

Frank Rudd: This tape is the property of Tales of Cape Cod Incorporated and cannot be reproduced without their written permission. Today's date is June 29, 1978, and we are at the home of Judge Henry Allen Murphy of 19 Rolling Hitch Road in Centerville, Massachusetts. Murphy, are you native to the Cape?

Henry Murphy: I'm a native of Cape Cod. That's right. I was born in Hyannis [on] February 13, 1907.

FR: Do you recall your grandparents or your great-grandparents?

HM: I recall my great-grandparents – let's see, wait a minute now. My father was James Murphy. His father was Patrick Murphy. That would be my great-grandfather. He died hunting gold out in Oregon sometime back in the middle half of the last century. I don't know the date.

FR: Was he involved in the Gold Rush?

HM: Yes. He was involved in the Gold Rush.

FR: How did he get out there?

HM: Went around the horn on the sailing ship. And I had a letter which had been mislaid, which he wrote from out there as to the conditions and as to how hard it was to get by, to live among that.

FR: How did he earn a living up there?

HM: Well, I don't know. I can't tell you that. I don't know. Trying to find gold, I know that. I assume he worked as a laborer.

FR: Was he at all successful?

HM: Not to my knowledge. No. He died out there, actually.

FR: What about your grandfather? Do you recall him?

HM: My grandfather –

FR: Your paternal grandfather?

HM: My paternal grandfather. Well, that would be my paternal grandfather.

FR: I see.

HM: Yeah, I'm sorry. That would be my paternal grandfather. Great grandfather, I have no knowledge of him.

FR: Where did your paternal grandfather come from originally?

HM: Came originally from County Cork, Ireland.

FR: Do you have any knowledge of why he came over here?

HM: Well, I think it was because of the potato famine in Ireland. During those years, they were very hard-pressed to find enough to eat. And a lot of the Irish immigrated to America about that time, the middle or late '40s, 1840s.

FR: Did he marry your grandmother over here?

HM: He married her, so far as I know, over here. She was Bridget Liberty. And I think at that time, she was living in Sandwich or thereabouts. Married her here, and she came over about the same time from Ireland.

FR: What did they do for a livelihood?

HM: He was a farmer and a blacksmith. And he had a farm, that's within my memory, up on – just north of Stevens Street that's named after him. His name was Thomas Stevens. Oh, wait a minute, that's my maternal grandfather.

FR: Correct.

HM: Right. My maternal grandfather was Thomas Stevens, and that street Stevens Street is named after him. He had a farm right there at that location, and he had also been and was a blacksmith.

FR: Judge Murphy, what did your father do?

HM: My father was a baker. He was in the baking business under the trade name of Murphy Brothers Bakery. He was in that business with his brother Patrick. And there were four in that family, James, William, Patrick, and one girl, Bridget, who died many years ago, of course. I think she died first and then Patrick, then my father, and then the – they were in the baking business right now where the Heritage House is located in Hyannis.

FR: That's a gift shop?

HM: That's a motel.

FR: Motel?

HM: Motel. And they were there for, oh, I would think, perhaps forty to fifty years in the baking business. And they used to deliver bakery products by horse and wagon all

throughout Barnstable, the town of Barnstable from [inaudible] all the way through to [inaudible] Barnstable.

FR: Did you work in the bakery?

HM: I worked there. Yeah.

FR: Tell us about it.

HM: I went to work there early in the morning, probably around 5:00 until school time. Then I went to school, and after school, I came and worked after that. And during the summer, I had to work there during my summer vacation for a good part of it, which I didn't like, of course, but however.

FR: Do you recall what you got paid?

HM: I don't think I got actually a salary. Of course, I had a lot of good things to eat, especially peanuts that everyone enjoyed. Of course, in those days, donuts were, I remember this, ten cents a dozen, and baker's dozen was called, that was thirteen; they threw in an extra one. Ten cents a dozen.

FR: Ten cents a dozen.

HM: Now they're, oh Lord, a dollar or something, a dollar-twenty, I think.

FR: What did a loaf of bread cost?

