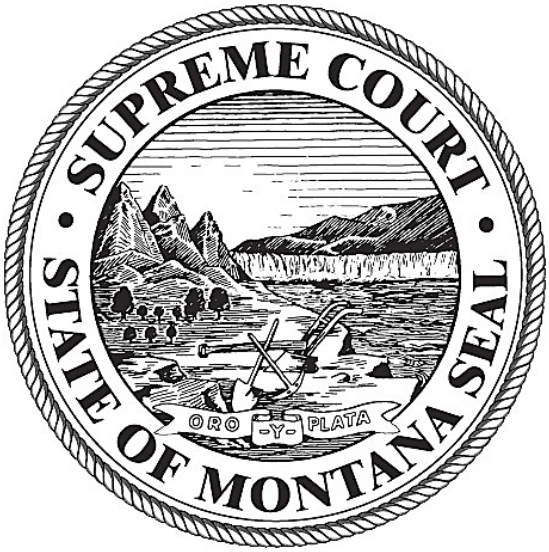
Biographies and Histories of Montana's Justices, Judges, and Courts



1865-2020

Written and compiled by the State Law Library of Montana

Acknowledgements

This biography of the judges and justices of the courts of the state of Montana updates and expands material initially compiled by the Montana Judiciary in 1989. We hope that users of this work find it useful and easy to use. All biographical information and pictures contained in this publication can be found in the State Law Library's Vertical Files or from materials found in the library's collections. Each biography was compiled using historical newspaper articles, memorials, directories, local histories, and for more recent judges, surveys, and interviews.

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Images

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Introduction to Montana's Courts

The State of Montana was first organized as a territory by the United States Congress on May 26, 1864. With this congressional act the judiciary of Montana was born. However, it was not until Chief Justice Hosmer, appointed by President Abraham Lincoln, arrived in October 1864 that the courts began to be organized. Hosmer was soon followed by two more, Justice Williston and Justice Munson. These three justices served both as judges of fact and appeal: for state and federal cases. In other words, they saw it all. This arrangement ended in November 1889 when the territory was accepted into the union and Montana became a state.

After statehood, the tasks of adjudication in Montana were divided. Justices no longer rode the rails to attend trials across this far flung state. Montana Justices today focus, instead, on interpreting the state law and applying it to contemporary controversies. The Montana Judicial system is established by Article VII of the Montana Constitution. It deals with cases involving state law or citizens of this state. The Montana court system can be divided into three levels, the supreme court, state district courts and local courts. Most people in Montana have their first court interaction with local courts, of which there are 156. In Montana, all cases in state district courts are appealed directly to the Montana Supreme Court; there is no intermediate court.

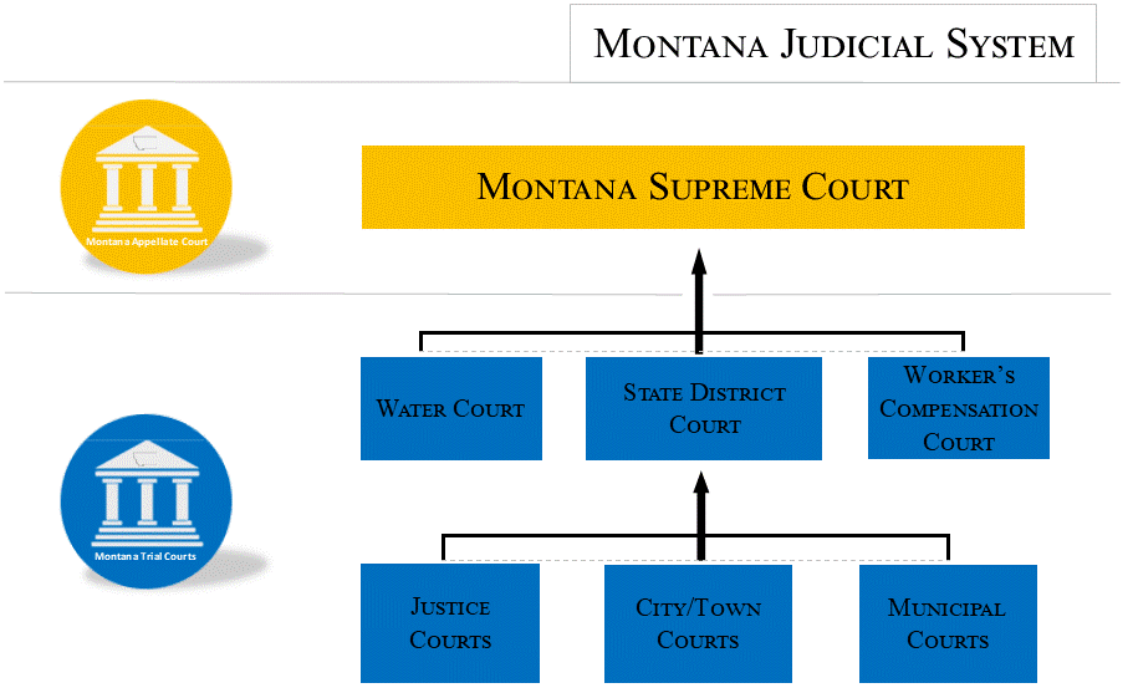
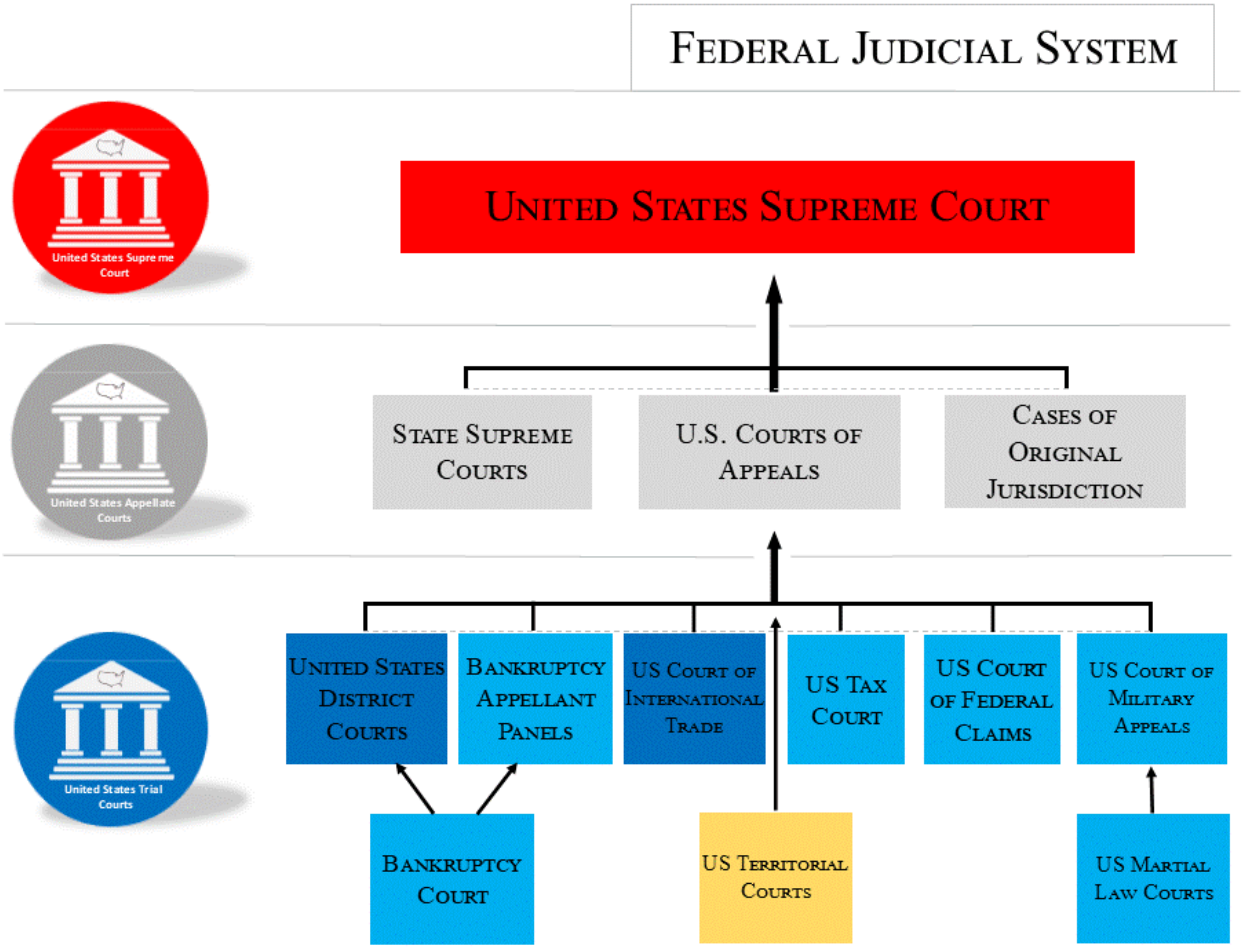


Figure 1 The Montana Judicial System

Courts in the federal system are established by Article III of the United State Constitution. They handle cases involving federal law, or cases that cross state lines. This system is also divided up into three levels: trial courts, appeal courts and supreme court. In the federal system, however, cases are far more diverse and varied than in state courts.



*Article I Courts are in light blue, Article III Courts are in dark blue, Article IV Courts are yellow.

Figure 2 United States Judicial System.

In total, more than 380 people have served as judges and justices in the courts of Montana. Many of these individuals were politicians, business leaders, soldiers, or pioneers. Most individuals have served their communities well and with integrity. Yet, the courts have faced their share of ups and downs and scandals too. Judges have been impeached for crimes on the bench others have suffered great losses and pain while serving this state; finally, a few have been impeached and later exonerated. This biography hopes to capture some of their stories.

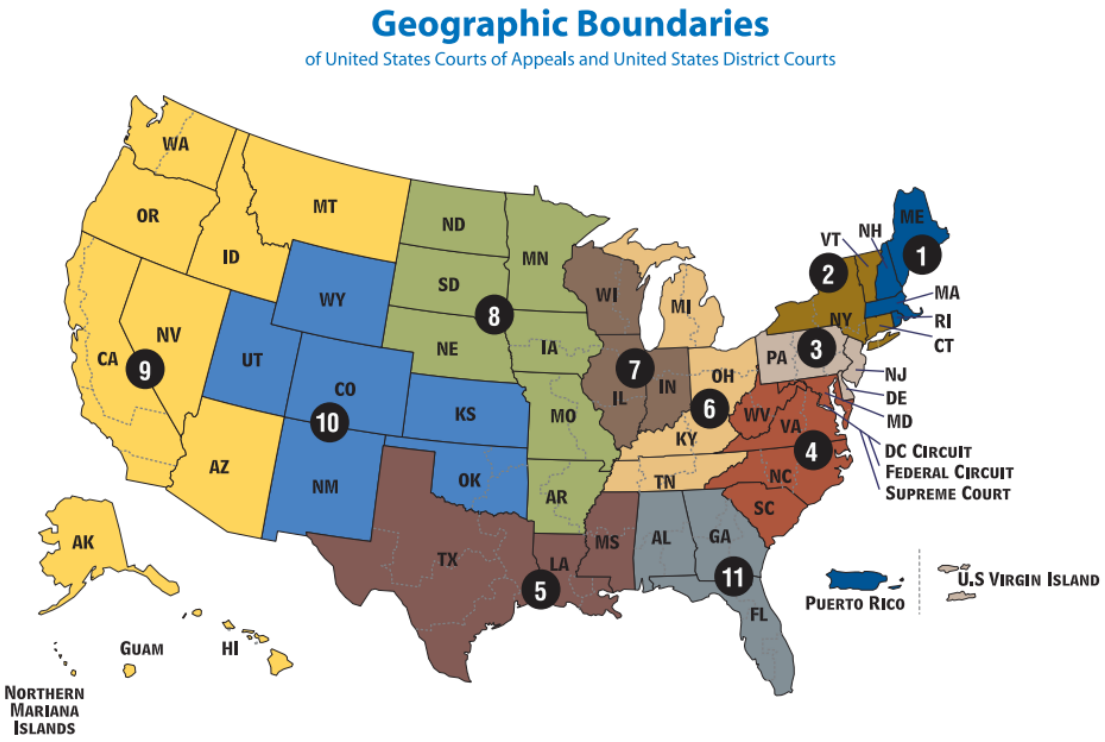


Figure 3. Map of the US Courts of Appeal boundaries.

US District Court of Montana

Congress organized Montana into one judicial court district in 1889. The Montana Court District is the largest geographical federal court district in the continental United States. The district is made up of five geographical divisions (see below) and is served by three Article III judges, three senior judges, three magistrate judges, two recalled magistrate judges, one bankruptcy judge and 130 employees who work in the district court, bankruptcy court and United States Probation Office[1].

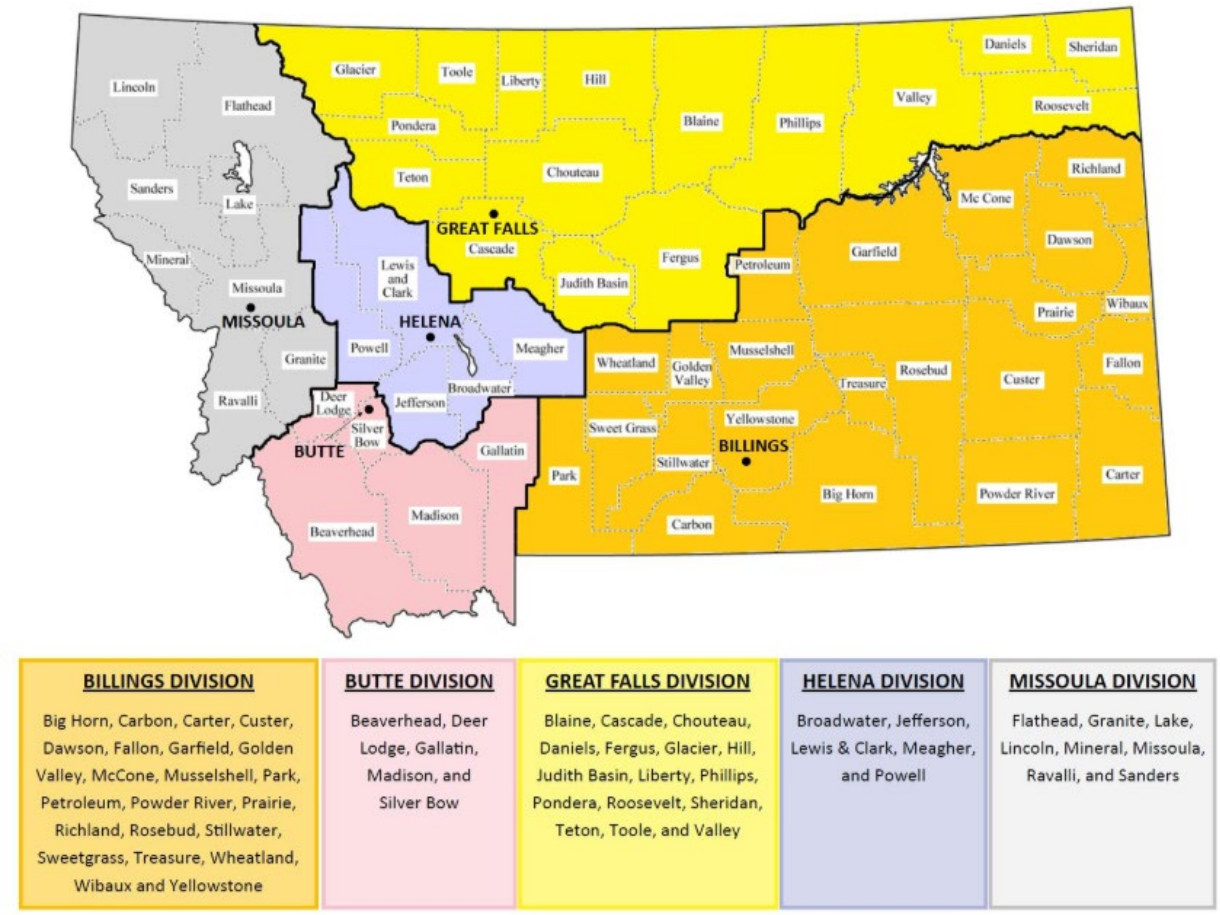


Figure 4. US District Court of Montana Divisions.

[1] District of Montana Profile. US Courts webpage. https://www.mtd.uscourts.gov/district-montana-profile

Topics of interest

Oldest Judges

Youngest Judges

Longest Serving Judges

- District Courts
  - Judge Steve D. McKinnon 44 yrs.
  - Judge H.H. Ewing 39 yrs.
  - Judge Jeremiah J. Lynch 37 yrs.
- Supreme Court
  - John C. Harrison 34 yrs.
  - Albert H. Angstman 28 yrs.
  - Theodore Brantley (Chief Justice) 23 yrs.

First Women Judges

- Diane Barz – Montana District Judge, 1978
- Diane Barz – Montana Supreme Court, 1989

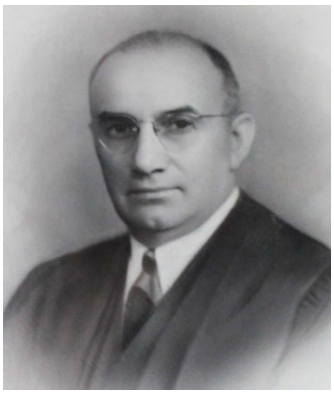
Judges serving in high office

Famous and Infamous Jurists

- George M. Bourquin
- William Clancy

Biographies of Montana Judges & Justices, alphabetical

Chris Abbott- District Judge, 1st Judicial District, 2020-present. He was raised in Helena, Montana. Judge Abbott received his Bachelor of Science degree in Economics from University of Puget Sound and his JD from the University of Washington Law School in 2006. After graduating, he worked for the Office of State Public Defender. Judge Abbott worked in that position for 10 years before becoming an Assistant Attorney General in 2017. In 2020, Governor Steve Bullock appointed him to serve as district judge for the 1st Judicial District to replace Judge Reynolds.



Chief Justice Hugh R. Adair

Hugh Rogers Adair – Chief Justice, Montana Supreme Court 1947-1956; Justice 1943-1946 and 1956-1968. He was born on August 29, 1889 in Ellis, Trego County, Kansas. He received his Bachelor of Laws degree from the University of Kansas at Lawrence in 1913 and admitted to the State Bar of Montana on January 26, 1914. Hugh Adair served in the Tank Corps during World War I. From 1921 to 1925, he served as Deputy County Attorney, and later, served as member of the Montana House of Representatives in 1927 and 1931, representing Lewis and Clark County. He married Jeanice Janes of Helena, Montana, on September 25, 1935. In 1936, Justice Adair was elected Lieutenant Governor and served as President of the Senate until 1941. He was elected as a Justice of the Supreme Court in 1942 and served until 1946 when he assumed the position of Chief Justice. Justice Adair served until January 7, 1957 at which time he again assumed the position of Associate Justice. He served as Associate Justice until his retirement in 1969. Judge Adair died January 18, 1971 at age 82.

George J. Allen – District Judge, 6th Judicial District, 1956-1964. George Allen was born on October 7, 1907 in Livingston, Montana. He earned his Bachelor of Law from Montana State University in 1931. He was practicing law in Livingston when he went to Europe to serve in the American Red Cross from 1943-1945. Judge Allen spent nine years as the Park County Attorney and in 1941 was elected as a Representative. He was appointed June 20, 1956 by Governor J. Hugo Aronson to fill the unexpired term of Benjamin E. Berg. Judge Allen died in office December 1, 1964.

Nat Allen – District Judge, 14th Judicial District, 1960-1982. He was born in Butte, Montana on December 22, 1910. He received his BA in 1933 and, in 1936, Bachelor of Laws degree and JD from the University of Montana. Judge Allen served as the Golden Valley County Attorney from 1936-1959. He was appointed by Governor J. Hugo Aronson to the 14th Judicial District on December 9, 1959. Judge Allen held office from January 1, 1960 to January 1, 1982. He was the author of *County Attorney's Manual,* 1956 and *Judge's Digest*, 1984. He died in Roundup Montana at age 90, September 2001.

Robert B. Allison – District Judge, 11th Judicial District, 2012-Present. He was born in Kalispell, Montana. Robert Allison received his BS in Anthropology and his JD from the University of Montana in 1975. He served as a Medic in the US army from 1971-1977 and worked as a contracted public defender for Flathead County from 1976-2006. Judge Allison was elected to the 11th Judicial District in 2011. He continues to serve on the bench.

Justice Albert Anderson

Albert Anderson – Associate Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 1941-1945. He was born in St. Croix, Wisconsin on March 28, 1876. He received his Bachelor of Laws degree from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 1906. Judge Anderson moved to Glendive, Montana in 1912, where he served as the County Attorney for Dawson County during World War I. On Jun 10, 1914 he married Mabel M. Moran. In 1923, he moved to Billings, Montana. Justice Anderson was elected to the Supreme Court in 1940 and served until 1945 when he lost in re-election. Justice Anderson died October 17, 1948, in Helena, Montana at age 72.

Forrest H. Anderson – Associate Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 1953-1957. He was born on January 30, 1913 in Helena, Montana. He received his law degree from Columbus Law school at the Catholic University of America, Washington DC in 1938. He married Evelyn Samson in 1941, and they had two daughters and a son. In 1942, Justice Anderson was elected to the Montana House of Representatives and in 1944, he became the Lewis and Clark County Attorney. He was elected to the Montana Supreme Court in November 1952 and the Montana State Attorney from 1956-1969. From 1969-1973, Justice Anderson served as Governor of Montana, but because of this poor health, retired after one term. Justice Anderson died of a self-inflected gunshot wound at home July 20, 1989 at age 76.

Judge Forrest H. Anderson

Justice Ralph J. Anderson

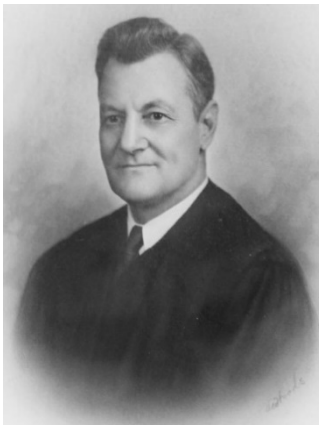
Ralph Justin Anderson – Associate Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 1933-1938. He was born in Kinderhook, Illinois on October 17, 1888. He received his law degree from the University of Colorado in 1912 and later that year moved to Lewistown, Montana. Justice Anderson was elected to the Montana House of Representatives for Fergus County in 1914, and in 1917, was appointed deputy County Attorney for Fergus County. That same year, he joined the US Army to serve in World War I. On February 24, 1919 he married Lauretta Kelly, they had no children. He was elected to the Montana Supreme Court in November 1932 and served until the end of 1938. He is credited with being the only attorney in the state to have argued 4 cases in one day before the Montana Supreme Court. He became a member of the State Board of Law Examiners in 1943 and was chair of that body, 1951-1962. Justice Anderson died August 8, 1962 in Helena, Montana at age 73.

Justice Albert H. Angstman

Albert H. Angstman – Associate Justice, Montana Supreme court, 1929-1934; 1937-1942 and 1945-1961. He was born on March 23, 1888 on a farm near Farmington, Minnesota. He graduated in 1912 from the St. Paul Minnesota College of Law and moved to Helena, Montana in 1912. He served in the US Navy during World War I. He married Mar Frances Chirgwin and they had three children. Justice Angstman was first elected to the Montana Supreme Court in 1928 and served until he was defeated in the election of 1934 by Claude F. Morris. He was elected Associate Justice for the second time in 1936 and served until he was replaced by Hugh R. Adair in the election of 1942. In 1944, Justice Angstman was again elected Associate Justice and served in that capacity until his retirement on April 10, 1961. Judge Angstman died February 29, 1964 at age 75. He served a total of 28 years on the Montana Supreme court.

Frank K. Armstrong – District Judge, Ninth Judicial District, 1891-1900. Frank K. Armstrong was born on March 6, 1849 in Rockford, North Carolina. He received a Bachelor of Law degree from the University of Missouri in 1875. Judge Armstrong moved to Bozeman, Montana in 1879 and began practicing law. He married Lora Lamme in 1881. He has served as district attorney, territorial councilman, and Speaker of the House of the Montana Legislature. Judge Armstrong was appointed March 4, 1891 by Governor Joseph K. Toole, to the seat in the newly created 9th Judicial District (L.1891, P. 215). He retired in 1900 to pursue business ideas. Judge Armstrong died on December 2, 1924 in Bozeman, Montana.

Ralph L. Arnold – Associate Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 1939-1941; District Judge, 4th Judicial District, 1936-1939. He was born on December 4, 1887 at Mount Pulaski, Illinois. Before he was of school age, his family moved to Tobias, Nebraska. He attended the law school at the University of Nebraska, Lincoln and graduated in 1911. In 1914 he married Marjorie Mason, a local schoolteacher, and they had three children. Shortly thereafter, Justice Arnold began his law practice in Missoula, Montana. From 1916 to 1919, he served as the Missoula County Public Administrator and on the Missoula County Public School board from 1924-1936. He was elected Mayor of Missoula in 1934 and again in 1936. He resigned as mayor in 1937 to become District Court Judge for the 4th Judicial District. Governor Roy E. Ayers appointed Justice Arnold to the Montana Supreme Court to fill the unexpired term of Justice Samuel V. Stewart but lost in re-election in 1938. He died in Missoula, on September 23, 1948 at age 61.



Justice Ralph L. Arnold

Governor Roy E. Ayres.
Image from the Montana Historical Society Research Center Photograph Archives, Helena, MT.

Roy E. Ayres – District Judge, 10th Judicial District, 1913-1921. He was born on November 9, 1882 in Lewistown, Montana. He received a law degree from Valparaiso University in 1903. Judge Ayres served as Fergus County attorney from 1905-1909, and in 1913, became judge in the 10th Judicial District. He served until 1921, when he was appointed to serve as a commissioner of the Montana Supreme Court. He served the court for 10 months and resigned on November 22, 1922. In 1932, Judge Ayers was elected to the US House of Representatives and served until 1937, when he was elected Montana Governor. He served until 1941. Judge Ayers died May 23, 1955 at age 73 and was buried in Lewistown, Montana.

