

**ORAL HISTORY OF DWIGHT D. MURRAY**  
**Sixth Interview**  
**May 15, 2018**

This is the sixth interview of the Oral History of Dwight D. Murray as part of the Oral History Project of the Historical Society of the District of Columbia Circuit. The interviewer is Gene Granof. The interview took place in Washington, D.C., on Tuesday, May 15, 2018.

Mr. Granof: You wanted to talk about your family.

Mr. Murray: I wanted to mention some things about my family that I think are important. They have been a big part of my life. I got married in June 1968 and when my wife and I got married, she knew I was going to go into the Marine Corps, and she knew back in 1968 chances of me going to Vietnam were very high. In fact, that did come to pass, and it takes a remarkable woman to, first of all, commit her life to someone with that kind of future. You don't know whether or not it's a short-term future, a short-term marriage, and you know there was going to be a long separation, and I've always appreciated with my wife – her name is Elodie – what she did in accepting my proposal. Not only that, but when we got married, I didn't have anything. I probably had a couple hundred bucks in the bank. I got a summer job after graduation and then in September, she had a job at the Veterans Administration. She was part of the management selection team. She was highly recruited by a lot of government agencies. She's an extremely intelligent, smart good person, very religious, and she agreed to go to work with the VA. We moved up to Washington, D.C., in August-September of 1968, knowing that I was going into the Marine Corps in October of 1968. We really didn't have a lot of time together as a married couple. On October 14<sup>th</sup>, I went to Quantico, and I was

in the OCS program. I didn't see her again for another five weeks. After five weeks, they allow you liberty just on the weekends, so I caught the Greyhound bus from Quantico to downtown D.C. We spent Saturday and Sunday together, and then by Sunday night I was back on base. That was pretty tough on her because she was here in D.C. by herself, and then I left her again in July of 1969 when I went to Vietnam. By that time, we were expecting our first child, Michele, who was born on January 17, 1970. I was away, I was in Vietnam at the time. I didn't see my daughter until she was about six months old. I think I said earlier that was the same situation with my dad in World War II. He didn't see me until I was six months old. It was almost the same, like history repeating itself. But pay tribute to that. And to be home alone. We moved back to New Orleans so she could stay with her parents while she was expecting and working at the same time. When she delivered Michele, her parents helped care for her. I came back in July of '69.

Mr. Granof: When you were away, there had to be considerable anxiety on her part.

Mr. Murray: A lot of anxiety.

Mr. Granof: I mean Marine lieutenants . . .

Mr. Murray: Yes, they had a short life expectancy. Very short life expectancy. And that was another thing that weighed on her. I mean, I didn't think about it that much. It's like I told you when I was in Okinawa, waiting to be transported over to Vietnam, I saw this bulletin on the bulletin board about this Marine fighter pilot who had 800 combat missions in Vietnam and got killed in a motorcycle accident in Oakland, California. And I said to myself, if it's your destiny to die in Vietnam,

you're going to die no matter what you do. You can die in a Jeep accident, you can die in strange ways, or you can die in combat, and if you're not going to die in Vietnam, then you can stand up in a hail of bullets, and somehow you're going to miraculously be preserved or saved. I stopped worrying about it, but it didn't stop her from worrying about it. I didn't pay much attention to it until many years afterwards when I realized how stressful that could be on the ones left behind. If you have any relative that is in harm's way, you're going to worry about them, and you're somewhat powerless, so that makes the anxiety even worse because there's nothing you can do about it. I'm kind of a problem solver, so if there's a problem I try to solve it, but when you're put in a situation like that where you're powerless to solve it, then what you have to work on is to control the anxiety and try not to worry about it too much. That's kind of difficult.

When I got back, I was a little bit short-tempered and whatnot, and didn't understand much, trying to fit the role of not only being a husband, but also a father. That took a big adjustment, and I thought I was the kind of person who could adjust to anything at a moment's notice or a snap of a finger, but it took a long adjustment for me. And then to complicate things, when I got out of the Marines, I went to law school. That dominated a lot of time. The more I think about it, the more I realize what a struggle she went through putting up with me, and the things that I had to do in the next step of the ladder of so-called success. Marine Corps and law school. Then when you get out of law school, you get a job. It takes up a lot of your time. That put a difficult burden on her. And it put a difficult burden on Michele, my daughter. I remember I would purposely take

time off from my studies or in the Marine Corps and spend a little bit of private time, take her to the playground, but not as much as I should have. And that's the thing you really regret when looking back on your life, things that you could have done better, things that you should have done better, and you didn't do better. I regret that. But my daughter turned out well, my wife, she's doing extremely well. She became a staunch Catholic. She went to Medjugorje where the Blessed Mother appeared, and it changed her life, completely, for the better.

Mr. Granof: Was she Catholic originally?

Mr. Murray: Oh, yes. Came from a big Catholic family. She had two brothers who went into the Jesuit seminary, and they got out after 10 years. She had an uncle who was a priest. She had two aunts who were nuns, and when her father died, the Cardinal said the Mass, the funeral Mass of her father. They were very well connected in the Catholic Church. She came from a very prominent family. Like my mother said, when she found out I was dating Elodie, she said "What does she see in you?" I said, "Mom, you're supposed to be on my side." But my mother was a big fan of my wife. And then I want to talk about my daughters. First, Michele.

Mr. Granof: And how many years have you been married now?

