Harmon Scoville: Harmon G. Scoville, S-C-O-V-I-L-L-E.

David Knight: All right; and Glenn, your turn.

Glenn Salter: Glenn Salter, S as in "Sam"-A-L-T-E-R.

David Knight: We're ready to go.

Glenn Salter: This is part of the Appellate Courts Legacy Project. Today we are talking with Retired Justice—Presiding Justice, actually—Harmon G. Scoville of the Fourth Appellate District, Division Three, in Santa Ana, and we'll be talking with him about his history on the California Court of Appeal. Also in the room with us today is his son Scott Scoville.

Justice Scoville, before we start, I just want to remind you of a comment that you probably heard on many, many occasions. You are always referred to in the legal community as a judge's judge. I thought that was the greatest compliment.

Harmon Scoville: Yeah, I appreciated that.

Glenn Salter: So I'm sure that by the time we finish the interview today, everyone will know why you did obtain that comment. I understand that in your chambers, you used to always have a picture of your great-great-grandfather on the wall.

Harmon Scoville: I did.

Glenn Salter: What was the significance of that picture to you?

Harmon Scoville: Well, he in his earlier days had known Abraham Lincoln.

Glenn Salter: I believe he lived in Springfield, Illinois.

Harmon Scoville: Yeah.

Glenn Salter: Right; and how did he know Abraham Lincoln? Was he his attorney? Was that the connection?

Harmon Scoville: Well, he had tried a case for him.

Glenn Salter: Oh, really?

Harmon Scoville: Yes.

Glenn Salter: And I believe that your middle initial is "G" and so there is—

Harmon Scoville: Yeah, it's Groesbeck.

Glenn Salter: And that was his name as well.

Harmon Scoville: Yeah.

Glenn Salter: So when he . . . my understanding is when he went to leave Springfield, Abraham Lincoln was opposed to that.

Harmon Scoville: Well, I don't know that that was necessarily so; I do know that he left.

Glenn Salter: And where did he go?

Harmon Scoville: To Utah.

Glenn Salter: Utah. And I believe you were born in Utah—Ogden, Utah?

Harmon Scoville: Yes, that's right.

Glenn Salter: December 21, 1922.

Harmon Scoville: Right.

Glenn Salter: What was the area like there when you grew up in the 1920s?

Harmon Scoville: It was nice—nice area. Had snow in the wintertime; summertime, real good.

Glenn Salter: Was this sort of a rural area?

Harmon Scoville: No, no. We had a large brick house. My dad made sure that it was well done.

Glenn Salter: And what business was he in at that time?

Harmon Scoville: My dad was in the broom business.

Glenn Salter: Manufacturing brooms?

Harmon Scoville: Yes, he owned a lot of factories through the United States.

Glenn Salter: Oh, he did; do you remember the name of those factories?

Harmon Scoville: Well, it was Fuller Broom Company.

Glenn Salter: Oh, really? I understand, though, that after a few years there, he moved on to Los Angeles.

Harmon Scoville: That's right. And we came with him.

Glenn Salter: Do you remember why he decided to move to Los Angeles?

Harmon Scoville: Well, times were rough. It was very hard, and he had a brother who had an interest, as well as my dad, in a broom factory in Los Angeles; and so that was where they went.

Glenn Salter: Do you remember where in Los Angeles that broom factory was?

Harmon Scoville: Yeah, it was on East 4th Street in Los Angeles.

Glenn Salter: Let's see, I understand that you actually worked in the broom factory for a while.

Harmon Scoville: I did, starting at 11 years of age.

Glenn Salter: And what were you hired to do?

Harmon Scoville: I used to have to sort out the corn in the morning, broomcorn, and load the trucks. And it was a miserable job; I didn't like it at all.

(00:04:55)

Glenn Salter: Is that when you first started having thoughts that you wanted to maybe do something else?

Harmon Scoville: Yes, I wanted to have something that I could wear a shirt to.

Glenn Salter: *[Laughing]* And I understand you had some friend, a friend whose father worked in the legal business at that time—was a court clerk, I believe.

Harmon Scoville: Yes, he was a court clerk in Ogden, Utah.

