

George Dalman Nelson
October 9, 1917 – January 5, 2004

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George Dalman Nelson was born October 9, 1917 in Junction City, Louisiana. While he loved Arkansas, one way to get a rise out of him was to imply he was actually born on the Arkansas side of the state line. He would emphatically assert that the house in which he was born was 80 yards this side of the line. Therefore, he never lived anywhere outside of Louisiana except where the U.S. Government sent him. His parents moved him and his brother Harry to Minden to get to better schools and they weathered the great Depression there.

He received \$100 scholarship as valedictorian of Minden High and another \$50 from the DAR and with his \$5 a week job, it was enough to get him to LSU. Like many here he received his BA and LLB in six years, graduating in 1940. He was a Sigma Nu and loved it. He pledged because they were the only fraternity that didn't drink. After the pledge ceremony all the actives got drunk and he asked what the deal was. They told him they had a rule that they didn't drink during rush week.

One fateful afternoon he was walking down the hall of the law school and some friends saw a notice that they were having interviews for the FBI. He went. 400 were interviewed, jobs were offered to 2, and he was one. As a commissioned 2nd Lieutenant in 1940, he didn't know what to do. His father gave him a piece of advice that served him and me in good stead. He said, "you can always quit but you can't always go." So, he went.

He weighed in at Quantico at 122 pounds. When they asked him where he wanted to be assigned, the young man from Junction City and Minden said New York or Los Angeles. They sent him to East Orange, New Jersey. Shortly after that he was reassigned to Washington, D.C. and had his office in the Justice Department. On December 7, 1941, he had worked the night shift and laid down for a nap when the call came to tell him that the country was at war and to come back to work. He was on duty for the next 48 hours as they locked in on and in some cases took into custody those they believed to be members of Japanese intelligence.

When we asked him later if he believe they overreacted he felt they had but, as to whether he had any part in it, he had not doubt that anyone he helped detain was actively engaged in spying.

He met my mother while home for Christmas in front of what is now the library. He took her to the Strand that night and had a long distance romance. On the night he proposed he was in Washington on a stakeout. He called her in Shreveport and had to wait until 2:00 a.m. for her to call back. To hear him tell it, when he proposed, she said, "Yes, who's calling?"

Not long after the wedding my grandfather called and offered him a job at Querbes & Bourquin. He had always thought he would go back to Minden and practice law with his brother Harry, and probably run for office. Following his father's advice, he accepted and worked right up to the Friday before he died. He asked when he could go back to work on the day he left us. He watched LSU win the national championship with his youngest grandson the night before.

He never practiced law but he remained a member of the Shreveport Bar, the Louisiana Bar and ABA his entire life. His insurance and civic careers are a topic for another day. Querbes & Nelson, Life Insurance Company of Louisiana, Louisiana Companies, CABL, First Methodist Church, and Centenary all bear his mark as do his family. We thank his brothers and sisters at the bar for this opportunity to remember him fondly.