Thomas C. Bach – Associate Justice, Montana Territorial Supreme Court, 1886-1889. He was born in Brooklyn, New York on October 10, 1853. He received his Bachelor of Law degree from Columbia College in 1877 and practiced law in the State of New York until he came to the Montana Territory in 1884. After a short stay in Bozeman, Justice Bach moved to Butte and formed a law partnership with Judge DeWitte of Butte and lived there until 1866 when President Cleveland appointed him Justice of the Montana Territorial Supreme Court. After he left the bench, he practiced law in Helena and in 1892, he was elected to the Montana House of Representatives. In 1906, Justice Bach was appointed District Judge in the 1st Judicial district by Governor Toole and served in that capacity until 1909. He died October 29, 1914 in Pasadena, California at age 61.

Justice Thomas C. Bach

Justice Beth Baker

Beth Baker – Associate Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 2011-Present. She was raised in Spokane, Washington. She graduated from the University of Washington with a bachelor's degree in Speech Communication in 1982 and graduated with her law degree from the university of Montana in 1985. She served four years as a clerk for US District Judge of Montana Charles C. Lovell. From 1989 to 2000, Justice Baker worked for the Montana Department of Justice as an Assistant Attorney General. Starting in 2000, she worked in private practice of law until her election to the Supreme Court in November 2010 to replace Justice W. William Leaphart who had retired. She serves as the Supreme Court's Representative to the Access to Justice Commission. Justice Baker continues to serve on the bench.

Edgar J. Baker – District Judge, 10th Judicial District, 1925-1934. He was born in 1883 in Bay City, Michigan. He earned a law degree from Valparaiso University. Judge Baker served as County Attorney and was elected to the 10th Judicial District in 1924. He died in office on September 27, 1934.

Norman R. Barncord – District Judge, 14th Judicial District, 1944-1944. He was born in Corriganville, Maryland on November 23, 1887. He was a graduate of the West Virginia University School of Law. Governor Sam C. Ford appointed Judge Barncord on March 22, 1944 to fill the unexpired term of Judge W. C. Husband. He died in Harlowton, Montana on December 19, 1972 at age 89.

Justice Diane G. Barz

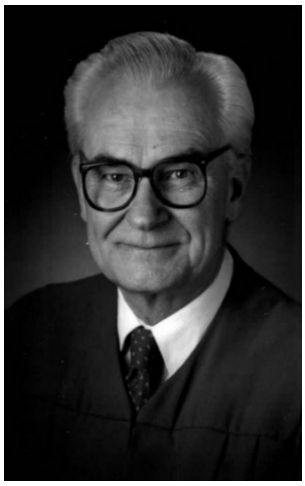
Diane G. McDonald Barz – Associate Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 1989-1991; District Judge, 13th Judicial District, 1978-1989 and 1994-2003. She was born on August 18, 1943 in Bozeman, Montana. She received a BA from Whitworth College in 1965 and JD from the University of Montana in 1968. Justice Barz was engaged in the general practice of law and served as deputy county attorney, public defender, and public administrator in Yellowstone County. She was elected District Judge in 1978 in the 13th Judicial District and served in that capacity until her appointment to the Montana Supreme Court in September 1989. Justice Barz is the first woman to sit as a District Judge and to sit as a member of the Montana Supreme Court. She married Daniel J. Barz and they have one son. She died on May 14, 2014 at age 71.

James Franklin Battin – Chief US District Judge, District of Montana 1978-1990; US District Judge, District of Montana, 1969-1978. He was born on February 13, 1925 in Wichita Kansas but moved to Montana with his parents in 1929. He served in the United States Navy from 1942 to 1945. Judge Battin received his BA degree in 1948 from Eastern Montana College (now Montana State University, Billings) and his JD from George Washington University Law School in 1951. From 1951-1952, he established a private law firm in Washington, D.C. then returning to Billings, Montana. Judge Battin served as the deputy County Attorney for Yellowstone County (1953-1955), the assistant Billings City Attorney until 1957, when he was promoted as the Billings City Attorney (1957-1958). He served as a member of the Montana House of Representatives from 1958-1959. Judge Battin was elected as a Montana US Representative in 1961 and served until he was appointed to US District Court Judge by President Nixon on February 27, 1969. He served as the Chief from 1978-1990. Judge Battin died on September 27, 1996 in Billings, Montana at age 71.

US Judge James F. Battin
Image from the Montana Historical Society Research Center Photograph Archives, Helena, MT.

G. Todd Bauch – District Judge, 13th Judicial District. He was born in 1941 in Sweetwater, Texas, and moved to Montana in 1967. Judge Bauch received a B.A. in Economics and Business from Rice University and a Bachelor of Laws degree from the University of Texas. He was engaged in the general practice of law until being elected to the 13th Judicial District in 1984. Judge Bauch retired December 2014. His wife's name is Linda and they are the parents of one son and one daughter.

Gordon R. Bennett – District Judge, 1st Judicial District (1970-88). He was born on July 19, 1922 in Scobey, Montana. In 1936, he moved with his family to Eugene, Oregon and then to Montana in 1939, finally settling in Helena. Judge Bennett spent his first two years at Carroll College. However, his college education was interrupted by military service during World War II. He served in the US Army as a 2nd Lieutenant from 1943-46. He later received an BA in Economics from Carlton College in Minnesota, a MA in Journalism from the University of Missouri in 1950, and a law degree from Georgetown University in 1956. Judge Bennett was a reporter for the Great Falls Tribute starting in 1950. He was a candidate for Justice of the Montana Supreme Court in 1962. He was appointed District Judge of the 1st Judicial District by Governor Forrest H. Anderson on December 7, 1970, to fill the unexpired term of Lester H. Loble. Judge Bennett held that position until he retired December 31, 1988. He was married twice first to Suzanne Heineke, they divorced and he later to Norma Tirrell. He was the father of one son and one daughter. Judge Bennett died February 9, 2017 at age 94.



Judge Gordon R. Bennett

Judge Lyman H. Bennett
Photo courtesy of the 5th Judicial State District Court.

Lyman Hakes Bennett – District Judge, 5th Judicial District, 1921-1937; 1942-1952. He was born in Virginia City, Montana on February 15, 1885. He graduated with a law degree from Stanford University, then after graduation, he moved to Butte, Montana. He married Kathryn M. Leonard on April 17, 1910 and they had two sons. Judge Bennett was appointed to the 5th Judicial District by Governor Joseph M. Dixon in 1921 after the death of Judge William A. Clark, but was defeated by Henry Rodgers in 1937. He was reelected in 1942 and resigned as district judge on July 1, 1952. He died in Helena, Montana on November 16, 1967 at age 82.

Charles H. Benton – District Judge, 8th Judicial District, 1889-1896. He was born on May 30, 1844 in Saratoga County, New York. He studied law from John Patterson and Gordon Cole and was admitted to the Minnesota bar in 1872. He married Augusta Slocum in 1876. Judge Benton moved to Great Falls, Montana in 1887 and elected to the 8th Judicial District in 1889.

Benjamin E. Berg – District Judge, 6th Judicial District, 1929-1956. He was born in McLeansboro, Illinois on February 3, 1886. In 1897, at age 11, he moved to Montana and settled in Red Lodge. In 1911, Judge Berg graduated from the University of Michigan with an LL.B. He practiced law in Columbus, Montana until being elected as district judge to the 6th Judicial District in January 1929. He retired in January of 1956. He had one son and two daughters. Judge Berg died on September 8, 1958 at age 72.

Judge Luke M. Berger

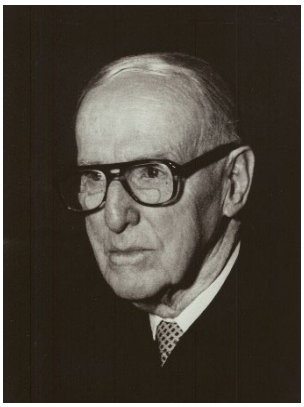
Luke M. Berger – District Judge, 5th Judicial District, 2017- Present. He grew up in Dillion, Montana, and graduated from Beaverhead County High School. He attended Carroll College and received his Law degree from the University of Montana in 2008. After Law school, Judge Berger clerked for the Montana Supreme Court for a year. He then served as deputy City Attorney for the city of Helena from 2010-2012 and was a deputy Lewis and Clark County Attorney from 2012-2017. Judge Berger was appointed by Governor Steve Bullock to replace District Judge Loren Tucker, who retired on January 27, 2017. In 2018, Judge Berger was elected to a full six-year term. He is a member of the Criminal Jury Instruction Committee and sits on the Sentence Review Division. Judge Berger and his wife, Alexis, have two sons and a daughter.

Albert Besancon – District Judge, 4th Judicial District, 1935-1956. Albert Besancon was born near Cornwall Bridge, Connecticut on February 21, 1875. He began is studies attending a business school in Grand Forks, ND, and later earned a law degree from the University of North Dakota in 1901. Judge Besancon married Selma Peterson in 1906 and moved to Missoula, Montana in 1909. While practicing law, he also worked in business matters, such as such as establishing the Roza State Bank and Missoula Orchards Company. Governor Frank H. Cooney appointed Judge Besancon to fill the unexpired term of Theodore Lentz, December 15, 1934. He retired in December of 1956. Judge Besancon died on December 26, 1965 in Missoula, Montana.

Elizabeth Best - Elizabeth Best – District Judge, 8th Judicial District, 2016- Present. She was born in Louisville, Kentucky, and moved to Montana in 1960. She received her bachelor's degree in Political Science from Montana State University in 1978 and a law degree from the University of Montana in 1981. She and her husband were Captains in the US Army in the Judge Advocate General's Corps in Germany from 1981-1984. Judge Best was a law clerk for US District Judge Paul Hatfield in Great Falls from 1984-1985. She practiced law until her appointment by Governor Bullock on March 1, 2016 to replace Judge Julie Macek who retired. During her practice, she served two terms as a trustee on the Centerville School Board and chaired the Board of Labor Appeals and the Montana State Fund. She has been elected to her seat twice since her appointment. She and her husband, Mike, have a grown daughter and son, and two grandchildren. Judge Best is only one of two women in Montana invited to join the Montana chapter of the American Board of Trial Advocates (ABOTA). She is the current President of ABOTA.

Katherine M. (Irigoin) Bidegaray – District Judge, 7th Judicial District, 2003-Present. She was raised in Richland County, Montana. She received her bachelor's degree from the University of Montana in 1982 and her law degree in 1985. While in Law School, Judge Bidegaray served on the editorial board of the *Montana Law Review*. After law school, she worked for the Montana State Auditor's office for three years, later returning to Sydney and engaging in the general practice of law until she was elected November 2002, as a District Judge of the 7th Judicial District. Judge Bidegaray is an active member of the Montana Judge Association and has served as an association officer. She has five children.

William M. Black – District Judge, 9th Judicial District, 1957-1962. He was born on August 20, 1881 in Pembina, North Dakota. William M. Black was appointed November 29, 1957 by Governor J. Hugo Aronson to fill the unexpired term of R. M. Hattersley. He died on December 25, 1962 in Missoula, Montana at age 84.



Judge Frank E. Blair
Photo courtesy of the 5th Judicial State District Court.

Frank E. Blair – District Judge, 5th Judicial District, 1971-1982. He was born on August 24, 1890 in Groton, South Dakota. He apprenticed in high school to the local pharmacist and upon graduating, in 1910, passed the South Dakota Pharmacy Examination. He married Rose G. Bistodeau in 1915 and they had two daughters and a son. In 1920, he moved to Butte and continued work as a pharmacist but studied law independently. In 1921, Judge Blair passed the state bar exam. Rose died in 1922 and he married Eda Corgiat in Butte, Montana on October 16, 1926; they have one son. He moved to Virginia City in 1928 and was elected Madison County Attorney from 1929-1935. In November 1970 (50 years after becoming a lawyer and at age 80), he was elected district judge and served two terms from 1971-1982. In 1980, Judge Blair received a degree (his first) in Public Administration from Upper Iowa University. He frequently wrote reports to the local paper on the cases he had heard that week. Judge Blair died in Virginia City, Montana on April 8, 1986 at age 96.

Henry Nicholas Blake – Associate Justice Montana Territorial Supreme Court, 1875-1880; Chief Justice, Montana Territorial Supreme Court 1889, and Montana State Supreme Court, 1889-1893; District Judge, 1st Judicial District, 1895-1896. He was born on June 5, 1838 at Dorchester, Massachusetts. He received a Bachelor of Laws degree from Harvard in 1858 and practiced law in Boston until April 1861. When the Civil War broke out, Justice Blake enlisted in Company K of the Eleventh Massachusetts Infantry as a private. He participated in twenty important battles: among them two Bull Runs, Chancellorsville, Fredericksburg, and Gettysburg. He rose to the rank of Captain but was mustered out in 1864 as the result of a wound received. After his discharge, Justice Blake was the author of a book entitled, "*Three years in the Army of the Potomac, 1865*"; describing his experience as a soldier.

Chief Justice Henry N. Blake

In 1866, Justice Blake moved to Virginia City in the Territory of Montana where he practiced law and edited the territory's first newspaper, the *Montana Post*. On April 22, 1869, President Grant appointed him the US Attorney for Montana, but in 1871, he resigned that position and accepted appointment as District Attorney of the 1st Judicial District of the Territory of Montana which comprised the counties of Beaverhead, Madison and Gallatin. Justice Blake was elected to this position in 1871 and served two terms.

In 1872, Justice Blake was appointed Reporter of the Montana Territorial Supreme Court. After much research, he wrote volume 1 of the *Montana Reports* and assisted in writing Volumes 2 and 3. In 1875, President Grant appointed him Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the Territorial of Montana, and served in that capacity until 1880, when he returned to Virginia City. He was elected to the Montana Territorial Legislature in 1880 and 1882. In 1884, Justice Blake was elected District Attorney of the 1st Judicial District.

On March 23, 1889, President Benjamin Harrison appointed him Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the Territory of Montana. He was the last Chief of the Territorial Supreme Court and at the first election for

state officers held October 1, 1889, Judge Blake was elected the first Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the State of Montana. He served as Chief Justice until January 3, 1893.

In 1895, Governor Richards appointed him Judge of the 1st Judicial District to replace Judge Horace R. Buck who was elected Associate Justice of the Montana Supreme Court. In 1897, United States Judge Hirman Knowles appointed Judge Blake as Master in Chancery for the State. The last judicial service rendered by Henry N. Blake was in 1905 as Supreme Court Commissioner for a period of six months to replace Commissioner Callaway who resigned to become Judge of the 5th Judicial District. In his later years, Justice Blake returned to Boston where he died in November 1935 at the age of 96.

Harry Albert Bolinger – District Judge, Eighteenth Judicial District, 1947-1948. He served as Gallatin County Attorney, circa 1916. Judge Bolinger was appointed March 22, 1947 by Governor Sam C. Ford after the 18th Judicial District was re-established by the 1947 Montana Legislature.

Justice John W. Bonner

John W. Bonner – Associate Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 1969-1970. He was born on July 16, 1902 in Butte, Montana. He received his law degree from the University of Montana in 1928 and was admitted to the State Bar the same year. In 1929, Justice Bonner became the first counsel for the newly formed legal department of the State Highway Commission. In addition to private practice, he also served as chief attorney for the Public Service Commission and was elected Montana State Attorney General in 1940. As a reserve officer, in 1942, Justice Bonner was called to active duty by the US Army, so he resigned his post as Attorney General and on May 1, 1942, entered the US Army. He served as Judge Advocate under General Omar Bradley and later under General Courtney Hodges, heading the war crime investigations at Nordhausen, Buchenwald, Hadamer and Tekla, Germany. Justice Bonner served in five campaigns during the war and was awarded five battle stars, received the Legion of Merit, Bronze Star and was presented the Criox de Gerre by General Charles de Gaulle. After the war, he returned to Montana and resume private practice. In 1948, he was elected Governor of Montana and served one term in that office. In 1968, he was elected Associate Justice of the Montana Supreme Court and served until his death on March 28, 1970 at age 68.

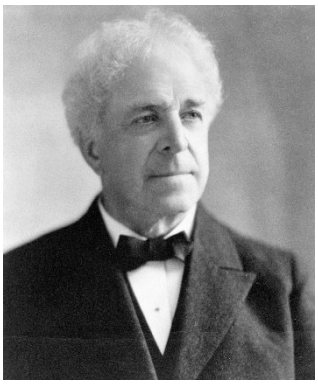
Carl D. Borton – District Judge, 17th Judicial District, 1921-1928. He was born on February 14, 1870 in Michigan. He completed post-graduate studies in Chicago. In 1916, Judge Borton was elected County Attorney and re-elected in 1918. He was elected in 1921 to the 17th Judicial District and served until he retired in 1927. Governor Cooney appointed him to the Board of Education in 1936. Judge Borton died on February 17, 1943 in Glasgow, Montana at age 73.

Raymond "Vic" Victor Bottomly – Associate Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 1949-1961; District Judge, 8th Judicial District, 1961-1964. He was born in Cederville, Kansas on July 16, 1886. He graduated from Emporia Teachers' college with a BS and in 1915 from the University of Kansas with BA and a Bachelor of Laws degree. Justice Bottomly moved to Harlem, Montana later in 1915 where he engaged in the general practice of law. He married Mouriel Heath on December 10, 1916 and had two daughters and seven sons. From 1915-1922, he served as Commissioner for the Harlem Irrigation District. He served as the Blaine County Attorney from 1922-1925 and worked as an Assistant Attorney General in 1941. The following year, Justice Bottomly became the Montana Attorney General 1942-1949. In 1949, he became an Associate Justice of the Montana Supreme Court. He was a veteran for the US Army from World War I. Justice Bottomly died on February 14, 1961 at age 75.

Justice Raymond V. Bottomly

Richard V. Bottomly – District Judge, 8th Judicial District, 1961-1964. He was born in Chinook, Montana. He graduated from Montana University and started practicing law in 1950. During World War II, Judge Bottomly served in the US Navy. He served two terms as County Attorney and was elected to the 8th Judicial District in November 1960 but resigned in 1964 to run as Montana Lieutenant Governor.

Daniel A. Boucher – District Judge, Twelfth Judicial District, 2010-2018. Judge Boucher received his bachelor's degree (1980) and later his law degree (1984) from the University of Montana. After law school, he engaged in the general practice of law, served as the regional public defender in Havre and as a part-time deputy Hill County Attorney. Governor Brian Schweitzer appointed Judge Boucher to the 12th Judicial District on December 1, 2010 to fill the seat of retiring Judge David Rice.



US Judge George M. Bourquin
Image from the Montana Historical Society Research Center Photograph Archives, Helena, MT.

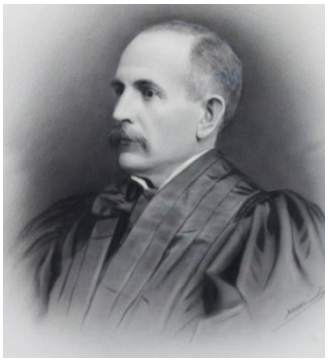
George M. Bourquin – District Judge, 2nd Judicial District, 1905-1909; Federal Judge, US District of Montana, 1912-1958. He was born in 1863 near Tidioute, Pennsylvania. In 1881, he moved to Aspen, Colorado where his four brothers were working as mining engineers. From 1881-1884, Judge Bourquin worked as a miner, cowboy, and smelter in Aspen and Leadville, Colorado. In June 1884, he moved to Butte, Montana where he worked in the silver mines. In 1889, Judge Bourquin apprenticed with a local lawyer and began to study law. In 1891 he married Mary Mitchell Ratigan and they had three sons. About the same time, he was appointed by President Harrison to the position of Receiver of the Public Money in the Federal Land Office in Helena, Montana. In 1894, he was accepted by the Montana Bar and returned to Butte to practice law in 1899. In 1904, Judge Bourquin was elected Judge of the 2nd judicial District of Montana and held that position until the end of his term in 1909. In 1912, President Taft appointed him as the Federal Judge to the Federal Court of the District of Montana. Judge Bourquin reached senior status and retired in 1934. He died in November 1958 at age 95. A number of his judicial opinions had lasting, national impact.

George R. Bourquin – District Judge, 2nd Judicial District, 1924-1928. Son of Montana Federal District Judge George M. Bourquin. He was born on December 23, 1892 in Helena, Montana. He graduated from the University of Pennsylvania School of Law with a Bachelor of Laws degree in 1917. He Joined the US

Army shortly after (July 1917) and then the US Navy aviation corps (September 1917). Judge Bourquin was honorably discharged in February 1919 and returned to engage in the general practice of law until he was elected County Attorney of Silver Bow County, Montana from 1921-1924. Judge Bourquin was elected district judge of the 2nd Judicial District of Montana (Butte) in 1924. He died on March 23, 1930 of a head injury at age 37. Judge Bourquin was married to Hazel Grant and they had two sons.

Robert J. Boyd – District Judge, 3rd Judicial District, 1973-1987. He was born on July 18, 1923 in Anaconda, Montana. Judge Boyd served in the US Army 1942-1945. He married Carol Kelly on August 26, 1950 and they had seven children. He received a BS in Electrical Engineering from Montana State University in 1948 and JD from the University of Notre Dame in 1951. He engaged in the general practice of law and served as City Attorney for the City of Anaconda 1958-1962 and as County Attorney for Anaconda-Deer Lodge County. Judge Boyd retired on April 15, 1987. He died in Anaconda, Montana on July 22, 2000 at age 77.

Truman Gove Bradford – District Judge, 8th Judicial District, 1964-1978. He was born on July 26, 1899 in Great Falls, Montana. He attended the University of Colorado and received a Law Certificate from the University of Montana in 1923. He served in the US Air Service form February 15, 1918 to February 13, 1919. Judge Bradford later served as the Cascade County Attorney from 1947-1949 and Great Falls City Mayor from 1949-1951. He also served three terms as a member of the Montana House of Representatives, 1959-1963 before becoming a District Court Judge in 1964. Judge Bradford retired December 15, 1986. He died on January 30, 1994 at age 94.



Chief Justice Theodore Brantly

Theodore Brantly – Chief Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 1899-1922. He was born on February 12, 1851, near Lebanon, in Wilson County Tennessee. He received his BA from Stewart College (formerly the Masonic University of Tennessee) at Clarksville, Tennessee. After teaching for four years and studying law at the same time, he graduated with a Bachelor of Laws degree from Cumberland University at Lebanon Tennessee in 1880. In 1883, Justice Brantly was appointed Professor of Ancient Languages at Lincoln University at Lincoln, Illinois, where he taught until 1887, when he became a professor of Latin and Greek in the College of Montana at Deer Lodge, Montana, where he taught for two years. He was admitted to the State Bar of Montana in 1888 and practiced law until January 1893 at which time he became judge of the 3rd Judicial District. Justice Brantly served as District Judge until January 3, 1899, when he became Chief Justice of the Montana Supreme Court. He served as Chief Justice until his death on September 16, 1922 at age 67 and is the longest serving Chief Justice to date.

Jack Briscoe – District Judge, 10th Judicial District, 1918-1921. He was born on February 11, 1870 in Ralls County, Missouri, but came to Lewistown in 1914. Judge Briscoe was appointed on November 9, 1918 by Governor Sam V. Stewart to fill the unexpired term of Judge H. L. DeKalb. He was elected as Mayor in 1921 and served three terms, being re-elected in 1925 and 1927. Judge Briscoe was later appointed as Assistant County Attorney but died while in office on August 12, 1933 in Lewistown, Montana at age 63.

Holly Brown – District Judge, 18th Judicial District, 2004-Present. She received her bachelor's degree in Computer Science and Management Information from the University of Wyoming in 1979 and her J.D.

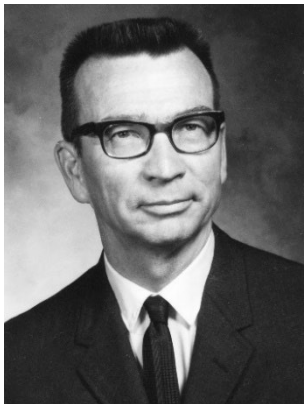
from Vanderbilt University in 1982. Judge Brown moved to Bozeman, Montana in 1986 and engaged in the general practice of law until she was appointed to the 18th Judicial District of Montana by Governor Judy Martz in 2004 to replace Judge Mark Guenther. She continues to serve on the bench.

John C. Brown – District Judge, 18th Judicial District, 2006-Present. He received his BS degree from Montana State University in 1983 and his JD degree from the University of Montana in 1986. Since then, Judge Brown has engaged in the general practice of law until his appointment to the 18th Judicial District of Montana by Governor Brian Schweitzer in 2006 to the newly created judgeship. Judge Brown continues to serve on the bench.

Judge Stephen Brown.

Stephen R. Brown – Associate Judge, Water Court, 2019-Present. He graduated from Whitworth College, Washington with a BS in Geology in 1983 and received his JD from Lewis and Clark Law School in Oregon in 1989. Judge Brown was the editor for the law review *Environmental Law* and an adjunct professor at the University of Montana Law School from 1998-2019. Judge Brown was appointed Associate Water Judge by Chief Justice McGrath in 2019 to fill the unexpired term of Doug Ritter and continues to serve on the bench.

E. Gardner Brownlee – District Judge, 4th Judicial District. He was born in Mondovi, Wisconsin on January 7, 1917. His family moved to Montana that same year and was raised in Wolf Point. He served in the US Air Corps during World War II. Judge Brownlee received a Bachelor of Laws degree from the University of Montana in 1940. He married Mildred Adrain in 1941. They had one son and one daughter and then divorced. He then married Louise Sullivan in 1968. He served 14 years as County Attorney in Ravalli County, as a member of the Montana Criminal Code Commission; member, Region 1, Board of Crime Control; Chair of the Montana Commission on Lower Court Improvement; and served on the National Judicial Educators Association.



Judge E. G. Brownley.
Image from the Montana Historical Society Research Center Photograph Archives, Helena, MT.