Glenn Salter: Oh, I thought he was a court clerk here in Los Angeles.

Harmon Scoville: No.

Glenn Salter: Did you get to go to any court proceedings when you were younger here in Los Angeles?

Harmon Scoville: Oh, yes, I did.

Glenn Salter: Do you remember any of those proceedings? Was this the superior court in downtown Los Angeles?

Harmon Scoville: No, I don't remember.

Glenn Salter: Okay. I was always sort of curious: Did your mother work in the family business as well?

Harmon Scoville: No.

Glenn Salter: She was just a homemaker.

Harmon Scoville: Yes.

Glenn Salter: Did you have any brothers and sisters?

Harmon Scoville: I did. I had an older sister, Ruth, and a younger sister, Janet.

Glenn Salter: I understand that you were very active in the Boy Scouts.

Harmon Scoville: That's right.

Glenn Salter: When did you start in the Boy Scouts?

Harmon Scoville: Oh, as soon as I was old enough. I liked scouting. I liked the trips, I enjoyed the camaraderie of the scouting, and I stayed in scouting until I attained my Eagle rank, and stayed on longer.

Glenn Salter: What type of trips did you take? You said you enjoyed trips?

Harmon Scoville: All these were trips that we did in scouting.

Glenn Salter: Were these field trips?

Harmon Scoville: Field trips, yes.

Glenn Salter: How many badges did you earn? Or did they have badges then?

Harmon Scoville: Oh, yes, they had merit badges, and I had enough to get my Eagle award.

Glenn Salter: How many badges did that take at that time?

Harmon Scoville: Twenty-one, I think.

Glenn Salter: Twenty-one.

Harmon Scoville: And I had more than that.

Glenn Salter: I understand you graduated from Los Angeles High School in 1940.

Harmon Scoville: That's right.

Glenn Salter: Did you have any favorite teachers or classes?

Harmon Scoville: Oh yes, yes.

Glenn Salter: Who was your favorite teacher?

Harmon Scoville: I guess Miss [*inaudible*], probably. She taught Latin and English and languages.

Glenn Salter: Was she sort of your mentor at the school?

Harmon Scoville: I don't know that she was, but I sure enjoyed her.

Glenn Salter: Did you participate in school in any extracurricular activities?

Harmon Scoville: Oh, yes, I was debater. I was on the debate team.

Glenn Salter: For how many years?

Harmon Scoville: A number of years.

Glenn Salter: These were local debates against other high schools?

Harmon Scoville: Against other high schools, right.

Glenn Salter: Did you do any athletics when you were in school?

Harmon Scoville: No, except in the classes that they prescribed for us. I remember playing basketball, and they prescribed those classes for us.

Glenn Salter: Any girlfriends, or do you want to talk about that? *[laughing]*

Harmon Scoville: Oh, yeah, I liked some girls, but I was too busy—I had a paper route and got up early in the morning, and so I didn't do much dating.

Glenn Salter: Okay, so the paper route, was that the *L.A. Times*?

Harmon Scoville: The *L.A. Times*.

Glenn Salter: I think you actually worked for the *Times* later on, didn't you?

Harmon Scoville: I sure did.

Glenn Salter: And you knew the Chandlers?

Harmon Scoville: No, I didn't.

Glenn Salter: When you were in high school it was 1940; how aware were you and how aware were your classmates of the impending Second World War?

Harmon Scoville: I was in the office of the *Times* building when we first got word that Pearl Harbor had been bombed, and I remember the news came in. And I was there in the *Times* building at the time news came that Pearl Harbor had been bombed.

(00:10:05)

Glenn Salter: How did you respond to that?

Harmon Scoville: Oh, I think that we were all very surprised.

Glenn Salter: Were you thinking about enlisting at that point? Because you did at one point join the military.

Harmon Scoville: Oh, I did; it was later, later than that.

Glenn Salter: Did you go to UCLA right there?

Harmon Scoville: Yes, in 19—. I graduated from high school in 1960 and immediately started at UCLA.

Glenn Salter: And what was your major?

Harmon Scoville: I had three majors. I had military science and political science and public speaking. I had . . . they call it a general major.

Glenn Salter: How long were you in UCLA before you enlisted?

