

Oral History of Roger M. Adelman

This interview is being conducted on behalf of the Oral History Project of The Historical Society of the District of Columbia Circuit. The interviewee is Roger Adelman, and the interviewer is Stephen J. Pollak. The interview took place on July 22, 2008 at the offices of Goodwin Procter LLP, 901 New York Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20001. This is the first interview.

Mr. Pollak: Good afternoon Roger. Would you state your full name and your current address for the record?

Mr. Adelman: My name is Roger M. Adelman, and the "M" stands for Mark. I live in Washington, D.C.

Mr. Pollak: Where were you born and when?

Mr. Adelman: I was born in Norristown, Pennsylvania on June 25, 1941.

Mr. Pollak: Were you an only child or do you have siblings?

Mr. Adelman: My sister was five years younger than I. She was born in 1946 in the same town and same hospital. I grew up in Norristown for 22 years before we moved to another town nearby.

Mr. Pollak: What are your parent's names and where did they come from? Give us a little background about your folks.

Mr. Adelman: My folks married in 1935. My father's name was Louis Adelman, and my mother's maiden name was Mary Butz. My father grew up in South Philadelphia and he was the son of Russian immigrants and had eight siblings, some of whom were born here, and some of whom were born in the Old Country. He did not complete high school. As a teenager, he sold newspapers and was very good at it. He was an extremely bright guy, a great memory, and a passionate believer in this country. My father grew up in South Philadelphia

in the Teens and the Twenties, during Prohibition, and he experienced that life as a young man. He sold newspapers and worked in a pool hall.

Mr. Pollak: What business?

Mr. Adelman: The pool hall was run by a former policeman who had been disgraced by being convicted of something and then he opened a pool hall.

My mother, on the other hand, grew up in what was then rural Pennsylvania, outside the city of Philadelphia. Her family had been in the United States for almost 250 years. She was Pennsylvania Dutch, that means Pennsylvania German. My father met her in 1932, and they married in 1935. My parents were married 59 years. My mother died in 1995. My dad died in 2002. My sister was born in 1946, and she passed away in 2005.

Mr. Pollak: What are your earliest memories that you can reach back to?

Mr. Adelman: My earliest memories during World War II were things like rationing and the Victory Gardens. We had Victory Gardens in our neighborhood. There were large community gardens where people grew food because of the war shortages. I remember ration stamps. I also remember the World War II blackouts. I most clearly remember the end of World War II. My father took me downtown in Norristown. People were dancing in the streets, there were juke boxes in the streets. I couldn't quite understand what had happened.

We lived in Norristown, which was, and still is, a blue collar factory town, then about 40,000 people. It was a typical Pennsylvania mill town. Even though it's only 20 miles from Philadelphia, it has always had its own culture and character. Many of the people I grew up with still live there.

Mr. Pollak: So, you were born in Norristown. Did you go to the public school?

Mr. Adelman: I did. There was a public school and a good one, Norristown High School. I graduated from there in 1959. In junior high I was put in the academic track, this was for the kids who were expected to go on to college.

Mr. Adelman: I was privileged to grow up with, and become best friends with, a fellow named Jerry Spinelli. We are the same age. We lived in the same neighborhood and went to school together for 12 years. He is now a renowned author of children's books. Many of his fiction books are about Norristown. He wrote a non-fiction book, *Knots in My Yo-Yo String*, about his childhood, and parts of mine. It's Jerry's biography of his life as a kid. He draws inspiration and characters in his books from his experiences in Norristown. I once described him in the *Philadelphia Inquirer* as the William Faulkner of Norristown. He's still writing children's books to this day. His classic is *Maniac Magee*. It's based on Norristown people whom he has fictionalized and Norristown is fictionalized as "Two Mills." It is a classic in children's literature. Many kids in the United States have read that book.

Mr. Pollak: Were the events in *The Knots in My Yo-Yo String* events that you lived?

Mr. Adelman: Absolutely. Many of them were things we did together. He even put in the book a description I wrote in 1995 of the baseball field on which we played as kids. His writing provides revivification of youth for me, for him and for many of our friends.

Mr. Pollak: Do you still see him?

Mr. Adelman: Yes, quite often.

Mr. Pollak: Roger, you're now moving to junior high school. Were there particular teachers who influenced you in this time of your life?

