

**Oral History Number: 003-001, 002**  
**Interviewee: William D. Murray**  
**Interviewers: Don Spritzer, Rex Myers**  
**Date of Interview: December 14, 1970**

*This interview was recorded on two tapes out of order. To hear the full interview in the correct order, listen to the tapes as follows: Tape 1, Side A; Tape 2, Side A; Tape 1, Side B.*

William Murray: He came out to Montana. His uncle was here in Butte.

Rex Myers: That's James A. [Murray].

WM: James A., yes. My father's grandparents had come over to this country from Ireland. I don't know the exact year or anything, but I imagine it was during the potato famine. In any event, they came over and brought their children with them. One of the children was, of course, my father's father. He went to Canada, and that's where my father was born. He came out to Butte after he finished law school.

RM: Was he here at all before?

WM: Yes, yes, he had made trips to Butte when he was in school.

RM: Did he work out here during the summer?

WM: Yes, yes.

RM: I've run into mention of his apparently being here. Apparently working in the mines but no date. I didn't know if it was before school or after school.

WM: Yes, It was before school. He worked in a number of different mines at that time while he was going through school. Then when he finished school, he came out and started to work as a lawyer. Gradually became the lawyer for his uncle who had many interests in the state and in the whole west. He—James A.—he owned, at one time, Boulder Hot Springs and Hunter's Hot Springs and Broadwater and the water works at Livingston, the water works at Pocatello, Idaho, the water works in San Diego, California.

RM: It was a profitable line.

WM: Yes. (laughs) Then, of course, he had mining interests. That's where he originally made his money. He was interested in a bank in Seattle and—

RM: Excuse me.

WM: Yes, go ahead.

RM: Did James A. own the United States Building and Loan Association?

WM: No. No, that was started by my father and his brother. That was...Well, I don't think that was started until probably after James A. died. I'm not quite sure of that, but it may be around that same time. Oh, James A. had a little private bank right across the street here—this building right on the corner here.

RM: Oh, the one with the little cupola?

WM: Yes, that was his private bank. When he was in Butte in later years he had an apartment upstairs, and his bank was downstairs in that building there.

As I say, he had a lot of real estate in Seattle, Tacoma, that sort of thing. Well, my father kind of took over... did take over as his lawyer, and James A. was kind of a litigious person. He didn't want to settle anything (laughs). He wanted to go to court all the time with any...just any problems that he had he went to court. So Dad had quite a busy practice just taking care of James A. After he was here just a few years, about three years I think, no, longer than that...It was about 1907, I believe, when he was elected county attorney.

RM: Yes, the election of '06, 1906.

WM: Yes, well, and in those days you didn't run in the primary. It was a convention system. Dan Hennessey, the owner of the Hennessey store, was the Democratic political power in the community at the time, and he had taken a liking to my father and supported him. Got the nomination for him for the county attorney. So he didn't seek reelection to that job.

RM: Often times for a position like that, it's something that they just share among attorneys in town. Was it that kind of a thing here?

WM: I'm not sure. That may have been; although, I remember my father telling me that he didn't want to in any event. I kind of gathered that maybe he thought that it was the better part of valor not to seek it because he felt he had made enemies in the community by enforcing gambling and liquor laws at the time.

RM: Well, when he ran for election—it was either '34 or '36—one of the little brochures he put out had a reprint from a 1909 *Butte Miner* editorial which complimented him and the sheriff very highly for doing such an excellent job.

WM: Well, yes, I remember...I don't remember that brochure, but I remember Dad at various times just referring to it and discussing it. As I say, I don't think he ever said so, but I had always had the feeling that he thought maybe he'd better quit while he was ahead. (laughs)

He practiced law then very actively then for the next ten, 12 years. Then he became very interested in the Irish Revolution. As I say, raising money and propagandizing, serving on committees and one thing and another, and he was...Of course met all of the Irish revolutionary leader—de Valera [Éamon de Valera] and all the rest of them.

RM: Did he get any of them to come and speak here in Butte?

WM: Oh yes, almost all of them came to Butte. De Valera came here two or three times and they arranged...It was through him or that is he through Lieutenant Governor McDowell arranged to have de Valera address the Montana legislature in a joint session. De Valera told me himself just a couple of years ago about that and how he thought that the speech he made before the Montana Legislature was probably the poorest one he'd ever made in his life. He said "I couldn't account for it, but I felt...I had a feeling of hostility towards me."

He said, "I just didn't...I couldn't respond, and I couldn't make the kind of talk that I thought I could," but he said, "After I finished making the speech, I went out on the front steps of the capitol, and there a great crowd had gathered at the statue of Thomas Francis Meagher."

He said, "Then I knew that I was among friends, and I think I made a fine speech then."

RM: (unintelligible)

DS: In Wheeler's diary...not diary his autobiography, he made a statement that Murray got de Valera to speak in Butte when McDowell was running for the governorship in the primary in 1920, and that Wheeler was very, very bitter about the Irish contact between the two men.

WM: I suppose that may be so. Dad eventually became the national president of the American Association for the Recognition of the Irish Republic. While he was the president, as I recall it, the revolutionary government sent Arthur Griffith and Michael Collins and some others to London to negotiate a settlement. They were given by de Valera and Dáil Éireann, D-a-i-l E-a-r-r-a-i-n something like that...that's the Irish parliamentary body, Dáil something like that...In any event they had given the negotiators power to enter into a treaty with the British government. They did, and they came back with a treaty for home rule which left the northern counties out of Ireland and still maintained a connection with the British crown. But they thought that was the best they could do and that was the best for Ireland. They came back then and de Valera then rejected that, and as a result of that there was almost a civil war. As a matter of fact, Michael Collins, who was a great Irish patriot, was ambushed and murdered as a result of this contest.

