The Early Years

The College of Law initially adapted the apprenticeship model of legal education to the classroom setting of the University. It must have been an extremely exciting experience for the students. The faculty were drawn from the most prestigious attorneys in Denver, and students were well aware of the reputations of their teachers. They studied with them in the classroom and could observe them practice in the courthouse. Law school built on and enhanced the apprenticeship model since the required curriculum assured each law student an exposure to the overall structure of the common law. Students had the advantage of being able to interact with each other in a classroom setting where they discussed the courses and the cases they were studying, and at the same time were taught by the most outstanding legal minds of the Denver community. The advantages of the apprenticeship model were still retained through the faculty's daily exposure to the practice of law and their working knowledge of the local courts. The early years were the purest model of a professional education within the University that was fully integrated with the practice of law.

The beginning of the University of Denver College of Law came at a time of other extraordinary birth and growth in Denver and the surrounding area. The year of 1892 was recorded as the most prosperous in the history of the state. A Denver newspaper reported the opening of a new law school in Boulder and the Iliff School of Theology also opened in 1892. The Brown Palace Hotel and St. Anthony Hospital were founded in the same year, and The Denver Post began publication just as women's suffrage was gaining support in the state. Denver witnessed its first asphalt street paving as well as the first use of electrical lights for outside holiday decorations, beginning a tradition that honored Denver as the "City of Lights." As the Colorado State Capitol building was under construction and the first concert was given by the Philharmonic Society of Denver, it is laudable that 1892 saw the birth of the College of Law as a consequential advancement in the area's civic and cultural growth.

The authority to organize professional schools at the University of Denver, including a school of law, was contained in the 1864 Act of the Legislative Assembly of the Territory of Colorado. Under the Charter, power was given to the board of trustees "to confer all degrees and emoluments customary to be given by
similar institutions. "Thus, twenty-three years before Colorado attained statehood, a law department was included in the original University of Denver concept.

The University of Denver Board of Trustees' Executive Committee adopted a resolution initiating a law department on June 30, 1888. A committee headed by Colorado Supreme Court Chief Justice Samuel H. Elbert and Hon. William B. Mills was appointed to organize the department. This plan evidently received no active support, as it was four years later that a trustee committee recommended the inauguration of the departments of law and theology, "so that students shall be able to complete professional education without going East." There was also a group of distinguished Denver lawyers who, having themselves been forced to seek their legal education at distant points, recognized the need for a local institution devoted to preparation for the bar. The idea would remain dormant until 1888-89, when a nucleus of attorneys became involved in the school's formation. A popular scenario involves George C. Manly and William Moore, son of the University of Denver's first chancellor, David Hastings Moore, who were both members of DU's second undergraduate graduating class in 1888. Both went on to law school, and Manly graduated from the Michigan Law School in 1887 while Moore studied law at Columbia where he graduated head of his class in 1888. He had, however, been admitted to the Colorado bar in 1887. The two formed a law partnership which allowed them to share their ideas, ambitions and interests. Those undoubtedly included discussions regarding the initiation of formal legal training in the West. With the birth of the American Bar Association (ABA) in 1878, the Denver Bar Association (DBA) in 1891, and the Colorado Bar Association (CBA) in 1898, there was a growing consensus among bar leaders that the old methods of legal education - primarily "reading the law" - were no longer acceptable and adequate and should be eliminated. Formal training in law schools would be the new mode.

In 1888, under Manly's tutelage, a number of students were pursuing law studies as a "Blackstone Class." These students agreed to matriculate if a law faculty and a formal school program were organized. In 1888 Elbert, son-in-law of DU founder John Evans, was again placed in charge of plans for the law school. Records indicate that on April 16, 1891, Elbert, who had studied law in Dayton, Ohio, announced that the law department of the University had been fully organized under the charter of the institution, the constitution of the school having been completed and an eminent and able faculty secured. Elbert's announcement was received with applause. The consideration and adoption of the constitution were, however, postponed until a future meeting.

