September 21, 1997

MS. GERE: This is the continuation of the oral history of Judge June L. Green. Today is September 21, 1997, and we are meeting this afternoon in Judge Green's chambers in the United States District Court in Washington, D.C.

Good afternoon, Judge Green.

JUDGE GREEN: Good afternoon, Sally.

MS. GERE: We are continuing our interview. I believe when we last spoke, we were talking about your attempts to find employment after law school. And I think that you had just started to tell me about some of the efforts that you had made, so I'd like to start at that point, if we might.

JUDGE GREEN: Well, I went around to all government offices. I went to the Department of Justice, I went to Office of Price Administration, which was a new one that was just forming, and I went to all kind of places that were set up for the war effort.

MS. GERE: Did you think it would be easier, knowing how difficult it would be for a woman to obtain employment as a lawyer in any event, was there any thought that it might be somewhat easier, given that it was wartime? Given that men were away?

JUDGE GREEN: They hadn't really all gone at that point. Because it was at the end of 1941 that Pearl Harbor occurred, after all. In December. And we were really just starting in the war when people were starting to be drafted, so that it had not hit the job market at that point, so much. When I finally got my job, there were still male lawyers in the office, as well as a male boss. But I'd made lots of applications, and people had given me some hope that there would be–that they'd get around to–they were always waiting for something. They were waiting

for the fiscal year, they were waiting for the Congress to settle on the effect of their office–it was a brand new one.

MS. GERE: Always something.

JUDGE GREEN: Always something. So I went repeatedly to any place that gave me any hope. I found that I had been out looking for a job then for a whole year and more before I had any chance. Finally I had a chance from Dean Grace Hayes Riley. She was the Dean all the time I was in law school, and was always very nice and kind, and a very good Dean, I felt–and a nice human being. She called me up and she said, "Mrs. Green, are you still looking for a job?" I said, "Indeed I am." She said, "I have an opening I can tell you. I'll tell you exactly what the conversation was. This is an insurance company, and they periodically call us for replacements for people in their office for claims adjusters. They called, and Mr. Glenn, who is the head of that office, always calls and says, 'Well, do you have a nice man for me?' I have provided him with quite a few. He called and said the same thing this time, he needed one. I said, 'I don't have a nice man, but I have a nice woman. What about that?'" Quite confident. He said, "The idea never crossed my mind." She said, "Well, let it. After all, this is the 1940s." Like the millennium. He said, "Well, we'd be interested, we certainly will interview her." She said, "I'm sure she will. I'll give her the word. She will get in touch with you at your convenience."

So indeed I did go to see him. I did not put my best foot forward, because I wanted to know just exactly what was being done with the people that I had to see to settle cases. I wanted to know, wanted to make sure they weren't widows and orphans being gypped.

MS. GERE: That would have been a good question to ask in an interview.

JUDGE GREEN: And he said, "Well, you would certainly have to turn people down that don't have any legal basis for making the claim. You certainly don't gyp anybody and neither do we. How about a 90-day trial period? You find out whether you like the job, and we can find out how you're doing it."

MS. GERE: Now which company was this with?

JUDGE GREEN: This was Lumbermens Mutual. Lumbermens was owned by James S. Kemper, and the Kemper Companies were the overall heads of these. I worked for Lumbermens Mutual as well as American Motorists, which was also a Kemper Company. But they didn't use the Kemper name, except for the fact that he was the president of the company at that time. I was so thrilled at having the job. I was really delighted. I couldn't wait to tell John about it. He said that he hoped it worked out alright.

MS. GERE: So, now, when was this that you began?

JUDGE GREEN: I began in 1942. I think it was about February, but it's a long time ago at this point. Anyway, I was going to see how it worked. They were going to see how I worked, because they gave me the worst assignments. Of course I didn't know that until a little later, when I saw what happened to the rest of the office.

MS. GERE: Were there other young lawyers who came in at about the same time, or were there people who already were there and established?

JUDGE GREEN: These were people who had already been there, were established. Because I think it was only the one vacancy that they had that I was being considered for. They sent me, whenever there was an immediate blood-in-the-gutter case. Literally, where one of our insureds had hit somebody and they were literally in the gutter

bleeding. Before the ambulance came, I was sent–along with [the ambulance], probably, but at least close on the heels, to determine what could be done for them, investigate the facts of the thing, to make sure the people were going to be sent to a hospital properly, and find out about the driver, the insured. Who was–generally–had the decency to be very upset. Then they would send me to the hearing, when people died, as they did in one of the early ones that they gave me. They sent me to the hearing examiner's office, for cause of death and to determine whether or not they were supposed to be indicted, for instance.

MS. GERE: So the job was both investigative and then more traditional legal argument.

JUDGE GREEN: Right. I was sent every place that I could think of, that they could think of, that would be in a terrible neighborhood. I went places that I didn't really want to sit down on the bed, which was the only place that you would have that was not full of used tin cans that hadn't been washed.

MS. GERE: So this is all around the Washington Metropolitan area? Including Maryland? Did you ever go into Virginia?

JUDGE GREEN: No, I didn't cover Virginia. I did cover all of the District of Columbia. Our office, the Washington Office, covered Montgomery County in Maryland, Prince George's County in Maryland, and also Calvert County, Saint Mary's, and Prince Frederick. Those were ones that I had to cover pretty thoroughly. But not so much when I was a claims adjuster. I was told, when I was settling cases, I would, on the ones that were just, perhaps, had been in an accident and nobody was injured or they had ruined their nylon stockings. They couldn't be bought at this point in the war.

MS. GERE: Oh, goodness. Because nylon stockings were not available.