HM: A loaf of bread was ten cents, fifteen for the big ones, if my memory serves me right. Big, long loaf of bread. It was real bread, nothing like this –

FR: Tell me, did you have a special formula or –?

HM: I don't think so. I don't remember, particularly the formula and all. My father worked hard and whatever – he had succeeded a man by the name of, I think, (John Morris?) [who] had owned that. He worked for him. And whatever that formula was, he picked those up, and they used to make bread and cake and pies and donuts and all kinds of foods like that.

FR: If you had bread a day old, what would happen to that?

HM: Seems to me we'd give it away after a day or two. I think that's what was just done with that, as far as I remember.

FR: He must have had the business during the Depression.

HM: Yes. He sold that business right about just before, seemed to me it was about '27 or eight, which would've been just before the Depression. I think so. Right in there somewhere. Now, wait a minute now. Maybe – I correct myself. I think it was in perhaps the early part of the Depression that he disposed of it. It could have been 1931, '32.

HM: Were you hurt by the Depression?

FR: Oh yes, we were. Everyone was affected by that very badly. I was then just getting out of law school. You can imagine; you couldn't buy a job, never mind step into a law office. It was just wicked. Bank holidays and breadlines and poverty that's never been seen, I don't think like it was here then, not in the United States, that's for sure because that was certainly the Great Depression.

FR: Was there a dole? Was there a welfare department?

HM: Oh, yeah. A welfare department. But mostly, I remember there were long breadlines in the city, people without any food who stood in line and were passed out enough to get by for the day. As I said, the banks were closed for a certain period there. Money was, of course, very scarce, and people dealt in commodities, really. If you had some bread, perhaps, or some article of clothing or food, you could exchange that for something else. And it really was bad. There were many suicides, of course; millionaires in New York were jumping out of windows there in the '29 to '31 period.

FR: In a sense, they were working the barter system?

HM: They were working the barter system. No question about that. And we had a farm up there, which we farmed more than it had been for many years before. Potatoes and corn, and well, every vegetable. We raised a lot. You had to dig; it was tough.

FR: Did you in your store have to extend a lot of credit to people?

HM: Oh, yes. A lot of credit. Yeah. A lot of credit. Everyone did. I don't remember, really, but a lot of it was never paid, of course. Because the people never got to the point where they were able to.

FR: When you came back from law school, did you go to work in the bakery?

HM: No. I went then to Boston to start to try to practice law, took the bar, passed the bar, and worked up in Boston for a while, a year or two. And that was a hard role then because, gosh, lawyers were a dime a dozen, and jobs were – there were none. I think I started with a professional collection agency because of the fact there were a lot of bankruptcies and assignments and a lot of debts owed. I felt there's a chance perhaps to make some money because of collecting bills and certainly plenty owed [inaudible]. I lasted another couple of years, but, oh, that was tough. Oh, man.

FR: How did they pay you?

HM: Well, the only way you could get paid was by the week. You'd get so much a week – ten dollars, fifteen dollars a week. Some bills perhaps you'd never finish paying. You'd get something on it, but it was mostly for doctors, lawyers, dentists, and professionals. Then I came back to the Cape.

FR: Did you get a percentage of the –?

HM: Yeah, twenty-five percent [inaudible] of what we'd collect. So you had to go out and really scratch. People were really – but if you got someone that was getting out of debt and taking some money in, you could get something on account anyway. So we did it; we'd get by.

FR: Then you came back to the Cape?

HM: Then I came back to the Cape. Yeah. I went in and practiced law with the Late Charles C. Payne, who was quite a well-known lawyer on the Cape and a well-known family. There was a doctor in the family, Dr. (Alonzo?) K. Payne. His brother was an architect, Al Frank Payne, and built many of the homes in Hyannis Port and in Hyannis.

FR: They were local Cape people.

