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Tribute

Bruce Miller

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TRIBUTE

Bruce Miller,
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Clerked 8/26/99 – 8/22/00*

AS anyone who spent any time in chambers well knew, Judge was seldom without a lit cigar. Each time he would come to my office to discuss a case, he would pull up a chair and set his cigar on the edge of the desk while we talked. And I would always keep a wary eye on that cigar, watching as the ash burned closer and closer to the wood as the discussion progressed. After a few close calls, I wrote to my parents asking about a beautiful crystal cigar ashtray that they had that had once belonged to my great-grandfather. It was a family heirloom, but they quickly agreed to send the ashtray to me, and it was with great satisfaction that I brought it to chambers and placed it at the top of my desk. Though I said nothing about it, I knew Judge would be pleased.

The next time Judge came in to discuss a case, he pulled up a chair, sat down, nonchalantly took the back of his hand and slid the ashtray out of the way, then placed his lit cigar on the edge of the desk. No comment was made, nor was anything ever said about the ashtray the rest of the year. He never once used it, and the ashtray eventually turned into a candy dish, which remains on my desk to this day.

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