JUDGE GREEN: These were things that I understood, that the woman who was screaming about her nylon stockings, somehow I could understand better than some of my colleagues. I would sympathize with them, indeed. I indicated the best that we could do would be to give them the money for them, and if they ever found them, by all means—

MS. GERE: Purchase them.

JUDGE GREEN: I remember one–in those days, it was fashionable to wear a hat.

MS. GERE: For women? And men, I guess, too.

JUDGE GREEN: For both, yes. If you were outside. I don't mean in the house.

MS. GERE: Not the baseball caps of today, that people wear everywhere.

JUDGE GREEN: I remember one person was enamored of my hat, and she wanted to know if I would settle for it. I said, "Certainly."

MS. GERE: So, in defense of the company, you gave up your hat?

JUDGE GREEN: I did rather odd things. But I didn't see any sense in arguing with somebody. If it's something that's only–works out to be money, and it is still within the ballpark of the value of the case, then you could throw in your hat as well as a proper settlement. I had rather very good results, because I had some empathy, and I had sympathy, and I felt really a part of the people I was talking to. And so we didn't–I never made enemies with them. It was surprising to some of the people at Lumbermens that I made settlements rather well. I might say that first of all, it was heard from the home office, which was in Chicago, that we had that strange monster–a female claims adjuster–and I think I was the first one in the United States, I'm not positive of that, I can't prove it–at the time it seemed to be that way. Mr. Kemper himself

decided that he wanted to check me out. So he came and brought his secretary from Chicago—

MS. GERE: To Washington? To the Washington office?

JUDGE GREEN: Yes, the Washington office, and then he had kind of cold feet. Though maybe, I think, Mr. Glenn, dissuaded him from picking on me. But Mr. Glenn was my boss, and he was a very nice, kind individual. In spite of the fact that they gave me the worst—

MS. GERE: Gave you a hard time. To test your mettle.

JUDGE GREEN: And I wanted to make very sure that, I thought that they were giving me the business, I would never let them know that I thought it was bad. Anyway, Mr. Kemper's secretary took me to lunch. She wanted to report to him what I was like.

MS. GERE: But he wouldn't just have lunch with you himself, or that was not—?

JUDGE GREEN: Oh, no, no. Oh no, oh dear me, no.

MS. GERE: Not the president of the company with a mere mortal woman claims adjuster?

JUDGE GREEN: In addition to which, he became the Ambassador to Argentina, I believe, from the United States, and he did it so poorly, I might say, years afterwards, which has nothing to do with this story. But he was a strange man.

MS. GERE: So you went to lunch with his secretary.

JUDGE GREEN: I went to lunch with his secretary and realized, of course, that I was being put on the grill to find out just exactly what kind of person I was. Well, she must not have given me zeroes, because I was still there when they left town. I don't think she was enthusiastic. She thought that there wasn't much that I could do wrong in that short period of time.

MS. GERE: So did this lunch take place during your 90-day probationary period?

JUDGE GREEN: Oh, yes.

MS. GERE: So you really were being checked out.

JUDGE GREEN: No question about it. So, well, it finally came to a point where I was always trying to say, I want to do my first trial. Well, I wasn't admitted until 1943.

MS. GERE: Admitted to the bar.

JUDGE GREEN: To the bar. So in 1943 I started immediately, wanting to be trying these cases that I hadn't been able to settle. So, they said, "Oh, yes, we'll do that one of these days."

MS. GERE: In the meantime, were your colleagues in the office–first of all, how many were there?

JUDGE GREEN: There were four, besides my boss.

MS. GERE: And were they all lawyers?

JUDGE GREEN: Oh, yes.

MS. GERE: So, if they had cases that they were not able to settle, then they would be able to take them to trial, is that right?

JUDGE GREEN: Yes. Right. Unless there were personal injuries. None of us could take personal injuries because they were all farmed out to outside attorneys.

MS. GERE: Oh, to outside counsel.

JUDGE GREEN: But all the property damage ones we handled ourselves. In addition to which, we would settle with the insured, and, incidentally, they do call it insured. I thought before I started there that you'd call them assured, but they always called them the

insured.

MS. GERE: I guess Lloyd's of London probably uses "assured" instead of "insured."

JUDGE GREEN: They had said that they would like me to try a case, and I said, "Oh, I'll win, win, win." Finally, just as we were closing up one day, Mr. Glenn came in my office and dropped a file on my desk. He said, "You want to go to court? This one's all set for tomorrow morning."

MS. GERE: And so you had overnight to prepare for your first trial.

JUDGE GREEN: Oh, yes. Nine-thirty. I said, "I don't even really know where the courthouse is, to be sure." He said, "Oh, don't worry, George or I will take you down." George Coufelt was the other lawyer he was suggesting I could use. Meanwhile, oh, I had been, I had been sent out with each of the adjusters on their jobs.

MS. GERE: Oh, so on-the-job training.

JUDGE GREEN: Yes. But on the adjusting cases, rather than trial. In each case, they behaved differently. I mean, each person had their own way of doing. And with some of them, I thought, "I would never say that to a claimant." I learned what not to do in some ways. People would talk about not being greedy. Well, I wouldn't use such a term to a claimant. I just found that it was very interesting, some of the people I learned a lot from. Some I learned what not to do. Several of them went into the service, and we were losing them all the time. Well, anyway, George was there, still, and Mr. Glenn. They said, "Well, don't worry about it, you know, you can—" I said, "I've never seen these people. This isn't one I've worked on."

MS. GERE: So you hadn't adjusted this one.

JUDGE GREEN: Never even met the people. So they said, "That's alright, don't worry about it." It was in the small claims court.

MS. GERE: Here in D.C.?