HM: They were local Cape people. Their father, whose name was – first name slips my mind – was born, I think, in Hyannis Port. As I say, they were – one of them was an architect. One was a doctor. And Charles, that I went with, was a lawyer. Three boys and the father. I think he was Alonzo, too. They built a great many homes around this area. In Hyannis Port [inaudible]. Charles Payne was Town Counsel in Barnstable for many years. Many years. And a good lawyer. Died somewhere shortly after the last [inaudible], call it, '47, eight, nine, in there somewhere.

FR: Prior to your judgeship, were you active in town government?

HM: Yes, I was. I was a moderator here for something like, I think, about sixteen years, seventeen years. I was on the school committee back in the middle '30s. I was a member of the school board for, I think, three terms, four-year terms. Oh, I served on many boards and many committees in the community over a period of probably forty years.

FR: Your family was too very active.

HM: Family was very active. My brother Tom was a selectman for, I think, more than twenty years. My brother Bill was a court officer for a great many years. And both my sisters moved away, married, and lived elsewhere, came back here. My oldest sister, Louisa, just died this past winter. She was the wife of John B. Curley, mother of the present presiding justice of the First District Court, where I was seventeen years. My other sister – her husband worked as a newspaperman for the Providence Journal, and he

died about ten years ago. She's now come back to the Cape and lives over here in Centerville.

FR: Murphy, what is your wife's maiden name?

HM: My wife was Mary Elizabeth Hickey, and she was born in Wakefield, Massachusetts. She had been a summer resident of Cape Cod prior to that. I met her when I used to sailboats in Lewis Bay.

FR: What type of boats did you sail?

HM: Knockabouts mostly, in the races there at the Hyannis Yacht Club; I was the Commodore there for three or four years, if I remember, way back. I met her early in my sailing career, call it, and married her in 1941. We have six children.

FR: When you asked Mrs. Murphy to be your bride, did you ask her father for her hand?

HM: Well, I think I – not in so many words, but I did ask, of course, or told him that I'm going to marry her. And there was no objection. As a matter of fact, I think they were –

FR: You took the positive approach?

HM: Yes. I felt that was the best way to go at it being a lawyer. She was quite happy, I'm sure. And we've had a very happy life for thirty-eight years now.

FR: Tell me, during your courtship, what would you do? Where would you go?

HM: Well, we would go to various places on the Cape. There were at that time, of course, some nightclubs in existence, and we'd go dancing. Perhaps in Falmouth, somewhere West Falmouth; we'd drive up there sometimes and around Hyannis to various places to eat. Even at that time, there were many places, good places to eat and socialize. I don't particularly remember any particular place, but I know there were many, and we did visit many and enjoyed the facilities.

FR: Did you go to the movies?

HM: We'd go to the movies, yeah.

FR: Do you remember any movies that you saw?

HM: No, not really.

FR: Were they silent pictures?

HM: They were at first. Let me see. Back in '41, I'm not certain whether they were – I think they were, actually. No, no. I think they were talking then. Yeah, but I can remember the silent movies at the old Idle Hour theater. They had a piano player by the name of Parker, and they showed silent movies. Of course, that's before this time; this is way back when I was a young boy. But they did have them then. But I think the talkies came in sometime in the early '30s or somewhere in there, if my memory serves me right. I didn't mention my boy Henry Jr. is Town Council of Barnstable now. And Douglas is also a lawyer. They're both practicing law here in Hyannis, which makes me feel quite –

FR: Did they matriculate at Georgetown?

HM: They went to Georgetown University also, and then onto law school. One went to Boston College Law, and the other to Suffolk Law. Then I have two other boys' one's a graduate of BC [Boston College], and he's in the insurance business. I have one boy, Christopher, who's a senior at BC, and he's majoring in computer science. He'll be out this coming year. I have two girls, one married, who lives in Washington DC, to a doctor there, and I have another younger girl who's going to be married this fall, Mary Pat [Patricia]. That's all of them.

FR: Judge Murphy, I should imagine in your profession as a judge, you came to know an awful lot of people that are famous in many ways.