Mr. Adelman: Yes. There were, particularly, an English teacher and a Government teacher. The two people that stick out in my mind – actually the Superintendent of Schools, Elwood Geigas, who was a Renaissance man, and he I think quietly sponsored my advancement through the school system and into college. The other person was Dorothy Berger who was a guidance counselor.

Mr. Pollak: What was Geigas's job?

Mr. Adelman: He was the Superintendent of Schools, but he was also a teacher.

Mr. Pollak: What did he teach?

Mr. Adelman: He taught Government and taught English, and at the time I was there, he became Superintendent. Ms. Berger was the guidance teacher. She taught English as well. And then a math teacher by the name of John Schueler. He would say, "It is bad enough that you do not know, but it is worse that you do not know that you do not know." I remember that still.

Mr. Pollak: How many students were in your grade or in your high school?

Mr. Adelman: There were 335 in my graduating class.

Mr. Pollak: From high school?

Mr. Adelman: Yes.

Mr. Pollak: Still looking back at those years, those very early years, would you say that your childhood was a happy childhood, that you had fun and did the kinds of things that you liked to do?

Mr. Adelman: Unquestionably. It was hard for me to know what was out there in the world. Television blossomed when I was about 7 years old. My sense of the real world was limited to as far as I could ride my bike. Obviously we saw things on TV, but I hadn't traveled anywhere, I didn't leave the state of Pennsylvania until I was a teenager, so everything seemed to be right there, all your friends were there, the school was there, I went to the YMCA, went to the YMCA summer camp, I was a Boy Scout. Those were big adventures.

Mr. Pollak: Sleep-away camp as they now call it?

Mr. Adelman: Sleep-away camp. Jerry has written an interesting little story about that. His backyard was about the size of this office. He and I camped out there when we were about 10. He wrote that he thought that we were on the plains in Wyoming. He didn't make it through the night. So I trundled home. It was our initiation of being campers.

Sports was a big thing with my dad and with the town. There's a tradition there of high school and even junior high sports, so all of my friends congealed together as Little Leaguers, football players, "Biddy Basketball" teams, and high school sports. So we all knew each other from the time we were 7, 8, 9 years old. There was a great deal of pride being part of the Norristown sports tradition.

No one in my family had ever been to college. I was visited by Princeton, by Penn, by Dartmouth, University of Michigan. I eventually went to Dartmouth. But I also got into Amherst.

Mr. Pollak: Had you played sports in high school?

Mr. Adelman: Yes. I played football and basketball. Football was a big thing. We had a very successful football program.

Mr. Pollak: I think Norristown occasionally makes the sports pages for its high school teams.

Mr. Adelman: It does. The significance of this is that all of us on the team grew up together. In my junior year, 1957, we had an undefeated team. That team is the last undefeated football team at Norristown High School. In 2007 we had a 50th reunion of that team. We also invited the cheerleaders. It was a great hit because unlike a traditional class reunion where there are a lot of different levels of people, we were all the same mode, we had all been inspired by the same coach, who unfortunately had passed on. Somebody had saved films of the 1957 games and showed them.

As for school, I loved school. I love to read. I love to learn, I love the challenge. Norristown High School was not the level of a private prep school, I found that out at Dartmouth, but it was as good an education as I could get. It was a good public school system.

Mr. Pollak: We're still looking some at the town and the high school and your schooling, did you hold any jobs when you were a young person?

Mr. Adelman: I did. I had to work. I think the first job I had was when I was 7. I was a big kid, so I did manual labor, even at 7. I recall working at 7 or 8 years old on a house that was being built in our neighborhood. I delivered newspapers, shoveled snow, and later painted houses. I worked for my father. I worked at a truck stop. I worked in a nursery. I worked in the Post Office. As time went

on, when I got into college, I worked one summer in a steel tubing mill. I worked five summers in a brewery. I worked for a short time in a rubber tire factory. I worked for a company that built swimming pools. All the kids I grew up with worked. I don't think there ever was a time that I was without a job. Older kids in my neighborhood would work, they had regular jobs even though they were out of school, they'd come home, live with their parents and pay rent. Norristown was, and still is, basically a blue-collar, lower middle-class town. But I didn't know of how better off people lived because there was no comparison. In my neighborhood we lived in row houses. The way my friend Jerry Spinelli has put it in one of his books, no one in our part of town had a front yard or a side yard.

