



Court Historical Society NEWSLETTER *Eastern District of Tennessee*



NOVEMBER 2011

Hoffa Documents Received

Documents relating to the 1963 federal indictment of Teamsters leader **Jimmy Hoffa** on jury-tampering charges have been donated to the Court Historical Society for preservation in the Society's archives.

They come by way of Knoxville lawyer **Jack Draper**, Northern Division Vice President of the Society, from his cousin, the late **J. Draper Keisling**, Crossville, who was a member of that grand jury. Mr. Keisling is shown in the photograph below.

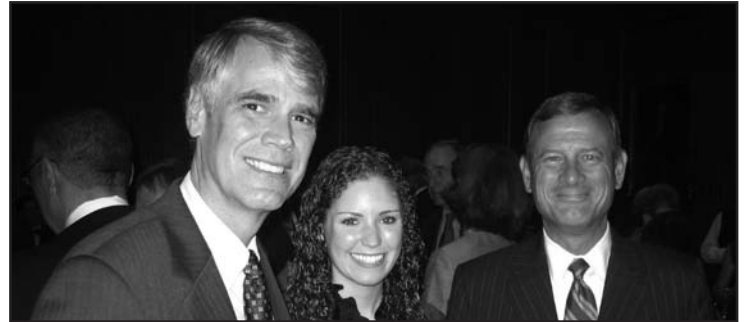
Hoffa was indicted in the Middle District of Tennessee at Nashville, but the case was transferred to the Eastern District of Tennessee and tried in Chattanooga in 1964 by **Judge Frank Wilson**. Hoffa was convicted and imprisoned.

Mr. Keisling died this past July 12 at the age of 96. During one of Mr. Draper's last visits with Mr. Keisling, he gave Mr. Draper permission to donate the grand jury materials to the Society.

They consist of a copy of U.S. District **Judge William Miller's** 10-page charge to the grand jury, a copy of the transcript of the court proceeding in which the grand jury reported, a letter to each of the 23 grand jurors from then-U.S. **Attorney Kenneth Harwell**, a newspaper clipping reporting the judge's praise of the "history-making" grand jury, and an 8x10 black and white group photo of the grand jurors (shown below). ■



*A JOB WELL DONE--This photograph was made in June 1964, on the last day these grand jurors met, concluding their 18 months of service, during which they were told by **Judge William Miller** that they had "performed more important work than any grand jury in the history of the Middle District of Tennessee." One of the indictments the group returned during their service was that of Teamsters president **Jimmy Hoffa** on jury-tampering charges. Those charges grew out of a trial in Nashville in which Hoffa and others were charged with violating a provision of the Taft-Hartley Act. That trial ended with a hung jury. **J. Draper Keisling** is second from the right on the front row.*



*AT JUDICIAL CONFERENCE RECEPTION--**Judge Varlan** and his daughter **Georgia** are shown with **Chief Justice John Roberts** at the Judicial Conference reception in September in Washington. **Georgia** is a third-year student at the University of Virginia School of Law.*

Historic Appointment

Judge Varlan is serving as a member of the 27-member Judicial Conference of the United States, the first judge from the Eastern District of Tennessee to serve on that body in 36 years. The Conference is the policymaking body for the federal court system.

Because of the method by which appointments are rotated through the district courts within the 12 geographic circuits, the Eastern District of Tennessee hasn't had a representative on the Conference since **Judge Robert L. Taylor's** appointment ended in March 1975. Appointments are for a three-year period.

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*GRAND JURY MEMORABILIA--Knoxville lawyer **Jack Draper**, left, and **Don K. Ferguson**, executive secretary of the Court Historical Society, review a photograph and documents pertaining to the service by Draper's cousin on the federal grand jury that indicted Teamsters president **Jimmy Hoffa** in 1963. Draper arranged for his cousin, who died a few months ago, to donate the items to the Court Historical Society.*

Historic Appointment *continued*

At the time of its formation in 1922, the body was named the Conference of Senior Circuit Judges. The name was changed to its present designation in 1948, and in 1957, district judges were added to the Conference. Judge Taylor, who was appointed to his judgeship in 1949, is the only other Eastern District of Tennessee judge to have served as a member of the Conference. He died in 1987.

Judge Varlan was selected for the appointment by the district judges in the nine district courts in the U.S. Sixth Circuit at the judges' meeting in the spring of 2010. Other members of the Conference are the chief judges of the 13 courts of appeals, a district judge from the other 11 circuits, and the chief judge of the Court of International Trade. ■

*THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY
OF THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF TENNESSEE, INC.*

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	<i>Howard H. Baker Jr. U.S. Courthouse • 800 Market Street, Suite 130 Knoxville, Tennessee 37902 865/545-4234, Ext. 2222 • Don_Ferguson@ted.uscourts.gov</i>	

Successful Seminars

The Court Historical Society coordinated two very successful seminars in October, examining two notable cases tried in the Eastern District of Tennessee in the 1980s, one in Chattanooga and one in Greeneville.

The Chattanooga case was tried by U.S. District Judge R. Allan Edgar and the Greeneville case by the late U.S. District Judge Thomas Gray Hull.

Both seminars received outstanding coverage by the media and praise by those who attended. The Chattanooga meeting attracted nearly 200 people and the Greeneville session about 100.

The Court Historical Society's Southern Division Vice President, T. Maxfield Bahner, was chairman of the Chattanooga seminar, which dealt with a ruling by Judge Edgar that changed the form of Chattanooga's city government. Black plaintiffs had charged that the structure of government there and the election procedures that were followed violated the Voting Rights Act of 1965.



BIG NEWS--Judge Edgar, left, and T. Maxfield Bahner look at one of the enlargements of newspaper pages that were displayed at the Chattanooga seminar, held at the University Center of the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga. The case that was the subject of the seminar made big news in late 1980s. It was tried by Judge Edgar. The title of the seminar was "The Meaning and Power of the Right to Vote in Chattanooga: Brown v. Board of Commissioners of the City of Chattanooga and Its Legacy."

PHOTO BY NEIL A. BRUNETZ

The Society's Northeastern Division Vice President, Greene County Circuit Judge Thomas J. Wright, was chairman of the Greeneville program, which examined Judge Hull's ruling that provided the impetus for the development of guidelines to help public schools resolve religion-related issues with families.

Joining with the Court Historical Society in sponsoring the Chattanooga event were the Chattanooga Chapter of the Federal Bar Association, the Chattanooga Bar Association, the Chattanooga Bar Foundation, the Justices Ray L. Brock Jr. and Robert E. Cooper American Inns of Court and the Hamilton County Chapter of the UT Alumni Association.

The Greeneville program was co-sponsored by the Northeast Tennessee Chapter of the Federal Bar Association.

U.S. District Judge Curtis L. Collier, who, as chief judge, serves as honorary chairman of the Court Historical Society and at whose suggestion the seminars were planned, spoke briefly at both sessions. ■



PLAINTIFF AT SEMINAR--Vicki Leslie, left, greets Judge Greer, right, and Professor Stephen Bates of the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, at a seminar held in Greeneville to mark the 25th anniversary of the milestone case in which she was the plaintiff. The case bore the name she held at that time, Vicki Frost, as she and other Hawkins County parents sued, claiming that textbooks used by the school system offended their religious beliefs. Professor Bates wrote a book about the case and was the keynote speaker at the seminar. Judge Greer moderated a panel discussion following Professor Bates' talk.