Mr. Murray: Almost 50 years. And Michele, extremely proud of her. She did well in school. She went to the University of Virginia. She did very well there, became a member of the Delta Gamma sorority and had very good grades. When she got out of University of Virginia, she didn't know what she wanted to do. Then she got a job at Oakcrest Girls' School and found her niche in life, which was higher education administration. To accomplish the goal of becoming a college administrator, she

knew she needed at least a master's degree, so she went to the University of Vermont, got her master's degree and went on and got a Ph.D. at the University of Maryland while she was working at Loyola University in Baltimore. After spending ten years in Seattle, Washington as a Vice President at Seattle University, she is now the Vice President of Student Development and Dean of Students at Holy Cross College, in Worcester, Massachusetts.

Mr. Granof: Oh. Sure.

Mr. Murray: The thing about her is she's got all the qualities, and I told her a long time ago, I told her when she was about maybe 22 years, I said you got all the qualities to go as far as you want to go. She is levelheaded, she has good leadership qualities and she has good decision making and analytical capabilities. Plus, she is not afraid to confront when confrontation is needed, and she is a problem solver. I said one day you're going to be the president of a university. I predicted that a long time ago. Whether that will happen, I don't know, because she really likes her job now.

Mr. Granof: Being president of the university is no fun.

Mr. Murray: It's no fun, but she was offered a job at one of these schools in Baltimore, and she turned that down. Now my other daughter, Maria, she is also very, very special. She went to Thomas Jefferson High School of Science and Technology in Virginia. Whereas Michele had more of a liberal arts focus, Maria was a scientist. She also graduated from the University of Virginia with distinction and was Phi Beta Kappa. Maria was more focused. She developed an interest in marine biology, got a job at Woods Hole, which is a highly respected, to hone skills as a marine biologist.

Mr. Granof: It is. Woods Hole is a major marine laboratory, certainly one of the most prominent in the country.

Mr. Murray: Yes, she lived in Cape Cod for a year or so, worked at Woods Hole, could have gone to Scripps, and did go to Scripps, did some study at Scripps, and then accepted a Ph.D. candidacy at the University of Maryland. She could have gone to Stanford University. It was a toss-up. And don't ask me why she chose Maryland over Stanford. She said, "Dad, it's who you study with, it's not the school."

Mr. Granof: I think she's right about that. That's all very perceptive.

Mr. Murray: Yes, I think she was wrong about that, but she made the decision and it was her decision. And the reason why I say it's wrong is because they don't list on your graduation certificate who you studied with; they just list the university. It's not a question of being elitist; it's a question of how far a degree from Stanford will take you compared to a degree from the University of Maryland. This is not a knock on the University of Maryland. But mid-way through her program, her advisor, the person she wanted to study under, left Maryland and took a position at Cornell. This meant Maria had to find a new advisor and had to start over. Therefore, it took her longer to get her Ph.D. But that setback showed me she has a lot of courage and determination. She made me very proud. She was able to shoulder the setback and do what she had to do to get her doctorate. Her doctorate had to do with genetic mutations of oysters. It was so complicated, she and her husband, Woody, who is an engineer, had to write their own program to do the computations and borrow time on the supercomputer at Cornell. I went to the

presentation of her thesis, and I did not understand a word she said. It was so complicated. She was talking way over my head and I was proud of her.

Mr. Granof: But the other side of that coin is that if you are looking for a job in a field, and you studied with Professor X, who is well known and well connected, that can be a definite plus even if the school itself may not have the same cache.

Mr. Murray: Well, it could be, but it didn't work out that way. The professor that she wanted to study with, he quit right in the middle of her pursuit, and she had to start all over again with a new professor. Like I said, first she had to find a sponsor, then she had to start all over again. And I don't think that would have happened at Stanford. He left to get a better opportunity at some university, Cornell, I think it was. But in any event, you know you live and learn, and the thing about it is we talked, yes, this was a setback but that's how you get tested. You just don't look back. If you got to start all over, you start all over. You're only talking about a couple years. Yes, you wasted a couple, but it's just two years. The thing is that you go ahead and do what you have to do and graduate, and get your Ph.D. Both of my daughters have Ph.D.'s and are very well settled. It makes me and my wife happy to see how successful our daughters are.

Mr. Granof: And what's she doing now?

Mr. Murray: Well, she works for the Smithsonian. She's a program manager in the Smithsonian oceanographic program.

Mr. Granof: Seems to me she's done pretty well.

Mr. Murray: I give a lot of credit to my wife because one of the things, when you think about your life and about all the things you missed, my wife never missed their first day

of class from grammar school – and I’m talking about pre-school, first grade, all the way through college, she never missed their first day of class, and I was always doing something. I was always working or had a conflict. Even when my second daughter, Maria, was born, the great thing was that she was born on a Sunday. The bad thing was she was born right in the middle of a trial that I was involved in. Therefore, I couldn’t spend the time that I should have spent in the hospital. I could only come there at night and I could only stay there a short while because I had to prepare for the next day. And that’s another thing that my wife, I knew it got to her. There was one instance where I knew I was in the doghouse because the lady who delivered around the same time that my wife delivered Maria, her husband sent her a big bouquet of flowers and all this stuff, and I come in empty handed, so I did not look good, did not fare well during that time. That’s one of the downfalls of the profession. Sometimes it consumes you, especially when you’re in trial, and this was a tough trial, this was a very tough trial in front of a tough judge, so I was consumed with doing well for the client. You don’t bring those problems home. I internalize a lot of the problems, try to solve them myself rather than put it off on other people’s shoulders. When I think about this oral history, and I think about what a big part and how much satisfaction from my family, and how proud I am of them, of my daughters, of the job my wife did. It’s just a remarkable accomplishment where my wife deserves most of the credit.

