

UFLC 15

Interviewee: E. Covington Johnston

Interviewer: Sid Johnston

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Mr. E. Covington Johnston practices law in Gainesville and is a graduate of the University of Florida College of Law. He was born in Liberty, South Carolina, on March 10, 1916. His father was in the turpentine business and moved the Johnston family to Gainesville, Florida, in 1919. Mr. E. Covington Johnston attended Kirby-Smith School and graduated from Westside High School, both in Gainesville. He began his undergraduate education at the University of Florida in 1934 and entered the law college in 1937, graduating in 1939. He is currently senior partner in the law firm of Clayton, Johnston, Quincey, Ireland, Felder, and Gadd.

SJ: Today is the seventeenth of October. This is Homecoming Weekend of 1984, and I am in Mr. E. Covington Johnston's law office on 226 South Main Street in Gainesville. And 32601 is the zip code, I believe. I am Sid Johnston, and this is an interview for the University of Florida College of Law Oral History. How are you this morning, sir?

CJ: Fine, thank you.

SJ: Where were you born and what date?

CJ: I was born in Liberty, South Carolina, on March 10, 1916.

SJ: And who were your parents?

CJ: My father was W. E. Johnston, and my mother was Mary. Her family name was Covington, and her family was from North Carolina. My father's family was from South Carolina.

SJ: How did your parents meet?

CJ: As I recall, my mother was teaching school in South Carolina. She had actually come to Florida from North Carolina. Her father was in the turpentine business. They would follow the timber, and they would have a turpentine still. They would collect the rosin from the turpentine trees, and then they would distill it to make the turpentine. In those days whole families were involved in the business, and they would move all at the same time. They had a bunch of workers that would go out and skin the trees and collect the rosin and take it to the still.

The family moved down through Georgia and eventually ended up around Plant City. I have heard my uncle talk about riding the woods on his horse all around through Dade City and down in that area. My mother went back to

South Carolina. I do not know how she happened to go back there, but she was teaching school in South Carolina. They met and were married. My brother and I were both born there [in Liberty, South Carolina], and then we moved to Gainesville. I remember I heard my father saying that he picked a town in Florida where there was a university.

He was [a] traveling [salesman] back in those days; they were called "drummers." They would travel all over. His territory was all over Florida and Georgia, and they traveled by train. They could not go by automobiles because there were not any roads. Most of the roads were dirt, and they were terrible and almost unpassable.

Anyway, he could have located in any town in Florida, so he picked the town that had a university in it. And at that time, I think this was probably the only men's university in the state. Maybe Stetson was in existence. Of course, Tallahassee was the women's college at that time. He made the remark that he wanted to pick a college town so that if anything ever happened to him, his sons would be able to go to school, which was fortunate and good foresight, because he died when I was fourteen.

SJ: Now, was your papa a foreman of turpentine?

CJ: No, that was my mother's family. They owned the turpentine business. They moved their whole crew with them.

SJ: And they would move with the crew?

CJ: Right. And they would stay for, I guess, several years maybe until they had cut all the trees. They would skin the trees with a sharp knife that cut a V-shape thing down the tree. Of course, they would first have to lease the tract of timber. Or maybe they would buy it, I do not know. Terra-cotta cups were nailed to the tree, and they had two little tin troughs into which the rosin would drain. It was a real slow process, [as] you can imagine. It would ooze out of the trees and would collect down in that pot. And then the workers, who were mostly black people, [would collect the rosin]. I guess they would hire them, maybe, if they lived around in that area. They would go around and collect these [full] pots and put new ones up. I am just not real sure how it worked, but, of course, they would cook that rosin and distill it and make the turpentine.

SJ: Put it on a train and then market it?

CJ: They would ship it out. Now, this went on until the pulpwood business came into existence, I guess, right after World War II. That late. And turpentine, as I understand, is [now just] a byproduct of the pulpwood [industry]. Most of the pulpwood is pine. Turpentine [being] just a byproduct, they can have it for a

tenth of the cost of this other business.

But we used to have several turpentine stills around Gainesville here. I can remember the last one, I think, was abandoned after World War II in the 1940s, I would say.

SJ: Do you remember some of the owners or families that operated these turpentine operations?

CJ: No. The only one I can recall here in Gainesville is the Mize family: Mr. E. Mize out at Fairbanks, which is between here and Waldo on Highway [24]. And I think his nephew, Vernon Mize, still lives out there.

In fact, Fairbanks was the turpentine operation. That is all it was. And, of course, the still is gone, but the people are still there. Fairbanks is famous [now], for recently, [as] you know, the State Road Department (DOT [Department of Transportation]) polluted the wells and the water in that area. It is just beyond the airport on Waldo Road. But that originally was the turpentine stills--the whole settlement.

SJ: Now, that was your family?

CJ: No, no. The Mizes [were] no kin to me.

SJ: But your family, your mama's family, was involved in turpentine.

CJ: That is right but not involved in any in Alachua County.

SJ: And they moved from South Carolina over a series of years?

CJ: They moved from North Carolina, followed the pine timber, and once it was all cut over they moved on.

SJ: [There was no] reason to stay.

CJ: [The] rosin left, so they would move on to the next tract.

SJ: Now, what about your papa's family?

CJ: They were farmers in South Carolina. [They] had a big farm up [there]. Liberty was the closest town. It was just a small town, so he left the farm and went to work as a clothing salesman. I think the headquarters were in Atlanta, and I think the name of it was the Carhart Overalls. Back in those years, the overalls were a real hot commodity. They moved his territory to Florida and Georgia, so that is why we ended up down here.

SJ: And your mama and papa met in Liberty?

CJ: Well, I guess it was in that area. I am not really too sure, but he was living on the farm out from Liberty.

SJ: Now, you have one brother. What is his name?

CJ: Edward. He is a Junior. William Edward [Johnston], Jr.

SJ: He is a few years older than you?

CJ: He is two years older.

SJ: What brought your parents to Gainesville?

CJ: As I said, my father was moved to Florida. He was to pick a town in Florida as his headquarters and then travel out from there. He could have picked any part of Florida that he wanted, but he picked Gainesville because of the university here. As I mentioned, he made the statement that he wanted to settle in a town where there was a university so, if anything ever happened to him, his sons would be able to get a college education.

SJ: Did your mama continue to teach after you moved to Gainesville?

CJ: No. She did not work until my father died, and then she was house mother at the university. They had house mothers in the dormitories then, [and that was the] first time she had worked. Well, now, she did teach, I think, for maybe two years before my father died.

SJ: Where was it that she taught?

CJ: It was kindergarten. In those days they did not have public kindergarten like they do now [in] the schools. The kindergartens were all private, and the kindergarten class that she had was in the old Epworth Hall, which was part of the [First United] Methodist Church [of Gainesville]. I do not know whether you are familiar with the history of that. That was the original East Florida Seminary, which even predates the University of Florida. That was probably the original University of Florida.

SJ: It carries the date of 1853.

CJ: Sam Proctor could probably tell us about that, but the East Florida Seminary, as I remember, was created by the state. It was a state school, and preceded the university and the old White House Hotel, which was right across the street from

it and is now torn down. The Sun Bank sits where the old White House Hotel was. The East Florida Seminary was the classroom, and the old White House Hotel was, I think, the dormitory.

And then the park, as we called it, [was] right in back of the Methodist Church. There is a block, [and] it is just an open park. According to the old pictures, one time there were barracks on that. The East Florida Seminary was a military school, I believe. Of course in those days I think most of them were [military in nature], and they used that old park as a drill field according to old pictures. How did I get off on that? Now, you asked me something.

SJ: We were [just] talking. Let me pursue this idea of the White House Hotel. It was used as a dormitory. How?

CJ: I think this was right. It was a great big rambling building.

SJ: Do you remember when it was originally built?

CJ: No. It must have been built in the day when the East Florida Seminary was in existence. Later it later became a hotel. Major Thomas, who was the leading citizen back in those days, was the one who was supposed to have been responsible for moving the University of Florida from Lake City to Gainesville. I guess he bought that property and had a hotel there: the White House Hotel.

SJ: So it was a hotel first and then a dorm?

CJ: No. I think the hotel followed the dorm.

SJ: A dorm first for the seminary.

SJ: And then a hotel.

CJ: Yes, then a hotel. Matter of fact, the hotel was just torn down. To me, it seems just like a few years ago. It may [have been] maybe twelve [or] fifteen [years]. It fools you. The hotel was torn down, and the bank was built.

SJ: Which bank?

CJ: It is now Sun Bank. It was Citizens Bank originally, and then it became Sun Bank.

SJ: Let me see if I have got the chronology of your parents' history right in my mind. I think I do. Your papa left home where his parents were farmers and moved into a clothing operation in South Carolina and worked there for a while.