JUDGE GREEN: Yes, the Municipal Court. In the Municipal Court of the District before it was General Sessions or anything else, it was the Municipal Court. First of all, I went to the police station to get the file, to find out what was, what it was all about. It was a very skimpy file that they had given me. No personal injuries and property damage. I believe the reason it hadn't been settled, quite honestly, is that the claimant was such an obnoxious young man. He happened to be a law student.

MS. GERE: Uh-oh. The worst kind.

JUDGE GREEN: So, that is what I thought afterwards. I didn't know it before. I didn't even know who he was. I called John, and he met me as soon as he got out–well, of course he was out of school at this point, but as soon as he'd gotten out of work–well, as a matter of fact, his hours coincided with mine fairly well, until later. So I told him that I had my first case the next morning, and I said I wondered if he'd meet me so we could pace off the intersections and so on. I'd gotten the police reports.

MS. GERE: Oh, so you actually were going to the scene.

JUDGE GREEN: And I was going to the scene, so I would really learn what to do, what this case was all about. Well, it turned out that our insured was coming through, I believe it occurred, we'll say, Wisconsin Avenue and one of the streets off it. He was coming into Wisconsin and didn't give right of way to people who—

MS. GERE: Who were already on Wisconsin Avenue.

JUDGE GREEN: So that it wasn't a light street, I mean there wasn't a traffic light there.

MS. GERE: He should have yielded the right of way.

JUDGE GREEN: We talked through this thing, John and I paced it, and I said, "It looks to me as though the case ought to be settled. But this isn't what I was given it for. I'm supposed to be defending it." John said, "You're set up. Nobody would give you a case to try if it's worthwhile. Your first case, at that time of day, and on facts that you know right now, you can't win it." He said, "So, you go down and you do the best you can, and you lose it gracefully." I decided that was what I had to do.

MS. GERE: That was your plan.

JUDGE GREEN: Of course I had a sleepless night, and I had all these plans, and I was trying to see what in the world I could do about it, and so on. As I went to court, obviously I went to the office to see who was going to go with me. Mr. Glenn said, "I'm awfully sorry, but as it turns out I didn't realize I was supposed to be at some meeting or other, and so you'll have to go with George." And George said, "I'm in trial someplace else. And so I can't go with you." They said, "Oh, you'll be alright. Just grab a cab and tell them where you want to go." I said, "How do I find my clients?" He said, "Oh, ask the marshal to call their names out, and they ought to be there. You can talk to them, introduce yourself."

I said to myself, you know, I was terrified, I didn't know what I should do. So I got up, walked into the place, and I thought to myself, "I'd better not tell these people that this is my first case, because they're going to be angry with the company. Because I can't win it. They'll be very unhappy about it." I figured, the one thing that I'm not going to do, is I'm not going to

pretend that I know what I'm doing to the clerks around here. Because they know damn well they've never seen me in their lives before. So I went in and I introduced myself and I said, "I'm supposed to be trying this case today–defending it. I've never seen the people, and they just gave it to me at the last minute. Will you tell me what to do? Because I haven't the least idea." This was a very nice, decent man. Youngish. Pleasant. Not cocky. Just kindly. He said, "Look, fill this out, it's entering your appearance."

MS. GERE: That's a good place to start. Entering your appearance.

JUDGE GREEN: What you do is, you take it into the court, because this was a central assignment, and so you would go in the courtroom, and you would find out what you were supposed to do. But they would call the things, and you would indicate ready. But you want to tell the marshal, you tell him to call these people out so that you can talk to them, introduce yourself and so on. I will put your name down a little lower in the list, so you'll have a chance to see other people. This is why I say, that an awful lot of men helped an awful lot of times. They were the only ones that were there.

MS. GERE: Well, there probably would have been women if they'd been able to get those jobs.

JUDGE GREEN: So anyway, I listened to people. The clerk said, "Don't indicate that you're–just indicate you're ready. Just stand up and say, 'May I enter my appearance, and I am–we are ready.' But then they'll do it all again, until such time as they have a judge who's available." This was, by this time, about nine-thirty. So my client answered to his name and stepped out into the hall with his wife. He was an elderly gentleman, didn't hear very well, and probably didn't see very well. I'm sure his age must have been much less than I am now. But I

thought he was Methuselah. I said, I just wanted to introduce myself and tell him that I was representing him on behalf of his insurance company. We might want to talk a little bit about it. He said, well, he just went out there. This guy was speeding, and he was just right in front of him, he'd seen him and he thought it was a far enough distance, so he just rushed into the intersection. He hit him on the side. On the right side, as I recall. I said, "Did he say anything?" "Oh, yes, he was furious. But he wasn't injured. That's all." I finally took them to lunch at the drugstore, because they hadn't gotten to us except for the first call, all the way to lunch. I think this was a little helpful on their part, so that I would see what other people did, and a chance to get my feet on the ground, so I wouldn't sound like my voice was cracking or something. I was so scared. So, anyway, I took them to lunch. I said, "Now, I would like to say something to you. You have bought insurance to protect you from these things. You don't have anything to worry about, because that's what you've paid your money for. We're going to do the best we can, but it's no matter of life or death if it goes against you, because that's what you have the company for, the insurance for." And they said, "Oh, you make us feel so much better because you're so experienced, and this is the first time we've ever been to court." I did not say, "Me too."

MS. GERE: No, that might have undercut their confidence level, I think.

JUDGE GREEN: So we went to court finally, and it was late in the afternoon that I finally got sent to a judge who was rather elderly.

MS. GERE: Do you remember who it was?

JUDGE GREEN: I can't remember his name, exactly, but I sure remember his face. And the plaintiff was a law student who was so pleased with himself that he could scarcely breathe.

MS. GERE: Was he representing himself?

