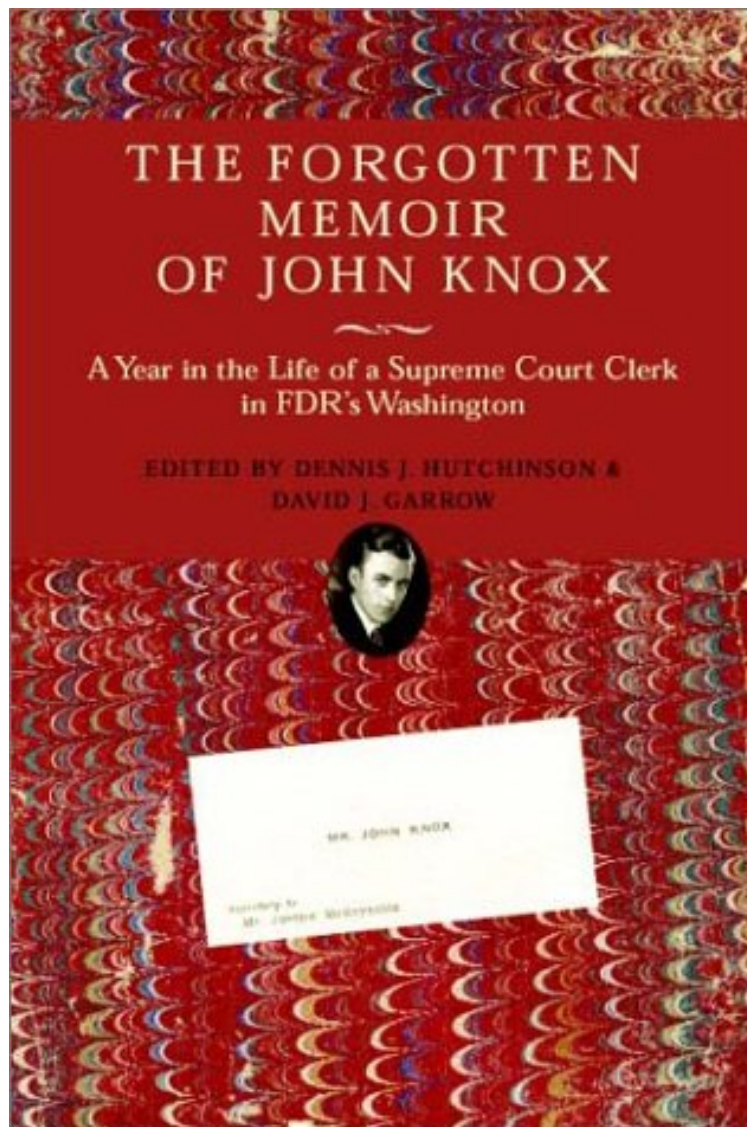


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John Knox

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John Knox : The Forgotten Memoir of John Knox: A Year in the Life of a Supreme Court Clerk in FDR's Washington before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Forgotten Memoir of John Knox: A Year in the Life of a Supreme Court Clerk in FDR's Washington:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Thank you, John Knox! By Customer What a gem! Good book, very

smooth, relaxing, fascinating read. I really appreciated the slice-of-life stuff from the 1930's. Feel bad that this really was Knox's swan song, he didn't really amount to much afterwards, but in a way that helps me identify with him more. I loved how McReynolds freaked out at the possibility of Knox using a Stenotype machine - poor judge wouldn't get far in the modern age, would he? 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Flowed Like a Novel! By Jules7 This was such an intriguing book. It was a page turner like say a Grisham novel. An inside look at what it was like to work day after day with America's most disagreeable SC Justice. Knox wrote respectfully of all the Justices he met. Most remarkably, he wrote respectfully of James McReynolds. By the end of the book, the reader can feel Knox's frustration with McReynolds. Yet Knox treasured the time he spent as his clerk. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Four Stars By sparks An interesting inside view of the Court in the thirties of which we have not had many.

