And he didn't look to see whether or not I voted for— (Laughter)

**KM: (01:55:34) Well, you were up against a lot in Mississippi when you were there, obviously.**

JM: Yeah.

**KM: You had the segregationist legislature, you had the Citizens' Council—**

JM: Oh, everybody.

**KM: Who, who in particular?**

JM: Who in particular?

**KM: Yeah, if you had an arch-nemesis, or if you had somebody that was just always on your back.**

JM: You know, nobody that amounted to anything. There were a lot of them that were always on my back that didn't amount—there was a couple of little state legislators from some of those North Mississippi counties, didn't have enough votes in the whole county to wad a shotgun if you crammed them all in there together. (01:56:18)

**KM: What about the Citizens' Council?**

JM: (Shakes his head) Never heard from them. I—the, the, the one person that wrote more stuff about me than anybody else was always close to the truth but never quite true, was—what was that fellow's name?

**KM: What did he do?**

JM: He was a syndicated columnist—I mean, an unsyndicated columnist. (Laughs) For the, for the Clarion Ledger.

**KM: On the Citizens' Council?**

JM: And, and if he wasn't a member of the Citizens' Council, he was a strong supporter. I can't think of his name.

**KM: Was it Bill Simmons out of Jackson?**

JM: No, Bill Simmons was a—I met Bill on a number of times, had that guardsman's moustache. And Bill, Bill went into the armed services, and was doing fine until they started to send him overseas.

**KM: He went to the West Indies, he said.**

JM: He went, he was going over into Europe, though.

**KM: Oh right.**

JM: And he, he had been a strong admirer of Adolf Hitler. Bob Farley told me this, so I don't know that it's true. But I, I think that Bob would be more accurate than anybody else. He said that Bill all of sudden went blind, and that the psychiatrist said that the reason was that Bill just simply could not in his mind—he'd been such a strong supporter of the things that Adolf Hitler was for—that he couldn't see himself doing that, and it, it meant it became a personal reaction. (01:58:43)

**KM: Wait, I don't fully understand. That he—**

JM: That he reacted by becoming blind in fact, because he could not picture himself.

Bill is your uncle, I know. (Laughter)

**KM: Nope, but I interviewed him a couple of years ago. He didn't, he didn't tell me that. (Laughter)**

**What about the Sovereignty Commission?**

**AG: (on camera in background) I'm going to switch tapes here.**

(BEGIN TAPE 3)

JM: You know, if they bothered us, I don't remember it. They were, they were, were pretty toothless by the time I came along anyway, but in the early days they were, they were a strong factor, I think.

**KM: You know who they bothered, who's on this list, is Wilhelm Joseph.**

JM: Did they?

**KM: Woo! They were on his case.**

JM: Yeah, I remember seeing that—and, and Bill and, and Jim Eastland apparently. I, I don't believe Jim—that's too small stuff for him to be fooling with. Somebody was sitting across the desk from him when he wrote that letter. (02:00:00)

**KM: Hm.**

**AG: What was the kind of atmosphere that the Sovereignty Commission created in the state, though?**

JM: I don't know of any—I really don't know of anything that they did that, that affected the outcome of any action anybody took or didn't take. Somebody helpless like Joseph was, they might be able to. But I can't believe they would cause any problem to a fellow like Farley or to, to me either.

**KM: (02:00:50) Everybody that we've talked to so far has sort of talked around your departure, talked about—speculated that there was a, that there was outside pressure for you to leave, but no one's really talked concretely about that.**

JM: Oh, plenty, plenty of pressure. State senator from Marshall County—I can't think of his name—and a representative from one of those counties up there, and Ed Perry from over at Senatobia, all were in the legislature, and all of them were calling for action on the part of the state legislature. The legislature was seen as toothless, not being able to do anything, and they wanted them to cut off the law school funding. And that's what, that's what really got me started thinking about it. I, I could see that what was going to happen was going to be that they were going to cut off the funding for the law school, and we'd just be sitting there, and it wouldn't be doing anything I could do about it or keep from doing, and I thought I better get out of there and let everybody else do the same. And that's what I did. (02:02:13)

**AG: Was that because of the North Mississippi Legal Serv—Rural Legal Services?**

JM: Well, that was one thing because that—Marshall County was one of the old, old Mississippi counties. It, it had about, what, 70 percent black? Something like that.