The American Irish got into that sort of thing too, and a great many of them wanted to send arms and one sort of thing and another to Ireland. My father thought that was the wrong thing to do, but he wasn't going to have any part of supplying Irishmen with tools to kill Irishman with (laughs). I suppose he didn't mind if they were to send them over to the English. But, in any event, as a result of that he withdrew from the association—

RM: About what time was this?

WM: —and retired. It was in 1922 or [192]3, I think.

RM: Did he ever see the president about the Irish? Some people say he did and some say he didn't.

WM: Yes, he served on a committee that called on President Wilson and urged him to demand—in accordance with Wilson's announced principles—freedom for the Irish or permit them to determine their own. Self-determination was Wilson's phrase as I recall it. In any event he served and he testified before committees of Congress with reference to the matter and asking for the United States government at least in the form of moral support.

He retired from that activity, but, of course, didn't lose his interest in the matter and always maintained...and while he and de Valera then were not friendly for quite a while, they became friendly again later in life and saw each other frequently when Father was in Ireland a number of times and de Valera was over here. I've been to Ireland. I had a lovely visit with de Valera. He was very kind, and he was almost blind but a very fine, thoughtful person. You'd never take him to be a revolutionary at this point. Of course, he's almost 90 years old or something like that, but very alert and clear and charming gentleman.

Well, when he finished with that, primarily, he engaged in the practice of law. In the meantime and over a period of years, his uncle had given him some presents of stock and interest in property, one sort of thing and another. I rather gather, although I'm not sure of this at all...I rather gather that he did that rather than pay him fees or a salary or anything like that. I think he just from time to time gave him something. In any event along about that time—I forget exactly—but I think it was about 1923 that his uncle died.

Interviewer: Early 20s as I recall.

WM: I just barely knew old James A. I have two memories of him. One is one Saturday morning I came up to the bank. I'd gone to my father's law office, and his secretary said that he was up at the bank. I was about, oh, I think about maybe ten years old, and so I came up the hill to the bank and old James A. was there. As I recall, he didn't recognize me, and I told him who I was and that I was looking for my father. He said, "Well, what do you want to see your father for?"

I said, "Well, the circus is in town today, and I haven't got any money to go to the circus," (laughs) and so he gave me the money to go to the circus. Then we used to go and stay from time to time, during the summer particularly, over at Hunter's Hot Springs, and old James A, liked it over there too. So we were there a lot of the time when he was there, and as we were kids we used to get him to throw money in the pool, and we'd dive for the money. I don't know if we thought we were kidding him. I suppose we did think we were because if he threw in a penny or a nickel we'd say it was too small and we couldn't find it. He'd have to throw bigger money in, and he'd accommodate us. (laughs)

Anyway, old James A. then died, and there was some contest with reference to his estate because he had given some stock in the Monida Trust Company, which was his own holding company, to my father. James A.'s widow and her son by another marriage didn't want to acknowledge that it was his so a court action was started but eventually settled. Then—

RM: Who solved it? Did your father finally get—?

WM: Well, yes, yes, I think he got what he expected or, you know, I think that a...I think after that there wasn't any hard feelings as a result of it; although, I think at the time there was. I don't remember much. I never did see Aunt Mary after old James A. died, but I know that my father from time to time saw her and they were friends.

He continued to live here in Butte; although, at one time I remember we went to Seattle and Tacoma one summer. It was Dad and four of us boys...I think four of us, drove over to Seattle and Tacoma because he had property there in Seattle and Tacoma. He was over there looking after his property and talking with his real estate agent. The real estate agent was trying to talk him into moving to Tacoma to live because he had substantial property there. He owned two or three buildings in Tacoma and a big office building in Seattle. So I remember the real estate agent took us—all of us—out to the Pantages home. Remember the Pantages vaudeville? You don't remember it, of course, but that was a famous name in vaudeville and theatrical circles in the early 1900s. He had a magnificent estate there. Gee, it was a beautiful place to live all right, but Dad really wasn't interested in moving from Butte. So he came back here and involved himself in various things, a little practicing law, taking care of his own business then. For example I remember one time he arranged for, and I think paid for, a meeting at the Broadway Theatre here in Butte for some Indian from India who was traveling the country on the same kind of a program as the Irish were. He was looking for independence for India. I know that my father was instrumental in having him have a meeting here, tried to raise some money for them and that sort of thing. Well, he did that sort of thing.

He owned a lot of property on the east side of Butte. He owned about a couple of square blocks of property over there that had small homes on it. They were settled into by the Lebanese people who moved in here. So there was a whole colony of Lebanese people, and they rented the property from my father. My father wasn't happy with the situation, renting to these poor people—a lot of them were—so he gave each one of them the property that he owned. So they

elected him, and he was—I'm sure until the time of his death—the honorary president of the Lebanese society. (laughs) Every once in a while...Don't tell this to anyone because they'd have their feelings hurt, but every once in a while, he and my mother would have to go over there to their society and eat a Lebanese meal. It was such a greasy thing that it almost killed them. (laughs) Some of them even took his name when they became citizens. They changed their name to Murray so there are a lot of Lebanese Murrays around.

Well, he was always interested in politics. Was local chairman of the Democratic Party during that time over a period of time. Of course, he was very active in the Roosevelt [Franklin Delano Roosevelt] campaign, became very active in that. Was a delegate, and from that point on was just wrapped up in politics.

RM: Were Murray and [Thomas] Walsh very close?

WM: Oh yes, yes. I don't know where they are now, but I remember at the time that my father was first running for Walsh's...to fill out Walsh's term that I saw in his office a file of letters that exchanged between Walsh and my father over a period of years. They were always a very friendly nature, and Walsh's partner...I remember seeing a letter from Walsh's partner in which...who was Colonel Nolan...I remember seeing a letter from him to my father in which he thanked him for the financial and other support that my father had given the Senator in one of his campaigns.

RM: There was a fellow from the university who did a M.A. thesis a couple of years ago on the election of '56...1954, and he came over and interviewed you, at least he cited an interview with you. In one of the things he cited he stated or quoted you as saying essentially that when Senator Murray was first elected that he was a very wealthy man and that the course of years serving in politics for public causes and what not that the wealth declined.