Mr. Granof: Did she continue to work?

Mr. Murray: Yes, she continued to work, and right now my younger daughter Maria is going through some problems, and I put problems in quotation marks, because she just

delivered our second grandchild, almost three months ago, and she's going back to work this week, so she's going to experience the separation anxiety which my wife experienced several times. But my daughter Maria has the flexibility of doing telecommuting whereas my wife Elodie had to get on a bus, or get in a van pool, and go to work for eight hours, or seven and a half hours, every day. The routine was I would drop the kids off for day care, or school, and she would pick them up. I had more flexibility in the morning, but I didn't have flexibility in the evening. Her schedule was rigid. She would get off at a specific time so she would at the day care place.

Mr. Granof: Was she still working for the VA?

Mr. Murray: She worked for the VA from '67 to 2012 or 2013, one of those times.

Mr. Granof: That's full career.

Mr. Murray: That was a full career. I mean my wife, she graduated second in her class at Xavier and I would say if you weren't dating me you probably would have been first. Because I took a lot of the luster away from her. And she was the type, you know, she studied for exams, but she didn't cram, she didn't really burn the midnight oil like the one who graduated valedictorian. She's a very, very brilliant woman. She could have done a lot. And let's see, she had a very good career but always put the family first. She could have gone into the government's senior executive program.

Mr. Granof: Senior executive program?

Mr. Murray: Yes, they wanted her, but she didn't want the commitment. There was a time when she wanted to go four days a week instead of five days, and if she went to

senior executive service, she wouldn't have been able to do that. I kind of encouraged her to go for the senior executive. I thought it would have been a good experience, it was an opportunity that I wouldn't have passed up, but she thinks differently. My wife was not materialistic, she was more grounded about which things are important. She didn't want the pressure of the job to take away from her devotion to the family. So that's something you must respect. If I were in her shoes, I would have grabbed that opportunity and run with it, and I would have suffered the consequences that she was intentionally avoiding, much to her credit. We're just different in that way. One should learn to appreciate the difference, and I learned to do that. I could have been a better husband, I could have been a better father, could have spent more time doing the things I should have been doing. But I saw the way my father provided for his family. He worked, worked and worked. I guess a lot of that rubbed off on me. But I did spend more time with my kids than my father spent with me. Therefore, I probably tried to change the trajectory just a little.

Mr. Granof: Well, someone said, famously, the law's a jealous mistress.

Mr. Murray: Let me tell you, that's a true statement. That is a very true statement.

Mr. Granof: I think particularly if you're in litigation. I think that's really true of litigation especially. If you're in wills and trusts, maybe not so much.

Mr. Murray: Yes, because you don't control your schedule. Judges control your schedule. I can't tell you the times I missed vacations because of trials, or because a judge wanted to set a case for a specific time regardless of my vacation schedule. They thought that would promote a settlement discussion because I didn't want to

cancel my vacation, but I always canceled the vacation, and that was unfortunate. I always put a premium on the client's interest. I didn't want to shortchange the client because of my vacation schedule. You pay a price for that.

Mr. Granof: There's not much you could do to shortchange the client; you can't really say go get another lawyer.

Mr. Murray: That wouldn't be fair to the client. The client would have to pay the legal costs involved for the new lawyer to catch up or get to speed on the case. Plus, the idea of abandoning a client or jeopardizing the client just to go on vacation was repugnant to me.

Mr. Granof: That wouldn't have set well with the client.

Mr. Murray: It wouldn't have set well with me.

Mr. Granof: That would have been hard on you. I agree.

Mr. Murray: So those things you kind of regret when you look back on your life, that you wish you could have done things a little better, but sometimes it was extremely difficult, you didn't have the choices that you would like to have had at the time.

Mr. Granof: Are both your daughters married?

Mr. Murray: Both of them are married. They're married to excellent guys and I'm very thankful for that. Michele married a guy by the name of Chris Lewers who's from Arizona. Michele got married kind of late in life, she was in her early 30's.

Mr. Granof: That's not uncommon these days.

Mr. Murray: It's not uncommon but she wanted to get married and start a family and she thought she would never get married, and my mother used to tell her, they were very close, my mother and Michele. My mother would say, "Your husband is

right in front of your eyes.” My mother always had this sixth sense about her. One day she was walking a neighbor’s dog, and her future husband was right across the street. They got to know each other, they fell in love, they got married. First, they lived in Seattle, and they lived in Baltimore when Michele worked for Loyola University in Baltimore. Then she got a job as assistant vice president of Seattle University in Seattle, Washington, and then this job, this opportunity at Holy Cross.

Mr. Granof: Holy Cross was, obviously it’s co-ed, I mean they’ve had women there for a while.

Mr. Murray: It’s co-ed, yes.

Mr. Granof: But at one time, it was all male.

Mr. Murray: All boys. Holy Cross had some great alumni: Bob Cousy; they talk about Chris Matthews from MSNBC, Hardball; Clarence Thomas, Justice Clarence Thomas; Ed Bennett Williams graduated from Holy Cross. They have some very distinguished alumni. They have a great endowment, and my daughter really likes it there. She gets along with the president, the president likes her, she’s doing extremely well there.

Mr. Granof: It’s also in a nice area.

