

1 UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

2 EASTERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS

3 TYLER DIVISION

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6 ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW ] 10 AM, MAY 24, 2010

7 OF ] U.S. COURT HOUSE

8 MURRAY L. HARRIS, ESQ. ] TYLER, TEXAS

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11 INTERVIEW OF MURRAY L. HARRIS, U.S. CLERK OF COURT (RETIRED)

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13 David Maland, U.S. Clerk of Court, Presiding

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15 Also in Attendance:

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17 Karen Mitchell, U.S. Clerk of Court

18 Northern District of Texas [by teleconference]

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20 David Provines, Chief Deputy Clerk

21 Eastern District of Texas

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23 Mike Lantz, Deputy Clerk

24 Eastern District of Texas

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10:07AM 1 MR. MALAND: I'm going to be using an outline that  
10:07AM 2 was developed by the FCCA Oral History Project.

10:07AM 3 This is an interview of Murray L. Harris, who was  
10:07AM 4 United States District Clerk for the Eastern District of Texas  
10:07AM 5 from 1974 until 1992.

10:07AM 6 This interview is being made on May the 24th, 2010,  
10:08AM 7 at Tyler, Texas, by Karen Mitchell and David Maland, as part  
10:08AM 8 of the history project of the Federal Court Clerks Association.

10:08AM 9 So, with that said, Murray, Karen has pulled up a  
10:08AM 10 little bit of your biography. There was one little bit that  
10:08AM 11 I didn't know, the name of the town you were born in, Yowell.

10:08AM 12 MR. HARRIS: That's correct.

10:08AM 13 MR. MALAND:

10:08AM 14 Q. Where is that? Where is Yowell, Texas?

10:08AM 15 A. It's out from Greenville, in Delta County. I think  
10:08AM 16 the county is Delta.

10:08AM 17 Q. And you were born on September the 16th, 1917?

10:08AM 18 A. Correct.

10:08AM 19 Q. The great war was still being fought, World War I.

10:08AM 20 A. Uh-huh.

10:08AM 21 Q. And there you were entering the world during the time  
10:08AM 22 that, you know, the Model T was just being invented and built,  
10:09AM 23 Woodrow Wilson was President. The world was a very different  
10:09AM 24 place then than what we have now. And I'm just inviting you,  
10:09AM 25 Murray, to go back to the years of your youth, your boyhood,

10:09AM 1 because this is extremely interesting for those of us who grew  
10:09AM 2 up in later eras. But what was it like growing up as a young  
10:09AM 3 boy with your family? Just tell us a little bit about your  
10:09AM 4 family life, and your mom and dad and sisters and brothers, and  
10:09AM 5 what you did.

10:09AM 6 A. We happened to be in Yowell, Texas. My dad was an  
10:09AM 7 attorney. His grammar school experience was through the  
10:09AM 8 seventh grade, then he taught school.

10:09AM 9 Q. After seventh grade, he taught school?

10:09AM 10 A. Correct. When he tired of that, he went down to the  
10:09AM 11 university to go to law school. He went one year, passed the  
10:10AM 12 bar. He had no money to open an office, so he went to Yowell  
10:10AM 13 to farm a hundred acres of land that his wife's dad owned. His  
10:10AM 14 name was Wesley Miller from Greenville.

10:10AM 15 Q. So that was his father-in-law, Wesley Miller?

10:10AM 16 A. Correct.

10:10AM 17 Q. And what kind of farming did they do? Did they run  
10:10AM 18 cattle?

10:10AM 19 A. Raised cotton.

10:10AM 20 Q. Raised cotton.

10:10AM 21 A. King cotton back in those days. So he was there for  
10:10AM 22 that reason. His mother was very upset about him farming his  
10:10AM 23 father-in-law's farm when she had spent all that money on his  
10:10AM 24 education. So he abandoned that as soon as he could and went  
10:10AM 25 to Corsicana and opened a law office. And I still have some