The University's catalog of 1891-92, under a section on the School of Law, announced that "Arrangements are in progress for the opening of this department early in October (1892). It is the purpose of the board of trustees to provide facilities for the study of law which shall equal those furnished in any similar institution. The reader is directed to Chancellor Moore for further information." On June 5, 1891, the board of trustees resolved that "Judge Elbert be and hereby is invited to make such arrangements as he considers to be proper and necessary in the employment of the faculty for the Law Department of the University for the coming year."
Mary Florence Lathrop's life was indeed one of many 'firsts' and her lawyering career will always rank her as a true trailblazer in the history of Colorado's legal profession. As a 1896 graduate of the Denver Law School, Lathrop was the first woman lawyer to be admitted to practice before the Colorado United States District Court and the United States Court of Appeals, as well as the first woman to argue before the Colorado Supreme Court. She reportedly was the first woman to be admitted, in 1917, before the United States Supreme Court.

Lathrop was the first woman to serve as president of the Law Alumni Association (1920-21). She was also the first woman to join the Colorado Bar Association, in 1913, as well as the Denver Bar Association, and was one of the two women first admitted to membership in the American Bar Association. She may have been the first woman invited to join the ABA during the group's annual convention held in Denver in 1901. But she refused, thinking she would be black-balled because of her gender. In 1918, she and Mary Agnes Mahan of Iowa were unanimously elected to ABA membership. Lathrop became active in Association affairs, serving as a vice president in 1922 and as the only woman member on the General Council. She annually hosted a dinner at ABA conventions, an event to which invitations were highly prized.

It was long a common belief that Mary Lathrop was the first woman to be admitted to the practice of law in Colorado. That place actually belongs to Mary S. Thomas, who was admitted in 1891. Another DU graduate, Ann Hunt, a classmate and friend of Lathrop's, was DU's first woman law graduate, the first woman to receive a law degree in Colorado, and was admitted to the bar in 1894. Lathrop was admitted to practice in 1896.

Born of Quaker parents, Mary Lathrop spent her early life in her native Philadelphia. Lathrop's father died when Mary was fourteen. The October 6, 1891, minutes of the regular meeting of the Trustees state:

Mr. George Manly, upon invitation, presented the report of the committee appointed to devise the ways and means for the establishment of the proposed law school. He said that a sufficient number of instructors had been secured. On motion of Mr. Church and Mr. Wolff, the report was referred back to the committee of Judge Elbert and George Manly with power to act in the matter of establishing the school.

Finally, on April 22, 1892, at a special meeting of the board's executive committee, a constitution of the School of Law was presented. Following a reading it was adopted by the committee. Signing for the law faculty were Chancellor William F. McDowell, Lucius W. Hoyt, Elmer E. Whitted, Manly, Moore and Robert J. Pitkin. McDowell reported at the annual trustee meeting on June 7, 1892:

It is gratifying to announce the final organization of the School of Law, the first term of which opens on the 3rd of October, 1892. The faculty of the School of Law is as follows: Albert C. Pattison, Dean; Joseph C. Helm; Lucius W. Hoyt; Charles J. Hughes, Jr.; George C. Manly; William A. Moore; Robert J. Pitkin, Elmer E. Whitted.

With the heavy involvement and leadership of Manly, Moore, Elbert, Hoyt and other leading Denver attorneys, it may seem surprising that one of them was not chosen to be the new school's first dean. The speculation is that Pattison's appointment may have been a compromise among all concerned. At the age of forty-six, his stature and prominence may have been sought to match that of his counterpart, Moses Hallett, at the new law school in Boulder. The first mention of Pattison in any of the recorded proceed-
ings regarding plans for the formation of the law school was when the final plans and the first faculty were announced.

Pattison's appointment is also interesting because he did not have a law degree. Pattison was of the "Blackstone School," having been admitted to the bar after reading the law and studying Blackstone at an early age at law offices in New York. This may have influenced his appeal to Manly who led similar studies in Denver.

Pattison's credentials were very impressive and his appointment was both popular and set a precedent that has been a strong part of the law school's history: professional and community involvement. Although he had practiced in Denver for only ten years at the time of his appointment, he had quickly "gained a large clientele and a reputation as one of the best attorneys in the city." He was named soliciting attorney for the Colorado Midland Railroad in 1886 and served as the first president of the Denver Bar Association from 1891 to 1892. His prominence was enhanced by his appointment, in 1889, as one of the first Colorado Supreme Court commissioners. The Colorado General Assembly had created a Supreme Court Commission in 1887 as an auxiliary to the Court, designed to meet the pressures of a growing docket.