Mr. Murray: It’s in a nice area. Then they have a nice house. So, everything looks well. Nothing brings you comfort like seeing your children do well in their chosen profession and in their life. Not only professionally, socially, and in the family thing. And my younger daughter just gave birth to Camille. Her husband, Woody, they met at Woods Hole. Woody is a brilliant engineer. Woody could

have gone anywhere he wanted to. When Maria finished her education at Woods Hole, she was trying to decide whether she was going to go to California and Scripps or University of Maryland. You choose, I'll get into a school and get an advanced degree, and I think his appeal especially was oceanographic engineering. So she got in the University of Maryland, he got into Johns Hopkins, and he got a Master's from Johns Hopkins and then they wanted him to stay to get a Ph.D., but he said no, I have to get out there and earn some money. So he left there and got a job with the Navy Submarine Ocean Laboratory at Carderock.

Mr. Granof: That's my neighborhood.

Mr. Murray: Yes. I don't know what he does because he can't tell me, but I know he works on propulsion systems. It's a nice place to work. From what I understand, he enjoys it. Sometimes he gets to play with my old submarines, I mean huge submarines. He's a special guy. His family's nice. I mean everybody; it's a good blend. We're very fortunate. We spent this past weekend with them. They live in Kensington. That's close by. How nice it is. Enjoyed meeting all of his family. They are all very good people. His grandfathers were in their 90's when they died, recently. Both of them were World War II veterans. One was a Marine, so we clicked right away. And his other grandfather was a coach at Grinnell University in Iowa. His last name was Fitch, and they named a stadium after him. He was very prominent and well respected. Woody is from Wisconsin. We went to the farm after they got married, and they wanted to give a party for Woody and Maria. A lot of the people in that area couldn't make it all the way to D.C. for the wedding. So, it was at the farm, and I was talking to Woody's grandfather who was a Marine. His

name was George Curtis. And there was a chin-up bar, and I said “You know, George, I used to be able to kip over it – they call it a kip where you just swing and zoom over the bar as part of the obstacle course. And George looked at me and said, let me see you do that. Now, I was in my 60’s, and George was in his late 80’s at the time, so I made a run and grab for it and I swung up, and I couldn’t swing over. I said to myself, I used to do this with ease. Then I said, maybe I didn’t have enough speed, so I tried again and again, and I couldn’t – and George was just laughing because he knew that the things you used to be able to do when you were 20, you can’t do when you’re 60. I had a hard time accepting that, but I thought it was funny too.

Mr. Granof: That’s very true.

Mr. Murray: And I’m saying to myself, “No, no, that doesn’t apply to me,” and the more I tried, the harder I tried, the harder he laughed. He was waiting for me to come to this realization.

Mr. Granof: Your grandchild here is three months?

Mr. Murray: Yes. Three months.

Mr. Granof: That’s the age you try and coax a smile.

Mr. Murray: She smiled this weekend.

Mr. Granof: And your other grandchild?

Mr. Murray: She’s six. And she loves her grandpa. Her name is Ella. She was named after Elodie, my wife, and Chris’ mother, Grace, so her name is, her given name, baptismal name is Elodie Grace.

Mr. Granof: You probably don’t see her as much, but probably through Skype.

Mr. Murray: I see her maybe twice a year. We make an effort. When my daughter Michele, the older one, was at Seattle, they would send her on recruiting trips, the school would go on recruiting trips for students in the Pacific Rim, and they would send her to Hawaii, so we would fly out there and rent a condo and whatnot, so when she's finished with whatever commitment she had, we turned it into a small family mini vacation. So, we got a chance to spend time with them that way. That was nice.

Mr. Granof: Six years old. They're really very open.

Mr. Murray: Oh yes. Well, this started when she was three, two, when she almost about a year old. We went out there maybe several times. This started when Ella was about a year old, maybe 10 months old. I taught her to stand up, and I wasn't, I wasn't that careful as her parents were with her. She took her first drink of water out of a fountain with me because I stuffed her face in the water, the water shot out. I showed her mother, I said, "Look what I've taught your daughter." Michele just rolled her eyes back. She knew I did things like that. As an example, when Michele was about six or seven months old, Elodie made the mistake of going home for a friend's wedding, and so I had to take care of Michele, and I did a lot of things that would probably horrify Elodie if she saw me doing them. I put root beer in a milk bottle, just to watch her eyes light up when she got the taste of a little root beer. I gave her candy, licorice candy.

Mr. Granof: Hey, that's what grandfathers are for.

Mr. Murray: That's right. All those things I did, we bonded very nicely.

Mr. Granof: That sounds like it still continues, and then you'll do the same with your youngest granddaughter.

Mr. Murray: I hope to make up for a lot of time that I missed when my daughters were coming up. But it's been fun spending time with them and watching them grow, and watching their success, my daughters' successes. And it's still going on. They have a very bright future ahead of them, both of them, as well as their husbands. I'm just keeping my fingers crossed that everything goes well.

Mr. Granof: Hopefully it will. It sounds like they're on the right path . . .

