His extreme modesty and unwillingness to advertise himself or permit others to extol him, his utter unselfishness, and his complete subordination of self and personal interests to those of the University and Law School to which he gave four decades of loyal and devoted service, have combined to leave biographical materials about Dean E. Blythe Stason, except for the most routine accounts, almost nonexistent. Writings by him are amazing in number and scope. Writings about him can scarcely be found. This is not because there is a lack of things to write about him and his many, brilliant accomplishments in the fields of law, education, administration and legal statesmanship. May one soon appear, with talents greater than those of this writer, to whom the time, opportunity and occasion may be made available for the necessary study, research and resultant writing. This alone could do him justice and permit the adequate paying of a richly deserved tribute. At the same time, it would add much to the public knowledge of how his achievements and many distinctions have helped to enhance the eminence and rich traditions of the Law School over whose destinies, for so long, he presided.

Education — Early Experience

E. Blythe Stason was born on September 6, 1891, in Sioux City, Iowa, the son of a successful practicing lawyer. In 1913 he received the degree of Bachelor of Arts from the University of Wisconsin, and in 1916 the Bachelor of Science degree from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology where he had specialized in electrical engineering. Then, for one year, he was an instructor in Electrical Engineering at the University of Pennsylvania. He entered the armed service at the beginning of World War I, in 1917, and served in the Corps of Engineers of the U.S. Army, ultimately attaining the rank of captain. At the War’s end in 1919 he became assistant professor of Electrical Engineering at the University of Michigan, continuing until 1922. It was during this period (1921) that he married Adeline Boaz. They have two sons, Edwin Blythe Stason, Jr., and William Boaz Stason.

* Chief Justice, Supreme Court of Michigan. — Ed.
The years at M.I.T., devoted to studies of electrical engineering, and his subsequent teaching experience in that field gave Dean Stason background for a range of interests unusual for one who was to become a member of the legal profession. They have provided him a valuable avocation, but, further, have proved a positive aid to him in his work in administrative law and in dealing with legal problems. Those years of teaching embryo engineers also served to develop in him a love of teaching and a proficiency for it from which succeeding generations of law students were destined to profit.

During his three years of teaching electrical engineering at Ann Arbor he was also taking a full law course at the Law School of the University of Michigan, gaining a J.D. degree in 1922, after having achieved an all “A” record. He was elected a member of the Order of the Coif. From 1922 until 1924 he practiced law with his father in his home town, Sioux City, Iowa. His father immediately thrust upon him full responsibility for the trial of cases. Thus he learned his way around in the courtroom and acquired active, practical, professional experience which was to stand him in good stead in his subsequent work of training others to become lawyers.

In the fall of 1924 the University of Michigan beckoned to him again and he returned to Ann Arbor to become Professor of Law in the school which he continued to serve so well during the succeeding thirty-six years. It is a source of pride to this writer that that autumn also marked the opening, for the first time, of the doors of the new Lawyers Club and his own initiation into the ranks of the long succession of Michigan law freshmen who were to sit, as did upper classmen, of course, at the feet of Professor Stason to hear his expositions of the law.

Library Years

Dean Stason’s early years on the Michigan Law Faculty, from 1924 to 1932, were devoted especially to developing his law teaching equipment in a broad range of subjects — Pleading, Trial Practice, Appellate Practice, Trusts, Torts, Municipal Corporations, Administrative Law, Taxation, Public Utility Law, and, later, Constitutional Law. These he has styled his “library” years (though never since has he been a stranger there), years of long, hard hours spent building up knowledge of the corpus juris, writing law review articles and preparing his own casebook on Admini-
E. BLYTHE STASON

Administrative Tribunals and, a little later, another on Municipal Corporations and Other Public Agencies. These were the years when the foundations were laid not only for subsequent years of highly skillful teaching of students in his special fields, such as Administrative Tribunals and Municipal Corporations, but also for three decades of outstanding contributions to his profession, community, state and nation, as a legal statesman, if one may borrow a term he applies to other lawyers in whom he has discerned an urge and aptitude for serving the public welfare.

Law School — Administration

A splendid opportunity to develop the administrative skills so vital to his later service as Dean, and to acquire an intimate understanding of University administration and the problems of higher education in general, came to Dean Stason in 1938 when he was made Provost of the University. He remained in that capacity until his resignation from it in 1944, all the while continuing to carry his full teaching load at the Law School and, as well, from 1939 on, shouldering the administrative duties which became his as Dean of the Law School to which office he was appointed that year.

The war years were in some respects depressing for the Law School. Civilian enrollment, of necessity, shrank, and continuance as a member of the regular student body until graduation became, for many, an uncertainty. The resulting problems for administration of the school and maintaining its program and standards seemed, at first, almost beyond solution. A mark of Dean Stason's administrative ability, adroitness at overcoming current difficulties and, above all, vision for the future of the school, was his success in getting the Judge Advocate General's School moved from Washington to the Law Quadrangle in Ann Arbor. During the war years over 2,000 lawyers, carefully selected from all over the United States, were quartered there and given instruction in all aspects of military law. These became members of the Judge Advocate General's Corps. In the meanwhile, the Law School's regular courses were continued for its considerably contracted student body. Thus were the Law School's facilities put to excellent and capacity use during the war period. But, beyond that, the Michigan Law School acquired many new legal friends, who were graduates of other law schools but whose esteem for their second alma mater is attested by the sizeable number of
these "Judge Advocate Alumni" who since have sent their sons to study law at Michigan. This was an accomplishment in the field of practical public relations which was destined to bear future fruitage for the Law School and University of Michigan. It is just an example of the Stason skills as an administrator.

There is much more to be said of Stason's twenty-one years of administrative work and accomplishment as Dean. Let us note first a few of the physical and statistical results for the school. Student enrollment increased from 612 in 1939 to 861 in 1959. Degrees conferred in 1939 numbered 160 and in 1958 totalled 284. In his 1956-1957 report to the University President, he wrote:

"...We have, after careful consideration of our own practices and observation of other law schools, established as a long-range objective of legal education at Michigan a ratio of one faculty member of professorial rank to each twenty-five students of the Law School. ... Experience teaches us that the best results are not obtained in the large, impersonal classrooms."