**KM: (unintelligible murmur)**

JM: And—funny thing, that, that state senator that raised so much hell about that. Our, our lawsuit that Legal Service Foundation filed up there in Marshall County was decided, and it decided that black people had to be given the same kind of education as whites, and schools had to be open, so on and so on. They then said that blacks had to be able to

vote, so within about ten years the whole political structure in North Mississippi changed, where you had no, no blacks voting, and now you got 70 percent of them voting. Seventy percent of the population is black that's voting. And this senator was a big champion of black voting. (Laughs) I can't—politicians are funny people.

**KM: (02:03:56) Tell a little of the back story, just for the record, if you will, about the—well, now it's North Mississippi Rural Legal Services, but back then it was the Legal Services—**

JM: I think it was North Mississippi Rural Legal Services then.

**KM: Ok.**

JM: Yeah. We, we got one of the first grants—Sandy D'Alemberte, who's been president of the ABA and nearly about everything in Florida, and president of the university—Florida State University—dean of the law school. Sandy—uh, what were we talking about?

**KM: The North Mississippi Rural Legal Services, and you were, you were telling us earlier about the Holly Springs, the desegregation.**

JM: Oh, yeah. What, what—but some, I had some connection, though, with this school—what was I? Uh, can't think of what I, what, what I was going to tell you about.

**KM: Well, and I was just asking you to sort of explain, for the record, the, the, the lawsuit that North Mississippi Rural Legal Services filed.**

JM: Well, we, we—I know, I know what I was trying to tell. Sandy keeps, every time I see him, he tells me about this story that he runs into Clint Bamberger, who was the head of legal service program for Robert Kennedy—I mean, for John Kennedy—and then later on as well. I went up there, hat in hand, to get some money, that's what I was looking for. I didn't care where it came from, and I was getting it—they, they had plenty of it, Legal Services. So I went in there, and Clint didn't want to talk to me, somebody from Mississippi coming up there talking to him, so, I asked him—he said he couldn't see me that day. I said, “Are you going to eat lunch?” Said, “Yeah.” So I said, “Well, maybe we can eat, eat and talk, how about that?” So he said, “Alright.” So, anyway, I told him what I wanted, and I would take money with strings attached, and he could attach plenty of them. And, we, we set the thing up in Oxford, and we set it up in such as way that it was to pay, pay Oxford attorneys to do, do work, of all kinds, including political.  
(02:07:06)

That went—that probably lasted for two years, and then we, we began to have trouble inside the structure itself, people wanting to do more radical things, and, and I had no objection to that—they, they began to file, finally filed this lawsuit. And so by filing the lawsuit, it put us in direct, head-to-head conflict with the political structure of Marshall County. And ultimately we won, but I could see that if, it we pursued that, that thing,

that the easiest way for them to stop us was to get the university to cut us off, say that we're not going to sponsor you anymore because the, the, the by-laws of the Legal Service Corporation, the one in Washington, say that they can't give a, a grant unless there is a sponsor that has, meets certain criteria, and one of them had to be a teaching university, a teaching something. So, we, we looked around, the nearest thing we could find was this Mary Washington—whatever it is—

**AG: Holmes.**

JM: —junior college.

**AG: Was it Mary Holmes?**

JM: (Nods) Mary Holmes. And we got them to agree to be ready to sponsor us when—not “if” but “when”—the university cut us off. And that's what happened. Other than that, everything went ri—went on, right on just like it always had. (02:09:13)

**KM: Was it that case that was sort of the impetus for some of the outside pressure on you?**

JM: No, I don't think so. It could've been, but I don't think so.

