TRANSCRIPT OF

INTERVIEW OF

TRAWICK H. STUBBS, JR. (Stubbs & Perdue)

Place: U.S. Bankruptcy Court

Raleigh, NC

Date: August 16, 2019

TRANSCRIPT ORDERED BY:

DAWN R. WRIGHT, CASE ADMINISTRATOR (U.S. Bankruptcy Court)

ATTENDEES:

TRAVIS SASSER, ESQ. (Sasser Law Firm)
CINDY OLIVER, ESQ. (Longleaf Law Partners)
CHRISTINE CASTELLOE, CHIEF DEPUTY CLERK (U.S. Bankruptcy
Court)
STEPHANIE BUTLER, CLERK (U.S. Bankruptcy Court)

Transcriber, Kimberly Upshur J&J COURT TRANSCRIBERS, INC. 268 Evergreen Avenue Hamilton, NJ 08619

(609) 586-2311 FAX NO. (609) 587-3599

E-mail: jjcourt@jjcourt.com Website: www.jjcourt.com

Audio Recorded

MS. BUTLER: We are here interviewing Mr. Buzzy Stubbs. Present are Travis Sasser, Cindy Oliver, Christine Castelloe, and myself, Stephanie Butler.

Mr. Stubbs, we'll open it up with letting you just tell us a little bit about your background and --

MR. STUBBS: I will do that.

2.0

2.3

MS. BUTLER: -- how you came to get involved in Bankruptcy.

MR. STUBBS: I went to Carolina, Duke and then I went to Charlotte and practiced with a law firm there, then I went to Nashville, Tennessee and worked with a book company for about a year and then came back and I worked with John Larkins, a federal judge. I clerked there for a year and a half. I worked with the book company, because they paid more money.

And then Larkins was a real inspiration. I learned a lot from him. See, and then that's where I met Mickey Moore and we got to be pretty good friends. Mickey had a case before Larkins and Mickey was representing — this is back in the desegregation period — and Mickey was representing a school, and the — a minority was trying to desegregate the school, and there had been a lot of these cases. Right after the hearing we went down to the local eating place and we had lunch, and Mickey said to me, he said what do you

think Larkins will do? I said I know damn well what he'll do because I'm going to write the opinion.

2.0

2.3

So I said he's going to deny it, because he's going for the Black community in every one of these cases, so, Larkins did, and then Mickey appealed the case to the Fourth Circuit and it was the only, as I recall, desegregation case that was set aside and sent back to the trial courts. So we became friends and he took me in. He just started in bankruptcies, and there was a guy who was doing it all.

MS. BUTLER: Who was that?

MR. STUBBS: It was Ed Moore. Have you heard his name before?

MS. BUTLER: No.

MR. STUBBS: He was running him out, and I was just there you see, at the right time. He was doing it all at that time. He was trustee, he had all the work, and he was nice to me and was kind of taking care of me. He knew he had all the bankruptcy work and would continue to have it forever and ever. But, I don't know, Mickey and I just became good friends and I started doing more.

MS. BUTLER: So was he already a referee when you met him then?

MR. STUBBS: Mickey was a referee, and the

thing I remember the most is whenever Mickey's name came up for reappointment, and he had a secretary, who we all liked, and we had a funny incident. My wife Jane and I went to the secretary's house, and how did that -- no, I know where it was. I went to the secretary's house with Larkins, and Larkins always liked girls, and the secretary made it clear that she was going to try to convince Larkins to appoint somebody other than Mickey, believe it or not.

2.3

And even on the way home, I won't go into the details of the evening, but on the way home my wife said Stubbs you better watch out, because your friend Mickey Moore may not get reappointed if the events of the evening are an indication, and I said no, I don't think so. I know Larkins. So I believe the next day Larkins called up Mickey, and he said, Mickey, this is Judge Larkins, and he said I've got a paper here that I'm supposed to appoint a new bankruptcy referee and there's a lot of people who are applying for this position.

Larkins was a big Democrat, as you might know, and, Mickey, of course, was a Republican and had been appointed by Judge Butler, who was a Republican Judge at the time, and he said that the appointment really should not have been done -- made until the

first of May and this is just the 10th of April, but what I was thinking is I think I'll go ahead and sign this thing now and I will take away all these other people that are looking for the job and we'll get finished with it. So Larkins was not influenced by a girl to change his mind about his friend --

MS. BUTLER: Or politics.

MR. STUBBS: -- Mickey Moore.

MS. BUTLER: Right.

2.3

MR. STUBBS: Yeah, and -- or politics or anything else. Mickey was really good at what he was doing at the time and Larkins knew that, and the people that other people were promoting were good political friends, but they were not as good at the job as Mickey was.

And I learned a lot from Larkins. I won't go into details about not letting women persuade you to do things that you really shouldn't do, but it was a lesson to me learned. Yeah, that was in, what year was that? It was before the new Bankruptcy Act in '78, because he was being reappointed as referee rather than as a bankruptcy judge. So that was a long time ago, '77, something like that. What were you doing in '77 Travis?

MS. BUTLER: Probably nothing.

MR. SASSER: I know I wasn't doing bankruptcy.

MR. STUBBS: Yeah.

2.0

2.3

MR. SASSER: Was Mickey -- so Mickey

obviously was a Republican. Everybody knows that.

MR. STUBBS: Yes.

MR. SASSER: What all kind of political activities did he involve himself in?

MR. STUBBS: The one that I remember the most was when he -- his name was put up for District Court Judge and he was named with three other people. One was Claud Wheatly, a very active Republican and a very good fellow, a good friend of mine. He was much, much older, but he -- I liked to go to bar meetings and he and I would sit around and talk to each other when he was in his later years.