This was expressive of his avowed policy both before and after that report. The extent to which he succeeded in giving it effect may be judged from the fact that in 1939 the law faculty consisted of fifteen professors, two associate professors, one assistant professor, one visiting professor and two part-time outside lecturers. In 1959 there were thirty professors, one part-time professor, two associate professors, one assistant professor, one part-time assistant professor, six instructors, one lecturer and three visiting professors, all of whom held at least the degree of Bachelor of Laws and most had had some experience in the practice of law before appointment. The total number of volumes in the law library in 1939 was 145,261; in 1960 it had increased to twice that number, 297,782. It is not only one of the largest law libraries in the world, but it is extremely well selected and well arranged. Admittedly, other factors in addition to the Dean's skillful administration figured in these changes, but, as the Director of the law library once observed about the growth of the library, "Dean E. Blythe Stason... has seen to it that the library has received its fair share of the funds available to the school." It is evident that he ushered in a new and enlarged concept of the proportions of that "fair share," and so it was with regard to the growth of the

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school in its many other aspects. Thus it must be understood that it was no mere coincidence that the long-standing national recognition of the law school at Michigan as a leading law school of the country and of the world was considerably strengthened during the Stason deanship, and this for reasons not only as above outlined, but, perhaps even more because of the reorganization and improvements he brought about in the teaching and other programs of the school, to which we now turn our attention.

The Law School — Curriculum and Program

For an understanding of the nature, extent, purpose and consequences of those changes in the curriculum, program and pedagogical methods we are aided by some of his own expressions of his philosophy of the law, and his statements about the objectives of legal education and the principles which motivated him in administering the law school. They present a glimpse of his vision and prophetic insight into the inevitable growth of the law and the consequent demands which would be made on the skills of the lawyer of the future, his own understanding of how to meet and satisfy the resultant changing needs in the field of legal instruction, and a picture of how it was done at the law school of The University of Michigan.

The Law School Announcement for 1940-41, the first prepared under his supervision, stated:

"... Most of the classroom discussion is conducted by means of the free discussion of legal principles, as disclosed in reported cases, statutes, and other legal materials; but frequently, when time is available, excursions are made into related nonlegal materials in order to observe the application of law to society. Thus our legal system is examined as a general scheme of social control with a background of economics, political theory, sociology, and other social sciences, as well as psychology, psychiatry, and biology."

Dean Stason's concern that there should also be a stabilizing influence in such a scheme of social control is evident from a statement in his 1945-46 annual report to the President:

"It is indeed fortunate that there is an element of stability in the legal structure of a society approaching chaos in some

of its aspects. We believe that it is one of the important functions of the Law School to inculcate in future lawyers and statesmen a careful, thorough knowledge of, and respect for, these stable fundamentals of the law."\(^1\)

In an article about the Law School in 1948,\(^2\) Dean Stason restated this belief and, in words revealing of his concept of the objectives of an ideal law school, continued:

"This latter consideration necessarily looms large and exerts a material influence in carrying out the educational program of the Law School. This program is, of course, the heart of the School and the key to its success. It is the composite effort of the faculty, and probably no two members of the group would state its objectives in the same way. However, as envisaged by the writer, the principal educational objectives of the School, guiding its program of education of the next generation of lawyers, may be stated as follows:

"First, the lawyer of the future will have the same need as the lawyer of the past for the fundamentals of legal science, for the basic principles of contracts, property, torts, procedure, equity jurisprudence, etc. These fundamentals change but slowly—even in a changing world they survive. What we have been taught about these subjects in years gone by still is, and will continue to be, the backbone of legal science—and will be the grist of the practice of law in years to come. One of the major policies of the School is the imparting of a thorough training in these fundamentals. We believe that therein lies to a large degree the secret of the success of the School's graduates. We plan to continue the policy in the future.

"Second, the lawyer of the future will have the same need as the lawyer of the past for the keen qualities of intellect that have made lawyers the leaders in their communities. The power of analysis, the ability to spot the pertinent issues of a problem, to envisage the pros and cons thereof, to appraise their respective weight, to bring to bear upon the solution the qualities of imagination, wisdom, and good judgment—these are and will continue to be the intellectual essentials of the profession. In carrying out the Law School objectives, we have devoted and shall continue to devote major

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\(^1\) President's Report, 1945-1946, pp. 101-102, BROWN 27.

effort to inculcating these qualities in the students by insisting upon careful, exacting analysis of leading cases (the ‘case method’) and important statute law. There is no escape from rigorous training to develop these mental processes, although, of course, we also use other methods of imparting legal skills, e.g., solution of problems, individual research tasks, practice court work, etc.

"Third, the lawyer of the future will need certain new items in his repertory of intellectual equipment — items that lawyers of years gone by have not found so necessary and hence have either lacked altogether or possessed only in limited degree. These new elements we must identify from time to time as need arises and include them in the curriculum. Pursuing this policy, during the past generation we have added to the program courses in taxation, labor law, regulation of business, and other subjects as they have emerged and assumed importance in the practice of the law. In the future we shall undoubtedly be adding other new subjects as they appear at the frontiers of the profession, and we shall be placing increased emphasis on other subjects if they acquire increased importance in practice."

A dozen years later, he wrote:

"What is the nature of the intellectual equipment required to fit these lawyers for their professional activities? Views may differ somewhat, but my experience leads me to list four principal features. They are:

‘(1) The lawyer must acquire familiarity with a large number of rules, principles, and standards of law. . . .

‘(2) The lawyer must possess an ability to reason effectively. . . .

‘(3) The lawyer must develop certain highly professional skills which he is called upon to use constantly in his practice. . . .

‘(4) And perhaps the highest art of all is that which I have elsewhere called legal statesmanship. The lawyer must be well aware of the social, economic, and political impact of legal doctrine, and he must be prepared to contribute as a community leader to the development of the law as a means of social control. . . ."