WM: Well, he wasn't as wealthy as he had been a little earlier. By that time we were in the Depression and the values of one thing and another had gone down, but he was still a very well-to-do man.

RM: I ran across...I haven't really gone through too many Butte newspapers, but about 1930 or so, one of the times when he was elected or maybe even reelected to the county chairmanship he pledged his support financial... very explicit that he also pledged his financial support to the party and the newspapers pointed to that. I wondered if—

WM: Dad was a very generous man in big things, but he hated to see small waste. Two bits bothered him, but 100 dollars was okay. (laughs) So that when he ever went into anything he went into it with everything he had—his finances as well as his whole heart. I don't have any idea how much money he put into the Irish thing over a period of time. Of course he didn't even get expenses from them, and I know it must have been thousands of dollars that he put into that sort of thing you see. He lost a lot of his wealth in that fashion. I remember one thing

that Dad always said talking about money was that he didn't want to loan anybody any money. He'd give it to them. He said, "If I like a person, I'll try and give them the money, but I don't want to loan it to them because then they'll be mad at me." So, he would...People would come along and want to borrow money, and I know that he very often said, "No, I won't loan you 200 dollars, but I'll give you 100," or something like that. I remember my partner, Emay, Jack Emay, started out under my father practicing law. He was a young fellow and he was just getting married, and he wanted to borrow some money from my father. So my father gave him the money, and Jack said, "Well, I'll sign a note."

The Old Man said, "Well, no. Don't bother signing a note. That's not going to help you pay me back." So Jack said he borrowed money then regularly from my father but always paid him back.

But I don't know...Wheeler and my father were really never friendly, and their estrangement became worse as time went on. As Wheeler became more and more opposed to Roosevelt and my father was supporting him more and more, they just split up entirely. I recall in that connection one time, my father was always very liberal with his sons. We were all permitted and had our own independent judgment about anything. I remember at about that time in the '30s—it was sometime in the '30s—there was a banquet at the Finlen Hotel in which Senator Wheeler and I were the speakers. I spoke before Wheeler did, and in the course of that speech I was critical of the Senator. When he got up to speak, he was just filled with rage. He was sitting right next to me. He looked down, he shook his finger at me and he said, "Young man, I'm going to run you out of this state." (laughs)

I said, "Well, if you can, why, I'll be glad to get out."

RM: Was this after your father was already in the Senate?

WM: He was in the Senate, yes. Wheeler told me after he finished his speech...He turned around, and he said, "I'm going to tell your father about this the moment I get to Washington."

I said, "Well, fine, fine." (unintelligible)

So he went and told my father and my father said, "Well, what do you want me to do? Beat him up? He's done it, that was his opinion, and there's nothing I can do about that." Wheeler thought that that was just...my father, I suppose...that Wheeler thought that my father was using me to blast Wheeler, but that was not so. It was my own thinking and choosing. As I say, when my father decided to blast him himself, he did.

RM: Was this difference ever patched up?

[End of Tape 1, Side A]

[Tape 2, Side A]

DS: They campaigned against each other?

WM: Well yes, yes. My father was very anxious to get somebody to run against Wheeler in the Democratic primary.

DS: This was in '46?

WM: He tried to get...That was in '42, was it?

DS: Well, Senator Wheeler was defeated in '46, right after the war.

WM: In '46? Oh yes. Wait a minute...Yes, I guess it was. Well, I know that my father tried to interest Hugh Adair into becoming a candidate, and Hugh thought it over very seriously but decided not to although Hugh was no friend or admirer of Wheeler's. As a matter of fact, at a banquet in Helena that Wheeler was present at, Hugh Adair made a very strong attack upon him and his record as a Democrat.

RM: Quite a few people in this state, it seems to me that very awful strong against Wheeler.

WM: Well, yes. I suppose he either had very good friends or very bad enemies.

DS: One way or the other.

WM: Yes. Well, I think Wheeler was a hard man. I think that if you were with him, why fine, but if you were against him, I think he was a difficult enemy to deal with. I don't mean to say he was unscrupulous, but he was a hard man and I don't think sentiment ever interfered with him in anything in any way, I don't think. But finally they prevailed upon Leif Erickson to beat Wheeler. My father said, "The only place you can beat Wheeler is in the Democratic primary," because he had so many Republican friends that once he got the Democratic nomination why the Republicans never even put up a serious candidate against him in recent years. So your only place to defeat him was in the Democratic primary where you could convince the party members that he wasn't being a party member. That was the whole background of the thing—that he just didn't act as a member of the party at all. So that's what happened. Erickson defeated him, but Erickson just couldn't carry the—

DS: Your father backed Erickson quite a bit, didn't he, in the primary?

WM: Oh yes, oh yes, sure. He backed him with money and speeches and everything else that he could. No doubt about where his loyalties lay in that campaign.



DS: You don't happen to remember a book that was written in that campaign called *The Plot against America* and your father had anything to do with financing that?

WM: I don't know.

DS: It was just a kind of anti-Wheeler campaign pamphlet-type thing.

WM: No, I don't know, I don't recall that. Was it an anonymous thing or—?

DS: Well, it was written under a pseudonym. The author didn't use his real name.

WM: I don't think that my father would have had anything to do with that because he was subjected to that sort of thing himself so much that (laughs)—

DS: I know he was in '54.

WM: Well, a lot of other times, too, but Dad was a little more forthright. Everybody always knew where he stood on any issue, and he called you what he thought you were and that was it.

DS: Your father never really broke with Roosevelt very strongly on any main issue?

