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Oral History of Student Life at the UK College of Law with James Park, Jr. (Class of 1958)

James Park Jr.

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Interviewee: James Park, Jr. (Class of 1958)
Interviewer: Franklin L. Runge
Date: June 25, 2015
Location: University of Kentucky College of Law

This transcription is non-strict verbatim, meaning that it does not include all utterances (e.g., Mm-hmm, uh-huh, umm, uh, etc.). The audio timestamp will be added before each paragraph. New paragraphs are started at every change of speaker or at every three minutes, whichever is earlier.

[laughter]

[background conversation]

0:00:03 Franklin L. Runge: This is June 25th of 2015. It is a little after 9:00 AM in the morning. This is Franklin Runge, the interviewer. The interviewee is James Park, Jr., of Lexington, Kentucky. And he graduated from the College of Law in 1958. As I said, let's just hear a little bit about your childhood and your family situation growing up with...

0:00:33 James Park Jr.: I was born in Lexington on April the 16th, 1933, on McDowell Road. Just a couple of blocks from Henry Clay's home. And I haven't gotten far physically in life. I now live behind that Henry Clay's home at the corner of Woodspoint and Ashwood. When I was about five years old, the family moved to the country out Tates Creek Pike, what was in the country then, now it's in the city. And so I grew up basically on a farm. I went to the university school that was a part of the Department of Education of the University of Kentucky. Starting in kindergarten, went all the way through and graduated from high school in 1951.

0:01:45 FR: Did you have siblings?

0:01:46 JP: I have one older sister who's still living. She's about six and a half years older than I. And she went same university school. She did her undergraduate work at the University of Kentucky also. That was all the siblings that I had. My father was a lawyer. He was, from as long as I can remember, Commonwealth's Attorney here in Fayette County. That was at a time when the city or the county was small enough that it was a part time job. And he was... It was for six year terms and he was elected four times, which was a little unusual because it carried all the way through the Depression. He was Republican. And he was active in Republican politics. My mother was a graduate of the university, also and very proud of the fact that she was inducted in the first class of Phi Beta Kappa at the university. So, we had this university background. Well, after I got out of school, I had a family friend who was couple years older than I, who was going to Princeton. And I asked him, I said, "Tell me about the school." And he said, "It's good school. I think you would enjoy it. It'd be good for you." So I applied and got in. It would've been a lot harder today.

[chuckle]

0:03:44 JP: And so I graduated up there, took history was my major, mainly American History. But history, generally. And it'd always been sort of a love that I've had, I picked up from my father who loved history, and so that fit right in. And I did well enough there, came back here to go to law school. Now, why'd I go to law school? I never felt any pressure from my father to become a lawyer. But he was so unusual in that he was a great trial lawyer, being a prosecutor. He was not one that believed in a lot of emotion, he had a voice that could carry anywhere in the courtroom without loudspeakers and the like, but it was always modulated. He was always polite and he'd cut a witness up politely. He was really a good trial lawyer but he was a book lawyer, too. He'd love legal problems and he was sort of a lawyer's lawyer. There were lawyers all over the state that would come to him because they had a unique problem. Ask him to join them or pump him [chuckle] for information. And if my father had something interesting, he'd just talk about it. And I can remember that he told us about one case he was involved in involving a train that had started in Ohio, lost its brakes as it was going across the river and jumped the tracks in Kentucky.

0:05:56 JP: And they had an agreement between the railroads that whoever's tracks or wherever the accident occurred, was responsible. Didn't matter who owned the locomotive or the line. And so the brakes failed in Ohio. It ran out of control on the bridge that was owned by a third railway then jumped the tracks in Kentucky on the third one. He was fascinated by that, he had a great time and he would talk about cases like that. I mean that's stuck in my mind. I have no idea how many years ago that was. And so I decided that I would like law, it involved history. And so after I graduated from Princeton I thought I wanted to practice although I didn't know and I thought, "Well, I'd better come back to Kentucky if I'm gonna practice in Kentucky."

0:07:00 FR: Now do you have a memory of childhood going to court with your father and watching him try cases?

0:07:09 JP: On occasion, yeah.

0:07:09 FR: On occasion?

0:07:10 JP: On occasions, yes.

0:07:11 FR: What's your sort of earliest memories that are kinda fully formed about those trials?

0:07:17 JP: I can't recall...

[background conversation]

0:07:29 JP: I can't recall a specific trial, but I can remember going and watching him in some criminal prosecution. I don't remember. I remember going to court. I didn't do it as a habit. The only other time I can remember specifically going to court was during the trial of Ed Prichard. Going to Federal Court and watching parts of that session.

0:08:13 FR: What was that trial about?



0:08:15 JP: Well, Ed Prichard had been a wonder boy of the New Deal in Washington and had come back to Kentucky. He graduated from Princeton and then Harvard Law and was Frankfurter's law clerk. And he was on the inner sanctum of the White House. And he came back to Kentucky and he was gonna be Governor. And he was unquestionably a brilliant person. But at that point in time he traveled unencumbered by a whole lot of ethics. And so he and at least one other person stuffed some ballots in Bourbon County and some Republican precinct worker heard ballots shaking in the box when they were getting ready to open. And he sat on the box and called the FBI and so they had the evidence. And the trial was notorious in part because Prichard had gone to the circuit judge over in Bourbon County, that was the father of one of his friends, to ask for advice what he oughta do. That was a mistake 'cause he talked too much to the judge. And one of the legal issues was, was that attorney client privilege? And the ruling was, "No," he could not act as an attorney in a case that he was acting as a friend and there was no privilege. And that went all the way to the Supreme Court and got affirmed because it couldn't get a quorum, I think. I've forgotten now. Prichard came back later on and basically got hold of himself and the Prichard committee...

0:10:24 FR: Committee, yeah.