And the other one was Frank Dupree, who ultimately got the nomination and the -- I mean he was active in politics in his hometown of Wilson, and the good thing about Mickey was that he was very military oriented. He was a one-star and I think then became a two-star general in the army reserve and spent a lot of time doing that, and that helped him politically as well but --

Gosh, I kind of forgot about a lot of those

1 What do you remember, Cindy? things. 2 MS. OLIVER: I appeared before him once. 3 MR. STUBBS: Yeah. MS. OLIVER: It was probably in '88 probably. 4 5 MR. STUBBS: How old were you in '77? 6 MS. OLIVER: I was in high school. 7 MR. STUBBS: Yeah. You only appeared before 8 Mickey Moore once? 9 MS. OLIVER: Mm-mm. When did he die? 10 **'**91. MS. CASTELLOE: 11 MR. STUBBS: He died '92, '93. 12 MS. CASTELLOE: **\91**. 13 MR. STUBBS: '91 it was? Jane was still 14 alive and nuts about him. All right, let me just ask 15 you that, did you -- was he nice to you or was he mean? 16 MS. OLIVER: He was very nice. I was very 17 It was my very first court appearance, ever, 18 and Rebecca Henderson drove us to Wilson, which is 19 about an hour drive, and I had an uncontested motion 2.0 for relief from stay and I was scared, which I probably prepared for like two days, and my story has actually 21 22 been repeated several times. When we got to the 2.3 courthouse and our matter was called, I probably gave 24 my five-minute spiel, and Judge Moore said, well, let's

take a recess. Let's go back into chambers.

25

1 MR. STUBBS: And it scared you even more.

2.0

2.3

that.

MS. OLIVER: I had no idea what was coming. And then he sat in his seat and leaned back, put his feet up on the desk and lit a cigarette. This is my very first court experience. I wasn't prepared for

MR. STUBBS: Was this downtown in the old post office building?

MS. OLIVER: Yes. Yeah, and then we proceeded to talk about the case and my motion was granted.

MR. STUBBS: And you had a happier ride home than you did getting down there.

MS. OLIVER: And I felt good.

MR. SASSER: Did Mickey ever talk to you about his initial appointment back in 1960 to be the referee?

MR. STUBBS: No, the prior bankruptcy and referee had been Joe Cheshire, who is the father of Joe Cheshire here, the practitioner in Raleigh, and that was a more political appointment, because he was a Republican and Judge Butler had appointed him to that position, who was a Republican. His offices were in Clinton. And Mickey had obviously been active in the Republican party in order to get that appointment. It

was not that big a deal at the time. It was a parttime job, and he had a few cases, but then during the
-- ultimately had the bankruptcy judges, which was in
'78 with (indiscernible), I think, and he never said
much about that. We'd always known he'd been active
Republican.

2.3

And Judge Butler and Judge Larkins were, I wouldn't say they were rivals, but they were not of the same political cause. They were different types of people. Absolutely one hundred percent different.

MR. SASSER: How much do you think -- do you have any thoughts on the relationship between Rufus Reynolds and Judge Moore?

MR. STUBBS: Yes, I do. Rufus was a very smart guy, and Rufus wanted to improve his salary, so he looked at the books and the way things worked and he figured out if he could jack up the number of cases he had, he would get a bigger salary. So he jacked up his Chapter 13 cases, and he had the biggest Chapter 13. Hell, he may have had one of the biggest in America, and that improved his salary as a referee. It would not affect him as a judge, but his referee work helped him.

Now Rufus' theory was he told a lawyer all you need to do, lawyer, is get that man to the table

and I'll give you your fee. You get him to the courthouse, and I'll take care of it from there, and he did. And the lawyers knew that all they needed to do was sign the man up and bring him in. Well, Mickey got in trouble. Rufus said he could do the same thing, that he can improve his salary and he came behind Rufus, but he went about it differently, whereas, Rufus just got the man to the table and the trustee handled it from there.

2.0

2.3

Mickey actually made the lawyer do more, and Mickey was one to promote the lawyers probably better than any judge or referee even through today. And he helped build the bankruptcy practice in the Eastern District more than any district except Memphis.

Memphis at that time had the biggest practice-wide, bigger than New York and Chicago. It's because they had a good bench and a good bar promoting them. It changed my opinion, but that's the way our history came.

And then Mickey was very close to his lawyers and his trustees, and that's -- he's the one who really taught all of us how to do this stuff, and I'm grateful for the man. Provided a good living.

MR. SASSER: Now, Mickey, it was his idea, or you and his idea to start the Eastern Bankruptcy

Institute, is that accurate?

2.0

2.3

MR. STUBBS: We had not anticipated it as big a deal as it has become. It was his idea I guess and he says, Stubbs, let's have a seminar. I don't know if it was yet called Eastern Bankruptcy Institute back then. He says let's just have a sing-along and get the lawyers together. In fact, we started out doing some different things. We were trying to promote Chapter 13 just so we had have some debtor and creditor seminars.

I remember one in Goldsboro and we invited all the managers of the credit companies, the lenders, and we would explain to them what Chapter 7 and 13 were about and then we'd encourage them to be nicer to people, and out of that came Mickey's suggestion, let's have a similar conference for the lawyers. Then we —

I think we had a few seminars for lawyers probably in Goldsboro and Raleigh before we ever went to

Wrightsville Beach. Wrightsville Beach is where we used to have it and then he and I are the ones that started that.

Then about '76 or '77 Allan Head came to me and he says, Stubbs, we are trying to start a thing that we call sections. Allan was a very innovative guy, a very good lawyer, one of the best known among the state. He says why don't you -- you are going

pretty good and you got your people organized. Why don't you start a bankruptcy section? And we had the first bankruptcy section in the bar association.

2.3

to us.

