

T. Harry Williams Center for Oral History Collection

ABSTRACT

INTERVIEWEE NAME: Jack Paul Faustin Gremillion

COLLECTION: 4700.0532

IDENTIFICATION: [1920 - 2001] World War II Veteran and Former Louisiana Attorney General

INTERVIEWER: Mary Hebert

SERIES: Political

INTERVIEW DATES: April 26, 1995; May 17, 1995; October 17, 1995; January 31, 1996; May 24, 1996.

FOCUS DATES: 1930s-1960s

ABSTRACT:

Session I

Tape 770

Campaigning with Earl Long; Date and Place of birth; attending St. Joseph's Commercial Institute in Donaldsonville; participation in sports during high school; his father's career; siblings; educational background of his parents; attending LSU; working while attending LSU; the LSU boxing team and the formation of the Baton Rouge Athletic Club; ROTC; working at the Solvay plant; getting a law degree under Fred LeBlanc his father's political activities; practicing law and working at the Solvay plant; starting his law practice; getting involved in politics in Baton Rouge; being drafted for World War II; getting married; collecting back taxes and the use of tokens to pay taxes; accompanying his mother when Huey Long would invite her for coffee on the train; LSU football during the Huey Long days; Colonel Middleton as commandant of the LSU cadets; his reaction to being drafted; becoming an infantry officer; training; assigned to the 106th Infantry Division; assignment as a replacement officer; arriving in England; Omaha Beach; assigned to the Fifth Infantry Division; fighting in the hedgerows; wounded while on a probing mission; details of being wounded and his determination to survive; description of combat; his hospital stay and aspects of his treatment; writing a letter to his wife to inform her of the situation.

Session II

Tape 771

ROTC at LSU; being a freshman and hazing; attending football games as a group; working at the Solvay plant; involvement in union activity while at the Solvay plant; involvement with the American Legion; establishment of the predominantly African-American Bonnette Harrison Post of the American Legion; General Wainwright speaking at the Nicholson Post of the American Legion; the use of voting machines; reappointment and representatives in the House of

Representatives; influence of the Democratic Party in Louisiana; campaign manager for Jimmy Noe in his run for Governor; taxes and the use of tokens as a campaign issue.

Session III

Tape 802

Pea Patch Politics; Bill Dodd and his involvement with the 1955 Long and Fraser political ticket; creating the voting machine board; how Gremillion became involved with the Long and Fraser ticket; being an assistant district attorney in Baton Rouge; getting the call from Earl Long to qualify for attorney general; starting campaigning; memories of campaigning with Earl Long; making campaign speeches; campaigning with Jimmie Davis; campaigning with McKeithen; Bob Kennon and the Eisenhower administration; running against Fred LeBlanc for attorney general; Earl Long's problems speaking in front of television cameras.

Tape 803

Getting the chair Huey Long used when he practiced law in Shreveport; getting a coat rack from Earl Long's sisters; memories of a visit to Earl Long at the Pea Patch; memories of hearing the news of Earl Long's death.

Session IV

Tape 929

Involvement with the desegregation case of the city park golf course; Acie Belton; the African-American voting block; Gremillion's involvement with the Tidelands case; John Madden; stopping oil production in Louisiana and suing the oil companies as part of the Tidelands case; involvement of Scott Wilkinson, Austin Lewis, hearing in front of the Supreme Court; working with the Mineral Board in Louisiana; the history of the Tidelands litigation; in actions and interference of Leander Perez in the Tidelands case; Perez's involvement with Governor Davis in an effort to replace Gremillion as the lawyer for the Mineral Board and Tidelands case; involvement of McKeithen, involvement of Dean Hebert and Victor Saxy; Louisiana's receiving 37 million dollars in payment from the United States Government; public sentiment; case with Texas over the oil revenues in the Sabine River.

Session V

Tape 959

NAACP case; segregation cases that the office of the attorney general handled; the NAACP and the desegregation of the New Orleans schools; Tureaud and his involvement with the NAACP cases; public opinions for and against segregation; Skelly Wright; the sovereignty commission; Willy Rainach; the political race between Jimmie Davis and Chep Morrison; the Citizens' Council of Louisiana and the Jefferson Club; voter purges; court of appeals incident; Edwin F. (Chug) Hunter; the Congress of Racial Equality and voter registration; being made a scapegoat because of his involvement with segregation cases; A.Z. Young; voting for Kennedy as a member of the electoral college; trying to get Earl Long on television; individuals who helped in the Tidelands case;

TAPES: 6 (T770, T771, T802, T803, T929, T959)

TOTAL PLAYING TIME: 7 hours

PAGES TRANSCRIPT: 196 pages

OTHER MATERIALS: Proper Name Lists; Correspondence

RESTRICTIONS: None