Mr. Pollak: Was it a union town?

Mr. Adelman: Yes. Most definitely. I had to join the unions to work for the summers in the steel mill and the rubber tire factory, and also in the brewery. I'm pro union. I think overall the unions have done good things. I think the industry there basically functioned on union support.

Mr. Pollak: Did you remain close to your sister throughout your life?

Mr. Adelman: Yes.

Mr. Pollak: You said that you didn't go out of state. Did you do much traveling as a family later in your childhood?

Mr. Adelman: Not really. We went to Atlantic City for two days as I recall, but there was no sense – myself, or any of my friends or family – that people took vacations or traveled. That's just the way it was. The broader world, as I say, was not really

exposed to me then. Now, kids travel all over when they're young. That was never really my experience at all.

My father and mother both worked. My father sold carpets in his own store for 41 years. He opened a small carpet store. He had worked for the large department stores in Norristown and then started his own business in 1956, with my mother. So from 1956 to 1997, they ran a mom-and-pop operation. It was located in a town about nine miles from Norristown. Besides the other jobs, I was their stockman, deliveryman, and part-time salesman. Even in law school I worked part time for them.

Mr. Pollak: Hoisting carpets around?

Mr. Adelman: Absolutely. I drove into Philadelphia, picked up orders. Later on when I was in Penn Law School, I had a lady friend who was a graduate student, and her father, a gentleman who had immigrated from Italy and was a worker, he once asked me "What is your trade?", which was important to him. I wanted to make a good impression, so even though I was in law school, I said, "Well, I lift carpet." And he was pleased, "Oh that's good. You work with your hands." I hope that he liked me. Such things track you through life. When I had graduated law school and got out of the Army, I was hired as a clerk in a law firm in Philadelphia. On the first day I was there I met the managing partner. A very nice gentleman. He said to me, "Well, you've gone to Dartmouth. That's good. You've gone to Penn. That's good. You've got the background." He then looks at me and he says, "What does your father do?" And I said to myself, uh oh, this is not my environment. And I told him, "He sells carpet." I

think he was expecting a different answer. Looking back, I was very proud of that.

My father loved to sell. He had been a salesman all of his life and he loved to talk to people. My mom was with him all the time. And literally people would come in to buy from him or buy from her. No matter what particular carpet they wanted, people wanted to buy from them. I remember in my father's later years, a lady came in, she was walking around the store, and I said, "Can I help you?" and she says "No, this man here [my dad], whatever he says, I'll do. I'll buy." I'm very proud that my parents were part of the entrepreneurial tradition in the United States.

Mr. Pollak: Did you take the job with the law firm that asked about your dad?

Mr. Adelman: Yes. I worked there for a year and then was hired by the U.S. Attorney's Office in Washington.

Mr. Pollak: I see. And did you feel that they were not interested in having people whose parents were selling carpet?

Mr. Adelman: I think I got that idea.

Mr. Pollak: I guess that was somewhat more common then than today.

Mr. Adelman: Yes. I was always proud of what my father did and what my mother did as entrepreneurs. My mother had created her own business during World War II. She built a food business and prepared food and sold it to the factory workers. And then my sister was born and that ended her business because she had to devote her time to my sister. We'd come home for lunch in grade school. This was at that time in this country when you did that.

Mr. Pollak: How far was your grammar school, your junior high, and high school from your home?

Mr. Adelman: Grammar school, six blocks; junior high, about a mile; and high school, about a mile. So school was nearby. The town is only four or five square miles.

Mr. Pollak: Were your parents active politically or civically?

Mr. Adelman: I think in my mother's heart, she was always a Democrat because she was inspired by Franklin Roosevelt. My father was a registered Republican because most people in the Montgomery County were Republican. But my mom was an ardent Roosevelt supporter and Truman supporter, and she was a strong influence in my life. My father was much more of middle of the road, but extremely interested in politics, and that's a side issue with me through all the years – political talk at the dinner table.