Harmon Scoville: About a year and a half, because . . . yeah, it must have been a year and a half.

Glenn Salter: What branch of service did you join?

Harmon Scoville: Well, I was in ROTC, and so I stayed in the infantry.

Glenn Salter: And where did you do your training?

Harmon Scoville: Fort Benning, Georgia.

Glenn Salter: Did you enjoy training?

Harmon Scoville: Oh, the training was good at Fort Benning. We had a good instructor, but it was hot. However, I do remember that October was one of the nicest parts of the year.

Glenn Salter: So how long were you in Fort Benning?

Harmon Scoville: Till I graduated and got my commission.

Glenn Salter: So you were in officer candidate school then?

Harmon Scoville: Yeah.

Glenn Salter: And commissioned as a lieutenant.

Harmon Scoville: Right.

Glenn Salter: And where was your first assignment?

Harmon Scoville: At Camp Meade, Maryland.

Glenn Salter: And what were your duties at that point?

Harmon Scoville: Well, I was an officer and assigned to a company. And I remember going into the office of the commanding officer at

the time—it was a colonel, and the colonel was very nice to me. We took some trips together.

Glenn Salter: You did eventually get sent over or shipped over to Germany at one point?

Harmon Scoville: Yeah, I went to Germany.

Glenn Salter: What year was that?

Harmon Scoville: Would be ’43.

Glenn Salter: And were you in the frontlines, or were you—

Harmon Scoville: No, I never . . . I didn’t see any combat.

Glenn Salter: When the war was over, I believe you were sent down to Nuremberg; is that correct?

Harmon Scoville: Well, no, when the war ended I was in Germany and stayed in Germany for a while and attended the University of Heidelberg, because I enjoyed the scholastics and I enjoyed the University of Heidelberg. I had courses in German and in civics, and I just enjoyed it very much. And I lived, at that time we were stationed, near Munich.

Glenn Salter: Did you ever get a chance to see . . . did you get a chance to get to Nuremberg for the Nuremberg trials?

Harmon Scoville: No, I did not.

Glenn Salter: When the war was over and after you were done in Heidelberg, you came back to the United States?

Harmon Scoville: Yeah.

Glenn Salter: And you went back to UCLA?

Harmon Scoville: Yes.

(00:15:00)

Glenn Salter: Was there any professor or class at the university that sort of pointed you in the direction of going towards the law?

Harmon Scoville: Well, I don't know that it was towards the law, but I had a professor in public speaking who I liked a lot—a lot. And I always remember the fact that he is one professor I expected an A in the course and he gave me a B; and so I wrote a letter to him. I always remember that; I regret that very much, because I deserved a B and I wanted an A. *[laughing]*

Glenn Salter: *[Laughing]* I’m assuming he didn’t change the grade.

Harmon Scoville: No.

Glenn Salter: Did he write back?

Harmon Scoville: No.

Glenn Salter: Why did you decide to go to law school?

Harmon Scoville: Well, from the time I was 14, I wanted to be a lawyer. I didn't want to be a doctor, and I didn't want to be in school all the time, and so I really enjoyed being a lawyer.

Glenn Salter: Now, you went to Stanford Law School?

Harmon Scoville: Yeah.

Glenn Salter: Graduated in 1950. Why did you choose Stanford Law School? It's a great law school, but why Stanford?

Harmon Scoville: I think it was one of the best in the country. At that time Stanford was the best in the country. We outranked and beat out Harvard. And so it was Harvard and Stanford, and I chose Stanford.

Glenn Salter: So you were accepted at Harvard too?

Harmon Scoville: Yes.

Glenn Salter: Did you enjoy your law school years?

Harmon Scoville: Oh, very much.

Glenn Salter: What was it about law school that excited you?

Harmon Scoville: It was the companionship of a lot of the other attendees, and it was the fact that I wanted to be a lawyer that kind of spurred me on to stay in law school.

Glenn Salter: They always tell stories of about that time, the late '40s, early 1950s, that when you would go to law school, the first lecture would be "Look to the left, look to the right; those people won't be here three years later."

Harmon Scoville: Yup, that's right.

Glenn Salter: Did they give you that lecture?