WM: No, no, no. You see, even his Irish friends turned against him here in Butte. He lost Butte in the '42 election because he voted for Lease-Lend [Lend-Lease Act] for England, and they couldn't understand an Irishman supporting England in any way some of them so they were very bitter. He just barely scraped by against...Rankin was the candidate. Rankin carried Butte, which was quite a surprise. (laughs) But that's how strongly the Irish people felt about it. He just lost this whole area up here where the Irish—

DS: Wheeler might have possibly given Rankin some support too.

WM: Oh yes, yes. Wheeler and Rankin were friends. Let me see...Yes, Wheeler and Rankin were friends up until about that time. After that Rankin and Wheeler...and after the election, when my father defeated Rankin, Rankin became a great supporter of my father's. It was a strange thing. (laughs) Ever after that in the...Let's see, when did Dad run? Yes, '42, '48, '54. In the '48 and '54 campaigns Rankin was a great supporter of my father's, and he used to—of course he was very interested in politics—he'd call up my brother's office or my father or get word to him some way and say, "Senator, you're losing ground in Lewistown. You have to get some work done down there. I'll give you the names of some of my friends." He particularly disliked...what was the name of the...Tom Davis who was the Republican candidate in '48. He disliked Tom very much, and I don't know what it came from but I'm sure that he was the...He did more work, I'm sure, to elect father than my father did (laughs) because he wanted to defeat Tom. As I say, I don't know what was behind it and all, but he was very interested in that particular campaign.

Well, I don't know what else I can tell you.

DS: Do you happen to recall a politician—I guess this guy was involved in politics—by the name of W.H. Kelly. He was from Miles City. He made a number of speeches that were strongly anti-Wheeler, and your father had them in his files (unintelligible) correspondence. I'm just trying to establish in some of these names the positions these people held.

WM: W.H. Kelly...Kelly. I don't know anything. That name doesn't click with me. Miles City. I know a friend of my father's in Miles City was a man named Nugent. Kelly...Wild Horse Kelly from Kalispell.

DS: Maybe.

WM: Do you know that name, Wild Horse Kelly?

DS: Right.

WM: He was the fellow that was promoting Hungry Horse. Hungry Horse Kelly, I mean they called him, not Wild Horse. Hungry Horse Kelly. He ran a little weekly newspaper, I believe, up there. I don't know. The name Kelly from Miles City doesn't ring a bell with me.

There were some articles written nationally about the senator, are you familiar with those?

DS: I ran across one in about a 1942 or '44 *Saturday Evening Post*.

WM: Oh, "Legionnaire Moses"?

RM: "Legionnaire Moses", right.

WM: (laughs) I think he said he figured that he could cure anything by passing a law or something like that. But, yes, that was one.

One of the staff members that worked with him wrote a book not particularly about him, but I think about the full employment act of '46 [Employment Act of 1946].

DS: There's been a book written about that.

WM: Yes. He has some kind of...As I recall it, there's some little biography in the book with reference to the senator. I don't know what it...I don't recall what it says now, or how much it has.

RM: Do you remember the fellow who wrote it, his name or even the title?

WM: I think it's *The Making of a Bill*, is the title of it. *The Making of a Bill*. He goes through the history of how they worked out and developed the full employment act which is still supposed to be the policy of the government, I suppose.

RM: Theoretically, yes. (laughs)

WM: But I don't know what they're doing to implement it at this point.

RM: Your father was appointed chairman of the PWA [Public Works Administration] board right after—

WM: Oh yes, right after Roosevelt was, yes.

RM: Was that Roosevelt's doing?

WM: Yes. It was Roosevelt and Bruce Kramer (?). I suppose, primarily Bruce Kramer and Roosevelt. At the same time my father was working on Roosevelt to appoint W.W. McDowell [William Wallace McDowell] as ambassador to Ireland.

RM: It sticks in the back of my mind that he died just

WM: He died as he made his welcoming speech, his speech at the banquet. He dropped dead. My brother, my younger brother, had gone over with W.W. McDowell as his private secretary.

RM: Charles?

WM: No, Edward. W.W. got up to say thanks to de Valera and all the gathered guests and dropped dead.

RM: I wondered what the circumstances were around his appointment. I thought it was probably just a "thank you" for his...Apparently he supported Roosevelt and was responsible for—

WM: Oh yes, yes, and then because he was particularly persona grata to de Valera because of his support to de Valera, you know, before freedom so that Bruce Kramer and the other leading Democrats of the state, I think, all supported McDowell for that appointment.

RM: You mentioned your brother Edward. I wonder if I could ask you what happened, if you can remember approximately when your brothers were born and passed away or just approximately—

WM: Yes, yes. Jim was born in 1906. I was born in 1908. About eighteen months later, I think in 1909, Ed was born. Then “Mike,”—Howard—would have born about 1911...Let's see. I was born in 1908...Yes, “Mike” would have been born in 1911. Charles was born in 1916...Wait a minute. No, Charles was born...Yes, Charles was born in 1916, and John was born in 1920.

John died in '36. He was 16 years old.

RM: Accident?

WM: No, he had played a game of football on the Central High team here. When he came home after the game, he didn't feel well and didn't want to eat dinner. So he went to bed, and Mother took him up something and left him. An hour or two later she went back to check up on him, and he had a terrible fever. She called the doctor, and they couldn't do anything with him at all. He died the next morning. They performed an autopsy, and he had a strep infection. They figured...It was so rapid. He had a cut on his arm was the only thing that they could see where he probably got the infection.

Then “Mike”—Howard...nickname was “Mike,” died in, gee, 1952 or something like that. Gee, I don't remember those dates. Then Ed died later, and then a couple of years ago Jim died.

DS: Were you and all your brothers in the service during the Second World War?

WM: Were what?

DS: During the Second World War were all of you in the Armed Forces, weren't you?

WM: No. Jim, the oldest one wasn't. I was, Ed was, and “Mike” was. But Jim and Charles were not. They were both—what did they call it—4F. Mike was a demolition expert. He was a mining engineer, and he knew how to use explosives and that sort of thing.

