



1997

Dedication: A Tribute to Professor Arthur G. Murphey, Jr.

Robert R. Wright III

Follow this and additional works at: <https://lawrepository.ualr.edu/lawreview>



Part of the [Legal Biography Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Robert R. Wright III, *Dedication: A Tribute to Professor Arthur G. Murphey, Jr.*, 19 U. ARK. LITTLE ROCK L. REV. xiii (1997).

Available at: <https://lawrepository.ualr.edu/lawreview/vol19/iss4/1>

This Dedication is brought to you for free and open access by Bowen Law Repository: Scholarship & Archives. It has been accepted for inclusion in University of Arkansas at Little Rock Law Review by an authorized editor of Bowen Law Repository: Scholarship & Archives. For more information, please contact mmserfass@ualr.edu.

A TRIBUTE TO PROFESSOR ARTHUR G. MURPHEY, JR.

In May 1997, Arthur Gage Murphey, Jr. retired after forty years in the law teaching profession, concluding his distinguished career following his appointment as Arkansas Bar Foundation Professor of Law for 1996-97. He will continue to maintain offices in the Law School building as an Emeritus Professor and will no doubt continue to contribute, as he has in the past, to legal education through his writings and activities.

Professor Murphey has been a faculty member at UALR since the law school was severed from the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville in 1975 and became a part of this branch of the University of Arkansas System. Prior to that time, from 1967-75, Professor Murphey was a faculty member of the University of Arkansas School of Law, Little Rock Division, and served as Assistant Dean from 1970-73.

Teaching stints for Professor Murphey prior to coming to the University of Arkansas were at the University of Akron, Emory University, and the University of Georgia. He has also been a visiting Professor at Western Reserve University, Franklin T. Backus School of Law, and at one of his alma maters, Ole Miss.

A native of Macon, Mississippi, Professor Murphey attended Vanderbilt University and received his A.B. degree from the University of North Carolina. He received his law degree from the University of Mississippi in 1953. He studied at the London School of Economics, University of London, during 1953-54 as a Fulbright Scholar, performing research work in legal history under the eminent English legal historian, Theodore F. T. Plucknett. While on the Emory law faculty, he received his LL.M. in 1962 from Yale Law School. Prior to undertaking his academic career, Professor Murphey was an associate with a prominent law firm in Jackson, Mississippi, and performed legal work for an insurance company.

Although he has taught the amazing number of twenty-eight different courses during his law school years, his principal work has been in the general area of Contracts, Commercial Law, Conflict of Laws, and particularly in the last fifteen or more years, International Law, International Business Transactions, and Comparative Law. He studied in that area at the Hague Academy of International Law and the University of Brussels, aside from various workshops in the United States. Most of Professor Murphey's publications over the years have been on specific topics in commercial law or international business transactions.

During the 1996-97 academic year, Professor Murphey served as Faculty Advisor to the Law Journal. In his earliest days in legal education, that is one of the ways he began—as Faculty Advisor to the Emory Student Section of the Georgia Bar Journal and Faculty Editor of the Journal of Public Law (which is now the Emory Law Journal). One of the student editors on one of these publications was Sam Nunn, who recently retired from the United States Senate.

One area of "the law" on which Professor Murphey considers himself a leading authority—and long-time observers would agree—is "Murphy's Law," which he believes was originally and properly named "Murphey's Law"—the omission of the "e" being an error probably attributable to ill-informed press references. This law, which holds that whatever can go wrong will go wrong, has long plagued this distinguished professor. For example, about ten years after he left the University of Georgia Law School, it was designated to be a "peak of excellence" within the University system (—which translated, means "infusion of funds," "faculty salary increases," "money"). Something similar happened about the same time at Emory. Naturally, "Murphey's Law" led him here, where faculty salaries peaked about the time of Nixon's resignation from the Presidency. "Murphey's Law" has manifested itself periodically throughout our distinguished colleague's life through minor misfortunes in the home, slights from waitresses in the serving of meals, necessary but unanticipated automobile repairs, the fluctuation of the stock market, and the like. It is well, for example, to consider that weeks away from Professor Murphey's retirement and his reliance upon the TIAA-CREF retirement fund, Federal Reserve Czar Alan Greenspan chose to launch an attack on inflation (which is very low) and thereby indirectly an attack on the stock market, which plunged.

From the personal standpoint of students and faculty, as has been stated, Professor Murphey has been an important part of this law school from its accredited inception as a division of the University of Arkansas Law School in Fayetteville, through the time of its attachment by the General Assembly to UALR as a separate school of law under that campus of the University System, down to the present, during which the law school has finally acquired adequate facilities designed and intended to be used for a law school building. That situation has not always been as it is now. The first facilities of this law school in August, 1965, were on the second floor of a building at Third and Broadway known as the Gay Building. Down below on the first floor was Everett's Glass Shop. Everett replaced cracked or smashed windshields of motor vehicles, and the shop was identified by a sign in the shape of a thick arrow on the second floor level pointing down in a curve toward the first floor where Everett's was located. The sign had tinted bulbs around the edges of the arrow, and it bore the legend: "Everett's Glass Shop: Give Us a Break." That could have been the motto of the fledgling Little Rock Division of the U of A.

From that location, the law school moved into the new Arkansas Bar Center where Professor Murphey had his office for most of his career. The Bar Center was a much better situation, and Murphey had a spacious office with a large glass window that ran the length of his north wall and overlooked the Arkansas River and North Little Rock. It was a lovely view. The Bar Center, however, did not have enough classroom, office or library space for a full-time law school, which this law school became in 1975 when it was made a part of UALR. As a temporary measure, the Old Federal Building (or Old Post Office, as some called it), which was close by on Second Street between Spring and Center, was acquired. Those buildings, however, ultimately became inad-

quate also, particularly as to library space, and the current building was occupied in the summer of 1992, following the gutting, complete renovation and new construction at 1201 McAlmont in a building formerly occupied primarily by the Graduate Institute of Technology and originally built for the Medical School.

Professor Murphey was an integral part of all of that history, including what seemed to be a continual struggle with the law school in Fayetteville and some of its Deans. This would not include all Fayetteville Deans, however, since when the Law School was a division of the University of Arkansas Law School in Fayetteville, Professor Murphey served as Assistant Dean under Dean Ralph Barnhart, who was the Dean in Fayetteville when the Little Rock Division was created and who has always been a supporter of this operation.

It has been a distinct pleasure for these many years to serve as a faculty member with Art Murphey. His cheerful personality, even when suffering from the downward spiral of Murphey's Law, is always welcome. His knowledge and erudition, his interest in literature, theology, history, the performing arts, humor, and so many other things, are most desirable characteristics in a colleague. We are pleased that he will continue to have his office in the law school and visit with us. We wish him the best in the years to come.

Robert R. Wright, III
Donaghey Distinguished Professor of Law