JUDGE GREEN: He was. He did have one, for a client, too. He brow-beat the old gentleman, my client. I didn't make as many objections as I could have, but I made ones that I thought were important, and they were sustained. And he went on about "How outrageous!", and "He ought not to have a license!", and "He shouldn't be permitted to drive!" Which may have been true, but we weren't there for that purpose. He was very rude to the old gentleman and also rude to the court.

MS. GERE: Now that's a mistake.

JUDGE GREEN: So there was not very much that I could do. I couldn't make anything that was something different from what the facts were. I just let him tell it the way he told it. Finally this tirade of a closing argument that the plaintiff made was so irritating to everybody that all I said, that I could say, was, "Your Honor, please. After all, plaintiff has the burden of proof, and it is our position he hasn't met it." This lovely judge said, "I agree. For the defense!"

MS. GERE: Oh my gosh. Oh, my heavens.

JUDGE GREEN: Really, I didn't win the case. This man lost his case.

MS. GERE: Lost his case.

JUDGE GREEN: For himself. For being an absolute horse's—. And so the man, my client, was so delighted, and he gave me so much thanks, and his wife was so relieved, and they said how wonderful it was to have had somebody who really was so experienced, and to please tell them back at Lumbermens how much they appreciated it. And I said I would.

MS. GERE: Be sure and pass that along.

JUDGE GREEN: So by this time, it was later than the people were accustomed to staying in the office, but I could not take myself–I could not contain myself to sit down in a taxi cab. I practically floated, pranced—

MS. GERE: Danced—

JUDGE GREEN: All the way to 13th and H, which was where the office was. And I was so pleased. And of course, I did stop at the office of the clerk.

MS. GERE: To say thank you.

JUDGE GREEN: He said, "You won that thing?" I said, "No, he lost that thing." And we were fast friends for the rest of the time that I ever went to that court, incidentally. And so I went back. There were both George and Mr. Glenn, waiting for my appearance. By this time it was about an hour past the usual closing time. They always went out the door pretty rapidly. They said, "Where the hell have you been?" I said, "In court. Didn't you know?" They said, "Not all of–five-thirty," or something or another, and I said, "Oh, yes. We were quite late getting on." "Well what happened?!?" I said, "Oh, we won it." They said, "You did what?" I said, "You wouldn't have given me a case I couldn't have won. Would you?" They said, "How in the hell did you win it?" I said, "Well, I did. I want to tell you that Mr. So-and-so, your insured, asked me to please convey his thanks for sending such competent counsel and he surely will stay with Lumbermens." Of course, I've lost them and won them–more important cases indeed. But that was the best. Because it was needed, I'll tell you. This is one that Darren [Sobin, a law clerk to Judge Green] had insisted upon having in the little reunion yearbook, "June Green Second," I think it was.

MS. GERE: Right. The recollections of—

JUDGE GREEN: Yes. Recollections of law clerks. His recollections are not always exactly in tune with my recollections, but they are pretty close. At least I know what they were based on. John was pretty surprised about my winning that one, too.

MS. GERE: I'll bet he was. I'll bet he was. But I'll bet he was very pleased, as well.

JUDGE GREEN: Yes, he was. Of course, he thought that justice wasn't done, but— I think it was. That guy was so obnoxious.

MS. GERE: It sounds like a rough justice was done. Definitely so.

JUDGE GREEN: Anyway, I don't think anybody made anything of the ninety day trial period. I just was staying on regularly at Lumbermens. I got little stipends of increase. They were little.

MS. GERE: Do you know, or were you ever able to determine whether you made the same amount as your male colleagues in the office?

JUDGE GREEN: I think we did. I think we may have been the same.

MS. GERE: How about your assignments while you were there?

JUDGE GREEN: I think they were all straight, afterwards. But I think, as a matter of fact, when the people were all out of the office, George was the only one left. Mr. Glenn. George was anxious to move someplace. He went actually with Lumbermens to the Missouri office. He'd already named his child Kemper.

MS. GERE: I guess trying to ensure that he would move up in the company.

JUDGE GREEN: He said that he wanted to make sure his son would always have a job.

MS. GERE: I suspect he probably would've had to do more than just have a name, but I guess if you've got to start somewhere—

JUDGE GREEN: But anyway, Mr. Glenn and I turned out to be– he would settle the cases in the office, anything that he thought was not like that first one. He would pay all the ones that he felt were legitimate. They were paid. I would try, I would defend the cases that he thought, other than property damage, were to be tried.

I also handled all the worker's comp formal hearings. Those necessitated my driving down to St. Mary's County very often, because they were just covering the–just building the Naval Patuxent Airfield. It was a sizeable enterprise, and there were many people injured on the job. Instead of bringing them to Baltimore for the principal hearing, or to Washington, I thought we didn't have jurisdiction in Washington, anyway, but in any case, it would've been to Baltimore. We would have it down there because it didn't make sense to drag those other people who were injured other places. So I spent lots of time going back and forth to that situation and I would run in on the other cases as well.

MS. GERE: Well, as you were going around and trying cases and going to various worker's comp hearings and so forth, were there other women who were practicing law? Did you ever see any of them?

JUDGE GREEN: There was Vivian Simpson. A very able woman in Montgomery County who was a worker's comp attorney. She really knew her business, and did it very, very well. There was every now and then, well, in the District of Columbia, in Municipal Court, there would be one woman or other. Generally speaking, they weren't doing very well. I had many, many cases against many of the young lawyers in the city, because if they were in big firms, they

were the ones sent down to the Municipal Court to bring these actions, some that I was defending. I knew lots of them. We were very good friends. We represented our clients to the best of our ability and I'll–no stops. But certainly, we all behaved in a decent, civil fashion to each other. There was not–we were not fighting anybody, ourselves. We thought that to represent our clients properly, that you did it with gentility. And decency. So that there were many, many of my friends at the bar. We'd each see each other day after day. And so when I found that one of them was going to lose one of their trial people, I thought, "Good, I do know that there will be something that's available." I went to see Hogan & Hartson, and inquired whether or not they had need for a trial lawyer. I had had lots of experience. I'd had hundreds of trials by that time. And that was after I'd been with Lumbermens about five and a half years, having done no more adjusting, but

MS. GERE: The trial work.