HM: Yes, I certainly did. I had practiced law here some twenty-odd years before I was appointed to the bench. And, of course, I'd gotten to know a great many people in the community and on the Cape, and from all over Massachusetts, and all over the United States for that matter, who came here in the summer to live or visit. So when I was appointed judge and got on the bench, I had a great many people whom I had met or knew or knew of, or had seen, or had known during my career as a lawyer. And a great many of those were congressmen; there were judges of the United States district courts. And they were judges from the state courts. And there were congressmen and senators who lived or visited here one time or another. Some of those prominent families got into difficulty and appeared before me. In the course of events, they were treated just the same as everyone else. I might add that being a judge in a community of this kind, small, in a sense, and yet inhabited in the summer by what, perhaps twenty times the population in the winter, with all those prominent people involved, it was a very difficult task, really. It was difficult to keep objective, but I think I managed all those years to do so. Even though it was sometimes very trying, we got through them safely, let's say, and any judgments we made or passed on anyone certainly [was] done with knowledge of all the facts and all the circumstances, and a decision that was commensurate with the offense that had been committed. But I have to add that we were loaded with prominent people, no question. It made it very difficult to maintain a –

FR: Probably much more pressure than out of the ordinary [inaudible].

HM: Right. Right. If you were in the city and sitting, for instance, in a court where there's a million people in the city, you don't see that same person. Well, if you could do,

it's very rare that you get a great many numbers before you every day or every week, which could happen down here and did happen and made it very difficult. But on the other hand, if you kept an objective viewpoint, you could do the job alright. And I think we did alright.

FR: Earlier, you were telling me about the Kennedy Memorial, and that was quite some project [inaudible].

HM: Yes. The Kennedy Memorial, I was instrumental in getting that started, and we had a committee, which was appointed, I think, by the selectmen of the town. I was made the chairman to establish a Memorial to the Late John F. Kennedy, who, as you know, was shot in [1963], I think it was.

FR: Did you know the president?

HM: Yes, I did. And he was a very fine –

FR: Tell us a little about him.

HM: A very fine man. A very kind man. A very generous man. I think a very, very good administrator. I think he was doing a great job as president. When he was assassinated, I think it was a shock to everyone. Even those that didn't like him didn't want that. And, of course, having summered here all so many years before and the family having been at Hyannis Port, it was deemed to be fitting that we establish a memorial in his memory. And finally, as I say, this committee was appointed, and I think we were two to three years trying to get the right kind of memorial in his memory. I think we had thousands of suggestions from everywhere as to what kind of memorial to establish and finally settled on this, what I call a simple memorial, which cost us only sixty thousand dollars and was established on Ocean Street in Hyannis. After it was dedicated, the first year, people threw money into the pool out of their concern for his memory. I think the first year, we took in something in the nature of three or four thousand in quarters and half-dollars thrown into the pool. That's continued every year since, not in that amount, but in some amount. Although it's diminished over the years, it's still being done.

FR: That was oceanfront property, was it not?

HM: That was oceanfront property, which my father owned back in 1925, 1927. And the town took from him by eminent domain for beach purposes. I think they paid around maybe twenty, maybe twenty-five thousand dollars at that time.

FR: For how big a plot?

HM: It's about five acres of land, which today would probably be worth –

FR: Half a million?



HM: At least. At least.

FR: You've met some other, I'm sure, politicians in your career as a judge. Could you tell us, do you have any further stories?

HM: Well, I know that James Michael Curley, whose career is well known to everyone in the state of Massachusetts and all over the United States, used to come to the Cape quite a lot. Quite often. I had met him, of course. And the treasurer, I think his name was (Dolan?), had a big yacht. He used to come down, park it down at Baxter's Wharf in Hyannis. I recall, on occasion, when there was a vacancy in the Second District Court of Barnstable, in the judgeship there, I think a man by the name of – well, his name slips my mind, but in any event, there was a vacancy, and the special judgeship was available. There was a man by the name of John H. Payne, a cousin of the Charles Payne that I mentioned earlier with whom I was associated, who was a Democrat. They were very scarce in those days on the Cape. And John wanted to be the special justice in the Second District Court, and Charles – or he or both asked me – at the time, I was active in democratic circles – would I take him up to meet the governor, Governor Curleym, and see whether or not he would give him the job. So I took John, and we went to Boston and got in to see the governor whom I had met. I knew him casually, anyway. I asked him and suggested that John Payne be appointed special justice. And he said – his answer was, “Mr. Murphy, there's nothing I would rather do, but I have already promised that job to John (Creon?), who has done so much work for me in West Roxbury, and he could be the special justice in the Second District Court of Barnstable. Other than that, I would appoint your man.” Afterward, John (Creon?) was appointed the special justice. No question about it. And served there for twenty-five years.