He then asked what legal education has been doing to make certain that its graduates acquire these attributes, and continued:

"(1) As we all know, heavy reliance has been placed by legal educators on the so-called 'case system,' conceived by Professor Langdell at Harvard three quarters of a century ago, and now used in almost all of the law schools in this country. Yet the efficacy of this system as the sole means of imparting legal education has in recent years been seriously questioned. It is time consuming in character, and only a limited number of skills are developed by it. Accordingly, legal educators have searched for alternatives, or at least for supplementary devices, and these have been forthcoming. In many schools 'problems' are currently being used whenever the subject matter permits, and to an ever-increasing extent, especially in small seminars, use is being made of independent research, the drafting of documents, pleadings and statutes, and the preparation of papers—all in supplementation of the rather uniform and occasionally uninspiring diet of judicial decisions served up in the earlier years. . . .

"(2) Fully as significant as improvements in teaching method has been the evolution of the substantive content of legal education, taking into account the changes that have been emerging in the practice of law. Relative newcomers include taxation, labor law, legislation, problems of international trade, administrative law, and, more recently, such innovations as air law and atomic energy law. These have introduced many new concepts into the classrooms, not to mention the new facets that have been introduced as a result of current developments in such relatively conventional subjects as torts, property, and constitutional law. Some of the familiar course names of an older generation have disappeared, although the significant portions of the subject matter have ordinarily been absorbed into other courses. Thus we have witnessed the demise of separate courses in damages, public utility law, equity jurisprudence, common law pleading, and agency. With only three years available, legal educators have been forced to make some hard choices, and as a result, the evolutionary process has gradually changed the appearance of the law school catalogue of courses. . . .

"(3) Among the more notable changes of recent years, credit can be claimed for a truly new dimension in legal education developed very largely, although not entirely, since World War II, and partly resulting from some of the end results of that conflict. I refer to education for legal states-
manship. By this I mean a generous supplementation of the skills of ‘client caretaking’ with an awareness of the social, economic and political impact of legal principle. After all, law is a means of social control as well as a device to effectuate individual rights, and the law schools have, to an ever-increasing extent in recent years, endeavored to bring home to their students consciousness of their obligation and opportunity in this regard. Courses in labor law, administrative law, land utilization and, very especially, in international law, comparative law, and related matters have placed marked emphasis upon the obligation of the lawyer to be a constructive citizen as well as a careful guardian of his client’s interests. Rapidly changing contours of the body politic have given rise to a wealth of opportunity for members of the bar to exert a worthy influence in the formation of policy at all levels of government — local, state, national, and international. Legal education has increasingly recognized its obligation in this regard. Classroom and seminar materials are being selected not only to educate good craftsmen of the law, but also to create effective legal statesmen.

“(4) Another truly important post-war development in legal education in most law schools, and certainly at Michigan, has been the great upsurge of faculty interest in legal research. Law faculties have become thoroughly conscious of their obligations and opportunities in the field of productive scholarship and constructive activity on the frontiers of the law. This interest, second only to the doing of effective teaching, is virtually another new dimension in legal education. It is no overstatement to say that in due course the products of such research activities will have a marked effect upon the evolution of the law and administration of justice, by helping to bring into being new legislation, new court rules, new ideas for strengthening and improving the substance of the law. We are working out a judicious combination of effective law-teaching with forward-looking legal research, much of the latter being in the nature of research on legislative matters for public and quasi-public agencies pro bono publico. These activities are making the law school of the present and future a truly powerful agency among American institutions. . . .”

In 1954 Dean Stason suggested to the Law Faculty that they commence to “think in terms of objectives to be achieved in the next twenty or thirty years.”

In a recent, unpublished statement Dean Stason said:
"If I were asked to pick four major principles (among many others of lesser importance) that have guided me in the administration of the Law School, I would state the following:

(a) I have sought to build a law faculty which would work harmoniously and cooperatively together, with complete dedication to the task, without factions or 'isms,' but with an ever-broadening base of intellectual interests, to include especially conduct of research to improve the law and administration of justice, and the development of understanding of international and foreign law.

(b) We have instituted selective admission of students, thereby upgrading the student body, improving the classroom performance, and increasing the quality of our graduates.

(c) We have endeavored to establish closer relationships with the bar, with bar organizations, and with alumni, through meetings, conferences, institutes, continuing legal education, and similar activities.

(d) We have constantly kept in mind the basic idea that it was our duty to train young men to engage successfully in the practice of law, with high ideals and a sense of responsibility and concern for public welfare, and to this end we have placed heavy emphasis on the fundamentals of the law and basic skills essential to professional life."

In working out his program for the improvement of the Law School, he delegated authority wherever feasible. He caused the creation of the positions of Director of Legal Research, Director of Legislative Research Center and Admissions officer. Also, at his prompting, the regents authorized reorganization of the administrative offices within the law school, and the appointment of an Associate Dean "to be directly responsible for research in legal education and for alumni relations development and to have advisory functions in regard to recruitment of faculty personnel and budget problems" and for an Assistant Dean to carry many administrative duties. Members of faculty were also given administrative assignments. Without these forward strides in administrative reorganization of the Law School the great advance in the work, program and eminence of the school could not have been possible.

What was the character of the changes in teaching, curriculum and program?