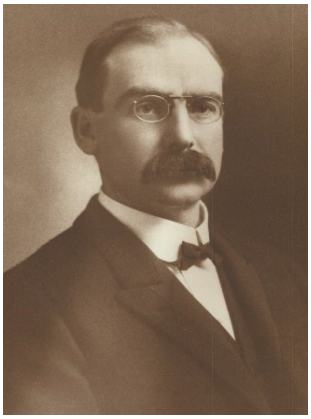
Judge Brownlee was the author of several publications including: *Handbook for Montana Peace Officers; The Montana Justice of the Peace and Police Judge; Instructions to Water Commissioners; The Law of Evidence* (for Montana Judges)*; Trial Judges Guide – Objections to Evidence* (published by and prepared at the request of the National College of State Trial Judges)*;* and *Bench Book for Montana Courts of Limited Jurisdiction.* In 1976, Judge Brownlee was cited by the United States Supreme Court in the court's majority decision holding that trial before a non-lawyer judge does not breech a criminal defendant's constitutional rights. In this case, Brownlee's *Montana Justice of the Peace and Police Judge*, was used by the court. Judge Brownlee retired in 1979. He died on January 17, 2009 at age 92.

Justice Horace Buck

Horace Riverside Buck – Associate Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 1897-1897; District Judge, 1st Judicial District, 1890-1896. He was born in Yazoo County, Mississippi on September 17, 1853. He graduated with high regard from Yale College in 1876 and studied law at St. Louis Law School and with the law firm Messrs. Noble & Orrick. He was admitted to the bar in 1878. In 1879, in partnership with William H. Hunt (see below), Justice Buck began his practice in Fort Benton, Montana. He married Mary E. Jewett on August 16, 1881 and they had three children. In 1884, he was elected to become a member of the legislative council for the Territory of Montana. In 1887, he moved to Helena, Montana and engaged in the general practice of law. Justice Buck served as the official reporter of the decisions of the Montana Supreme Court from 1887-1889. He was appointed February 28, 1891 by Governor Joseph K. Toole to the newly created judgeship in the 1st judicial district (L.1891, P.221) and the following year elected to the same. In November 1896, he was elected Associate Justice of the Montana Supreme Court. Justice Buck died in a gun accident, in Helena, Montana on December 6, 1897 at age 44.

Marc G. Buyske – District Judge, 9th Judicial District, 1994-2006. He was born on February 7, 1951 in Springfield, Missouri. He received his BA degree from the University of Montana in 1973 and his JD from the University of Montana, school of law in 1978. Judge Buyske obtained an LL.M in 1982 from the University of Denver. He was appointed to the 9th Judicial District in 1994 by Governor Marc Racicot to replace Judge R.D. McPhillips. He was re-elected three times and retired in 2006. Judge Buyske and his wife, Jan, have six children. Currently he resides in Helena, Montana.

Judge Marc G. Buyske



Chief Justice L. L. Callaway
Photo courtesy of the 5th Judicial State District Court.

Llewellyn Link Callaway – Chief Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 1922-1935; District Judge, 5th Judicial District, 1905-1913. He was born on December 15, 1868 in Tuscola, Illinois. In January 1871, his father was appointed by President Grant as Secretary of the Territory of Montana, so, in March 1871, his family moved to Virginia City in the Montana Territory. Justice Callaway was sent to attend West Rugby Academy and Hamilton Preparatory School in Philadelphia from 1884-1885. In the fall of 1886, he entered the University of Michigan, but the devastating winter of 1886-87 hit, and he returned home to Madison County to help his father's ranch. He returned to the University of Michigan in the fall of 1889 and received this law degree (Bachelor of Laws degree) in 1891. Justice Callaway returned to Montana to practice law in White Sulfur springs from 1891-1894. On December 12, 1894 he married Ellen N. Badger and they have two sons and three daughters. He next moved to Virginia City and served as Madison County Attorney from 1894-1898. He was also elected Mayor of Virginia City in 1900, for three terms. He became well regarded as a specialist in in Montana water right litigation. In 1903, Justice Callaway was chosen to join the Montana Supreme Court Commission, and in 1904, he was elected District Judge for the 5th Judicial District and so resigned the Court Commission in 1905. He was appointed Chair of the Montana Conservation Commission from 1908-1909. Justice Callaway's next move

was to Great Falls, Montana in 1913. In 1922, he was appointed by Governor Joseph M. Dixon to become the next Chief Justice of the Montana Supreme Court after the death of Chief Justice Brantly and served until he retired in 1935. He died on August 6, 1951 in Helena, Montana at age 83.

Frank E. Carleton – District Judge, 18th Judicial District, 1920-1920. He was appointed January 10, 1920 by Governor Sam V. Stewart to fill the unexpired term of William B. Rhoades. After leaving the bench, Judge Carleton moved to California.

William Edward Carroll – District Judge, 2nd Judicial District, 1921-1932. He was born in Independence, Missouri on December 24, 1868. In 1871, his family moved to Olathe, Kansas and remained there until 1881 when they returned to Independence, Missouri. Judge Carroll attended the University of Michigan and graduated there in 1890 with his law degree. In 1891, he moved to Butte, Montana. On September 27, 1894 he married Anna Martin and they had three children. From 1907-1909, Judge Carroll was assistant City Attorney in Butte. He was elected to the 2nd Judicial District in 1921 and retired in 1932. He died on October 27, 1933 at age 56 from an illness.

Justice Wesley Castles

Wesley Castles – Associate Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 1957-1976. He was born on September 26, 1918 in Superior, Montana. He received a degree in forestry from the University of Montana in 1939 and worked for the US Border Patrol until World War II when he served in the US Army Air Corps. Justice Castles married Ruth Blake in 1939 and they had three daughters. Justice Castles received a JD from the University of Montana in 1949 and went into private practice in Missoula, Montana. He later served as County Attorney for Missoula County. He ran unsuccessfully for State Attorney General. Justice Castles served as Executive Secretary and Legal Counsel to Governor J. Hugo Aronson and as Director of the State Unemployment Compensation Commission from 1953-1955. Castles was appointed to the Montana Supreme Court in 1957 by Governor Aronson to replace Justice Forrest H. Anderson who resigned upon his election as State Attorney General. While on the bench, he headed the Criminal Law Commission, which rewrote the entire filed of criminal law in Montana. He retired from public service after his 1976 defeat for the office of Chief Justice. He died in a fiery crash on April 6, 1990 at age 71.

Edwin K. Cheadle, Sr. –District Judge, 10th Judicial District, 1901-1913. He was born in Marysville, Indiana on October 22, 1858. He graduated from Carleton College in Minnesota in 1883 and was admitted to the State Bar of Montana in 1893. He married Ida Constance Wohlfahrt on June 26, 1890 and they had one daughter and two sons. Judge Cheadle was elected as Fergus County Attorney in 1897 but resigned to fight in the Spanish-American War in 1898. He was later promoted to Lieutenant by Governor Smith. He was elected judge of the 10th Judicial District, 1901-1913. Died in Lewistown, Montana August 11, 1936 at age 77.

Edwin 'Ned' K. Cheadle, Jr. – Associate Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 1944-1947. He graduated with a degree in law from New York University. Justice Cheadle joined the US Army in 1917 and the Montana National Guard in 1921. He married Ruth Moore in Lewistown, Montana in 1923 and they had three daughters. He served continuously in the US military until 1955 and reached the rank of Colonel. Returning to Montana after World War I, he engaged in the general practice of law with his father. Justice Cheadle was elected to the Montana House of Representatives in November 1926. He died in Helena, Montana on February 1, 1981 at age 85.

Justice Edwin Cheadle, Jr.

Justice Isaac W. Choate

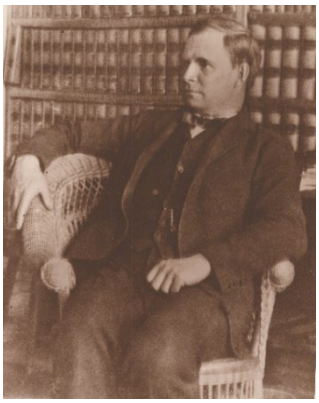
Isaac Watts Choate – Associate Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 1947-1949. He was born on September 12, 1882 in West Barnet, Vermont. Justice Choate graduated from the University of Minnesota with a B.A. in 1904. He married Roberta Gammon on September 20, 1909 in Lynn Massachusetts and they moved to Bridger Montana; they had three sons. He studied law in the law office of Wilford L. Hyde and was admitted to the Montana bar in 1911. He engaged in the general practice of law. Justice Choate served as the City Attorney for Manhattan and later as the Assistant County Attorney of Gallatin County. He moved to Helena in 1918 to work as an Assistant Attorney General. Mr. Choate was appointed to Code Commissioner by the Montana Supreme Court shortly thereafter. From 1924-1928, he served as deputy attorney general. In 1941, he became counsel for the state board of equalization. In 1945, Justice Choate was again appointed code commissioner, which he held until 1947 when he was appointed associate justice of the Montana Supreme Court, serving until 1949. Justice Choate died on October 23, 1953 at age 71.

John R. Christensen – District Judge, 10th Judicial District, 1995-2000. He was born in Townsend, Montana. He graduated from the University of Montana with BA degree in 1971 and his JD in 1976. Judge Christensen was elected Judith Basin County Attorney from 1978-1984 and District Judge for the tenth Judicial District, 1995-2000. Judge Christensen is married with two children.

Deborah Kim Christopher – District Judge, 20th Judicial District, 2001-Present. She was raised in Polson, Montana. Judge Christopher received her JD from the University of Montana in 1988. She worked as in the Airborne Judge Advocate Generals Corps (JAG) and obtained the rank of Captain. In 1994, she was elected as the first female to serve as the Lake County Attorney, 1994-2000. Judge Christopher has two sons.

William Clancy – District Judge, 2nd Judicial District, 1897-1905. He was born on May 30, 1842 in Somerset, Ohio. In August 1862, he enlisted with Union forces; discharged November 1863. Judge Clancy attended St. Paul's College at Palmyra, Missouri and graduated 2 years later. For the next two years, he read the law, and in November 1868, he was admitted to the Missouri Bar. While living in Edina, Missouri,

Judge Clancy was elected probate judge, 1873-1878, and later the Knox County Attorney. He moved to Butte, Montana on July 14, 1893 and was elected District Judge in 1896, holding that post until 1905. While on the bench, Judge Harney and he presided over an infamous series of cases relating to the ownership of the ore bodies found in Butte Hill. These cases and the incidences surrounding them gave both judges a notoriety at the time. The Judge never married nor had any children. He died in Butte, Montana on October 30, 1912 at age 70.



Judge William A. Clark
Photo courtesy of the 5th Judicial State District Court.

William Alexander Clark – District Judge, 5th Judicial District, 1913-1921. He was born on December 16, 1862 in Denver, Colorado. His family moved to Virginia City two years later. Judge Clark completed his law studies in Michigan in 1886 and was admitted to the Montana Bar in 1887. In 1888, he was elected Prosecuting Attorney for Madison County and served until 1895 when he was elected as a state Representative. He married Susan Houghton in 1902 and they had two sons. In 1912, Judge Clark was elected to the 5th Judicial District. He served as district judge until his death on January 12, 1921 at age 59.

NOTE: Not the same as William Andrew Clark, 1839-1925 (Montana Politician, and Butte "Copper King").

James Merritt Clements, Sr. – District Judge, 1st Judicial District, 1900-1917. He was born on October 1, 1849 in Ohio. He studied law at the office of the Ryan Brothers and was admitted to the bar in 1873. He moved to Montana to follow mining. In 1875, Judge Clements returned to Iowa and worked as a Court Reporter. He married Alta Cook in 1877 and moved back to Montana. He was elected as Probate Judge in 1886, serving until 1888, when he returned to practicing law. In 1900, Judge Clements was elected to the 1st Judicial District and served until 1917. He retired and began practicing law again. In 1919, President Woodrow Wilson appointed Judge Clements as the United States District Attorney for Alaska. He resigned in 1921 and moved back to Helena for health reasons. Judge Clements died on September 1, 1921 in Helena, Montana at age 71.

Judge James M. Clements
Image from the Montana Historical Society Research Center Photograph Archives, Helena, MT.

Alfred Benjamin Coate – District Judge, 16th Judicial District, 1967-1988. He was born on March 20, 1927 in Forsyth, Montana. He served in the US Navy, 1945-1946 and 1950-1952 and received his Bachelor of Laws degree from the University of Montana in 1959. Next, Judge Coate engaged in the general practice of law. He married Donna Ruth Coate in 1963 they had two children in addition to her three children. Judge Coate was appointed to the bench on October 13, 1967 by Governor Tim Babcock to fill the unexpired term of Walter R. Flachsenhar and served until his retirement in 1988. He died on November 21, 1998 at age 71.

John Coburn – Associate Justice, Montana Supreme court, 1884-1885. He was born on October 27, 1825 in Indianapolis, Indiana. He graduated from Wabash College in 1846 and was admitted to the bar in 1849. Justice Coburn was a member of the Indiana House of Representatives in 1850 and a Judge of the Court of Common Pleas in Indiana, from 1859-1861. He resigned as judge to join the Union Army and was given the rank of Colonel in 1861. Justice Coburn mustered out of the Union Army in 1864 and was promoted to Brigadier General (1865). He was appointed as Secretary of the Territory of Montana but resigned immediately. Justice Coburn served as a district judge in Indiana shortly before being elected to congress, from 1867-1875. He was appointed Justice of the Supreme Court of the Territory of Montana, from 1884-1885; after which he returned to Indianapolis, Indiana. General Coburn died on January 28, 1908 in Indianapolis, Indiana at age 82.

Justice John Coburn

H. William Coder – District Judge, 8th Judicial District, 1977-1983. He was born in Hampton, Illinois on May 5, 1927. He received his BA from Augustana College in 1956 and his Bachelor of Laws degree from the University of Montana in 1964. Judge Coder served as Great Falls City Judge from 1967-1976 before becoming a District Judge for the 8th Judicial District in January 1977. He served as a member of the Governor's Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals, Task Force on Courts from 1974-1976, and the Montana Supreme Court Commission on Lower Courts. Judge Coder resigned November 1983.

Maurice R. Colberg, Jr. – District Judge, 13th Judicial District. He was born on December 26, 1934 in Minneapolis, Minnesota, and came to Montana in 1940. He served in the U.S. Army from 1957-1958 and in the Army Reserve from 1959-1965. Judge Colberg received a BS in Business Administration from the University of Montana in 1970 and his J.D. in 1970. He engaged in the general practice of law with emphasis on commercial litigation and served as a trustee for Billings School District No.2 from 1979-1985. Judge Colberg was appointed to the bench on November 10, 1989. His wife's name is Patricia and they are the parents of two sons and one daughter. Judge Colberg died November 22, 2018.

Judge John Collins
Photo courtesy of the 5th Judicial State District Court.

John Collins – District Judge, 5th Judicial District, 1952-1952. He was born on September 14, 1876 in Debello, Wisconsin. He graduated from the University of Wisconsin. He married Harriett A. Russel in Chouteau County on June 3, 1911 and they had one daughter. Judge Collins was elected as Representative for Blaine County in 1913 and later served as deputy U.S. District Attorney for Montana from 1927-1928. He was appointed district judge on August 30, 1952 by Governor John W. Bonner to fill the unexpired term of Judge Lyman H. Bennett. After serving on the bench for four months, he returned to his law practice. Judge Collins died on August 14, 1971 in Dillon, Montana at age 94.

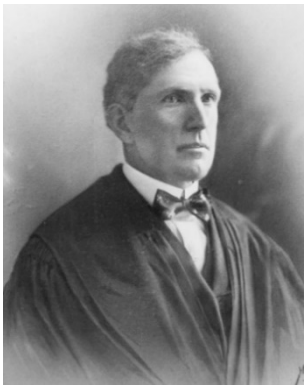
Cloyd E. Comer – District Judge, 20th Judicial District, 1919-1924; District Judge, 4th Judicial District, 1939-1960. He was born near Walnut, Illinois on September 27, 1882. His family moved to Iowa and in 1903, moved to Minnesota. Judge Comer arrived in Colbertson, Montana in 1909 and later that year took the bar examine in Helena. In 1910, he moved to Medicine Lake and engaged in the general practice of law. On May 15, 1913 he married Hilda Peterson and they had no children. In 1918, he joined the military and served until the end of the year. In 1919, Judge Comer was appointed the first judge of the 20th Judicial District by Governor Stewart. He later became judge of the 4th judicial District from 1939-1960. Judge Comer died on May 16, 1971 in San Clemente, California at age 89.

Justice Everton J. Conger

Everton Judson Conger – Associate Justice, Montana Territorial Supreme Court, 1880-1886. He was born on April 25, 1836 in Ohio. He was educated at the Western Reserve College. In April 1861, Justice Conger joined the Eighth Ohio Volunteer Infantry, was wounded twice while on duty and participated in the search for John Wilkes Booth, who had assassinated President Abraham Lincoln. After the first search was unsuccessful, Mr. Conger was ordered to take twenty-five cavalrymen and institute further search. After Mr. Booth was found and refused to surrender, he was shot. Booth's body, under the direction of Mr. Conger was taken to Washington and identified, and for his part in the pursuit and capture, he received a reward of $15,000, while others in his company each received $5,000. He married Emma K. Boren in October 1861 and they had four children. After the war, Mr. Conger returned to Ohio and resumed the study of law and in 1869, was admitted to practice in Illinois. On March 9, 1880, he was appointed Justice of the Montana Territorial Supreme Court by President Hayes. When his term of office expired, he moved to Dillon, Montana, and practiced law. He was elected Prosecuting Attorney for Beaverhead County in 1887 and served until 1889 when Montana became a state. Justice Conger was again elected Prosecuting Attorney for Beaverhead Count in 1892. Justice Conger died on July 12, 1918 in Honolulu, Hawaii at age 82. He is buried in Dillion, Montana.

DeeAnn Gribble Cooney – District Judge, 1st Judicial District, 2016-2016. She graduated with a BA in psychology from the University of Montana in 1979 and received her JD from the Antioch School of Law in 1985. Since then, Judge Cooney has engaged in the general practice of law. She was appointed by Governor Steve Bullock on January 1, 2016 to fill the recently vacated seat of Judge Jeffrey Sherlock. She is married Mike Cooney (former Montana Lt. Governor). She continues to serve on the bench.

Charles Henry Cooper – Associate Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 1919-1924. He was born in Houghton Regis, Bedfordshire, England on September 15, 1865 and came to the United States in 1883 with his brother Walter. They moved to Wisconsin in 1884 and finally to Helena, Montana in 1885. Justice Cooper passed the bar examination in 1892. Judge Cooper married Alice Louise Brazier on March 24, 1894, they had two sons. He was elected as Associate Justice of the Montana Supreme Court in 1919 and resigned on August 30, 1924. He and his wife moved to California to manage several estates left to him in a will. His son, Gary Cooper, soon followed him and became famous in Hollywood. During World War II, Justice Cooper would often read Shakespeare to the Solders at the hospitals. He died in Los Angeles, California on September 17, 1946 at age 81.



Justice Charles H. Cooper

Justice Patricia Cotter

Patricia O'Brien Cotter – Associate Justice, Montana Supreme court, 2001-2016. She was born and raised in South Bend, Indiana. She graduated from Western Michigan University in 1972 with a BS degree in Political Science, and in 1977, she graduated from Notre Dame school of law with a JD degree. Justice Cotter returned to her home in South Bend, Indiana and engaged in the general practice of law. She married Michael Cotter in 1979 and they have a son and a daughter. In 1983, she moved to Montana and eventually settled in Great Falls and engaged in the practice of law. In November 2000, she was elected to the Montana Supreme Court, replacing retiring Justice William Hunt. She served until her retirement in 2016.

Stephen Joseph Cowley – District Judge, 8th Judicial District, 1925-1926. He was born on February 5, 1881 at Fort Abraham Lincoln, North Dakota. He graduated from the University of North Dakota and the University of Wisconsin School of Law. He married Mary Catherine Egan in St. Paul, Minnesota in 1912, but they had no children. Judge Cowley served as a Judge Advocate in World War I. He moved to Great Falls, Montana and engaged in the general practice of law. Judge Cowley was appointed by Governor John E. Erickson on May 4, 1925 to replace Jere B. Leslie. He died on July 5, 1946.

Dale Cox – District Judge, 7th Judicial District, 1987-1998. He was born on March 23, 1927 in Great Falls, Montana. He served in the US Navy, then attended the University of Montana and Washington University at St. Louis and received his BA and Bachelor of Laws degree from St. Louis University. He married Jackline Jewell on December 27, 1949 and they had two sons. Judge Cox received his JD from the University of Montana in 1952. He engaged in the general practice of law and served as County Attorney for Dawson County. Judge Cox was appointed to the bench in June 1987. He retired from the bench in June 1998. Judge Cox died in Billings, Montana on December 8, 2006 at age 79.

Charles Liebert Crum – District Judge, 13th Judicial District, 1913-1915; 15th Judicial District, 1915-1918. He was born on January 9, 1874 in Underwood, Indiana, then his family moved to Wilmot, Kansas in 1884. Judge Crum attended Southwestern College in Winfield, Kansas. He was a court reporter in El

Reno, Oklahoma Territory in 1894 and was elected a county judge in Canadian County, Oklahoma about 1900. He moved his family to Colorado in 1902 due to the health of his wife. On August 6, 1906, he came to Montana to claim a homestead in the Yellowstone Valley. In 1909 he again moved due to his wife's health, this time to Forsyth, Montana. He was elected Rosebud County Attorney, 1911-1913. He was later elected as District Judge, 1913-1918 first of the 13th Judicial District, then of the 15th when it was created by the legislature in 1915 (L. 1915, Ch 51). He resigned March 19, 1918. The Montana Senate removed him by impeachment on March 22, 1918. He had been charged with disloyalty and as un-American. In 1991, he was exonerated from wrongful impeachment by the Montana Senate. He married Jessie Helen Mitts in 1896, she died in May 1910. He died in Wilmot Kansas on March 21, 1948 at age 74.

Matthew Cuffe – District Judge, 19th Judicial District, 2017- Present. Judge Cuffe was raised in Libby, Montana. He earned his JD from the University of Montana. Judge Cuffe was elected to the 19th Judicial District in 2016. He continues to serve on the bench. He and his wife, Christi, have two children.

Katherine 'Kitty' R. Curtis – District Judge, 11th Judicial District, 1995-2012. She was born in Blytheville, Arkansas and grew up in Leland, Mississippi. She earned her bachelor's degree in political science from the University of Mississippi and her J.D. from the University of Memphis in 1981. Judge Curtis worked for the US Department of Justice from 1981-1985 and then moved with her husband to Columbia Falls, Montana in 1985. She was the Columbia Falls City Attorney from 1985-1995 before she was elected a District Judge of the eleventh Judicial District in 1995. Judge Curtis was the first woman serve as a district judge for Flathead County. She retired from the bench in 2013.

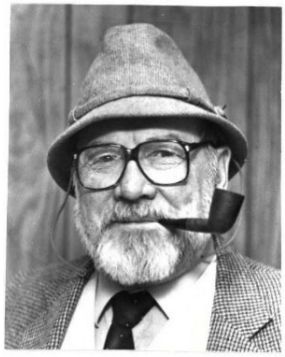
David J. Cybulski – District Judge, 15th Judicial District, 1995-Present. He was raised in Plentywood, Montana. Judge Cybulski earned his BS and JD from the University of Montana. He was admitted to the Montana Bar in 1980. In 1994, Judge Cybulski was elected to the 15th Judicial District in 1994. He continues to serve on the bench.

Justice Gene B. Daly

Gene B. Daly – Associate Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 1970-1982. He was born in Great Falls, Montana on December 13, 1917. Justice Daly worked in the engineering department of the Cascade County Surveyor's office before enlisting in the United States Air Force. He served for 5 years as a pilot during World War II obtaining the rank of Captain. He married Ruth Richardson in the 1940s; they had two sons together; Ruth died in 1987. After the war, he attended Carroll College and the University of Great Falls, before receiving his law degree from the University of Montana in 1953. Justice Daly briefly had a private practice before he was elected as Great Falls City Attorney in 1955. He was then elected as Cascade County Attorney from 1959-1970. In 1970, he was appointed to the Montana Supreme Court by Governor Forrest H. Anderson to succeed the late justice and former Governor John J. Bonner. Justice Daly retired in 1983. He then married Beverly Dewitt in September 1989. He died in Helena, Montana on June 27, 1998 at age 81.

Colette Baumgardner Davies – District Judge, 13th Judicial District, 2019-Present. She graduated from the University of Montana with a BA degree in 1991 and a JD in 1997. Since then, Judge Davies has engaged in the general practice of law. She has served as a Billings Municipal Court Judge from 2005-2010. In November 2018, Judge Davies was elected to the 13th Judicial District. She continues to serve on the bench.

Frank Merle Davis – District Judge, 5th Judicial District 1970-1970 and 1983-2000. He was born on November 2, 1921 in Unicoi, Tennessee, and moved to Montana in 1952. Judge Davis enlisted in the United States Army Air Corps in 1943-1945 and left as a staff Sargent. He married Joan M. Faller on May 8, 1945 in Luxembourg and they had three sons and two daughters. Later, he attended East Tennessee State and received his Bachelor of Laws degree from the University of Tennessee. He was a law professor at Dickenson Law School in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. On May 19, 1970, Judge Davis was appointed to the bench by Governor Thomas L. Judge to replace Philip C. Duncan. He was later elected District Judge, serving from 1983-2000. He died in Dillon, Montana on January 1, 2011 at age 89.



Judge Frank M. Davis

Justice Horace S. Davis

Horace S. Davis – Associate Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 1954-1957. He was born on October 22, 1892 in Worcester, Massachusetts and attended Massachusetts schools. When he came to Montana, Justice Davis entered the University of Montana, Missoula and finished his undergraduate work at Montana State University, Bozeman. His legal training was secured at the University of Chicago where he earned his JD. He was admitted to the Montana Bar in 1917 just prior to his enlistment in the US Army. His service with the American Expeditionary Forces in France and in Germany lasted throughout World War I and for many months thereafter. When he completed his military duties, Justice Davis established a law practice in Big Timber, Montana. He was then elected to the office of County Attorney of Sweet Grass County and served three terms. In 1926, he moved to Billings, Montana, and practiced law there, until his appointment by Governor Hugo Aronson to fill the seat of the late Justice Harrison J. Freeborn. Justice Davis served as Associate Justice of the Montana Supreme Court from December 21, 1954 until January 7, 1957. He died on May 18, 1967 in Billings, Montana at age 75.