CJ: No, he traveled.

SJ: He traveled selling clothing?

CJ: He was a traveling salesman, right.

SJ: And then he moved to Gainesville to better coordinate that clothing operation.

CJ: Yes. His business moved him apparently and headquartered him in Gainesville, Florida. Florida and South Georgia [was his territory].

SJ: When was he re-assigned to this area?

CJ: Well, I use the year 1919. This could vary a little bit. I can not remember that. My mother is deceased, and I can not exactly verify the date, but I was three years old.

SJ: Do you remember being uprooted from South Carolina [and being brought] down here?

CJ: No. The only thing I can remember is living in Gainesville. I went back to South Carolina, but I can not really remember ever living there.

SJ: [You all] moved here about 1919 [and] your mama worked right off when she arrived in Gainesville?

CJ: No, she did not. Let me see. My father died in 1930. She did not work until about maybe 1928 or 1929, somewhere along in there. That was right in the middle of the Depression years and she had a kindergarten class there.

SJ: That is right. What schools did you attend when you were in grade school and high school in Gainesville?

CJ: I started in the first grade in Kirby-Smith over on the east side of town. Matter of fact, that was the only all-white schoolhouse in Gainesville at that time. It [included] first through twelfth [grade], and I went through the sixth grade in that building. In the meantime, they built the westside high school [Gainesville High School], which was first through twelve, so we had two first-through-twelfth-grade schools. And when that school was built, then Kirby-Smith became first through sixth, and all of the high schools moved out to the westside school.

SJ: Now [the school you call] westside was on . . .

CJ: University Avenue.

SJ: That is a parking lot today for the doctors' building.

CJ: On the south side of that lot is the doctors' building--the high-rise doctors' building. The school sat on the north side, and the back was the athletic field. It was a big field back there where we had our physical education classes and would play football. But they played their football games out at Harris Field, we called it, which is close to where Citizens Field is now if you are familiar with that.

CJ: Out on the Waldo Road where 8th Avenue intersects with the Waldo Road?

SJ: Yes.

CJ: And there is a fire station there and, I think, the County Road Department or something. I do not know what is there now, but there used to be a baseball diamond there, and Citizens Field sits in that.

SJ: Would a bus take the team out there to play or would they go by automobile?

CJ: I cannot remember. I think the school bus. There were very few automobiles.

SJ: Well, would people take a horse and buggy or a cart out to see the games on Friday evenings or Saturday mornings?

CJ: Now there were a lot of horses and wagons around, but buggies were kind of passe actually. I mean, people had automobiles, and they [used them]. But there were still a lot of horse and wagons. As a matter of fact, I recall the express company, American Railway Express, was a big thriving business in those days because there was so much railroad traffic. It used horses and wagons: big draft horses and big closed-in type wagons to haul the freight in them. And the ice man would come around.

I do not know how much you want me to get off on my memories, but one thing brings [me] to another. The ice man [was common because] we had no electric refrigerators [and only] an ice box. As a matter of fact, I still call the refrigerator an ice box. But everybody had an ice box, and the ice man would bring the ice by every day in a horse and wagon. You left your houses open--you never locked the door--and the ice box usually sat on the back porch or sometimes was in the kitchen. The back door was left open, and you would hang a square cardboard sign that had twelve pounds or twenty-five pounds or fifty pounds or one hundred pounds [written on it]. You would hang it up on a nail with the side up of the number of pounds of ice you wanted, and you would leave that where the ice man could see it. And his old horse knew the route. He did not even have to tell him to get up and go or stop. The old horse would walk down to the next house and he would wait.

He had big hundred-pound blocks of ice in the back of his wagon, and he

would get in there and chop them with the ice pick. He would pick the ice up with ice tongs. I remember he had a crocus (or burlap) sack over his shoulder because it would get so wet, and he would throw that over his shoulder and hold the ice on it, and he would go in the house. People would not even be home. He would put it in the ice box, and you had a coupon book that had all your coupons. Maybe they cost ten dollars, and he would tear off whatever number of coupons for the amount of ice you ordered.

SJ: That would be ten dollars for the year right?

CJ: Oh, yeah. That would last a year because you probably paid ten cents, maybe, for the hunk of ice.

SJ: Where were you living at the time?

CJ: It was then Virginia Avenue. You know, all the streets used to be named, [and Virginia Avenue] is now N.E. 1st Street. It was later developed into what we call the Highlands. As a matter of fact, the house was remodeled. It faced west [but] has been remodeled and now faces north. Finley Cannon lives there. It is now a big brick house, but it was a wooden house in those days. The kids would crawl up in that ice wagon because it was going so slow that we could run and crawl up in there on a hot summer day and get those little slivers of ice and eat them.

SJ: And cool off.

CJ: But we loved to eat that ice.

SJ: Were you in Kirby-Smith one through twelfth grades or did you go to [the] westside [school]?

CJ: No, I skipped the fifth grade, but I went into the sixth grade there at Kirby Smith. Then for the seventh grade I transferred to the westside school, which was known as Gainesville High School, and I went seven through twelve in the westside school. Later years, after they built the new GHS [Gainesville High School] out on 13th [Street], that [westside school] became a junior high. It was a middle school, I guess. Buchholtz Middle School, I guess they called it.

SJ: Well, for entertainment around here as a young boy, you can jump on the back end of the ice wagon. What else would you do?

CJ: Yes, there was no entertainment other than what you made yourself.

SJ: Did you have a bicycle?

CJ: I had a bicycle, and we rode all over Gainesville.

SJ: Where? What were some of the swimming holes or fishing holes?

CJ: Well, our favorite swimming hole was out here on the Waldo Road and 8th Avenue where Citizens Field is now. That is what we called the fairgrounds. Every year they had a big county fair. The county, I guess, owned that property, and they had their permanent exhibit buildings. You know, [it was] just an old-time county fair where you bring your livestock and your chickens and your homemade jelly and your homemade cake and home-demonstration and all that. Then they had a race track where they had horse races. And over just beyond that race track was a natural pond. I guess it is probably still there. I do not know. It is built up.

SJ: How popular were the horse races?

CJ: Oh, very popular. They had big crowds. I remember my father used to never miss that. He loved horses, I guess, being brought up on a farm. But that was one of the main attractions in those days.

SJ: And was the pond that you are referring to open to the public?

CJ: Well, it was out in the woods. We would just go out there and skinny-dip. You know, just hang our clothes on the hickory limb, as they say, and it was just old woods and bushes all around. And the university students, I mentioned to you the other day, would go the Freezer's Pond we called it, which is out right just off of the 22d Street. It is the corner of 22d [Street] and 10th [Avenue]. I say corner, it is back in there just off of 10th.

SJ: That would have actually been closer to go to as a recreation sight than the other pond.

CJ: Yes. But, see, we were kids, and university students would go there. We did not mingle too much with them.

SJ: That is right.

CJ: As we got older, we had friends out there. But when I got older--high school age--the university had built a swimming pool back of what we called the Old Gym.

SJ: That was over on campus?

CJ: On campus, right.

SJ: That would have been the Women's Gym.

CJ: The Women's Gym, 1919, I think they made it. I think they still use that pool. But we would go, [too]. They let us use it as I remember.

SJ: When you were in high school you could go to that.

CJ: When I was in high school, I think. I do not know that we had free access to it, but I remember going in swimming there. Apparently, there were certain conditions that we were permitted to [use it].

SJ: You would have been nine, ten, maybe eleven years old during the boom-and-bust cycle of the mid 1920's in Florida.

CJ: Yes.

SJ: Do you remember much about that term of growth?

CJ: Yes, and I think we had more fun, really, than the children do today. We played all the sports: basketball, baseball, football. We would get together during the seasons, and we had no equipment to play football. We played tackle football [and] had no headgear. But we did not have shoes, so we played barefoot. Nobody got really hurt. I can not remember anybody ever really getting seriously hurt.

Today, I think it is such a mistake [because when] my children all came up--I have two sons and a daughter--both of my sons played Little League Baseball, Tiny Mite Football, and whatever they called the basketball. It is far too organized. I get off into this. I can holler all day. The children lose the fun of it. They get all upset. I have seen kids cry and just get real upset.

SJ: Competitive edge, right?

CJ: Yes, and I think that parents are the ones that get into a fight with the umpire.

SJ: Or between themselves.

CJ: Actually, a fist fight with the umpire.

SJ: I have seen that, too.

CJ: They [are] little children, and here are these little fellows who want to play so badly.

SJ: They do not care about [them, only] the competition.

