

Tulsa Law Review

Volume 10
Number 1 *Dedicated to John Rogers*

Volume 10 | Number 1

1974

Dedications to John Rogers

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.law.utulsa.edu/tlr>



Part of the [Law Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Dedications to John Rogers, 10 Tulsa L. J. 1 (1974).

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.law.utulsa.edu/tlr/vol10/iss1/3>

This Front Matter is brought to you for free and open access by TU Law Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Tulsa Law Review by an authorized editor of TU Law Digital Commons. For more information, please contact megan-donald@utulsa.edu.

DEDICATION TO JOHN ROGERS

No positive contribution for the betterment of mankind can ever occur without the continuous, energetic, steadfast and devoted dedication of a group of human beings in support of a cause in which they believe. It has been the good fortune of our law school to have numerous supporters, both men and women, who have fallen into that category. But I believe all will agree that there is one man whose love and devotion for this law school has surpassed that of any other. And that man is John Rogers. He is a man whom I have had the good fortune to know for almost 25 years and a man for whom I have profound respect.

Mr. Rogers took his law degree from the University of Oklahoma in 1914 and was a member of the third graduating class of that law school. He has been at the bar for 60 years. He is a man who commands the universal respect of the bar of this state and who has commanded over the years the absolute confidence and trust of his clients who have been an assortment of men and women who unhesitatingly have looked to Mr. Rogers for the resolution of the most difficult of legal problems relating to oil, cattle, land and securities.

In addition to being a lawyer's lawyer, Mr. John Rogers has devoted himself to literally scores of other worthwhile things in life. He came to Tulsa, Oklahoma, to practice law after having practiced for a short time in Holdenville, arriving in Tulsa on Easter Sunday in 1915; that coincidentally happened to be his 25th birthday. Although he was quite a young man he became a respected lawyer almost literally from the day of his arrival. In a three volume work published in 1921 entitled "The History of Tulsa" the historian, speaking of Mr. Rogers, states:

Thus within a year after his admission to the bar he rose to a place of great professional prominence and is today regarded as one of the leading corporation lawyers in Tulsa

. . . .

In a volume published in 1934 entitled "Oklahoma, Land of Opportunity," another historian, speaking of Mr. Rogers, states:

John Rogers, although young in years, has forged his way to the top as an oil man and attorney. He has a record as

a champion of education and possesses in his own home the finest library, it has been said, of any Oklahoman.

Mr. Rogers was Dean of the College of Law of The University of Tulsa from 1948 to 1959. He is a former member of the University of Oklahoma Regents. When the constitution and statutes were re-written in the 1940's relating to higher education in the state of Oklahoma, he was appointed by the Governor to the State Regents for Higher Education, on which Board he served for a period of 19 years. He has been a member of the Board of Trustees of The University of Tulsa and served as its chairman. And the matters alluded to merely scratch the surface of the many institutions of higher education, both within and outside of Oklahoma, which have benefitted by an association with John Rogers.

But above all, Mr. Rogers loves the law. He believes in our profession. He believes in legal education. Indeed, he is a broad gauge man who has given himself, his time and his money to the great benefit of practicing lawyers, judging lawyers and teaching lawyers.

John W. Davis, one of the great constitutional lawyers of our time, once said:

In the heart of every lawyer worthy of the name there burns a deep ambition so to bear himself that the profession may be stronger by reason of his passage through its ranks and that he may leave the law itself a better instrument of human justice than he found it.

If ever there was a man who exemplifies that thesis John Rogers is the man. I consider myself most fortunate to have been his friend.

JOSEPH W. MORRIS

*Former Dean of the College of Law
Judge, United States District Court for the
Eastern District of Oklahoma*

JOHN ROGERS: THE INFLUENCE OF A MAN

Within several months of this publication John Rogers will complete sixty years of active practice in the law. This alone is a remarkable achievement and would normally justify published recognition. However, in addition, John Rogers has served higher education, and especially legal education, for fifty years, as trustee, instructor and law school dean.