0:10:24 JP: That's Ed Prichard. The last years of his life were unlike his first years.

0:10:34 FR: Yeah.

0:10:35 JP: Anyway, you wanted to know what trials I saw. That fascinated me because of the issues that were involved and the personalities that were involved. It was in Federal Court as it was a Federal election.

0:10:58 FR: So then after seeing some of these early cases, you knew you wanted to practice in Kentucky?

0:11:04 JP: Yeah. I thought so. I'll say it wasn't just seeing it but it was hearing legal issues discussed that weren't necessarily jury trials. And my father for some reason did not drive and once I got a driver's license I used to drive him all over the state. A lot of that was political, other parts of it was he'd be going up, argue a motion or one thing or another. I'd listen to him talk about the cases and that made it interesting. So I decided that if I wanted to practice law I'd better come here. After I graduated in 1958, I wasn't sure what I wanted to practice or whether I wanted to teach, and so I did a year and a half up at Yale and got a Masters, and I thought there was more politics there than there was in a courthouse and came back to practice law.

0:12:17 FR: So when in... After you graduated from Princeton that summer, did you come back here and live in Kentucky?

0:12:25 JP: Yeah, yeah.

0:12:26 FR: All right. So you lived out on the farm where your...

0:12:28 JP: That's right.

0:12:30 FR: So your father was an attorney. Was he just also a gentleman farmer or did you all have actual, like a working farm?



0:12:37 JP: Well, he was a gentleman farmer, in the sense that he didn't do any farming, but it was a real farm. And particularly during World War II, your patriotic duty was to have gardens and chickens and hogs and one thing or another, so we did. And so I grew up knowing a little bit about farming, but I suppose I was like my father. My father grew up on a farm. There were five brothers, and he said that he knew he wanted to make his living with his head and not his back. [chuckle]

0:13:26 FR: That's fair, yeah.

0:13:26 JP: But he loved the country.

0:13:30 FR: So that summer you were there, after you graduated from college, you were there at home for the summer, and did you enroll in law school here at the University of Kentucky?

0:13:40 JP: Correct.

0:13:41 FR: That fall then?

0:13:42 JP: Yeah. Yeah, I graduated in '55 from Princeton, that fall entered the law school class.

0:13:50 FR: The class in the fall of 1955. What was... Did you... I'm trying to just imagine what the admissions process was and how you managed it. Did you just come and talk to the... Was it Dean Starr at the time?

0:14:05 JP: It was, but my only recollection of the procedure was in the admissions office where they didn't understand the grading system at Princeton, which was not an A-B-C-D-E, it was a numerical system, and so they were trying to equate it to the A-B-C and say that if I had a... Well, there were more numbers than there were letters, and so you couldn't convert them as such, and as I recall the admissions officer for the law school, whoever that was, I think it was up in the Administration Building. [chuckle] I never did get it through that person's head, and she was questioning how good my grades were even though I graduated magna cum laude [chuckle], so be that as it may. Starr was probably Dean only one semester. He was in and out. He was Dean and then, this was before I got here, and then he went to serve... Maybe he was Air Force Secretary at one point a time, I think. And then W.L. Matthews substituted for him, and then when he came back, and I think he was Dean my first semester but I can't be positive about that, Matthews succeeded him. Matthews taught first year Property. I'll never forget, [chuckle] he would take out his watch and say, "I give you my watch." Then he would go from that gesture, just what it took for transfer of property and for that. But I'll never... "I'll give you my watch." He was Faculty Athletics Representative before Bob, and a real straight arrow. Bob will tell you that, Bob Lawson.

0:16:42 FR: Yeah.

0:16:44 JP: And so he was Dean and taught Property, I think, for the whole time. And what else did I take that first year? Common Law Pleadings, which had to be the dullest subject I ever took anywhere.

[chuckle]



0:17:11 JP: And all I can say is that it enabled you to read some old cases and understand what they were talking about, and also to get some concept of what were the basic causes of action of common law things. And that was taught by McEwan, and I can't think of his first initials; I'm confusing with the developer. But some time, I think it was the freshman year, McEwan was struck by lightning and killed out on the Lexington Country Club or some golf course. So, when we moved out of Common Law Pleadings to the code and the civil rules that was a great step forward.

0:18:23 FR: Alfred McEwan.

0:18:24 JP: Alfred.

0:18:24 FR: Who was out of Virginia.

0:18:26 JP: Yeah. He was a nice fella. And he did the best he could with his subject. And Roy Moreland taught criminal law, and I think that would have been the first year, but he had the Law of Homicide. He had his own little book on homicide that you bought. Contracts was Burt Hamm, and if you didn't get contracts it wasn't because you were... You weren't paying attention because he laid it out. He used the same notes year after year and he laid it out as clear as could be. People took good notes that were called Hamm-o-grams.

0:19:26 FR: Yeah.

0:19:28 JP: Have you heard of 'em?

0:19:28 FR: Yes I've heard of the Hamm-o-gram. They were passed on from year to year.

0:19:32 JP: Oh, okay. Then Paul Oberst was Torts. And he was a brilliant fella and a great individual. I ran into a classmate of mine from Princeton, who was blind at Princeton, and from Ashland of all places. And he ended up going to Washington and he became a lawyer. And I was talking to him at a reunion, a 60th reunion, and Orel Miller was his name. And he said, "Did you go to law school at Kentucky?" I said, "I did." He said, "Did you know Paul Oberst?" I said, "Yes, I did." "Well he was visiting professor at the University of Chicago Law School where I went and he was a great influence on me and worked with me." I remember Miller used to take notes in Braille back in that day and age that was the only thing he could do, punch little holes. And he remembered Oberst. But that was typical of Oberst. He helped this blind law student. He worked with a law student who was denied admission to the University and he said he had to drive over to Frankfurt to Kentucky State to teach this fella law and that was before finally the federal court threw out that ban. This was before Bragg and the Board of Education. Then I was trying to think who else was doing that... Dorothy Salmon taught legal bibliography and Fred Whiteside taught domestic relations. Legal method was Mr. Star and Mr. Matthews. I still don't have much memory about Elvis Star. I don't know when Richard Gillam came in. Let's see.