I remember in Philadelphia, which was 20 miles from us, in the early 1950s there was a political revolution. Joe Clark and Richardson Dilworth cleaned up the city starting in 1952. That caught my attention because this is what American politics was supposed to be. Richardson Dilworth was, and still is, my favorite politician. He became Mayor in 1956. He was a Yale guy and a Chestnut Hill guy, but he had the guts to go down and talk to all these tough people in City Hall, in South Philadelphia and elsewhere in the City and tell them what he thought was right and what was wrong and what he was going to do about it. And he did do things. He and Joe Clark literally cleaned up the city. So that was a model. He's my ideal politician and he also was a good Philadelphia lawyer.

Mr. Pollak: You commented already that you went to Dartmouth. What brought that college to your attention, and why did you select it?

Mr. Adelman: As you know, Dartmouth has a very active alumni recruiting group. I was approached by some Dartmouth graduates from the Chestnut Hill section of Philadelphia. They talked to me about going to Dartmouth. At the same time people from Penn are talking to me, and people from Princeton too. So I went up to Hanover, New Hampshire on a weekend. And it's a captivating place. Someone has written that Dartmouth is America's ideal of a college, and I thought, "This is great." If you asked me whether I was attracted because of a particular program, no. My guiding force was football. While I was there, I met the coach, Bob Blackman. He was one of the original thinkers and great motivators in the game in the 1950s and 1960s. I was honored to meet him.

Mr. Pollak: Tell us about your college experience, and if you want, when you get there, what influenced you to go to law school. But you can talk generally about life at Dartmouth and what you did.

Mr. Adelman: I loved college. I loved the idea of just being there to study and think. I had never been exposed to teachers like college professors. Even in my first year, I was taught by some tenured professors. For instance, Fred Berthold, the Dean of the Department of Religion, taught freshmen. I was fascinated by how much the professors knew, their depth of knowledge. I took a wide variety of courses. I majored in English, which I picked without much consultation. I think I would have been happier in economics or government or history. I was a bookworm. I had to work too because I had a scholarship and scholarship

people had to work, which is fair, so I worked in the kitchen for a while and some other jobs.

Mr. Pollak: At the Commons?

Mr. Adelman: No, at Thayer Hall. And I worked there a couple terms I think, but basically studied. A guy named Tim Kraft roomed with me for two years. He went on to become Carter's campaign manager in 1976 and then his Appointments Secretary for four years. He was a learned guy at 19. He was a constant source of challenge both in reading and politics. And one of our professors said something I never forgot: "You are educated not only in your class, but by your colleagues." And the b.s. sessions that we had in the dorm, to me, were especially educational. In my dorm there were other people – a couple of playwrights, poets – guys like Mike Marantz and Steve Gellar – different folks from all classes, that's what Dartmouth also was wise in doing. At that time they didn't have freshman dorms; you were mixed in with upperclassmen. So I learned things from a wide variety of people. Tim was a dedicated Democrat. In the 1960 primary campaign, he worked for John Kennedy in New Hampshire. Kennedy spoke at Dartmouth. I was fascinated by that. I witnessed history. We also had evening lectures on various topics. I recall that Professor Lou Stilwell, a history professor, held a series, "Battle Nights", lectures on the epic military engagements, such as the Battle of Ticonderoga or the Battle of the Bulge and the like.

Mr. Pollak: Did you play sports?

Mr. Adelman: I did. I played football. I was an end, offense and defense. I played for two years. I was injured when I was a sophomore. I was a starter on the freshman football team. It was a real disappointment to get injured. The next two years I rowed on the crew.

I made some lifetime friends at college. I really, really enjoyed the intellectual challenge. I took art courses, I took Shakespeare courses, history courses. These are all things that were a wonderment to me. The guys who went to prep schools like Andover or Exeter were on a different level. They had done blue book exams, papers, and had the rigorous training that college required. It took me a year to catch up with that and how to handle the course material.

Mr. Pollak: Did you join a fraternity?

Mr. Adelman: I did. Beta Theta Pi. I made some good friends there, one of whom is now a retired federal judge and many other people who've gone on to do good things.

Mr. Pollak: When do you think you first got an idea that you would study law?

Mr. Adelman: In my third year, I roomed with two other guys, Rick Braddock and Randy Fields. They were intending to go to business school and law school. I started to think about that and the more I thought, the more I thought what I had studied and been interested in, I decided that law is what I wanted to do. I had no real conception of what lawyers did or what the practice of law was like. I did not know any lawyers. Nobody in my family had ever been to college. The only law school I applied to was Penn, and I was accepted.

