

1987

## Tribute: The Passing of a Legal Legend

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### Recommended Citation

Ronald J. Bacigal, *Tribute: The Passing of a Legal Legend*, 21 U. Rich. L. Rev. 607 (1987).  
Available at: <https://scholarship.richmond.edu/lawreview/vol21/iss4/2>

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# UNIVERSITY OF RICHMOND

## LAW REVIEW

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VOLUME 21

SUMMER 1987

NUMBER 4

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### A TRIBUTE TO MALCOLM RAY DOUBLES

*The University of Richmond Law Review respectfully dedicates this issue to the memory of Malcolm Ray Doubles, 1900-1987. Judge Doubles earned his B.S. degree at Davidson College and his law degree at the T.C. Williams School of Law. He practiced with the Richmond law firm of Carter, Crawford and Redd before leaving to become a full-time law professor at the T.C. Williams School of Law. He served as dean of the law school from 1930 to 1947 and from 1971 to 1972, and as Judge of the Hustings Court of Richmond from 1947 to 1965. The pages that follow serve as a tribute to the Judge's memory.*

### THE PASSING OF A LEGAL LEGEND

*Ronald J. Bacigal\**

Malcolm Ray Doubles, a retired judge of the Richmond Hustings Court and former Dean of the T. C. Williams School of Law, died in Roanoke Memorial Hospital on April 21, 1987. His death signals the passing of one of the last of Virginia's legendary legal educators.

Judge Doubles embodied a unique mixture of academic and practical legal study. A graduate of Davidson College and the T. C. Williams School of Law, Judge Doubles practiced law for several years, taught for three more, then earned a doctorate from the University of Chicago Law School. Judge Doubles moved easily and often from teaching to the practice of law. He served as Dean

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of the T. C. Williams School of Law from 1930 to 1947, while simultaneously working in the office of the Virginia Attorney General. Judge Doubles resigned the Deanship in 1947 to become Circuit Judge for the Hustings Court of Richmond.

Judge Doubles quickly built an excellent reputation as a judge and was particularly well known for his superbly crafted jury instructions. West Publishing Company learned of Judge Doubles' talent and asked him to write a book on jury instructions which would be available to judges and lawyers throughout the state. Judge Doubles agreed to write the book, but insisted on input from both a defense and a plaintiffs' lawyer. Judge Doubles selected Robert R. Merhige, Jr. to present the defendant's side of the issues and Emanuel Emroch to present the plaintiff's side. The result of this trio's work was a set of comprehensive model jury instructions which continue to be an invaluable resource to Virginia lawyers today.

When Judge Doubles retired from the bench in 1966, he briefly returned to private practice. In his later years, Judge Doubles again assumed the Deanship at the T. C. Williams School of Law.

Throughout the years, Judge Doubles taught many now famous lawyers, including federal District Judge Robert R. Merhige, Jr. Judge Doubles belonged to the school of legal educators who conducted class with the benevolent tyranny of the mythical professor Kingsfield from *The Paper Chase*. In spite of his intimidating approach to legal education, Judge Doubles often formed lasting bonds with his students. He and Judge Merhige formed a particularly close relationship based on mutual admiration. Judge Doubles took an active role in securing Merhige's appointment to the federal judiciary, journeying to Washington on one occasion to speak with the United States Attorney General on behalf of Merhige. At Merhige's swearing-in ceremony, Judge Doubles took great pride in personally administering the oath of office to his former student.

Throughout his life, Judge Doubles encouraged his students to seek judicial appointments. He would often point to the avowed mission of the T. C. Williams School of Law: "Courts of Justice are the most important of human institutions among civilized men . . . . It is, therefore, a blessing to the community, when these are filled with able and upright magistrates." Judge Doubles took this message to heart and devoted his life as a teacher and a judge to

contributing "all in his power toward keeping his country furnished with such a bench."

The passing of Judge Doubles constitutes a grievous loss to the Virginia legal profession. We may not see his like again.