0:22:32 FR: Gillam must have been '58 or '59.

0:22:36 JP: Yeah.

0:22:38 FR: Richard Gillam.



0:22:39 JP: That's right. I hate to say this, but I'm sure he's gone. He was a likeable nice fella. He was known as Liquor Dick. [chuckle] He occasionally had his problems on that.

0:22:58 FR: Now there is a story about how he would cure his hangovers.

[chuckle]

0:23:04 FR: About being put in the bathtub. Did you hear that?

0:23:07 JP: No. If I did I've forgotten it.

0:23:11 FR: He would hook himself on a harness so he wouldn't drown.

[chuckle]

0:23:15 FR: And he would pour a hot bath and go to sleep and then apparently when the water temperature cooled it would wake him up, and then, allegedly, he wouldn't have a hangover and would come in and teach his Saturday classes.

[chuckle]

0:23:33 FR: I don't know if that's true. That's one of the stories I've heard.

0:23:40 JP: He was wonderful. He had a southern accent you could cut with a knife. He taught Legal Ethics and I can remember one thing about Dick Gillam was that in there he started cross-examining class. He said, "Why do you wanna be a lawyer?" And people had all these reasons; that they wanted to help orphans and widows, and the oppressed and the poor, and justice and fairness and all that. And finally he just said, "Wrong, wrong, wrong. You wanna do it for the money." [chuckle] And then he went on to explain, but that you have to be ethical when you do it. But don't kid yourself; you're interested in practicing law for the money. I'll never forget that. I mean, he was adamant that you had to learn the ethics of the profession, and treat it as a profession. But I'll never forget that, when he said, "Don't kid yourself. You're gonna do it for the money." [chuckle]

0:25:00 FR: Now, were there faculty members who you thought took a particular interest in the student body, you know, who had close connections with students?

0:25:13 JP: I'd say that Roy Moreland didn't have a particularly close relationship with the students, and he was awfully hard on the two women in our class. He was the only professor that I know of that sort of made fun of them, and they stuck it out. I don't know what... Jessie Doyle and Amber, I think it was... What they did afterwards or where they went, but he was the only one in that way. The other person that came on later was Jesse Dukeminier here, and he was a brilliant fellow, really. I guess he's passed on, but now I don't know. He went to UCLA, but he was really smart and had written some legislation on perpetuities, look back law, and he had his own notebook. And always, the rule against perpetuities. He had a cartoon that says, "Trespassers will be eaten." It was enjoyed.

0:26:35 FR: Trespassers will be what?

0:26:37 JP: Eaten.

0:26:37 FR: Will be eaten.

0:26:40 JP: He taught future int... No, he didn't teach future interests for my class, he taught future interests... He taught estate planning, and he was really good at it, too. He left, I guess, and Tom Lewis came in and taught future interest. He was there one year, my senior year.

0:27:14 FR: Yeah. So he graduated, I believe, in the class of '54.

0:27:17 JP: I was gonna say he was right before.

0:27:19 FR: And then he went into the...

0:27:20 JP: But his notes were still floating around, or I think it was his. Anyway, he was smart as... At that time, I think he had the best record of anybody that had come through the law school.

0:27:35 FR: I've looked at his transcript up in the registrar's office, and it is typed on there, "Highest GPA ever at the College of Law, as of..." You know, so he was...

0:27:47 JP: Yeah. Yeah, yeah. I don't know whether anybody ever did better.

0:27:52 FR: Well, yeah. So I think there are two now. Since then there have been two people who have done better, that I know of.

0:28:02 JP: Yeah, yeah. And so senior year I thought he taught future interests, which is... I enjoyed the course; I guess I was crazy. Other people just thought it was awful. It's difficult, future interests, and... But that's that.

0:28:28 FR: Was there a professor that was closest to you as a mentor, or did they all kind of take turns playing that role?

0:28:38 JP: Well, Jesse Dukeminier here had something to do with my going on up to Yale.

0:28:47 FR: Say that again? With...

0:28:48 JP: With my going on up to Yale for graduate work.

0:28:53 FR: He had an Ivy League education. I didn't know if it was... Was it Yale that he had...

0:28:58 JP: I wanna say it was. There were a lot of Yalies around at one point in time, and I think he was.

0:29:10 FR: Yale University, yeah. That's where he got his LLB in 1951.

0:29:16 JP: Yeah. And he had a little scar on his cheek from World War II. He was active in going into Germany. Oberst, I think he was generally pretty close to the law students. I think W.L. Matthews was. Gillam would certainly participate after hours with the students.

0:30:00 FR: Yeah, there were law fraternities.

0:30:04 JP: Yeah.

0:30:05 FR: Yeah, there were two of them, correct? Or do you remember?

0:30:08 JP: Yeah, they weren't a big thing.

0:30:09 FR: Were you a member of one?

0:30:11 JP: I was a member of one and I'd be hard-pressed to tell you which one. I mean, that's how important they were. Law Journal was more important. To get on that rather than... The fraternities would have a party or something like that a couple of times a year or something but they weren't social things, as I recall, at all and certainly they weren't academic as I recall. The Law Journal, there was competition to get on that, I forget how you got on it, and to write it and that sort of thing. But that was considered the most important thing you could do at the law school outside of the classroom. They... I don't even remember... Yeah, there were some mock, we had mock trials in the procedure and I can remember some of that but there wasn't, as I recall, a program to get people as interns in the summer. It was usually if somebody would go back, they'd know a lawyer in their community and they'd say, "Can I work around your office?" And of course it was all free. And that's what I did, was go down to my father's office and work there and do research.