CJ: And they are sitting on the bench, maybe, and the coaches want to win. The necessity of winning is carried down to that little [child]. And here that little fellow on the bench has got just as much right to play as that other boy they are letting play, but they will not let him play because they want to win at all costs. And, like you say, even those that are playing just want to play: "Let us play. Leave us alone."

We would organize our own team, after school, in the afternoon. We would get together, and we would choose sides. We knew who were the best, and the two best players would choose. "I take you and I take you," and then it would be the next ones turn. And then we would square off, and we would play football, baseball, or whatever was in season. And there was not a grown-up in sight.

We would argue and fight. We had no referees. We would argue and we would fight, and then we would settle it. Then we would go back to playing. And I think we had more fun than they do today. They are just way too organized.

SJ: Do you remember seeing much growth in Gainesville during your early years [when you were] nine, ten, eleven, or twelve years old during that boom thing? Do you remember much of that?

CJ: There was not [much happening]. I know my father, like everybody else, went into real estate, and there was just a world of real estate development going on. But there was not a lot of building. It was all selling and buying and selling, and they would buy an option. I would give you a \$100 for a tract of land on an option, and then I would turn around and sell it to somebody else, and it would maybe pass through several hands. Finally, the guy that ended up with it probably got stuck with it because the bust came, as we called it, and we [did not have any] subdivisions: just dreams. Elaborate subdivisions [were surveyed] all over the woods. You could walk through the woods and would find this archway built up where there was going to be just this beautiful dream of a subdivision, [but] the streets were never put in and never cut.

We ran into it all the time in abstract examinations. We would be examining title to a farm and there would be forty acres of it that is laid off into streets. [It had] never been opened up, never been used, and there would be lots sold all through that forty acres probably to somebody in Chicago, New York, [or other places] up there. And a lot of those people have been paying taxes on that stuff and still are.

It really creates a problem because in order to turn it back to acreage, you must have the streets abandoned and dissolve the plat. And you can not do it because these people still own lots in it. So it really creates a problem.

SJ: When you referred to an archway several minutes ago, what exactly [were you talking about]? [Were they] brick?

CJ: Yes, the entrance to the subdivision would be two big columns maybe ten feet high [made from] brick or concrete block or most of them though were built out of wood. That was the style in those days: build a wood frame and then tack wire mesh-type stuff over it and put stucco on it. And [on the] the old column, the stucco is falling off, and you can see the wire mesh shining through.

SJ: Do you remember seeing those as a child here in Gainesville out in the woods?

CJ: Oh, they would be all over everywhere. There were just a world of them, and that was the boom. Now, that land sold for a huge price. Maybe comparable with today's prices, but with a few exceptions there was no money--big money--ever passed. It would, as I say, be sold on an option or a contract, and they just put a little bit of money down, and then that fellow would sell it to somebody else. It would just keep passing through different hands. Then, finally, whoever got it last when the big catastrophe came along probably lost it to the bank or whoever had the mortgage on it. Later, of course, gradually through the years, it would sell. But many of the subdivisions that we have today are re-plats of these old subdivisions. Now a few of them made it, but there are a lot of them that did not. You can see them all over Florida like that.

SJ: When did you graduate from Gainesville High School?

CJ: June of 1933.

SJ: So the Depression had already been on about three to four years, although in Florida it started about 1929. Was not that the year all the banks closed?

CJ: Let me see. Franklin Roosevelt went into office, [but] Herbert Hoover was credited with the Depression, which really was not fair. And Roosevelt came in, and his first official act was to declare a moratorium [on banking]. All the banks were failing, and [he] declared a moratorium and froze everything.

A bank was located where Chesnut's [Office Supply] is. The downtown square used to be the number-one business location in Gainesville--the intersection of University Avenue and Main [Street]. Florida National Bank it was [called] then, [but] it changed names three or four times. It was the Florida Bank and Trust Company and this was the bank where we banked, I remember, as a kid. This was where we had our money, and they called it the Florida Bank and Bust Company because it went broke along with every other bank.

The present Florida National Bank has no connection whatsoever with the one that went broke. The present Florida National Bank at Gainesville had

bought out what was known as the Phifer State Bank, which was located where the city plaza is now. The Phifer State Bank went broke, but it stayed in business and finally came out of it. First National never did go under. It is now the Atlantic National.

SJ: While all these banks were going broke and the Depression was on, why did your thoughts turn towards college?

CJ: I just never thought anything else. I have often thought about that myself. People talk about motivation and someone to encourage you. I am sure my mother must have encouraged me to go, but I can not remember that she did it in such a way that I knew she was doing it. I am sure she must have. But it was just always understood that that was what I was going to do. There was never any thought of quitting and going to work.

I can remember talking to these people that had dropped out of school. And most of them would say, "Do not drop out of school." He says, "I was a young fellow in high school and some guy came along and offered me a job." In those days, school teachers were making \$75 a month, and I guess a professor at the university maybe made \$100 a month, and anybody making a \$150 maybe was top salary. Doctors and lawyers and people were maybe making \$200 a month. And, anyway, some kid that absolutely never had anything--other than what he could sell in papers [for] nickels and dimes and things like that--[would probably be overwhelmed if] somebody came along and offered him a job, say, at \$50 a month or something. I remember one fellow telling me, "That man ought to be prosecuted and put in jail because here this young kid does not know any better." Under those circumstances he drops out of school, and he takes that job. And then he stays at it, maybe he gets promoted, and [he is] just making a little more money until it is too late. He gets married and has children and he cannot then go back to school.

But I, fortunately, had people--friends or acquaintances and my mother--[who] encouraged me to go on. It never entered my mind, actually, [not to go to college]. My brother and I both [attended]. He went through engineering, got his degree in engineering, and stayed in the service. He went into World War II and stayed in the service after the war in the Air Force in the engineering corps. I, of course, went to law.

I cannot remember when I decided on law. I decided on it back before I ever really understood what it was all about. I think maybe one person that had a lot of influence [on me was] James C. Adkins, Sr. [Florida supreme court justice and graduate of University of Florida College of Law, 1936]. He lived right in back of us. His son is a supreme court justice today. But we grew up together and played together from [the time we were] little kids.

Colonel Adkins was a practicing attorney. As a matter of fact, he was state's attorney at that time, and I am sure that had an influence on me because they were--the grown people were--some of them are best friends. I looked up

to them, and Jimmy Adkins was one of my best friends.

SJ: Had there been any law tradition in your family?

CJ: No. In my mother's family there were lawyers in Rockingham, North Carolina, but I did not know them. In later years I knew them and met them, but I heard my mother talk about them. But this did not really, I do not think, have any influence.

SJ: So, you graduated. Do you remember a telephone always being around your house here in Gainesville?

CJ: Yes, I always had a telephone.

SJ: Even when you were a young boy?

CJ: Yes, everybody had a telephone. And we had operators. This is real fun to think back. You would pick up the phone, and [give the operator] the numbers. I even remember my number; it was 658. You had three numbers. If you wanted a party line, you had a *J* or an *A* or a *B* or a *C*, like 658J. If you had just the one line, it was just the number. And they have grown. The numbers have grown now. But you would pick up the receiver and the operator who would say, "Number, please." And you would give them the number you wanted, and she would plug it in. You have seen the old TV shows, I am sure, where they would say "Susie."

Well, in some of the rural phones, you had a crank on them. I remember seeing those around. Actually, you generated enough electricity to ring the bell and then the bell alerted the operator, and you would say, "Susan, give me Joe Blow's house," or something like that. She had a great big switchboard, had her ear phones on, and had a whole bunch of plugs with cords on them. The little light would light up when you picked up your receiver, and she would plug it in, and you would tell her what number you wanted. I guess she plugged the other end of your line in this fellow's number.

The telephone office used to be right back of the Wilson Company Building on the Square. It was upstairs, and there was a drug store on University Avenue where I worked as a curb hop. They had soda fountains and kids [waiting on the customers]. I was eleven or twelve years old, and cars would park out in front and blow the horns. I would run out and take their order for whatever they wanted: Coca-Colas, ice cream, and this kind of stuff. And I would run in and get it and bring it out on a tray and hook it on the side of the car.

The telephone operators would order Coca-Colas, and we would take a big tray back there and would push a button downstairs. It would buzz, and they had an automatic lock that would open. The door would open, and I would take the tray up there. I can still see them. There must have been twenty-five to

thirty girls in a row there with earphones and just busy [makes a ringing noise] going like that. They would take a break every now and then because they could not drink their coke while they were on duty. They would take a break, and somebody would relieve them.

SJ: Were there any other jobs that you had as a young boy in Gainesville before you started college?

CJ: I sold papers. I did not do that long. I had a paper route, rather. I just did that. My brother and I had that together for, I guess, a couple of years. And later I worked with the city. [I] did all kinds of stuff for the city: [worked on the] maintenance crew [and] one thing after another.