Mr. Murray: They're on the right path, and they haven't given us hardly any trouble at all. My wife has been more understanding, I've been more disciplined. I was not that much of an empathetic person when you come to a problem. I looked for resolution as opposed to, you know, empathy, yes, feel sorry. And I didn't realize what an impact that was until we were driving back from Woody's farm one day, Woody's family's farm, and my daughter Michele said, "Dad, do you remember the time when I called home and I was in college, and I was crying about all the work I had to do, and mother was on the phone, and she said, 'Oh, I understand, you can try, you can do it,'" being very empathetic to Michele's plight. Elodie said, "Do you want to talk to your dad?". Michele said yes. So, I got on the phone and said, "What's the matter?" She told me, and she said I said, "Look, stop all your blubbering and just get to it." Same thing my dad used to say, "There's nothing to it but to do it. You take your first step and you will realize this problem can be overcome, and you go ahead and put your shoulder to the wheel and do it. I don't want to hear your blubbering." And I hung up.. And she said, "Dad that

was the best advice, because when I hung up, I started doing the work, and I realized that I could see the light at the end of the tunnel.” I forgot this has happened, but it sounds just like me. Sounds like something I would do, something like I would say. Because that’s the way my parents reacted -- “I don’t want to hear your problem, just solve it, you got into it, solve it.” It was that kind of thing. And that was revealing because I forgot all about it, but I saw that it made an impact in her life, a positive impact, and it’s like I said in our first interview, you never know how you influence people because sometimes the feedback never gets to you. That was a positive feedback that I wasn’t even aware of, and it affected my own daughter, so I was satisfied with that.

Mr. Granof: Well, at some point your kids, you realize wait a minute, they’re not kids anymore.

Mr. Murray: I realized that when they came home from college. You realized that, wait a minute, they’re 18 years old now. They’ve been independent when they were at college, so you can’t tell them, “OK, time to come home, I want you home at 10:00 o’clock, 10:30, 11:00 o’clock, 11:30.”

Mr. Granof: Yes, but even beyond that, when they get into their 30s and they have their own established careers, and you realize, and you try and look back at where you were at that age, and how you felt about where you were in your life, you didn’t feel like a kid anymore, you felt like a responsible adult.

Mr. Murray: That’s right. And it’s hard to say OK, they’re no longer kids, it’s hard not to interfere, but what I try to do is give them options and let them make the decision. If they come to me for advice, I say well, here are your options, you should

decide. And if they say, well, what to do you think, then I'll tell them what I think. I say, "Weigh your options, pick out the best option for yourself, look at the consequences, and then go ahead and decide, and then make a decision. Don't sit on the sideline because you're afraid of the consequences. No matter what the consequences are, once you decide, you must live with the consequences, and then act accordingly."

Mr. Granof: It's nice that they still come to you for advice.

Mr. Murray: Oh, yes, Michele, she's got things that come up with her job at school and she'll call up and say "I've got this problem," and we'll talk it out, and I say "OK, this is the path I see." You might know of another path, and she'll mention some things, and then we'll talk about it, and she'll come to a conclusion.

Mr. Granof: Sounds like your family has just worked out wonderfully.

Mr. Murray: I'm very happy because I know other people who are not as fortunate as I am, and I feel very blessed, quite frankly. Again, my wife was right there, you know, every time they needed their mother, she was right there. Every single time. That's kind of special. I wrote that to my wife in a Mother's Day card.

Mr. Granof: We're talking about your family, but I think you also wanted to get on to the people that have helped you.

Mr. Murray: Yes, the first person that helped me was Judge Murphy, Judge Tim Murphy. I clerked for him for a year after I graduated from law school. I sent out over a hundred resumes, and I got a couple of nibbles, but one of the nibbles was Judge Murphy. And I went to interview him, and he was a Marine, he was active in Marine Corps Reserves, so the fact that I was a Marine attracted him. We hit it off

in the interview. So he offered me a job, and that was the only offer I had at the time. I found out later that other judges were seriously considering my application, but Judge Murphy made the first move.

Mr. Granof: It was not a bad offer.

Mr. Murray: It was an excellent offer because we became good friends as a result of that. I learned a lot from him. Also, another hard worker. Also a man who was very decisive, very well respected. I got to know his family, his kids, his wife. I still see them on occasion even though he died a few years ago. I was there right before he died, the same day he died. He was surrounded in typical Irish setting where his sick bed was right in front of the fireplace, all of his family was around him, and he just sort of slipped away. He had been suffering for a long time, a long time. In fact, he outlived the medical predictions. By the time he died, several years before he died, he couldn't speak, he couldn't move, he couldn't walk, and sometimes I would go to his house to visit him and it would be a one-person conversation, but his mind was still sharp, he could still understand things.

Mr. Granof: And what did he die of?

Mr. Murray: He had some kind of neurological degenerative disease that kept him off the bench. I remember one time I went to visit him when he was still able to get around in a wheelchair, and he wasn't good on computer, so he'd say, "I want you to go on the computer, I want you to find this." So I start laughing. I knew what he was up to. He was planning a trip to San Diego, by himself, and so I got the Marine Corps base in San Diego where he was going to stay – at that time he was a retired colonel in the Marine Corps, rank has its privileges, so he was going to

be quartered in a nice place, and he had some friends in San Diego. He said, “What are you laughing at?” I said, “Judge, I know why you’re doing this.” He said, “Why do you think I am doing this?” I said, “Because if you can make this trip by yourself to and from San Diego, you can make a pitch to the court that you’re ready to go back to work.” And he starts laughing. Because that’s exactly what he was trying to do. They were telling him now you can’t come back to work because you got all these physical limitations and whatnot, and he was going to prove to them that if he can travel by himself all the way to San Diego and back, he can certainly travel to downtown D.C. in the Superior Court and sit on the bench. But he wasn’t ready to go back. He was a very self-reliant, stubborn man. But he was stubborn in a nice way, a very determined way. He was a typical Marine through and through. Judge Murphy was not easily discouraged.

Mr. Granof: He had a long career.