0:32:12 FR: He was still County Attorney at that time?

0:32:15 JP: No. He was County Attorney for two years, then he was Commonwealth's Attorney.

0:32:21 FR: Commonwealth's. Yeah, I'm sorry. Commonwealth's Attorney.

0:32:23 JP: Commonwealth's Attorney for 24 and that... He gave that up in '52. So he... And actually he was still active while I was in law school but his health began to catch up with him afterwards. But there were 10 people in the office and that was just considered a huge law firm in Lexington. [chuckle] It was a different world then. Well, it was the same when here in law school that you had to make a carbon copy of something and the only way you could do it was with flimsies and carbons. And you had to do it right the first time. You usually wrote something out. I couldn't type. Most lawyers didn't type. They would write something out on a yellow pad. And I can remember the first copy machine and it was a Kodak wet copier. And being the youngest person around the office, I was the only one that really knew how to make copies. [chuckle] But you could copy a case and that was remarkable. But technologic...

0:34:02 FR: So during the summers, that's what you would do is go down there. And what was the name of the firm?

0:34:07 JP: Stoll, Keenon, and Park. My father, Judge Stoll. It'd been originally Stoll, Muir, Townsend and Park. And Keenon Odear, and they got merged. So that's my...



0:34:29 FR: Those were your summers, then, is doing some...

0:34:31 JP: They were the summers, yeah.

0:34:33 FR: And so you worked for free down there or did they pay you a little bit?

0:34:35 JP: Uh-uh. You worked for free. You might get mileage. You liked mileage. But you...

0:34:46 FR: So did you work... Now a lot of people worked during law school to sort of...

0:34:51 JP: Yeah.

0:34:51 FR: So did you work during law school in a job?

0:34:53 JP: No.

0:34:54 FR: Or were you were able to rely on family or?

0:34:57 JP: Yeah. Yeah. I did not have to work during law school. I know one person that had worked in the earlier class. He had worked at one of the funeral homes on the night desk and he had plenty of time to study. He was a good student. So...

0:35:20 FR: There are definitely some funny stories of the different jobs people had during law school.

0:35:25 JP: Yeah.

0:35:25 FR: One person drove school buses in the morning and he got them... You know, like you name it, people...

0:35:31 JP: Some of them were reporters. Kent Hollingsworth was a reporter.

0:35:34 FR: You mentioned Hollingsworth, yeah.

0:35:36 JP: And a good one. He ended up in the equine area of... Right offhand, I don't come up with any in my class, any jobs that were of interest of...

0:35:55 FR: What would you all do between class breaks? Would you all study or did... What were some of the... Was it all studying during, between class breaks, or did you all have like social, certain games, or?

0:36:07 JP: Well, the worst thing that happened is, you know Lafferty Hall?

0:36:13 FR: Yeah.

0:36:14 JP: The walk in front of it goes down to the library, and so there's a lot of traffic. And the law students tended to congregate on the front porch between classes. And the most benign thing they did was pitch pennies for cracks in the concrete, or joints in the concrete, but occasionally they would comment on the pulchritude of some of the coeds that went by. Particularly, some of the veterans that were around. That was probably the biggest activity between classes that I know of. But yeah, pitching pennies.

0:37:16 FR: Were you good at it?

0:37:17 JP: No, not particularly. Now, we had one member of my class, I don't know what class he...

0:37:23 FR: Here's some of the students, here's a list of some of the students during... As I mentioned, this is your graduating class, and then I have the year below you.

0:37:29 JP: Well, the one I'm trying to think of is John Y. Brown, Jr., and I don't know when he graduated.

0:37:43 FR: It could have been '60 or '61.

0:37:45 JP: Because he... It could have been. The reason I'm saying that is that there was a lounge, there was a student lounge in the law school, and John Y. was the biggest Encyclopedia Britannica salesman in Kentucky. Did you ever hear that story?

0:38:13 FR: Well, I knew he sold them and he made a lot of money doing it.

0:38:16 JP: Oh, he made... Right. And he was making so much money that he was... Law school was weighing very lightly on his shoulders, so to speak. And I can remember some people thinking that, "Yeah, here he is, his father is a very prominent lawyer and he's just floating through." I mean, he was busy with his salesmanship and of course, he could've ended up... We thought he was wasting his time. He could've bought the whole class when he got out and got into fried chicken.

0:39:00 FR: Oh yeah, that's right. Yeah. That's...

0:39:03 JP: Now that's one person that I remember what he was doing. I had forgotten about that. But no, he was a leading salesman of the day. [chuckle]

0:39:16 FR: So there was, as far as, there was a student lounge for you all?

0:39:23 JP: Yeah. Yeah.

0:39:25 FR: And did most people hang out there, did most people hang out in the library?

0:39:31 JP: I'd say a little bit of both. I mean it depended, if you had... Well, depended on the weather, depended on a number of things. Like if the weather wasn't good, you weren't going in-and-out of the law school because it wasn't close to the student union or where you could pull over across Limestone there by Prall Street. There were some places you could grab a sandwich, but some people would bring their lunch. Some people had cars, some of 'em didn't.



0:40:16 FR: Did you live near campus?

0:40:18 JP: I lived back out in the country.

0:40:20 FR: Oh, so did you stay at your folks' home when you went to school?

0:40:23 JP: Yeah.

0:40:23 FR: Okay, I didn't know whether you had a place in town that you could kind of... No. So you stayed at home during law school.

0:40:29 JP: Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

0:40:31 FR: Did most of your frie... I assume most of your friends that had... Did they have apartments too, or did people kind of...

0:40:39 JP: Some of 'em were married. They were older in some ways, because they were married, they had families. And so they had separate apartments. And some of 'em were from out of town. But there were those who were from Lexington area, and I think they may have continued to live with family.