"My name will survive as long as man survives, because I am writing the greatest diary that has ever been written. I intend to surpass Pepys as a diarist." When John Frush Knox (1907-1997) wrote these words, he was in the middle of law school, and his attempt at surpassing Pepys part scrapbook, part social commentary, and part recollection had already reached 750 pages. His efforts as a chronicler might have landed in a family attic had he not secured an eminent position after graduation as law clerk to Justice James C. McReynolds arguably one of the most disagreeable justices to sit on the Supreme Court during the tumultuous year when President Franklin D. Roosevelt tried to "pack" the Court with justices who would approve his New Deal agenda. Knox's memoir instead emerges as a record of one of the most fascinating periods in American history. *The Forgotten Memoir of John Knox* edited by Dennis J. Hutchinson and David J. Garrow offers a candid, at times naive, insider's view of the showdown between Roosevelt and the Court that took place in 1937. At the same time, it marvelously portrays a Washington culture now long gone. Although the new Supreme Court building had been open for a year by the time Knox joined McReynolds' staff, most of the justices continued to work from their homes, each supported by a small staff. Knox, the epitome of the overzealous and officious young man, after landing what he believes to be a dream position, continually fears for his job under the notoriously rude (and nakedly racist) justice. But he soon develops close relationships with the justice's two black servants: Harry Parker, the messenger who does "everything but breathe" for the justice, and Mary Diggs, the maid and cook. Together, they plot and sidestep around their employer's idiosyncrasies to keep the household running while history is made in the Court. A substantial foreword by Dennis Hutchinson and David Garrow sets the stage, and a gallery of period photos of Knox, McReynolds, and other figures of the time gives life to this engaging account, which like no other recaptures life in Washington, D.C., when it was still a genteel southern town.

From *Library Journal* James C. McReynolds, who served on the Supreme Court from 1914 to 1941, was one of the worst of the more than 100 justices who have presided from America's highest bench, and Knox (1907-97) had the misfortune of clerking for him. One of the so-called Four Horsemen, conservative judicial activists who did their best to overturn New Deal legislation, McReynolds and his fellow dissenters provoked Franklin Delano Roosevelt's "Supreme Court packing plan," which attempted to fill the court with supporters. Ironically, the plan had been proposed previously by McReynolds during the Wilson administration. FDR lost the battle but won the war when one justice started voting with those in favor of judicial restraints the "switch-in-time-that-saved-the-nine." This insightful memoir by Knox, who clerked for McReynolds from 1936 to 1937, brings the battle into the justice's home, where he worked. McReynolds was a blatant bigot whom William Howard Taft described as "fuller of prejudice than any man I have known." He ran his apartment like a dictator employees were treated like minions and labored in constant fear of displeasing their superior. As one might expect, Knox's service was underappreciated; he was fired mere days before his clerkship expired. Editors Hutchinson (Univ. of Chicago; *The Man Who Was Whizzer White*) and Garrow (Emory Univ.; *Bearing the Cross*) deserve credit for bringing this personal memoir to publication. Court buffs, political junkies, and observers of Washington when it was still a small, segregated Southern town will be enthralled by this insider's account. William D. Pederson, Louisiana State Univ., Shreveport Copyright 2002 Cahners Business Information, Inc. ". . . a delicious combination, packed with drama, irony and drollery." -- Jonathan Yardley, *Washington Post Book World*, June 9, 2002 "John Knox . . . lucked his way into a Supreme Court clerkship . . . The memoir he left behind, though, is a fascinating achievement." -- David A. Price, *Wall Street Journal*, May 31, 2002 From the Inside Flap "My name will survive as long as man survives, because I am writing the greatest diary that has ever been written. I intend to surpass Pepys as a diarist." When John Frush Knox (1907-1997) wrote these words, he was in the middle of law school, and his attempt at surpassing Pepys part scrapbook, part social commentary, and part recollection had already reached 750 pages. His efforts as a chronicler might have landed in a family attic had he not secured an eminent position after graduation as law clerk to Justice James C. McReynolds arguably one of the most disagreeable justices to sit on the Supreme Court during the tumultuous year when President Franklin D. Roosevelt tried to "pack" the Court with justices who would approve his New Deal agenda. Knox's memoir instead emerges as a record of one of the most fascinating periods in American history. *The Forgotten Memoir of John Knox* edited by Dennis J. Hutchinson and David J. Garrow offers a candid, at times naive, insider's view of the showdown

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