Mr. Pollak: Something must have – what did you think you were doing when you moved toward law?

Mr. Adelman: Nothing was planned. I never thought I'd be a criminal law lawyer. And I certainly never thought I'd be a trial lawyer. I never ever thought about being a criminal lawyer. I thought I'd be a counselor, an advice giver. I thought I'd be a helper.

Mr. Pollak: So you were going to law and you felt in a way that you were going into a helping profession.

Mr. Adelman: Absolutely, but as I said, I had no idea that I'd ever do trial work.

Mr. Pollak: Well let's set the stage. You got out of college. You graduated probably in June of 1963. Were you working that summer? Had you applied? Taken the LSAT?

Mr. Adelman: The application and admission process was much simpler then. I had worked in the summer most of college and all of law school in a brewery job. I took the Law Boards, I don't have any recollection of how I did. I guess I did well enough. I had an interview at Penn and I was accepted. Penn Law was small, about 190 people in our class.

I was bowled over by the law faculty there, by the intellectual fire power. It started with Professors Tony Amsterdam and George Lee Haskins. Also Professors Curtis Reitz and Leo Levin. They were absolutely masterful. I thought the college professors were amazing in what they knew but the mode of legal analysis and thinking was new to me. The instruction at Penn was generally in the classic Socratic tradition. There were some people who

lectured, but basically it was the Socratic approach. We had about 85-90 people in a section and so you got called on every so often. There weren't any clinical programs or extracurricular work. Frankly I found the subject matter of most cases rather boring. The Uniform Commercial Code meant nothing to me. I did not work in law during law school. I had no sense of what the things I was studying really meant in practice.

Mr. Pollak: In the summer you had your brewery job?

Mr. Adelman: Yes. When I was in law school there weren't that many law jobs for students. The law firms didn't have summer programs then. The law firms in Philadelphia hired a few people but they were law review candidates. I don't recall many people working law jobs, except that they had some connection in law school. That would have made things a lot different for me. I would've seen the practical side of what we were learning.

Penn was a traditional law school then, and the one area that really engaged with me was criminal law because Tony Amsterdam was the professor. He had clerked for Justice Frankfurter, had graduated number one at Penn, and then he became an Assistant U.S. Attorney here in Washington. He created his own case book based largely on D.C. law. So I was ingrained with D.C. criminal law in law school. Professor Amsterdam was a marvelous teacher, and made criminal law come alive. It was exciting, as compared to, say, trusts and estates. I took three courses from him. This was at the beginning of the Warren Court revolution in criminal law. The Supreme Court handed down *Miranda* the month I graduated from law school. Professor Amsterdam had a fabulous

mind. As I understand it, he was first in his class at Penn, he also got a degree in Classical Languages at the same time. He taught the criminal law course with the book closed. And he would say, “Turn to page 79, then turn to page 162.” He just knew it cold. He was dedicated to social issues. He argued many death penalty cases in the Supreme Court on behalf of the NAACP.

Mr. Pollak: He was a star.

Mr. Adelman: Yes.

Mr. Pollak: Everybody knew – all the young lawyers – knew the name of Tony Amsterdam.

Mr. Adelman: Right. So I said this is the way to go. And of course he had been an Assistant U.S. Attorney in Washington. He would talk about the little and the big cases in the D.C. courts. Law school was a mixed bag for me. I liked the intellectual challenge and was amazed by the professors. Except for criminal law, the subject matter was rather dull – secured transactions, contracts, international law. Not that it wasn’t intellectually challenging, but it just didn’t mean anything to me.

Mr. Pollak: Did you have interesting classmates? Did you learn from your classmates?

Mr. Adelman: Not quite so much. There were provocative people; there were people who tried to argue with the professors. There’s an apocryphal story, it wasn’t in my class, but in another class someone argued – I believe with Professor Paul Bender. Paul Bender had clerked for Justice Frankfurter. They took up a Frankfurter opinion, and Paul Bender said, “Frankfurter meant this.” And the student said, “No, no. He didn’t mean this, he meant that. And Bender looked at the guy and said, “Sir, I know what he meant because I wrote that.” End of discussion.

Mr. Pollak: Did you find it hard at law school? Were the courses difficult?

Mr. Adelman: No.