Harmon Scoville: Yeah, I had that: "Look to the left, look to the right, and only one of you is going to stay." *[laughing]*

Glenn Salter: How many were in that entering class?

Harmon Scoville: I think there were about 150.

Glenn Salter: And how many did eventually graduate, do you remember?

Harmon Scoville: Just about a third of us.

Glenn Salter: So they were accurate.

Harmon Scoville: Yup.

Glenn Salter: Were the two next to you, were they the ones who were gone?

Harmon Scoville: I don't know.

Glenn Salter: Now, I understand that you actually . . . this is also when you worked at the *L.A. Times*.

Harmon Scoville: Oh, when I came out of the Army, I asked for a job at the *L.A. Times*, because I needed the money for schooling. I needed the money for tuition, books; and so I asked for the job and they gave it to me.

Glenn Salter: And what were you doing at the *L.A. Times*?

Harmon Scoville: I was what they called a road ben—in other words, I went around and checked on a lot of the things that were done in the delivery of the *Times*.

Glenn Salter: And was this during the summertime, then, before school?

Harmon Scoville: Well, I worked full time and I worked during school, too, and I went to UCLA and worked at the *Times*.

Glenn Salter: Now, once you went to Stanford, did you continue working at the *Times*?

Harmon Scoville: No, I did not.

Glenn Salter: When you graduated from law school, you came back to Los Angeles to work for a law firm?

Harmon Scoville: That's right, yeah, Trippet, Newcomer, Yoakum & Thomas.

(00:20:02)

Glenn Salter: And what was life like for a young attorney, fresh out of the best law school in the country?

Harmon Scoville: Well, I thought it was pretty good. We had a good boss, I remember the law firm Trippet, Newcomer, Yoakum & Thomas, and it was good.

Glenn Salter: What type of, what area of, law did you practice?

Harmon Scoville: It was all civil; I didn't go into the criminal field.

Glenn Salter: Did you get an opportunity to go to court those first years?

Harmon Scoville: Yes, sure did.

Glenn Salter: Do you remember that first time you walked into court? Most lawyers do.

Harmon Scoville: I'm trying to think what case it was, because we had a number of cases that we went to court on; I just don't recall the name of the case.

Glenn Salter: At the time lawyers weren't paid as well as they are today.

Harmon Scoville: Oh, no.

Glenn Salter: What salary did you get or did you have to start off with?

Harmon Scoville: We started at $275 a month. That was it, $275 a month, and then it went up to $300, then $350, $400.

Glenn Salter: Did you have to buy a hat?

Harmon Scoville: *[Laughing]* No.

Glenn Salter: I was told by a lot of attorneys that back in that time the first thing they made you do is buy a hat; all lawyers wore hats, so—

Harmon Scoville: This was in the San Francisco area, where they didn't do that. I was not in that area where we had to buy hats.

Glenn Salter: You at some point moved down to Orange County. Was there . . . why did you come to Orange County?

Harmon Scoville: I was offered a job with a law firm in Orange County, and I accepted; I came down, started working in Orange County.

Glenn Salter: Did you enjoy that move? Do you think it was a good move?

Harmon Scoville: It was a good move, yeah.

Glenn Salter: Smaller county?

Harmon Scoville: Yeah.

Glenn Salter: Chance to go to court?

Harmon Scoville: Yeah.

Glenn Salter: What did you think of the Orange County judges?

Harmon Scoville: I thought they were good—very good, very good judges.

Glenn Salter: Did you at that point see maybe yourself being a judge?

Harmon Scoville: Yes.

Glenn Salter: Were there any cases that you remember that were, or any court situations that come back to mind, about the way judges handled their court or maybe didn't handle it as well as they should have?

Harmon Scoville: Yeah, yeah, there were.

Glenn Salter: It seems to me one time some judge didn't want to read your brief after you had spent time and effort on it.

Harmon Scoville: Yeah, that's true.

Glenn Salter: Can you name that judge, or should we keep that anonymous at this point?

Harmon Scoville: Oh, no, we keep it anonymous.

Glenn Salter: Did he tell you actually he just wouldn't read your brief?

Harmon Scoville: I don't remember the specific words.