**KM: What do you think, if there was a straw that broke the camel's back?**

JM: I, I never did feel any—the, I'm sure that, that those people I was talking about, that didn't talk to me but talked to the chancellor, were telling him that he had to do something, and he was not a s—what you'd call a strong person anyway.

**KM: Was he candid with you about that, or—**

JM: No. No. No, he was always, had a, some contingency that had to happen before anything would take place that he was talking about. (02:10:15)

**KM: Hm.**

JM: W—

**KM: Were there any people—oh, sorry, go ahead.**

JM: Williams was a strong chancellor. He'd go as far as he could and just kind of nudge up against the, whatever he's supposed to be leaning on.

**KM: During this era, while you were there and especially toward the end of it, was there any one person or several people that were particularly supportive and really went out on a limb to back you up and—?**

JM: (Thinks for several seconds, then laughs) I don't know.

(Lengthy pause)

**KM: Long pause.**

JM: I don't know of anyone. (Laughs) I hadn't really thought about that, but I can't think of anybody. (long pause) Claude Clayton, I guess, would be one. Didn't give a damn [if] he's fighting a circle saw tomorrow, it'd be ok with him. (02:11:38)

(Lengthy pause)

**KM: What about your family? How, how or if were they affected by some of this?**

JM: Tha—it was hard on them. It—Oxford is a, is a small town, and it's, but it's got a lot of big city things connected with it, too, and, we were able to live within the social structure at Oxford and be included in all phases of activity. Even though they might point at us behind our back and say that we were ultraliberal or something. But it didn't seem to bother anybody. I guess in a university setting, you, you kind of used to that.

**KM: You mean it didn't seem to bother anybody in your family?**

JM: No, anybody outside that, to keep them from, anyone in Oxford from having social contact with us. (02:13:26)

**KM: Have you been back to Oxford?**

JM: Yeah. (Laughs)

**KM: Would you do things differently if you had them to do over again?**

JM: I'm sure I would, but I'm not sure how. I haven't spent any great amount of time thinking about it, though, tell you that.

**KM: So you left there, and you came, you came to Tallahassee.**

JM: Um-hm.

**KM: And sort of describe that transition.**

JM: It was—we had another enemy here. We had the University of Florida, and the law school at the University of Florida didn't like the idea of having another state university having a law school. And they were trying to cut our feet out from under us at every turn. And that's what all the focus was on when I was over here. We had—we did a good bit of work in the recruitment of black law students. We, we recruited and funded the first Hispanic-American law recruitment program, educational program. And

University of Florida really at first didn't want to have anything to do with Hispanics. It was—Hispanics in Florida held about the same position that blacks had held in Mississippi, and it was hard for some of those older faculty members at Florida to get used to the idea that things were changing. But other than that, I can't think of anything that—I can't—it was easier on my family, I think, once we got here than it was in Mississippi. (02:16:09)

**KM: You were saying to me on the phone that it was particularly difficult for your wife, I think you said?**

JM: Yeah, because of pressures that were put on our kids and that—hard for her to respond to.

**KM: Ok.**

JM: Yeah.

**KM: How old were your kids?**

JM: I was talking with Jean yesterday, and she said she started to school in Oxford. My oldest daughter was a junior in high school when she, when we moved here. And my son was a sophomore in college, whatever age that is, I don't know.

**KM: So you just had one young daughter.**

JM: Yeah.

**KM: And, and what were, what were some of those pressures that she faced, do you recall?**

JM: I don't, you know I can't—she, when, when she was in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade, they closed down the black school that was the—I think it called, was called Central. And all those kids went into the general mix. Now I remember there was a little girl, a little black girl named Devorah, was cute as a biscuit, that was in Jean's class. They put on some play, and she was one of the stars in it, and she really was a star. (02:18:15)

**KM: Well, we've asked all these other people about your legacy at Ole Miss.**

JM: (Laughs) Yeah?

**KM: What do you think you, was your—**

JM: Big legacy?

**KM: Or just your, your contribution, you know, what—?**

JM: You know, I don't know. What would you think?