The influence of John Rogers has affected the entire bar of Oklahoma. As a recognized authority in oil and gas, Indian titles, and probate matters, the early laws and cases of this state carry his mark. As an instructor in the law, many of us remember with warmth the respect for constitutional processes that he left with us. As the dean emeritus of the College of Law, we see today the tangible and intangible marks that he made at this institution. As a trustee of several institutions, both public and private, we have seen, and continue to feel, his influence for quality education, for equal educational opportunity regardless of race, color or creed, and for respect of the law and its many institutions.

Even though all Oklahoma lawyers have, in one or more ways, experienced the many contributions of John Rogers, as advocate, as instructor, as administrator, as scholar, as civic servant, very few of us have seen him in all these roles. For over the last third of his service in the legal profession, I have had the privilege of working with him as student, associate, partner and friend. During these years he has been a man of warmth, a man of loyalty to those he served, and a man who demanded more of himself than others; thus he has inspired those around him to always strive for the highest standards of our profession.

I am sure that those of us associated with Mr. Rogers feel that his greatest asset is the devotion to quality in all endeavors. With fifty-five years as general counsel for the Chapman-McFarlin-Barnard Interests, handling their extensive operations in oil and gas, ranching, banking and investments, Mr. Rogers always found the time to handle his varied legal responsibilities, and yet counsel his associates so that the craftsmanship of his firm was always recognizable. The scholar, the teacher, the warm concern for others is always present in our as-

sociation today. We are able to see daily his great devotion to quality, in the law, in the concern for our clients, in the concern that we all return something to our profession, to our community, to our associates, to our families, and to ourselves.

It will always be true, that words cannot adequately or eloquently describe the works of a great man. Such works are always best described in the marks of his time. Such a man is John Rogers, for we see his mark in the quality of the legal profession, in the quality of legal education, in the quality of life among us all, regardless of our race, color or creed.

WILLIAM H. BELL

*Partner, Rogers, Bell and Robinson
Tulsa, Oklahoma*

JOHN ROGERS: A PERSONAL REMINISCENCE

I became acquainted with John Rogers in 1911 when we were students in the College of Law at the University of Oklahoma. John was in the class graduating in 1914 and I was in the class graduating in 1913. The College of Law at the University of Oklahoma opened in 1909. The first graduates were the class of 1912.

After graduation John entered the office of an older brother, Harry Rogers, who was practicing law in Tulsa. I spent about a year working for a law firm in Muskogee and a few months practicing with Earl Foster, one of my classmates, in Drumright, Oklahoma. I came to Tulsa as an employee of Carroll & Mason, a Tulsa law firm, in 1915. From that time until today John and I have been friends.

Professionally, we saw each other quite frequently, beginning in 1917 or 1918, and for fifteen or more years thereafter, in connection with extensive litigation involving title to an Indian allotment of 160 acres located in Creek County, Oklahoma, known as the Lite Kalvin allotment. This land produced a lot of oil and also produced "a lot" of litigation. John and I represented clients who had a community of interest in this litigation. Through our efforts and the efforts of other attorneys who were representing clients having a common interest with our clients, this litigation was responsible for the Oklahoma Supreme Court's announcing in 1921 a doctrine which the American Bar Association is now advocating through its Code of Judicial Conduct. A number of cases involving title to the Lite Kalvin allotment had been consolidated for trial in the District Court of Creek County, Oklahoma, before Lucin B. Wright. After the trial of these cases had proceeded to a certain point it became evident, in the opinion of counsel for the defendants, that Judge Wright's conduct was such that he should disqualify. He refused to disqualify and an original action was filed in the Supreme Court of Oklahoma to compel him to disqualify. The Supreme Court upheld our position and in so doing announced the following principle of law.

Courts must maintain a standard of justice which leaves no valid reasons for a lack of faith in them. The conduct of defendant, whether intentionally corrupt or whether a mere indiscretion, was such as gave rise to public doubt as

to whether he would render a fair and impartial judgment, and it is clearly apparent that neither party to the suits before him have shown any commendable degree of trust in him.

The present Code of Judicial Conduct states the philosophy that an independent honest judiciary is indispensable to justice in our society; and, in order to bring this condition about, a judge should avoid impropriety and the appearance of impropriety in all his activities.