Glenn Salter: I think there was another time, too, wasn't there, where some judge kept a lot of attorneys waiting in court while he heard just one motion?

Harmon Scoville: Yes, I remember that judge. He heard about 16 cases and just kept us all waiting, and then finally went back, followed his calendar.

Glenn Salter: How did that . . . what did you think about it?

Harmon Scoville: I didn't like that. I thought that a judge shouldn't do that; I thought a judge should handle his cases and take them in order and dispose of them.

Glenn Salter: I assume by now you must have been married. Were you married at this point?

Harmon Scoville: I was married, yes.

Glenn Salter: And children?

(00:25:00)

Harmon Scoville: I had three and . . . well, actually, I had five.

Glenn Salter: Five children. Now, you were appointed to the municipal court bench in 1967, I believe; at the time, the appointment process was a little different than it is today.

Harmon Scoville: No, I didn't make an application.

Glenn Salter: Can you tell us what happened?

Harmon Scoville: Well, I had been working in politics and was very active in the Republican Party in politics; and when Reagan came, he just named me to the bench. And then after that I applied for superior court, and I did make an application for that.

Glenn Salter: Well, I believe, on the one to the municipal court, didn't you just get a phone call from somebody asking if there was maybe some interest on your part?

Harmon Scoville: Yeah, just a phone call from the appointments secretary, and that was all.

Glenn Salter: What type of cases did you work on, on the municipal court?

Harmon Scoville: In municipal court it was mainly a lot of traffic, because back in those days the municipal court handled traffic cases, so we had traffic cases.

Glenn Salter: I assume you enjoyed going to the superior court?

Harmon Scoville: Oh, very much, yeah.

Glenn Salter: I understand that when you were in the superior court you believed very much in the settlement process.

Harmon Scoville: That's the case; that's true.

Glenn Salter: It's also been said that you settled more than half the cases that were sent to you.

Harmon Scoville: I think so.

Glenn Salter: What do you think makes a good settlement judge?

Harmon Scoville: A judge that will listen to both sides, be fair, and make an equitable decision.

Glenn Salter: What type of attorneys do you think do best in that setting?

Harmon Scoville: Ones that are willing to negotiate and compromise and want a settlement; if an attorney doesn't want a settlement, you're not going to get it.

Glenn Salter: Are there any tricks that the judge has to know when an attorney may be saying one thing, such as "I won't settle," but

they are willing to settle? How do you know that a case will settle?

Harmon Scoville: Well, you sense it after being on the bench for a while. You sense it from different attorneys and then you know them by their experience and by name. But we had a lot of cases that we settled.

Glenn Salter: Orange County was a pretty small legal community at the time.

Harmon Scoville: Yeah.

Glenn Salter: Did you attend a lot of bar functions?

Harmon Scoville: Yes, sure did.

Glenn Salter: Did you ever become president of the Orange County Bar Association?

Harmon Scoville: No.

Glenn Salter: You have also been quoted at one point as saying that you have a—

Scott Scoville: You were for a short time, weren't you, then you got appointed? Weren't you president of the Orange County bar for, like, a short period and then you got elevated to judge?

Harmon Scoville: Oh, I guess that was true. There was a period of time that I was appointed and then was elevated.

Glenn Salter: You have also been quoted as saying that you have great faith in the jury system.

Harmon Scoville: I do.

Glenn Salter: But sometimes juries get it wrong.

Harmon Scoville: That's right.

Glenn Salter: There was a case, I believe a paternity case, and you set aside a verdict. Do you remember that case?

Harmon Scoville: Not particularly.

Glenn Salter: There was a woman who testified that a man was the father, and the jury found that true. And do you remember setting aside that case, that verdict?

Harmon Scoville: No. But I know that I did. *[laughing]*

Glenn Salter: You were vindicated in that case, too.

Harmon Scoville: Yes.

Glenn Salter: The DA had investigated further after you set that aside.

(00:29:56)

Harmon Scoville: I set it aside and he did investigate it further and found that I was right.

Glenn Salter: That she had lied. You also brought a rather innovative approach to jury selection to Orange County, bringing in panels of 18 instead of panels of 12.

Harmon Scoville: Yeah.