Cases selected by the Court were examined by the three commissioners and after this review of the records, they submitted opinions to the judges for approval. Officials soon realized that the process was duplicative as the justices had to also review the cases in order to be able to approve, or disapprove, commissioner opinions. Pattison resigned from the commission in 1890. The agency was abandoned a year later on April 6, 1891, and this body was succeeded by the formation of Colorado's first appellate court, whose members were the sitting members of the commission. Pattison became a member of the respected Denver firm of Pattison, Edsall and Hobson.

One of the most important faculty appointments was that of Hoyt as faculty secretary. History records that from the beginning he was the driving force in establishing a strong foundation for the school and instilling in it a place of tradition in Denver's legal community. Chancellor McDowell also noted a long list of lecturers, including many of the most eminent lawyers of Colorado. He added that the School of Law would be self-supporting, and that the faculty would do its work without guaranteed salaries. Revenue from the school went to the faculty, who were responsible for all expenses including heating, lighting and maintenance. The trustees were to furnish, free of cost to the school, suitable lecture and recitation rooms in Denver, and to place in each University of Denver catalog an announcement about the School of Law.

and when the family's fortune was lost through a bank failure, she was forced to leave school and find work. Poor health required her to give up a promising newspaper career that had taken her across the United States, to Europe, Japan and China. She and her mother moved to Colorado where they had visited on several occasions.

Disregarding the pleas of her family to pursue other professions, Lathrop, at age twenty-nine, entered DU and completed the two-year law course on schedule, despite working sixteen-hour days, with an outstanding grade-point average that earned her the coveted Faculty Prize and summa cum laude honors. Probate law became her specialty, and her most well-known case was Clayton v. Hallett, which set Colorado's law of charitable bequests.

Lathrop, described as "quaint and dainty," early in her career earned a special reference from a male counterpart that became a lasting characterization. It is reported that a male lawyer refused to try a particular case against her. But Lathrop moved ahead with the proceedings, had her witness sworn in, and obtained a judgement by default when defendant's counsel refused to try the
case against "that damn woman." Lathrop was soon known throughout Denver as "that damn woman." Lathrop, who officed in the Equitable Building, despised being called a "lady lawyer." Her frequently quoted response to this reference was "I'm either a lawyer or I'm not, and don't go dragging my being a woman into it."

At one time, she discouraged women from entering the legal field and voiced strong feelings against equal rights.

During World War II, Lathrop prepared and hosted dinners for servicemen, especially on holidays, for which she received numerous honors. Over the years the attendance at these dinners increased, and she arranged for them to be served at a downtown hotel. At the time of her death, it was estimated she had entertained nearly 14,000 service personnel. During her lifetime, Lathrop also provided financial assistance to a great many needy law students, and she left the bulk of her modest estate to DU to establish a student emergency loan fund named in honor of her father, John Lathrop.

Tuition was set at $75 per year, with room and board available at $5.00 per week. The Hesperus noted, in a lengthy announcement of the new school, that the classes were to be held in the evenings, Monday through Friday, consisting of one lecture and a recitation from textbook each evening. The evening classes were offered to enable students of limited means to take the course and at the same time follow some work on the outside.

An opening ceremony was held on Monday, October 3, 1892, at the Haish building on the corner of 14th and Arapahoe Streets. The building, made possible by the contribution of Jacob Haish, also housed DU's medical and dental schools. The mayor of Denver spoke, as did the chancellor of the University, a justice of the Colorado State Supreme Court and the dean of the new law school. The Rocky Mountain News reported that Mayor Platt Rogers, Chancellor William F. McDowell, Associate Justice Victor A. Elliott, and Dean Albert E. Pattison, "gave the young men a godly amount of sage advice," and a class of about forty began its study the next evening.

Admission requirements stated that an applicant must be of good moral character, must have attained the age of at least eighteen years and must pass an examination in the rudiments of geography, English grammar, history, composition and arithmetic. Graduates of universities, colleges and high schools of recognized standing would be admitted without such an examination. It was stated explicitly that "women are entitled to all privileges of the school."