**KM: I mean, I think you set the place heading in a new direction.**

JM: Well, I don't think I could've done it had not J.D. Williams, the president, been supportive. But he was—he let you know that he wasn't going to be a, standing up against the wall if there was a firing squad, but that he would do almost anything else. And he did fine. Bob, Bob Farley's work in, in the area had laid the groundwork, I think. Bob, Bob was too much of a traditionalist to do any terrible changes, but he, he also was an independent sort, so he could, he could do whatever he wanted to do. (02:19:44)

I can't think of anybody that really did too much.

**AG: Several people have, that we've interviewed have said that your tenure there shifted the way, the level of professionalism in the practice of law in the state of Mississippi, that before it had been very much embroiled in a "good ol' boy" system. And that there were serious challenges to a level of professionalism and that your leadership, especially, you know, with the integration, with bringing in new law professors that opened up, that it really shifted the tone of professionalism.**

JM: Well, that's true. And that's one of the things we were trying to do, was to, to, by getting people from all sorts of different backgrounds, to let the students know there were places to look other than across the street or at the courthouse. And, a lot of them did learn that. An awful lot of them—an awful lot of them that learned it [did so] going out the door kicking. (02:21:26)

Trent's a good example. Trent, Trent can talk however he needs to talk now. (Laughs)

**KM: And sometimes how he doesn't need to. (Laughter)**

JM: Yeah, he's, he, I don't think Trent really seems—I don't think he understands *yet* that he's in a different world. He was talking about his uncle—did, did you hear him when he was talking about his uncle and the, his uncle meeting with what amounted to the Klan? Oh well. He did. (Laughter)

**KM: He, he was on campus last week, and his guest of honor was Tom Daschle. He said it was the first Democrat he had ever invited to the University of Mississippi.**

JM: Oh.

**KM: And then, in the middle of their presentation, a Democrat from Florida walked on the stage, whose name—Nelson, Bill Nelson?**

JM: (Nods) Yeah. Bill Nelson has, has been really bearing down on what he thinks is the right thing. (02:23:00)

**KM: (to AG on camera) Well, what other questions do you have back there?**

**AG: I just wondered if there were any other stories or anecdotes you wanted to share about your time in Oxford.**

JM: (Laughs) I can't think of any.

**KM: Are there other people we should interview?**

JM: Might talk to Horowitz. You get him?

**KM: We have his name on our list, but I don't think we've talked to him.**

JM: He's, I talked to him last month.

**KM: Is he in DC?**

JM: He's, I think he's "afloat." (Laughs)

**KM: Afloat?**

JM: I think he's in DC and in Washington, and, but he seems to be in, in air an awful lot of the time, just flying around from one place to the other.

**KM: Hm. Then—who's the guy who's, I think, at Duke now? That was one of these professors?**

JM: (Nods) Um-hm.

**AG: (unintelligible) Dellinger?**

**KM: Dellinger.**

JM: Walter Dellinger. He's, he was the, the Solicitor General, uh—

**KM: Clinton, wasn't it?**

JM: Yeah, they, they couldn't name him as Solicitor General because he couldn't pass the vote necessary to confirm him. So he was Acting Solicitor General for about four years. Walter is, he is an amazing person. He's one of these people that can talk on any subject, just sit him down and tell him to start talking about the Copernican Theory, and he'd come up with it. (02:24:58)

**KM: Well, we might sit him down and ask him to talk about you.**

JM: He might, he, he could give you a lot.

**KM: Um—**

JM: He's, is he at Duke now, still?

**KM: I think so.**

JM: I think he is, too. His, I, I gave his son \$50 or \$100 or something, whatever he asked for, to run for district attorney, and then I was, had forgotten about it, and got this check in the mail. His son decided not to run, the last minute.

**KM: Hm. You know North Mississippi Rural Legal Services, they were recently plotting and planning for their 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary.**

JM: No kidding?

**KM: Um-hmm. That's how, well, talking with them, that's how I first got in touch with Wilhelm.**

JM: Hmm.

END INTERVIEW. (02:26:00)