SJ: While you were in high school?

CJ: I must have been in high school, yes. But I worked most of my young years at the soda fountain hopping curbs.

SJ: How much would they pay you?

CJ: Ten cents an hour. You worked a five hour period and you got fifty cents.

SJ: Did you ever have a raise?

CJ: I do not remember that I ever got a raise. I would work until midnight, and I lived over here in Highlands. It was nine blocks. I was twelve years old, and I would walk home at midnight. I would be scared today. I would not even think of such a thing.

SJ: I would have thought that in the 1920s Gainesville would have been rolled up tight by midnight.

CJ: Oh, it was. On the weekends the university would have dances out at the [campus] and [we had] dances in town. They would be all over. Things would be going on, and after the dance broke up we would have a rush [at the soda fountain]. Cars would be just double parked all out in the street and all of them blowing their horns because these were the only places you could go to get refreshments.

I am sure that there was a lot of drinking of hard liquor going on, but we were not aware of it. I am sure they would order Cokes and mix it. [That is] probably what they were doing in the cars, but you did not have any problems. I do not remember having any problems. There would be isolated incidents, but you really did not have any problems. I was not at all afraid.

I remember one time when I was twelve years old. You did not have to

have a driver's license, and I was driving at twelve. My mother let me take the car to work one night. My father was living then. I had been used to walking home after I got off work, and here I had been working maybe four hours on a dead run back and forth. So when we got off, I walked home the nine blocks and realized that I had driven the car to work. I had to walk all the way back to town and get the car and drive it home.

SJ: So, when did you join the ranks of the university students?

CJ: In September of 1933 was the year I started.

SJ: Did you move down to the university when you first began college?

CJ: We lived in a whole bunch of places after my father died. The house we were living in we lost in the Depression years. That was happening to a lot of people. We lost that house and moved out [near] the university, and my mother rented a big house and [then] rented [rooms] to students to make the rent.

SJ: Did she start that in 1929 when the Depression started?

CJ: Well, we moved out there my senior year in high school. Oh, [I forgot to mention that] I worked in a grocery store. I remember that. You had asked me what jobs we had. All the grocery stores were downtown at that time and I was working for the predecessor of Winn Dixie. It was right there where the Florida National Bank parking lot is. It was called Winn Lovetts. It later became Winn Dixie, and on weekends I would work there. The grocery stores all stayed open until twelve o'clock at night on Saturday night. Nothing was open on a Sunday. It [the town] was closed up tight, but I would work on. And I can remember we had moved out to the west side of town out [close] to the university my high school senior year because I would go home from the grocery store and I would go on out there.

SJ: Where was that house that your mama rented and rented to students?

CJ: Well, the first one was on Lafayette Street, and that is [now] about 16th Street.

SJ: I thought you said right behind the Krystal. Is that about right where it would be today?

CJ: Yes, the old KA House was on the corner, and it is torn down. I think there is a steak house, but this was about three blocks off of University Avenue [to the] north.

SJ: I see.

CJ: And then we moved from there to a one-story house about two blocks down the street on that same street.

SJ: Now, you stayed with your mama all through your college career?

CJ: That is right.

SJ: How many people would you have rooming with you at one time?

CJ: I would say ten or twelve. They would usually be two boys in a room, and the house probably had about five or six rentable rooms.

SJ: And do you remember other people in the neighborhood renting out rooms to people?

CJ: Everybody did. Every house out there was [a rooming house]. There were only three dormitories: Buckman Hall, Thomas Hall, and what we call the the new dorm. What is it now, Murphree?

SJ: It is Sledd.

CJ: Those are the only [ones]. Now wait a minute. Not Murphree [but] Sledd. Let me see. Where is Murphree?

SJ: Murphree was built in 1939, and Sledd was built in 1939, too. That would have been the year you graduated. Was it between Buckman and Thomas?

CJ: It connected Buckman and Thomas. But it was there. It was there when I started to school.

SJ: It was called the new dorm for several years.

CJ: Yes, we called it the new dorm.

SJ: And it was not dedicated Sledd or Murphree until 1939. I think that is what I meant to say.

CJ: I cannot really remember when it was built, but I know my mother was house mother of it. She started working there before I went to college while I went to high school.

SJ: Do you remember what some of her duties were?

CJ: They supervised the cleaning. They had a whole crew of maids that would go through and clean and change beds and this kind of thing. I think that was probably their main duty. And then the mother did not have any duties. They called them house mothers, but they did not really have any specific duty, say, like a house mother in a fraternity or something like that. But although they did, they would do that because they knew all the boys in there. And all the boys knew them and kind of looked to them for various and sundry things.

SJ: When would she go to work? Early in the morning?

CJ: Yes, she would usually go about the time we went to school, as I remember.

SJ: And, of course, she lived on that side of town at the time, so it was just a short walk.

CJ: Yes, right, not any big problem.

SJ: Well, what were some of the first classes you took, and what was your initial idea when you were in college of what you were going to do with your life?

CJ: Of course, as I mentioned the other day I debated about whether to take [classes in] arts and science or business administration. Those were the two favorite pre-law subjects. I figured that if I take arts and sciences, I could get courses that I would never be able to get, or, rather, I could learn things that I would never be able to learn without going to school or getting in college. I [figured that I] could pick up the business end after I went to work, but I have since realized that this is not quite accurate because there is a lot of the business administration that is very helpful. [You learn things] that you never get unless you train in it. It is just impossible. Unfortunately, it would be well if you had both. Anyway, my theory was that I wanted to get as much of the arts and sciences courses that I could. I majored in history and political science and had a minor in English and a minor in languages.

SJ: Where were most of your classes held for your arts and sciences classes?

CJ: The history classes were all in Peabody, and this is the class I had under old Dr. [James Miller] Leake [head professor of history and political science] that I mentioned to you the other day. He was from Virginia [and] still had a strong Virginia accent. When we get to the phase in American history concerning Robert E. Lee, tears would come in his eyes.

But all of the history classes were in that building, and my English was all in [what] is called Anderson Hall today. At that time the lower floor of Anderson Hall was the university business office. The business manager's office and the president's office were in that building too.

SJ: That was called Language Hall?

CJ: I believe it was Language Hall, yes. I think it was later named Anderson.

SJ: It was.

CJ: Yes, but the lower floor was all administrative. And it seemed like the president's office was on the second floor.

SJ: Did you have any classes in that building?

CJ: I had all of my English classes there.

SJ: On the top floor?

CJ: Well, we had some classes on the ground floor. The business manager's office was in the basement. The front part of the building on the first floor was [also] the business manager's [area]. They had a basement that was some of the business manager's [department], and they had these little spiral staircases going down to them. And the bookstore was in the basement. I had forgotten that. It had a soda fountain [in it], and also [served as the place] where you bought your books.

SJ: Could you buy your textbooks anywhere else in town?

CJ: I cannot remember. I was trying to figure that out the other day. I do not think we did. However, Vidal Drug Company used to be on the square. It was right where the clock tower is now. We bought all of our high school books there. He apparently had a franchise.

SJ: You had to buy your own high school books?

CJ: Oh, yes. The state did not furnish anything in those days.

SJ: Nor the county?

CJ: Nor the county. Nothing was furnished. Absolutely nothing. The county did not even have enough money to pay the teachers. [During] my senior year in high school, all the parents that were able, had to donate money to supplement the teachers' salaries to get them to continue to finish our senior year. Otherwise, we would not have been able to graduate. The school would not have been accredited. A lot of the schools closed. We had students that came from Waldo and Alachua and all these little towns around Gainesville to finish

their senior year.

SJ: Those were very tough times.

CJ: They really were. But we, as I remember, bought all of our college books in that little bookstore down in the basement [of present-day Anderson Hall]. Later, I think before I finished law school, Irving Kallman opened the bookstore on University Avenue. I do not know whether it is still there. I was talking to his son the other day. They still have the bookstore, but I do not know whether it is located in the same place that it used to be.

SJ: What is the name of it?

CJ: Kallman's. It was right there across from the campus. It was in the block just east of the College Inn. They changed all that stuff.

SJ: That would be the Florida Bookstore today, I think.

CJ: Yes. That, I think, is probably in the same [place]. And this boy's father--I cannot remember his [first] name, but I think he graduated along about the same time I did--opened this bookstore there. And I think it was opened prior to my finishing school. I am not real sure what year it opened.

SJ: When did law school first appear attractive to you?

CJ: I always, looking back on it, just for some reason assumed that I was going to law school. In fact, in high school we took [an exam]. It is not the same exam they give today.

SJ: The LSAT?