With the opening of the law school, Manly's eleven "Blackstone" students did enroll and, because of their previous training, were among those completing the course of study in the first year of the school's existence. This allowed DU to hold formal graduation exercises on June 5, 1893, thus producing the first graduates of a law school in the history of Colorado. Graduates of 1893 included Harry W. Cooke, George...
N. Hurd, Andrew N. Patton, Stanley B. Ross, Hubert L. Shattuck, and Homer H. Weaver. Four of the six held undergraduate degrees. Shattuck was to become the first graduate to teach at the law school. His grandson, Donald M. Shattuck, was a member of the College of Law's 1990 graduating class.

The school's 1893-94 catalog indicates that a total of fifty-three students, including one woman, began the 1892 fall term (eleven seniors, thirty-four juniors and eight special students). The first student body also included Robert Henry Hayes, an African-American student from Columbus, Mississippi. He completed two years of study at Denver and later practiced in the city. Chosaku Katamiwa, of Utosumia, Japan, was also enrolled at this time.

The first Bulletin of the law school was not hesitant to display some early "horn-tooting":

"The superior facilities of a school of law for imparting instruction in the science and practice of the law are now generally recognized. Formerly students were obliged to pursue a course of reading in the office of some practitioner. Too often these efforts were unaided and without intelligent direction. The student wandered through a labyrinth of learning only to emerge with vague and much confused ideas of it all.

Teaching assignments for the first law school faculty were amazingly numerous and diverse and included the following courses in traditional legal areas as well as those of particular importance to the legal development in the West:

**Faculty**

- Patterson
- Reuter
- Hoyt
- Manly
- Moore
- Pitkin
- Whitted

**Special Lecturers**

- George W. Allen
- Gustave C. Bartels
- John C. Bell
- John A. Bentley
- Julius B. Bissell
- James H. Brown
- David V. Burns
- Hugh Butler
- William W. Dale
- Thomas H. Edsall
- Samuel H. Elbert
- John D. Fleming
- Lewis B. France
- Charles E. Gast

**Other Instructors and Courses**

- Frank C. Goudy
- Julius C. Gunter
- Charles Hartzell

- Evidence and Preparation and Trial of Cases
- Civil Law, Wills and Administration
- Contracts
- Torts, Criminal Law, Pleading and Practice
- Real Property
- Equity Jurisprudence
- Evidence

- Evidence
- Examination of Titles to Real Estate
- Injunctions
- Mechanics' and Miners' Liens
- Quasi Contracts
- Fixtures and Easements
- Judgments and Executions
- Conflict of Laws
- Pledges and Collateral Securities
- Corporate Bonds and Securities
- Public International Law
- Federal Crimes
- Libel and Slander
- Eminent Domain

- Corporate Trusts and Combinations
- Public Land Law
- Law of Banks and Banking
H. N. Haynes  
Charles D. Hayt  
Edward L. Johnson  
Henry F. May  
Harper M. Orahood  
Lafe Pence  
Alfred C. Phelps  
Amos J. Rising  
Dexter T. Sapp  
John F. Shafroth  
Wilbur F. Stone  
George T. Sumner  
Robert D. Thompson  
Joel F. Vaile  
John M. Waldron  
Greeley W. Whitford  
Sylvester G. Williams

Peculiarities of  
Colorado Law  
Constitutional  
Limitations  
Charitable Uses  
Law Regulating Applied  
Electricity  
Constitutional Law  
Law of Elections  
Trust Deeds and  
Mortgages  
Practice  
Municipal Indebtedness  
Law of Roads and  
Streets  
Mexican Land Grants  
Law of Place  
Law of Attachment and  
Garnishment  
Railway Law  
Police Power  
Law of Taxation and  
Assessment  
Law of Insurance

The class of 1894 numbered thirteen graduates including Ann Hunt, the first woman graduate of a Colorado law school and the first woman law school graduate to be admitted to the bar of Colorado (June 29, 1894). The first woman to be admitted to the bar of Colorado was Mary Thomas, who was admitted by petition on September 14, 1891, after reading and studying the law on her own. The Rocky Mountain News in 1901 gave Hunt high praise when they noted “Miss Ann Hunt is another woman who has made a success of the law. She is attorney for the State Home for Dependent and Neglected Children and practically controls the adoption business of the state. She is a good probate lawyer and expert in the preparation of written pleading.” The most celebrated of the College’s early women graduates was Mary Florence Lathrop, class of 1896. She was the first woman member of the Colorado and Denver bar associations and was one of the first two women admitted to the American Bar Association in 1918.