FR: Murphy, you attended the Barnstable schools?

HM: I went to school at the Training School, the elementary school on Ocean Street in Hyannis. I think, at that time, there were nine grades, if I'm not mistaken. The principal was William G. (Currier?), who was a character. I say character; I mean well-known person, well-known educator on the Cape who lived to be, I think, ninety or somewhere around there.

FR: What was discipline like?

HM: Discipline was very stern and very severe. He had a ruler or a strap, and if you were out of order or did something that disturbed the classroom, you were taken outside and given on the bare hand so many straps or slaps of that on the knuckle. Believe me, a few of those across that bare hand – oh. And he would say, “This hurts me more than it does you, Henry,” but I doubt it.

FR: They would never spare the rod.

HM: No, absolutely not. Matter of fact, they used it pretty quite often if it was necessary; now, I don't say that it wasn't necessary. We didn't always behave.

FR: What were your high school days like?

HM: My high school days were very, very enjoyable. The principal there at that time was Louis H. (Buie?), a very tremendous and wonderful fellow, a wonderful man as I look back. Of course, there were times then when I didn't think he was that great because I think he used to be a little severe on us. We had one great room for the four classes, as I remember. And we then dispersed to separate rooms to take our separate courses. And I remember one instance; I think I might have been a freshman, probably. We were planning to run away, two or three other boys. I've forgotten the other two.

FR: You had the wanderlust?

HM: We had the wanderlust because we were pretty young then, probably – what? Fifteen, sixteen – in there. Had the wanderlust, and we were going to run away. Somehow or another, he got wind of it, and he called or spoke to my father, and through the superintendent of schools, who was then George H. (Gouger?), a man with a very – he had a throat that always hung down under his chin and gray hair, slightly bald, and believe me, he looked at you with these glasses that were half-rimmed, down at you because – I didn't know that he knew. One day, one morning, he called me into the office, and here sitting is my father and the Superintendent (Gouger?) and Mr. (Buie?). He said, “What's this I hear about you going to run away?” I said, “Oh,” and I lost my speech. I just was speechless because I was in the presence of those three. I thought, “God, I'll never get” –

FR: You thought it was a secret.

HM: I thought it was a secret. And here's the superintendent, my father, and the principal. They gave me quite a lecture at that time, as I remember it. My father said something about – “Well, I'll take care of him when he gets home, so you don't need to punish him here.” With that, they let me go back to the classroom. He took care of me when I got home. Yeah. That was quite an experience. Mr. (Buie?) was a very well-respected, well-liked man, and I always admired him. I think back to those days a good many times and think perhaps that was probably one of the reasons maybe that, later on in life, some of that discipline sunk in. I didn't realize it at the time. I resented it, probably, but later on, it was what was needed.

FR: [inaudible] weekends?

HM: Well, you're talking now about the younger days when I was –

FR: Yes, in the early 1900s.

HM: Yeah. Well, when I was a youngster there, we would go swimming. As a matter of fact, we went swimming after school, I remember, at Dunbar Point, where all the development is now, the Captain's Table and the condominiums there. There was nothing there but one big old red barn way out in the middle of that Dunbar – we called it Dunbar Point then.

FR: [inaudible]

HM: And we used to go skinny dipping down there in that creek. I can remember that like it was yesterday – a bunch of us after school. There was nothing at all there. Nothing. Then, of course, we played baseball. I played. I was quite athletic – baseball, basketball, and football. There was always plenty to do in that line. We had organized baseball to some extent, but if not organized, we played what they called scrub, which is you choose up sides and have a game. And beyond that, I –

FR: Did you play in the Cape League?