CJ: Yes. I do not remember what type of thing it was, [but] it was not a qualification-type [exam]. You did not have to make a certain score on it to get into law school. I think they were glad to get anybody to come.

SJ: Aptitude, writing skills?

CJ: Some type of thing like that. I know that my brother was interested in possibly going to medical school, and I remember he took a different test from the one I did. We [took] an aptitude test of sorts, but what it was [I am not sure because] my memory is not that good.

SJ: Did you have a combined course of training--a combined degree?

CJ: Yes. I had a six years. I am sure I took some electives during that time, but

most of my required subjects were concentrated in the first three years, and my senior year in arts and science was combined [with law school]. That was my first year in law school, and all of the law classes counted as electives in arts and science. This way at the end of 1937 I could have gotten my A.B. But I did not get it because I did not see any use in graduating twice. There would have been no reason to have [taken the A.B.] because I was going right on to [law] school.

At the time I was working for Dr. [Elmer Dumond] Hinckley in the psychology department. He was teaching the course Man and His Thinking in general college [as] we called it. It is University College now. [University College was later merged into the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. Ed.] I was one of his assistants. He had about three. I was making, I think, about \$35 a month, which was big money. And if I got my degree, I could get \$50 [a month] since I would be a graduate student. So in 1938 I applied for my degree, and then in 1939, of course, I graduated from the law school.

SJ: Was there a registration process for law school?

CJ: Yes. Now, I am trying to think. I know the registration process for the pre-law was similar to what it is today: long lines, I am thinking. I do not know whether they have done away with that. They have tried all kinds of systems, but I do not think they have ever done away with it.

SJ: It is still terrible.

CJ: And we registered in the old library. The new library was built after I graduated.

SJ: Where was the old library? Is that what they call Library East?

CJ: It was right between Peabody and Anderson. Right there by Dr. [Albert A.] Murphree's statue [University of Florida president, 1909-1927].

SJ: That is [Library East]. Right.

CJ: That was the [main] library.

SJ: It was put up in 1922.

CJ: It was there when I started in school. You were asking about jobs. I worked while I was in college in the summer building the old student union building. I do not know what is there now.

SJ: Is that [next to] the Arts and Sciences Building [Dauer Hall] today?

CJ: I do not know.

SJ: Is it in the center of campus?

CJ: It is right in the center of campus.

SJ: The brick, collegiate, gothic-style building?

CJ: Yes. It was the student union, we called it. [The student union was located in Johnson Hall, which was destroyed by fire December 6, 1987. Ed.] The Florida Union they called it in later years. The Florida Union is right. And also I worked for the maintenance department: painting. I think I did that even after I was in law school in the summer. In the winter, I worked for Dr. Hinckley.

SJ: What summer did you work on the student union building?

CJ: That was before I got in Law School. I cannot remember.

SJ: 1936 is the idea I have of when it was built.

CJ: I must have worked [there in the 1930s]. It took about two years to build it. Probably 1934 and 1935, maybe. Time gets away from me. I would not want to say, really, because I am not sure. All I can remember is it was hard work.

SJ: How much did they pay you?

CJ: That I cannot really remember. I know some of the work was twenty-five cents an hour. It had gone up from the ten cents. That I remember.

SJ: [That is] not much.

CJ: But, now, we may have gotten more because that was hard work. But I worked for twenty-five cents an hour for the painter. We stripped the vines off of the side of the building and waterproofed the brick. Because if you do not [apply waterproofing], the brick would ruin.

SJ: Would they pay you with a check or cash?

CJ: I think it was cash. We would go downstairs in Anderson Hall, [or] Language Hall [as it was called], to the payroll window on Friday afternoon when we got off, and they would give us an envelope with cash in it.

SJ: And how about when you were a graduate student working over in the psychology department?

- CJ: Now this I cannot remember, but I think maybe we got a voucher from the state. It is funny, but my memory has gotten away. Then I worked one summer for the university tearing out an old ice box [in what] we called the commons. It was the cafeteria. I guess the cafeteria is still there. [Also located in Johnson Hall, which was razed in the 1987 fire. Ed.]
- SJ: It is called the Rathskeller today.
- CJ: But there was an old, huge walk-in refrigerator that was just built-in. It had old cork and stuff in the walls. The biggest black roaches that I had ever seen ran out of the old cork. But we tore that thing out and built a new one, and then we painted and cleaned. We were given a ticket good for one free meal for each hour we worked. I accumulated enough tickets to eat my noon meal one entire semester.
- SJ: You were talking about waterproofing those bricks all over the campus. Do you remember?
- CJ: They would mix the waterproofing themselves. Take a great big drum and pour some kind of fluid like gasoline or some solvent in and then put paraffin in and mix it. We used big brushes. That was tiresome work. We actually waterproofed those bricks.
- SJ: Did the color of the brick change?
- CJ: No, it was a colorless liquid, and as I understand it those walls are solid brick [in] those old buildings. And if you do not do that, when it rains the water will actually go through the brick. If you do not keep them waterproofed, vines will ruin a masonry building.
- SJ: That is right. They cling right into the brick. Well, it sounds like there was adequate work available.
- CJ: Oh, yes. Anybody that wanted to work could work. I do not recall ever having any problem. I worked all the time.
- SJ: Do you remember a lady by the name of "Ma" Ramsey?
- CJ: Oh, yes. She was a house mother at the same time my mother was.
- SJ: Did she also run a boarding or rooming house?
- CJ: Oh, wait a minute. I am sorry. I am thinking about "Ma" Peeler. I am sorry.

SJ: Who was Ma Peeler?

CJ: She was the house mother of [the] Murphree and Buckman [dorms] at the same time my mother was. But Ma Ramsey had two rooming houses right on University Avenue. I guess any student that went to the University of Florida from when to when knew Ma Ramsey and probably ate at Ma Ramsey's.

SJ: Did you know her pretty well?

CJ: I knew her fairly well. She had a big two-story house [that she] rented to boys, and [it] had a dining room. All of the dining rooms were family style. This was the best food you ever ate in your life. She had a one-story house right next to it that she rented to students, and I used to work for her. If you waited on tables, you got a free meal for each meal worked. I would wait tables. Then after we got through [waiting tables] we would eat.

SJ: What a deal.

CJ: She would give you all you wanted to eat.

SJ: Did she have cooks working for her?

CJ: I am sure, [but] my memory is not that good. But I am sure she had some permanent waiter help. [She] probably had one head waiter [and] one maitre d' or something, but there were hundreds and hundreds of students. They went through school waiting tables. That was the way they fed themselves. If you brought maybe five students to her rooming house, that would [earn] you a meal ticket for a semester. The ticket was for one week, I believe, and had the days printed around the edges. Each time you ate, they would punch a hole in the meal ticket.

SJ: There were some deals to be made.

CJ: But if you would bring five, or whatever number, to buy tickets, she would give you a free ticket. So you would not have to work or wait tables. There was no reason why in those days. Now, I say there was no reason. I really believe that you have to qualify this, of course. But generally speaking there was no reason why a student, if he had enough ambition, could not have come here and gone to college if he wanted to badly enough.

SJ: How much would a room cost?

CJ: Just about everybody had a boarding house. The competition was keen.

SJ: How much was a rooming house going for?

CJ: You know, I would hate to venture but maybe five dollars a week or something. I am really not sure.

SJ: What did Ma Ramsey look like?

CJ: That would be hard for me to describe, really. I knew her, but to paint a picture of her, I could hardly do it. She was gray-headed.

SJ: She was an older lady?

CJ: She was an older lady, oh, yes. And heavy, big, jolly, heavy set.

SJ: She had a husband?

CJ: Not that I remember. He was deceased, I guess.

SJ: Any children?

CJ: I never knew whether she had any children.

SJ: Where were her houses located?

CJ: I think her main house was on the corner there by the College Inn. I believe Paul Smysor bought that house in later years. I do not know whether it is still there or not. And then she had the one in the back of it.

SJ: Is that on the northeast corner of that block?

CJ: Yes, I believe that is right.

SJ: Did she also work as a house mother at the dorm?

CJ: No, I got mixed up there. Mrs. Peeler was the house mother I was thinking about. She was from Perry [as] I remember. And years and years before her time, her sister, Miss Swanson, was the house mother. A lot of the real old timers that lived in the dormitory would probably remember her [as] Ma Peeler.

SJ: So you started in law school in 1937. That was your first year of taking courses?

CJ: Right. That was my first year.

SJ: And you would walk from the house or would you take a bicycle?