0:41:17 FR: Did you commute in by car then? Did you drive in?

0:41:19 JP: Yeah, yeah. It was only back then...

0:41:26 FR: You could zip down Tates Creek, I'm sure.

0:41:28 JP: Two-lane road, we called it Four Miles in the Country. So it was a little more than four miles from Cooper Drive, which was inexistent, then Montclair, and that was the end of town basically. And you could... It didn't take long to get in town. And I can't remember about parking, but parking wasn't the problem that it is today. Where it ranks right up there with faculty and students. [chuckle]

0:42:09 FR: And do you remember any sort of speakers or guests that visited the College of Law that left an impression?

0:42:15 JP: No. If I thought about it I might. It was pretty straight forward. You had classes, or you attended classes, you... The only sort of thing would be in procedure where you had mock trials and that sort of thing, but no. Basically, it was sort of cut and dried in the sense that you were taking academic courses and... I don't remember lectures. I think there was. There probably was one, but I can't remember anything specific about it. Only event I remember, I don't know who put it on, it was the Libel Show.

0:43:15 FR: Which still goes on today.

0:43:16 JP: Does it?

0:43:17 FR: Yeah. The Libel Show.



0:43:18 JP: It was awful. [laughter]

0:43:20 FR: Still goes on today. They use it to raise money for students that do public interest work.

0:43:27 JP: Yeah.

0:43:28 FR: Nowadays, they have an auction and the faculty members now donate things. We'll have a dinner at a faculty members home, and students bid on it, and then the money will go to help students...

0:43:41 JP: Okay.

0:43:42 FR: Yeah.

0:43:42 JP: Well, it wasn't that uplifting. [laughter]

0:43:48 FR: Well, there's still jokes, and that kind of stuff.

0:43:52 JP: But I was thinking about it. Actually, in my opinion, you came out of the law school with a pretty good legal education. I got to see it, compare it in some ways with Yale. I was there for a year, and I stayed on a little bit doing some research for a professor.

0:44:21 FR: What was your master's at Yale? What was the...

0:44:24 JP: Law.

0:44:24 FR: Law? Oh, okay.

0:44:26 JP: Master of Laws. I sort of cherry picked some things...

0:44:30 FR: What would that be? Would that be an LLM that you have?

0:44:33 JP: LLM.

0:44:33 FR: You did the LLB, and then the LLM.

0:44:36 JP: That's right. I never switched my LL...

0:44:39 FR: B to a JD, which was... Yeah.

0:44:41 JP: To a JD, because it didn't make sense [chuckle] for me.

0:44:44 FR: Yeah.

0:44:46 JP: And so I picked out courses up there. I picked them out usually by the reputation of the professor, who was the best professor. And generally that meant I got some pretty good courses up there.



0:45:12 FR: What were, as far as during your time at the College of Law, were there any national or local events that became a focus that you remember the student body talking a lot about? Or what was happening in the country at that time that either influenced you, or was something that was talked about by the students?

0:45:40 JP: Probably the implementation of Brown against Board of Education. But I don't remember that in the sense of so much of it being a law school issue. Although, obviously we would have looked at that, but it was what was going on. And in the state, which at that point in time, compared to other states that had segregated school systems, Kentucky did pretty good. The first place there was trouble was in Clinton, Tennessee, right outside of Oak Ridge. And they had sort of a riot down there, and I forget what happened. And then about a week later down in Union County. Sturgis, I wanna say. They had a disruption of trying to desegregate. And Happy Chandler was Governor then. Second time.

0:47:00 JP: And the next morning the people woke up with tanks from the National Guard on their streets. And he said, "We're not gonna have any disorder and flouting of the law in Kentucky." And that was the end of it. Now, they later had some in Louisville, but that had more to do with the specifics of the court system and that was after law school, as I recall. Because I'm thinking the judge... I can't remember who the judge was. I think it was a judge. He had a little yellow school bus in his office, and he had a sense of humor, but no, that was something that was going on. And of course we had been looking at that where most of the cases before Brown against Board of Education were separate but equal but these aren't equal. And that's how they integrated the graduate school at the university and that sort of thing. And so that was a... I suppose was the biggest issue hanging around, that everybody would be talking about, wouldn't be limited to the law school. But that was the biggest issue at that point in time.

0:48:58 FR: What were some of your, as far as your classmates are concerned, some of your... And here are the people that graduated with you, who were some of your best friends? Do you remember in spending time with?

0:49:11 JP: Well, Les Morris was at that time a good friend.

0:49:16 FR: Yeah.

0:49:17 JP: And I practiced law with him later on.

0:49:22 FR: Les Morris, was...

0:49:24 JP: Yes. Leslie Morris.

0:49:25 FR: Les Morris.

0:49:26 JP: Yeah, he died in the Comair crash.

0:49:29 FR: Oh yeah.

0:49:31 JP: Joe Johnson, who was a lively, smart fellow but he'd go off on a tangent and he had a funny sense of humor and we studied together a lot of times. They were good friends. It was small enough class that you



didn't have exclusive ones. Like Joe Helm was a friend of mine. He'd gone to Princeton a year ahead of me and I knew him. Paul Slad was another guy who was a friend. Charlie Palmer. Well, the thing is if you look at the class, it's small enough that you can't say...

0:50:30 FR: You knew everybody. Yeah.

0:50:32 JP: That they weren't friends. You knew everybody in your class, so that's the best way I can say it. Now the reason I mentioned Les Morris at that time because he had been in my high school class at University High School, and so we had known each other for a long time.

0:51:02 FR: Yeah. Did he go to school here at U of K or did he go to another? Do you remember?

0:51:05 JP: He went to the university here.

0:51:07 FR: Yeah.

0:51:08 JP: Undergraduate.