RM: What did your other brothers do? Charles was a lawyer I take it—

WM: No, Charles graduated from the University of Michigan in economics. Jim was a lawyer, graduated from Harvard.

Ed was a...Oh, I don't know what he was. He wrote some, and he was interested in dramatics and worked for...Really right after McDowell died, he went to England and got a job on the French desk of the AP [Associated Press]. His French wasn't good enough, and he garbled up a story or two so he got canned. He went over to France, then, and lived and worked in France for about a year or so then came back to this country. He had graduated from Dartmouth, originally, and then went to Yale and got a master's degree in drama. He worked for...gee, I forget the name of the television company for some time. I can't remember it.

Mike was a mining engineer. He worked all over the world. He worked in Alaska, in Panama Canal, in Panama, in Guatemala, and one of the South American countries, I forget which one— Venezuela or Ecuador. Worked in Saudi Arabia, Alaska. He just kind of bummed around the world.

RM: They tend to do that. I knew a fellow in Denver who was a mining engineer, and the list of countries that he could rattle off that he worked—

WM: Yes.

RM: He worked for a single company, and they'd just ship him.

When did your mother die if I may ask?

WM: Isn't that terrible?

RM: There are some letters which indicated she was very sick right after the senator was elected.

WM: She was ill for quite a while. She never really had good health after my little brother, my youngest brother, died. That took the starch out of her, but she had a long, hard...Well, she was in Johns Hopkins Hospital for two different times for about a year at a time. Gee, when did Mother die? Mother died about 1951, I suppose. Yes, I think so.

RM: Did your father's mother ever come to Butte?

WM: Oh, yes. She died in Seattle after my father finished school. Old James A., of course, put him through school. After my father finished school and his brother came out here too, then later—

RM: To Butte?

WM: To Butte. Mark Murray, Marcus Murray—

RM: Was he a lawyer also?

WM: No, no, he didn't have an education beyond high school. He was a telegrapher on the Canadian Pacific Railroad. [telephone rings] I think it was the Canadian Pacific or the Michigan Central. In any event he quit and came out here, and shortly after that is when they set up the United States Building and Loan Association. He and a man named Haggarty were the people that ran it to start with.

My father had a sister, May Murray, who came out and went to Seattle and worked in old James A.'s bank. Her mother came with her to Seattle, but her mother was in Butte, of course, several times. I remember visiting with her in Seattle, too, staying at her home there. There was another sister in the family who was a nun. She was a nun in Canada and died just...died after my father did. She died about five or six years ago, I guess.

DS: Did you have any relatives who were involved in the WPA [Works Progress Administration] in Butte in the '30s? I came across one of your aunts or—

WM: Oh yes, yes. Elinor Horgan (?). I don't know what she did with the WPA but—

DS: What about any of the rest of the family? Were you involved in WPA?

WM: No.

RM: I wrote to St. Thomas High School, used to be St. Thomas College, where your father went to school and they sent back his grades.

WM: (laughs) I don't—

RM: He didn't do too poorly. I brought them along. I thought you might enjoy taking a look at them, if I can find them here in my collection of stuff. There we go.

WM: Did you ever write, did you write to...Oh, what's the name of the college he went to?

RM: Oh, New York University?

WM: No, where he got his AB degree. St. Jerome's in Berlin, Canada.

RM: Right. It's now a high school. It used to be St. Jerome's College. A little thing xeroxed on the back I guess is their graduation brochure. They went through and underlined all of his activities.

WM: There were two or three boys from St. Thomas over the years that my father used to see...who were successful men, you know. They used to get together and talk about...I can't remember their names even now. Well, one man's name was Lowry (?). Another man—I can't think of it—he had become president of Western Union. They used to talk about old times.

My father had a nickname when he was a youngster. [long pause] He used to hang around the railroad yard...After his father died, they moved into London, Ontario, and my father used to hang around the railroad yard there and act as a messenger boy for the railroad crews that used to come through on the Michigan Central...the things that they wanted to buy in Canada. So he spent all of his spare time hanging around the railroad yards, and they called him—because of that—they called him Smokey...They called him Smokey Jim from the smoke from

the trains he was always involved in. (laughs) I remember that. I remember Dad being called that because one of those men that he visited with had said, "Well, do you remember when we used to call you Smokey Jim."

Well, I don't know what else I can tell you that—

RM: The question has come up...couple people have wondered and I think it happens with any politician in this period of time and that would be what the Senator's relationship with the Anaconda Company was. They say during that period of time you had to have some kind of rapport with the company to get elected, and people wonder—

WM: No. He had a very poor relationship with the company, and it went back years. It went back to the time he was first here because the company didn't want anybody independent. So they didn't like old James A. Murray to start with, and they were not friendly. My father wasn't friendly with them. Actually up until the time Glover became president of the Anaconda Company—

RM: When was this?

WM: Well, about 1950 or something like that, maybe a little before, but at least up until that time they couldn't...I don't think they even corresponded with him as a senator, and I know that no one from the Anaconda Company had ever come to his office. But, Glover started to try to kind of...He was the senator, and Glover thought they ought to be able to use him as a senator because his interests should be the same as theirs generally speaking. That is—the economics of the thing from Montana—that should be his interest as well as theirs. So they started, in the late '40s, to try to have some relationship, and they did establish a good relationship at that time. But up until that time they had always opposed him politically and every other way. There were many people involved in the company, as I say, that he wouldn't even speak to, like Dan Kelly, who was the vice-president here. Dan was the, as I recall it...Oh, Dan was...What the devil, I can't recall. Dan was vice-president, and my father was in town and at the Finlen Hotel and Dan...I don't know what he said to him, but...I wasn't there. As I understood it later, my father told him never to speak to him again and he'd have no part in anything he would say or do. But I think it was during the war, and what it was about I don't know but I know the relationship was just...There was no relationship. They were opposed to him, and he felt that they were not being responsible to their employees, generally speaking, that they didn't pay them enough, didn't treat them as human beings. That was his general opinion of the Anaconda Company.