John and I were on a committee appointed several years ago to study the form of government under which the City of Tulsa was operating and to make recommendations as to whether a different form of government would be desirable. John was Chairman of the Committee. This Committee was, I believe, the first committee to recommend to the electors of the City of Tulsa that they should adopt a new charter providing a form of government known as the strong Mayor-Council form. The recommendation of this committee did not appeal to enough of the electors and the proposed new charter was defeated. It has been tried twice since then and each time defeated.

John and I served on the board of the downtown Tulsa YMCA for several years during the depression, when it was a difficult task to obtain sufficient finances to keep the doors of the YMCA open. Under John's leadership the YMCA was preserved and now has expanded to meet the needs of the entire growing population of the City of Tulsa.

In a small way, I have been able to help in providing the new facilities for the Law School at the University of Tulsa. The major inducement to any service I have been able to render in this connection was due to the fact that, through the efforts of John Rogers, as a member of the Board of Trustees of the University of Tulsa and as Dean of the Law School, the Law School has become one of the fine law schools in the Southwestern United States.

CLAUDE ROSENSTEIN

*Partner, Rosenstein, Fist & Ringold
Tulsa, Oklahoma*

JOHN ROGERS: THE RIGHT MAN AT THE RIGHT TIME

Negative evidence, such as "I have never heard anything against the character of the man" is the most cogent evidence of a man's good character and reputation. In the twenty-six years that I have been associated with the legal profession, as a law student, lawyer, Judge, and Justice, never have I heard a derogatory remark about John Rogers, from within the profession or from the lay people of this state.

Indeed, if a former constitutional law student of Dean Rogers cannot muster an ill statement when recalling the ordeal and agony of semester examinations some twenty years ago, then the Dean's reputation is well intact, even though those examinations narrowly escaped the eighth amendment prohibition against cruel and unusual punishment.

When John Rogers became Dean of the Tulsa School of Law, the majority of his students, including myself, were ex-GI's of World War II. We were anxious to constructively recoup months and years of time spent in the military. Pointedly, many of us were impatient. We sought to accumulate a maximum of legal knowledge in a minimum amount of time.

John Rogers was the right man at the right time.

It seemed to his students that he had a genuine and abiding interest in each and every student of the Law School. As Dean of the Law School, he was always available for an audience, and willing to offer his assistance and advice. Dean Rogers exhibited patience equalled only by Job. The wisdom he imparted concerning important decisions, particularly affecting legal careers, can only be compared with the wisdom of Solomon.

But Dean Rogers was neither soft nor easy.

As an instructor, he could recognize a recitation from a cold brief immediately, and did not hesitate to embarrass that student who had tried to 'fudge.' I readily observed, however, that an inherent fairness existed in his teacher-student relationship that demanded respect and commanded friendship. Many of us owe John Rogers for any success we might have had in the law not only because he made us

learn the fundamentals of the courses he taught, but because he constantly strived to instill in us the fundamentals of justice and fairness.

As I visit, day to day, with many of Dean John Rogers' former students who have attained some measure of success in the business world or legal profession, I recognize a part of the man, John Rogers, in each of them. And how else do you measure the true success of any man, other than by his contribution to the success of those he has guided.

As I recall, John Rogers was a rather rabid baseball fan. His favorite team, while I was his student, was the St. Louis Cardinals. Dean Rogers was never adverse to entering a lively discussion concerning Stan Musial's batting average, the potential of the youngster from Commerce, Oklahoma—Mickey Mantle, or the relative merits of the American vs. the National League. As well, there was very little the "Golden Hurricane" or "Big Red" football teams were doing that Dean Rogers was not aware of. Brief oratorical sojourns into the world of sports often brought our attention back, refreshed, to the legal subject under discussion.

We are prone to measure a man's success in terms of "Public Profile". Despite his genuine efforts to maintain a low profile by remaining in the wings while the major production was on the stage, John Rogers has surfaced as "High Profile". His students would have it no other way.

ROBERT D. SIMMS,

*Associate Justice
Supreme Court
State of Oklahoma*