0:51:09 FR: And then you all met back up again for law school?

0:51:13 JP: Yeah. That's right.

0:51:14 FR: Neat. That's good. What was the... Do you remember much about what the grading was like here? If you thought it was fair or if you thought certain faculty members were more fair than others or...

0:51:28 JP: Well, I'm sure we did but practical matter, that doesn't stand out. Some of them were a little harder than others. It was... Some of them were easier, their tests were easier, some of them were harder. Jesse Dukeminier had the tough tests 'cause he had some tough subject. Burt Hamm, he taught corporations also, he had laid it out and if you followed your notes and his rules you could do his tests. So I mean, that was sort of the attitude of people. I don't remember beyond that. It wasn't that Burt Hamm's classes were gut classes, it was the expression then, but his mode of teaching was, by George, you didn't have to dig it out, he fed you. [chuckle]

0:52:58 FR: Who was it... Do you remember the classmates that sort of impressed you the most?

0:53:04 JP: Well, one was Paul Slad. Paul Slad, now he had a job. It's coming back. He was an announcer for WLEX TV and he had a melodious voice. It was sort of deep and what have you and even though he grewed up in Pike County, you wouldn't have known it. And so that always impressed when Paul would talk and he was a bright fellow too. He went with... I can't name the law firm... He went with one of the major law firms in Tampa. I don't know what happened, he died some time back. Early.

0:54:04 FR: I wonder if... Do you remember what graduation was like? Do you remember the graduation ceremony?



0:54:13 JP: I don't know that I went to it. I remember I had a little [chuckle] over the diploma. It said honors, and I knew that my grades the Spring term were such that I should've been, and I don't how you could've calculated it, as high honors. And that's the only thing I remember about graduation is having an argument. They said, "Well, that's true, but we didn't have your grades." "Well, you do now." So I ended up, I got my diploma, but...

[laughter]

0:54:55 FR: Fixed again.

0:54:56 JP: I got my diploma, but that was the only thing I remember about graduation.

[laughter]

0:55:07 FR: Was the one fly in the ointment, not anything else.

0:55:10 JP: Yeah. Yeah.

0:55:12 FR: Yeah, that is funny. It is funny that these things stick in your mind.

0:55:13 JP: Well, and I think I was, the reason I was concerned about it was I was trying to get in graduate school. And I think I was going up to interview at various law schools in the East. And so, I wanted the proper recognition.

0:55:39 FR: Recognition.

0:55:40 JP: There was a reason for it. But I don't remember going to graduation at all.

0:55:47 FR: Do you remember the class doing something together all as a group or?

0:55:52 JP: No, we may have but...

0:55:54 FR: You just sort of...

0:55:56 JP: I mean we may have, but people were getting ready for the bar. And that would be coming up.

0:56:11 FR: Did you wait to take your bar? Or until after...

0:56:14 JP: I took it actually in '59.

0:56:17 FR: Yeah.

0:56:20 JP: Because I think I was... I don't remember, but I think I had gone up to... East to interview a couple of places. But I'm vague on that.

0:56:40 FR: Yeah. So then, you mentioned that there was a comparison between the Yale classes and the Kentucky classes. Do you remember how... What the differences were like within the LLM program and the LLB at Kentucky?

0:56:57 JP: Well, I remember getting in [chuckle] some classes at Yale. And oh, I've lost his name, he'd been Dean up there. And he was teaching a course and I wanted to take it just because, not that I was ever gonna use it, but I wanted to take a course under him. And he'd get his students in there, and he would start on them about what this meant in this opinion. I didn't have any idea what replevin was or assumption or what have you, and how procedurally the case came up. He was just adamant that you couldn't understand the opinion without understanding the procedure.

0:57:58 JP: And I remember, I didn't volunteer every time, but if need be, I had the answer because I had... [chuckle] Maybe McEwan's damn Common Law Pleading, I had some concept of the thing. And that was one thing I learned in here, the really essential of analyzing an opinion is to understand procedurally how it got where it was and what... Because that impacted the deference the court was gonna give one way or the other, to one party or the appellee. Who was the appellee? Who was the appellant? That sort of thing. And some of the practical stuff at Yale, they were great on policy, as I used to say. But sometimes they weren't as good on the nuts and bolts as some of the classes here. Now, that wasn't everybody. But as I say, there were some courses that were an awful lot of policy. [chuckle] And I think that's Yale more so than Harvard at the time.

0:59:19 FR: And so, when you came back to Kentucky, you took the bar, how did you begin your legal career after that?

0:59:29 JP: Well, I had... It was right after they adopted the Uniform Commercial Code in Kentucky and it was about, I think the third state. And I had worked with one of the draftsmen up there. And so, that was one of the things I did when I got back. People knew that I had some background at it, and lawyers were having to completely relearn a whole bunch of commercial law and so I got out and I spoke and one thing or another but essentially as a young lawyer, I was going out at a rate of \$10 an hour investigating truck accidents. [laughter]

1:00:20 FR: Oh, neat. Yeah. [chuckle]

1:00:24 JP: And that was one of the things you did. But then, I'd walk into court and the judge would say, "Mr. Park, I want you to represent that fellow over there." I remember Judge Ford, Federal Court, he said, "Mr. Park," he had a little high voice, "I want you to go talk to this fellow and come back and plead him guilty." [laughter] He knew he was gonna plead guilty. And I had been a lawyer maybe two weeks. I went back and he was accused of selling tobacco off of a card, you know what I'm talking about? His allotment, he sold tobacco, he didn't have an allotment card for...

1:01:15 FR: Allotment for it, and he was... Yeah.

1:01:16 JP: Anyway, it was more than a technical violation, he was a pretty bad guy but he wasn't dangerous, if you know what...

1:01:30 FR: Yeah. Yeah. There's certain crimes that...