We went to Asheville and nobody else had done anything. He was explaining how he was going to put these sections together, and we hardly had our sign ups and got people in line and we had a section going. So Allan says, Buzz, why don't you participate with us instead of having your own thing just for the eastern district down there in Wrightsville Beach. Why don't you have a statewide bar association, do bankruptcy, and we'll continue to be statewide instead of just in the east. I said, Allan, that sounds like a good idea. Did you know about all of this?

MS. BUTLER: No, I do not know this story.

MR. STUBBS: And you don't know of it?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: No, this is all news

MR. STUBBS: So I said -- I was the nice guy and we were all young back then. I said, Allan, I'll be glad to help with the bar. So we had -- I think it was '76, maybe '77, we had the first statewide bar bankruptcy meeting in Raleigh down here at the -- it was --

MS. OLIVER: Marriott? By Crabtree?

MR. STUBBS: Yeah, Crabtree. And it was all in all Mickey, his friend from Charlotte, Judge Wooten. Did any of you all remember him? He was really a funny guy, and I was -- and we had a good time. The next fall Thomas Small -- when was Small appointed?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: '82?

MR. SASSER: '82.

2.0

2.3

MR. STUBBS: '82.

MR. SASSER: '82.

MR. STUBBS: Well, it had to be --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: And they stumped you.

That might be the one that Sparkman handled.

MR. STUBBS: Yeah. I don't see him as being (indiscernible). It must have been in '82 maybe after he was appointed. He called me from Boone and he said, Stubbs, I've got some (indiscernible) and people up here in Boone and I'm having a -- trying to entertain them and I don't have enough money. I called Allan Head, I expected him to help me pay for it, and Allan said, no, we can't give money like that for judges. The Bar won't let us do that. And he said -- Small said what should I do? I said Tom go ahead and give them anything they want. Just serve them good liquor and I'll pay for it when you get home, okay. Now -- and he did, but it really pissed me off, so I told

Mickey we're going back to the beach, and we started our EBI back again.

2.0

2.3

Now, ever since that time Allan Head was always mad at me and never let me participate in any bar activities, because -- at which I couldn't care less. I wanted to be with my friends anyway. And then we have more people coming to EBI than goes to Allan's thing, so I didn't care. But that's the way we got started.

The worst thing that ever happened at EBI was that at Wrightsville Beach we always used to -- there was the Blockade Runner back when we got all the rooms and made the arrangements, and we got the things for the judges and always made careful to make sure it got done right.

Mickey got down there and if anything went wrong it was me he always called. I'll tell you another funny incident in a minute, but he said,
Stubbs, I'm in the room. I said that's great, Mickey,
I hope you like it. He said they have given me a
Murphy Bed. Some of you all have heard that.

MS. CASTELLOE: I have heard the Murphy -- I heard -- the version I heard is that the reason the EBI left Wrightsville Beach was because Judge Moore got a Murphy Bed.

MR. STUBBS: And that's --1 2 MS. CASTELLOE: And so that is true. 3 MR. STUBBS: Now, Murphy Bed -- actually, we did not leave Wrightsville Beach. We left the Blockade 4 5 Runner and moved down the street to the Holiday Inn, and we went there for several years. 6 7 MS. CASTELLOE: I have heard the Murphy Bed 8 story. 9 MR. STUBBS: I mean he was really mad and I 10 just -- we got another room and fixed it all up. 11 that's the way we left the State Bar and came back to 12 our own Eastern District. 13 MR. SASSER: Was it because the Bar would not 14 pick up a bar tab --15 MR. STUBBS: For Judge Small in Boone. 16 MR. SASSER: -- and that's why we have EBI. 17 MR. STUBBS: Yes, that's the reason. And I 18 did not think of it being as late as '82, but we must 19 have had that seminar at Wrightsville Beach several 2.0 times before we joined up with the Bar. 21 The other incident where Mickey got so mad at 22 me, my good friend -- this is Al Butler, Sr., and Al 2.3 and I were probably the closest friends together in our 24 senior Bar Association. We went places together and

did different things and Al always had a party for the

25

trustees at Wrightsville Beach. Any of y'all remember those? It may have been expanded a little bit, but the regular attendees did not --

MS. BUTLER: Was that at his house?

MR. STUBBS: Yes, at his house.

MS. OLIVER: Was that Shrimp-A-Roo

(phonetic)?

2.3

MS. OLIVER: I went to one of those.

MR. STUBBS: Yeah. It was an exclusive type of thing, and I did not like that. My attitude is -- usually I say bring them along. I did not care for the exclusive stuff, okay? So Mickey had gone out for all this (indiscernible) to the -- Al Butler's house to the meeting with trustees and he took great pride in it and people made speeches there. So I did not want to go, so I rented a yacht, which is right down the road from the Blockade Runner and went back into the Blockade Runner and there were several people or attendees who had not been invited to the trustees' party, and I said come on, guys, let's go. So I got them all on the yacht, okay? And we -- some of y'all must know something about this.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: No, I had not -UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I've actually heard
that story.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Have you?

MR. STUBBS: You have?

2.0

2.3

 $\label{thm:continuous} \mbox{UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Uh-huh. I actually} \\ \mbox{heard that story.}$

MR. STUBBS: Anyway we took off in the yacht and we drove down the sound past Al's house and the guy blew the horn and we all waved from the yacht, and that pissed Mickey Moore off totally. And then he told me later, he said, he was really mad about that, because he thought I was trying to take people from Al Butler's party on my yacht, so to speak. And then I told him, I said, nobody on that yacht had been invited to Al Butler's and it pissed me off. That's why I did it. And he did not believe me. Of course, he thought I was competing with Al's Shrimp-A-Roo, but then he asked, I don't know if it was Peggy or my girl Angie, but they confirmed what I said. Nobody on that boat had been invited.

Now the funniest thing that had happened on the boat, and I don't know if y'all heard this part. I was always wanted to pay somebody a hundred dollars to jump off the dock in their clothes, okay? I just liked stuff like that, and my wife just hated it, and one night I paid my brother-in-law, Roger Moore, a hundred dollars to jump off the dock and he sat at dinner in

his wet clothes, and she gave me hell all night.