Mr. Pollak: It wasn't like moving from Norristown High to Dartmouth. Dartmouth, you felt well prepared?

Mr. Adelman: My problem with law school was motivation. With one exception, the concepts were easy to grasp. And that exception is property. The professor for property was George Lee Haskins, a very erudite Philadelphia lawyer. Instead of studying modern issues like zoning, we spent most of the semester studying the Statutes of Uses, and the Rule against Perpetuity and the like, doctrines and all obtuse. But the concepts, many courses made sense. Antitrust made sense and tax law made sense.

Mr. Pollak: I think that you might say a word on what difference did it make at Dartmouth that there were people from all over.

Mr. Adelman: You got different points of view. For instance, one roommate was from Indiana, and when we talked politics, he talked about stuff I never heard before. People from California had a different outlook. Some of them were artists and creative guys. This was a world I had never been exposed to. It really gets back to my insularity as an 18-year-old. I didn't have very broad life experiences.

Mr. Pollak: What brewery did you work at?

Mr. Adelman: Schmidt's of Philadelphia. They're a regional brewery. They had bought out the local brewery in town. Every town in Pennsylvania had its own brewery then, and this place was called Valley Forge Brewery, but Schmidt's came in and bought it out. My father knew the union business agent and he got me the

job. And it was considered a primo job because I made the grand figure of \$2.35 an hour and we could buy beer for \$2 a case after work on Friday. That experience was educational too. There were a lot of blue collar guys who were there forever. A lot of them came up to me and said, “Don’t get stuck here, go to college.” “Go to school.”

Mr. Pollak: Interesting. What about your college classmates? Any of them stay as friends throughout your life?

Mr. Adelman: A number of them. One fellow, Ernie Torres, was the Chief U.S. District Judge in Rhode Island. Another fellow is Mike Cardozo, a D.C. lawyer whom you and I both know. Mike and I share an office suite here in Washington.

Mr. Pollak: I think that you have come along through your education.

Mr. Adelman: After law school, the military was next. I’m one of the few people that got an academic education in the Army. I graduated from Penn Law in 1966. The Vietnam War was going on and I found that the Army needed people to attend the Army Language School in Monterrey, California to study Russian. Eventually they took five of us from Penn.

Mr. Pollak: I see. You graduated from Penn. How did you get connected up with the Army?

Mr. Adelman: The Army recruited five people from Penn for the Russian language school. The language school is very difficult. It’s like going to college. There were four of us from the law school and one from Wharton. We went through basic training, did the regular army training, then we spent a year as students at the Language School in Monterey, California, learning Russian. By the end of the

year, I was fairly fluent in Russian. Our teachers were native Russians. The language school had a rule that all of the teachers that taught had to be native speakers. The teachers were very good. They grilled us. They would talk a lot to us in Russian. We had lectures from them in Russian. That was quite a great experience.

Mr. Pollak: Did you learn to read the language?

Mr. Adelman: Yes. I learned the alphabet and grammar. You had to speak as best you can. We had lab. We had six hours of class a day.

Mr. Pollak: You did that for a whole year?

Mr. Adelman: Yes, 48 weeks. It was a rare experience.

Mr. Pollak: So you got out, then what?

Mr. Adelman: 1968. Then I went to the law firm in Philadelphia.

Mr. Pollak: So after they trained you, they mustered you out?

Mr. Adelman: They mustered us out in the sense we were released from active duty but they kept us in the reserves. I had a total commitment of six years, and I served about four years in the active reserve. Eventually, we were assigned to the Pentagon.

Mr. Pollak: So you had some real military experience when you went through basic training?

Mr. Adelman: We went through regular basic training – boot camp – and you put up with all kinds of folks in basic training.

The teachers at the language school were wonderful people. They all had interesting and sometimes tragic lives. Our youngest teacher had fought at

Stalingrad. He gave a lecture one afternoon about what it was like in the Battle of Stalingrad. Amazing stuff – you can't get that from a book. Another teacher was an older gentlemen, he had been captured by the Germans and forced to translate German interrogations of Russian prisoners. He saw the tortures that these people underwent.

Mr. Pollak: And it took you out to California. I suppose that was your first trip out there.