Gary L. Day – District Judge, 16th Judicial District, 1997-2013. He was born in Park Rapids, Minnesota on January 3, 1951. He received his BS degree from Moorhead State College in 1974 and his MS degree in forestry, and then received a JD degree from the University of Montana in 1981. Judge Day engaged in the general practice of law from 1981 to 1997 when he was appointed District Judge of the sixteenth Judicial District. He was married to Mary Jo Ridgeway and they had a son and a daughter. He died in office of a heart attack on February 12, 2013 at age 62.

Ray J. Dayton – District Judge, 3rd Judicial District, 2007-Present. He was raised in Anaconda, Montana. Judge Dayton graduated from Montana State University in 1978 and received his JD degree from the University of Montana Law School in 1982. Since then, he has engaged in the general practice of law. Judge Dayton was elected to the bench November 2006. He continues to serve on the bench. He and his wife, Michele, have three children.

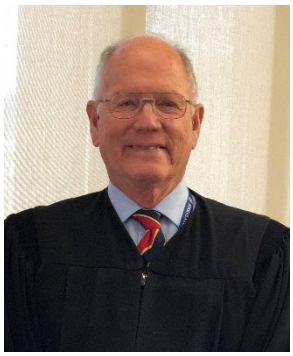
H. Leonard DeKalb – District Judge, 10th Judicial District, 1917-1918. He was born in Alexandria, Nebraska on May 10, 1879. Judge DeKalb obtained a law degree from the University of Nebraska in 1902, then moved to Lewistown, Montana in December and engaged in the general practice of law. He married Vera B. McClean on May 30, 1905 and they have one daughter. He was elected City Attorney of Lewistown

from 1904-1910 and appointed District Judge in 1917. Judge DeKalb resigned in May 1918. He died on November 2, 1965 at age 63.

Guy C. Derry – District Judge, 13th Judicial District, 1936-1967. He was born in Alliance, Nebraska in 1894. He received his law degree from the University of Nebraska and was admitted to the Montana Bar in 1914. Judge Derry was elected District Judge in 1936 and served for thirty years. He married first Oletta Hine who died in 1956. He then married Marie H. Dillion in 1960. He had one son and two daughters. Judge Derry died on September 9, 1977 in Palm Springs, California.

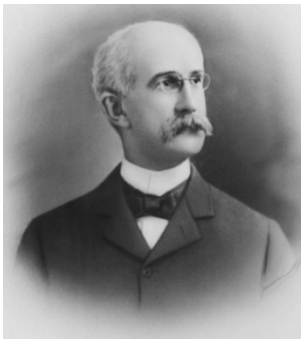
Dudley M. DuBose – District Judge, 10th Judicial District, 1891-1900. He was likely born in Washington, Wilkes, Georgia about 1863. He is the son of the Confederate Civil War General Dudley McIver DuBose. Dudley DuBose moved to Montana in the Spring of 1889. Judge DuBose was appointed on March 7, 1891 by Governor Joseph K. Toole, to the seat in the newly created 10th Judicial District (L.1891, P. 216). He was removed from office after being absent from the state for over 60 days and the absence constituted forfeiture of the office. (Art. VIII, §37, Montana Constitution, 1889.) He moved to Nome, Alaska and later became involved in a Mining Scandal there.

Robert "Dusty" L. Deschamps III – District Judge, 4th Judicial District, 2006-Present. He was raised in Missoula, Montana. He received a BA degree from in 1966 and a JD degree in 1970 from the University of Montana. He married Rebecca on September 18, 1965 and they had four children together. Judge Deschamps served as the Missoula County Attorney from 1971-1998 and was appointed District Judge by Governor Brian Schweitzer in July 2006. He is continuing to serve on the bench.



Judge Robert Deschamps

Kathleen DeSoto- US Magistrate, Missoula, 2019- Present. Kathleen Desoto was raised in Missoula, Montana. She graduated from Santa Clara University in 1989 with a bachelor's degree and from University of Montana in 1989. After graduation, Judge DeSoto clerked for Judge Shanstrom before entering private practice. She has been appointed to US District Court in Missoula to replace Judge Jeremiah C. Lynch, making her the first female federal judge for the Missoula Division. She began her appointment in August 2019.



Justice William H. DeWitt

William H. DeWitt – Associate Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 1889-1897. He was born in New York state on March 16, 1853. He graduated from Hamilton College in 1875 and Columbia University in 1878 with his law degree. Justice Dewitt practiced in New York City until he moved to Montana in 1879. He was admitted to the Montana Bar in 1879 and began his practice in Helena. He moved his practice to Butte, Montana in 1881 and was appointed and served as the US Attorney for the District of Montana from 1883-1885. Justice DeWitt served as the Silver Bow County Attorney, 1886-1889 and was elected an Associate Justice of the Montana Supreme Court in 1889. He served until 1897. He was married and had one son. He died of a heart attack in Butte, Montana on January 18, 1902 at the age of 49.

Stephen J. DeWolfe – Associate Justice, Montana Territory Supreme Court, 1888-1889. He was born in March 1833 in Hawkins County, Tennessee. He graduated from Lebanon Law School of Cumberland University in 1857, later moving to Salt Lake City, Utah in 1859 where he was an editor for the Valley Tan newspaper. Justice DeWolfe was appointed the US Attorney for the state of Utah in 1867. He moved to Butte, Montana in 1879 and engaged in the general practice of law there. He was elected to be a member of the Twelfth Montana Legislative Assembly (1881) and to be a member of the Fourteenth Legislative Council (1885). Justice DeWolfe served as the Butte City Attorney from 1886-1888 and was appointed an Associate Justice of the Montana Territorial Supreme Court by President Cleveland in 1888. He never married. He died on October 27, 1907 in Denver, Colorado at age 68.

Justice Stephen J. DeWolfe

Thomas Dignan – District Judge, 17th Judicial District, 1962-1976. He was born about 1911 in Glasgow, Montana. Judge Dignan was appointed to the 17th Judicial District in 1962 by Governor Tim Babcock. He died on October 10, 1977 in Glasgow, Montana.

Michael Dolan – District Judge, 2nd Judicial District, 1905-1917.

Charles J. Dousman – District Judge, 16th Judicial District, 1919-1920. He was born on April 12, 1881 in Sleepy Eye, Minnesota. He earned a law degree from the University of Minnesota in 1904. He married Ila Merle Blair in 1910. Judge Dousman moved from Minnesota to South Dakota, becoming the United States Commissioner, serving until 1911. He moved to Montana in 1913 and opened a private practice. He would later move to Baker, Montana and, with partner Edwin Booth, began the firm of Booth & Dousman. Judge Dousman was elected as county attorney and then appointed to the 16th Judicial District by Governor S. V. Stewart in 1919. He served until 1920 when he lost in re-election. He died January 17, 1948 at age 66.

T. E. Downey – District Judge, 2nd Judicial District, 1932-1964. Born in 1892. He was elected to the 2nd Judicial District in 1932 and retired in 1964. He died in 1972 at age 80.

Justice Stanley M. Doyle

Stanley "Larry" M. Doyle – Associate Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 1961-1967. He was born in Revere, Minnesota on February 4, 1898. He received his bachelor's degree from St. Thomas College in St. Paul, Minnesota and his law degree from Drake University, Des Moines, Iowa, in 1922. That same year, Justice Doyle was admitted to practice before the Montana Bar. He engaged in the general practice of law in Glendive, Montana that year (1922). He maybe one of the youngest pilots to fly in the United States Army Air Corps (at 19), which he did until the conclusion of World War I. Justice Doyle also served as an intelligence officer in the United States Army during World War II. After which, he returned to private practice, this time in Polson, Montana. He was appointed Associate Justice by Governor Donald Nutter to the Montana Supreme Court in 1961 and retired in 1967. Justice Doyle died in Polson, Montana on January 16, 1975 at age 76.

Asa Leland Duncan – District Judge, 4th Judicial District, 1913-1936. He was born in Hale Ford, Virginia on September 10, 1857. He graduated from the Virginia Military Institute in 1883 with the rank of Captain. He attended the law school at Washington and Lee University and was admitted to the Virginia Bar in 1886. Judge Duncan moved to Missoula, Montana in 1892 and was elected Missoula County Attorney in 1896. He fought in the Spanish-American war and served in the Philippines until 1899. On July 16, 1900 he married Gertrude Hathaway and they had on son. In 1900, he was appointed Inspector General of the Montana National Guard. Judge Duncan was elected District Judge in Missoula in November 1912 and served until he retired in 1936. He died in Franklin county, Virginia on July 9, 1937 at age 79.

Philip C. Duncan – District Judge, 5th Judicial District, 1953-1970. He was born in Virginia City, Montana on September 14, 1905. Judge Duncan received his Bachelor of Laws and his JD from Stanford University and was admitted to the Montana Bar in 1929. He married Kathryn Hostrum on August 22, 1933 and they had four children. He lived and practiced law in Virginia City from 1929-1931 and then moved to Whitehall from 1931-1952. Judge Duncan was elected to the Montana Legislature as a Representative from 1945-1950 and a senator, in 1951. He was elected district judge of the 5th Judicial District in 1953. In 1959, he was the only Montana judge to hold a Juris Doctorate. Judge Duncan died while in office in Dillon, Montana on May 9, 1970 at age 65.

Judge Philip C. Duncan
Photo courtesy of the 5th Judicial State District Court.

David M. Durfee – District Judge, 3rd Judicial District, 1889-1893. He was born in Schenectady County, New York on July 22, 1855. He was admitted to the Maryland Bar in 1882. Judge Durfee moved to Philipsburg, Montana later that year and taught at the local school there until 1885 when he engaged in the practice of law. He was elected County Attorney of Deer Lodge County in 1886-1889, and then elected delegate to the Montana Constitutional Convention and that fall was elected District Judge for Deer Lodge County. He married Emily J. Irving on February 1, 1888, they had four children. Judge Durfee returned to private practice in 1893, but later was elected Granit County Attorney and Mayor of Philipsburg in 1910. Emily died in 1902 and judge Durfee married Elizabeth E. Kelley in 1903, and they had one daughter. Judge Durfee died in Spokane, Washington on April 29, 1942 at age 86. He was buried in Philipsburg, Montana.

Edward T. Dussault – District Judge, 4th Judicial District, 1972-1978. He was born in Missoula, Montana on January 2, 1911. He served in the US Navy. Judge Dussault received his law degree from the University of Montana in 1934, and in 1935, he was elected Public Administrator for Missoula County and elected Missoula County Attorney in 1939. He married June R. Myers ion September 1, 1938 and they had one daughter. He ran unsuccessfully for the position of Missoula Mayor in 1946 and 1953. In 1959, Judge Dussault was elected to the State Senate and held office until 1968. He served as Majority Leader in 1965 and Senate President in 1967. He ran unsuccessfully for Lieutenant Governor in 1968 but was elected District Judge in November 1971 and retired in 1978, due to poor health. Judge Dussault died in Missoula, Montana on December 30, 1987 at age 76.

John Vincent Dwyer – District Judge, 2nd Judicial District, 1917-1919. He was born in Atlantic, Michigan on August 18, 1877, and moved west to Butte, Montana at age 16 to work in the mines. He attended Butte Business College at night to complete his elementary education. Judge Dwyer attended Creighton College, in Omaha, Nebraska. Upon completion, he returned to Butte and taught English at the

high school and continued his legal studies. He was admitted to the Montana Bar in December 1907. Judge Dwyer served as the Butte City Attorney and interred as the Chief Duty County Attorney. He was elected a representative to the Montana Legislature in 1915 and served as the District Judge for Butte for two years. He then went to work for the legal department of the Anaconda Copper Mining Company until he retired in 1950. He married Grace Mary Gordon in 1908 and they had six daughters and one son. Judge Dwyer died in Butte, Montana on April 30, 1953 at age 75.

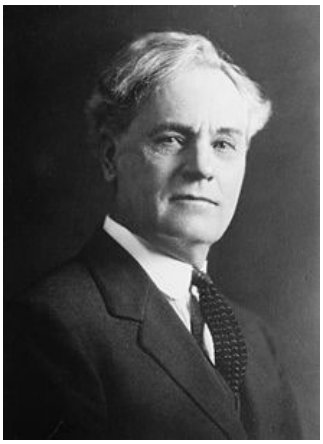
Amy Poehling Eddy – District Judge, 11th Judicial District, 2015-Present. She grew up in Stanley, Idaho and moved to Montana in 1998 to attend law school. Judge Eddy received a bachelor's degree in Social Science form California Polytechnic State University in 1997 and received her JD degree from the University of Montana in 2001. She was appointed by Governor Steve Bullock on October 22, 2015 to replace Judge Lympus, who retired. Judge Eddy continues to serve on the bench.

Charles B. Elwell – District Judge, 18th Judicial District, 1929-1932; 12th Judicial District, 1932-1967. He was born in New Orleans, Louisiana on December 28, 1888. He graduated from high school in Salem, Massachussetts in 1905, and in 1908, worked for the US Treasury Department in Washington, DC. Judge Elwell graduated from Georgetown University with a law degree in 1912. On August 28, 1913 he married Harriett E. Jarvis and had one daughter who died soon after birth. Also in 1913, Judge Elwell was transferred to the United States Land office in Havre and appointed a US Land Comissioner in 1915. He was an Lieutenant in the US Army serving during World War I until December 1918. Judge Elwell was appointed Havre City Attorney from 1920-1923 and elected District Judge in November 1928. He was moved to the 12th Judicial District when the 18th was eliminated in 1932. He retired on October 1, 1967. Judge Elwell died in Havre on July 20, 1974 at age 85.

Charles E. Erdmann.
Photo courtesy of the United States Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces.

Charles "Chip" E. Erdmann – Associate Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 1995-1997. He was born in Great Falls, Montana. Justice Erdmann served with the US Marines from 1967-1970 and graduated with a bachelor's degree in business from Eastern Montana College in 1972. He received his law degree from the University of Montana in 1975. Justice Erdmann spent the first seven years after law school as a state government attorney before engaging the private practice of law. He was appointed by Governor Marc Racicot to serve as Associate Justice on the Montana Supreme Court from 1995-1997. From 1986 to 2002, he was commissioned as a reserved Judge Advocate General (JAG) officer for the Montana Air National Guard, retiring as a Colonel. In 1998, he joined the Office of High Representative in Bosnia and Herzegovina and was appointed Chief judge of the Bosnian Election Court from 2000-2001. Justice Erdmann was appointed Chief Judge of the United States Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces on August 1, 2015 and retired July 31, 2017. He is married to Renee and they have four children.

John Edward Erickson – District Judge, 11th Judicial District, 1905-1915; Montana Governor, 1924-1933; United States Senator, 1933-1934. He was born in Stoughton, Wisconsin on March 14, 1863. Judge Erickson graduated from Washburn College in Topeka, Kansas in 1890 and was admitted to the Kansas Bar in 1891. He moved to Choteau Montana in 1893. On June 27, 1898 he married Grace Vance and they had three children. Judge Erickson served as the Teton County Attorney from 1897-1905 and was elected district judge in 1905 but resigned in 1915 and moved to Kalispell, Montana. Judge Erickson was appointed Associate Justice of the Montana Supreme Court in 1918 but refused the post. He was elected Governor of Montana in 1924 and was re-elected three times. He resigned as Governor in 1933 to accept an appointment as US Senator but was defeated the following election. Judge Erickson died in Helena, Montana on May 25, 1946 at age 83.



Judge John E. Erickson
Photo courtesy of the United States Library of Congress.

Leif "Bart" Barton Erickson – District Judge, 11th Judicial District, 1985-1991. He was born June 10, 1942 in Helena, Montana. Judge Erickson received his JD from the University of Montana. He engaged in general practice of law until he was appointed to the District Judge from 1985-1991. He was named a federal magistrate in Missoula. Judge Erickson and his wife, Carole, have one son and one daughter.

Justice Leif B. Erickson

Leif Bernard Erickson – Associate Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 1939-1945. He was born in Cashton, Wisconsin on July 29, 1906 and moved to the Sidney, Montana area when he was 12. Justice Erickson earned his BA in philosophy (1931) and his law degree (1934) from the University of Chicago. Shortly after, he moved to Sidney, Montana to start his law practice. Justice Erickson was elected Richland County Attorney from 1936-1939 and elected an Associate justice of the Montana Supreme court in 1938, serving until 1945. He ran for Governor in 1944 and Montana Senator in 1946 but lost in both races. He married Huberta Brown in and they have two daughters and a son (**See above**). Justice Leif died in Missoula, Montana on December 22, 1998 at age 92.

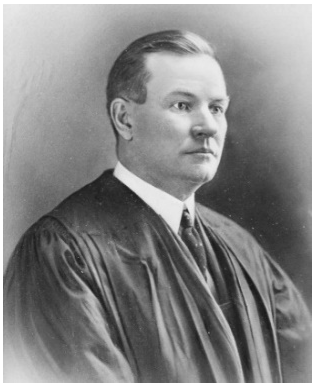
J. Chandice "Chan" Ettien – District Judge, 12th Judicial District, 1983-1988. He was born October 8, 1916 in Deer Lodge, Montana. Judge Ettien graduated from Gonzaga University and received his JD from the University of Montana in 1942. He was married to Helen Louise Pierce (1940-1970) and later Virginia Thompson (1973-1996). He had three sons and four daughters and two stepsons. He served in the US Marine Corps as first Lieutenant from 1943-1946 and then served as the Drummond City Attorney from 1946-1953 and the Granite County Attorney from 1947-1950. Judge Ettien served as a member of the Montana State Senate from 1950-1954. He took office as District Court Judge on January 2, 1983 and held the office until December 31, 1988. Judge Ettien died in Havre, Montana on July 17, 1996 at age 79.

Harry H. Ewing – District Judge, 8th Judicial District, 1909-1948. He was born on November 1, 1866 in Pennsylvania. Judge Ewing completed his law studies at Wesleyan University and graduated in 1891, moving to Great Falls later this year. He served as City Attorney from 1897- 1900 and Mayor of Great Falls from 1905-1909. Judge Ewing resigned as mayor when he was appointed to the 8th Judicial District in 1909 by Gov. Edwin Norris. He was one of the longest serving judges, retiring in 1948. Judge Ewing died on March 22, 1955 at age 88.

Russell Fagg – District Judge, 13th Judicial District, 1996-2017. He was born in Billings, Montana. Judge Fagg received a BA from Whitman College in 1983, a JD from the University of Montana in 1986 and a Master of Judicial Studies from the University of Nevada in 1999. He was a member of the Montana House of Representatives from 1991-1995 and was elected District Judge in November 1995. He resigned to run for the office of US senator on October 13, 2017. He and his wife, Karen, have two children.

Judge Russell Fagg

Victor H. Fall – District Judge, 1st Judicial District, 1953-1972. He was born February 17, 1907 in Wabash County, Indiana. He attended Notre Dame Law School and received his law degree on June 7, 1927. He came to Montana in 1932 and received his Masters' degree in history and political science from the University of Montana in 1935. In 1936, Judge Fall was the attorney for the State Water Conservation Board and served as Deputy County Attorney for Lewis and Clark County, 1942-1943. Judge Fall served in the US Navy 1944-45. After the war, he was the attorney for the Unemployment Compensation Commission until 1946. He died August 28, 1985 at age 78.



Justice George W. Farr

George Wilbur Farr – Associate Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 1922-1922. He was born on July 6, 1875 in Hamilton County, Nebraska. He received his law degree from Nebraska University in 1896. Justice Farr came to Montana in 1896 and settled in Miles City, establishing his law practice. He served as Mayor of Miles City from May 3, 1909 to May 2, 1911 and was a past president of the Montana Bar Association. On May 24, 1922, Governor J. Hugo Aronson appointed Justice Farr to fill the vacancy on the Montana Supreme Court caused by the death of Judge Frank B. Reynolds. After completing his term on the court, Judge Farr returned to Miles City where he died on March 28, 1957 at age 81.

Jessica Teresa Fehr – District Judge, 13th Judicial District, 2018-Present. She grew up in Billings, Montana. Judge Fehr received her BA in Political Science (2001) and her JD law degree (2004) from the University of Montana. She worked as an Assistant US Attorney for the District of Montana, 2006-2013. She was appointed District Judge on March 5, 2018 by Governor Steve Bullock. Judge Fehr and her husband have three children.

Stanley E. Felt – District Judge, 16th Judicial District, 1921-1936. He was born in Iowa on June 25, 1881. Judge Felt served in the military during World War I. He was married to Herriet Ann Kelly, in Glendive, Montana in 1913 and they had three sons. Judge Felt was a district judge in Baker, Montana from 1921-1936.

Ernest E. Fenton – District Judge, 13th Judicial District, 1955-1969. He was born in Merna, Nebraska and served in the US Army in World War I. Judge Fenton studied to become an attorney by working as a law clerk in Forsyth, Montana and taking correspondence courses from the University of Montana. He was admitted to the Bar in 1926 and engaged in the general practice of law in Forsyth. Judge Fenton served in the Montana State Senate, 1931-1933, and served as the Treasure County Attorney from 1936 until his appointment by Governor J. Hugo Aronson to the newly created seat in the 13th Judicial District. He also served as president of the Montana Judges Association in 1967. Judge Fenton died in office on August 14, 1969.

Russell Kenneth Fillner – District Judge, 13th Judicial District, 1986-1995. He was born on April 18, 1926 in Forsyth, Montana and served in the US Army during World War II. He married D. Jane Jackson on August 28, 1949 and they are had four sons and one daughter. Judge Fillner received a Bachelor of Laws degree (1952) and PhD from the University of Montana. He served as County Attorney for Rosebud County 1953-1965, City Attorney of Forsyth, Montana 1953-1965, and City Councilman, City of Billings. He was appointed district judge in December 1986 by Governor Ted Schwinden. Judge Fillner died on October 8, 2014 at age 88.

Walter R. Flachsenhar – District Judge, 16th Judicial District, 1945-1967. He was born in Mankato, Minnesota on July 15, 1888. Judge Flachsenhar received his Bachelor of Laws degree (1909) and his LL.M (1910) from the University of Minnesota Law School. In 1916, he was living in Glendive, Montana. Judge Flachsenhar was elected as a Representative in 1926 and served until 1932, becoming Speaker of the House in 1931. He was appointed district judge on March 10, 1945 by Governor Sam C. Ford to replace Judge Rudolph Nelsread. He resigned October 16, 1967. He married Olive May Featherman and they had one foster daughter. Judge Flachsenhar died in California on July 31, 1972 at age 84.

Eugene Barton Foot – District Judge, 11th Judicial District, 1957-1967. He was born on February 19, 1895 in Kalispell, Montana. Judge Foot fought for the US Army during World War I and married Nina Pearl Hopper in 1925. He was assistant County Attorney in Flathead County in 1953 and appointed to the newly created seat by Governor J. Hugo Aronson on April 16, 1957. Judge Foot died on August 5, 1980 in Flathead County, Montana at age 85.

Justice Samuel C. Ford

Samuel Clarence Ford – Associate Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 1929-1933. He was born on November 7, 1882 in Albany Kentucky. He received his law degree from the University of Kansas and then moved to Helena, Montana in 1906 and was admitted to the Montana Bar. He married Mary Leslie Shobe on November 24, 1910 and they had four daughters. Justice Ford was named Assistant United States Attorney in 1908 and served as Montana Attorney General from 1916-1920. He served as an Associate Justice of the Montana Supreme Court, 1929-1933 afterwards was elected Montana Governor, 1940-1948. Justice Ford died on November 25, 1961 in Helena, Montana at age 79.

William Louis Ford – District Judge, 14th Judicial District, 1921-1940. He was born on May 31, 1878 in Diamond City, Montana. Judge Ford received his law degree from Michigan University in 19010. He married his wife Margaret on December 25, 1907. He was elected Meagher County Attorney, 1906-1912 and elected District Judge November 1920. Judge Ford died in office January 29, 1940 at age 62.

Floyd Samuel Parker Foss – District Judge, 7th Judicial District, 1944-1959. He was born in Barnesville, Minnesota on November 17, 1887. He married Elizabeth Alice Healy Foss in 1915 in Glendive, Montana. Judge Foss died in office on December 12, 1959 at age 72.

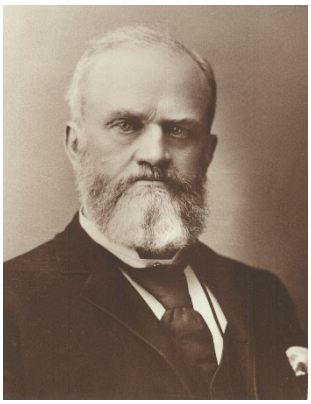
Sydney Fox – District Judge, 13th Judicial District, 1907-1913. He was born in Glasgow, Missouri on September 15, 1867. Judge Fox was appointed to the newly created 13th Judicial District on March 5, 1907 by Governor Joseph K. Toole. He was married to Elizabeth Van Gordon Bradley. Judge Fox died on February 6, 1914 in Red Lodge, Montana at age 46.

Justice Harrison J. Freebourn

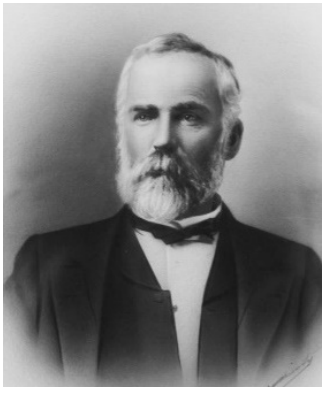
Harrison J. "Harry" Freebourn – Associate Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 1949-1954. He was born in Erie, Pennsylvania on February 17, 1890. He moved to Butte, Montana in 1909 and worked in the mines and smelters of Butte in the day and at night studied law. He married to Anne Donnelly on January 18, 1911 (she died in 1934) and they had five children. Justice Freebourn was admitted to the Montana Bar in 1918. He served as Sliver Bow County Attorney, 1929-1936, and was the Montana Attorney General, 1937-1940. He married again on November 30, 1936 to Mary Elizabeth Moran and they had three children. Justice Freebourn died in Helen, Montana, on December 14, 1954 at age 64.

