

man occupied. Knox was initially kept busy reviewing stacks of petitions for certiorari that the justice had instructed him to summarize, and then, when the term started in earnest, Knox took dictation on the repeated drafts of opinions that McReynolds was preparing. At other times Knox was left with time on his hands but was warned that he must not do anything that might prevent his being available for assignments, and that he would risk dismissal if he were found doing anything but the justice's work. McReynolds sometimes gave Knox assignments that were apparently meant to keep Knox from using his time to pursue any personal interests. The justice's tyrannical attitude about Knox's duties proved to be one of the most difficult aspects of the year and ultimately made the experience a less than positive one for Knox.

Two other employees of the justice were Knox's almost constant companions in McReynolds' apartment, but nowhere else in the Washington of the late 1930s. They were the justice's personal assistant and cook, Harry Parker, and maid, Mary Diggs, both of whom were African-American. They served the justice faithfully and for the most part stoically, despite his often unpleasant demeanor toward them and his patently racist paternalism. Parker, notwithstanding his lowly status in the racially segregated capital, was culturally savvy about the social rituals of Washington society and was a knowledgeable and respected source of information on the inner workings of the Supreme Court.

Harry Parker's duties with McReynolds extended far beyond cooking and running the household; they required a level of sophistication about the justice's idiosyncrasies that made Parker invaluable as a mentor to Knox. He introduced Knox to the important members of the Court's administrative staff, and he taught him the essentials of survival not only in the justices's household, but also in the Court and in Washington, D.C. Parker's duties didn't end there; on one occasion, as the aggrieved Parker reported to Knox, McReynolds went on a

duck hunting trip to the Chesapeake Bay, and Parker had to wade out into the cold water to bring in ducks that the justice had shot.

Parker was often Knox's advocate with McReynolds when Knox wanted some minor favor, such as a few hours off to attend a function that interested him. Parker would intervene and find some pretext that would usually succeed in getting McReynolds to grant the favor. For example, Parker secured a raise for Knox early in the year, when Parker realized that the justice had authorized a lower salary for Knox than the Court allowed and probably less than Knox could have lived on, especially because McReynolds had insisted at the outset that Knox live in the same apartment building as he, so that Knox would be quickly available when needed. (McReynolds later allowed Knox to move to a more affordable neighborhood.) Parker also explained the parameters of personal conduct that the justice would tolerate, which were often eccentric and restrictive. For example, McReynolds, a lifelong bachelor but not without several close female acquaintances, would not permit his clerk to become friends with any of these women. To do so would summarily cost him his job. Knox violated this rule, but without McReynolds ever finding out. Knox's doing so was one of a few rare instances in which he rebelled against McReynolds' draconian maxims, and it provided Knox with a little of the scant social life he enjoyed in his year in the capital city.

Parker explained to Knox the customary uses of calling cards; Knox would need one printed with only his name on it, and another that included McReynolds' name for use on occasions when Knox was representing the justice in his absence. Later McReynolds himself explained to Knox the protocol of the calling card, down to the number of cards to be left when calling on people of political importance in the city (when calling on the President, for example, one left cards for his wife and mother as well) and the manner in which the cards were to be delivered — either flat or

with a particular corner turned up, depending upon the status of the person who delivered the cards (a driver or messenger left the card flat, whereas an official or official's spouse turned up one corner, and the turning up of another corner conveyed condolences on the death of a family member).

The ubiquitous Parker secured seats for Knox at the Supreme Court on days when opinions were to be read. Knox turned to him and Mary Diggs for solace on the frequent occasions when relations with McReynolds were tense; Parker was Knox's early warning system when the justice was upset by the political setbacks that were eroding his position on the Court. Parker and Diggs had a nickname for the justice that allowed them to converse about him in the kitchen without the risk of their comments being understood, if overheard; they called McReynolds "Pussywillow," and Knox adopted the name for the justice in his conversations with Parker and Diggs.

Even in the face of the oppressive and claustrophobic atmosphere that McReynolds had created at his apartment, Knox found time to indulge a few of his interests. He was a Civil War buff, and his interest prompted him to attend a convention of Union veterans that was held the summer he arrived in Washington, D.C. Knox met one of the "old men" and was clearly moved by this living relic of a momentous era. He also called upon the other justices from time to time, though when he visited Brandeis or Cardozo he did so without McReynolds' knowledge, as neither justice was in McReynolds' good graces. This was in part because they opposed him on the New Deal rulings, but principally because they were Jewish, and McReynolds was openly anti-Semitic. Knox offers interesting recollections of Brandeis and Cardozo and their personalities. That they would so generously share their time with the young Knox, who often comes across as feckless and star-struck, says something both about the men and the era, when Washington was a small city in many respects and its residents dis-