JUDGE GREEN: And so, I stopped there to see whether they would consider me, and they said, "We would consider you to take depositions." I said, "You mean, without knowing what the case was about?" They said, "Yes."

(end side 1)

(side 2)

MS. GERE: So you went and talked to Hogan & Hartson about going—

JUDGE GREEN: Yes, I went–they wanted to know if I'd be interested in working in their library. I said, no, I was a trial attorney, and that's all I would be interested in being. They said, "Well, to tell you the truth, June, we think enough of you to give it to you straight. That is, we don't think any woman is going to be as good a trial attorney as almost any man."

MS. GERE: Oh my.

JUDGE GREEN: So I said, "Thanks a lot. I'd rather you say that to my face."

MS. GERE: Who did you talk with?

JUDGE GREEN: One of their really good trial lawyers, who was doing the personal injury work. I don't think he was too aware of what I was doing.

MS. GERE: He was simply aware that you were of a certain gender, and it wasn't one that he thought, or that the firm thought, should be in a courtroom.

JUDGE GREEN: This did help me decide that I was going to open my own office.

MS. GERE: Did you ever, did you apply to, or interview, or talk with any other law firms in this city, before that?

JUDGE GREEN: What had happened was, the people were coming back from the war.

MS. GERE: Oh, I see. So this would have been—

JUDGE GREEN: Oh, I might say, some of the places I had applied in those years when I hadn't yet started came to fruition while I was at Lumbermens. I just said I already had a job, thank you.

MS. GERE: And you stayed there really because of the trial experience?

JUDGE GREEN: Oh, yes.

MS. GERE: You really enjoyed being in the courtroom.

JUDGE GREEN: I did indeed. I knew that was what I really wanted to do. I really knew that from the minute I was in my moot court case. But because it was not in the appellate level that I was interested, it was trial. Trial. I had found that that was what really

interested me. I had been really quite happy with this situation, except that I was tired of doing always the same limited profession, I mean, in the profession, because of not having a case—

MS. GERE: The personal injury cases.

JUDGE GREEN: The principal, big cases. And anybody, in any place, wants to have the big deal—

MS. GERE: The biggest, the best, the most complex and challenging. Right.

JUDGE GREEN: So we had just made arrangements to buy the house where I was born from my mother.

MS. GERE: So this would have been about what year?

JUDGE GREEN: My father had died. This was 1947. That was the first summer that I had not been in the house. We didn't want to have another like that. In my whole life, I'd always been over there much of the time. At least weekends. When my father died, mother moved to Baltimore, got herself an apartment there, and she would open the house on weekends so that John and I would have someplace to go. She would bring her cook down there with her. This was, I finally got through my head, a tremendous imposition on her.

MS. GERE: For her. Right.

JUDGE GREEN: But she was not complaining. I finally decided that this was ridiculous. And that was how we had gotten–not there that summer. Because I said that I really thought she should rent the place. We got somebody to rent it.

MS. GERE: Oh, you did? Oh my goodness. Then, obviously, no one else had ever lived in the house except your family.

JUDGE GREEN: That's right. And so this was terribly—

MS. GERE: Traumatic.

JUDGE GREEN: Traumatic to me. And John, too, for that matter. 'Cause he'd been so used to being there, even before we got married. But anyway, we would go over sometimes. Kitty and John, my sister and brother-in-law who lived down the river from us, had two handsome yachts that they had usually at the yacht club or marina, or someplace down there. One was a powerboat and the other one was a very handsome sailboat. We would go on there and sleep, unbeknownst to them.

MS. GERE: Just so that you could get closer to home.

JUDGE GREEN: Yes. We would stop by and see them, perhaps. We had been looking for a house for the last three years that we were in the apartment.

MS. GERE: So you were still living then at Connecticut and Macomb.

JUDGE GREEN: Right. We finally lived there for eleven years. And the last three years were a little much because we really had acquired a good deal of furniture and it was—

MS. GERE: Getting a little cramped.

JUDGE GREEN: It was, and we really wanted to settle in something by this time. So we had been looking for houses. We'd also been drawing. In the early part of our time, we drew plans for the ideal house we were going to have. We wanted it to be within fifteen minutes of our respective offices, because we were so tired of commuting. We were going to have a very modern house. We were going to have a U-shaped one, and it was going to have a swimming pool in the middle. It was going to have the most modern things, it was just going to have a little privacy and a garden, is all, but that was what we were going to do. We thought, first of all, we

would look for the location. To get fifteen minutes from our offices was a little difficult. It was Massachusetts Avenue. You know, wooded drive and that sort of thing. One, if we had bought the lot, we wouldn't have had money to build a house, and if we had tried to put this kind of house on it, we would've been drummed out of the—

MS. GERE: Neighborhood. I'd say.

JUDGE GREEN: So we had to give that one up. So we started to look for a house that was sort of normal, and just pleasant. We kept returning to one out in Wesley Heights and that general area.

MS. GERE: That is a nice area.

JUDGE GREEN: One of them, I don't remember just exactly where it was located, but it was at the second circle instead of the first one. Not the one, not the one that's near AU, but the next circle. I said to John, "Why don't we go back and look at that house again?" He said, "Because I think that it's a very expensive thing for a lily of the valley bed." I said, "What do you mean?" He said, "I know perfectly well the only thing that's interesting to you about that house is the lily of the valleys that are under the window in the dining room."