James D. Freebourn – District Judge, 2nd Judicial District, 1965-1980. He was born March 24, 1912 in Butte, Montana. He graduated from the University of Montana in 1941 and served in the South Pacific during World War II. He was elected as Butte County Attorney in 1946 and served three terms. Judge Freebourn ran unsuccessfully for Supreme Court Justice several times. He was elected to the 2nd Judicial District in 1965 and retired in 1980. Judge Freebourn died December 28, 1998.

Thomas Jacob Galbraith – District Judge, 5th Judicial District, 1889-1892. He was born in Turbot, Pennsylvania on October 3, 1825. Judge Galbraith was educated at the University of Lewisburg (now Bucknell University), Pennsylvania and taught school and read law under the direction of Hon. Joshua W. Comly. He was admitted to the Pennsylvania Bar in 1852 and practiced law until 1854 when he moved to the Territory of Minnesota. In Minnesota, Judge Galbraith served as County Surveyor and County Clerk of Montour county. He married Henrietta Garrelson in Danville, Pennsylvania on April 5, 1855 and they had five daughters and six sons. He was elected to the Minnesota Territorial House of Representatives in 1855, and in 1857 was elected as a delegate to the Constitutional Convention of Minnesota. He later served as a Minnesota State Senator in 1860 and was appointed agent of the Sioux Indians of the Mississippi by President Lincoln in 1861, resigning in 1863. Judge Galbraith then moved back to Pennsylvania in 1868, later moving to Idaho in 1879. He settled in Montana in October 1884 and began the practice of law. When Montana became a state in 1889, Judge Galbraith was elected District Judge of the fifth Judicial District and served in that capacity until 1892. He died in Cheyenne, Wyoming on February 3, 1909 at age 84.



Judge Thomas J. Galbraith
Photo courtesy of the 5th Judicial State District Court.



Justice William J. Galbraith

William John Galbraith – Associate Justice, Montana Territory Supreme Court, 1879-1888. He was born in Freeport, Pennsylvania on February 18, 1837. Justice Galbraith was educated in Dartmouth College, New Hampshire and graduated in 1857. He studied law in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania until 1861 when he was admitted to the Pennsylvania Bar. During the American Civil War, he enlisted with the Pennsylvania volunteer regiment and served for three months in 1861. He was promoted to lieutenant and then transferred to the US Signal Corps and served until November 1864. After the war, Justice Galbraith engaged in the general practice of law, and in 1872 moved to Nebraska. He then moved to Cherokee County, Iowa in 1874. Justice Galbraith was appointed by President Hayes as justice of the territory of Montana (2nd district) in June 1879. He had five daughters and two sons. He died on January 23, 1907 in Seattle, Washington at age 69.

Albert J. Galen – Associate Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 1921-1933. He was born on January 16, 1876 in Crow Creek Valley, Jefferson, (now Broadwater) County, Montana. He attended Notre Dame University for three years and completed his law courses at the University of Michigan in June 1897. Justice Galen engaged in the private practice of law in Helena, Montana until 1904 at which time he was elected Montana State Attorney General and served in that capacity until 1912. During World War I, he served as Judge Advocate of the American Expeditionary Forces in Siberia until the close of the war. Justice Galen was awarded the Distinguished Service Metal. At the completion of his military service, he returned to Helena, Montana, and practiced law until his election to the Montana Supreme Court in 1920. He served on the Court through 1933. In 1930, he ran unsuccessfully for United States Senator. Justice Galen died on May 16, 1936 at age 60.

Justice Albert J. Galen

Joseph B. Gary – District Judge, 18th Judicial District, 1979-1989. He was born in Bozeman, Montana on April 12, 1922. Judge Gary attended Carroll College, then Montana State University in 1942. He served in the US Navy as a Lieutenant, 1942-1946, and received his Bachelor of Laws degree from the University of Michigan in 1949. He married Peg Casto in Ann Arbor, Minnesota on September 11, 1948 and they had five children. Judge Gary served as Deputy County Attorney for Gallatin County, 1951-1953 and the Manhattan City Attorney, 1958-1978. He was elected to the newly created second judgeship for the 18th Judicial district on January 1, 1979 and retired on July 31, 1989. Judge Gary died on November 15, 2011 in Bozeman, Montana at age 89.

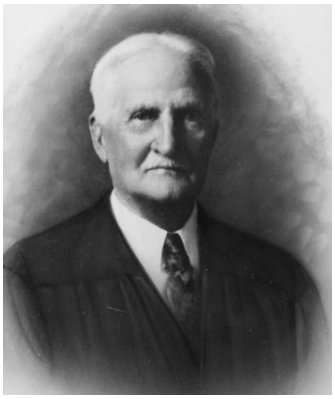
Justice Fred L. Gibson

Fred L. Gibson – Associate Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 1947-1948. He was born on September 20, 1874 near Dundee, Michigan. His family moved to Madison County, Montana in 1894. Unfortunately, his father was killed shortly after arriving. To finance his education in the law, Gibson taught in the local school. With sufficient funds, he attended the law school at the University of Nebraska in Lincoln, Nebraska and obtained his law degree. Justice Gibson moved to Virginia City, Montana and was admitted to the Montana Bar in 1898. Finding little work, he became a newspaper man and editor for the *Alder Gulch Times.* Justice Gibson became known as a public speaker and was then elected Montana legislature for Madison County in 1899-1900. He married Winfred Fletcher, in 1899 and they had one son and two daughters. He was named the first County Attorney for Rosebud County (1901-1903) and so moved to Forsyth, Montana in 1901. Longing for the mountains, Justice Gibson moved to Livingston, Montana in 1903. He served as the Montana Representative from Park County, 1909, 1919, 1921. In 1947, he was appointed by Governor Ford to the post of Associate Justice of the Montana Supreme Court. Judge Gibson died on September 29, 1956 at age 82.

Ammi Giddings – Associate Justice, Montana Territory Supreme Court, 1864-1864. He was born on May 31, 1822 in Sherman, Connecticut. He graduated from Yale University in 1849 with an Honorary A.M. degree, then settled in Plymouth, Connecticut to practice law. He married Charlotte Augusta Paige in 1850. Justice Giddings held the office of Probate Judge in Plymouth for 14 years, as well as served that state's legislature in 1851 and 1856. He was the Connecticut State Prison Director in 1851 and the Clerk of the Connecticut House of Representatives in 1854. Justice Giddings was twice a bank commissioner and twice a railroad commissioner. He was elected to the Connecticut State Senate in 1857 and 1864 and was *Pro Tempore* of that body (1857). In 1864, he was nominated by President Lincoln and unanimously confirmed by the US Senate as Associate Justice of the Montana Territory Supreme Court. He resigned immediately citing poor health, never serving on that court. However, his commission remained in force until 1865 and he is still listed on the court histories of that time. In 1866, he moved to Kalamazoo, Michigan. Justice Gibson returned to Connecticut in 1872 and practice law in Bridgeport and Norwalk. He died in Sherman, Connecticut on February 13, 1882 at age 59.

Brenda R. Gilbert – District Judge, 6th Judicial District, 2013-Present. She was raised in Clyde Park, Montana, after moving to Montana with her parents when she was three years old. Judge Gilbert received her JD from Montana State University in 1987. She was in private practice until her election to the 6th Judicial District in 2012. Judge Gilbert and her husband have three children.

(William) Emmet Glore – District Judge, 4th Judicial District, 1960-1971. He was born in Steeleville, Illinois on May 1, 1902. Judge Glore graduated from Washington University in St. Louis. During World War II, he was a lieutenant commander in the Alaskan Theater. He was appointed in 1960 by Governor J. Hugo Aronson to fill the unexpired term of C.E. Comer and retired in 1972. He married Virginia Caroline Reilly and they had one son. Judge Glore died in Polson, Montana on April 1, 1986 at age 83.



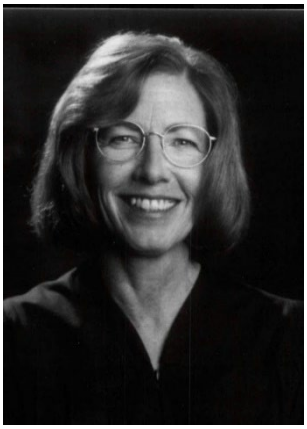
Judge O. Fletcher Goddard

O. Fletcher Goddard – District Judge, 13th Judicial District, 1924-1937; Chief Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 1938-1938. He was born near Troy, Iowa on January 20, 1853. Justice Goddard attended Troy Academy and taught school for a time before studying law. He was admitted to the Bar of Iowa in 1880 and practiced law for three years in Corydon. In 1881 he married Alwilda Stephenson in Centerville, Iowa and they had one son and two daughters. He moved to Billings, Montana in 1883 and began the general practice of law. In 1889, Justice Goddard was a member of the Montana Constitutional Convention. In 1890 and 1892, he was elected to the Montana State Senator for Yellowstone County and was a candidate for congress in 1896. He was appointed District Judge of the thirteenth Judicial District on October 1, 1924 and elected that November, serving until he retired in Jan 1937. On July 1, 1938, he was appointed by Governor Roy E. Ayers Chief Justice of the Montana Supreme Court, retiring on December 7, 1938. He died in Billings, Montana on September 25, 1943 at age 90.

Robert Parker Goff – District Judge, 8th Judicial District, 1995-1996. He was born on September 8, 1939 and grew up in Great Falls, Montana. Judge Goff attended Dartmouth college, then served in the US Army, 1962-1968. He married his wife, Sandra, in 1967 and they have one daughter and one son. He earned his J.D from the University of Montana in 1971. Judge Goff was elected to the 8th Judicial District in 1994. He died of cancer on July 3, 1996 in Great Falls, Montana at age 56.

Edward H. Goodman – District Judge, 14th Judicial District, 1919-1920. He was born at Meeme, Wisconsin on September 14, 1855. In 1862, he and his mother moved to Chicago, Illinois, then moved to Watseka, Illinois in 1867. Judge Goodman moved to Valparaiso, Indiana in 1879 to attend the Northern Indiana Normal School. He graduated from there in 1881 with a BS degree, and received his J.D. in 1883. In 1885, Judge Goodman moved to Townsend, Montana and taught in a local school until 1888 when he was admitted to the Montana Bar. In June 1889 he married Eva Allen (died 1928) and they had one daughter together. He served in the Montana legislature, 1889-1890 and served as the Broadwater County Attorney, 1897-1902. In 1919, Governor Sam V. Stewart appointed him district court judge. Judge Goodman retired in 1921 and was elected state representative for two terms. He was elected state senator in 1926. On May 17, 1930 he married Margaret Evans. Judge Goodman died on October 5, 1938 at age 84.

Karla M. Gray – Associate Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 1991-2001; Chief Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 2001-2008. She was born in Escanaba, Michigan on May 10,1947. Justice Gray attended Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo, Michigan, 1965-1970 and received her BA and MA in African History from there. She received her JD from Hastings College in 1976 and moved to Montana to serve as a law clerk for US District court judge W.D. Murray until 1977. She married Myron Currie in Butte, Montana in 1979; they had no children. Justice Gray was appointed to the Montana Supreme Court by Governor Stan Stephens in 1991. She was elected Chief Justice of the Montana Supreme Court in November 2000. She was the first woman to be elected Chief Justice of the Montana Supreme Court. During her tenure as Chief Justice, she implemented the legislature's decision to have the Montana Supreme Court assume administrative and supervisory control of all the Montana District Courts. She retired from the supreme court in 2008. Justice Gray died on February 19, 2017 at age 69.

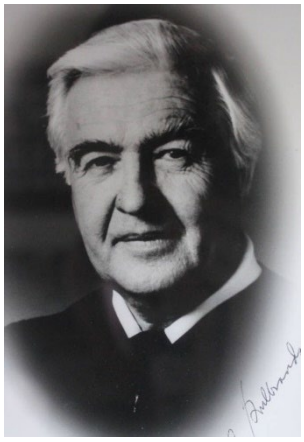


Chief Justice Karla M. Gray

Jack L. Green – District Judge, 4th Judicial District, 1963-1992. He was born May 18, 1922 in Kalispell, Montana. Judge Green served in U.S. Army, then received a BA, Bachelor of Laws degree, and JD from the University of Montana. He engaged in the general practice of law and served as a member of the City Council in Missoula, Montana. He was appointed to the bench May 1963 and has served continually since his appointment. His wife's name is Pat and they are the parents of one son and two daughters. He retired January 1, 1993. Judge Green died on July 20, 1997 in Missoula, Montana at age 75.

John J. Greene – District Judge, 19th Judicial District, 1919-1928. He was born in Allamakee County, Iowa on December 4, 1887. Judge Greene attended Upper Iowa University at Fayette and studied law at the University of Minnesota, receiving his law degree in 1912. He moved to Conrad, Montana in the Spring of 1913. He married Allice Timmis on August 1, 1914 and they had three children. He was elected County Attorney there in the fall of 1914 and served one term. Judge Greene was appointed judge by Governor Stewart in 1919. He later married Ellen C. Colleran on July 15, 1933. Judge Greene died May 8, 1960 in Billings, Montana at age 72.

Mark Guenther – District Judge, 18th Judicial District, 2000-2003. He was born on January 4, 1952 in Hazen, North Dakota. He graduated from the University of Montana with a degree in economics and later law. Judge Guenther began his legal career in 1982. His wife's name is Monica and they had 3 children. He died of cancer November 2003 in Bozeman, Montana at age 51.



Justice Leslie C. Gulbrandson

Leslie C. "Les" Gulbrandson – Associate Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 1983-1989; District Judge, 7th Judicial District, 1960-1982. He was born in Vida, McCone County, Montana on October 28, 1922. Justice Gulbrandson served five years in the US Air Force during World War II and received the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Purple Heart and five Air Medals for missions over Japan. He graduated with a JD degree from the University of Minnesota in 1952, then returned to Glendive, Montana to engage in the general practice of law for the next seven years and serve as the Glendive City Attorney. Justice Gulbrandson was appointed District Judge for the 7th Judicial District by Hugo J. Aronson in December 1959 and served there until he was elected Associate Justice of the Montana Supreme Court in November 1982, retiring on August 31, 1989. He was married to Billie and has three stepchildren. Justice Gulbrandson died on October 3, 2009 in Tucson, Arizona at age 86.

Ingrid G. Gustafson – Associate Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 2017-Present; District Judge, 13th Judicial District, 2004-2018. She was born in Wyoming. Justice Gustafson moved to Billings, Montana about 1972. She graduated from Montana State University with a business degree in 1983 and received her law degree from the University of Montana in 1988. She is an NCAA All-American and member of the MSU Athletic Hall of Fame for alpine ski racing. Justice Gustafson engaged in the general practice of law until appointed to district judge by Governor Judy Martz in 2003 (effective Jan 1, 2004). She began the felony drug court in the 13th Judicial District. She was appointed to the Montana Supreme Court by Governor Steve Bullock in December 2017 and was elected to the bench in November 2018. Justice Gustafson continues to serve on the bench.

Henry Cleveland Hall – District Judge, 17th Judicial District, 1919-1920. He was born in Butte, Montana on October 13, 1892, but grew up mostly in Great Falls, Montana. Judge Hall graduated from the University of Michigan in 1914 with a Bachelor of Laws degree. He then joined a law partnership and moved to Havre, Montana. He enlisted in the US Army to fight in World War I in August 1918 and was discharged January 1919. On September 6, 1919, Judge Hall was appointed district judge by Governor Sam V. Stewart and moved to Glasgow, Montana. He married Georgie G. Coleman on May 10, 1919 and they had one son. Judge Hall died in Great Fall, Montana on October 26, 1963 at age 71.

Leslie Halligan – District Judge, 4th Judicial District, 2018-Present. She received her JD from the University of Montana in 1989. Judge Halligan served as Deputy Missoula City Attorney 1990-1991 and Deputy Missoula County Attorney, 1991-2012. She served as Standing master of the 4th Judicial District, 2012-2015. She was an adjunct Professor of law at the University of Montana School of Law. Judge Halligan was appointed district judge by Governor Steve Bullock May 8, 2015. She continues to serve on the bench.

Ashley Harada – District Judge, 13th Judicial District, 2019-Present. She was born in Montana. Judge Harada received her JD from the University of Montana in 2004. She worked for 9 years for the US district courts of Montana in Billings, then was elected to Montana district judge in November 2018. She is married to Tim Harada and they have two children.

Douglas G. Harkin – District Judge, 4th Judicial District, 1981-2010. He was born in Sidney, Montana. Judge Harken served in the US Marine Corps in 1968. He received a BS in Accounting and JD from the University of Montana in 1968. Judge Harkin then earned a Masters in Judicial Studies in 1999 from the University of Nevada. He engaged in the general practice of law and was County Attorney for Ravalli County before being elected to the bench in 1980. He was the father of three sons and two daughters. Judge Harkin retired December 31, 2010.

Judge Douglas G. Harkin

Edward W. Harney – District Judge, 2nd Judicial District, 1901-1905. He was born in Rock Island, Illinois on January 19, 1862. Judge Harney attended the State University of Iowa and later graduated from Tabor College in 1885. He took up the study of law and was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 1889 and married Mattie Dell Kistler in 1889. They had three children. He engaged in the general practice of law in Valentine, Nebraska until 1895 when he moved to Butte, Montana. Judge Harney was elected district judge in Butte, November 1900. He and Judge Clancy presided over an infamous series of cases, related to the ownership of the silver ore bodies found in Butte Hill. These cases and the incidence surrounding them gave both judges a notoriety at the time. Judge Harney died in Butte, Montana on December 4, 1907 at age 46.

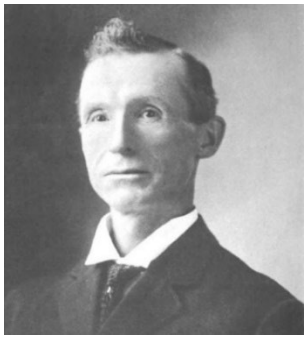
Donald L. Harris – District Judge, 13th Judicial District, 2017-Present. Judge Harris received his BA, in 1980, and his JD, in 1983, from the University of Montana. He was appointed district judge by Governor Steve Bullock on October 31, 2017. His wife's name is Cheryl.

Chief Justice James T. Harrison

James Thomas Harrison – Chief Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 1957-1977. He was born in Hankinson, North Dakota on April 4, 1903. Justice Harrison received his Bachelor of Laws degree from St. Paul College of law in 1926 and a JD degree from William Mitchell College of Law (1967) and an honorary degree from the Montana School of Mines. He married Leah Lambert in August 1926 and moved to her hometown of Minot, North Dakota. Justice Harrison moved to Glasgow, Montana in January 1929 to be the court reporter for Judge Hurly of the 17th Judicial District. He moved his family to Malta, Montana in 1939. From 1939 to 1957, he served as the Malta City Attorney and the Philips County Attorney. He was appointed Chief Justice of the Montana Supreme Court in January 1957 by Governor J. Hugo Aronson, retiring from the court January 3, 1977. He and Leah had three children. Justice Harrison died in Helena, Montana on September 21, 1982 at age 79.

John Conway Harrison – Associate Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 1961-1995. He was born on April 28, 1913 in Grand Rapids, Minnesota, but his family moved to Harlowton, Montana in 1928. Justice Harrison served in the US Army from 1940 to 1946. After the war, he joined the Army Reserves and retired as a Colonel. Justice Harrison received his law degree from George Washington University in 1940. He married Virginia Flanagan in August 1941 in Great Falls, Montana. They have 3 sons and 3 daughters. He served as Lewis and Clark County Attorney, 1954-1960, and was elected to the Montana Supreme Court in 1960. Justice Harrison currently is the longest serving Justice on the Montana Supreme Court (34 years). Virginia Harrison died in 1984. In 1987, he remarried to Ethel Harrison. Justice Harrison died on November 11, 2011 in Helena, Montana at the age of 98.

Justice John C. Harrison



Judge Charles S. Hartman

Charles Sampson Hartman – District Judge, 12th Judicial District, 1927-1929. Born in Monticello, Indiana on March 1, 1861. He attended Wabash college and then moved to Bozeman, Montana in 1882. He studied law and was admitted to the Montana Bar in 1884. He was a probate Judge for Gallatin Count, 1884-1886. He was elected to the Montana State Constitutional Convention in 1889. He was elected an US Representative, 1893-1899. He was appointed Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to Ecuador, 1913-1922. He returned to Bozeman Montana in May 1922 and resume his practice of law. He appointed district judge by Governor John E. Erickson March 3, 1927. He was married Flora Imes in December 1884 and they had two daughters. He died in Great Falls while in office on August 3, 1929 at age 68.

Benjamin Porter Harwood – District Judge, 13th Judicial District, 1937-1960. He was born in Helena, Montana on July 21, 1891. Judge Harwood attended Yale University and received his law degree from Harvard Law School in 1917. He served in the Massachusetts National Guard and was sent to fight on the Mexican border in 1916. In September of 1917, Judge Harwood was sent with the US Army to France to train as an aerial observer. He married Nina Dietz on September 6, 1919 in New York City and they had two children together. He was discharged at the end of World War I as a Major but remained in France for two years before returning to the US and finally to Billings, Montana in 1925. Judge Harwood was elected Yellowstone County Attorney in 1928 and State representative in 1935. He was elected district judge in 1936 and resigned on January 3, 1960 Judge Harwood died on February 16, 1982 at age 90.

Justice Edgar N. Harwood

Edgar Nelson Harwood – Associate Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 1889-1895. He was born on December 5, 1854 near Ellicottsville, New York. Justice Harwood received his law degree from the University of Illinois. He went west with his father and brother to Deadwood, South Dakota, from there went to a mining camp near Laramie, Wyoming. He was first admitted to the practice of law in the Territory of Wyoming and practiced at Laramie until 1882. After two years practicing in the mining camp, Justice Harwood started north by horseback. He stopped in Buffalo, Wyoming for a term of court, then continued riding up into the Territory of Montana. He camped for a day or so near Custer Battlefield, and then went on to Billings, Montana, where he arrived in July 1882. Justice Harwood was the first City Attorney for Billings. He also served as Deputy County Attorney in Billings when Miles City was a Territorial County Seat. He served in the fifteenth Territorial Legislative Assembly in 1887 and was elected Justice of the first Supreme Court of the State of Montana in 1889; serving the bench until 1895. (His son, Ben Harwood, was elected a district judge of the Thirteenth Judicial District in 1936.) After 1895, Justice Harwood made his home in Butte, Montana. Then in 1918, he moved to Billings, Montana where he resided until his death on October 21, 1936 at age 82.

Frank I. Haswell – Chief Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 1978-1985; Associate Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 1967-1978; District Judge, 11th Judicial District, 1958-1967. He was born in Great Falls, Montana on April 6, 1918. Justice Haswell received his bachelor's degree in economics from the University of Washington in 1941. He served in the US Marines in the South Pacific, 1943-1946, then received his Bachelor of Laws degree from the University of Montana in 1947. He was married to June Arnold in 1951 and they had three children and one stepson. After practicing law in Great Falls for a year, he moved to Whitefish and engaged in private practice. Justice Haswell served as the city attorney for 10 years. He was elected District Judge of the 11th Judicial District in 1957 and assuming the duties of District Judge in January 1958. He served as judge until August 1, 1967 when he was appointed Justice of the Montana Supreme Court by Governor Tim Babcock to replace retiring Justice Stanley M. Doyle. Haswell was appointed Chief Justice March 10, 1978 by Governor Thomas L. Judge to succeed Chief Justice Paul Hatfield who had resigned. Haswell served as Chief Justice until his retirement in January 1985. Judge Haswell died March 12, 1990 at age 71.

Chief Justice Frank I. Haswell

Chief Justice Paul G. Hatfield

Paul Gerhart Hatfield – US Chief District Judge, District of Montana, 1990-1996; US District Judge, District of Montana, 1979-1990; Chief Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 1977-1978; District Judge, 8th Judicial District, 1961-1976. He was born in Great Falls, Montana on April 29, 1928. Justice Hatfield was educated at the College of Great Falls, 1947-1950. He served in the US Army from 1951-1953 then received his Bachelor of Laws degree from the University of Montana in 1955. He married Dorothy Ann Allen in 1957 and they had three children.

Justice Hatfield served as Chief Deputy County Attorney, Cascade County, 1959-1960 and as District Judge, 8th Judicial District, 1961-1976. He was elected Chief Justice of the Montana Supreme Court in November 1976, then resigned as Chief Justice to accept appointment by Governor Thomas L. Judge to the United States Senate on January 22, 1978 to replace Senator Lee Metcalf. President Jimmy Carter appointed him Judge of the United States District Court, District of Montana for a term beginning May 11, 1979. He was appointed Chief Judge for the District of Montana in February 1990 until February 1996. He served as a senior judge until his death in Great Falls, Montana on July 3, 2000.

Ralph Marshall Hattersley – District Judge, 19th Judicial District, 1929-1932; District Judge, 9th Judicial District, 1932-1957. He was born in Cincinnati, Ohio on August 11, 1883. Judge Hattersley graduated from George Washington University with his Bachelor of Laws degree in 1907 and his Master of Laws degree in 1908. He moved to Conrad, Montana in 1909 and later served two terms and county attorney there. He married Ruth C. Buzzell in 1919 and they had two children. Judge Hattersley was elected a district judge in November 1928. He died while in office in Conrad, Montana on November 28, 1957 at the age of 74.d

James A. Haynes – District Judge, 21st Judicial District, 2003-2018. He grew up in Arizona. Moved to Montana in 1977. Judge Haynes served in the U.S. Army from 1968-1970. Received his undergraduate degree from the University of Arizona and his JD from the University of Montana in 1982. He served as Deputy County Attorney in 1983 and half-time Justice of the Peace from 1983-1986. Judge Haynes was elected to the newly created 21st judicial district in November 2002 and retired July 31, 2018. He has four children.