Brown 65.
"In 1945 Dean Stason submitted a memorandum to the Curriculum Committee suggesting the introduction of an introductory first-year course on the legal system and giving a proposed outline of topics to be dealt with in such a course. As Dean Stason stated in his memorandum the objectives of the proposed course should be: '(a) orientation rather than information; (b) stimulation by developing interesting subject matter rather than penetrating analysis of legal problems; (c) presentation of certain general features of the legal system rather than close examination of a given period of the law.'""5

This recommendation was soon put into operation. Effect was also given, in the Law School program, to Dean Stason's plans and suggestions contained in his following statements:

"(1) In regard to improvement of teaching methods and procedures, I have in mind, for example, such matters as the improving our understanding of the objectives and possibilities of the classroom, the finding of the most fruitful means of using the case system to develop in the students the requisite powers of analysis and of inductive and deductive reasoning, and the discovery of ways and means of inducing our students to make greater use of the law library, exploring the wealth of materials available therein, and enriching their understanding of the law by reaching far beyond the limits of the casebooks prescribed in the respective courses.""6

"Legal education had proved itself to be very effective. Law graduates are well trained and quite capable in handling legal principles. When they go forth to the bar, however, they come into contact almost for the first time with the necessity of acquiring skill in assembling, sifting, analyzing, and utilizing the facts relevant to legal situations. In the law schools little is done with respect to this phase of the lawyer's task. . . . I hope to see the University of Michigan Law School in due course enter this field in such a way that every law graduate will have at least one solid experience in marshaling facts pertinent to a legal controversy. . . .""7

"In the fall of 1957 the Law School initiated a new program requiring all second-year students to do individual work in legal research and writing and in the development of related legal skills.""8

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5 Id. at 620.
6 Memorandum to Faculty, December 1950, quoted in Brown 86.
7 President's Report, 1953-1954, p. 102, Brown 221.
"By selecting legal propositions which have a lively significance in connection with the actual trial of cases it has been possible to give an element of vital interest and punch to the club work that is so often lacking in moot court exercises."

"... I have long maintained that a law school which succeeds in teaching legislation effectively will make as great a contribution to legal education as that of Professor Langdell at Harvard, when in 1870 he designed the case method of law study. Currently, statutes are to an ever-increasing extent invading the domain of the common law and are becoming grist for the lawyer's mill. The subject matter of legislation must be taught not only in the specialized courses and seminars designed for the purpose of imparting statutory and interpretive techniques but also, and perhaps even more importantly, in connection with cognate case law courses. The task will require a careful preparation and revision of teaching materials and a substantial amount of experimentation in methods. Serious attention must, in the years to come, be given to the means of teaching statute law in the Law School."

"For nearly three generations, and until quite recently, legal education has been predominantly 'case' study. The judicial opinion and decision which is thus used as the basis of class discussion (ordinarily used in fairly large classes) is a powerful educational device, but more and more we are coming to realize that legal education will be materially strengthened by insistence upon supplementing the former practices with other teaching methods. Among other useful devices is the seminar, with its opportunity for independent library research and legal writing. An increase in the number of available seminars, so that each student may be enabled to enjoy the benefit of at least one, or perhaps two, such educational experiences while enrolled in the Law School, is greatly to be desired. The seminar offers opportunities for independent library study and research, for synthesis of legal ideas, for developing skill in legal writing, and for interchange of views between students and instructors—all virtually impossible in the ordinary Law School classroom."

9 Stason, The Law School Case Clubs, 35 Mich. Alumnus 250 (1928). "Dean E. Blythe Stason visualized the possibility of the use of motion pictures in this connection, and at his suggestion a plan was developed pursuant to which pictures are used as the means through which witnesses and clients can learn of the facts constituting the basis of later litigation." Joiner, Motion Pictures and Practice Litigation: Michigan Law School Introduces New Technique, 35 A.B.A.J. 185, 186 (1949).


11 Id. at 101, Brown 214-215.
In 1950 he announced the establishment, with the cooperation of the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, of an Integrated Program with three and one-half years of liberal arts and three and one-half of law in place of the former three and three combination, leading to degrees in both Arts and the Law.

During his tenure as Dean the following recommendations also were implemented and effectuated in the Law School program:

"More specifically, the Committee recommends that the Law School make available at least three courses that may be described as jurisprudential in character and which will represent the three basic categories described earlier in this report. Tentatively at least the three courses may be described as (1) Legal Methods, (2) Legal Philosophy, and (3) Law and Society."

"In making further additions to the faculty it is most desirable that we engage an experienced and capable professor of international law—preferably someone with practical experience with the United States Department of State or some related service, who will not only do enlightened law teaching in that important field and make substantial contributions to international law literature, but who will also achieve prestige and leadership among the legal profession to the end that the weight of the profession may make itself felt in the international arena. World problems of the future point to international law as one of the important frontiers demanding skilled professional attention, and we propose to do our share."

"These changes in the character of the professional arena are unmistakable, and they bespeak certain changes in legal education—for example, they indicate an increased emphasis on the legal aspects of accounting, public finance, corporation finance, and certain other phases of corporate and government economics."

"...At the close of the year action was taken by the faculty to modify the course offerings for the year 1939-40 in the following important particulars:

1. In recognition of the increasing importance of constitutional law as a study basic to many other specialized fields of the law, the course in constitutional law was transferred from the third to the second year and was made a required course.

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14 President's Report, 1941-1942, p. 114, Brown 129.
It will be a prerequisite upon which to build the constitutional specialties in taxation, trade regulation, public utilities, administrative law, municipal corporations, employer and employee relations, etc. . . .

"2. Since the students in the Law School should become as familiar as possible with the basic principles in the interpretation and application of statute law, this important subject was taken from the restricted seminar where it had hitherto been taught and was placed in a general course in legal methods, which in turn was enlarged and so placed in the teaching schedule that the combined program was made available to a large proportion of the students. . . .

"3. In the belief that a course in legal history should be made available in the School, so that students may have the advantages of careful study of early legal institutions and principles, such a course was authorized and approved by the faculty for introduction during the school year 1939-40.

"Modern law-school education has two principal objectives: (1) the practical needs of training for the profession; and (2) the somewhat broader needs of training for constructive statesmanship in the law and public service. . . ."\(^{15}\)

"All of them, however, regardless of subsequent specialization, have need of the fundamentals of the law—for example, for the basic principles of contracts, torts, property and constitutional law."

"It was not until E. Blythe Stason became Dean in 1939, that any particular effort was devoted to an expansion of the areas of international and comparative law studies.

