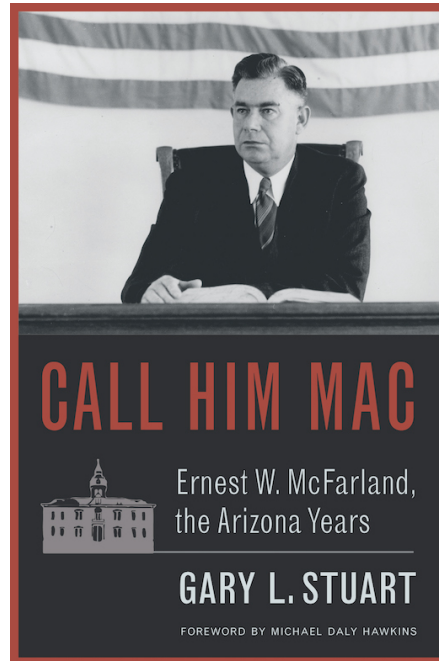


EXCERPTS

"CALL HIM MAC"

Gary L. Stuart, University of Arizona Press (2018)



Excerpt – Prologue

This book is about a teacher, lawyer, judge, and a United States senator. A Governor, Supreme Court Justice, and an entrepreneur. He had titles, accolades, comrades in arms, and a principled, highly nuanced view of the world. His friends numbered in the tens of thousands. They were real friends—not virtual or digital—just old-fashioned analog friends. His were the kind that broke their necks getting to one another’s funerals. Except for his parents, everyone else called him “Mac.” He insisted on that.

Born in a log cabin near Earlsboro, Oklahoma, on the Pottawatomie Strip, he thought his home was the western frontier. And for him, it was. The day of his birth, October 9, 1894, was also in the year that Coca-Cola was sold in bottles for the first time; it became Mac’s favorite soft drink. That was also the year the Ohio national guard killed three white men in the process of lynching a black man. The black man was rescued; Mac would have been proud of that. Kipling

wrote *The Jungle Book*, a book Mac loved. Great Britain introduced “death duties,” which became inheritance taxes in the United States, something Mac approved of as an organizing principle.

But in all of America, from then to now, Mac was the *only* person to ever serve his country during time of war, serve his state as a prosecutor and as a defense lawyer, be elected to the superior court of his state, then be elected in a landslide to the U.S. Senate (where he would become the majority leader), be elected governor of his state, and finally serve as chief justice of the Arizona Supreme Court.

Mac was born at the end of the nineteenth century but lived most of his life in the twentieth. In telling his Arizona story, it seems appropriate to contrast the elemental differences between the century of his birth and that of his death. The nineteenth century is best known for what collapsed; the Spanish, Napoleonic, Holy Roman, and Mughal empires imploded. While the American experience was stretching its legs, the British Empire was virtually unchallenged in world dominance after 1815—the Napoleonic Wars. With that calamity, the Pax Britannica ushered in globalization, industrialization, and economic integration on a massive scale. It’s fair to say that none of the pioneering families in Oklahoma or Arizona knew of Pax Britannica. But rural Arizona prepared him for every legislative mountain he climbed. He was a man of the people, by the people, and for the people. Today’s politicians all use that cliché. Mac really was that man.

His political accomplishments are documented and archived in scores of state and national libraries. *What* he did is well known. But *how* Arizona’s citizens and the state’s culture shaped Mac is this book’s previously untold story. It explains the fame that Mac created, not for himself, but for the thousands he served in Arizona and millions more by his unparalleled success in governance and statesmanship at the highest possible levels. His early Arizona story is a switchboard to past, present, and future big ideas.