2.0

2.3

On the boat I had a new guy working for me who I really liked and he had a wife who was a really cute gal, and somehow it came up -- now maybe I was bored or something, and I said -- I can't remember his name now. I said I'll give you a hundred dollars to jump off the boat with your clothes on, okay? And he was standing there and he says sure, I'll jump off the boat for a hundred dollars. Hundred dollars was a lot of money back then. It is today, but I mean he was more than willing to do it.

And then we were going 15, 20 knots in the water and anyhow I gave his wife the hundred dollars and she had stuck it down in her shirt, and then he got to the edge and saw the water was running a little faster than he thought it was, and he says I don't -- I've changed my mind. I don't think I better do it. And the wife said no, you will, I got the money, you're going in, and sure enough he jumped in. The guy driving the boat just went crazy. He didn't think we should have done that, but anyway he got a hundred dollars.

MR. SASSER: Who was it that jumped in?

MR. STUBBS: The guy?

MR. SASSER: Yeah.

1	MR. STUBBS: He was a young lawyer who worked
2	for me.
3	MR. SASSER: But you don't what's his
4	name?
5	MR. STUBBS: I don't know.
6	MS. BUTLER: He can't remember who it is.
7	MR. STUBBS: Norma would remember. She was
8	there at the time. I'll find out.
9	MS. BUTLER: We'll followup with Norma. I'm
10	sure she'll
11	MR. STUBBS: He moved back to Michigan and
12	started a personal injury practice with some member of
13	her family.
14	MR. SASSER: Did you say Roger Moore is
15	connected to
16	MS. BUTLER: Is his brother-in-law.
17	MR. STUBBS: Roger Moore is the brother of my
18	first wife, James O. Moore's
19	UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: You didn't know that?
20	MR. SASSER: I never knew that.
21	MR. STUBBS: No, I went to when I got out
22	of law school I worked for Moore & Van Allan, and he
23	was the James O. Moore. And instead of again,
24	he's dead, too, although I ended up loving the man. If
25	there was a crustier son of a bitch that ever practiced

law in North Carolina, I don't know who he was, but he was. James O. Moore was really smart, and he was not happy when I left his law practice to go sell books.

And in his later years we became very close.

2.0

2.3

This has nothing to do with this, but he and I were sitting in his back room. He had bad stomach problems. His wife and mine were gone somewhere. He had bleeding -- a bleeding ulcer I think it was, and I said, Jim, you need to go to the emergency room. Well, he fought me and didn't want to go, and I took him to the emergency room, and I said if this guy doesn't get an immediate transfusion, he's going to die, I told them.

And he said I'm not going to have a transfusion. He made some inappropriate racial remarks and did not want it, and I said Jim, listen, analyze this. If you don't get a transfusion, you're going to die today. If you get a transfusion and you catch a case of AIDS, you've still got a number of years left. And we finally convinced him to have a transfusion, but that's nothing to do with bankruptcy.

MR. SASSER: One of the judges that we interviewed said that the Shrimp-A-Roo was discontinued because it was too exclusive. Is that your recollection of why they discontinued it?

1	MR. STUBBS: I don't recall that being the
2	reason. I disapproved even though Al was my best
3	friend. I don't I just don't like exclusive things
4	where you leave people out. I don't recall that was
5	the reason. I think Al maybe just got tired of doing
6	it. Maybe Mickey was mad and didn't want to have it
7	again. I don't know. I don't recall.
8	MR. SASSER: Do you recall the Shrimp-A-Roo
9	where the Tom Stanton who was the first executive
10	director of the U.S. Trustee program where he attended
11	the Shrimp-A-Roo?
12	MR. STUBBS: What was the guy?
13	MR. SASSER: Tom Stanton. It was in 1988.
14	So right after the U.S. Trustee program became sort of
15	nationwide. Apparently, he came to the EBI and the
16	Shrimp-A-Roo. No? That's fine.
17	MR. STUBBS: Tom Stanton is a familiar
18	sounding name, but I don't remember him at the
19	MR. SASSER: Maybe that was the year you were
20	on the boat. That's why you
21	MR. STUBBS: It may have been.
22	(Laughter)
23	MR. STUBBS: It may have been. But we did a
24	lot of funny things.
25	MS. OLIVER: So why did EBI move to Myrtle

Beach?

Δ

2.0

2.3

MR. STUBBS: More capacity. We had bigger places down there and we outgrew the Holiday Inn at Wrightsville. And then people complained because we weren't supporting North Carolina hotels. Our participants liked going to the beach. It's better, there's more to do there. Myrtle Beach is more family oriented, and we tried to get the people to bring families and kids which they did, and I think that's one of the reasons it's more popular today than the Middle or Western District seminars.

And the -- we are still trying to improve the EBI. In fact, two Fridays ago I had a meeting here in Raleigh with some younger members of the Board at EBI, and they -- and when I say younger, these are kids in their mid to late 40s. And what I'm trying to do now, I'd like to have some what I call third generation. We started out with my age, first generation, and then I started getting some younger people then, and those are the ones I had lunch with. And now I'm thinking I'd like to have some in the late 20s, early 30s to participate on the Board, and Norma will bring -- runs the EBI. She picks the speakers, picks the topics, talks to the judges. Probably Norma Wygand is probably the closest person to all three judges right now than

any other person.

Δ

2.0

2.3

Our system and chief goes to them for topics and what they like, what they don't for format and things like that. She does not work for me anymore, as you know. Norma is the main girl for Jody Bledsoe, who is a Chapter 13 Trustee, but people think she still works for me, but she doesn't. She's going through some tough times right now, as you know, but, hopefully, she'll keep doing EBI until she dies.