"By 1958-59, the Law Faculty had broadened the curriculum to include a number of courses dealing with comparative law studies, such as the seminars on Comparative Constitutional Law, Comparative Criminal Procedure, Comparative Law of Business Associations, English Legal History, International Problems of Criminal Law, and Law of Foreign Trade and Investment."

A comparison of 1958-1959 course offerings with those of 1940-1941 discloses a significant change.\(^{18}\) Summer school course offerings increased from fourteen in 1940-1941 to twenty courses in 1958-1959, and for the two regular semesters from fifty to seventy-

\(^{17}\) Brown 145, 146.  
four. Some of the old subjects of 1940-1941 had disappeared from the list altogether by 1958, and many new ones had been added, as explained in the portion of the Dean's article quoted above. These changes were designed to meet new needs of the times and represented better pedagogy and consideration of the relationships of the several fields of the law.

The Dean strongly favored the use of visiting professors and guest lecturers. He expressed his views on the subject as follows:

"We expect to gain in several ways by resorting to the services of visiting professors. The regular faculty of the School benefits by stimulation from ideas of other law teachers and by the insight into new or improved methods of other law schools. The students profit by fresh points of view in the classroom."20

"... Likewise it was a rewarding and enriching experience for the faculty to have this opportunity to become acquainted with the guest lecturers and to exchange ideas with them."21

Dean Stason was determined that the Law Quadrangle at Michigan should provide many of the legal cultural advantages enjoyed at the Inns of Court in London. He initiated programs designed to bring notable lawyers, judges and lecturers on the law into close contact, from time to time, with students and other lawyers and judges at the Lawyers Club. One phase of this program has been lectureships in the law, open to students, faculty and the profession, such as the annual Thomas M. Cooley series of lectures which was instituted at Michigan's great law center, with the intent, in Stason's words, "to sponsor in the Law Quadrangle a series of distinguished lectures on phases of jurisprudence of timely interest and value to students, faculty and the legal community."

Law School—The Profession

We have already noted Dean Stason's recent statement that one of his major guiding principles in the administration of the Law School was the establishment of closer relationships with lawyers, alumni and bar organizations through meetings, institutes, continuing legal education and similar activities. The extent to which

that principle and objective was realized at Michigan under the
impetus and direction he gave is evidenced by what has been done
there in that regard. In 1939 the Law School, under Dean Stason's
guidance and inspiration, began its Law Institute Program. It
continued until interrupted by World War II in 1943. Members
of faculty, lawyers and judges participated, covering, during that
period, a range of subjects largely relating to various fields of the
substantive law. Interspersed, however, were Round Table dis-
cussions of the History of the Anglo-American Legal System, and
consideration of judicial review of administrative agencies, state
barriers to commerce, and the weight of precedents. After the war
the program was revived. The series known as the Annual Sum-
mer Institute began in 1948. Under faculty direction, professors,
lawyers and judges, in large numbers, have sparked each other's
thought processes and imaginations and added to their store of
learning. These annual sessions have treated with such subjects
as Current Problems of International Law and the United Nations,
Industrial and Legal Problems Deriving from Peacetime Use of
Atomic Energy, Water Resources and the Law, and many others
whose pertinence to the development of legal statesmanship is
readily apparent. Of direct benefit to the active practitioner have
been the studies of the Law of Labor-Management Relations,
Taxation of Business Enterprises, Federal Antitrust Laws and
many others.

In 1950 began the Annual Advocacy Institutes. Here trial
lawyers conferring with fellow lawyers, professors and judges, rev-
elled in the presentation of the fine points of improved methods
of preparation for trial, presentation of proofs, techniques in argu-
ment of evidence, trial tactics, and selling the case to the jury, and
took refresher courses in trial evidence. Periodically there have
been special institutes on practice and procedure and particular
phases of the law, with emphasis for some years on land title prob-
lems and even a touch of treatment of the troublesome problem of
how to improve the method of judicial selection in Michigan. Al-
most fifty of such institutes there have been here during the past
twenty years. In his Report to the President for 1959-1960 Dean
Stason stated:

"Finally, during the year, in collaboration with Wayne
State University and the State Bar of Michigan, the Law
School established a new organization known as the Institute
for Continuing Legal Education, created to set up in various
centers throughout the state a continuing series of legal institutes, conferences, and workshops, all for the benefit of members of the bar. Already, in cooperation with the Junior Bar organization of the state, one institute, a Young Lawyers Seminar, has been held in Ann Arbor, devoted to bridging the gap between the law school years and the hard realities of early practice. Three hundred lawyers were in attendance, and not all of them, by any means, were the most recent graduates.

"In short, the Law School has accepted the current challenge of promoting continuing legal education, primarily for the benefit of the bar, but secondarily to promote its own contact with and understanding of the realities of professional life. The law faculty is addressing itself seriously to carrying out its obligations in this area."

The contribution to the professional skills of practitioners of the law is incalculable. Equally great are the impetus, inspiration and knowledge imparted to those enlisted in the cause of modernizing the judicial process and adapting the law to twentieth century requirements. The combined effect must inevitably be to improve the administration of justice and to increase the public confidence therein.

The committees of the Judicial Conference of Michigan, in their studies of many areas of the substantive and adjective law, have been aided by research assistants supervised by members of the Law School faculty. The legislative research center, which Dean Stason promoted and established at the Law School, has conducted annual studies of frontiers that might be benefited by legislative enactments, and the materials have been published and made available to all the states under the title "Current Trends in State Legislation." It has devoted itself to a number of pressing problems of the states, such as those of water law and of metropolitan development.