Mr. Adelman: Yes, it was my first real experience living in California, although I had been there before. Two of the summers that I worked in the brewery in the last two weeks of two summers, a friend and I hitchhiked around the United States. We hitchhiked to the Seattle World's Fair and then down to California. We hitchhiked another time to California. You could safely do it then. I'm not sure you can do it safely now. So I got to see the world that way.

Mr. Pollak: So, graduation from law school was in June of 1966.

Mr. Adelman: Right.

Mr. Pollak: What firm? It's got to be in your history, you might as well put it in.

Mr. Adelman: Duane Morris. A very fine firm. They have become a very large regional law firm now.

Mr. Pollak: Didn't it at some point have the name Heckscher in it?

Mr. Adelman: Duane Morris and Heckscher. They're now Duane Morris. Well, I got to work at Duane Morris.

Mr. Pollak: How did it come about? Here you are in Monterrey. You get mustered out.

Mr. Adelman: Henry Reath was the senior litigator partner and was a Penn graduate, class of 1948, and he needed an assistant. I interviewed and got the job. I greatly

respected Henry Reath. He was a Chestnut Hill gentleman, a perennial Philadelphian, and a very fine lawyer, and a very creative guy. I got to work for him pretty much for one year. He was very much like an English barrister. He did all kinds of litigation, not really too much criminal because there was really no white collar criminal law at that time, but he did corporate litigation, antitrust and tax work. I got to see a first-rate seasoned litigator work. He had worked his way up in the firm. He had fought in World War II. He was in the famous Penn Law Class of 1948. After the war ended in 1945, they established two classes at Penn so they could take as many veterans as they could into law school. He had been with the firm almost ever since, 20 years or so. He gradually moved up and became senior litigator. That's important to me because I had said to myself, "Hey you know if you're going to get to the top, it's going to be a long haul." All of the people in the firm were very nice, and what I learned most there was professionalism.

Mr. Pollak: What do you mean by that?

Mr. Adelman: Well, things were done honestly. Henry Reath was head of the – in Philadelphia it's called the Board of Censors – we call it the Board of Professional Responsibility here. You litigate honestly. That was immediately impressed upon me by Henry Reath. I also worked with David Toomey and Reeder Fox, two fine lawyers. Pennsylvania still had a preceptorship program. Do you know what that is?

Mr. Pollak: I have a vague idea. Young lawyers went to work with someone who –

Mr. Adelman: He was called your Preceptor and he actually taught you the practice of law. In the 19th century that was fairly common. Pennsylvania kept it, at least up until the time I was there, in the sense that you had to have a designated preceptor and you would talk to him about how you were doing. He was a mentor. My preceptor was Reeder Fox who was quite a fine gentleman. It was an opportunity to deal with a very professional lawyers.

Mr. Pollak: Did you get into court at all in your year with Duane Morris?

Mr. Adelman: I went to court with Mr. Reath, but never got up to speak. I saw Mr. Reath argue motions. I wrote motions. It was never contemplated that a new person would argue motions in court because there was a client relationship. This was a firm that had clients, historic clients, that they'd represented over time, and there was a relationship there.

Mr. Pollak: Did the practice of law seem more interesting than in law school?

Mr. Adelman: Absolutely.

Mr. Pollak: What interested you in that early year?

Mr. Adelman: Antitrust. We litigated some antitrust cases. They represented one of the tire companies in the TBA litigation. I had Professor Louis Schwartz for Antitrust at Penn, and he was not only a good antitrust expert, but he was an analytic guy. Anyway, that was a good background, and I liked that and we did a fair amount of that. I worked on tax issues. I got to work for not only Mr. Reath but some of the other litigators. They have like a vertical litigation tree standard. When I later went to Washington and joined the U.S. Attorney's office, I went back and told them, and they said "Well when your three years are up, you should come

back here.” Sort of like I’m signing up for the Army and I’m going to come back, which I guess is the way they viewed government service, as pretty similar to the military.

Mr. Pollak: Explain or put some meat on the bone. You’re an associate in the law firm, going along, working with one of the top guys, so how did you happen to get an opportunity to become an Assistant United States Attorney? What happened?