MS. GERE: That would be an expensive reason to buy a house, for a lily of the valley bed, you're right.

JUDGE GREEN: He said, "And I think, if you're going to drive that far, I would like not to be able to see what the people are going to have for dinner in the next house." I said, "Well that's probably a good point." He said, "If we're going to go that far, we ought to go to the other side. You always wanted that house that you were born in. Why don't we offer to buy it from your mother. It would solve some of the problems. That's where you are going to be

happy." I said, "I wouldn't have had the nerve to suggest it." He said, "Well, why don't we see and work on it? Talk to your sister" (who was in the real estate business at the time). Dot. And so Dot said, "Well, look, I think it's a great idea." But she and her husband had family, had their own house, and Kitty and John had moved and had their own house. We were the only ones that would've been in the market for ours. We certainly didn't want it to go out of the family. I said, "Well, I thought we ought to find out how much it was going to cost." Of course mother hadn't the slightest idea of putting any figure on it. John said, "You know, I can give you some people to give you some appraisals, but I can't give you the price. Because it's pretty worked up in my mind, too, it's priceless as far as I'm concerned." So we used hers, and I also had a cousin, Joseph Lazenby, in Annapolis, who was in the real estate business, and he gave me one. I didn't take the highest and I didn't take the lowest, but I did take the mean. I asked mother whether she would be interested in selling, and she said, "Oh, it would be wonderful." She wished she could give it to us. Ridiculous. We didn't want it that way, anyway. But I wanted to know what we should do in her best interest. I went to the only person I can think of who would be out of the family and who would be–father had left some things to a trust company that was handling things for mother. The trust officer, I said, I think that he ought to be interested in this, so I made an appointment to go talk to him. I said, "I wanted to discuss with you what would be the best situation. We are planning to buy the house from my mother." He said, "Well, first of all, I'm going to recommend that she not take it. Not sell it to you." And I said—

MS. GERE: What?

JUDGE GREEN: "Why's this?" He said, "I think you're not going to pay her. That's the way it usually works out in the families." I said, "You mean you think I'd gyp my

own mother?"

MS. GERE: This sounds like a swell guy. Not much of a business-person.

JUDGE GREEN: He said, yes, he thought so. I said, well, frankly, I thought maybe he should check my credit rating and—

MS. GERE: Credentials and otherwise—

JUDGE GREEN: —and credentials and other things, like Little Different Shop had been paid off by me and so on, and I owed nothing that I was not responsible for. And he said, well, that was his advice. So we decided not to take it.

MS. GERE: I'd be looking for another trust officer, I think.

JUDGE GREEN: Well, I would like to, as a matter of fact. But you see, it was set up with the trust company. Certainly father never had anything to do with this man. But anyway, the only things–I think maybe you had some of them in my—

MS. GERE: Right. In those papers.

JUDGE GREEN: Where I had written him. He had always suggested making changes in some of the stock holdings that were going to bring in less money than she had. And I indicated if there was any particular reason why he should get rid of them or something I would like to discuss that, but not just for the–I didn't tell him churning, because I didn't know about it at that time. I certainly know it now, and I have for many years. But that is really all he had in mind. So I got Carla Longstreth, and I don't know whether you ever–you never met her.

MS. GERE: I don't think so.

JUDGE GREEN: Joyce [Green, another U.S. District Judge in D.C.] would have met her. But she was a tax attorney. She came into my office when I finally got it, and decided

that she was going to light there without ever a penny's offer or anything else, and I finally had to ask her to leave when she wanted to get her name put on the door and things like that. She hadn't even mentioned to me that she'd like to—

MS. GERE: Practice law with you?

JUDGE GREEN: You know, tell you the truth, sometimes other people were strange. But anyway, I don't whether it was because I didn't have enough experience in just living, or what. But–and incidentally–we signed up for the house for mother. We made arrangements to find out what we were going to do about, what we were going to pay. We paid her a down-payment. It was not a very smart time to decide that you're leaving a steady income–of course, John still had one–but I was taking the income that I had from Lumbermens to go to open my own office. But I had, I came to the conclusion that that was what I was going to do. As a matter of fact, I opened that office in November, I think it was, of '47, and we bought the house in October.

MS. GERE: Oh my goodness. Did you–knowing that you were buying the house as you were going through that process–did you first inquire of Lumbermens whether there was another position in the office that would have allowed you to do something else?

JUDGE GREEN: Not at all. As a matter of fact, they felt very strongly that it was a mistake for insurance lawyers to be known as insurance lawyers. They thought that this was, people were not all required to have insurance in those days. Originally. And so nobody ever was to mention insurance. It would be the subject of non-suit, actually, if somebody did. You would end up having a mistrial. Of course, now that doesn't make any sense. It didn't make much sense then.

MS. GERE: But that's the way it was. Right.

JUDGE GREEN: So, no. I felt that I had gone as far as I could go with Lumbermens, and I thought that the place to go was to broaden my—

MS. GERE: Horizons.

JUDGE GREEN: Horizons. And have other kinds of cases.

MS. GERE: Well, looking back, though, on Lumbermens, you viewed that, though, as a very beneficial time in your life? In your professional life?

JUDGE GREEN: Oh, I think so, because I think that it really gave me much more trial experience than I would have had—

MS. GERE: And confidence—

JUDGE GREEN: —in years, because I had more experience than those youngsters at Hogan & Hartson , for instance. They didn't have it. And I'm not saying they weren't good, they were, surely. But—

MS. GERE: They hadn't had the same opportunities to get into court as frequently as you had.

JUDGE GREEN: Right. And as I say, I was there. Plenty of days I tried two cases.

MS. GERE: Now what were the judges like, or juries, and other people who came into a courtroom, and all of a sudden here was a woman who was the trial lawyer for the defense? I take it from what you've said, you saw women from time to time in the practice, but they were the exception and not the rule.

