

1977

## In Memory of John Rogers

Robert D. Simms

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

 Part of the [Law Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Robert D. Simms, *In Memory of John Rogers*, 13 *Tulsa L. J.* 8 (2013).

Available at: <http://digitalcommons.law.utulsa.edu/tlr/vol13/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 [daniel-bell@utulsa.edu](mailto:daniel-bell@utulsa.edu).

## IN MEMORY OF JOHN ROGERS

As memories of Dean John Rogers refocus more clearly in my mind, the realization crystallizes that my personal acquaintance with Dean Rogers spans many years. The vividness of the reality of the total greatness of the man completely dwarfs my setting to paper any singular experience I was blessed to share with Dean Rogers.

I first met Dean Rogers before I was ten years of age. At that time, the Dean was extremely active in and sometimes taught the Men's Sunday School Class at the First Christian Church in Tulsa. My father, at the invitation of John Rogers, was invited many times to be guest teacher of the Men's class, and I, as a freckle-faced youngster, with a pronounced "cow-lick," would tag along. My unfaded recollection is that John Rogers, at that time a general practitioner of the law, would always take time to visit with me, make me feel more welcome, and kiddingly refer to my freckled face. Although not generally recognized for his sense of humor, John Rogers could talk to a youngster in a humorous and kidding manner, and yet acquire the total respect of the younger person. Dean John Rogers was a dry wit who seldom exposed his keen sense of humor. I know, for I was blessed with the experience.

It was only on seldom occasions that I saw John Rogers following those years until post World War II, when I decided to become a lawyer by enrolling in the University of Tulsa Law School. Then, our classes were held both at old Central High School and in the upper floors of a building located on the north-east corner of Third and Main. In those days, Dean Rogers taught Constitutional Law and Conflicts. Many of today's outstanding lawyers and jurists suffered through the tribulations of Constitutional Law taught by John Rogers; but they evolved as superior lawyers because of those tribulations.

In that period of time, when our classes were in two locations and our law library in a third (the "pigeon roost" of the old County Courthouse at Sixth and Boulder), the law school could not obtain accreditation. During my law school days in the late 40's, the health of Dean Franklin began to fail and the strong but quiet personality of John

Rogers became more assertive. John Rogers had a singular, consuming desire to see the law school accredited. To remedy this exigency, it was essential that the law school classrooms be housed in the same physical plant as the law library.

This writer is not privy to how this goal was accomplished, but this much is common knowledge—it was through the relentless efforts of John Rogers that both law school classrooms and the law library were situated in one building (which I recall being an annex to the “new” Standolind Building at Sixth and Cincinnati). Then, commenced a concerted effort by John Rogers to have the University of Tulsa Law School accredited. He was not too long in accomplishing this goal.

One word about John Rogers during the brief period I attended Tulsa Law School with John Rogers as Dean.

His students respected him to the utmost. Dean Rogers reciprocated in kind, for when a student was confronted with a crisis, either personal or academic, Dean Rogers’ door was always open. The Dean was consistently attentive to the student, shared the problem, and was a man of compassion and understanding. However, if the situation was one that demanded stern action on the part of Dean Rogers, he would not hesitate to take that sometimes distasteful course of action dictated by the circumstances.

If there was any one personal trait of Dean John Rogers that stood above all others, it was integrity; not only integrity in the general acceptance of that word, but above all things, mental and intellectual integrity.

Much could be written regarding the driving force of Dean Rogers which resulted in the construction and occupancy of the building on the campus of the University of Tulsa which now houses the College of Law.

To many who now occupy the on-campus site as faculty or student, or even for those who may simply walk or drive by the building, it may appear to be just another structure housing a College of Law. But to me, each and every time the building comes into view, I see not only the beautiful structure itself, but I also envision the mental image of a man dearly beloved and highly respected, in whose name the building was dedicated.

Were I to compose a eulogy to my good friend Dean John Rogers, it would be simplistic, and perhaps, read something like this: He was a Christian man who lived by the Golden Rule; he was deeply devoted

to family and his fellow-man; John Rogers was a lawyer's lawyer; he was dedicated to both the ethical practice and teaching of the law; he may have gone to that Heavenly abode from which no traveler returns, but every new lawyer, graduated from the University of Tulsa College of Law is a living memorial to the wisdom and dedication of a great Christian lawyer, Dean John Rogers.

ROBERT D. SIMMS  
Associate Justice  
Supreme Court  
State of Oklahoma