A number of significant milestones for the law school were reached during this era. In 1895, separate day and evening classes were established, although the evening program was suspended when enrollment in the division fell to only four students. One of those evening students was Clarence J. Morley, who served as governor of Colorado from 1925 to 1927.

A review of early student rosters suggests that a number of students did not complete requirements for the law degree. In 1899, it was noted by University officials that “while attendance of the first year or two was about equal in number to that of the present, it was of a different character. The attendance of late years has been better in that most of the students who have attended have remained for the entire course, or at least for one whole year.” While most of the students were from Denver, the school was not provincial. The Kynewisbok yearbook stated:
Lawyers, who know the value of good instruction, are sending their sons here to acquire their legal training. Students who have graduated from this school... have already made for themselves places in the front ranks of the profession.

The students now attending represent nearly all parts of this country, some coming from Stanford University, others from Harvard, Yale, St. Louis, Ann Arbor, and other prominent law schools. It certainly speaks well for the institution that it can so well satisfy all students, some of whom have attended the best known law schools of the world, and many of whom had literary courses in various universities.

Extra-curricular activities in this era included “quiz clubs,” which were, apparently, study groups organized informally among students. Also, a senior class literary organization was active in 1895, and its president was law student Robert Bret Hart Harris. In 1902, the Brewer Inn Chapter of Phi Delta Phi, the oldest international law fraternity, was chartered at the law school, the thirty-first such chapter established at an American law school. Several years later, in 1913, the Charles J. Hughes, Jr. Chapter of Phi Alpha Delta legal fraternity was established at the school.

Moot court programs were a part of the activities from the start, and students were urged to form clubs among themselves for the purpose of discussing questions of law and politics.

In 1895, the Denver Law School Alumni Association was founded, eleven years prior to the formation of an alumni association at the University. The officers of the Law Alumni Association for 1895-96 were: Homer H. Weaver 1893, president; William W. Garwood 1894, vice president; Willis F. Wolf 1895, secretary-treasurer.

As part of his effort to improve the quality of the bar, Hoyt announced in 1895 that effective in 1897 the law school’s admissions requirements would be raised. Specific areas of testing in the entrance examination were outlined:

**History** - Myer’s General History; Green’s Short History of the English People; Johnson’s History of the United States, or their equivalent

**Geography**

**English Literature** - Shaw’s New Manual, or its equivalent

**Mathematics** - arithmetic; algebra, to quadratic equations; plane geometry - Wentworth’s Plane or its equivalent

**English Language**, Composition and Rhetoric - the applicant will be required to write an essay on some familiar subject of about 500 words, correct in spelling, punctuation, capitalization, grammar and paragraphing

**Civil Government** - Fiske’s Civil Government, or its equivalent.

Also in 1895, graduate courses were made a part of the law school curriculum. Only two persons ever earned the master of laws degree. It was conferred in 1898 on William W. Garwood 1894 and Frederick H. Randall 1895. The program was dropped soon thereafter, but graduate work was renewed in the years 1933 to 1936.

Frank Ricketson was a man ahead of his time in several respects. He was a pioneer in using his legal education in ways other than that as a practicing lawyer, a career not uncommon today. A well-known Denver business and civic leader, movie executive, former newspaperman, and esteemed friend of the University of Denver and its College of Law, Ricketson earned a law degree from the Westminster Law School in 1919. His business acumen set a standard that helped motion picture theaters survive the Depression. Most of all, Frank Ricketson was a man who exemplified service to his community and dedication and loyalty to his professional alma mater.