Mr. Adelman: I had to bring some papers down to the SEC in Washington. I had a college friend, Bill Subin, who was an Assistant United States Attorney in D.C. We had lunch. And at the lunch there were two other Assistants, Phil Kellogg and Bob Watkins. Bob is now with Williams & Connolly and Phil has his own practice. They told me they were doing exciting things on their own, like trials, and I said, “Are you kidding me?” These guys were a year older than Bill and I. “You’re doing that? Could I do that?” They said, “Sure.”

Mr. Pollak: What were they telling you they were doing?

Mr. Adelman: Trying cases. They were trying cases in the Court of General Sessions and in the U.S. District Court. Bill was in Appeals. So they said, “Thomas Flannery has just been hired as U.S. Attorney, why don’t you talk to him.” So I did. There was a big push to hire more Assistant U.S. Attorneys in D.C. because President Nixon just came into office and said that we’re going to fight crime in the District of Columbia. So the United States Attorney General authorized the hiring of 15 or 20 new Assistant U.S. Attorneys in D.C. I was one of those people.

So I came down and had an interview with the head people in the Office and they made an offer. So I said I'd think about it, and it didn't take too long. I thought and decided here's a chance to try my wings, and so I told them "yes."

Mr. Pollak: How big was the U.S. Attorney's Office when you joined it?

Mr. Adelman: I was number 79. That includes the Civil Division, so maybe 12 people were in Civil. And now the Office has maybe 400 prosecutors. The Court of General Sessions was the local court, it had only misdemeanor jurisdiction. And there was the Federal Court, U.S. District Court. All felonies were tried in U.S. District Court. The D.C. set up was totally unique in the United States because you have a federal prosecutor prosecuting local crimes and federal crimes.

My history in the office, just to outline that, I was sent immediately to General Sessions. I was there for six or seven months, then I went to Appeals. In 1971 I was sent to Felony Trials in the U.S. District Court, where I remained for 16 years.

In 1971-1972, a transition occurred. D.C. Code offenses were sent to the new D.C. Superior Court. In the 1970s, I tried a lot of D.C. Code street crimes cases in federal court because a number of cases that either pre-dated the court reorganization or were brought there in connection with federal crimes.

Mr. Pollak: You learned your way into the practice that you did in the U.S. Attorneys' Office. Your law education, how did it relate?

Mr. Adelman: From my background at Penn studying criminal law, I was at first most comfortable drafting motions because I loved to write in law school and had done writing at Duane Morris and Heckscher. From what Professor Amsterdam

taught, I got a good grasp on criminal law. It was still a bit discouraging at times in the Court of General Sessions. The things I learned sometimes fell on deaf ears. For instance, the Supreme Court had recently decided a case named *Terry v. Ohio* about search and seizure. One day a defense lawyer cited that case to a General Sessions judge. The judge looked down at him and said, "Sorry, we don't follow the state cases here." But there also were judges like Judge Tim Murphy and Judge Ed Daly in General Sessions there who really knew the law and really held you to it. But the cases made all this real, I mean, you talk about a search of a car and here it is, the police come and search cars. You see the results. It's a real quick, tough learning experience. And again, this is during the Warren era and things were changing, especially in search and seizure and interrogation.

One story about Judge Tom Scally. He was from Boston, basically a police-court judge. The Supreme Court had held in a case called *Jackson v. Denno* that the government must prove that a confession is voluntary, and the Court had to hold a hearing before admitting it. So I had such an issue in one case. I told Judge Scally: "Your honor, we have to hold a *Jackson* hearing." He says, "None of that Perry Mason stuff here" and he proceeded without a hearing. The Supreme Court required it, so we just went his way. He was something. And I tried a couple of jury trials in front of him. He rarely took jury trials. He was a character. But those stories, those little epigrammatical events that you see, you learn and you remember. And the one rule I learned right from the beginning and I forget who told me this, maybe Vic Caputy, is

you make a mistake, you're going to court and make mistakes, but don't make the same mistake twice.

Mr. Pollak: I think it's a great way to start a career, whether staying there or doing something else.

Mr. Adelman: And you know there are economic pressures that led some Assistants to leave, but eventually you're going to face a decision whether you want to make it a career. But you get the opportunity at a really young age to try major cases. And you can stand up in a court room and say "Ladies and gentlemen, I represent the United States of America in this courtroom." That's a big deal. Sometimes it's fun, sometimes it's not.

Mr. Pollak: We'll do all of that. I think this is a good time to stop, and we'll pick up in another session.