JUDGE GREEN: Right. And I would try to study them as to why there would be

a snicker, going through the nice guys at some of them, before they opened their mouths.

MS. GERE: These were snickers from judges—

JUDGE GREEN: No—

MS. GERE: Or opposing lawyers?

JUDGE GREEN: The male lawyers. And I might say, I really didn't have that particular–I had–I'm sure that I told you the time when I was over on the Eastern Shore, and they brought— This one lawyer was standing on the front porch of the old courthouse, and was saying to anybody who walked down the street, "Come on in, there's a woman lawyer!" I was it.

MS. GERE: This was such an unheard of event that—

JUDGE GREEN: They thought this was going to be—

MS. GERE: A matter of great amusement.

JUDGE GREEN: A two-headed calf, or something. But I still think that even if they started that way, if you didn't make a total ass of yourself, they noticed you. And they remembered you, furthermore. I remember several times. I was representing a man who was native to Prince Frederick, and the other side was representing his brother, I believe. I mean the brother of the lawyer. And that lawyer was saying, "I just can't imagine how you think you're going to do anything with this case, when we are all local people and have known every member of the jury," and so on. And they were standing out on the porch in Prince Frederick shaking hands, the lawyer and the client—

MS. GERE: With everybody who came into the courthouse?

JUDGE GREEN: Well, the jurors that were coming to the panel. But you know, I said, I represented a guy who was also there. He was shaking hands with them, too. He was

saying, and this is Mrs. Green, my attorney. I thought, when in Rome—

MS. GERE: Exactly.

JUDGE GREEN: We won that case.

MS. GERE: Good.

JUDGE GREEN: I don't think it had anything to do with the local yokels. Frankly, I think that we had the right side. Naturally.

MS. GERE: Naturally. And a well-presented right side, I'm sure. Well, was the company, though, sorry to see you leave? Or did they make any efforts to retain you? Did Mr. Glenn? I'm sure if you were doing all of his trial work, he probably was sorry to think about you leaving.

JUDGE GREEN: He was. He tried to talk to me. I would say, "But I must put in this notice because I'm going to go."

MS. GERE: Oh, this is your resignation.

JUDGE GREEN: He said, "Oh, I hope you'll think it over."

MS. GERE: So he just wasn't forwarding your resignation to the home office.

JUDGE GREEN: No, he didn't send it. So I spent quite a little time trying to induce him to do so, because I was afraid that they wouldn't allow me to leave at the time I was trying to go. At this time, as I say, the people were coming back from the service, and of course they all had–their places were supposed to be held for them. The first place.

MS. GERE: Oh, at the various law firms where they had worked.

JUDGE GREEN: Every place.

MS. GERE: I guess the government, everywhere.

JUDGE GREEN: There had been a number of people I'd talked with of my colleagues and they had said they were dissatisfied with where they were, and why didn't we all go in to open the same place together? I really thought we would all do this. And all of them chickened out.

MS. GERE: Oh, they did?

JUDGE GREEN: Yes. So, I wasn't really that brave to think originally that I was going to do it all by myself.

MS. GERE: Oh gosh. That's just the way it ended up.

JUDGE GREEN: This is the way it turned out. So when I went, and it was difficult to get a law office—

MS. GERE: Oh, just physically, you mean. The space.

JUDGE GREEN: Yes, the space was all being grabbed up. So I went to where, of course, by this time I knew every nook and cranny of the District of Columbia. So I thought the Washington Building was as nice a one as any. And furthermore, John and I had been at the Matterhorn that very first date.

MS. GERE: Oh, right, right, right.

JUDGE GREEN: So I thought that might be a nice office. I went in there and asked them if they had space. They said they did. I introduced myself, and I said that I would like to open a law office. It was the vice president of Weaver Brothers. Weaver Brothers was the handler of the Washington Building. They also had their offices in there, on the second floor. This very nice old gentleman, from my point of view back then, I'm sure he wasn't so old. But anyway he was a very nice gentleman. He said, "I'll tell you what, I'll give you an option on the

best space that we have. I think that you would like it, and so I'll give you two weeks' option. Would that help?" I said, "Why, that's fine. What is it?" It turned out to be a suite of nine rooms. And I said—

MS. GERE: Whoa!

JUDGE GREEN: I went back, I think it was Friday that he told me–and I was driving myself crazy, and John, the whole weekend. I concluded there was no way. Because, you see, I thought originally that some of these people—

MS. GERE: Would be with you, right.

JUDGE GREEN: Were going to be with me, and that I would need it. And so when I found out, oh no, they were scared to do it and couldn't try and all this stuff, and the job that they'd had, while they didn't like it, it was—

MS. GERE: A sure thing, at least it'd be an income.

JUDGE GREEN: I decided two weeks nothing. I'm going to tell this man Monday first thing that I cannot possibly do it and he might as well lease it. So I said, "You know, there just isn't any way." He said, "Well, what do you really need?" I said, "Well, I need to have an office for myself. I need to have a storage room where I'd have files and things of that sort, and copy machine, and I would need to have a reception area. And that's all. Really, that's all I need." And he said, "Well, if I could find somebody who wants just about that, I just have a fellow who is just leaving the CAB," that was Civil Aeronautics Board in those days, and he said, "He's just looking for something, somebody to share a space with him." His name is John Marshall. I said that, well, he has a good name. So I met him. He and his charming wife, she really was a lovely person. I haven't seen her–I hope she still is, but I haven't seen her in some

years. He said she was going to be his secretary. And we talked about what kind of practice I had and he had, and so on, and he said, well, he didn't have a general practice at all. That his was going to be representing two or three people in the aviation industry. And that's all. So he had retainers. I said, well, I was going to have anything that had merit.