Born in Leavenworth, Kansas, he graduated from the University of Kentucky. He worked his way through law school as a sports reporter for The Denver Express, which later merged with the Rocky Mountain News. He moved to The Denver Post where he followed Gene Fowler as sports editor and married fellow reporter, Maizie Donovan.
His career in show business began when he went to work in Hollywood for Howard Hughes. When Hughes’ firm was sold, Ricketson returned to Denver as president of Fox-Intermountain Theaters, a part of the National Theater chain, which he later headed as general manager. During the Depression, Ricketson boosted movie attendance by inaugurating “Bank Night”, which provided theater-goers a chance to win cash from a drawing. The idea was such a success it was copied by theater owners all over the country. Ricketson soon found himself deeply involved in Denver community affairs. He was a leader in the restoration of the Central City Opera House, and a prime mover in the annual opera festival which brought famous stars such as Helen Hayes, Mae West, Lillian Gish and Beverly Sills to the small Colorado mining town.

Ricketson also helped organize the Roundup Riders of the Rockies, a group of businessmen who for more than thirty years has made an annual horseback trek through the Rocky Mountains.

Ricketson, an honorary life trustee of the University of Denver, was honored by DU on several occasions. He received the Evans Award in 1967, and a Distinguished Achievement Award in 1974. During the College of Law’s first commencement exercises held on its present campus in June 1984, the University conferred an honorary doctor of laws degree upon “Rick,” as he was affectionately known.

In 1898, the record-size graduating class totaled twenty-one students. In connection with the new rules of bar admission, which now included a written examination, the law school expanded its course of study from two to three years (day) and four years (evening). This move made the school one of only twelve of the nation’s seventy-three law schools to introduce a three-year course. However, the enrollment took a noticeable downturn that fall. The large graduating class of the previous spring was certainly a factor, as was the continuing depression. There was yet a third cause. As became the pattern over the next seventy years, war decreased the size of the student body. The Spanish-American War, although short-lived by comparison to later conflicts, involved prospective as well as current students. The presidential call was for 120,000 service personnel, with Colorado’s quota set at 1,600. Total law school enrollment dropped to twenty-eight for 1898-99; twenty-seven in 1899-1900; and to twenty-eight in 1900-01. Two members of the senior class served with the First Colorado Regiment which saw duty in the Philippines. George N. Hurd, a member of the class of 1893, remained in the Philippines and rose to serve as a justice of the Supreme Court there.

During the first twenty years of administering the Colorado bar exam, DU law graduates placed first in sixteen years, including eleven of the first twelve. Between 1898 and 1936, DU graduates placed first or shared first place for twenty-seven years.

The law school’s first mark of national accreditation came during the ABA’s twenty-fourth annual convention held in Denver in August 1901. The Association of American Law Schools (AALS) was staging its first annual meeting at the Denver Tabor Opera House in connection with the ABA’s gathering. The AALS had held an organizational meeting...
in New York the previous August. A number of law schools, not including Denver, were represented at that meeting. However, during the year to follow all law schools were invited to become members, providing they could comply with the Association’s criteria. DU accepted, made application and was formally admitted to the AALS as a charter member on August 21, 1901. Also admitted during the Denver meeting were the Hastings Law School of the University of California, and the law schools or departments of the University of Colorado, the University of Kansas, and Stanford University.

Pattison’s sudden death on August 12, 1902, following a stroke, shocked the Denver community. The Denver Times editorially praised Pattison, stating that his associates were “charmed with the simplicity and beauty of his character, with his high ideals and with his spirit of tolerance, broad humanity and keen sympathy for struggling merit.”

Lucius W. Hoyt thus became the school’s second dean. One of Hoyt’s most innovative moves came in 1904 when the school scored a national first with the establishment of the Legal Aid Dispensary. It was the forerunner of the clinical legal education program for which the school became widely known and remains so today. The experiment under Colorado Supreme Court rule, allowed students to accept meritorious cases of poor persons unable to pay attorney’s fees. Under the guidance of an experienced attorney, the law students represented clients in litigation from the initial meeting to the trial. If litigation reached a court where students were not permitted to appear, the Preceptor of the Dispensary took charge. Ultimately, the Colorado General Assembly enacted legislation which permitted students, when acting for the Dispensary, to appear in all courts of the state as if they were admitted to the bar. Colorado was the first state in the nation to enact this “student practice rule.”

Hoyt’s contributions to the University were recognized when he was awarded an honorary master of arts degree in 1901. In 1908, he received an honorary doctor of civil law degree from DU. In addition to his efforts on behalf of the school, Hoyt was one of the Colorado legal profession’s most tireless workers, reflecting positively on the law school. Along with two others, Hugh Butler and Edward L. Johnson, Hoyt formed a committee that called the first meeting leading to the formation of the Colorado Bar Association. The CBA was incorporated on January 8, 1898, and Hoyt served as the secretary until 1909 when he resigned to become the president. He died unexpectedly in 1910 at age forty-nine.