- CJ: Well, I rode a bicycle. I either walked or rode a bicycle. In fact, Sam Proctor lived with us for, I think, one or two years. You had asked me the other day how long he lived with us. I think we may not have lived in that house more than about a year, and then we moved. I do not know why we moved so much. Maybe [my mother] got a better deal. We moved to another house further toward town from that house. Then my senior year it seemed like I was living in that house further toward town. I think he [Samuel Proctor] lived there [with us] two years. I am just trying to grind my wheels and think back.
- SJ: These homes that you all rented and consequently rented out to students were all within the block of 13th Street down to about 19th [Street]?
- CJ: Yes, in that area. There were also a lot of rooming houses east of 13th Street. There were a good many. In fact, there were a lot of fraternity houses east of 13th [Street as well], but there were also a lot of boarding houses and rooming houses [east and west of 13th Street]. [There] was kind of a concentration of them in that area.
- SJ: I guess you were pretty familiar with campus, growing up in Gainesville as a kid. [I am sure] you probably played over on the campus area.
- CJ: We did, yes. But it has changed so much now.
- SJ: You had talked about the grid changes made by President [John J.] Tigert [University of Florida president, 1928-1947].
- CJ: Yes. Dr. Tigert made that change. The streets used to curve. There were two main arched driveways through the campus, and Dr. Tigert came along and put in the grid--the right angle on the streets.
- SJ: Do you remember how soon into his administration he drew up new plans?
- CJ: I surely do not, but it was pretty fast. He was a man of action, and I really admired him. He was quite a fellow. I knew him quite well.
- SJ: Murphree died in 1927. He was appointed president in 1929 and [James] Farr took over as acting director that one year.
- CJ: Yes. Dr. Farr lived over in Highlands. The University bought a big house on the Boulevard where Dr. Tigert lived. We used to go over there to see Mary Jane while they lived there. I got to know him pretty well.
I am going to run back a bit here. The track used to be where the westernmost dormitory is, which is a logical place for it, just opposite the old Women's Gym. The oval [runs] north and south now; it used to run east and

west. The stadium was built, I think, about the year I started school: 1933 [or] somewhere along there. I do not know whether it was called Gator Growl or not, but the pep rally before the games [was held in the old track]. They may have had them just at Homecoming or before all the games, I do not know.

But every freshman was required to bring his weight in wood and pile it up in the middle of the track. If you did not, you got paddled. You got so many licks, so we would go out and [gather] anything that would burn. [We] would strip it, and bring it to the bonfire. Eventually, it was necessary to do away with the bonfire. They had to quit doing it because they were stripping everything in town that would burn. [Students] were taking porch swings and porch chairs and, of course, there was not a privy left. There were still a lot of privies around in those days: little outhouses. They would take them [and] anything [else] that burned. All the benches up and down the streets [located] at the bus stops, etc. Finally, the benches were built with concrete on each end and boards across the seat.

SJ: [They] tried to secure them, right?

CJ: [Yes, so they] could not move it. I guess when you mentioned the campus, I thought about that bonfire that we used to [have].

SJ: When you approached the law college from the west side and you walked in through the portal that has the little porch, what was the first thing you came onto on the west side?

CJ: On the left was the library. As I remember, it had a big double door, and that whole wing downstairs was the library.

SJ: Who worked in there?

CJ: On the back end of it, on the north end, was an office where Mrs. [Ila] Pridgen [College of Law librarian] worked.

SJ: Do you remember her having any assistants? Who would help at night or during the day?

CJ: I think Stan West was there at that time.

SJ: Were there any law students that were assistants besides Stan?

CJ: I do not think so. Now, there may have [been], but I cannot remember. They probably did [have other assistants], but they do not come to my memory.

SJ: Where were most of your classes?

- CJ: Most of the classes were--I say most of them--in the courtroom. Upstairs over the library was the courtroom. [It occupied] that whole floor. We had a lot of classes in there. Downstairs I know there was [at least] one classroom, and it seems like there were two classrooms downstairs, but I cannot remember.
- SJ: As you immediately walk in, there is a classroom to the right. Would there have been one down the corridor on that south end?
- CJ: Dean Trusler's office was down that way to the left.
- SJ: I am not sure now whether his office was upstairs or downstairs.
- CJ: It seems like there was a classroom down the corridor. It was on the left. One to the right and one to the left of the corridor.
- SJ: Speaking about the courtroom, what was practice court all about?
- CJ: We had two semesters. We had a practice court, which was just a classroom or trial practice. I think that was what they called it. That was the classroom work, and then [for] the practice court, we had one criminal case one civil case and one equity case the next semester. Two lawyers would be assigned as [counsel for the] plaintiffs and two as defense attorneys on the civil and the criminal case. I do not remember whether the prosecuting attorney was handled by the school or by the professor that taught it or by the student.
- I cannot remember much about my [equity case]. As a matter of fact, I cannot even remember my criminal case. But I remember my civil case. That was one I was telling you about. It was an actual case. The sawmill right off of 23d Boulevard--[at the] junction of the railroad track and 23d--had caught on fire, and that was the main line of the Atlantic Coastline Railroad.
- SJ: A cinder popped out of the steam engine?
- CJ: Yes. They had locomotives and a cinder had gone over into the lumber mill. Some people accused the owner of the lumber mill of setting it on fire purposely to collect the insurance on it. They [the lumber company] tried to blame it on the railroad. We made an appointment with the engineer. He used to park his switch engine every night down here at the foot of Main Street.
- SJ: Where Stringfellow's Supply is?
- CJ: Where Stringfellow is now, right. As a matter of fact, the side tracks are still there just where they always were where they brought freight cars in. And we went all through that [locomotive]. He opened up the front of it so we could look

in and see how the boiler works. On one locomotive there was a big round thing in front, and it actually was on hinges. You could open it up and pull that thing open, and there is a screen in the smokestack. The smokestack was right on the front of the train. And I never did know it before, [but] there is a thing that fits right in there with a screen, which is supposed to screen out those cinders when they came out the stack. But because of the intense heat and the constant heat and [smoke] blowing [through it], that thing would get holes in it, and sparks would escape out there. When the locomotive ran the smoke would just come gushing out of there. But, anyway, that was a lot of fun to go on that thing and see how it [worked].

SJ: Who won that case?

CJ: I cannot remember how it came out.

SJ: How about the actual case?

CJ: I just do not remember. I do not even remember that because it was not a case that had happened during the period when I was really paying any attention to law. I think it was an old case that they had dug up somewhere.

SJ: Who was the judge or the person that appointed this case?

CJ: Professor [Clarence J.] TeSelle taught the class.

SJ: Tell me a little bit about him.

CJ: I knew him quite well, too, because his daughter was in high school with me, and we went to his home many times when we were young kids. I say young, [we were] high school age. But he was crippled and walked with a walking cane. He was an ex-prosecuting attorney from Wisconsin, I believe, and he kept a cigar in his mouth. He never lit it, as I remember, and it would always hang out one side, and he would get a real scowl on his face. If you did not know him, you would be scared to death of him. You would think he was going to eat you.

But he was really an excellent professor. As a matter of fact, many a student came out of the law school despising him. But they will never forget the experience they had, and that is what it is all about. I mean he wanted to engrave it in your mind.

SJ: Did you have a favorite professor?

CJ: No, not really. Actually, he was probably one of my favorites, mainly because I knew him. I was going to tell one interesting thing [about Professor TeSelle] that comes to mind.

I was taking Evidence in the summer, and we only had about ten people taking it [or] maybe less than that. And we were sitting in the jury box in the old courtroom, and he was sitting down at one of the counsel tables. We had taken a break and just filed back in and had taken our seats in the jury box, and he would just holler at you. He never said anything quietly. It was always just a bellow: "Johnston, stand up!" So I stood up, and he proceeded to rake me up and down. [He] accused me of cheating and I do not know what all [else] for it seemed about an hour. It was probably about two minutes, [but] he just really railed out at me, and I know I must have turned every color in the rainbow. And everybody and I were just completely dumbfounded. They did not know what was going on. I kept thinking that he was just joking, but he was so serious and just kept on bounding at me. He was deliberately doing [that] to keep me dumbfounded. If he had done it in a kind of soft way, I would have probably responded. But as it was, I stood there completely mute. I did not say a word [and] did not know what was going on.

SJ: How did it end?

CJ: Well, he finally said, "Sit down." And then he said: "All of you know that there is nothing to what I have said. I am just illustrating a point in evidence [that shows] how dangerous it is [when] a person is accused of something [that] if they remain silent, [it can be] used as an admission of guilt." He was illustrating a point that I have never in my life forgotten, [even] if I live to be a hundred years old.

SJ: You have given me two examples that seem like your law school experience was pretty practical.

CJ: Well, it was really.

SJ: Were there suggestions to go down to the courthouse and watch the proceedings there?