Mr. Murray: Yes, very long career, very successful career, a very admirable career. He singlehandedly cleaned up the backlog in the motions court. At the time, before they went to individual calendars, Superior Court handled motions in a motions court, and they had a backlog of, I don’t know, hundreds of cases, and he got in that motions court and he decided motions, boom, boom, boom, boom, boom. Of course, most of them went up to the Court of Appeals because there was no hearing, or whatever -- the Judge said your response was due, didn’t come in time, motion granted. Some motions were denied. Sometimes the motions were granted, but the point is that the backlog was cleared. Why that was special is no other judge had the guts to do that. He was the only one that wasn’t afraid of his

reputation being damaged by the Court of Appeals reversing him. His goal was to clear up the backlog, and that's what he did, and I tell you they still talk about it. The other thing, I represented him in a case. The facts are not that important. He was wrongly accused and he was vindicated. But what I got to find out about Judge Murphy was how much he meant to a lot of people. This is the kind of man I worked for. The kind of man that gave me inspiration.

Mr. Granof: But what could he have been accused of?

Mr. Murray: Well, he was handling a high-volume court one day, and one of the defendants passed out. Judge Murphy called for medical assistance, which was standard procedure. But the Deputy Marshals thought the defendant was faking it, so they took him out of the courtroom, put him in a cell, and the guy asphyxiated. He had an asthma attack. The judge was accused of being insensitive. This was a completely false statement, and we negotiated a retraction from the *Washington Post*. There were other terms in the settlement agreement. But the point was that in putting all this together, every living U.S. Attorney wrote letters of praise of Judge Murphy. I had letters from congressmen, senators, ambassadors, Marine generals. I mean it was like a who's who writing praises of Judge Murphy. One important letter was from a sergeant on the police force. The letter said, "Judge, you may not remember me, but when I was a young, first-year recruit rookie cop, I saw something that was going on that was wrong, and I was concerned about my career, and I came to you seeking advice, and you gave me advice, and I took your advice and did the right thing." The letter said further that "Although I took a lot of flak, my career flourished, thanks to you." Or letters like, "Judge, I was

surprised to see you in an alleyway at 3:00 o'clock in the morning because you sentenced me to work with the Sanitation Department while I was on probation and you came around, you took time off to check on me at 3:00 o'clock in the morning in some alleyway." Stuff that you don't hear about. How dedicated he was, and he would always, when he was sentencing, especially juveniles, he would make a deal with them, or even young adults. He'd say, "Well, I'm going to suspend your sentence, but I'm going to suspend it if you promise me to stay out of trouble. Do we have an agreement?" Of course, the guy is going to say yes because if he doesn't, he's going to be locked up. He'd say, "Well come and shake my hand. I'm going to take you at your word." And if that guy broke his word, off to jail he went. So he's sending a message, a lesson that when you give your word to somebody, you must keep it. The only person you have to blame is yourself if you break that word. Now he was a remarkable man, remarkable man, and sometimes he doesn't get the credit. If people would have seen what went on behind the scenes with Judge Murphy, they would have been even more awestruck. He's the only judge I knew that could conduct two, three cases at the same time. He'd call for a jury, have another jury out, and then hear cases that are on motions.

Mr. Granof: He moved the docket.

Mr. Murray: He moved the docket, like nobody could. And he and Judge Braman made a good pair because Braman was more cerebral, extremely intellectual guy, and Judge Murphy was the smartest judge on the bench, and Braman would say "Judge

Murphy's the smartest judge on the bench." So, you had the mutual admiration society.

Mr. Granof: And how did you get to know Judge Braman other than he took over the chambers at one point.

Mr. Murray: Yes, and that's how I got to know him. He would take a break and he would come in chambers. Braman was a very formal individual. He was sort of what we called in the Marine Corps a "by the numbers" person. But his weakness was that he loved the law. That was his weakness. And I mean he loved good lawyering. I would talk to Judge Braman about some things, I would sort of yank his chain about the nice suit he had on that day.

Mr. Granof: This is when you were clerking for Judge Murphy?

Mr. Murray: And, quite frankly, I was overstepping my boundaries, but I did it on purpose because he sort of got annoyed by it, but he said "Who is this kid talking to me like that?" But he didn't tell me "Don't talk to me that way." And as long as he didn't draw that line, I was always crossing it, always pushing him. As a result, we became, not friends, but we came closer, and I had a case, a very difficult case many years later in front of Judge Braman. A legal malpractice case. It was about 19 counts of legal malpractice, and my client was a very prominent lawyer. The case had been bounced around from judge to judge to judge. No one wanted to take the time to tackle the issue. I filed a motion for summary judgment on all the 19 counts, and I said to the client, when we went to argument before Judge Braman, I said, "If we get a good judge" – this was before Judge Braman took the case – "we'll get 16 of the 19 counts knocked out. Then I anticipate that we'll go

to trial on the remaining three counts. If we get a good trial judge, we should get a directed verdict.” So I called it just like that. Judge Braman got the case, got the motion for summary judgment, called for an oral hearing. After the hearing he dismissed 16 of the counts. We went to trial on three. Judge Rufus King was the trial judge. I made a motion for directed verdict. It was denied. So, my client looked at me and said “Now, what?”

Mr. Granof: Now we put on our case.

Mr. Murray: Just when I was ready to call the last witness, my expert witness, Judge King said, “I want to talk about that motion for directed verdict again.” Judge King thought about it. And we argued it again before my last witness, before my expert witness was to testify. So, after argument, he granted the motion for directed verdict. My prediction came true.