George C. Manly succeeded Hoyt and began what became one of the longest tenures of any of the school’s deans. Born on November 21, 1863, in Uniontown, Ohio, Manly came to Denver to attend the undergraduate program at DU. After his graduation in 1885, he enrolled at Michigan University, graduating in cursu in 1887 with both master’s and law degrees. He returned to Denver to begin his law practice. His service as a member of the University’s board of trustees, which began in 1888 and continued until his death in 1936, is the longest in the history of the board to this day.
As a member of the board of trustees, as a founder of the law school, and as a member of the law faculty from the beginning, Manly drew on experiences from several perspectives to determine his agenda as dean. He obviously had ample opportunities to keep his finger on the pulse of the school.

One of Manly's principal concerns was not unlike that of his predecessors or of those who were to follow: larger and better space for the law school. At times the negotiations in this regard became rather fierce. His position as a trustee didn't seem to gain him any special favor, and thus it was an achievement for the school to move in 1911 from the Harsh Building to the "squat red building" at 1330 Arapahoe Street, identified as the Fine Arts Building. With the move to new facilities, the "honor system" was adopted applying to all examinations, and in 1912 special night courses were added in history, taught at the law school by faculty of the DU liberal arts college. The move supplemented the "Co-ordination of Schools" program. Courses were offered in American and English constitutional and political history.

From the opening enrollment of fifty-eight, the student body in 1910-11 averaged sixty-two. Enrollment reached 109 in 1911-12. One wonders, therefore, what Manly's reaction was to the opening of the Westminster Law School in Denver in 1912. The school had a significant effect on the size of DU's student body. For the following two years DU's enrollment fell to seventy-one and fifty-seven, and the first-year class totaled sixteen each year.

Westminster's founding took several years. On June 8, 1891, officials of the Colorado Presbyterian Synod filed articles of incorporation for the Westminster University of Colorado. A gift of 640 acres of land in Adams County was to be the site of the school, where a striking stone building was erected at a cost of $200,000.

The silver panic of 1893 delayed the University's opening as well as any future activity. In October 1901, synod officials renewed their efforts and on March 14, 1903, filed new articles of incorporation. This was another false start. Four years later, a committee was once again appointed for the same purpose. It formed a new corporation, the Westminster University Association, which would be the umbrella under which the Westminster Law School was to operate throughout its history.

By September 18, 1907, a faculty for Westminster University had been chosen and classes were conducted in the Central Presbyterian Church in Denver. The school experienced great financial difficulty and closed in August 1916, never to open again.

Westminster Association reports through these years make little reference to the law department other than to note in a 1915 statement that it was self-sustaining and doing good work. John C. Murray and Alexander Hitzler were founders of the Westminster Law School and represented its first total faculty as well. With little financial backing, their plan for an evening law school was unheralded and the problems of carrying it into operation were theirs alone. Murray assumed the deanship of the old Academy of Law in Denver. Hitzler was transferred to the school's steed.

On April 15, 1918, the school passed out of existence. Westminster's first degree was conferred on June 13, 1922, on Alexander P. Napheys, who had passed the Colorado bar and was a member of the college faculty. Hitzler's successor, L. M. Schweigert, was unable to continue. Like Murray, he passed on to other work.

From 1916 until 1922, the school was a model for the bar association and the state supreme court. It was an institution that produced many of the state's leading lawyers. During the period of 1916-1922, the school had 150 graduates, the last head of the school being Hitzler.

Murray had resigned the post in 1922. The school's first graduate was the late Judge E. G. Barry, who had been a leading lawyer of his day and a member of the board of trustees. His death in 1922 marked the end of an era in the legal profession of Colorado.
their alone. Murray, eastern born and educated, assumed the deanship. First classes were held in the old Academy of Medicine Building in downtown Denver. Hitzler instructed most of the courses and it was largely due to his efforts that the school was able to continue. Like DU, Westminster depended upon practitioners to serve as instructors. The record of service given by these men, who for years taught without compensation, became the foundation for the school’s steady growth.