Law School—Research

In a memorandum prepared for the faculty in 1950, for the purpose of directing attention to the program for the future, Dean Stason wrote:

"7. Maturing the Research Program. After a number of years of experimentation it may fairly be said that the research program is now a matured, going concern, with its 'housekeeping' arrangements well organized. With participation of the
faculty and under the careful guidance of the Research Committee and Director of Research many eminently worthwhile achievements are being recorded. The list of projects completed and in progress is impressive; our Legal Publications bookshelf is growing, and the fact that one of the publications has just been awarded the distinguished Ames Prize, having been selected as the most outstanding contribution to Anglo-American Legal Literature of the last five years, is not without significance. The newly established Legislative Research Center, which is now in operation, has already rendered important service to members of the faculty and to outside persons. I venture to predict that in due course its services and publications will constitute a major element of value in our research program. The accomplishments of the Research Program to date are highly creditable, but as we acquire more experience and skill we expect them to become even more worthwhile. Continuing attention is needed and will be given.”

Forty-six legal studies have been published by the Michigan Law School as part of its research program, all but the first three while Stason was Dean. In Legal Education at Michigan 1859-1959, the author writes:

“If a survey of legal research activity at Michigan had been made in 1908-1909, it would have shown the several professors at work on a number of individual projects, engaged in largely on their own initiative and directed toward publication as treatises, casebooks, or law review articles. A survey of research activity in progress or recently completed in 1958-1959, would have shown a greatly enlarged concept of research. While some members of the faculty were engaged in individual research, others were working on group research projects. While the Cook Endowment Income supported most research activity, the American Bar Fund and the Section of Real Property, Probate, and Trust Law of the American Bar Association were cooperating with the Law School in supporting a major project by Lewis Simes directed toward conveyancing procedures and the marketability of land titles in the United States. The Department of Internal Revenue of the United States Treasury had sponsored L. Hart Wright in his preparation of training materials for revenue agents and auditors. Dean E. Blythe Stason headed the significant and

23 For a list of these studies, see Brown 355-57.
pioneering work in the problems posed by the use of atomic energy.”

In all of these undertakings the encouragement and impetus given by Dean Stason was much in evidence. The faculty and staff of the Law School responded enthusiastically and with great industry and ability. The results have been notable and continue at an accelerated pace.

Stason—Publications

While thus leading the Law School to new heights in the fields of legal education, service to the bench, bar and the public and in faculty and staff research and writing, Dean Stason devoted countless hours to research and legal writing himself. A great number of his works have been published. They consist of books, casebooks, publications and drafts by committees of which he was a member, introductions, forewords, book reviews, articles and addresses. Their subject matter includes administrative law, atomic energy, biographical sketches, comparative law, constitutional law, evidence, insurance, international law, legal education, municipal corporations, procedure, public utilities, real property, taxation, torts, wills, trusts and estates, and law in general. Recently he humorously confessed, “I have two file drawers filled with manuscripts of my public addresses—mostly dealing with Administrative Law, Atomic Energy Legal Problems, and Legal Education, my principal subjects of interest. I am appalled at the millions of words that I have written and spoken down the years.” Scarcely a legal subject of interest has escaped his attention. His writings have been prodigious and always highly instructive. The student of the law, the practicing lawyer, the busy jurist, the legislative artisan, the formulator of rules of practice and procedure, the zealot for improved administration of justice, all have profited from the results of his studies and writing.

Stason—Contributions to the Bar

Although but a short period in his career was devoted to practicing law, he did not permit his educational, research and administrative duties to detract from his interest in the legal profession and the problems of practicing lawyers. His personal services to

24 Brown 357.
25 For a list of Dean Stason’s published works, see Appendix, p. 185 infra.
them and the organized bar have been manifold, running beyond his influences in making his law school helpful to them in the respects already noted. In 1929 he became secretary of the old, voluntary Michigan State Bar Association and the editor of its *Michigan State Bar Journal*, serving in these dual capacities until 1935 when the present integrated State Bar was established by statute and court rule. Previous to 1935 successive bills for creation of an integrated bar repeatedly failed of passage. Some were lengthy and detailed. In that year, however, he drafted a short, concise bill, worked with the legislature in the interests of its adoption, and saw his handiwork enacted into the piece of enabling legislation which ever since has been the base for the present integrated State Bar and court rules governing it.

During the subsequent twenty-five years of the State Bar’s existence Dean Stason has served it in many capacities. By four successive appointments by the Supreme Court of Michigan he has been one of the four Commissioners-at-Large of the State Bar since 1946. He has been a member or chairman of State Bar committees as follows:

Constitutional Revision — member, 1942-43
Legal Education and Admission to the Bar — member, 1940-60
Legal Publications — member, 1951-52
Legislation and Law Reform (Exec. Comm.) — member, 1938
Michigan Constitution — member, 1943-44
State Bar Journal — member, 1937-39
Special Committee on Disbarment of Subversive Members of the Bar — chairman, 1951-55
Special Committee To Assist in Coordination of Activities of the American Bar Association — member, 1950-51
Special Committee To Study the Commercial Code of the National Conference of Commissioners on Uniform State Laws — member, 1952-54.

Dean Stason has also found time to function as Director of the Michigan Law Institute from 1949 to 1955 and Director of the American Judicature Society from 1941 to 1948.

On one occasion he said: “It has long seemed to me that the American Bar Association is a worthy organization, deserving wide support, and I have felt that legal educators should take part in Association activities.” His American Bar Association activities
include: (a) Work with the Section of Administrative Law. He took active lead in the Section’s work with pre-trial procedures in administrative practice. These activities, in fact, led to adoption by many agencies of reasonably satisfactory pre-trial procedures. Later he became a member of the Council of the Section, then Vice-Chairman, but, because of conflicting duties, he declined the chairmanship. The many sessions spent with this Council discussing problems of federal administrative procedure he considers to have been among the most stimulating of his experience.  (b) In 1954 he was appointed Chairman of the Special Committee of the American Bar Association on Atomic Energy Law. The Committee was very active in connection with the adoption of the 1954 Atomic Energy Act. It presented thirteen specific recommendations to the Joint Committee of Congress on Atomic Energy, and of the thirteen, nine were accepted and became a part of the law. He continued as Chairman until 1957. (c) In 1957 he was appointed Chairman of the Research Committee of the American Bar Foundation, this being the committee that screens and develops research projects and places them in form for action by the Board of Directors and for prosecution by the staff. He continued as Chairman until 1959, at which time he was appointed part-time Administrator of the Foundation, with the understanding that upon retirement at Michigan he would move to Chicago to become the full-time Administrator. This move he now has made.