Judge James Haynes

Judge Michael B. Hayworth

Michael B. Hayworth – District Judge, 16th Judicial District, 2013-Present. He was born in Miles City, Montana and grew up in Colstrip, Montana. Judge Hayworth received his AA from Miles City Community College in 1989, his BA from George Washington University in 1992 and his JD from Valparaiso University in 1995. He was the Rosebud County Attorney, 2000-2013 and was appointed district judge by Governor Steve Bullock on June 19, 2013. Judge Hayworth and his wife, Jo Ellen, have one son.

Joe L. Hegel – District Judge, 16th Judicial District, 1989-2012. He was born in Forsyth, Montana. Judge Hegel served in the US Air Force between 1969-1972. He received a BA in government from St. John's University in 1973, and his JD from the University of Montana in 1977 and LLM in Taxation from Boston University in 1978. He engaged in the general practice of law with emphasis on criminal, domestic relations, and firm finance. Judge Hegel was elected to the bench in November 1988 and retired from the bench on December 18, 2012. His wife's name is Murielaise and they are the parents of one son and two daughters.

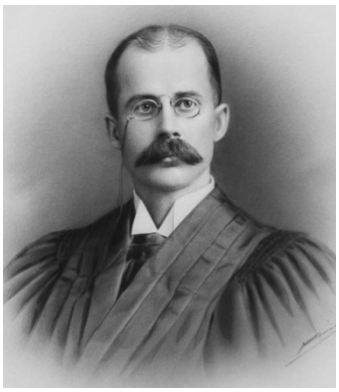
Frank Henry – District Judge, 6th Judicial District, 1889-1912. He was born in 1855 in Dayton, Ohio. His family later moved to Chillicothe, Missouri where he studied law from Luther Collier. Judge Henry was admitted to the bar in 1877. In 1880, he married Julia Ballinger and they moved to Montana three years later. In 1886, he was elected as Prosecuting Attorney of Gallatin County and served for two years. In 1889, Judge Henry was appointed the first city attorney of Livingston but resigned a few months later when he was elected to the 6th Judicial District, serving on the bench for twenty-three years until he died. Judge Henry died while in office on May 27, 1912 from an extended illness.

Judge John S. Henson

John S. Henson – District Judge, 4th Judicial District, 1979-2006. He was born in Wadsworth, Ohio. Judge Henson received a BS from Arizona State University and a JD from the University of Kentucky in 1967. He moved to Mineral County, Montana in 1971 and became the Mineral County Attorney in 1973, serving until 1979. He was appointed district judge by Governor Thomas J. Judge in 1979 and retired March 31, 2006. Judge Henson had one son and one daughter.

Harvey Blaine Hoffman – District Judge, 8th Judicial District, 1959-1961. He was born on November 23, 1884 in Abilene, Kansas. Judge Hoffman earned a Bachelor of Law from Harvard Law School. He moved to Montana in 1913 and opened a law firm in Great Falls in 1917. He served during World War I. Judge Hoffman was appointed to the bench on December 11, 1959 by Governor J. Hugo Aronson. He died February 11, 1977.

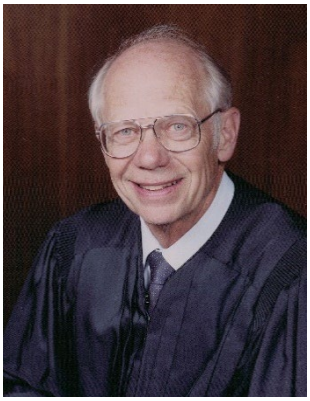
William Lawson Holloway – District Judge, 9th Judicial District, 1900-1902; Associate Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 1903-1926. He was born on November 8, 1867 in Kirksville, Missouri. Justice Holloway graduated from the State Normal College at Kirksville, Missouri and served as principle of the schools at Crystal City, Missouri for four years. He then attended the University of Missouri and graduated from the Department of Law, receiving his Bachelor of Laws degree, on June 30, 1892. Immediately after his graduation, Justice Holloway moved to Montana and located in Bozeman. He was elected County Attorney of Gallatin County in 1894 and served one term. In 1900, he was elected District Judge of the 9th Judicial District and served in that capacity until his election in November 1902 to the Montana Supreme Court. Justice Holloway served on the Montana Supreme Court until his death on December 11, 1926 at age 59.



Justice William L. Holloway

Robert Walter Holmstrom – District Judge, 13th Judicial District, 1984-1997. He was born on March 29, 1928 in Garden City, Kansas and moved to Montana in 1946. Judge Holmstrom served in the US Navy from 1945-46. He received a BA from the University of Montana in 1950 and a Bachelor of Laws degree from the University of Montana in 1952. He married Patricia T. Hennessy in Conrad, Montana on October 31, 1953 and they had one son and one daughter. He engaged in the general practice of law with emphasis on litigation before being appointed to the bench by Governor Ted Schwinden on March 16, 1984. Judge Holmstrom retired on December 31, 1997. He died in Billings, Montana on August 16, 2017 at age 89.

Clifford F. Holt – District Judge, 8th Judicial District, 1936-1960. He was born in 1884 in Brookings, South Dakota. Judge Holt graduated from St. Paul's College of Law in 1913, then moved to Great Falls with his wife, Sarah. He was elected as representative of Cascade County in 1917 and 1925. Judge Holt served two terms as County Attorney. He was elected to the 8th Judicial District in 1936 and retired on January 1, 1960. He died in Tacoma, Washington on June 7, 1962 at age 78.



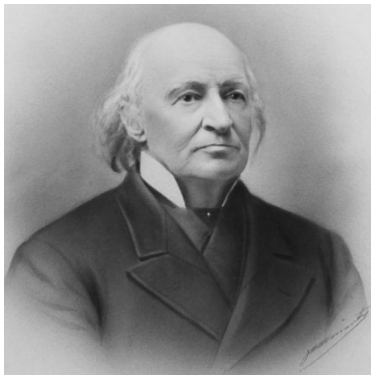
Judge Robert M. Holter
Photo courtesy of the United States District Court

Robert M. Holter – US District Judge, Montana District, 1988-Present; District Judge, 19th Judicial District, 1977-1988. He was raised in Williston, North Dakota and moved to Montana in 1947. He married Mary DeJarnette on November 25, 1953 and they had three children. Judge Holter served in the US Army 1946 and the US Air Force 1954-1956. He received his BS (1950) and JD (1954) from the University of Montana. Judge Holter was the Gallatin County Attorney from 1962-1962. He was appointed to the bench in 1977 by Governor Thomas L. Judge in the newly established 19th Judicial District and served in that capacity until he resigned to accept an appointment as Federal Magistrate, January 21, 1988. Judge Holter moved to senior status on January 3, 2003 but continues to serve the US district court of Montana.

Thomas C. Honzel – District Judge, 1st Judicial District, 1985-2008. He was born in Spokane, Washington and came to Montana in 1946. Judge Honzel served in the US Army; received a BA in English from Carroll College and a JD from the University of Montana School of Law in 1972. He was engaged in the general practice of law and served as Deputy County Attorney for Lewis and Clark County. Judge Honzel was elected to the bench November 1984. His wife's name is Mary and they are the parents of three sons. He retired in 2008 when his term ended.

George Augustus Horkan – District Judge, 15th Judicial District, 1921-1924. He was born on July 4, 1876 in Ireland and moved to the United States in 1891. Judge Horkan arrived in Miles City, Montana in 1893 and stayed until the fall of 1897 when he moved to Washington, DC to further his education. He was enlisted in the US volunteer Calvary, 1897-1899. Judge Horkan graduated from Georgetown University in 1902 with a Bachelor of laws degree, returning to Montana shortly thereafter. He married Marie Newnes on September 11, 1906 and then had two sons and three daughters. He served as the Rosebud County Attorney, 1906-1910 and was elected mayor of Forsyth in 1917. He volunteered in the US Army again (1918-1919) and was promoted to Captain. Judge Horkan was elected district judge in November 1920. He died in 1933 at age 56 (or 57).

Antone Joseph Horsky – District Judge, 1st Judicial District, 1921-1952. He was born in Helena, Montana on March 22, 1882. Judge Horsky received his Bachelor of Laws from the University of Michigan in 1905. He was elected district judge, November 1920 and served as a member of the Montana Supreme Court Commission, 1921-1922. He married Margarite Bowden and later Annie M. Stewart. Judge Horsky died on October 17, 1967.

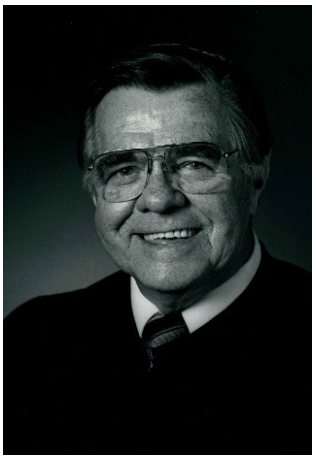


Chief Justice Hezekiah L. Hosmer

Hezekiah Lord Hosmer – 1st Chief Justice, Montana Territorial Supreme Court, 1864-1868. He was born in Hudson, New York on December 10, 1814. Justice Hosmer studied law with a kinsman and was admitted to the Ohio Bar in 1835, later moving to Maumee City, Ohio in 1836 and divided his time between the law and journalism. In 1844, he moved to Toledo and was editor for the Toledo Daily Blade until 1855. Justice Hosmer moved to Washington, DC in 1861 to interview for the position of Librarian of Congress. Instead, he was hired as Secretary of the US House Committee of Territories. He was appointed by President Abraham Lincoln to Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the Territory of Montana. He was charged with organizing the courts in the territory, which up to that time, had none. He opened the first court of Montana in December of 1864. The Territorial Supreme Court met the following summer in 1865. After his term was concluded, Justice Hosmer became the postmaster in Virginia City, Montana. In 1872, he moved to San Francisco, California where he remained until he died on October 31, 1893. Justice Hosmer was married four times. His last wife was Sallie Cotney, whom he married in August 1864. He had a total of three living children. He published several works including the novel *Octoroon* (1859), and *Bacon and Shakespeare in the sonnets* (1887).

Vernon Hoven – District Judge, 15th Judicial District, 1938-1949. He was born and raised in Montana. Judge Hoven graduated from the University of Montana Law School in 1932 and was admitted to the state Bar. He was elected as County Attorney of Sheridan County in 1933 and served until 1938 when he was appointed to the 15th Judicial District by Lieutenant Governor Hugh Adair to replace Judge S.E. Paul. Judge Hoven served on the bench until January 1949. From 1944-1945, he served as a naval aircraft pilot during World War II. He ran unsuccessfully for Governor in 1948 and re-ran for district judge in 1960 and 1972. Judge Hoven died on August 20, 1983.

William Edward Hunt, Sr. – Judge, Montana Workers Compensation Court, 1975-1981; Associate Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 1985-2001. He was born in Tacoma, Washington, February 28, 1923. During the Great Depression, his family moved to Burlington, Iowa. In 1939, at age 16 Justice Hunt gave a false birthdate and joined the US National Guard to fight in World War II, serving for a total of 25 years in the military and retired as a Captain. He moved to Montana in 1945 and attended the University of Montana 1950-1955, receiving his Bachelor of Laws degree from the University of Montana in 1955. On August 25, 1952 he married Mary V. Fassler, and they have five children. Justice Hunt engaged in the general practice of law and served as Deputy Count Attorney in Hill County and as County Attorney in Liberty Count for 10 years. He was Director of the Montana Aeronautics Commission, 1970-1975; and the first state Worker's Compensation Judge, 1975-1981. He was elected to the Montana Supreme Court in 1984 and served until 2001. Justice Hunt died on February 16, 2016 at age 92.



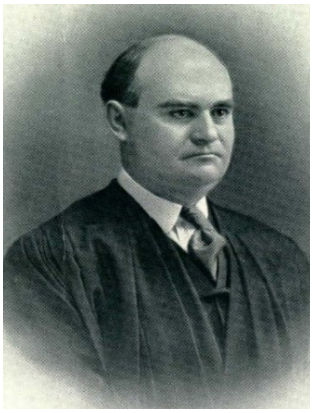
Judge William E. Hunt, Sr.

Justice William H. Hunt, Jr.

William Henry Hunt, Jr. – District Judge, 1st Judicial District, 1889-1895; Associate Justice, Montana Territory Supreme Court, 1895-1900. He was born November 5, 1857 in New Orleans, Louisiana. Justice Hunt attended Yale University, but ill health prevented him from graduating; a law degree was later conferred upon him by the school. He also studied at the Louisiana Law School. In 1879, he came to Fort Benton, Montana Territory and was appointed Collector of Customs for Montana and Idaho by President Garfield in 1881. Justice Hunt was a delegate to the Constitutional Convention of 1884. He served as Attorney General for the Territory of Montana in 1886 and 1887. In 1888, he was elected as Joint Representative from Lewis and Clark and Jefferson Counties to the Sixteenth and last legislative assembly of the Montana Territory. In 1889, he was elected as judge in the 1st Judicial District and served in that capacity until elected Associated Justice of the Montana Supreme Court. On June 4, 1900, Justice Hunt was appointed as Secretary of the Territory of Puerto Rico and resigned the Montana Supreme Court. He served as Secretary of Puerto Rico until July 4, 1904 when he was appointed to be the US Judge for the District of Montana by Theodore Roosevelt. In April 1910, Justice Hunt was appointed by President Taft as Judge to the newly created Court of Customs Appeals in Washington, DC. He served in this office until 1911 when he was assigned other duties in the US Circuit Court. He Resigned at the age of 71 and joined the firm of Gregory, Hunt and Melvin in the practice of law in San Francisco. Justice Hunt died at Charlottesville, Virginia on February 4, 1949 at the age of 91.

John 'Jack' Clarence Huntoon – District Judge, 10th Judicial District, 1922-1933. He was born in Peterboro, Ontario, on May 13, 1865. Judge Huntoon attended the Collegiate Institute of Collingwood, Ontario and then went to the British-American Business College of Toronto for four years. From Toronto, he moved to Ann Arbor to attend the law school at the University of Michigan and graduated from there with a Bachelor of Laws degree in 1891. Judge Huntoon then moved to Detroit, Michigan and engaged in the general practice of law. He moved to Great Falls, Montana and again engaged in the general practice of law, 1893-1900. For 4 years, he tried the sheep industry, but in 1904, returned to the law profession and moved to Lewiston. Judge Huntoon was elected Fergus County Attorney, 1908-1910 and appointed district judge on November 22, 1922 by Governor Joseph M. Dixon, serving until January 1933. He married Maud Towler and they had one son. Judge Huntoon died in Lewistown, Montana on June 18, 1933 at the age 68.

C. C. Hurley – District Judge, 7th Judicial District, 1913-1920. He was born on February 12, 1869 in Clinton County, Indiana. Judge Hurley grew up in Nebraska and later graduated from the law department of the University of Nebraska in 1898. In 1899, he moved to Glendive, Montana and was elected County Attorney in 1903, serving until 1907. Judge Hurley was elected to the 7th Judicial District in 1912. He died in 1932 in Glendive, Montana.



Justice John Hurly

John Hurly – District Judge, 17th Judicial District, 1917-1919 and 1929-1948; Associate Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 1919-1921. He was born in Berrien Springs, Michigan on July 19, 1878. Justice Hurly studied law in the office of Judge Purcell in Wahpeton, North Dakota and was admitted to the North Dakota bar in 1903. He served as court reporter to Judge W. S. Lauder. In 1905, Justice Hurly became a secretary to Congressman Thomas F. Marshall for two years. After which, he moved to Minot, North Dakota and engaged in the general practice of law. In the fall of 1908, he moved to Glasgow, Montana and served as the Valley County Attorney, 1911-1912. He married his wife Jeannette P. James in St. Paul, Minnesota on April 20, 1909 and they had two sons and three daughters Justice Hurly was elected district judge in November 1916 and served until 1919 upon being appointed Associate Justice of the Montana Supreme Court by Governor by Sam V. Stewart, 1919-1921, when the legislature expanded the number of Justices. From 1921-1928, he returned to his practice in Glasgow until he was again elected district judge, 1929-1948. Justice Hurly was elected for another term in the fall of 1948, but, due to failing health, resigned December 31, 1948. He died in Glasgow, Montana on June 10, 1949 at age 70.

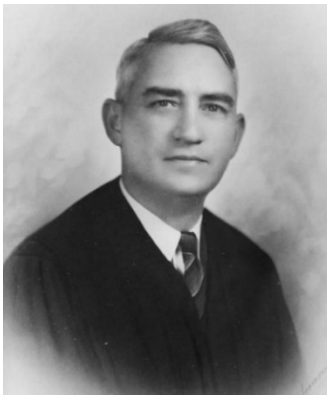
William C. Husband – District Judge, 14th Judicial District, 1940-1944. He was born in Guelph, Canada on February 23, 1882. Judge Husband graduated from the University of North Dakota law school in 1907 and in the fall of 1908, moved to Harlowton, Montana. He married Eva May Stevens on June 12, 1910 and they had three children. He was the first attorney to practice in Harlowton. Judge Husband served as the Harlowton City Attorney, the Meagher and then Wheatland County Attorney and as a Montana Senator in 1931, 1933, 1935, and 1937. He was appointed district judge by Governor Roy E. Ayers on February 3, 1940. He died while still in office on March 1, 1944 in Harlowton, Montana at age 62.

George 'Jerry' W. Huss – District Judge, 16th Judicial District, 2013-2016. He was born in Miles City, Montana on July 6, 1949. Judge Huss graduated with a BA degree from St. John's University in Collegeville,

Minnesota, and a JD from the University of Montana in 1974. After law school, he returned to Miles City and engaged in the general practice of law. Judge Huss was a part-time fireman and EMT. He served as the Miles City Attorney and was elected district judge in 2012, resigning on January 1, 2016. He married Jana Mueller and they had two sons and one daughter. Judge Huss died in Miles City, Montana on May 11, 2017 at age 67.

Joseph R. Jackson – District Judge, 2nd Judicial District, 1919-1924. He was born in Albany, New York on August 30, 1880. Judge Jackson received his BA from Manhattan College in 1900. Being tired of school, he traveled to Montana and worked various jobs in the copper mines. After three years, he was offered a job as a teacher and coach at Butte High School, then offered a job as Head of the Industrial School (a local reformatory for boys). During his teaching years (1903-1910), Judge Jackson decided to study law and in 1907, after much self-study, was admitted to the Montana bar. Next, he was elected Silver Bow County Attorney, 1917-1919 and appointed district judge by Governor Sam V. Stewart in 1919. He was chosen to be one of the Montana Supreme Court Commissioners, 1921-1922 and later served as president of the State Bar of Montana, 1924-1925. Judge Jackson moved to New York and practiced law there until he was appointed Assistant Attorney General in 1934 by President Roosevelt, and then was appointed to the United States Court of Customs and Patents Appeals by President Roosevelt in 1937, where he served until 1952 when he retired as a senior judge. As a senior judge, he would fill in for other judge and from 1958 forward for US District Court too. Judge Jackson died in Washington, DC on August 29, 1969 at age 88.

G. J. Jeffries – District Judge, 15th Judicial District, 1925-1932. He was born in Missouri about 1886. Judge Jeffries moved to Montana in 1909 after receiving his law degree in Missouri. He married Josephine Gaughan in June 1914. He served two terms as the Musselshell County Attorney before being elected district judge in 1924. Judge Jeffries died on January 17, 1958 in a car crash in Missouri at age 72.



Chief Justice Howard A. Johnson

Howard A. Johnson – Chief Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 1939-1946. He was born in Beloit, Wisconsin on December 18, 1893. Justice Johnson received his BA degree (1916) and his Bachelor of Laws degree (1917) from the University of Montana. After graduating, he moved to Butte, Montana and, in August of 1917, joined the US Army Signal Corps (later the US Army Air Corps). Justice Johnson was trained in Texas and then as a pilot in France. On completion of that training, he was commissioned a second lieutenant. In the fall of 1918, he was seriously injured when his plane crashed, and he spent 16 months in the hospital finally discharged in April 1920 and returned to Butte. Justice Johnson was elected as a member of the Montana House for Silver Bow County in 1920. He moved his practice to Whitehall in 1921, but when he was elected Jefferson County Attorney, 1922-1928, he moved to Boulder, Montana. He married Alice Caffery Schwefel on May 25, 1923 and they had two sons. In December 1928, he was appointed first assistant to the US District Attorney, under Wellington Rankin. Justice Johnson returned to private practice in 1931, but in November 1938, he was elected Chief Justice of the Montana Supreme Court, resigning in the spring of 1946. He moved to California in 1972. On February 12, 1972, shortly before moving to California, he married Cecile (Maillet) Badding. Justice Johnson died in San Leandro, California on June 8, 1974 at age 80.

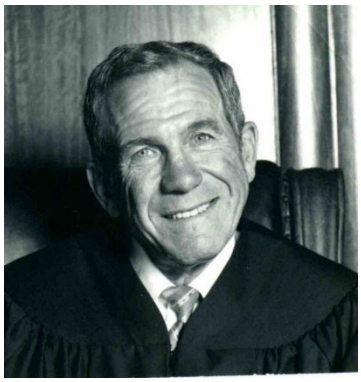
Marge Johnson – District Judge, 8th Judicial District, 1995-2000. She was born in Detroit, Michigan on October 17, 1948. Judge Johnson received her master's degree from University of Colorado and a J.D. from the University of Montana in 1980. She worked in private practice and as a mediator. In 1994, she was elected to the 8th Judicial District and served until 2000. Judge Johnson is married and has two children.

Blair Jones – District Judge, 22nd Judicial District, 1999-2018. Judge Jones served as the Stillwater County Attorney for 12 years (1987-1999). He was appointed district judge by Governor Marc Racicot to the newly created 22nd Judicial District and retired December 31, 2018.

George P. Jones – District Judge, 15th Judicial District, 1918-1920. Judge Jones was appointed March 26, 1918 by Governor Sam V. Stewart to fill the unexpired term of Charles L. Crum.

Judge Michael H. Keedy

Michael H. Keedy – District Judge, 11th Judicial District, 1983-1994. He was born in Falls City Nebraska. Judge Keedy attended the University of Nebraska, received a BA in Political Science from Earlham College in 1966 and received a JD from Washington University School of Law (St. Louis) in 1969. He moved to Montana in 1974. Judge Keedy served in the Montana House of Representatives 1979-1982. In 1994, after serving as district judge for 11 years, he moved to New Mexico and served as a public defense attorney. Judge Keedy later moved back to Kalispell, Montana. His wife's name is Carol and they are the parents of one son and one daughter.



Judge Robert S. Keller

Robert S. Keller – District Judge, 11th Judicial District, 1968-1976; District Judge, 19th Judicial District, 1988-1995. He was born on December 5, 1927 at Bellefonte, Pennsylvania. Judge Keller briefly served in the US Air Force at the end of World War II. He received a BA from Penn State University in 1950. Also, in 1950, he was commissioned in the US Army and served in Korea as a tank commander. He married Susan Bissey in December 1952 in Colorado and they have two sons and two daughters. He later received a Bachelor of Laws degree and JD from the University of Utah and engaged in the general practice of law. Judge Keller was elected District Judge of the 11th Judicial District in 1968 and served until May 1976, then was appointed District Judge of the 19th Judicial District in April 1988. Judge Keller died in Libby, Montana on July 3, 2018 at age 90.

Dean King – District Judge, 11th Judicial District, 1941-1958. He was born in Spearfish, South Dakota on January 31, 1888. Judge King graduated from Flathead County High School in 1905 then attended the University of Montana. He married Metta Elizabeth Steere on September 2, 1911 and they had two children. Judge King was elected to County Attorney in 1920 and served as district judge for the 11th Judicial District (1941-1958). He died in Flathead County, Montana on December 21, 1970 at age 82.

Mary Jane McCalla Knisely – District Judge, 13th Judicial District, 2010-Present. She was raised in Montana. Judge Knisely graduated with a BS in Psychology from Texas Christian University and received

her JD from the University of Montana. She served as a Deputy Billings City Attorney (1990-1997) and then served as a Billings Municipal Court Judge (1997-2010). She was elected District Judge in 2010.

Justice Hiram Knowles

Hiram Knowles – Associate Justice, Montana Territorial Supreme Court, 1868-1879. He was born on January 18, 1834 in Hamden, Maine. The family moved to Illinois in 1838 and to Iowa in 1840. Justice Knowles received his education at Antioch College, Ohio and graduated with a degree in law from Harvard. In 1862, he moved to Nevada Territory and practiced law for three years. In Nevada, he was District Attorney and probate Judge. Justice Knowles then moved to the Idaho Territory where he practiced law for one year. In 1866, he came to the Montana Territory where he prospected, mined, and practiced law until his appointment as Justice of the Montana Territorial Supreme Court by President Johnson on July 18, 1868. He served on the Territorial Supreme Court for eleven years. In 1884, he was a candidate for Delegate to Congress but was beaten by ex-Governor Toole. Justice Knowles served as a member of the Montana Constitutional Convention in 1889 and as a member of the first Republican State Convention, which nominated the first state officer for the state of Montana. In 1890, he was appointed United States District Judge and served until he retired on April 15, 1904. Justice Knowles died on April 6, 1911 at age 77.

Justice Knowles was very proud of the fact that he twice crossed the plains with teams, first to California, then to Nevada and finally to the Territory of Montana; then an undeveloped wilderness, inhabited by savage tribes and alive with buffaloes.

Judge Kurt Krueger

Kurt Krueger – District Judge, 2nd Judicial District, 2001-Present. He was born in Butte, Montana. Judge Krueger received his BA degree from Montana State University and his JD from George Mason University in 1978. He served as a member of the Montana House of Representatives from 1985 to 1987, serving on the Judiciary and Natural Resources Committees. Judge Krueger also served on the Joint Senate/House committee that established the Montana Stream Access Bill. He was elected district judge in November 2000. His wife's name is Kim and they have two children.

John Andrew Kutzman – District Judge, 8th Judicial District, 2015-Present. Judge Kutzman graduated from the University of Montana with a BA in political Science (1983) and a JD (1991). He moved to Great Falls in 1997. He was appointed district judge by Governor Steve Bullock in June 2015.