Excerpt – Chapter 12 – Mac on the Cusp of the U.S. Senate – 1940

With the 1940 Campaign behind him and the reality of entering the US Senate in front, Mac sat down for a long interview on December 15, 1940, just two weeks before he'd take the oath of office in Washington DC. Frank E. Ross, a brilliant young writer for the *Arizona Republic*, wrote a long, comprehensive story about "Judge Mac, the Pinal County judge who had bested the Republican candidate, Irving A. Jennings. Ross's goal in this interview was to write about "the new political team in Arizona. He wrote more like a poet than a reporter. And he wrote for a newspaper, the *Arizona Republic*, that had strongly editorialized for Irv Jennings and against Mac."

It was a lengthy interview. Ross opened by relating a conversation Mac had while on a cruise ship crossing the Atlantic five years earlier. Mac and his first wife, Clare, were aboard the USS *George Washington* from New York City to London. As he always did on trips, and especially in new environments, Mac made friends with a fellow passenger, a Frenchman returning to his home from a visit to America. Ross captured the tone and significance of that chance meeting and tied it to Mac's remarkable win in the 1940 U.S. Senate race.

"The rising wind whipped salt spray across the steamer's foredeck—deserted except for the two men at the rail—and made the tall, slim Frenchman shiver despite his heavy overcoat. Shall we not go in and continue our talk there, the Frenchman said as he turned his face from the Atlantic swell and its biting breath, and half- faced his bright- eyed companion. O.K., we'll go in, the ruddy aced man said, straightening his broad shoulders with a shake, taking one last look at the deepening troughs, and the soapy foam cresting with the mounting waves. Feet firm on the heaving deck, he stood poised for just a moment. There is a lot in what you say about our government and its courts, and I'd like to hear more.

In the warmth of the vessel's lounge, some of the chill left the Frenchman's body, and the facile questioning of his interested listener launched a detailed discussion of land and the law, farmer and businessman, taxes and

profits, depression and prosperity, waste and economy— all of the myriad factors which bring soundness or collapse to a government or a nation.

Ross captured what many, even some who were close to Mac, had missed in his remarkable political victory. It was a victory many Arizonans initially thought impossible. Everyone, except those who knew Mac well—they had sensed in him that rarest of all human qualities, the ability to question, listen, and build on lessons learned. In a few short years, Mac would become majority leader of the U.S. Senate, write the GI Bill, and have scores of pictures taken with Roosevelt, Churchill, Stalin, and everyone important in America. Ross's story was about a questioner, a listener, and a broad-shouldered Arizonan who drew out a shipboard companion, who would become a lifelong friend of his, *albeit* from afar.

During the long sea journey, Mac and his new friend explored common questions in the two countries related to land, the law, farmers, businessmen, taxes, profits, the great depression, prosperity, waste, and the economy. They exchanged views on the myriad factors which bring either soundness or collapse to a government or a nation. From that singular interview with Mac, the fundamental nature of the man everyone called Mac emerged, in print, for the first time. What kind of a man is he? Does he really have the makings? Does he expect to set the world on fire when he gets to Washington next week to take the oath of office as a United States Senator? What are his aims as a senator? What can he do for Arizona? Does he have a sane and wholesome slant on international affairs? Will he make a good senator?

Mac would leave Pinal County for the District of Columbia with the necessary tools vital to success in national politics—he had perspective and a sense of balance. And he was clearly in the majority party. That year, Roosevelt comfortably carried the nation, beating the Republican nominee, Wendel Wilke, handily. Mac carried all fourteen Arizona counties and major urban areas, easily defeating the Republican candidate, Irving A. Jennings, by 101,495 to 39,657. Democrat Sidney Osborn won the governorship easily, and four-year incumbent Democrat John Murdock went back to the U.S. House. That overwhelming

majority in a hard-fought general election meant he had the confidence of nearly everyone in the state. They believed in him without really *knowing* him. They knew what he said and what he said he stood for.

Ross's extensive research on Mac in the 1930s, when blended into his performance forty years later discounted entirely his opponents' sense of him in 1940. He was most assuredly "not just a judge down in Florence, the town with the 'dobe buildings." That narrow view, Ross argued in his story, "would get you a totally false picture of the man, and the same holds true for a lot of the residents of Florence."