A couple of years after that, Judge Braman, who had come in from Florida to D.C. during the hurricane season, took all the tough cases that they had on the Superior Court docket. He would ask for the toughest cases, the cases that had the most challenge to them. I reminded him of that. He said “Yes, I remember that.” We would go out to lunch. He said “Yes, I remember you said that was good lawyering, that was good lawyering.” To me that was a great compliment. I had that prediction, I saw it, and I knew if the right circumstances came together, this is the thing that should happen, not that it will happen, but it should happen. Should is not always the thing that comes to pass. We got along pretty well. I saw him on several occasions at Judge Murphy’s birthday parties. We’d talk.

Mr. Granof: Is he still alive?

Mr. Murray: I haven't seen him in several years. Every summer I call and ask if Judge Braman is back because I'd call him up and ask him to go to lunch. I don't think he comes in anymore. He's got to be in his late 80's now, and maybe, when you're in your late 80's there are better things to do than struggle over a big case, even though to him reading the law and deciding good cases is a joy, and he's a judge, just like Judge Murphy. They would get into a case, they wouldn't just look at what's filed, they would want more information. Judge Braman is the kind of judge, "Send me the depositions; send me the answers to interrogatories, I want to get a feel for the case." In the old days, they used to file that stuff with the court; now they don't, so judges have no idea what's going on other than the complaint, the answer, and maybe a status report, or pretrial statement. The meat of the cases is in the discovery, and they don't get that because the stuff is too voluminous. I understand that, but when they get into a case they want the meat of the case. They want the discovery, and they will know that case better than some of the lawyers that are handling the case. That's how good those judges, Judge Braman, Judge Murphy, were at the time. They would take the time to do it because they loved the law and they liked good lawyering. They wanted to control the case. It's always said a good trial lawyer is in constant battle for control of the courtroom with the judge. A good trial lawyer wants to control the courtroom, but the judge won't let him.

Mr. Granof: A good judge is not going to let him control the courtroom.

Mr. Murray: But if you're good and if the judge lets you, and some judges, they'll sit back and watch the show if there are two good lawyers going at each other, in a very

professional way. It's a thing of beauty to see a well-trying case where lawyers are doing their best and there's no chicanery, there's no hanky-panky going on, just one good solid shot after the other coming from both sides.

Mr. Granof: I would take it that as a trial lawyer you would feel that if you're in a situation where both you and your opponent are trying the case well, you would just as soon the judge stay out of it.

Mr. Murray: Oh, yes. Definitely.

Mr. Granof: Let you try your case.

Mr. Murray: Let me try the case. And if the judge is a decision maker, then he or she sits back, the judge gets all the evidence that he or she needs to make the decision. If the jury is the fact finder then the judge becomes like a referee, and only steps in when needed to call a strike, or you're safe, or you're out. That's it. You know, you don't see umpires participating in the game. You just see them standing back making sure the rules are complied with and let the outcome of the game be determined by participants, and the fact finder. And that's the way it should be played. At least that's the way I feel. So those are two judges. And then after I clerked, the first guy to give me a job, after my clerkship, was Larry Carr. At the time the firm's name was Carr Jordon Coyne & Savits.

Mr. Granof: Was that the firm with the Marines?

Mr. Murray: That's the firm with the Marines. Yes. And I was the only black lawyer there, the first black lawyer they ever hired, the first black lawyer doing that kind of work, but they made me feel real at home. Larry Carr was a great leader, great individual. He was a former Marine, not a former Marine, but he was a Marine,

excellent leadership skills, and every one of the partners were great trial lawyers. They had people like Jim Jordan; Mike Coyne, who became a Marine general later on, very bright guy, very driven; Ed Lopata, who died maybe 10, 15 years ago. I mean it was a firm that if you had a bad case that was going to trial with a short fuse on it, that's the firm you send it to. And we enjoyed that kind of reputation. We'll handle anything, we were not afraid of anything, and we'll try anything. That's the kind of reputation we had. But unlike most organizations, when you have a good combination of people, you try to find a way to keep them together. Law firms are things that break themselves apart, because of conflicting personalities, and we lost a lot of good people in the firm's transformation. Larry Carr left, Jim Jordan took it over. I became good friends with Jim Jordan. Larry Carr left twice. The first time he wanted me and a couple other young partners to come with him. And then he changed his mind. He changed his mind, and I'm laughing because I didn't find out -- I was the last one to find out -- because I was out of town on a case, and all of this was supposed to happen while I was out of town. He was going to leave and announce I was going with him, and when I came back, I thought I was going to be stoned when I got off the elevator for being a traitor. But as it turned out, somebody said, "Well, maybe you ought to talk to Larry." I went into Larry's office and said, "Well, what's going on?" He said, "Well, Dwight, I changed my mind." I said OK. He said, "Everybody else changed their mind so they're waiting on your decision." I said, "I would have liked to hear that to begin with. I would have enjoyed going with you and starting something new, but what the heck, I'll stay too." And then, I don't know, maybe

three or four years later, he left again, but this time it was permanent. And he started another firm, Carr, Goodson, Lee, and something, that became Carr Maloney. It's now Carr Maloney. And our firm became Jordan Coyne Savits & Lopata. Then Lopata left. Then it became Jordan Coyne & Savits. And now it's Jordan Coyne. That's the firm I retired from in 2012.

Mr. Granof: Could you have stayed? Did you want to stay?