We don't -- we vote on all the things that happen at EBI, and the Board discusses a lot of things, but when we -- vote is always by consensus rather than a vote. The only negative vote we've had in, well, since 40 years of this was this last meeting, this last year. I can't remember what the issue was, but Jody Bledsoe says I'm going to vote no. Now he was kidding in a way, but he voted no. And there's some criticism from time to time, but we don't have many disputes. Right now we all get along by consensus.

MR. SASSER: Do you think that that's just being collegiality and the consensus and the general good will in this District? What do you -- how did that come about, and what responsibility do you take in that culture?

MR. STUBBS: You're talking about two

different things. The congeniality among our bar is a compilation of a lot of factors. I say going back to Mickey Moore. The consensus at EBI is probably more complicated, but we do have a more congenial bar than I would say most practices areas in North Carolina. If you don't think so practice domestic law for a couple of months. Even criminal law, we have some, I don't know if it's jealousies or things like that, but I think our bankruptcy bar is pretty congenial.

Δ

2.0

2.3

MR. SASSER: Tell us about Mack Howard and when you first started to interact with him and your time with being a Chapter 13 Trustee alongside of him.

MR. STUBBS: Mack, as you know, was close a friend as I got, and he was -- he can be buried three times in Arlington Cemetery. He has two Purple Hearts and a silver star, any of which would entitle you to be buried there, but he doesn't make much of that. He came back here after he got out of the Army and ran for Congress, and I got to know him through the Republican stuff, and I said, Mack, how in the hell are you going to run for Congress? You don't have a chance, and look at the time it's taking away from your practice and (indiscernible), too.

But when he ran it gave him some name notoriety and helped him build his practice. Of

course, it was exactly the same as mine. He was a Chapter 13 Trustee, had a federal trial practice, and that's really the way we got to know each other as well as we did.

2.0

2.3

And he became a District Judge in, I guess, '88/'89, and his kid Josh, who does criminal law now in the federal court, I say could have been the federal judge at the time, if he had wanted, because he had built up so many national political contacts that he was -- he would have been a shoe-in, but he turned it down, and -- which I can identify with. The judgeship does not pay as much as my regular job or Josh's job now. Even so, he wanted to continue to build this practice.

But, anyway, going back to Mack, we had been close friends through the years, families and kids and all that, and he has always supported bankruptcy pretty strongly because of his active participation in it. He is getting older, but what is interesting he has taken a senior status for a while on this FISA Court that you've heard about in the last four or five years in Washington. But he has improved in his health in the last two or three years, so he is doing much better than he has before.

MS. BUTLER: Mr. Sparkman told us a story

about you and Judge Howard in Chicago when you were Chapter 13 Trustees.

2.0

2.3

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: And the newspaper.

MS. BUTLER: And the newspaper.

MR. STUBBS: Before I say anything which story did he --

(Laughter)

MR. SASSER: Just tell us both of them.

MS. BUTLER: Or all of them. Well, we said it was the newspaper one. Do you remember him going around, he had that newspaper printed up that says Stubbs is in town?

MR. STUBBS: No. I don't want to. Well, this is -- maybe that was in Chicago. I remember Howard doing something like that in the Chapter 13 Trustee conference in Austin, Texas, but he probably did do the same thing in Chicago.

MS. BUTLER: About you going up and down The Magnificent Mile and visiting a few establishments and being asked to leave a few establishments and then visiting more establishments.

MR. STUBBS: I cannot deny any of that. We just (indiscernible) -- I don't -- y'all was close to him as I am. As one of the best people, and I'll tell you something about Richard that I bet you don't know.

Every year for the last 25 years Richard Sparkman has given \$2,500 a year to the North Carolina Bar to be a -- at the top of the list of donors among lawyers. A lot of us have given money and reached certain numbers but Richard has been at the very top levels for many years, and I asked him about it, and he said, so, Stubbs, think what the Bar has done for me, and he's right.

2.0

2.3

Judge Small always liked him because he said when he was arguing he would not just tell you his side, he would tell you the other side. He was always very truthful about his case and what he had and didn't have. He's as close a friend as I've got in our Bankruptcy Bar.

And you know, y'all are all aware of some of the health problems in his family. It really has been difficult for his practice I think over the years. But we have developed, all of us, a lot of friendships through the years. Two of them are right here in the room. And, Cindy, I will not tell them what I told you when you used to leave your bicycle in my apartment. How long have you and I known each other, '86?

MS. OLIVER: '88.

MR. STUBBS: Yeah. Travis and I had a very good conversation together at the -- what's my hotel I

was staying? 1 2 MR. SASSER: Umstead Hotel of Cary. MR. STUBBS: Umstead. When was that, about 3 two --4 5 MR. SASSER: A couple months ago. MR. STUBBS: Yeah, and I intend to pursue 6 7 even more about your business nature. But the 8 Bankruptcy Bar has really established some very strong 9 friendships through the years for which I'm very 10 grateful. There's a lot of stories I would not deny, 11 but I will not tell them in a recorded session. 12 MS. BUTLER: We understand. 13 MR. SASSER: Well, you've employed many of 14 the lawyers -- I say many -- a lot of lawyers have 15 started working for you, and without -- obviously, you 16 don't want to pick favors, but who were some of the 17 memorable associates that you've had come through your 18 door over the years? 19 MR. STUBBS: I don't mind telling you --2.0 MR. SASSER: Or go ahead. Yeah. 21 MR. STUBBS: -- my favorite and everybody 22 knows who it is, and I won't tell you he's the only one 2.3 I would take back, but he's the only one I would want

I think y'all could probably say who that is.

MR. SASSER: Well, for posterity we're

24

25

recording this in the hopes that, you know, 20, 30, 40 years from now people will, so just go ahead and who is that person?