HM: I didn't play in the Cape League. No. I went away to college, and they were [inaudible]. I wasn't that good, really. And they took most of theirs from right around Boston, who came down from DC and Holy Cross. I was away at Georgetown, which was kind of out of touch. We'd go on weekends. We didn't have the big trouble they do now weekends with the – drugs were unheard of, of course. There were speakeasies, of course. Beer, you had that once in a while. Some of that, of course, went on, no question about it, back in those days because it was Prohibition part of that time. But life was a lot more simple, and it was a lot more easier to get along.

FR: Murphy, do you recall Prohibition?

HM: Yes, I do very well. I recall also that the Cape was a prominent place for – some of the rum runners used to run their booze, so to speak, in various locations, along the south shore of Cape Cod. And sometimes, when the revenueurs, so-called, would be right on top of them, they'd dump it overboard, and a lot of that stuff would come ashore. I can remember going down there and getting some booze from the ocean on the shore, throwing up on the shore in cases or hard cases or in bottles. Oh yeah. That was quite a –

FR: What did they sell it for?

HM: It seems to me that – you mean price-wise at that time?

FR: Yeah.

HM: Well, now I don't really remember. I really don't. There was a lot of it, and it seems to me that it got to be quite serious. I think we had a murder or two that occurred during that period. One or two of those fellows were shot while they were bootlegging, so to speak. And then they really tightened up, and there wasn't so much of it. Finally, of

course, Prohibition was repealed. I know a lot of it came ashore, and a lot of people got a lot of that, I think, and sold it in order to get along because it was during the Depression. No question: some picked up a lot of that stuff. I don't have any memory of that, but I know there were those who got boatloads, really. Sold it off somewhere, probably at a pretty good price.

FR: Murphy, do you recall any traveling salesmen who came through the village?

HM: Well, I know there were a lot of traveling salesmen of various kinds that used to come to the bakery and sell various products. That occurs to me now. Their names I can't remember, but they called them drummers in those days, like an extract drummer or a flour drummer. One of them I know organized a Fife and Drum Corps. Just comes to mind.

FR: Really? Tell us about it.

HM: Well, I think he was a salesman for a flour company in Boston. I can't remember the name of it, but in any event, he was interested locally like that. He organized this Fife and Drum Corps. And I played the fife in that Fife and Drum Corps. At the Fourth of July and November 11th, those occasions and in between those times, we would play. I don't remember how many in the band, but he instigated it, and he was a traveling salesman and drummer.

FR: From out of town.

HM: From out of town. He did organize that and got around enough to keep it going. Then I also, there were other kinds of salesmen. Let me think. We were talking earlier about –

FR: Talking about an organ grinder.

HM: Oh yes. There was the organ grinder who came every spring or twice a year, if I remember. And also the scissors sharpener who had a regular – and he had a brother who came with him and who used to cut hair.

FR: He'd cut the hair in the hall for you?

HM: In the hall, yeah. As I remember, he did all of us for several years when we were youngsters. This scissors grinder sharpened all the household knives and scissors or whatever. And then there was the organ grinder who came around with the monkey, of course and had the little act that he had. They were famous in those days. Every spring and summer, they were around along with the popcorn man who was on the main street.

FR: Popcorn man?

HM: Popcorn man made his popcorn right on the street and sold it for, I think, a nickel a bag. [inaudible] plenty of butter and very, very tasty popcorn, believe me. That's a long while ago.

FR: That's interesting. Murphy, what about industry on the Cape? What were the major industries?