Yvonne Gaye Laird – District Judge, 17th Judicial District, 2016-Present. She attended Concordia College in Moorehead, Minnesota in 1990 and received her JD from the University of Montana in 1996. Judge Laird served as Deputy Blaine County Attorney (1996-2002), and Blaine County Attorney (2003-2006). She was appointed District judge by Governor Steve Bullock on November 18, 2016.

Edwin M. Lamb – District Judge, 2nd Judicial District, 1918-1920. Judge Lamb was elected a member of Montana's House of Representatives for Silver Bow County in 1899 and served as Butte City Attorney, 1911-1913. He was appointed on June 1, 1918 by Governor Sam V. Stewart to fill the unexpired term of John B. McClernan, Sr.

Leonard Harvey Langen – District Judge, 17th Judicial District, 1977-1993. He was born on September 12, 1914 at Glasgow, Montana. Judge Langen received a BA in Economics and Sociology and Bachelor of Laws degree and JD from Montana State University (1940). He was a special Agent for FBI (1941-1953) serving in Detroit, Indianapolis, New York City and Butte. He married Kathryn Louise Loper on May 19, 1942 and they have three sons and one daughter. He served as President of the Montana Judges Association in 1990. Judge Langen was elected to the bench in 1976 and served until he retired in 1993. He died in Glasgow, Montana on April 7, 2001 at age 86.

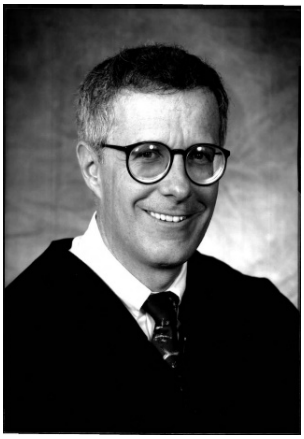
Jeffrey H. Langton – District Judge, 21st Judicial District, 1993-2019. He was born in Victor, Montana. Judge Langton earned a bachelor's degree in History (1975) and his JD (1978) from the University of Montana. He practiced law in Hamilton, Montana from 1978-1993 and was elected district judge in November 1992, serving for 25 years, before retiring on April 30, 2019. He wrote the local history of Victor, "*The Victor Story"* published in 1985. He married Patricia Stanbery and they had four children.

Judge John W. Larson with his Court Corgis

John W. Larson – District Judge, 4th Judicial District, 1993-Present. He was raised in Helena, Montana. Judge Larson earned his BA from Carleton College and his JD from the University of Puget Sound in 1975. He engaged in general practice and served as U.S. Magistrate from 1998-1992. Judge Larson was appointed to the 4th Judicial District by Governor Marc Racicot in 1993. He and his wife have two children.

Ben B. Law – District Judge, 9th Judicial District, 1913-1932. He was born December 17, 1877 in Gladehill, Virginia. Judge Law graduated from the University of Minnesota Law School in 1905 and returned to Montana. Later that year, he was elected as County Attorney, then was elected to the legislature in 1911. In 1912, Judge Law was elected to the 9th Judicial District. He served for twenty years, retiring in January of 1933. He died on March 14, 1933.

W. William Leaphart – Associate Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 1995-2010. He was born in Butte, Montana. Justice Leaphart attended Whitman College, 1965-1966, and then the University of Montana, 1966-1969, where he received a BA in Liberal Arts. He attended the University of Montana Law School and received his JD in 1972. He engaged in the private practice of law for 21 years. Justice Leaphart was elected to the Montana Supreme Court in 1994 and retired on December 31, 2010. He and his wife, Babs, have three daughters.



Justice W. William Leaphart

Frank P. Leiper – District Judge, 7th Judicial District, 1921-1943. He was born in Beaver County, Pennsylvania on December 4, 1876. Judge Leiper began as a teacher and taught school in Pennsylvania. He then completed his legal studies at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor and in 1904 was admitted to the Montana Bar. He married Lillian C. Sartian in Helena, Montana on August 24, 1905 and they had two children. Judge Leiper was elected to the Montana House of Representatives at age 28 (1905), and in 1908, was elected Dawson County Attorney. He served as district judge, 1921-1943. Judge Leiper died on June 5, 1959.

Theodore Lentz – District Judge, 4th Judicial District, 1915-1935. He was born on October 28, 1874 in Marion, Illinois. He graduated from Valparaiso University and did his legal studies at University of Michigan. Judge Lentz moved to Montana around 1901 and served for two years as superintendent of Glendive schools. He was elected as Dawson County Attorney. In 1914, he was elected to the 4th Judicial District in 1914. Judge Lentz died while in office on December 6, 1935 in Missoula, Montana.

Jerry "Jere" Black Leslie – District Judge, 8th Judicial District, 1897-1925. He was born in Monroe County, Kentucky, on April 12, 1853. Judge Leslie attended Washington and Lee University in Virginia and admitted to the Kentucky Bar in 1874. He practiced law in Glasgow, Kentucky until he moved to Great Falls, Montana in 1887. Judge Leslie was elected district judge in November 1896 and held the office until his death on February 6, 1925. His wife's name was Helen Trabue.

Judge W. W. Lessley
Image from the Montana Historical Society Research Center Photograph Archives, Helena, MT.

William Wallace Lessley – District Judge, 18th Judicial District, 1949-1982. Judge, Montana Water Court, 1982-1990. He was born on May 27, 1907 in Fayette, Missouri. Judge Lessley earned a degree from Central Methodist College in Missouri and returned to Bozeman to accept a teaching position at Bozeman High School where he set up the speech department and coached debate. While teaching, he worked toward a master's degree in English and Psychology which he earned from the University of Washington in 1935. Judge Lessley received his Juris Doctorate from the University of Michigan in 1938 and returned to Bozeman where he practiced law until his election as Gallatin County Attorney in 1942. During World War II, he flew in the China-Burma-India Theatre for the Army Air Corps and was awarded the Bronze Star and returned as a Lieutenant Colonel. After the war, Judge Lessley was elected County Attorney for the second time and served in that office until his election to the District Court in 1948. He served in that capacity until his retirement in December 1982. He was appointed Chief Water Judge in 1982 and was reappointed to a second term which he was serving at the time of his death on March 29, 1990. Judge Lessley served a total of 34 year on the Bench.

Michele Reinhart Levine- District Judge, 8th Judicial District, 2020-Present. Judge Abbott served in the Montana House of Representatives for three terms, from 2007-2012. She received her JD from the University of Montana in 2012. After graduation, she began her law career at a Great Falls law firm. Judge Abbott was appointed to the 8th Judicial District by Governor Steve Bullock in 2020. She is replacing Judge Pinksi.

Moses J. Liddell – Associate Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 1888-1889. He was born at Llanada Plantation, Louisiana on January 15, 1845. Justice Liddell fought in the American Civil War as a lieutenant in the Confederate Army from 1861 to 1865. He married Isabel Semple in 1868. After the war, he finished his legal studies at the State University of Louisiana and was admitted to the Louisiana Bar in 1872. He served as a member of the Louisiana Legislature from 1876 to 1877. In 1888, Justice Liddell was appointed by President Cleveland as an associate justice of the Supreme Court of the Territory of Montana. He served from April 1888 to November 1889 when the territory became a state and admitted to the Union. After 1889, he returned to private practice. He died in Bozeman, Montana on October 4, 1891.

Justice Moses J. Liddell

Chief Justice Carl Lindquist

Carl Lindquist – Chief Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 1946-1946. He was born in Paynesville, Minnesota on March 7, 1899. Justice Lindquist enlisted in the air arm of the American Expeditionary Forces of World War I (1917-1918). He first visited Montana in 1919 but returned home to attend university. He graduated from the University of North Dakota in 1928. Justice Lindquist was admitted to the Montana Bar and moved to Scobey, Montana shortly after. He served as the Daniels County Attorney, 1931-1937 and ran for district judge in 1938 but lost. He married Beth Stoffel on August 20, 1935; they had no children. He was appointed Chief Justice of the Montana Supreme Court by Governor Sam Ford on April 1, 1946 and served until January 1947. Justice Lindquist was a state senator in 1951-1953 and 1955. He died in Scobey, Montana on June 3, 1976.

John A. Lindsay – District Judge, 2nd Judicial District, 1897-1900. He was born at Lanarkshire, Scotland on September 23, 1864. His family moved to the United States when he was very young. Judge Lindsay attended the University of Minnesota school of law, then moved to Butte, Montana as legal counsel for Marcus Daly. He was later elected district judge and served one term. His judicial career ended just as the notorious cases involving Augusta Heinz and the Amalgamated Copper company were heating up. Judge Lindsay was married to Cora Lee and they had three children. After Cora died in 1921, he married Kathryn Ryan. He died in 1943 at age 79.

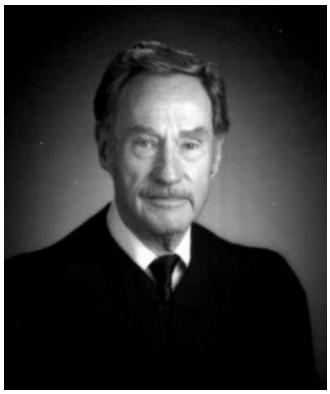
Jennifer (Boatwright) Lint – District Judge, 21st Judicial District, 2018-Present. She was raised in New Hampshire. Judge Lint graduated from Tuffs University with a degree in political science in 1991 and received her JD from the University of Montana in 1997. She was appointed by Governor Steve Bullock. Judge Lint was sworn in on September 24, 2018.

Judge C. Bruce Loble

C. Bruce Loble – Judge, Montana Water Court, 1990-2013. He was born and raised in Helena, Montana. Judge Loble earned his J.D. from the University of Montana. In 1972, he enlisted in the US Army and spent some time in Washington, D.C. as a trademark attorney. Judge Loble was appointed to the Montana Water Court in 1990 to replace Chief Judge W. W. Lessley.

Judge Loble is the son of Judge Henry Loble (below.)

Henry Loble [II] – District Judge, 1st Judicial District, 1983-1989. Judge Loble was born on May 25, 1917 in Helena, Montana. He received a BA in Political Science from Stanford University in 1938 and JD from the University of Montana in 1941, as well as marrying Grayce Eckhardt in 1941. They had two sons. Judge Loble served in the US Army from 1942-1945 as a pilot in the US Army Air Corps for 3 ½ years during World War II. He was honorably discharged from the Air Force Reserve in 1958 as a Captain. Judge Loble served as a member of the Montana House of Representatives, 1947-1952 and was the House Majority Leader in 1949 and the Minority leader in 1951. He was the President of the Montana Bar Association 1973-1974 and President of the Western State Bar Conference 1976-1977. He and Grayce divorced in 1979 and he later married Doris McKeever in 1996. Judge Loble retired on September 30, 1989. He died in San Francisco, California on August 11, 2008 at age 91.



Judge Henry Loble

Lester Henry Loble – District Judge, 1st Judicial District, 1957-1970. Judge Loble was born in Helena, Montana on April 9, 1893. He married Charlotte Sillers in 1910 and they had one son. He graduated from Cascadilla School in 1911 and the New York University Law School in 1914. He was elected Lewis and Clark County Attorney, 1916-1920. He later married Sylvia Singer on March 5, 1937. Judge Loble made important contributions to the development of Juvenile courts. He retired as district judge on January 1, 1971. He died on December 4, 1974 at age 81. His son was Judge Henry Loble (listed above).

Jack R. Loucks – District Judge, 15th Judicial District, 1952-1969. Judge Loucks received his law degree from Cumberland University in 1945. He was appointed on February 4, 1952 by Governor John W. Bonner to fill the unexpired term of David N. Nyquist. Judge Loucks died while in office on June 20, 1969.

Judge Charles Loud
Image from the Montana Historical Society Research Center Photograph Archives, Helena, MT.

Charles H. Loud – District Judge, 7th Judicial District, 1896-1909. Judge Loud was born in Weymouth, Massachusetts on November 20, 1858. He arrived in Montana in 1880 as a civil engineer helping to put through the Northern Pacific Railroad. He married Georgianna W. Burrell on December 21, 1886. He moved to Miles City in 1889 and began studying law. Judge Loud was admitted to the Montana Bar in 1891. He was a member of the Montana Constitutional Convention in 1889. In 1890-1891, he represented Custer County in the Montana Legislature. He severed two terms as Custer County's first County Attorney. In 1896, Judge Loud was elected district judge. He died in Miles City on October 28, 1935 at age 76.

Charles Luedke – District Judge, 13th Judicial District, 1968-1986. Judge Luedke was born in Saltese, Montana. In 1941, he was drafted into the Army and enlisted into the Army Air Corps as a pilot. He was discharged at the end of World War II with the rank of Captain. Judge Luedke received his Bachelor of Laws degree from the University of Montana in 1949. He married to Mary 'Robin' Kuhne in June 1957 they

had two children. He was appointed on September 1, 1967 by Governor Tim Babcock to fill the unexpired term of Guy C. Derry and retired in 1986. Judge Luedke died on January 6, 2012 at age 92.

Ted O. Lympus – District Judge, 11th Judicial District, 1992-2015. Judge Lympus was born in Missoula, Montana. He served in the US Army and received his BA (1966) and JD (1972) from the University of Montana. Judge Lympus served as the Flathead County Attorney since 1979. He was first elected in 1992 and retired on August 31, 2015. His wife's name is Patsy and they have two children.

Jeremiah C. Lynch – Federal Magistrate, United States District Court for Montana, 2006-2019. Judge Lynch is a Butte, Montana native. He earned his undergraduate degree in Zoology from Carroll College in 1973 and his master's degree in Zoology from Montana State University in 1976. He received his JD from the University of Montana in 1981. Judge Lynch was appointed Federal Magistrate Judge for the United States District Court for the District of Montana on June 10, 2006 and retired on August 2, 2019. His wife's name is Teresa and they have four children.

Magistrate Jeremiah C. Lynch. Picture Curtiousy of the US District Courts of Montana.

Jeremiah J. Lynch – District Judge, 2nd Judicial District, 1907-1932 and 1936-1948. Judge Lynch was born in Ballycrovane in Cork County, Ireland in 1871. He immigrated to the United States in 1884 at age 13. He came to Butte, Montana in September 1890 and worked as a miner. In the fall of 1897, Judge Lynch went to Kent College of Law in Chicago and received his law degree in 1899. In 1898, he enlisted in the Illinois volunteer infantry and fought in the American-Spanish war until the end of the war. He married Margaret Kelly on February 11, 1904. He served as assistant County Attorney for a couple of years before he was elected Silver Bow District Judge in November 1906. In 1932, Judge Lynch was appointed to Assistant Attorney General by Raymond T. Nagle. He was re-elected to the 2nd Judicial District in 1937 and retired in 1949. Judge Lynch died in 1961 at age 90.

Torrance H. MacDonald – District Judge, 11th Judicial District, 1958-1958. He was born on September 8, 1881. Judge MacDonald was appointed on April 23, 1958 (his term started June 1, 1958) by Governor J. Hugo Aronson to fill the unexpired term of Dean King. He and his wife, Nell, have two children. Judge MacDonald died in April 1968 at age 87.

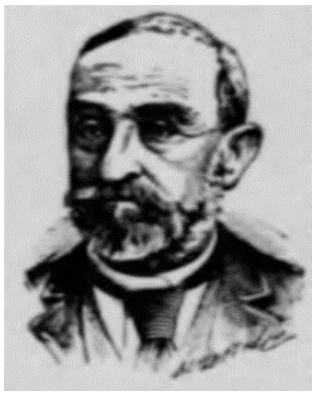
Julie Ann (Randono) Macek – District Judge, 8th Judicial District, 2001-2016. She married Mark Macek in October 1980. Judge Macek graduated from Montana State University with a BS in Sociology in 1981 and received her JD from Northwestern School of Law in 1985. She was named a Great Falls public defender in October 1985 and elected district judge in Great Falls in November 2000. She retired on February 29, 2015.

Benjamin F. Maiden – District Judge, 11th Judicial Districts, 1920-1921. Judge Maiden was born on March 11, 1868 in Iowa. Married Maria S. Smith on June 27, 1894. He was a member of the first faculty of the Montana State College, heading up the English Department. Judge Maiden was appointed as Lincoln County Attorney in 1909 and appointed September 1, 1920 by Governor Sam V. Stewart to fill the unexpired term of T.A. Thompson. He died in Libby, Montana on May 27, 1936 at age 68.

Judge James A. Manley

James "Jim" A. Manley – District Judge, 20th Judicial District, 2013-Present. Judge Manley served in the U.S. Army between 1969 and 1971. He earned his bachelor's degree in English from the University of Montana in 1973 and his J.D. from Lewis and Clark Law School in 1978. He was a deputy County Attorney for Lake County in 1979. Judge Manley was appointed by Governor Steve Bullock in October 2013 to fill the unexpired term of C. B. McNeil. He and his wife, Julia, have six children.

Jason Marks – District Judge, 4th Judicial District, 2019-Present. Judge Marks was raised in Missoula, Montana. He received his BA from Montana State University and his JD degree from Temple University School of Law in 2005. He worked as a public defender in Missoula from 2005-2007 and joined the Missoula County Attorney's Office in 2007, serving in the office's Special Victims Unit from its creation in 2012 until 2015, when he was promoted to chief deputy county attorney. Judge Marks was appointed by Governor Steve Bullock on August 14, 2019 to fill the unexpired term of Karen S. Townsend, who retired. He was sworn into office Sept. 6, 2019.



Judge Charles S. Marshall

Charles S. Marshall – District Judge, 4th Judicial District, 1889-1893. Judge Marshall was born in Paris, Kentucky on January 19, 1821. He graduated from the law department of Lexington University in 1842. He married Emma V. Corbet on August 30, 1848 in Ballard, Kentucky and they had seven children. While he lived in Kentucky, he was elected Ballard County Attorney (1854-1858), Ballard County Judge (1858-1862), circuit Judge (1862-1867) and Registrar in Bankruptcy (1867-1878). Judge Marshall followed his son Thomas C. Marshall, to Missoula, Montana in 1888. In October 1889, he was chosen District Judge. He was a member of the Montana Constitutional Convention in 1889. Judge Marshall died in Clinton, Kentucky on November 13, 1896 at age 75.

Arthur B. Martin – District Judge, 16th Judicial District, 1965-1988. Judge Martin was born in Carlyle, Montana on January 16, 1913. He served as a private in the US Army during World War II, then received his JD from the University of Montana in 1947. Afterwards, he served as the Fallon Count Attorney. Judge Martin was appointed district judge on April 22, 1965 by Governor Tim Babcock to succeed S. D. McKinnon. He married Darlene Klatt in Amarillo, Texas on April 13, 1944, they had five children. Judge Martin died in Miles City, Montana on September 11, 2011 at age 98.

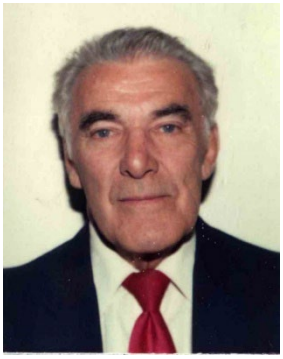
John A. Matthews –District Judge, 14th Judicial District, 1913-1919; Associate Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 1919-1921 and 1925-1936. Justice Matthews was born on February 1, 1876 in Mankato, Minnesota; he came to Bannack, Montana Territory six months later. The family later moved to Helena, Montana where he attended school and was valedictorian of his high school graduating class. His speech on that occasion dealt with the matter of abolishment of capital punishment in Montana after he and a friend witnessed a hanging that took place about the time. This speech prompted the former United States District Judge Pray and another local attorney to urge Judge Matthew's grandfather to send him to law school. Justice Matthews received his law degree from the University of Michigan in 1899 and returned to Helena, practicing law for a time, and then moved to Townsend.

Justice John A. Matthews

Justice Matthews was elected Broadwater County Attorney in 1902 and served in that position until 1913 when Governor Samuel V. Stewart appointed him district judge of the newly formed 14th Judicial District. He served until November 24, 1919 when he was appointed Associate Justice of the Montana Supreme Court to replace Justice George Y. Patton who resigned. He unsuccessfully ran for re-election, so his first term ended in December 1920. He ran again in 1924 and won, serving from 1925 to December 31, 1936. After leaving the bench in 1936, Justice Matthews served as attorney for the State Board of Equalization and afterwards as a member of that board and concluded his active service for the state in 1946. He died August 30, 1966 in Helena at age 90.

Dorothy McCarter – District Judge, 1st Judicial District, 1989-2012. Judge McCarter was born in Sackets Harbor, New York, and came to Montana in 1977. She received a BS in Elementary Education from the University of Colorado and JD from the New England School of Law. She served as law clerk in the 1st Judicial District and as Assistant Attorney General from 1981-1989. Judge McCarter was appointed to the bench on October 5, 1989 and is the first woman to serve as District Judge in the 1st Judicial District and the second woman to serve as District Judge in the state. She is married to Mike McCarter and they have two sons and one daughter. Judge McCarter retired in 2012.

Michael O. McCarter – Judge, Montana Workers' Compensation, 1993-2005. Judge McCarter was born in St. Louis, Missouri and raised in Colorado. He graduated from the University of Colorado with a BA in Political Science in 1970 and received his JD from Harvard Law School in 1973. He moved to Montana in 1977 and was assistant attorney general, 1977-1982. Judge McCarter headed the state's Medicaid Fraud Bureau form October 1982 to March 1984. He was then appointed judge of the State Workers' Compensation Court on September 7, 1993 and reappointed in 1999 to a second six-year term. He is married to Dorothy McCarter and they have two sons and one daughter.



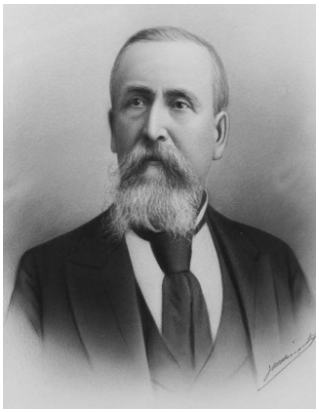
Judge John M. McCarvel

John Michael McCarvel – District Judge, 8th Judicial District, 1979-1994. Judge McCarvel was born on June 6, 1921 in Anaconda, Montana. He served in the US Navy. He received a BA from Carroll College, then attended the University of Notre Dame and received his JD from the University of Michigan. Judge McCarvel engaged in the general practice of law and served as County Attorney for Deer Lodge County and was appointed to the bench January 1979 by Governor Thomas L. Judge to succeed Truman Bradford. He served as President of the Montana Judges Association in 1986. He and his wife, Corintha, had five sons. Judge McCarvel died in Palm Desert, California on March 10, 2007 at age 85.

John B. McClernan, Sr. – District Judge, 2nd Judicial District, 1901-1906 and 1909-1918. Judge McClernan was born on April 23, 1863 in Albany County, New York. He was admitted to the New York Bar in 1884 and engaged in legal practice. He moved to Montana in 1892 and opened a law office. Judge McClernan was appointed to the 2nd Judicial District by Governor J.K. Toole on May 1, 1901. He ran unsuccessfully in 1906 for Supreme Court. He died in office on May 30, 1918 at 55 years old.

John B. McClernan, [II]. – District Judge, 2nd Judicial District, 1948-1975. Judge McClernan was born in Butte, Montana. He graduated from Montana State University with a B.A. and an LL.B. He has also done some post-graduate studies at the University of Michigan. Judge McClernan was elected to the 2nd Judicial District in 1948. He served in the Army during World War II. He retired from the bench in 1975 but was called out of retirement in 1978 when Judge Edward Dussault retired. (Son of Judge John B. McClernan, Sr.)

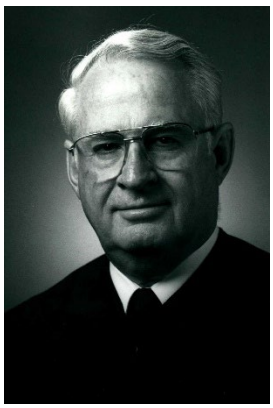
Newton Whitfield McConnell – Chief Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 1887-1889. Justice McConnell was born in Marshall County, Tennessee on May 22, 1832. He attended Allegheny College in Pennsylvania, 1853-1855. He married Nancy Elizabeth McCall on February 26, 1856 and they had three children. He taught for a short time and then began reading the law in preparation for the Bar. Justice McConnell served in the Tennessee Cavalry during the US Civil War, retiring as a captain. He was admitted to the Tennessee Bar in 1867 after the war and served in the Tennessee Senate and as a Tennessee circuit judge for eleven years. In 1887, President Grover Cleveland appointed him Chief Justice of the Montana Territorial Supreme court. In 1903, Justice McConnell retired to Seattle, Washington. He died in Topeka, Kansas on December 24, 1915 at age 83, but is buried in Helena, Montana.



Chief Justice Newton W. McConnell

Stewart J. McConochie – District Judge, 10th Judicial District, 1934-1954. Judge McConochie was born in Cambria, Wisconsin on February 29, 1880. He graduated from the University of Wisconsin law school in 1906 and admitted to the Wisconsin Bar in 1908. He moved to Lewiston, Montana in 1910. He married Hazel M. Kaull on June 25, 1913 and they have two daughters. Resigned office in June 1954. Judge McConochie served as an assistant county attorney, 1912-1915, and in 1916, he was elected Fergus County Attorney for two terms. He was elected to finish the unexpired term of Edgar J. Baker and he assumed office on December 16, 1934. Judge McConochie died in Lewistown, Montana on July 13, 1955 at age 75.

Robert Lee McCullough – District Judge, 4th Judicial District, 1911-1921. Judge McCullough was born in Tipton, Missouri on January 29, 1869. He graduated from the Law department of the University of Missouri in 1891 and moved to Missoula, Montana soon after to practice law. In 1896, he moved his practice to Hamilton, Montana. He was married to Leonora Miles on April 19, 1899 and they had four children. Judge McCullough served as the Ravalli County Attorney, 1908-1911. In 1911, he was appointed by Governor Edwin L. Norris to fill the unexpired term of Henry L. Meyers. Judge McCullough died in office on April 14, 1921 at age 52.