2.0

2.3

MR. STUBBS: It'd be Jason Hendren. I'm accused of being too much of a dictator. If I don't like you, you're not going to be there, but if I do, we'll have a lot of laughs together. I am more satisfied with the people I have in my office now from the lawyers down to the staff than I have ever been. I like who's there, and I'm always trying to grow all of them to a better place.

But if -- I shouldn't say this, but my wife is very good, that if I've got somebody in mind that I don't like there, somehow she is very good at talking to them and then they quit before I get to fire them, and I'm not sure what she's saying.

I had this guy I knew and who I dearly loved and he was not working out, and I remember firing him. But Wendy fires them, and she fired this guy, and he hates Wendy to this day but still loves me. I went to his birthday party the other night and, in fact, spoke at his birthday party. And he -- people who knew him called him my best friend, and he really is a -- he's an old (indiscernible) good health but he blames Wendy for firing him. But anybody who -- I want you to know

Wendy's not going to do anything I don't tell her to do, and anything that happens in my office, I'm responsible for that. I mean if I do something wrong, which I do all the time, Christine calls me up, and, Stubbs, you made a stupid mistake and that is not tolerated.

2.3

MS. CASTELLOE: You know better.

 $\label{thm:equal} \mbox{UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:} \quad \mbox{If she ever calls you} \\ \mbox{up and says that let me know.}$

MR. STUBBS: That wasn't blaming it on Wendy.

I mean that's --

MS. CASTELLOE: The only time you ever made a mistake I called Norma. I told Norma, and that was the time that --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: And she wouldn't call it stupid either.

MS. CASTELLOE: No, no, but, well, I did tell her it was at -- I was requested to call Norma. You had left your cell phone on, and it was in your front pocket like it is today --

MR. STUBBS: Yes.

MS. CASTELLOE: -- in court and it started ringing in court, and you did the best job of ignoring the fact that it was your phone. Everybody in the courtroom knew it was your phone. Everyone had -- and

you were standing up and doing your presentation and you just kept going, and it's just ringing and ringing and ringing. And, of course, you know, at first everybody's kind of looking around to make sure it's not their phone --

MR. STUBBS: Yeah.

2.3

MS. CASTELLOE: -- but we all knew it was your phone. And then eventually it stopped, and then, you know, and you finished -- you never acknowledged it. You finished your argument, you sat down and after a minute or two I saw you kind of lean over and take it out and maybe switch it off or switch it to vibrate or whatever and put it back. That was pretty good.

MR. STUBBS: I don't remember that. But, of course, I don't think it was the worse thing.

Telephones in court are not a good thing, and I was sitting there in court examining a witness and my cell phone rang, and I did not stand up and say I'm sorry, Judge, oh, please forgive me. I answered the phone.

No, seriously.

No, let me explain what the -- I answered the phone and talked to the person and I said are you all right? Is everything fine? And she said yeah. I just wanted to call you and tell you I'm doing fine and I have not had the baby yet. It was from my child in

Charlotte who was having a -- during the (indiscernible) C-section, so there was a little bit more medical stuff there. Well, foolishly, it was Judge Small, so I just -- when I hung up I told him, I said, Judge, I will apologize again, but there's some people you just got to talk to, and he was very forgiving and understood why I had to do that.

I think we have been fortunate in having a very good bench. I think the bench we have now is the best we have had since I've been practicing, although I might argue with myself when Mickey was there. But all of our three judges are the best, although even though I think all of our three judges and most lawyers who appear before any of them in North Carolina would all agree there's one who is the best in North Carolina. Who is that?

who is that?

2.0

2.3

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I don't know.

MR. STUBBS: Yeah, you do. Who's the best bankruptcy judge in North Carolina?

MR. SASSER: I feel like this is a trap that you're asking.

MR. STUBBS: No, it's not.

MS. CASTELLOE: Are you saying right now or ever?

MR. STUBBS: Yes.

MS. CASTELLOE: Okay. 1 2 MR. STUBBS: I'll say just about ever. 3 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: In this district or in the whole state? 4 5 MR. STUBBS: No, the whole state. MS. CASTELLOE: I'm not going to say. 6 7 think I know, but I'm not going to say. MR. STUBBS: I don't mind saying because 8 9 everybody would say the same thing. It's Ben Kahn. 10 MR. SASSER: What makes Judge Kahn so 11 effective in your mind? 12 MR. STUBBS: Let me tell you what he is like 13 when he was practicing, okay? He would come down here 14 and we would have a knock down drag out case. He knew 15 the law. He knows every damn thing. And when we would 16 take a break for 15 minutes and he says, Buzz, why 17 don't you do this and shift this to this and put this 18 here, and then I'll withdraw my motion and you do this. 19 And I said you know what I'm going to say to that? 2.0 That's exactly right. He'd figured out the 21 (indiscernible) now. He knows the law. He's very 22 academic. 2.3 And you say why did he want to be a 24 bankruptcy judge? He was bringing more money doing

what he was doing. And I understand his wife is very

25

smart and she has a good technology job and they got all the money they need, and he just wants to be on the bench, but I don't know why. I've talked to all three about it -- judges about it and they all acknowledge that Kahn's the smartest judge and knows the job. I'm assuming y'all will not say anybody else, will you? I don't -- I don't want you (indiscernible) in public --

2.0

2.3

MR. SASSER: I think I only -- I admired

Judge Kahn when he was in practice from my interactions

with him, and I've appeared in front of him a couple of

times in Durham, and I think he's a very fine judge.

MR. STUBBS: Yeah, he was --

MR. SASSER: Well, let's talk to you. You have been in front of all seven of the judges. We'll just call it the modern era, the post-Cheshire era.

MR. STUBBS: Yes, post-Cheshire era is a good way to describe it.

MR. SASSER: Without -- I'm not asking you to rank the seven judges, but what are some of the memorable strengths and weakness and characteristics of these seven judges? Let me -- actually, let me ask a question that I asked Richard Sparkman. Do you think that Judge Moore had a difficult time adapting when they changed from the 1898 Act to the Code?