CJ: No, we never did really. Now some of the students, I am sure, did, but I never did because every free minute I had I was working. I was either studying or working. I did not do a whole lot of studying because I was really [not mature]. As I mentioned the other day, I do not suppose I was too young because I had had plenty of experience in life [and knew] what life is all about. But I really was not academically mature I guess you could say.

SJ: Did you do pretty well in law school?

CJ: No, I did not do as well as I should have. I probably had about half C's [and] B's. I do not remember exactly what [I made, but] I am not particularly proud of my grades to tell you the truth.

- SJ: Did you clerk for any local lawyers, or do you remember anyone doing that?
- CJ: No, not in those days. In those days there was no such thing because the local lawyers apparently did not hire the students. One of my friends clerked with a lawyer in Miami during the summer, and he actually paid the lawyer to let him work for him. Times were that rough. Usually today we will have maybe three students clerking for us, and I imagine every law firm in town has two or three. And they pay them. Some of them, I guess, pay more than others, but [all pay] at least the minimum wage of \$4 an hour or maybe [even] more than that.
- SJ: What were some of your favorite classes and the kind of emerging specialties you had?
- CJ: At first I did all types of work, but I gradually drifted off into real estate and wills and estate planning and this kind of thing. The evidence course and Professor TeSelle, as I said, [would be on the list] if I had to pick a favorite. I [also] used to enjoy Judge Cockrell's criminal law classes. He was really a character. He made it very interesting. He had been on the supreme court and had been a practicing lawyer.
- SJ: You talked earlier, before the interview, about his tests. Are you sure that was him?
- CJ: Yes. He gave the objective-type [tests]: true and false and there might have been some multiple choice. I cannot remember, but they were strictly [objective]. There was none of the essay-type [tests] as I recall. As a matter of fact, I was thinking after you and I talked the other day [that] he gave us tests during the year, [and] I do not believe that any of our courses ever gave a test during the year. I think our final exam was it; that is, the entire grade for the semester was based on the one examination--100 percent.
- SJ: Do you remember how long you had for the final?
- CJ: It was about four hours, I think, [but] do not hold me to that.
- SJ: Were most of your classes in the morning? Did you have any in the evening?
- CJ: It was all morning. There was nothing in the afternoon.
- SJ: Do you have a sense of why that was?
- CJ: I guess maybe it had always been that way. Custom, I guess. There were no law classes in the afternoon.

SJ: Do you think it was that [it] was hot in the afternoon or a practical reason like that?

CJ: Well, it could have been, but I do not know. It is funny [because] I have often thought of this same thing both in high school and college. I do not remember ever noticing the heat. We had no air conditioning. Of course, the buildings were built differently. They had high ceilings and had windows on maybe three sides or at least two sides. But it got hot. I can remember it did get hot, but I do not remember it ever bothering me. I worked in the afternoon. [And it] was fortunate [that we had no afternoon classes] because I could use my whole afternoon for work.

SJ: Where were you working?

CJ: I was working with Dr. Hinckley in the psychology department.

SJ: How did you happen to get a job in the psychology department?

CJ: Dr. Wilson, who was dean of the college of arts and sciences, called me up one day and wanted to know if I was interested in working. I was over there before he could hang the phone up. And I knew him [Dr. Hinkley], of course, personally.

Well, back in those days we knew just about all of the professors on the campus. It made it really interesting. I feel sorry for students that go to a big school because we knew most of the students by sight, maybe not name, and we knew just about all of the professors. And the professors had all been here for years and years and years. Of course, one reason I knew them was because I had grown up in Gainesville. And they had been here forever. You know, they did not change [jobs so often back then].

SJ: How did they generally dress?

CJ: Coats and ties.

SJ: And how about the students?

CJ: We dressed more [formally] than they do now, but we did not dress up.

SJ: Were you all in a coat and tie?

CJ: No. We did not wear ties, but we dressed up. We did not go around looking like the students look today. It was a tradition--and I think I would have enjoyed it [because] it passed on before I was a senior--that in the law school seniors wore coats and ties and derbies. [They wore] what they call bowlers [and] those derby hats. But they were not doing that when I got there [or] by the time I was

senior. I think maybe our senior year we wore ties. We did not wear our coats.

SJ: Do you remember shuffling in class?

CJ: Yes, I do remember. I had forgotten about that until you mentioned it. I think when the hour was up we would start shuffling our feet.

You asked me about Dean [Harry R.] Trusler. Dean Trusler had all of his classes in the courtroom. He had a habit of talking with his eyes closed. I never did figure out whether he had them actually closed, but they looked like they were closed. A lot of the students would sit on the back [row] of that courtroom. It was a pretty big room; it was an auditorium actually. And he would stand up in the inside of the rail, and he would hold his hands out--both hands--and he would shut his eyes. He would wave his hands and talk for the whole hour. A lot of the students would get up in the back and sneak out, and he would never know the difference. Since there were no daily tests, there was not a daily grade. The final exam was it, and if you could bone up and pass the final exam, that was it. I do not remember whether they called roll. I guess they did, but I cannot remember for some reason.

SJ: Do you remember Hubert Christian Hurst?

CJ: I knew him well, yes.

SJ: Tell me about him.

CJ: He was, of course, a Gainesville native. I say native. I guess he was a native of Gainesville. But he had lived here for years, and I got to know him. I am not sure if he was ever married, but he was a lawyer and never practiced law. I used to talk with him a great deal. He would come in the office sometimes and talk. He was a Republican, and the funny thing [was that] back in those days when I was growing up, a Republican was some kind of an oddball. Everything was Democrat around here. There were two or three Republicans in town. I do not say this about Hubert because he was not much older than I was, but we looked on these Republicans as some kind of strange creature. [We saw] something different about them as kids. I was just throwing that in as a matter of interest.

SJ: He was a professor out there for a while.

CJ: Yes, he was a professor in business administration as I remember.

SJ: He was at the law college also. Do you remember him?

CJ: He may [have been]. If he was, that was after my time. Maybe during World War II he might have been. But he was teaching in business administration

when I was in school I believe. He was later appointed as a postmaster in Jacksonville. He left Gainesville and stayed up there a while and then came back to Gainesville.

SJ: What about [Clifford W.] "Pop" Crandall?

CJ: He had a little goatee. He taught Property [and] it seems like Equity Pleading.

SJ: Florida Civil Practice, I think.

CJ: Yes, I guess it was [that or] Common Law Pleading. I think Common Law Pleading is what we took and then Florida Civil [Practice] came after that. But he taught that, and he also taught me Property V. I cannot remember if he taught any other property courses.

He would talk, and he would stroke his little goatee, and it would wiggle when he would talk. But he was a highly intelligent fellow and was interesting and very calm. He had a kind of little lisp when he talked. It did not affect his delivery, but it was kind of distinctive. It kind of characterized him. When he would talk to you--he was baldheaded--he would rub his bald head. [laughter] That is the way he would think.

SJ: To stimulate those thoughts.

CJ: I guess so, yes.

SJ: Were all of the classes that you had with these professors within the law college, [or were] any of them outside?

CJ: No. All of them were right there in the school. And as I remember each professor had all of his classes in the same room. And [when] we would change class, [we would] go to his room.

SJ: You were in the Cavaliers?

CJ: Yes. That was supposedly a dance society. It was supposed to be a social organization, but all it was was really a dance organization.

SJ: I did not notice that you were a part of the John Marshall Debating Society or any other legal fraternity.

CJ: No, I never did [join]. I stayed so busy working that I never did [get involved]. I could have done it if somebody had pushed me a little bit. But the road of least resistance was not to get involved. And looking back, this is why I say [that] if I had been more mature, I would have done a whole lot more. Now I know

[during] my sophomore year [that] I ran--not in law college but in academic--for secretary. I was one of the class officers. But I never did get back into student politics.

Student politics was really a big thing in those days. We had a yearbook editor, and they had a business manager of the *Alligator*. And the editor of the *Alligator* and all those were elected offices and very much sought after. We had campaigns that would put the state elections to shame. [laughter] We had campaign literature, and they would go around and politic everybody on the campus. We would have rallies and all that kind of stuff, but I got out of it because I just really did not have the time.

SJ: You probably remember George Smathers [law college graduate, 1938, and United States Senator from Florida, 1951-1969].

CJ: Yes, George was just one year ahead of me, I think, and I knew George well [enough] to talk to him. But I was not personal friends with him.

SJ: Do you remember the professors having any social gatherings over at their house at the end of the term or midterm or at any time?

CJ: Never that I recall. We never saw them except in school. Now I knew Professor TeSelle. When I was in high school I had been to his home a good many times because I knew his daughter.

SJ: His daughter was in law college at the same time you were, I believe.

CJ: Yes.