Glenn Salter: Do you remember where you picked up that idea?

Harmon Scoville: No, no, but it made sense to me to have panels that could function better.

Glenn Salter: How did the attorneys respond the first time you made that suggestion?

Harmon Scoville: Well, I think they liked it.

Glenn Salter: Do you think in the long run it worked out well?

Harmon Scoville: I think so.

Glenn Salter: Did any other judges in the superior court take up your idea?

Harmon Scoville: No, not that I can think of.

Glenn Salter: You had a case one time with an 11-year-old boy who had AIDS.

Harmon Scoville: Oh, yeah, I did.

Glenn Salter: Can you tell us a little bit about that case?

Harmon Scoville: Well, it was a landmark case, and it was the first case that we had had in Orange County involving AIDS.

Glenn Salter: Somebody didn't want him in school, I think.

Harmon Scoville: Yeah, school district didn't want him, but I ordered that he be there, and so that was against the times.

Glenn Salter: I think if there was one thing everybody knew about you in terms of coming to court, was punctuality.

Harmon Scoville: Yeah, I tried to always be prompt.

Glenn Salter: Story was that you would wait until the second hand would hit 12 and then you would be on the bench.

Harmon Scoville: Yup, that's about right.

Glenn Salter: There is also a story of one time when you were on the Court of Appeal that only two of you came out for the panel and that the third justice came running out about five minutes later and that you never said a word to counsel; you just let the scene unfold and everybody knew what was going on.

Harmon Scoville: Yeah. I don't remember that.

Glenn Salter: You were the presiding judge of the superior court there for a couple of years.

Harmon Scoville: Yes, I was.

Glenn Salter: Did you enjoy that position?

Harmon Scoville: Oh, very much.

Glenn Salter: What was it about doing that that you liked as opposed to being in the trial court trying cases?

Harmon Scoville: Well, you had the opportunity to assign cases; and that, I thought, was a good thing.

Glenn Salter: Do you remember how many judges there were in the superior court at that time?

Harmon Scoville: About 26.

Glenn Salter: And you had the Department One calendar, too. What transpired in Department One? We don't have a Department One anymore with our direct calendaring systems. How were cases assigned at that point?

Harmon Scoville: Well, by the time the case was filed they could tell what it was—whether it was domestic or criminal or civil—and I think that we picked up from there. I don't remember anything further.

Glenn Salter: But you enjoyed being the presiding judge?

Harmon Scoville: I sure did.

Glenn Salter: You were nominated in 1988 to replace Justice Trotter as the presiding justice of the Court of Appeal in Santa Ana.

Harmon Scoville: That's true.

Glenn Salter: Is that something that you wanted?

Harmon Scoville: Yes, I think so.

Glenn Salter: What was it about being an appellate justice that appealed to you?

Harmon Scoville: Well, the fact that you could make decisions and have the camaraderie and the association with the other justices.

(00:34:58)

Glenn Salter: Do you feel that it was a collegial environment at the Court of Appeal?

Harmon Scoville: Yes.

Glenn Salter: What did you enjoy most about being a presiding justice?

Harmon Scoville: Oh, I think we had the flexibility of picking and choosing cases.

Glenn Salter: Did you enjoy the give and take that occurred between justices on particular cases?

Harmon Scoville: Yes, I think that the justices spoke their minds and would tell the audience, the spectators there in the audience, what their opinions were.

Glenn Salter: Did you enjoy the writing process of being an appellate justice?

Harmon Scoville: Yes, as long as I had good clerks like you.

Glenn Salter: Well, thank you; although Megan, I think, was very good.

Harmon Scoville: Well, you were good too.

Glenn Salter: Oh, I appreciate that. You know, you were always known for bringing donuts around the court?

Harmon Scoville: Yeah, that's true.

Glenn Salter: Did you pick that up from your days as a settlement conference judge?

Harmon Scoville: Probably.

Glenn Salter: That was always one of the great parts of the day, coming here and eating donuts.

Harmon Scoville: Yes.

Glenn Salter: You remember, you had a secretary by the name of Marian?

Harmon Scoville: Sure do.

Glenn Salter: English woman.

Harmon Scoville: Yes.