**Stason — Legal Statesman**

Dean Stason’s description of what he calls a “legal statesman” as a lawyer “prepared to contribute as a community leader to the development of the law as a means of social control . . ., an architect of a better world . . . [exerting] a worthy influence in the formation of policy at all levels of government — local, state, national, and international,”26 is best exemplified in his own life. He has poured himself out not only for his profession but pro bono publico. He was elected and served in 1953-54 as member of the Ann Arbor City Charter Commission which drafted a new charter setting up the equivalent of a city manager plan of government. The people adopted it and it has been in successful operation ever since.

In 1932 Michigan adopted the so-called “fifteen-mill amendment.” This forced the state away from reliance upon the general

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property tax for state revenues. Governor William A. Comstock, who took office on January 1st of 1933, asked Dean Stason to assume responsibility for drafting laws to obtain new revenues for the state. A committee was set up, including, in addition to him, Raymond H. Berry of Detroit and Professor Harcourt Caverley of the University of Michigan Department of Economics, to determine the best course of action. They drafted the present Michigan Sales Tax Act, and it was introduced, and eventually passed in the 1933 session of the Legislature. Concurrently he assumed responsibility for drafting the so-called “Tax Allocation Act,” the act under which the fifteen mills available from general property taxation were and still are allocated among the several local units. Also, consideration was given to the taxation of intangibles. At that time intangible personal property was in theory subject to the general personal property tax rates. This would have been ruinous except for the fact that most intangibles evaded taxation. The intangibles tax law was drafted by Dean Stason, working with Senator George P. McCallum, Chairman of the Senate Taxation Committee. With some rather disruptive legislative amendments, it was eventually adopted in 1936.

By gubernatorial appointment he took part in the work of the following state commissions:

(a) The Constitution Revision Study Commission of 1941. This proved to be interesting, instructive, but thoroughly futile.

(b) The Tax Study Commission of 1945. This was an effective group, with worthwhile but minor results. He served as chairman of a subcommittee on the assessment of mining properties in northern Michigan. After holding a number of hearings, recommendations were made for improvement in assessment practices, many of which became the law of the state. Unfortunately, some of the more general and more significant recommendations of this Commission, particularly those related to general state finances, were not pressed by the Governor and fell by the wayside. Regrettably this is too often the fate of study commissions.

(c) The Committee on Anti-Subversives Legislation in 1951. The work of this commission resulted in the amending of the Canons of Ethics of the State Bar to condemn overt subversive practices, proscribing activities by members of the Bar.

(d) Study Commission on Tax Administration. Dean Stason served as chairman of this group, which recommended the creation of a State Tax Court to replace the present Board of Tax Appeals.
If the proposal had been accepted by the Legislature, the building up of a tax jurisprudence for the State of Michigan would have been started. Unfortunately, although the proposed bill was recommended by the Governor, it failed to receive legislative approval.

In 1933 he served on the Michigan Commission for Promotion of Uniformity in Legislation. In that same year he was appointed a Michigan member of the National Conference of Commissioners on Uniform State Laws and has continued to date. He has helped with the drafting of numerous uniform and model acts and, as chairman of the appropriate committees, he has been responsible for the actual drafting of The Uniform Liquidation of Insurers Act, The Model State Administrative Procedure Act, The Uniform Act for the Disposition of Unclaimed Property, and The Revised State Administrative Procedure Act. This he has deemed a most rewarding association throughout the years. He now holds an honorary life membership in the Conference.

In 1939 the Attorney General of the United States, pursuant to direction of the President, appointed the Attorney General’s Committee on Administrative Procedure to review the federal administrative system and make recommendations with respect thereto. Dean Stason was one of twelve members of that group. The Committee was well financed and engaged in the most extensive study ever undertaken of federal agencies. The report, filed in 1941, included a dissent by three members of the Committee. Arthur Vanderbilt (one-time President of the American Bar Association), Carl McFarland (one-time Assistant Attorney General of the United States), and Dean Stason were the dissenters. They proposed a model Code of Administrative Procedure. Although theirs was the dissenting view, it was well received by the bar and in Congress. The American Bar Association threw its weight into the discussions, and eventually the Administrative Procedure Act of 1946 which they had proposed was written into the federal statutes. This association with the Attorney General’s Committee was significant for him. He had been teaching Administrative Law for ten years, and the two years of Committee work gave him a very valuable and close insight into the actual working of the administrative machinery in Washington. Moreover, it gave him his lifelong and cherished friendship with Arthur Vanderbilt, another of the truly great men on the American legal scene.

He was consultant to the President's Conference on Administrative Procedure in 1953-54. He then went to work on the Hoover Commission task force in 1954-55. This was one of the several task
forces of the Second Hoover Commission (known as the Commission for Investigation of the Executive Branch of the Government). He was chairman of a subcommittee in charge of the study of the procedures of the principal federal administrative agencies. This subcommittee prepared an extensive report, together with a complete revision of the Administrative Procedure Act of 1946. This revision has been taken over and sponsored by the American Bar Association, and is now before Congress in a bill entitled S. 1070. He has said, "The improvement of administrative procedure progresses slowly but surely, and my modest contributions have been a source of great satisfaction to me."

Dean Stason's most widely known work is undoubtedly in Atomic Legal Researches and Publications. He headed the study, under the Phoenix project, of the legal problems attending atomic energy. This project was commenced in 1951, jointly with two other members of the law faculty, Samuel D. Estep and William J. Pierce. In 1959 they published a 1500-page volume entitled Atoms and the Law. This volume is becoming known throughout the civilized world. In the past nine years they have held two major summer institutes on atomic energy law and have published several other pamphlets and volumes, together with a very large number of law review articles and addresses. As a result of their activities, the Ford Foundation granted assistance to the extent of $80,000, thus permitting an expansion of their researches into atomic energy legal problems. It is no overstatement to say that the University of Michigan Law School, under Dean Stason's guidance, has achieved worldwide repute as the leading source of objective studies of atomic legal matters. The work has been not only theoretical, but has had practical applications in connection with the development of the power reactor program of the United States, particularly so in connection with the Power Reactor Development Company (so-called Fermi Reactor) located near Monroe, Michigan, on the shores of Lake Erie. With this company, Dean Stason has been a member of the Board and Chairman of the Safety Committee since 1956.