HM: Well, I think the major industries, and one of them – perhaps the major, and it still is, is the building industry, of course. As a resort area, it was an area that catered to all of the United States, to summer visitors. Also, fishing back there was quite a great big industry. No question about that. And the cranberry business, I remember. And also, in fishing, there was a Cotuit oyster company, and several of those companies shipped fish and shipped oysters, littlenecks, and quahogs on a daily or weekly basis. During part of that period, I worked in the telegraph office in Hyannis, and we used to have orders from New York and Boston ship us so many bushels of quahogs, so many bushels of oysters, or so many bushels of littlenecks. It was quite an industry at that time. Very, very, very active industry. And the fishing, which took place in Hyannis on the harbor there – there were a great fleet of boats that came, and you could go there, and they would give you the excess, for instance, flounder, which is a filet of sole really. You could get a string of ten or a dozen on a string and take it home.

FR: No charge?

HM: No charge. Give them away. Now it's, my heavens, my wife told me within a day or so, she was in buying some fish there, and it was – oh, the haddock was three and a quarter a pound, the flounder, which is filet of sole, was something like three or four dollars a pound. Unbelievable. I can't – this to me was –

FR: What about cranberry?

HM: Well, cranberry was quite – everything then was done by hand, the picking, that is. And they did this – cranberry industry, as far as I know, originated here. Abel D. Makepeace, the old patriarch of that family, had established that cranberry industry here, I think, with Joshua Baker and John Baker. Some of that group had organized and started the cranberry industry way back, perhaps in the middle of the 18th century.

FR: That became a cooperative, did it?

HM: Eventually, it did. Yeah. It became a cooperative. And then they have Ocean Spray. It's now, of course, a tremendous industry. Yeah.

FR: How did you celebrate the holidays?

HM: Well, they were mostly family home holidays. In other words, at Christmas time, everyone was there. There were simple gifts, and it was a religious thing, more or less, with us. And everyone went to church and afterward the presents were opened. As I say,

they were simple presents. We had a big dinner, turkey, and everything that went with it. But we remained at home. As I recall it, it was kind of my father's not only desire but command that nobody went roaming around on Christmas day and not on Sunday either.

FR: How was your tree decorated?

HM: Tree was decorated pretty much as they are now, with the usual kind of decorations. I don't remember anything in particular.

FR: What would you get for presents?

HM: Mostly articles that were useful – clothing, a little money maybe, a few toys, things like that. Nothing very elaborate because we were not what you'd call well off at that time, and we had a [inaudible].

FR: Do you recall the Fourth of July?

HM: Fourth of July, I recall it, yes. When I was, say, a teenager, we used to get up early in the morning and take on a supply of firecrackers, run around through the town, and throwing those everywhere and all over the place. At that time, you could buy them anywhere. They were free. And they had some pretty big six-inch salutes and even bombs. Got to be – it led finally to a ban because people got – some of those children – some of those kids got hurt and some badly. As a result, now you can't have them at all, which I think is a good thing actually. But we were pretty – we took some chances back then with those six-inch salutes that went off in your hand, blow your hand off. But we used them anyway.

FR: Do you recall any other holidays?

HM: Well, I used to – of course, November 11th, the anniversary of the war, World War I. I used to like to watch the parades and see the veterans from Spanish American War and World War I and hear the music. They did celebrate those.

FR: What do you recall about World War I?

HM: Well, I would've been only about, let's see, ten years old then, about. I can remember it. I can remember the start of it, the assassination of the Duke of – I've forgotten what –

FR: Austria.

HM: Austria. Yeah. And then it started that off and then set off the whole thing.

FR: Do you recall the armistice?

HM: Of World War I? The armistice? Yes, I do, but just vaguely. I was still pretty young.

FR: Do you recall the first automobile you saw?

HM: The first one I saw? You want to ask –

FR: Yeah. Do you recall the automobile?

HM: Yes. I do recall the early days of the automobile, and there were still horses and wagons. I particularly recall sleighs or pung, as they were called. We used to hook a ride on the back of a pung on the run, you'd jump on with Arnie (O'Neill?), whose grandfather was Dennis (O'Neill?), and that's O'Neill's store in Hyannis at the corner of Main and Winter that they've now renovated and made it look like it was a hundred years ago. I remember the grandfather Dennis. We used to hop a ride on that pung. Now, the automobile came along in there somewhere, and I can remember riding on the sleigh in a horse and a wagon, a buggy, and having an automobile approach and having a horse rear and back off, run away or cause all kinds of consternation. I can remember people saying that won't last. How's that going to last? Won't last, and that's a fad. That'll be out and be gone. Which, of course, wasn't true. I can also recall Henry (Connolly?), who married an aunt of mine, who founded, I think, probably the first garage in Hyannis, which would now be in Center Street adjacent to the old railroad station there. He had a stable, and he made that – of course, when the automobile came along, he finally converted that into a garage. That was one of the first garages, I'd say, in Hyannis.