DS: I ran across a paper I did a couple years ago that James A. had supported [Fritz Augustus] Heinze when Heinze fought the company. I figured that if your father was at all affiliated with James A. that there would be little love lost.

WM: Yes, yes. They were more friendly with Heinze and W.A. Clark than with the company. There just never was any relationship between the company and either James A. or my father

until Glover became president and started a campaign of establishing some rapport and eventually did. I think that in many instances thereafter that my father was able to be of some assistance to them in their economic problems with the government.

DS: He supported the tariff on ore imports or something...Had something to do with ore imports way back into the war or something. He was interested, at least, in various types of metals coming in prior to that. Are there any particular hobbies or anything along that line that your father had that he would—?

WM: No, he was just an omnivorous reader. He enjoyed reading, and that was his biggest hobby. When we were young, he was quite a skater, and we had our own rink and skated a lot. He liked to hike and that sort of thing, but he didn't used to play cards or collect anything. As I say, reading and reading to us was one of his...He loved to read and declaim, I mean, read it with some kind of meaning.

RM: I noticed he was pretty good in oratory here.

WM: Yes, so he used to do that. He used to try...he always wanted to get us interested in books and in reading. When we were young, gee, I can remember he had a big...Mother and Dad had a big mahogany bed—in my mind it's like a big king-sized bed—I suppose it was about this big. (laughs) I remember when we'd go to bed, or if Dad'd go to bed early, then we'd all pile into bed with him and have him tell us a story. God, he could make up fantastic stories. (laughs) We loved it.

RM: Where was your residence in Butte?

WM: Well, we had two residences. That is, we lived in two difference places. One was at 1030—

[End of Tape 2, Side A]



[Tape 1, Side B]

WM: The home was originally built by W.A. Clark's brother. What was his name? Ross Clark, I believe. Then Ross Clark sold it to Creighton Hardy (?) who was my wife's uncle and then Creighton mortgaged the house to the old Monida Trust.

RM: Is that company still in existence?

WM: Yes, but it doesn't have any going concern in what...we own a few pieces of property is all.

RM: It was never public at all?

WM: No, no. But he mortgaged the house to the Monida Trust, and then the Monida Trust foreclosed, I suppose, on it. Then later my father bought it from the Monida Trust, and we moved into that house which was a...It was a fine lovely place, a magnificent place. It was built, as I say, with imported wood and all that sort of thing. It was a magnificent place. As we all disappeared and everything, my father and mother didn't have any use for it, and they sold it.

RM: Where was that house located?

WM: It's on 321 W. Broadway. It's on the northeast corner of Broadway and Washington.

RM: Still standing?

WM: Oh, yes, it's a magnificent building. It's owned now by the Shriners. It's kind of a club, but it's kind of built in the style of a castle—big turret, big fire—

RM: There were beautiful homes during that period.

WM: Oh, yes. Well, this was four stories high. The top floor was a magnificent big ball room, and several other rooms—a bath up there. Quite a place.

RM: Then did your folks move to a third residence or (unintelligible) Caledonia they moved to then?

WM: No, they never actually lived in Butte after that. My mother was ill and Dad was in Washington [D.C.] all the time so that whenever they came to Butte they used to stay with us when I was here or at the hotel. Many times when he'd come to Butte or when Mother would come to Butte, actually they'd stay out at Boulder. We owned Boulder Hot Springs, and they'd stay out there and just drive back and forth to Butte.

DS: Did your father always have pretty good relations with the state Democratic Party organization?

WM: Oh yes.

DS: I just wanted to know since your father and Wheeler opposed each other so strongly in the Senate in Washington if there ever was any struggle for influence over the party organized in the state?

WM: Well, yes, there was because Wheeler was pretty much in control of it at the time my father was elected—first elected. From then on it just became a political struggle to control it. As I say, because Wheeler wasn't thought of as a good party member really, it was just gradually, my father was the main...The state organization almost followed whatever he suggested for several years. It was that they would do anything that he wanted them to do.

RM: Was your father involved in any major law cases that come to mind? I might be able to look up just the documents if there was anything along that line or was most of it James A. Murray under Monida Trust? Something along that line?

WM: Yes. He was engaged in a lot of mining claims litigation, and he was engaged in litigation in California and in Idaho, too. I don't know if there's anything famous about any of it.

RM: I was just wondering. Sometimes if there's a case, for example, that made the Butte newspapers, you often get an idea of how the press treated the lawyer, who...That's what I was kind of interested in, to see how they were favoring him in a given situation for a mine or against.

WM: Well, I don't think of anything. I remember one case, but I don't remember...I heard him mention one case in which he defended one of his Lebanese friends in a criminal case. I'm not sure whether it was a man named Thomas, I believe, in which he (laughs)...I think he was charged with castrating some fellow.

RM: I'll be darned.

WM: I don't know what the outcome of the case was or anything, but I remember that there was some such case and I—

RM: That would be interesting covered in the press anyway.

WM: Yes (laughs). Well, do you have anything you can think of?

DS: I think we've pretty well covered just about everything.

There are a couple of names here that you might be familiar with—a man by the name of Joseph E. Parker.

WM: Oh, yes, Joe. Joe's still alive.

DS: Is that right?

WM: Yes, he's down in San Francisco. Joe was the proprietor of Walker's Saloon. He was a partner in that, and he also was a partner in the Parker-Verrelli Automobile Agency (?). They sold Studebakers and some other car at that time. Then Joe became the WPA administrator here in Butte and eventually became the state administrator. Then he became postmaster here in Butte. He's retired and lives in—

DS: Wasn't he involved in some of your father's campaigns?