On April 15, 1915, Murray and Hitzler met to consider and pass upon the question of conferring bachelor of laws degrees upon two men who would be Westminster’s first graduates as the class of 1915. Hitzler, who served as both the registrar and a professor, attested to the qualifications of the two candidates. One was George C. Marrs, a graduate of the Colorado School of Mines, and the other was John L. Schwegert who, records indicate, had successfully passed the Colorado bar examination before entering Westminster. Although the name of Benjamin F. Napheys is not part of this record, he is also considered a member of the Westminster class of 1915.

From 1915 until 1930, Westminster conferred degrees upon 255 graduates, including sixteen women. Its first woman graduate was Gertrude Y. McCormick, class of 1918. During the same period DU conferred degrees upon 288 graduates, including five women. During the period from 1926 to 1930, Westminster had 150 graduates and DU ninety-three, indicating Westminster’s inroads into DU’s student numbers.

Murray had resigned as dean of the Westminster Law School on January 31, 1930, after eighteen years in the post. One of the men who came to the school soon after its inception, Hamlet J. Barry, the associate dean, was immediately elected to succeed Murray. Barry’s organizational skills and his success in developing a new three-year curriculum brought the school further recognition. Barry had initiated a junior college in 1924, in response to a Colorado Supreme Court requirement that an approved law school could admit no degree candidate who had not completed one year of college. The junior college was expanded to two years, but in 1935 was discontinued.

Barry’s reverence for the law and learning was the real enthusiasm in his professional life. The Denver Post noted “an unbroken rule of his teaching career was to give practical help to needy students in memory of his own hard-won education. His life of unselfish service was an inspiration to hundreds of young men who knew him in the classroom and to friends who came to know the excellent quality of his character.”

Born in Prairie Du Chien, Wisconsin on June 10, 1880, Barry attended grade schools in Madison, St. Paul and Minneapolis and graduated from high school in Ocala, Florida. He then came to Colorado with his family, and with a college education as his goal, worked at three jobs in order to raise the necessary funds. He reportedly worked as a secretary to a railroad official, as a newspaper correspondent and as an employee of the Colorado Springs stock exchange. When he had raised enough money, he entered the University of Wisconsin where he graduated with honors while earning bachelor’s and law degrees.
Upon his return to Colorado, Barry resumed newspaper work. He soon became involved in civic and political affairs. He later gave his attention to the Republican Party and on three occasions accepted nominations for office, including district attorney, the University of Colorado Board of Regents and the Denver Board of Education. He was unsuccessful in all three instances but maintained strong party interest. He was serving as chair of the Denver Republican Central Committee when he died.

Barry had joined the Westminster law faculty in 1920 as a teacher and associate dean. Like his decanal counterparts at DU and CU, he devoted his time and energy to upgrading his school and the profession.

At the DU law school, meanwhile, a tradition was begun that was to last for many years. Derby Day started in 1913, and its purpose was to commemorate the school days of early law students at DU. A Derby Day participant wore a derby hat, carried a cane and dressed in the costume of the 1880s. A tradition was re-enacted at the law campus as part of the school’s centennial celebration.

Other student activities also occurred during this era. From the early 1900s “the laws” played important roles in DU athletics. Gridiron regulars included William E. Foley ’05, Clement F. Crowley ’11, Harry L. (Pinky) Cooper ’27, Floyd (Kootch) Karsten ’27, Don Bowman ’26, and Ronald V. (Greyhound) Yegge ’29. One of DU’s earliest football coaches was Benjamin (Pops) Griffith ’04, who also coached baseball and taught at the law school from 1920 until 1944.

During the war, the 1917-18 DU law school enrollment dropped to forty-three and the following year totaled only thirty-seven. There was a slight drop in overall enrollment in 1918-19. The eleven-member junior class of 1917-18 fell to a graduating class of only three by May 1919. But it was proudly noted that “when the last call to colors came the law men and graduates responded as they should and, holding ranks from colonel to private, they served with great credit, some never returning.” A bronze plaque honoring those from the law school who served during the war was erected by graduates and friends. A total of one hundred names appear on the plaque which hangs in the first floor hallway of the Mary Reed Building on the University Park campus.