MR. STUBBS: Now you're talking about '78?

1 MR. SASSER: '78.

Δ

2.0

2.3

MR. STUBBS: No. Here's what Mickey always
-- Chess, he says I don't care what the statute says.

He says you change (indiscernible) and make it more in favor of the banks and they (indiscernible) will come back and make it more in favor of them. They can do what they want. I make the decisions in this room and I can make it the way I want to. He had no problem with that I do not think.

MR. SASSER: So his way of adapting was he just kind of ignored --

MR. STUBBS: He did what was --

MR. SASSER: Okay.

MR. STUBBS: He did what was right.

Remember, we are living in a -- the bankruptcy arena is a -- geared towards being friendly to debtors. It's geared towards helping people who have financial difficulties. It's not like you (indiscernible) court he says, yeah, they didn't pay the money, the house will be foreclosed. Our whole bankruptcy legal system is how to help this guy, give him more time to pay whether it be 7, 13, 11. The discharge is the best thing that ever happened.

I mean we don't have a debtor's prison (indiscernible) pro-bankruptcy, but I do not think

Mickey had a hard time adapting. I've got -- I'm not saying I know the bankruptcy judges better than anybody else, but I had -- I've had some I like better than others, yes, and I know their -- I think I know their strengths and weaknesses as well as anybody.

MS. OLIVER: Well, you said that the current bench is probably the best bench so far.

MR. STUBBS: Yes, I did.

2.0

2.3

MS. OLIVER What makes them the best bench?

MR. STUBBS: Come back to me and let me think about how to word that.

MS. OLIVER: Okay. Did you ever think about being a judge?

MR. STUBBS: No.

(Laughter)

MR. STUBBS: Let me tell you what, and y'all -- Tom Ellis (phonetic) told y'all all the federal judges in North Carolina he and Mack were good friends and we would talk (indiscernible) all my -- I shouldn't tell this, but all my friends was going up to be interviewed. Charlie Winberry was my closest friend. He was a very good politician. Sam Currin who later got in trouble, Mack Howard.

I asked my wife, I said, you know, why don't they ever think about asking me? And she very honestly

said, Stubbs, if you went before the Judicial Committee, the first thing they would do is call in the last 20 psychiatrists, and they would never consider you. If that didn't do you in, they'd call in your last 20 girlfriends and then you couldn't even practice law in New Bern much less be a judge.

2.0

2.3

But it's always been a financial issue. I've got four kids, and they went to private schools, and that was really the primary issue. Although I could never have been -- (indiscernible) saying that, I could never -- I have never been confirmed as a judge of any kind because of my health issues. But, no, I didn't -- I've never wanted to be one either.

MR. SASSER: Judge Howard also passed on the chance to go for the bankruptcy judgeship in 1982 when Judge Small did. Was that because he was already submitting the Article III District Court appointment or is it other reasons we don't know about?

MR. STUBBS: Howard knew that if he played his cards right he would be an Article III judge. He and Jesse were very close. And I'm not saying Jesse and I were not. In fact, the morning my wife died, she died at 10:30, and I was sitting on a stool in my kitchen at 11:15, and Jesse called up and said, Buzz, I was just -- doctors called me and told me about Jane.

And he was -- Jesse was a good personal friend to a lot of people.

2.0

2.3

And I used to say if particularly, you know, when I was tired, Stubbs, what are your political views? And I would say I don't know, call Jesse and whatever he says that's it, and just like I do with my spiritual life, I didn't want to talk to -- about it. What are your spiritual views? Just ask my wife and she'll speak for me. But now if I'm awake and I'm alert and can talk to somebody like Cindy, I'll talk to you all day about it. Yeah, but sometimes you get tired and just don't want to talk.

MS. CASTELLOE: Speaking of that, we've been going about an hour and 15 minutes. Doing okay? Do you need a break?

MR. STUBBS: Yeah, go as long as you want to.

MR. SASSER: How do you think Judge Small -- having a second judge and Judge Small, how did he change the culture of the court when he came on?

MR. STUBBS: Judge Small is a very close personal friend of mine and my daughter Alice. And being a judge was more difficult for Judge Small than it was for Mickey. Judge Small, as he developed through the years, drew my appreciation, became a very debtor-oriented judge, which I agree with him, and he

has supported and has continued to support the mental health issues and with his friend, I think his name was Jay Williams, who is a psychologist who he worked with (indiscernible) for which I have been very grateful.

2.0

2.3

Judge Small was not popular among the district court, whereas, Mickey Moore was a saint, and when I had talked to people about who should be a bankruptcy judge, I usually start with here's one, Mickey Moore. Thought of that person where Judge Small did not play politician in the district among the judges, but Judge Small played politics among the national crowd more than any bankruptcy judge in America, and because he played tennis with the Chief Judge of the Supreme Court, who is the -- the Chief Judge of the Supreme Court is the judge that is the judge for the Fourth Circuit. So Judge Small played tennis and got to know him very well, and Judge Small, I think, was the most politically successful bankruptcy judge that I have known of.

Now, what does this say? The difference in personalities. There's a lot of people that don't like me that I don't get along with where I get my friend to go and talk to them and he can get it done for me.

I've been doing that much more in my later years. That guy doesn't like me, but, Jack, here you go talk to him

for me and then it works better.

2.0

2.3

Now, you asked me how Judge Small changed the dynamics of the bench. Judge Small and Mickey were friends, and they -- I won't go into detail, but they were not the same type of people and they were on the bench together at the same time.

MS. OLIVER: Do you have any memorable cases that you had?