1:01:31 JP: So I went back in, he said, "I'm guilty," and what have you. So I went back in and the Judge took him through, took his plea, finally looked over at me and said, "Mr. Park, this is the time you ask for probation." [laughter] So, "I move for probation, Your Honor." "Granted." [chuckle] You would be thrown into something. I was thrown in, early on, into representing. There was no legal defender.

1:02:11 FR: Right.

1:02:12 JP: You walked in through...

1:02:12 FR: That didn't come until the late 60s, yeah.

1:02:13 JP: You were around and the Judge would pick you out and say, "You go represent this fellow." And I and another younger lawyer, but he was more experienced than I, were appointed to... On a capital case early on and that was interesting episode.

1:02:36 FR: Were you part of your father's firm when you...

1:02:40 JP: I was an associate there.

1:02:41 FR: You associate there?

1:02:42 JP: Yeah. Took a pay cut from what I had been paid as a research assistant at Yale. [chuckle]

1:02:54 FR: That is funny. So can you talk just a little bit about what it means for you to have gotten your law degree from this institution?

1:03:07 JP: Well... One of the things, I thought it gave you a good basic legal education. And I thought on top of that I had gotten my money's worth, so to speak, out of the year at Yale. It gave me some insight into some things that I would not have gotten here with the small faculty. For example, I did corporate income tax up at Yale because the guy was supposed to be good, he'd written the book on it. Initially, there were no specialties. There were some people who made a special... Well, the only real specialty was patent law, patent and copyright law. To some degree, labor law was becoming a specialty in Kentucky. But other than that, basically anything walked in the door, you were supposed to handle it. And so I went to court on some things, did a lot of what I call research, and brief writing, memos, pleadings, and that sort of thing, but it was a cross thing. And initially I developed some expertise in the tax area, and wills, trusts, corporate, but that was only partial. Everything slopped over into something else, contract law, tort law, and the like. It was interesting. I had the advantage of practicing with some pretty good lawyers and you get an education that way.

1:05:37 FR: Now at that time were most of the lawyers graduates of this school or were they from all over? Do you remember, have a sense? If you can't remember that's fine too.

1:05:52 JP: I'm trying to think. I don't know of anybody that wasn't a Kentucky Law graduate that was in that firm. There may have been but, right off the bat, no, I can't recall anybody who wasn't a Kentucky Law graduate.

1:06:20 FR: Yeah. What do you, if you have any comments about what this college means for this community and the state.

1:06:34 JP: You mean the law school?

1:06:36 FR: Yeah.

1:06:36 JP: Well, in my opinion, it is now and always has been the leading law school in the state. That doesn't mean there can't be some good lawyers come out of Northern Kentucky or Louisville. But this was, all things considered, this was the place, all through the years that you wanted to get into the University of Kentucky College of Law, because it was the best law school in the state. And it has, in my opinion, produced some good lawyers, good judges, that sort of thing.

1:07:24 FR: Yeah. Do you have any sort of... I would be interested, now I feel like we've covered a lot of good ground, if you wanted to mention a few things. You'd talked about your father attending law school and graduating here in 1920. If you wanna touch on any sort of stories he told you about law school.

1:07:51 JP: No, but it was basically, he graduated in '20. So, he got out of the university undergraduate in 1915. And then he would've... I'm not sure when he entered law school. 1920, '18... It would've been, I think, in 1917. And of course World War I came up. He was on his own at that point in time and he was... People, "What's your summer job?" "Well, [chuckle] it's pitching baseball." And he said he never had the speed to overpower batters after his football injury. So, in those days, it was before the Curt Flood case, you signed a contract, that contract stayed with you the rest of your baseball career. Didn't matter where he was playing, he was gonna get the same amount of money. And so, he played for Drumright, Oklahoma. [chuckle] Which is a little oil boom town. And he got the same as when he was in the majors. Which wasn't bad pay but it wasn't anything like that but he... With World War I, and this is what I've not done, is try to figure out how his law school fit in with the fact that he had to go to aviation school at Ohio State and from there, went down to advanced school at San Antonio. And then they sent him up to Norfolk or Hampton Roads, coast artillery. Well, what they had there was Balloon Corps. And I guess because he was a math major and he was big, he'd been too big for an airplane, and he didn't drive a car. I think. Gosh. [chuckle] So, I don't know how he... When the war was over, I think he immediately got back in law school.

1:10:55 FR: It looks like it would have been before the war, before America entered the war. Because America entered in...

1:11:03 JP: '17, April.

1:11:05 FR: Okay. So, April of '17.

1:11:07 JP: He would've probably...

1:11:09 FR: So that's about when he's entering?

1:11:13 JP: Yeah. And that's what's confusing.

1:11:15 FR: Yeah figuring out which...



1:11:16 JP: I have looked for his transcript but he was also assistant coach, here.

1:11:25 FR: Did you say, you had ever looked for it or...

1:11:29 JP: At times. So he had, while he was going to law school, and I don't have the chronology, one point in time he was coach at Transylvania and athletics director there which... [chuckle] Whatever. But he was also assistant football coach, and ended up coaching one year, basketball at Kentucky. And I think a part of that was while he was going through law school. And they must have done something about letting the veterans accelerate or the like. I don't know how, he didn't talk about that. It was more about what he was doing outside of it and the stories he'd tell me when I was a boy about his adventures and trouble. And Oklahoma City and Omaha and all that sort of thing. But I can't recall. He had some of his law books still. I guess he kept them because he used the criminal law, he was in criminal... You know, prosecuting. And he was a good book lawyer, he liked them.

1:13:01 FR: Do you still have any of your father's library, or is that all just gone?

1:13:07 JP: No, they all got put in the firm law library. I had one book of his and it disappeared somewhere along the line.

1:13:18 FR: I just was curious if you still had those, those would've been neat to see.