SJ: I do not know if she graduated the same year as you.

CJ: I cannot remember whether she was in my class, but she was in there. She and Lucille Carns were both in there at the same [time].

SJ: Do you remember Margaret Edwards? She married a fellow by the last name of Skipper. She should have been in there too.

CJ: Yes, I do remember her. I had forgotten about her.

SJ: Were there any other women you remember in class or at the law college?

CJ: I would probably have to look at the annual.

SJ: The annual does not show anybody else.

CJ: They [women] were almost nonexistent.

SJ: Was Ila Pridgen teaching any classes?

CJ: No. She was the librarian, and she took one course a year. She graduated after I got out of law school, I think. I am not sure when she graduated, but she took one course a year and I am sure made an A in every course. I think she would have had straight A's.

SJ: Did you have any large classes of forty, fifty people?

CJ: It seem like our classes were about twenty to thirty. Now there may have been some combined when we meet in the courtroom, but most of our classes were small.

SJ: Did you ever have any guest lecturers: local practitioners or judges on the supreme court or anything like that?

CJ: No, never did that I remember.

SJ: Do you remember taking a course on how to prepare a brief?

CJ: I was trying to think. The closest we came to that--and this is not very close--was we would be assigned in legal bibliography citations, and [they would] make us look them up. But we had no practical courses other than this trial practice where we did any work ourselves. I do not think we ever had to hand in a paper.

SJ: Where did you do most of your studying for these classes?

CJ: Well, I [will] say [at] home in my room.

SJ: Did you ever use the library much?

CJ: Oh, yes, some. [But] I could not study too much in the library because there was always a lot of confusion. I do not know whether it is still that way, whether [they] can keep them quiet or not. But I would go over there when we had to, look up things, do some research, but I do not really remember too much about the activities as far as studying and the type of assignments [we had]. I know a great number of our texts--our books--were casebooks. We would read cases, and we could read them in our room as well as in the library.

SJ: Do you remember buying those books over at the basement of the Language Hall?

CJ: Well, here again, I do not know whether we had an exchange over there in law school because we very seldom ever bought a new book. [It] seems like we had an exchange there at the law school. We would sell our old book back. I do not know whether we would sell it or trade it or what, but we would take our old books back, and we would buy used books. We could also do that when Kallman finally opened up his store. And also the bookstore [on campus] did that. You could get used books.

SJ: Now, there are two professor that we have not talked about. One is Dean Slagle and the other is Jimmy Day.

CJ: Dean Slagle was the one I was mentioning. It was right funny [because] a lot of them thought that he was a former dean and that [his name], Dean, was a title. They would call him "Dean" in class as a title of respect. They would hold up their hands in class and say, "Dean," and so and so. [They would] ask him the question, and really they were calling him by his first name.

But his nickname was Sloogy. I liked him. I do not know whether I want to say this on the record, but he was probably the least liked of the five. Now, I say liked. He was a likable fellow, but if you had to grade them as professors on a scale of one to five, I think he would be number five.

SJ: How about Jimmy Day?

CJ: Oh, Jimmy Day was a highly intelligent fellow, but he would get bogged down in his mass of detail. He would lose you.

SJ: Somebody called him "Footnote" Day. Do you remember that?

CJ: Well, that was one of his nicknames. Of course, I guess all of us are guilty of it, [but if you] asked him what time it was, he would tell you how to build a watch. [laughter] He was the perfect example of this. If you asked him a test question, he would say, "Well, now, the answer that is there in the majority view." There is the minority view and then maybe there is the Florida view and then there is Day's view. And then he would go into detail. You know, he never gave you a definitive answer, a yes or no type thing.

But in law you cannot [do that]. I later realized that. I do that with my clients I am sure. They must think I am the same way. But I saved notes on many of my courses, and in one of his courses that he taught, if we examined an abstract with the detail that he taught [in] it, you would never get anything done. It would not be economically feasible to examine an abstract.

However, I have often looked back on that, and I can see the reason. He taught us the proper way to do things with all of the answers. We can [now] take that and use it and fit it to our practical needs. So I would say that he was an

excellent professor.

SJ: Did he have another nickname? You said Footnote was one of them.

CJ: We did not call him to his face Jimmy Day, but that is the way anybody that mentioned him would say, "Oh, yes, Jimmy Day." But we all called him Professor.

SJ: Were there any other professors that had nicknames besides Dean Slagle?

CJ: Well, "Pop" Crandall. Pop and Sloogy and Judge Cockrell. We all called him "Judge" because he was a former supreme court judge. And Dean Trusler I do not remember. He might have had a nickname, but I do not remember. And Professor TeSelle, that is all I ever heard him called. I guess everybody was scared to call him anything else [because] he might find out about it. [laughter]

SJ: Do you remember people selling class notes to help other students through courses? [Particularly] a fellow by the last name of Crosby: Crosby's Notes.

CJ: If they ever did, I never did have them or see them. I think there undoubtedly was such a thing. It seems like it might have been after I got out of law school, and I heard talk of maybe buying a notebook with the notes in it. But I never did see it or use it. We used to laugh about the professors [because] their lectures were the same year after year after year after year. They never put anything new into them. Even the same jokes would be [there].

But some of them did have notes, class notes, that they had gotten from somewhere. It would say "joke," and sure enough when he got to that [point in] time [during the lecture], he would tell a joke. [laughter] I had forgotten that. As I say, you have to forgive me because my memory is not that good. [But] I never did use them [nor] ever did have any of them. I guess that is why I did not remember them. But there were the exams that they would actually give us. You could get copies of the old exams, but I do not know whether they still do that or not. [We used them] to study from. There was nothing unethical about that considering they never repeated them exactly.

Now, Dean Trusler would give hypotheticals. He was a master at that. He would in the course on torts. He would have things like, "A little boy found a dead cat by the side of the road and picked him up by the tail and whirled him around over his head and threw him and the cat landed on a telephone wire and caused it to short and burn the wire through and the wire would fall and go into a building and . . ." Almost a Rube Goldberg type thing. Each act would cause something else to happen. It might even be a true-and-false question or it might be hypothetical. But on his final exams he would really have some wild ones as I remember.

SJ: Could you expect to make much money when you graduated? Was that on your mind?

CJ: No. I came up during the Depression and really did not [think too much about it], although it was a struggle to live. It is hard to explain to anybody, but money was really not the most important thing. We managed to live, have something to eat, and were in good health. Fortunately, we never had any serious illness in the family. Of course, my father died when I was fourteen, but we had what we needed. We had a Model A Ford, which was not much of an automobile. But it would run, and we did what we pleased. Of course, the whole idea was to make a living and to have things, but it [money] was never a real moving factor that I can remember.

SJ: Where were your graduation ceremonies held?

CJ: I was trying to remember. I applied for my degree in 1938, [and I think it] was in the P. K. Yonge auditorium. I think that my senior law school [graduation] was [held] in the stadium.

SJ: When you were at Florida Field, were you treated separately from the rest?

CJ: No, it seems like we sat with the rest of the group.

SJ: And you were awarded the diploma privilege for your acceptance to the bar after that?

CJ: Yes, it was just automatic. We had to apply, but there was no red tape to it as I remember.

SJ: Did you go back to the auditorium--the courtroom--afterwards?

CJ: You know, it is funny how those things get away from you. I was trying to remember if I finished in June. [It] must have been, and we did not pick up our diploma. I think we had to go back and get it in the basement of the auditorium. I think we were given just a piece of paper, and we went to the auditorium and were required to turn in our cap and gown before we could receive our diploma. Mine was rolled up sheepskin, I remember. We went to the basement or the ground floor of the big auditorium.

Yes! I take it all back. It was not in the stadium; it was in the University Auditorium, and you went down and there was a door underneath the steps.

SJ: Right.

CJ: The steps went down each side and we went in and picked up our diploma

downstairs. I remember that now. Right. I think in 1938 [when I got my A.B.] they were going to have it in the old P. K. Yonge building, and I did not even go. I just applied and picked up my diploma.

SJ: You mentioned earlier that you all had a Model A. Were there other automobiles on the campus?

CJ: Very few. Now I mentioned Dr. Leake. He had an old Ford that he would [drive], and everybody teased him about it. He would look out the window of it and say: "Now I can say that mine is paid for. Is yours?" [laughter]

But my mother drove ours to work when she was working in the dormitory, but I never used it. Well, I would use it maybe at night on the weekends if I had a date or something like that. But during the daytime, during the week, I usually rode a bicycle and I walked. We walked a lot. People do not walk enough, I do not think, today.

SJ: Well, I want to thank you for sharing your time here with me today.

CJ: Yes, I guess that I need to [go].

SJ: I know that you have got an appointment.

[End of interview]