In 1956 he was Director, Institute for Training in Citizenship, New York University, and in 1958 on the Council on Foreign Relations. He has served on the Council of the Inter-American Bar Association and with the American Law Institute since 1938. In 1955 he received national recognition as Managing Director of the Fund for Peaceful Atomic Development.
As is now evident to the reader, this has been little more than a prosaic narrating of facts. Any poetic inspiration must be drawn from the realization that these have been the accomplishments, in just four decades, of but one man. Proper understanding, analysis and evaluation of his work in administering the Law School must be left to the professional administrator and teacher of the law, in research and writing to the scholar and author, in public service and benefactions to the statesman and historian. We shall be content if we have gathered and presented available data for their consideration.

**Stason — The Man**

Having considered his professional and other accomplishments, so vast in number and variety, one wonders, what kind of man is E. Blythe Stason. He is the man who has written: “I like the law, lawyers, and the jurisprudence with which we live.” This “liking” has been one of the driving forces in his career. Those who have known him through the years certainly would credit him with being scholarly and industrious, and would take no surprise in his statements, in a recent address, that “I get very great satisfaction out of my legal profession” and that “my more than forty years in it have been truly rewarding.” These comport with his apparent quiet and reserve, his genuine modesty, dignity and restraint. They might be mildly surprised at his use, in that same address, of the term “fun” in referring to his “teaching, research, consultation, writing and other activities involving the handling of legal materials.”

They perhaps would be considerably more surprised to learn that under the outer cloak of serenity there lurks an effervescence and eagerness of spirit which constantly impels him to think in terms which he most often expresses by the word “exciting.” He never seems excited but sees excitement where others miss it. In the manuscript of his mentioned address the word “exciting” appears five times on the first five pages, as it does again in his final Dean’s report to the President of the University and elsewhere in his writing and speeches. Exciting legal history, exciting legal activities, learning something new and exciting from his friends at the bar about professional activities, exciting conversations with lawyers, exciting evening learning from a doctor friend the history of anesthesia, exciting period in a rapidly changing world,

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exciting developments for the Law School in the decades ahead, these are his common expressions, revealing something of his inner motivations and interests. They are an index to his vigorous pursuit of knowledge and urge to be of service to others. But exhilaration in the quest alone cannot account for his constant zeal and efforts for improvement and development in the law and its teaching, and for earnestly exhorting and training others to be and himself being a legal statesman, *pro bono publico*. He has been and is a deeply religious and devoted man, filled with a sense of responsibility for the fate of his fellows. In character was his recent statement, when questioned about his life's work and professional accomplishments, that while not "legal" in nature, he viewed as a "supporting element" his lifetime membership in the Presbyterian Church and experience as one-time chairman of the Board of Trustees and as an Elder of his local church. Ingrained is a family tradition of patriotism, loyalty and devotion to country and the cause of freedom which traces back to his Revolutionary War forebears.²⁸ His analysis of the contrast in terms of personal rights, the law and the administration of justice between the United States and Soviet Russia and his feelings, after a three-week visit to Russia, may be gathered from his excellent article, "An American Law Professor Visits the Soviet Union."²⁹ It is manifest that the training of young lawyers under his direction has been permeated with respect and devotion to the traditional American concept of constitutional freedom and human rights. These considerations lead us to conclude that, as a monument to his life's endeavors, the greater Michigan Law School, the valuable legacy of his learned writings, the improvements in the several echelons of government resulting from his labors, and his many other achievements, significant as they all are, will, as time goes on, take second place to the existence of that great body of men who became better lawyers because of him. He will continue to live on in their memories, affection and esteem, and, as well, in their work as "legal craftsmen" and "legal statesmen."

And so, as he leaves Michigan, we wish him and Mrs. Stason Godspeed and a full measure of contentment and happiness in the realization of continued usefulness and significant accomplishment in his new role as Administrator of the American Bar Foundation.

²⁸ Among the many organizations in which he holds membership is "Sons of the American Revolution."
APPENDIX

This list of Stason publications, with some revisions and additions, is taken from the section "Contributions to Legal Literature," published in Brown, Legal Education at Michigan 1859-1959, at pp. 805-918 (1959).

Administrative Law


Review. Report of the President's Committee on Administrative Management, United States (1937) 26 Georgia Law Journal 801-05 (March, 1938).


Atomic Energy


Amendments to the Public Utility Holding Company Act of 1935. (Statement on the applicability of the Public Utility Holding Company Act to Power Reactor Development Company and similar organizations.) Hearings of Subcommittee of the Committee on


Biographical Sketches

"Edwin C. Goddard" (with C. C. Grismore) 41 Michigan Law Review 573-75 (February, 1943).


Comparative Law


Constitutional Law


Evidence


Insurance


International Law


Law in General

Laws and Engineers Mix—No Police,” 36 Michigan Alumnus 216-17 (December, 1929).


Legal Education


“The University’s Hopes and Aims as it Plans for a Postwar World,” 52 Michigan Alumnus 60, 71 (November, 1945).


Municipal Corporations

Practice and Procedure

Public Utilities
Amendments to the Public Utility Holding Company Act of 1935. (Statement on the applicability of the Public Utility Holding Company Act to Power Reactor Development Company and similar organizations.) Hearings of Subcommittee of the Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce. U.S. Senate, 84th Cong., 2d Session, on S. 2643 — April 17, 18, 19, 24; May 18 and 24, 1956. Pp. 447-462.

Real Property
Taxation


Torts


Wills, Trusts and Estates