Mr. Murray: Mandatory retirement age was 70, I was 68 at the time, and the nature of the practice had changed. I didn't like the changes. I didn't like how some of the clients were treating the attorneys, how they tried to control the decisions, the reporting requirements were onerous, and I tried to stay away from clients that had reporting requirements, and I just didn't like the nature of the practice anymore. I remember calling my financial advisor and asking him, let's have lunch, and we had lunch, and I asked him if I could afford to retire? He said, "Yes, you can afford to retire, you won't spend all the money you have, not the way you live." I said OK. So I thought about it some more, and then on one of these trips to Hawaii with my daughter Michele and my granddaughter, I was sitting on a beach in Hawaii after coming from a swim, and I was looking all around, and I was watching all these people have a great time. I think it was in 2012, July of 2012, I was on the beach with my family and I was looking all around and I was watching these people enjoying life, and I said if I wasn't here I'd be at the office working. And I said how many times have I missed out on opportunities like this. I started to think more seriously about retirement, and by October 1, I wrote a memo to my partners, announcing my retirement at the end

of the month. You had to give 30 days' notice. I gave 30 days' notice. And I retired on October 31, but I said I'll stick around for transitional matters, because I turned over my cases to my partners. I stayed with them until, through November and maybe early December, and then I left, and never looked back.

And the same day I retired, the 31<sup>st</sup> of October, I gave a talk at Judge Cannon's law school class at GW, and he said, "Dwight, what are you doing now?" I said, "Well, today's my last day, the day I retire officially." He said, "You mean to tell me you come down here." I said, "Yes, you always have to give back to the profession." You know a lot of people give to the profession, a lot of people take from the profession, but a lot of people like Jake Stein, like Larry Carr, like Jim Jordan, like the guys I worked with, Tim Murphy, Judge Braman, they always found ways to give back. Whether it's to talk to young lawyers, young law students, whatever it was, they always found a way to give back. This is my opportunity to give back. I said it was a great ride, I enjoyed my career, I experienced a lot of things that a lot of lawyers don't get a chance to experience, but I missed a lot of things that a lot of lawyers did not miss. It's not a perfect thing, but I can't complain. I never thought I would retire from this business, but there comes a point in time where you have to say there are other things you have to do. I made the decision and retired.

Mr. Granof: You didn't really retire.

Mr. Murray: Well, I retired for three years. But while I was retired, I stayed active in committee work, bar committee work, Council for Court Excellence, so I had committee meetings just about three times a month while I was retired. I would

come into the city and I knew Jake Stein before I retired. We had cases together, I knew the firm, this firm, Stein, Mitchell firm, for over 30 years I had cases with them. I had cases against them, I represented them in some matters, involving partnership departures and whatnot. I got to know these guys very well. In fact, the day I announced my retirement, they came to my office, two of the partners came to my office and wanted me to handle a matter for them. And I said, "Well, guys, I'm retiring, today is my last day, I'm retiring," and he said, "That's OK, we'd still like you to handle it." And one of them made the comment, I think it was Gerry Mitchell, said, "Well Dwight, if you're looking for a place to stay, we got room for you upstairs." This was the same day I retired. I said no, I'm going to see if I can enjoy my retirement first. And I did. But, you know, you're used to running at a hundred miles an hour every day, and all of a sudden you slow down to 10 or 15. And that was a transition, but I filled it up by visiting every museum that I always said I'll get around to doing. I visited every museum, not just once, but twice. National Portrait Gallery, National Gallery of Art, and I would bike around, I bought a bicycle and rode my bike a lot and did a lot of things. Visited my daughter in Seattle.

But every once in a while I would have lunch with Jake. And Jake said, you're too young to retire. I didn't have a response to that. Jake was close to 90 years old, and here I was, what, 69, almost 70, and I'm telling him, no, no, I'm retiring right at the right time. He said you got another 10, 15 years left in you. I said, I don't think so, but you know, it just shows the attitude that he had, that you had a lot more to offer, don't leave anything on the table, give it everything

you've got. Then I eventually said OK, let's give it a try. What could it hurt? I came back, starting in 2015, September of 2015, when I started working for Stein, Mitchell as Of Counsel. And it's been pretty nice so far.

Mr. Granof: Have you tried cases?

Mr. Murray: No, not yet. The first year they were getting used to me. I picked up a couple of cases, resolved a couple case. In 2019 I'll probably have, if not one, maybe two trials. I picked up some cases last year, and I kind of predicted this because I've been in this business long enough to know when the cases are going to mature to the point where it's going to require a lot of my time, and for the last several months, those cases have required a lot of my time. I've worked every weekend since January, and before that, I would work maybe 4, 5 hours a day, take Fridays off. Now I'm working just about every day. And just like in the old days, late at night. I'm saying to myself this is not retirement. But you do what has to be done, no matter what it is. So that's where I am right now. And that's more or less my career, maybe not everything that I've told you, but we haven't spoken about some key cases, just a few of them, but those cases that I talked about earlier were the cases that stuck out in my mind. If anybody asks me what are the cases that stick out in your mind. Well, the cases I mentioned in these interviews are the ones that come to mind first. There are other cases that I'm sure were just as important. As a matter of fact, I just finished supplementing Jake Stein's *Closing Arguments* book, and I recounted some cases that I tried as part of the *Closing Argument* that I put in there. I was amazed that I remember some of the facts,

because they happened some time ago, but the facts were still close to me. Those were cases that I worked hard on.

I know I left some stuff out, some of the organizations that I belong to and how they have contributed to my professional growth.

Mr. Granof: Okay . . .

Mr. Murray: Inns of Court, Council for Court Excellence.

Mr. Granof: This is a good place to stop, and we'll set a time for next time.

Mr. Murray: OK.