MR. STUBBS: Yeah, I guess I got a lot of them, but, really, I should say this. I really don't like law. I should have done something else besides practice law. But I, sometimes I get -- I had my law partner, who I think is the smartest lawyer anywhere, but, he has corncobs up his ass, and when he is presented with a problem, he just says, no, you can't do this because. Well, that's not the way you do, but he knows the law so much better than I do.

He came to me the other day and he says,
Stubbs, I got a zoning problem. This little Indian guy
was trying to open a convenience store or a tobacco
shop and he went before the Board of Aldermen without a
lawyer, and they turned him down because they did not
want a tobacco shop. So John said they'd come to him.
He says, Stubbs, this is your type of case, because you
know all these aldermen and they are all your friends.

I love them all and have to deal in transactions with each one. And I said, John, this zoning concept is the most difficult thing you can have. Have any of you ever studied zoning?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah, just recently.

2.0

2.3

person with some law.

MR. STUBBS: Now, you've got zoning and then you've got is it consistency zoning or inconsistent? It is a non-conforming use, and there's so many -- should I get a variance? Well, when you want to get something done sometimes you've got to do more than just kiss the ass of the decision maker. You've actually got to study a little law and present that

So I started working on this little puzzle and I said, gee, I really like this. So it will ultimately come back to my friends who will decide, but I went down and talked yesterday to this zoning coordinator in New Bern. He pulled out all these books and showed me how complicated it was, but I'm going to get the project done and I'm going to get him a convenience store in this little place just because it interests me to do that, you know.

But most of my law, now, Cindy, is -- I'm not saying I'm bored with it, but I got pretty good kids, who know it better than I do, and they do better than I

do in telling me what the law is. I have a lot of memorable cases, and we've had some funny cases as you have. If you asked me what is -- Stubbs, what's your most memorable case? It's not a bankruptcy case. It's a federal case I had before Judge Howard, we called the Dicky John case. My client had this machine that dried corn called the Dicky John. I know, it's ridiculous. It won't dry corn. It won't change the temperature of the corn. Well, we got the Dicky John up there in court, and I don't know how, but the Dicky John worked, and heated the corn, and Howard said that's all I need to hear. But I don't really think the Dicky John machine did work properly, but it did that day. You know, that's all --

2.0

2.3

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: That's all that mattered.

(Laughter)

MR. STUBBS: I don't know what would be the most memorable case. I remember the people better than I remember the cases, I guess. There were very few people that you would want to be, but one of them is -- Cindy has a kid who is a -- went to Ole Miss, and when he was a rising senior at Ole Miss, he worked in our office, and I said at the time if I was going to be somebody going back to my senior year in college in

Oxford, Mississippi, this is a nice looking kid. He plays golf and has a good personality, and he's doing well in accounting now, isn't he?

MS. OLIVER: Yes.

2.3

MR. STUBBS: But you seem to remember the people better than you do the cases sometimes. Now, tell me when y'all get tired. I have a nine year old and she stayed at her cousins last night, but she's riding home with me and my driver, so the one thing I have left to do today is pick her up and take her home. Now, I may call Travis a little later and ask him about some business issues, but that doesn't need to be --

MS. BUTLER: On the record.

MR. SASSER: On the tape.

MR. STUBBS: Yeah, it doesn't need to be related here.

MS. CASTELLOE: Was there any story in your mind that you wanted to make sure that you told us when we called and asked you to do this that you haven't told us today?

MR. STUBBS: No, I -- there was some it would not be appropriate to tell, but I think we've covered a lot of stuff.

MS. CASTELLOE: We've covered a lot.

MR. STUBBS: And I attribute this -- Travis

and I have talked about this several times. The oldest of which was about three years ago, and I'm not going to relate that conversation. But Travis, I don't think he is a genius, but he has got a mind that thinks up more and is more innovative even than his rival John Orcutt, who was -- John was one of the best businessmen I've known. He has been very generous. Whenever I need money, I'd call John. He says, yeah, I'll give you \$5,000 or I'll give you \$10,000. If you need more let me know.

2.3

Now Travis is like my grandson in that I said you're not the favorite (indiscernible), but you are the most peculiar. Travis has the most ideas of anybody in our crowd, and I like him. That's controversial as hell, some of them are, Travis, and you can get in sort of (indiscernible), but you are the most innovative person in our group. And, Cindy, I think you would have to agree with that.

MS. OLIVER: Oh, sure.

MR. STUBBS: Yep.

MR. SASSER: Thank you. I mean, I think that on the record since we're, you know, this is for posterity, but I think that, you know, this Bar owes you a great debt of gratitude for putting on EBI, for just the leadership that you've shown, just for the --

1	all of the people you've mentored, and you've just done
2	a very good thing for this district. In terms of,
3	other than the you know, other than probably the
4	judges, you probably and maybe even more than the
5	judges, you actually are responsible for the culture
6	and a lot of the good things that are going on in this
7	Bar. Thank you for that.
8	MR. STUBBS: Thank you for saying so.
9	MS. BUTLER: Do you have anything else?
10	MR. SASSER: That's all I have.
11	MS. OLIVER: Thanks, Buzzy.
12	MS. BUTLER: Thank you for coming.
13	MS. CASTELLOE: Yes, thank you.
14	* * * *
15	
16	
17	
18	
19	
20	
21	
22	
23	
24	

1	<u>CERTIFICATION</u>
2	I, KIMBERLY UPSHUR, the assigned transcriber,
3	do hereby certify the foregoing transcript of
4	proceedings is prepared in full compliance with the
5	current Transcript Format for Judicial Proceedings and
6	is a true and accurate compressed transcript of the
7	proceedings as recorded, and to the best of my ability.
8	
9	<u>/s/ Kimberly Upshur</u>
10	KIMBERLY UPSHUR
11	J&J COURT TRANSCRIBERS, INC. DATE: January 14, 2021
12	
13	
14	
15	
16	
17	
18	
19	
20	
21	
22	
23	
24	
25	