

# Harlan Fiske Stone

Chief Justice of the Supreme Court ( 1872 – 1946 )



Harlan Fiske Stone was born in New Hampshire and attended Amherst High School. He grew up on a farm, and his dislike of farm work led him to attend college. After being expelled from Massachusetts Agricultural College, he graduated Phi Beta Kappa from Amherst College in 1894. He attended Columbia Law School and was admitted to the New York bar in 1898. In 1899, Stone married Agnes Harvey and they had two sons: one son became an acclaimed mathematician, while the other was a well-known lawyer.

Stone practiced law while lecturing at Columbia Law School and eventually became the school's dean from 1910 to 1923. In 1924, he was appointed U.S. Attorney General by his Amherst classmate and then-President Calvin Coolidge. As Attorney General, Stone was responsible for the appointment of J. Edgar Hoover as head of the Department of Justice's Bureau of Investigation, which would become the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).

On January 5, 1925, Stone was appointed an Associate Justice of the United States Supreme Court, becoming Coolidge's only appointment to the Court. During the 1932–1937 Supreme Court terms, Stone, along with Justices Louis Brandeis and BENJAMIN CARDOZO, was considered a member of the Three Musketeers, which was considered to be the liberal faction of the Supreme Court. The three were highly supportive of the New Deal programs of FRANKLIN ROOSEVELT, which many of the other Justices opposed.

Stone's support of the New Deal brought him into FDR's favor, and in June 1941, the President elevated him to Chief Justice, a seat vacated by CHARLES EVANS HUGHES. He remained in this position until his death in 1946 when he died of a cerebral hemorrhage that struck him on the bench as he read his dissent in *Girouard v. United States*. He was the shortest serving Chief Justice for more than two centuries.