1:13:21 JP: Yeah. It was a handbook on criminal law, I can remember that. But it was more he would talk about people he had known in law school and... But, I can't recall his talking about the particular professors. He did but it's not something that stuck in my mind.

1:13:52 FR: You had mentioned Redwine out there who graduated with your father. Do you remember any stories?

1:14:00 JP: None that I wanna tell. [chuckle]

1:14:01 FR: All right, that's totally fair too.

1:14:05 JP: There were some. I think his name was Marcus, but some other people pronounced it differently. [chuckle]

1:14:12 FR: Yeah. That is funny, yeah.

1:14:13 JP: No.

1:14:16 FR: Yeah. Is it...

1:14:17 JP: Ed Dabney was... I'd forgotten that he had the legal background, but he was head of Security Trust Company, that merged with the First National Bank and that became First Security which was later acquired by Bank One and just now JP Morgan Chase. That was his background. He was a very prominent man around Lexington.

1:14:51 FR: That's... Wow. Is there anything else that you'd like to add or mention before... As we come to a close?

1:15:00 JP: I was trying to think back to... The only other thing I would add is that Fred Whiteside's wife, I've lost her first name, but he always referred to her as Miss Lisenby, he married sort of late in life, Fred was just a delightful person but in a way sort of a cartoon character in the sense that... The absent-minded professor, now that's not the label I wanna put on him. She was very active in academic one thing or another. Paul Oberst's wife, Libbet, she was a lawyer, she'd gone to University of Michigan as I recall, she was very active. She had a good reputation around the law school. Dick Gillam wasn't married, Jesse Dukeminier wasn't married, Tom Lewis was married but he had a family, we just didn't see him and they only saw him that one year. But sometimes, the faculty wives for example, I remember going with Fred and some others to some sort of conference of law students somewhere in the Carolinas and his wife went along. She was very interested in law school things, she was a good person and I'm mad at myself 'cause I can't think of her name and the same for Libbet Oberst. I don't ever recall W.L. Matthews' family. So that's all I can add that I hadn't...

1:17:18 FR: Fred's wife and Paul's wife did things to be active and take part in the community?

1:17:27 JP: Yeah and University Affairs and Community Affairs, you knew who they were, they were active.

1:17:39 FR: Yeah. That's nice.

1:17:42 JP: In things.

1:17:44 FR: Yeah.

1:17:48 JP: Paul Oberst was an interesting, he was a... There were some smart people on that faculty.

1:17:55 FR: Absolutely, yeah.

1:17:56 JP: I mean I don't know whether you've, how much you've been able to gather on that but there were some smart people that were on that faculty.

1:18:09 FR: That's one of the of reasons...

1:18:11 JP: [chuckle] One thing that if you want stories, I don't know whether anybody ever said this, but Roy Moreland was rotund and as I recall, he didn't wear an undershirt. And all the wives would sit around and the first one that spotted his mega fold poking through the gap in his shirt would go, "I spy." He never knew what that was about but everybody in the class knew, it was terrible. We shouldn't have done that but...

[laughter]

1:18:50 FR: That is funny.

1:18:52 JP: I bet you haven't heard that story before.

1:18:54 FR: Nope, hadn't heard that. Now I've heard some other ones about him. There was one where a student fell asleep in Roy Moreland's class and Roy started to yell at the student next to him to say, "Wake up Mr. Johnson," or whatever his name was, "Wake him up." And the student "Well, you put him to sleep. You can..."

[laughter]

1:19:17 JP: There were people who would...

1:19:20 FR: Give it back?

1:19:21 JP: Give it back to him and sometimes he would say something in class, somebody would have a case that disagreed and they'd post it. They would give him...

1:19:33 FR: He served in World War I.

1:19:36 JP: Did he?

1:19:36 FR: Yeah, he served in World War I, he was a maybe, he was a ranking officer and he served. There is a photograph of him. He served in France because he ended up having a correspondence for many years with some man he met in France.

1:19:54 JP: That's interesting.

1:19:55 FR: They still have, we have the letters.

1:19:57 JP: That's interesting.

1:20:00 FR: Yeah and we have photographs from his time in France.

1:20:02 JP: Well, I never had any problems with Roy Moreland.

1:20:04 FR: Some people, yeah...

1:20:06 JP: Some of 'em... Some people suffered under him.

1:20:10 FR: Yes. There was one person who mentioned that he... That many students did not think that his grades were anonymous. That they thought that he knew... That he would look at the numbers when he graded. There were some... Who knows whether that's true or not but...

1:20:31 JP: That sort of rings a bell but it doesn't stand out. But I know that he would have it in for some students.

1:20:43 FR: Which is unfortunate but...



1:20:45 JP: Yeah, yeah.

1:20:45 FR: But he is described definitely as an interesting character.

1:20:50 JP: Well he was, he was.

1:20:53 FR: He wrote the book on homicide...

1:20:56 JP: That's right.

1:20:58 FR: And he had that, it was a red cover I think, I think it was, his little homicide book.

1:21:05 JP: I thought it was black.

1:21:07 FR: Maybe it was, I'm gonna have to go look at that again and see if I can...

1:21:11 JP: I don't remember, for sure. But my image is black, little, thin book but it was interesting. W.L. Matthews was a smart fellow, he was a good guy. He was straight as an arrow. You would never say anything about him nor Oberst or Burt Hamm. He was as kind as... He was the opposite pole from Roy Moreland.

1:21:47 FR: Yeah. How funny. That's something. Well, do you know what, I was gonna say before you leave, if you have a minute... And I don't know if it's gonna be up there but we can go up to the registrar's office and see if we can pull your father's transcript. I don't know if it'll be there but we can at least try.

1:22:06 JP: I got it.

1:22:07 FR: Oh, okay, so you've seen it. I didn't know if you'd seen it. Yeah.

JP: I've seen it. If I