WM: Oh, yes. Joe and my father were very good friends. My father actually was more friendly with Joe's brother, Patsy Parker, who was...Well, Patsy Parker was a partner of my uncle Ed's—Ed Horgan—my mother's brother. Patsy Parker and he were partners in a department store in Tacoma, and that was dissolved. I don't really know how or what the circumstances were. As a matter of fact, I suppose partly because of the illness of my uncle Ed, and he died shortly. But Patsy Parker then went to Canada and worked for the Hudson Bay Company and became one of their directors or governors, I think they call them, and was very successful and retired to Ireland and bought a castle (laughs). So my father's first connection with the Parker family was through my mother's family, through Ed Horgan. Then my father and Joe were very friendly, and my father thought Joe was a very astute politician—very smart. He was a smart Irishman and those...I don't think he went beyond the third grade school, but he was really a smart, able fellow and just like Hugh Daly. Hugh Daly was another...Well, when he died he was...he had the Daly-Shea undertaking establishment here.

DS: Your father might have been partly responsible getting Parker appointed.

WM: Oh yes. I mean he appointed him. I mean he saw to it that he was appointed. There was no doubt about that. As a matter of fact, that was one of the fights between Wheeler and my father.

DS: Yes, another name I came across (unintelligible) was Jim Love.

WM: Yes, yes. He was from Miles City too.

DS: Well, he was the boss of WPA.

WM: Yes, yes. Jim Love was the deputy administrator, I believe.

DS: He was right underneath Parker.

WM: Yes. Mr. Hart of Hart-Albin, dry-good department store in Billings was a great friend of Wheeler's. Among the things that my father politically engineered was, I assume, was to get rid of Hart because he was Wheeler's pal and put Parker in because he was his pal. (laughs) So, that was one of the things that Wheeler—

DS: I know I just came across half a letter by Wheeler protesting against Jim Love being fired.

WM: Oh well, I suppose that maybe he was there when Hart was the administrator and was still there when Parker became administrator and then Parker fired him. I don't recall anything about it.

I don't know anything particular that I could tell you over and above what I have that would be of any significance to you. My father must have lost an awful lot of money when he had five of us in college at one time. (laughs) That ate up some of his money, I'm sure of that. At one time...let's see if I can get it: Charles was at Michigan, Howard was at Stanford, Edward was at Yale, I was at Georgetown, and Jim was at Harvard.

DS: All at the same time?

WM: Yes. So I know that took a bundle. Edward and Jim both got their AB degrees at Dartmouth, but other than that everyone went to a different school.

RM: Did your father ever know Wheeler, or have any dealings with Wheeler before Wheeler ran for the Senate?

WM: I'm sure.

RM: Wheeler was what, the federal District Attorney?

WM: Yes, he was a U.S. District Attorney, and, oh, yes, I'm sure that...Oh, one thing and another, maybe...Wasn't Wheeler involved with the old *Butte Bulletin*?

DS: Is that the labor paper?

[Interviewers talking at the same time]

WM: That was supposed to be a Bolshevik paper, but my father donated money to them. Gave them money, I know that.

DS: They had a couple of write-ups on your father.

RM: It was primarily in terms of Irish culture.

WM: Well, that may be if they were supporting the Irish.

RM: They were pro-labor and labor tended to be Irish.

WM: Well, I suppose that was what that connection was.

DS: Do you remember if your father was particularly critical of Wheeler before your father entered the Senate in the 1920s?

WM: I don't know how critical he was, but I know that they just weren't friends. He just had no regard for Wheeler while he was a great admirer of Walsh's. That's the best I can tell you. Dad was a very...I don't know anybody or anything that he ever carried on as long as he did against Wheeler. He was a very forgiving person. Politically...I know sometimes the rest of the family would just be wild at somebody for something they said or did, you know, and think that it was a terrible thing that they'd done to Dad. Dad would say, "Forget it, forget it. Next time he'll probably be for us." He didn't carry a grudge, but he and Wheeler manages to— (laughs)

DS: I know during the war Wheeler was having Nazi or pro-Nazi things said against him. Did your father—?

WM: (laughs) I never heard him say it just that way, but I know that he thought that Wheeler was not doing the country a service by being so critical of—

DS: While we're on this subject, was he ever called the committee to defend America by aiding the Allies? Maybe to oppose Wheeler or anything?

WM: I wouldn't doubt it but I don't recall it, no.

RM: Certainly funny Wheeler was Bolshevik Bert in 1920.

WM: In 1920, yes, yes.

DS: And in '46 he was pro-Nazi.

RM: Pretty good transition.

WM: You see the company was against Roosevelt too—the Anaconda Company—and they owned the papers here. When Wheeler was running for governor, back in 1920, he made a big speech in which he said, "If you ever see my picture on the front page of the Anaconda Company papers then you'll know I've sold out." About that time they were putting his picture on the paper every...My father would always say, "Well, you see, he sold out. He's the company's boy now." A lot of politicians felt that way about it, that he had sold—

DS: Probably didn't happen—

RM: He was so violent against the company in the 1920 primary, and then he was elected to the Senate and made some very pro-company speeches about '26. It was really suspicious in a six-year period to see such a drastic change in his rhetoric.

WM: Of course I don't know what was all involved, but I can see that...You know it's easy enough to criticize somebody when you don't have any responsibilities in the matter, and so much easier to tear the head off of the company when you don't have to make any decisions with reference to anything involving them. But then when you get to the United States Senate and you have to vote upon matters that have economic significance in Montana, you find yourself maybe supporting the Anaconda Company. I don't know whether that's what was behind Wheeler or whether he made some kind of a deal. I don't have any idea. I just don't believe everybody's all bad, so I wouldn't...I would think that the things he did he did honestly however mistaken.

RM: He was just an independent man and I think probably—

WM: Yes, yes, that was the trouble between Wheeler and my father, both of them. You see, in that regard they were very much alike. Nobody was going to tell either one of them what to do or when to do it or how.

DS: Your father was a lot more loyal to the party.