MS. GERE: That could pay. One hoped.

JUDGE GREEN: I needed a secretary, and I thought that we could, if we shared, that would be even better. I thought maybe she would prefer her husband over me. She never did, I might say. Tremendously fair. He didn't really have that much work to do, I might say, but I did. Well, anyway, I got out my notices—

MS. GERE: So you ended up taking that–did you take that suite of nine offices, then, with him, or a little less than that?

JUDGE GREEN: No, they cut it down for us so that we had five offices, as I recall. It was just what I wanted. He had two and half, I mean two and a reception, and we shared the reception area, with his wife as receptionist.

MS. GERE: I've never heard this part of the story.

JUDGE GREEN: Well, we got along very well. He really didn't have clients coming in at all, and I had everybody coming in. All kinds of people. But anyway, I didn't know whether I was going to have–I had just about enough money where, after buying nice furniture and the things that I thought I had to have in the way of books and so on. I wanted to look like an old established firm instead of Johnny-come-lately, and so nothing was modern. It looked very nice. I used to bring in flowers from the country. I haven't done that in a little while here. But anyway, he had his principal clients came only about two or three times a year down to see him,

and then he would beg me to please bring in wild flowers. Frankly, he would ask me to look over any legal document that he had, because he didn't really know much about the practice of law. So I tried to do that for him. And he died at a very young age, incidentally, with a brain tumor.

MS. GERE: While you were sharing space?

JUDGE GREEN: No, after he was gone. He was, I think he went back in the government for a while, as I recall. I guess he really hadn't been doing very much. As they had children, she stopped being secretary. I think he went back in the government. Meanwhile I had—

MS. GERE: Well, so, now where did you get your clients, since you'd been with Lumbermens for that period of time? How did you develop a client base?

JUDGE GREEN: Well, my former boss came over one day and he said—

MS. GERE: This is Mr. Glenn?

JUDGE GREEN: Mr. Glenn. He said, "How are you doing?" I said, "Well, I'm—" He thought I was looking very nice, everything's set up. He said, "You used to scream about wanting to defend the personal injury cases. You still feel like that? You think you could do it?" I said, "I know I could do it." He said, "Well, you want to try? You'd have to give me service all the way down the state. All the same areas we had always covered." He said, "I've brought you some files, if you want them."

MS. GERE: Oh, he'd actually brought them along with him?

JUDGE GREEN: He'd brought them along with him. And I said, "Wonderful." When I realized that this, of course, you don't get paid until a thing's completely over and

finished, because I never partially billed them. I don't know what other people did. I didn't bill them on anything until it was finished.

MS. GERE: Until the entire case was closed. You mean, would that be, like–what if there were an appeal? You didn't bill until—

JUDGE GREEN: But you know, they mostly weren't appealed.

MS. GERE: I guess people—

JUDGE GREEN: I mean, really. But anyway—

MS. GERE: Interesting.

JUDGE GREEN: People were not nearly as litigious in the first place. But I had, with the whole territory, Lumbermens was representing the city of Rockville. They had all of the hot-shots, they had Warner Brothers' Theaters, and of course I had handled most of those things—

MS. GERE: In the property damage.

JUDGE GREEN: Yes, in the property litigation. So that I knew the people that I was dealing with and all that sort of thing. I remember one president of some corporation, I can't remember at the moment which corporation it was, but his wife had fallen in the theater. A Warner Brothers' Theater. She had injured herself. I think she broke her hip. There wasn't anything that was wrong about the place. She had just plain fallen. I said to him, "I am not going to–there isn't any liability. I just would not think of insulting you with offering you a nuisance claim value because I don't think you're the type, and I'm sure that what you want is what you're entitled to. I have to tell you, you're not entitled to anything." He was mad, but he never sued. That was when I was at Lumbermens. But, as I say, I had, when I was at Lumbermens, also

handled the settlements of burglaries. Burglary claims.

MS. GERE: You really had a wide variety of work, then.

JUDGE GREEN: Well, they did sue on those things. But that was, as they say, that was when I was getting in my teeth—

MS. GERE: In training.

JUDGE GREEN: Right. But all of that, I think, was very valuable to me. I also think that it was a very great thing that I had that business of Lumbermens out of the Washington office. I had an office in Annapolis, as well. In Maryland, you had to have an office.

MS. GERE: Oh, you had to maintain an office.

JUDGE GREEN: I had to maintain an office. I had maintained that since 1950, an office in Annapolis.

MS. GERE: But did you actually–were there times when you physically didn't come into Washington, but you went and spent the day or days in Annapolis?

JUDGE GREEN: Yes, and it was a very frustrating time. I thought it was going to be delightful because I was going to practice law the way that people did down there. The difficulty was, I would wait until I had a lot of things to do. I'd have depositions scheduled, I'd have all these things to do in that one day. They were all agreed to, all these things, and by the time I would get there, it would turn out that the lawyers were either going hunting, they were going—

MS. GERE: Fishing, or whatever.

JUDGE GREEN: Whatever. They didn't think that this was a very big deal. And so it was mañana, was alright. Well, mañana was not good enough for me, because I was going

to be in trial someplace the next day. Somewhere else. So it was very frustrating, rather than satisfying. I thought it would be a nice change in pace. It was—

MS. GERE: The wrong pace.

JUDGE GREEN: That's it. But I had that office all the way until I was here on the bench.

MS. GERE: Well, now did you ever–did you have a secretary, or any staff in Annapolis?

JUDGE GREEN: Yes, as a matter of fact, the fellow that was associated with me down there, I sent a case to in the last six months.

MS. GERE: Oh gosh. Who was that?

JUDGE GREEN: Frank Walsh. Frank was doing lots of real estate work.

(end of tape)