Glenn Salter: Very formal.

Harmon Scoville: Yes.

Glenn Salter: How did you get along with her? How do you think the two of you fit together?

Harmon Scoville: I thought we did very well. I liked her, and I think she liked me. I thought we got along well.

Glenn Salter: Those were good days. There were some interesting arguments at the court. What part of the oral argument process did you enjoy?

Harmon Scoville: The summations.

Glenn Salter: Were there any particular attorneys or arguments that you really thought exemplified what it meant to be an appellate attorney?

Harmon Scoville: Not that I can think of right now.

Glenn Salter: You wrote a number of published opinions in all different areas of the law.

Harmon Scoville: Yes.

Glenn Salter: One of the ones that, although I'm not sure you would call it the most significant case, but one that was of interest to me was—I don't know if you remember it—involved a traffic court clerk who was taking money but not depositing it with the county. Do you remember that case?

Harmon Scoville: No.

Glenn Salter: He was charged with bribery as well as embezzlement.

Harmon Scoville: Yeah.

Glenn Salter: He was actually, I think he was convicted of both of those, and you set aside the one, basically saying, "You can do one but you can't do both."

Harmon Scoville: Yeah.

Glenn Salter: What was your reaction in terms of setting aside criminal convictions?

Harmon Scoville: I did it very carefully, because I felt that the jury, if they had decided one way, that should probably stand. I was very much in favor of a jury verdict; but when I had a case before me that was out of line, then I didn't hesitate to set it aside.

Glenn Salter: You were on the court for a little over two years and then decided to take another job with the Buck Trust as a special master.

Harmon Scoville: Yes.

Glenn Salter: Who talked you into moving on to the Buck Trust?

Harmon Scoville: I think it was probably Homer Thompson.

Glenn Salter: And what was the big selling point? Why was he interested in moving you, as opposed to somebody else, up to the special master?

Harmon Scoville: I don't know.

(00:39:58)

Glenn Salter: He used to indicate that he was very respectful of your settlement abilities and your abilities to deal with people.

Harmon Scoville: Yeah.

Scott Scoville: Were you and Homer classmates?

Harmon Scoville: Yes, we were classmates at Stanford.

Scott Scoville: He was a retired judge, right?

Harmon Scoville: Yes.

Glenn Salter: You were a judge for a lot of years. What advice would you, based on your years of experience, give to a new judge, newly appointed judge?

Harmon Scoville: Listen carefully to all of the facts of the case, and then weigh both sides and give both sides your best shot. You've got to be fair on both sides.

Glenn Salter: How about patience?

Harmon Scoville: You've got to have patience.

Glenn Salter: Is that sometimes difficult to do?

Harmon Scoville: No.

Glenn Salter: In 1987 you were named Orange County Judge of the Year by the Women Lawyers Association; 1989, you received the Sam Barnes award; and then in 1990, when you retired from the Court of Appeal, they actually created an award called the Harmon G. Scoville Award for excellence in community service, given to the bench and bar. How did it feel to have an award named after you?

Harmon Scoville: I was very flattered and very appreciative of the recognition.

Glenn Salter: I guess I have just really one final question I would like to ask; and you know my literary bent, so it won't come as a complete surprise. But Maxwell Anderson wrote a play called *Star Wagon,* and in that play all the characters were given an opportunity to go back and do their life over again, a second chance. If you could go back, what one thing would you do differently?

Harmon Scoville: I don't think very much; I don't think there's very much that I would change.

Glenn Salter: Is there anything you wish had turned out differently?

Harmon Scoville: Oh, yes; I think that there are different areas that I could have done better.

Glenn Salter: If you had an opportunity, would you go back and change those things?

Harmon Scoville: Yeah, probably.

Glenn Salter: Justice Scoville, I appreciate all of the time that you have given to the court system, to the legal system, and for this interview as well; and I think it's very clear that you have been and still are a judge's judge.

Harmon Scoville: Yeah.

Glenn Salter: I really appreciate having the chance . . .

Harmon Scoville: Thank you, Glenn.

Glenn Salter: . . . to know you for all these years; absolutely wonderful.

Harmon Scoville: Yeah, it's been a pleasure to know you.

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