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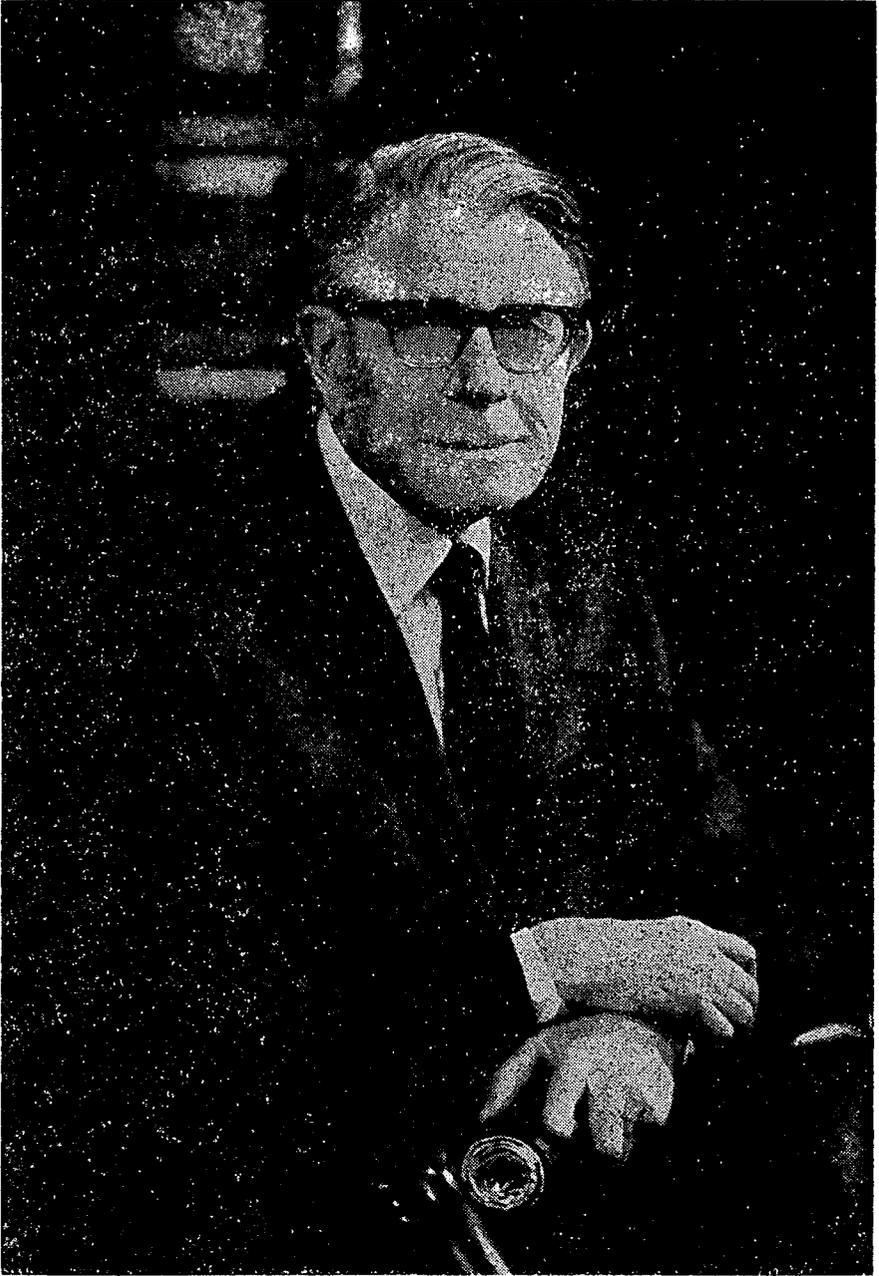
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HONORABLE MORTIMER STONE

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MORTIMER STONE—MR. COLORADO WATER LAW

BY ROBERT B. YEGGE*

There is a Colorado jurist who never ceases to perform legal miracles: Mortimer Stone. It is to him and his distinguished career that this special issue of the *Denver Law Journal* is dedicated.

"Mort," as his long-time friend, colleague, and associate in practice (and my father) called him, was born in 1882. The son of parents of modest means, he was required to strive diligently to gain his worldly goals. Yet for Mortimer Stone, the goals weren't hard; it was the means that posed the problems. It comes as no surprise that Mort wanted a fine, classical liberal arts education followed by a legal education which would allow him to, with experience and reflection, become a student of the law in the finest tradition. And with perseverance and many long, arduous hours, Mort did it. He graduated from Colgate University, being named to Phi Beta Kappa. After further work for means, he entered into law study at New York Law School, where he earned the LL.B. degree (honors).

The admonition of Horace Greeley called Mort to the west, and he moved to Fort Collins: Mortimer Stone, Attorney and Counsellor at Law, member of the Colorado Bar from and after 1910.

He tells the story about his early career: "I walked briskly because when I first started to practice in Fort Collins, I wanted people to think I was busy, thus a successful lawyer." For 35 years he practiced law in Fort Collins, where he shall never be forgotten as "Resident Wiseman." Then, in 1944, he was nominated and subsequently elected to a ten-year term on the Supreme Court of the State of Colorado.

In those ten years, Colorado became known for its jurisprudence. Mr. Justice Stone wrote opinions incisive in their legal and social thought, often witty, and always sound and just. During his last two years on the court, he rendered service long and nationally remembered as its Chief Justice. Indeed, he was named President of the Conference of Chief Justices of the United States: *Res Ipsa Loquitur*.

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In his years on the court, he became well known and respected for his thoughtful and meaningful opinions on litigation over the allocation of water resources; and in his final year of service, then Chief Justice Stone wrote one of the more significant opinions on these scarce and precious rights.

In 1955, Mr. Chief Justice Stone left the Colorado Court and returned to private practice in Denver. Although constantly called upon to help solve water problems, he found time to develop another expertise: labor arbitration. Indeed, he is still called upon to perform this service as one of the few recognized arbitrators in major railroad labor disputes.

When the editors of the *Denver Law Journal* decided to produce this Symposium on Colorado water law, they thought only once about a Special Editor: Mr. Colorado Water Law; and without hesitation, the distinguished scholar accepted the position. Justice Stone spent numerous hours consulting with the editors, editing manuscripts, and giving helpful and witty advice. His thorough knowledge of the subject, his precise style of exposition, his tireless energy, and his informal manner won for him the respect and admiration of the entire *Journal* Association. Hence, once this issue was ready, the editors — our finest students at the College of Law — were of one mind: the issue *must* be dedicated to the mentor of Colorado water law.

Thus, Mr. Chief Justice Stone, we proudly dedicate this issue of the *Denver Law Journal* to you, your distinguished (and we know satisfying) career, and its continuation. You are our colleague, mentor, and friend.