WM: Yes, oh yes. He belonged to Tammany Hall when he was going to school, and I think he had a kind of a training in party responsibility. One of his friends became...Oh, I forget what they call it now—some name, Indian name they have for the chief of Tammany Hall. Judge Olvany, who was a friend in school with my father, and he later—years later—became the chief of Tammany Hall. Now, of course, Tammany Hall was corrupt in many ways. I guess there's no doubt about it, but it also, in its time, was almost a necessary political organization for poor people and to give them some voice, to give them some help.

RM: That's really the only way you can do it in a large city.

WM: Yes. So my father...I don't know why or how, but just as a young fellow while he was in school he joined Tammany Hall.

RM: And he was active in the Democratic Party for an awful long time before he was senator, too.

WM: Oh, yes, sure. He enjoyed it. I think he would be very understanding of the sense that's widespread today—not the violence of it because he wouldn't go for that—but he would

understand the problems and despair that a lot of young people feel with what's happening to the world.

RM: Do you mind if I ask about the origin of your tie pin there?

WM: (laughs) That's the Camelback Inn in Phoenix, Arizona. They have a golf tournament down there every year, and they gave these out as a—

RM: Well, if you have no more questions, we'll let you get out of here.

(Break in audio)

WM: Well (unintelligible) some enterprising reporter took their picture behind the bars (unintelligible) every paper in the East particularly. (unintelligible) Anyway, my father at the time was on a political mission in California. Of course he got the word right away. When he came back from California he came back up to Butte, I met him at the depot, and he said, "Where's Charles?"

I said, "Well, he's gone to Washington.

He said, "What the hell's he gone to Washington for?" (laughs)

I said, "Well, he just thought he'd go back." Charles had come home to Butte, and in the meantime I'd talked to my father on the phone and he was wild, of course, that Charles had called him the judge and getting all that fine publicity. So I knew what his attitude toward Charles would be. So I said to Charles, "You better get out of town."

When I got the telegram from my father, he said, "Meet me at the North Coast Limited, such and such a date."

I told Charles, "You better get out of town before he gets here."

So Charles said, "What'll I do?"

I said, "Why don't you go to Washington?"

He said, "What'll I do in Washington?"

I said, "Well, go down to the office and kind of take over." The fella that was running his office at this point wasn't competent at all. I said, "Go on in, take over, and by the time the Old Man gets back" ...We always referred to him by the way of the Old Man, affectionately, and he referred to himself as the Old Man, too. He'd answer the telephone and someone would say, "Is that you Doug?" and he'd say, "No, this is the Old Man." (laughs)

But I said, "Just go on back, take over, tell them the Old Man sent you." So Charles did, and by the time the Old Man got back to Washington, Charles was running his office. Seems to me...I'm not too sure, but I kind of think that he never even mentioned it to Charles. By that time he'd simmered down and forgotten about it, and Charles was there and he was glad to have him. So that was the way it ended.

RM: He went about in the 1940s sometime?

WM: That was in...Oh no, that was in maybe '37.

RM: I didn't realize Charles was that good at law. I don't know where I got the impression that he...Well, was he just free then—?

WM: Oh, yes, I'm sure you'll hear from him because he said he'd be glad to supply you with any information.

RM: There are probably some other people in the seminar who will probably have more questions for him than I will or a more political nature.

WM: Yes, well, you see anything in that connection. Another thing...I think that Charles has all the dates and everything. I don't. He could supply you with all that kind of information that I can't. I was always just kind on the outside of the whole political thing except during the campaign itself. I used to make speeches, go around the state and make talks and that sort of thing. Otherwise I really didn't know much about what was going on.

I lived in Washington for about six months after the war, I opened an office there, and I had so much business that I...My brother was in Los Angeles, Jim, lawyer. I had so much business I sent for him to come back, and by the time he got there I was so sick of Washington, I said, "The hell with it. I'm going back home." (laughs) So I left him there and came back out here and went back to practicing with my partner, Mr. Eimite—Jack Eimite (?).

RM: How long have you been a judge here?

WM: Well, '49, 21 years. My partner was quite a man. He was a great, great fellow. When I finished law school, I looked around for a job, and I finally decided that I was just going to open my own office and practice law because my father had an office and had a law library. So I thought it'd be cheap for me to open an office to move into his and so I did. Mr. Eimite had his own office, and I went to him and said, "Mr. Eimite, I'm just opening an office now, if there are any little things that you don't want to be bothered with I'd appreciate your sending them to me." (laughs)



He looked at me—he had kind of a blank face—and he kind of looked at me with that dead pan and said, “Oh, I don't think I could do that.” I looked at him and I thought, “My, what kind of a guy is this?” My father had started him out and really gave him a real opportunity, and as I say it flashed through my mind that he was a peculiar fellow. He said, “I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll go into partnership with you 50-50.” (laughs)

“You've lost your mind,” I said. That's what I said to him. “You've lost your mind.”

He said, “No.”

He said, “You'll be getting more than your share now. The time will come when I'll be getting more than my share.” He moved up to the office and closed his office and moved up to mine because I had the better library and everything, and we practiced law together. I made more money the first six months than I ever thought I'd make in my life. It was a remarkable thing. Gee, he was a kind, nice fellow. We never had a word we weren't in agreement with.

His wife used to be kind of a final bookkeeper. At the end of the year she'd go over the books and recapitulate everything and figure out where we stood. She found out that Jack had cheated me out of 1,000 dollars. (laughs) In the course of the bookkeeping, there was some mistake made, and I had another 1,000 dollars coming. By god, I sure kidded Jack about that, of course, and his wife was the one that found it.

RM: Butte has sure changed since I first came here. That pit [Berkeley Pit] seems to be moving all the time. Don hasn't been in Montana very long, and I took him out there. It keeps moving in.

WM: When they blast in the pit, you see, this building trembles.

DS: Really?

WM: Really. We tried to get them to remodel the building about ten years ago, and it's been in the fire ever since. So they just did it now, and I think within ten years the thing will be tumbling down because of the earth movement.

[End of Interview]