FR: All electricity? The advent of electricity?

HM: Yes, I do. As a youngster, I recall we had streetlights that were gas, and there was a gas house, I guess they called it, up off Barse's Way, and they used some kind of a combination of chemicals to create the gas which created the lights. And the man would light the gas lights every night with a bicycle. And he lit up, had to step up and light the light. Electricity came – I don't know. I was quite young then, probably in 1915 to 1920 somewhere there, or '20, I'm sure. Or earlier.

FR: Was that around the time of indoor plumbing too?

HM: That was the time that indoor plumbing came. Just about that time. The same time. Yeah. Before that, there hadn't been.

FR: What about the telephone?

HM: The telephone. Seems to me that came, if anything, a little earlier or at least right around the same time. I can remember the –

FR: Did you have one in your home?

HM: Yes, we did it with a crank. It had a crank, and I lifted up the phone off the stand-up telephone, and not very convenient, but it served the purpose. And there would normally be three or four on the line, three or four – here was like two-seven-four – ring one-two-three-four, and you got three, four on there. It wasn't very much of a – compared to today, anyway.

FR: Tell me, do you recall your family doctor?

HM: Yes, I do. We first had the old Dr. Harris. Dr. Harris was a great man, in my opinion. He could doctor anything from a sore toe to a cold or whatever, or he appeared to. He always had a very affable manner. I think you wouldn't call it bedside manner either; he'd come in, and he cheered you up just by coming in with a little back bag and taking your pulse and – “Oh, well, let's see. You got one ...”. And he'd go on like that, and you don't know what he was thinking, but [inaudible].

FR: Would he have the medicine with him?

HM: I think he had it right in his bag. I don't ever remember prescriptions. Perhaps he had them, I suppose, at the drugstore, but I think whatever he gave, he had with him in the bag. I was a youngster.

FR: What if you had to go to a hospital when there was none in Cape Cod?

HM: Well, you had to go to Boston.

FR: How would you go to Boston?

HM: By train. By train is the only way. You couldn't go any other way because there weren't any automobiles in the early days.

FR: Where would you go if you had a problem with your teeth?

HM: Well, seems to me there was a dentist or two around. Yes, because I can remember as a young boy going to old Dr. John Baxter. Seems to me he was around then when I was at least ten, twelve years old. He had a drill which operated manually by foot. And believe me, when he put that drill in your tools and started pumping that drill, why, compared to today, why –

FR: You didn't have any Novocain or anything [inaudible]?

HM: Nothing that I know of; they never gave us anything. Not that I remember. I certainly can say that I am happy that I was born on Cape Cod and have lived here all of my adult life. I have been [to] a great many places all over the world, as a matter of fact, many, many parts of the United States and other parts of the world. But I still think Cape Cod, overall, is one of the best places, if not the best place, to live. Its pace is not as fast, perhaps as somewhere else. The mode of living is more simple. The people, to me, are



good, generous, kind, and friendly, even though they don't have that reputation in all parts of the United States. It's not a fact – they are, really. It may take a while to get acquainted, but once acquainted, you're a friend. I have prospered here. My family has done so. My family before me, my forebears have all prospered. Thanks be to God. Let's hope that a great many of them remain here for many years to come and that they will also enjoy the benefits and the fruits of living on Cape Cod.

FR: Thank you, Judge Murphy, for your very candid approach to our conversation.

HM: Appreciate your coming to tape this interview, and I'm happy to have a chance to be on record about some of the old days.

FR: Thank you, Judge.

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Reviewed by Molly Graham 10/11/2022