

## **Groves, Harry E.** <sup>[1]</sup>

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By University of North Carolina Libraries, 1999

**4 Sep 1921 - 24 Aug 2013**



Photograph of Harry Groves, Southern Historical Collection, UNC-Chapel Hill. Used with permission.

<sup>[2]</sup>Harry E. Groves was born in Manitou Springs, Colo., on 4 September 1921. An African American in a predominantly white state, Groves was valedictorian of his class, which earned him a full scholarship to the University of Colorado from which he graduated cum laude in 1943. Groves planned to teach high school English, but after graduation immediately enlisted in the Army, serving as a second lieutenant of artillery for 13 months in the European Theater.

Discharged after World War II, Groves enrolled in summer school at the University of Chicago, preparing for a degree in educational administration. Unchallenged by his classes, Groves applied to the law school and earned a J.D. in 1949. While in Chicago, Groves married Evelyn Apperson. An earlier marriage, which produced his only child Sheridan, had ended in divorce.

Groves's understanding of the law and his writing skills impressed a number of academics and won him a Ford Foundation Fellowship to study at Harvard University. While at Harvard, Groves became interested in constitutional law, especially in constitutions of newly formed nations. This passion became a lifelong professional interest in Asian countries, leading him to a professorship and deanship at the University of Malaya in Singapore, numerous lecture tours in several Asian countries, and writing articles on Asian law and four books on the constitution of Malaysia.

In a 1976 newspaper interview, Groves described lawyers as providing "the public and political leadership for a community." He practiced this philosophy in every community in which he lived, serving on numerous committees, councils, boards of directors, and with associations both on the local and national levels. Highlighting this service was his election to the Fayetteville, N.C., City Council, 1951-1952, and his selection as Ethics Committee chair for the United States Olympic Committee, 1993-1996.

Groves was Phi Beta Kappa, Phi Delta Kappa, and Kappa Delta Pi. He received a number of important awards, including a Carnegie Research Grant, and was the 1986 recipient of the North Carolina Bar Association's Judge John L. Parker award. In 1991, the National Bar Association inducted Groves into its Hall of Fame.

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#### *Additonal Information from Government & Heritage Library Staff:*

Harry Groves lived in North Carolina during a number of periods in his life. He first moved to the state in 1949, where he became a law professor at then North Carolina College of Law (today's North Carolina Central University School of Law). A few year's later during the Korean conflict he re-entered military service and served in the Judge Advocate General's

Corp at Ft. Bragg. Following this service, he moved to Texas to become Dean of the Texas Southern University School of Law. In 1965, he became president of Ohio's Central State University, an historically black institution. Groves left in 1968 following a difficult period of campus conflict after his support for integrating the school. He held a number of professorships around the country and returned to North Carolina in the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s to teach at UNC-Chapel Hill, North Carolina Central University, and Wake Forest University. He died on 24 August, 2013 in Chapel Hill, North Carolina.

North Carolina Professional Timeline includes:

1949-1951	Associate professor, North Carolina College Law School, Durham, N.C.
1951-1952	Captain, Judge Advocate General's Corps, 82nd Airborne Division, Ft. Bragg, N.C.
1952-1956	Private practice of law, Fayetteville, N.C.
Summer 1970	Visiting professor, School of Law, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
1976-1981	Dean, School of Law, North Carolina Central University, Durham, N.C.
1981-1986	Henry Brandis Professor of Law, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Spring 1993	Visiting professor of law, Wake Forest University, Winston-Salem, N.C.

## References:

Harry E. Groves Papers #4975, Southern Historical Collection, The Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. <https://finding-aids.lib.unc.edu/04975/#> [3]

Boger, John Charles. "Harry Edward Groves, Late Emeritus Henry Brandis Professor of Law: In Memoriam." *North Carolina Law Review*, Vol. 92: No. 4. Chapel Hill: UNC School of Law. 2014. <https://scholarship.law.unc.edu/nclr/vol92/iss4/2/> [4]

## Additional Resources:

Groves, Harry E. "Separate but Equal--The Doctrine of Plessy v. Ferguson." *Phylon (1940-1956)* 12, no. 1 (1951): 66-72. doi:10.2307/272323. [https://www.jstor.org/stable/272323?seq=1#metadata\\_info\\_tab\\_contents](https://www.jstor.org/stable/272323?seq=1#metadata_info_tab_contents) [5]

Groves, Harry E. 1963. *Comparative constitutional law: cases and materials*. Dobbs Ferry, N.Y.: Oceana Publications.

"Harry Groves, '49: Up for the Challenge." Blog, October 8, 2009, University of Chicago School of Law. <https://www.law.uchicago.edu/news/harry-groves-49-challenge> [6]

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