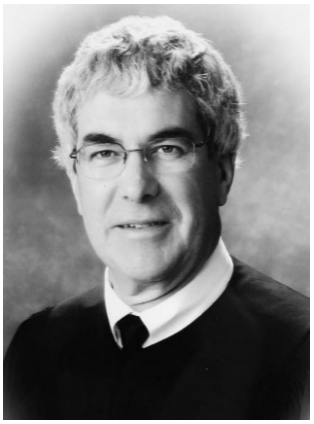


Justice Russell McDonough

Russell C. McDonough – Associate Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 1987-1993; District Judge, 7th Judicial District, 1982-1987. Justice McDonough was born in Glendive, Montana on December 7, 1924. He enlisted in the US Army Air Force in 1942. He attended Montana State University and received his JD from George Washington University in 1949. He served as the Glendive City Attorney and Dawson County Attorney and was a delegate to the 1972 Montana Constitutional Convention. Elected district judge in the seventh judicial district in 1982. He served as district judge until he was appointment by Governor Ted Schwinden to the Montana Supreme Court in May 1987. He retired from the Montana Supreme Court in 1993. He married Dora Jean Bidwell and they had 6 children. Justice McDonough died on April 3, 2018 at age 93.

Rienne Hartman McElyea – District Judge, 18th Judicial District, 2017-Present. Judge McElyea graduated from the University of Colorado with a BA in 1985 and a JD in 1989. She was appointed district judge by Governor Steve Bullock, January 2017 to replace Judge Mike Salvagni. She is married to Judge Russell McElyea.

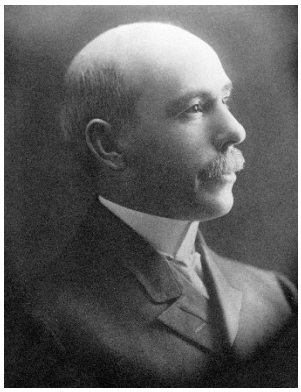
(William) Russell McElyea – Judge, Montana Water Court, 2011-2013; Chief Judge, Montana Water Court, 2013-Present. Judge McElyea received his BS degree in Economics from Northern Arizona University in 1984 and his JD from the University of Colorado in 1989. He was appointed to the Montana Water Court in 2011 and appointed Chief of the Water Court in July 2013. He is married to Judge Rienne McElyea.



Chief Justice Mike McGrath

Mike McGrath – Chief Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 2009-Present. Justice McGrath was raised in Butte, Montana. He served in the United States Air Force, 1970-1972. He earned a BA degree in business administration from the University of Montana in 1970 and received his JD from Gonzaga University School of Law in 1975. Following graduation from law school, Justice McGrath worked as a Reginald Heber Smith Community lawyer fellow in Reno, Nevada, providing legal services to low-income clients. He worked as an Assistant Montana Attorney General from 1977-1982 and was elected Lewis and Clark County Attorney from 1983-2000. In November 2000, Justice McGrath was elected as the Montana Attorney General, 2001-2008. In November 2008, he was elected as Chief Justice of the Montana Supreme Court. He and his wife, Joy, have two sons.

John Joseph McHatton – District Judge, 2nd Judicial District, 1889-1896. Judge McHatton was born at Mount Sterling, Illinois in 1860. He graduated from Iowa State University in 1883. He initially moved to start his practice of law in Stillwater, Minnesota where he served as an associate municipal judge. In 1884, Judge McHatton moved to Butte, Montana and served as an assistant Butte City Attorney. He married Rose Morier in 1889 and they had one son. He ran for district judge in 1889. The results of that election were contested. Both candidates (John J. McHatton and Levi J. Hamilton) resigned and Governor Joseph K. Tool appointed John J. McHatton on December 19, 1889 to the seat. After leaving the bench, Judge McHatton served as a City Attorney and a Police Magistrate. Later, he became chief attorney in legal department of the F. A. Heinze & Company. He moved to California in 1919 after the death of his wife. Judge McHatton died on March 17, 1944 at age 84 and is buried in Butte, Montana.



Judge John McHatton
Image from the Montana Historical Society Research Center Photograph Archives, Helena, MT.

Roderick Emmet McHugh – District Judge, 3rd Judicial District, 1932-1943. Judge McHugh was born on April 5, 1883. He Married Mary K. Lane about 1912. He was elected to 3rd Judicial District in 1932. Judge McHugh died in 1963.

Sidney H. McIntyre – District Judge, 1st Judicial District, 1896-1900. Judge McIntyre was born in Savannah, Georgia. He attended Brooklyn Polytechnic institute and Columbia University and moved to Fort Benton, Montana in 1884. Judge McIntyre served two terms as Chouteau County Attorney and then served as district judge in Helena. He was married to Bessie Sligh. Judge McIntyre killed himself in Helena, Montana on April 20, 1915 at age 53.

James E. McKenna – District Judge, 10th Judicial District, 1934-1934. Fergus County Attorney, 1930-1946. Judge McKenna was born in South Dakota on November 29, 1883. He was appointed District Judge by Governor Frank H. Cooney on October 1, 1934 to replace Judge Edgar J. Baker who died in office. He resigned his office of County Attorney immediately and served until December 16, 1934. Judge McKenna was elected Fergus County Attorney again in November 1934 and served as the Lewistown City Attorney for a time. Judge McKenna served the Montana House of Representatives, 1949, 1957 and the Montana Senate, 1959. He died in Lewistown, Montana on May 17, 1974 at age 90.

John C. McKeon – District Judge, 17th Judicial District, 1993-2016. Judge McKeon received his bachelor's degree from Gonzaga University and his JD from the University of Montana in 1975. He served the Philips County Attorney and was appointed district judge by Governor Marc Racicot in 1993. Judge McKeon retired on November 30, 2016.

Justice Laurie McKinnon

Laurie McKinnon – Associate Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 2013-2020; District Judge, 9th Judicial District, 2007-2012. Justice McKinnon was raised in Baltimore, Maryland. She attended Goucher College and received her undergraduate degree in 1982 then received her JD from the University of Baltimore School of Law in 1986. She started her career as a prosecutor in the Baltimore City State's Attorney's Office in 1987. In 1995, Justice McKinnon moved to Montana and became a Deputy Glacier County Attorney and a Deputy Teton County Attorney. She was elected a District Judge of the Ninth Judicial District Court in November 2006. In November 2012, Justice McKinnon was elected Associate Justice to the Montana Supreme Court. She is pursuing her Doctorate in Judicial Studies at the University of Nevada and the National Judicial College located in Reno, Nevada. She and her husband, Gary, have four children.

LeRoy L. McKinnon – District Judge, 10th Judicial District, 1954-1982. Judge McKinnon was born on December 16, 1911 in Harrisville, Michigan. He moved to Ronan, Montana in 1927 from Canada. He served in the US Army as a Staff Sergeant 1942-1945 and then attended the University of Montana and graduated with his Bachelor of Laws degree in 1951. Judge McKinnon became the Deputy County Attorney for Lewiston in 1952 and was appointed district judge on June 29, 1954 by Governor J. Hugo Aronson to replace Stewart McConochie. He married Dora Strong on October 6, 1957 and they are the parents of one son and two daughters. He retired on December 31, 1982. Judge McKinnon died in Lewistown, Montana on February 7, 1999

Steve Daniel McKinnon – District Judge, 16th Judicial District, 1921-1965. Judge McKinnon was born in Maple, North Dakota on May 30, 1886. He received his Bachelor of Laws degree in 1907 from the University of North Dakota. He moved to Miles City, Montana in 1909. Judge McKinnon was elected in November 1920 out of a five-candidate race but died while in office on April 11, 1965 at age 78. He served 44 years on the bench and at present (2019) is the longest serving Montana District Court Judge.

Thomas M. McKittrick – District Judge, 8th Judicial District, 1983-2012. Judge McKittrick was born in Anaconda, Montana. He received a BA in Political Science from Carroll College in 1966 and JD from Gonzaga. After graduation, he engaged in the general practice of law and served as Deputy County Attorney for Cascade County. Judge McKittrick was appointed to the bench by Governor Ted Schwinden in December 1983 and retired from the court in December 2012. His wife's name is Lisa and they are the parents of one son and one daughter.

Judge Edward P. McLean

Edward P. McLean – District Judge, 4th Judicial District, 1989-2015. Judge McLean was born in Anaconda, Montana. He attended the University of Washington and received a BS in Business then graduated from the University of Montana with a JD in 1973. He served as Chief Criminal Deputy for the Missoula County Attorney's Office. Judge McLean was appointed district judge by Governor Ted Schwinden in December 1988 and retired on April 30, 2015. His wife's name is Sandy and they have two sons and one daughter.

Justice James H. McLeary

James Harvey McLeary – Associate Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 1886-1888. Justice McLeary was born in Smith County, Tennessee on July 27, 1845. His family moved to Texas in 1850s. He attended Soule University before joining the Confederate Army from 1861-1865. He received his BA degree from Washington and Lee University in 1868 and graduated from the law school there and was admitted to the Texas bar in 1869. Justice McLeary married Emily Mitchell in December 1869 and they had one child who survived to adulthood. Emily died in 1872, and he married Mary King in August 1875. He and Mary had four children. He was elected to the Texas Legislature in 1873 and as Texas Attorney General in 1880. Justice McLeary was appointed Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the Montana Territory by President Grover Cleveland in 1886. He served in the Spanish-American war with the rank of Major. In 1901, he was appointed Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of Puerto Rico. Justice McLeary returned to the US due to poor health in November 1913 and died in Washington DC on January 5, 1914 at age 68.

Judge Michael F. McMahon

Michael F. McMahon – District Judge, 1st Judicial District, 2017-Present. Judge McMahon is a native of Helena, Montana. He attended Carroll College before transferring to National College where he got a BS in 1988. He graduated from Gonzaga University with a JD in 2001. Judge McMahon was elected in November 2016. His wife's name is Renee.

Charles Bertram (C. B.) McNeil – District Judge, 20th Judicial District, 1985-2013. Judge McNeil was born in Anaconda, Montana on February 17, 1937. He married JoAnn on December 27, 1958 and they had one son and one daughter. After attending the Montana School of Mines, he completed his BS in Metallurgical Engineering at the University of Alaska in 1959. While at school, he was in the US Army ROTC program and earned his wings as a pilot. He was commissioned a 2nd Lieutenant in the US Army and honorably discharged from the US Army in 1963 as a Captain. Judge McNeil received his JD University of Montana in 1966. Shortly after, he moved to Polson, Montana and engaged in the general practice of law. He was a delegate to the 1972 Montana Constitutional Convention. Judge McNeil was elected district judge in November 1984 and retired after 29 on the bench on September 3, 2013. He died in Polson, Montana on April 20, 2017 at age 80.

Judge Charles B. McNeil

Ronald Dale McPhillips – District Judge, 9th Judicial District, 1963-1994. Judge McPhillips was born in Great Falls, Montana on March 14, 1932. He started college at Montana State University, Missoula in 1950, but left after two quarters. Several months later, he enrolled in the Landig College of Mortuary Science and became a licensed Mortician. He was drafted and served the US Army, 1952-1954. In 1954, he returned to the University of Montana and in 1956 received a BS in Business Administration, Banking and Finance. He married Bernice Boyum on February 15, 1958 and had three daughters. Judge McPhillips began law school at Vanderbilt University and transferred to Valparaiso University Law School. Eventually, he transferred again and received his JD from the University of Montana in 1960. He was elected Toole County Attorney in 1960, while still in law school. Judge McPhillips was appointed district judge by Governor Tim Babcock on January 5, 1963 to fill the unexpired term of Judge William M. Black. He retired from the bench on February 1, 1994. He died on January 4, 2010 at age 75.

Wellington Harlan Meigs – District Judge, 8th Judicial District, 1927-1936. Judge Meigs was born in Fort Gibson, Indiana Territory [now Oklahoma] on March 11, 1871. Shortly after, his family moved to Siloam Springs, Arkansas. He attended the State University of Missouri and completed his legal training in 1895. Judge Meigs engaged in the practice of law for a while until he settled in Great Falls, Montana in 1908. In November 1912, he was elected Cascade County Attorney. He also served as an assistant US district Attorney in 1921 and was elected district judge in November 1926. He married Elizabeth Mayr Healy on December 31, 1932. Judge Meigs died on December 4, 1943 in Great Falls, Montana.

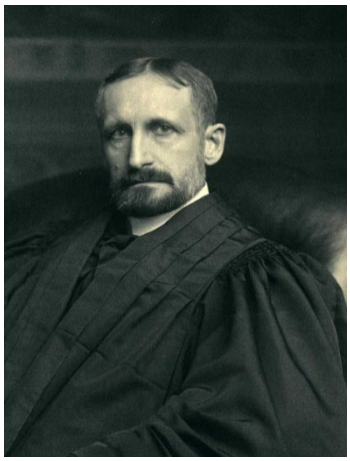
Peter G. Meloy – District Judge, 1st Judicial District, 1972-1982. Judge Meloy was born February 22, 1908 in Townsend, Montana. He graduated from the University of Montana with degrees in Psychology, Foreign Languages and Economics and his law degree. He helped found the Archie Bray Foundation in Helena, Montana in 1951. Judge Meloy and his brother were noted and influential Montana artists. He was appointed by Governor Forrest H. Anderson on December 17, 1971, to fill the unexpired term of Victor H. Fall. He retired from the bench in 1982. His wife's name is Harriett and they had five children. Judge Meloy died in 1998.

Mike Menahan – District Judge, 1st Judicial District, 2013- Present. Judge Menahan graduated from the University of Montana with a degree in Political Science and a JD. He served as deputy Lewis and Clark County Attorney for 18 years and was elected to the Montana House of Representatives in 2009-2013. Judge Menahan was elected district judge in November 2012. He and his wife, Stacy, have two children.

Justice Lee W. Metcalf

Lee Warren Metcalf – Associate Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 1947-1953. Justice Metcalf was born January 28, 1913 in Stevensville, Montana. He started studying at the University of Montana but completed his undergraduate studies in History and Economics at Stanford University. He returned to the University of Montana to study law in 1933 and graduated in 1936. In 1937, Justice Metcalf was elected to the Montana House of Representatives representing Ravalli County. He married Donna Hoover in 1938 they had one foster son. He was appointed Assistant Montana Attorney General by Harrison J. Freebourn from 1937-1941 but enlisted in the US Army in 1942 shortly after the attack on Pearl Harbor. He was discharged from the US Army as a 1st Lieutenant. Upon his return to Montana in 1946, Justice Metcalf was elected Associate Justice of the Montana Supreme Court. After a term, he was elected to congress as the Montana Representative, 1953-1960 then elected to the US Senate, 1961-1978. Senator Metcalf died on January 12, 1978 in Helena, Montana at age 64.

George Roszelle Milburn – District Judge, 7th Judicial District, 1889-1897; Associate Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 1901-1907. Justice Milburn was born on November 15, 1850 in Washington, DC. He received a BA from Yale University in 1872. He married Eugenie P. Bliss on December 7, 1875 and they had two children. After that, he worked for the US Pension Department and studied law at the National Law University until 1881. In 1881, he moved to New Mexico as Inspector of the Indian Agencies. In 1882, he was ordered north to the Indian agencies in the Territories of Montana and North Dakota. In 1884, he built Crow Agency. Justice Milburn was admitted to the Montana Bar in 1885. Subsequently that year, he retired from the federal government and engaged in the private practice of law in Miles City, Montana. In 1889, he was elected district judge, which he remained until January 1897. He was then elected Associate Justice of the Montana Supreme Court in 1901 and served until his term expired in 1907. Justice Milburn died in Helena, Montana on June 24, 1910 at age 59.



Justice George R. Milburn

Hugh J. Miller – District Judge, 6th Judicial District, 1922-1928. Judge Miller was born in Genoa, Minnesota on December 31, 1866. Following attending Darling's Business College, he taught elementary

school for about 5 years. In 1889, he entered the law school at the University of Michigan and graduated with his Bachelor of laws degree in 1891. In August 1891, Judge Miller moved to Livingston, Montana and soon after was admitted to the Montana Bar. On January 9, 1889, he married Georgiana Cole in Minneapolis, Minnesota and they had one son. He was elected Park County Attorney, 1893-1894, 1899-1902, and a Montana legislator 1906-1907. Judge Miller was appointed the Livingston City Attorney in 1911, then appointed district judge on December 27, 1922 by Governor Joseph M. Dixon to fill the unexpired term of Albert P. Stark. Judge Miller died in 1938 in Livingston, Montana.

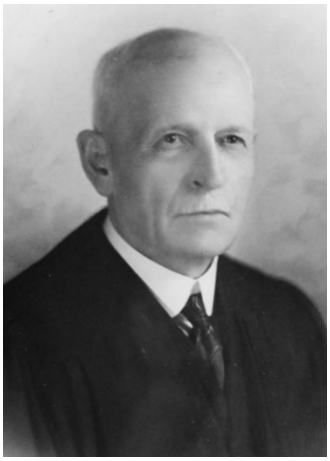
Ted L. Mizner – District Judge, 3rd Judicial District, 1987-2006. Judge Mizner was born in Deer Lodge, Montana. He received his BS in Business Administration-Accounting and JD from the University of Montana in 1974. Judge Mizner served as the Powell County Attorney then appointed to district judge by Governor Ted Schwinden in June 1987. He and his wife, Gayle, have three sons and one daughter.

Larry W. Moran – District Judge, 18th Judicial District, 1989-1996. Judge Moran was born on November 4, 1932 in Clay, West Virginia. He received his undergraduate degree from Kent State University in 1954. He and his wife, Mona, married in 1953 and they had two sons. From 1953-1956, he fought in the Korean War with the US Army. He received his Bachelor of laws in 1959 and his JD in 1968 from the University of Colorado. Judge Moran moved to Montana in 1972 and was admitted to the practice of law in Montana in 1973. He was appointed to the bench by Governor Stan Stevens in September 1989. Judge Moran died in Yuma, Arizona on March 11. 2005 at age 72.

Justice Brian M. Morris

Brian M. Morris –Federal Judge, US District of Montana, 2013-Present; Associate Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 2005-2013. Judge Morris was raised in Butte, Montana. He received his BA in 1986, MA in 1987 and JD in 1992 from Stanford University. He served as a legal assistant at the Iran-US Claims Tribunal; a legal officer at the United Nations Compensation Commission in Geneva; and a Solicitor for the Montana Department of Justice, 2001-2004. Judge Morris was elected to the Montana Supreme Court in November 2004. In 2013, President Obama appointed him to the Judge of the United States District Court of Montana. He and his wife, Cherche, have three sons and one daughter.

Claude F. Morris – Associate Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 1935-1946. Justice Morris was born on January 10, 1869 in Ralls County, Missouri. He received his Bachelor of Laws degree from Columbian University (now George Washington University) in 1902. He came to Montana and was admitted to the practice of law in 1903. From 1903 to 1906, Justice Morris was associated with the Union Bank and Trust Company as secretary and trust officer. For many years, he was prominent in the banking circles of Montana, particularly at Havre where he was the president of the Security State Bank. Justice Morris served on the Havre City Council from 1912-1916; from 1914 to 1916 served in the Montana House of Representatives; and from 1916 to 1920 in the Montana State Senate. He served as Assistant Attorney General from 1932 until his election to the Montana Supreme Court in 1934. Justice Morris served until 1946, at which time he unsuccessfully ran for Chief Justice. He died on September 28, 1957 at age 88.



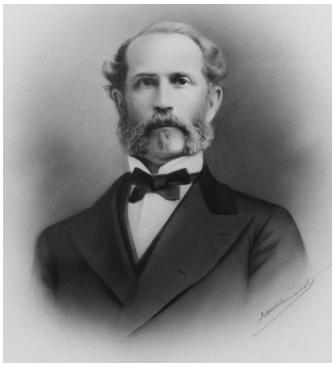
Justice Claude F. Morris

Justice Frank B. Morrison, Jr.

Frank 'Biff' Brenner Morrison, Jr. – Associate Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 1981-1987. Justice Morrison was born on September 27, 1937 in Stockville, Nebraska. He graduated from the University of Nebraska in 1959 and received his JD from the University of Denver Law School in 1962. He married Sharon McDonald on June 28, 1959 and they had one son and one daughter. Justice Morrison moved to Whitefish, Montana in 1969. He was elected to the Montana Supreme Court in November 1980. He co-authored *"Constitutional challenges to tort reform: equal protection and states constitutions"* in 1987. He served as president of the Montana Trials Lawyers Association in 1979 and was a candidate for Montana Governor in 1988 and 1992. Justice Morrison died on January 8, 2006 in Renton, Washington.

Michael Glen Moses – District Judge, 13th Judicial District, 2014-Present. Judge Moses was raised in Billings, Montana. He attended the University of Montana, receiving a BA in Political Science in 1974, and earned his JD from Lewis and Clark Law School in Portland, Oregon in 1978. Since that time, he has engaged in the private practice of law in Billings, Montana. Judge Moses was appointed as district judge by Governor Steve Bullock in 2014 to fill the unexpired term of Susan Watters. At the same time, he was also a primary candidate for Judge Todd Baugh's seat, who had recently retired. Judge Moses' father was Charles 'Timer' Moses. He and his wife, Karen, have three children.

Lyman Ezra Munson – Associate Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 1865-1869. Justice Munson was born in Great Barrington, Massachusetts on January 21, 1822. He was married to Lucy A. Sanford on October 6, 1846 and they had two daughters and a son. He graduated from Yale Law School with a Bachelor of Laws Degree in 1851. In March 1865, he was appointed Associate Justice of the Montana Territorial Supreme Court by President Abraham Lincoln. Justice Munson arrived in Helena, on July 9, 1865. When the Territorial Supreme court declared the second territorial legislature in March 1866 to be void, he was assigned the most remote of judicial districts. He resigned from the bench in 1868. Justice Munson died in New Haven, Connecticut on February 13, 1908 at age 86.



Justice Lyman E. Munson

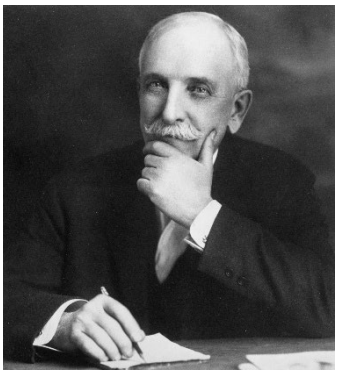
Nikolas 'Nick' Clarke Murnion – District Judge, 16th Judicial District, 2016-Present. Judge Murnion was raised in Jordan, Montana. He earned his bachelor's degree in Government at Montana State University and received his JD from the University of Montana in 1978. Judge Murnion served as the part-time Garfield County Attorney 1979-2009 and the Valley County Attorney, 2009-2016. He was appointed district judge by Governor Steve Bullock on February 24, 2016 to fill the unexpired term of Judge George Huss. Judge Murnion gained national recognition during the mid-1990s for prosecuting Montana's anti-government Freeman group.

Justice John L. Murphy

John Luttrell Murphy – Associate Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 1871-1872. Justice Murphy was born in Knoxville, Tennessee in 1842. He served in the US Army during the Civil War and obtained the rank of Major. In 1867, he passed the Tennessee Bar. Justice Murphy was appointed Associate Justice of the Montana Territorial Supreme Court by President Ulysses S. Grant on February 4, 1871. He was recalled/resigned after much controversy on October 4, 1872 and replaced by Justice Servis. He then opened a law practice in Bozeman, but soon after moved to San Francisco. Justice Murphy served as a federal prosecutor in San Francisco, California and as the City/County Attorney in the 1880s. His wife's name was Viola. Justice Murphy died in Knoxville, Tennessee on February 27, 1912 at age 70.

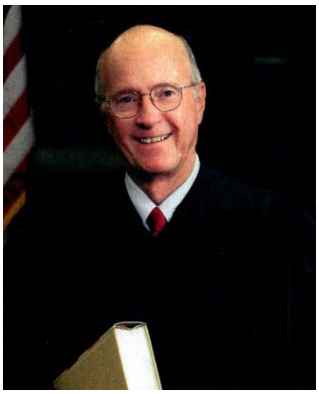
Henry Lee Myers – District Judge, 4th Judicial District, 1907-1911; Associate Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 1927-1929. Justice Myers was born in Booneville, Missouri on October 9, 1862. He studied law at the law firm Williams and Draffes and was admitted to the Missouri bar in 1884. Justice Myers moved to Hamilton, Montana in 1893. He married Nora Susan Doran in 1896 and they had one daughter. He served as Ravalli County Attorney, 1895-1899 and in the Montana Senate, 1899-1903. He was appointed district judge by Governor Joseph K. Toole in 1907, serving until elected to the United States Senate, 1911-1923. Justice Myers was appointed by Governor John E. Erickson to the Montana Supreme Court on January 5, 1927. He died in Billings, Montana on November 11, 1943 at age 81.

Justice Henry L. Myers



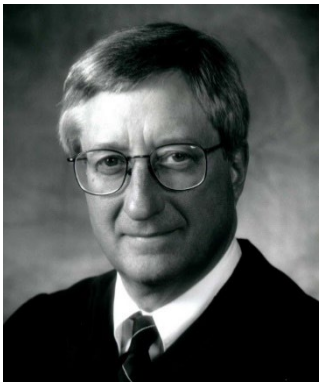
Judge Wellington Napton
Image from the Montana Historical Society Research Center Photograph Archives, Helena, MT.

Wellington Napton – District Judge, 3rd Judicial District, 1898-1904. Judge Napton was born in Saline County, Missouri on August 31, 1853. He studied for two years in Westminster College, and then at William Jewell College. He studied the law under Judge W. W. Dixon of Montana after 1873-1878 and was admitted to the Missouri Bar in 1878. Judge Napton returned to Montana in 1880 and settled in Anaconda. He was appointed district judge by Governor Robert Burns Smith on January 3, 1899 to fill the unexpired term of Judge Brantley. He was married to Kate Kelley. Judge Napton died in Sacramento, California on November 25, 1938 at age 85.



Judge Kenneth Neill

Kenneth Neill – District Judge, 8th Judicial District, 1996-2015. Judge Neill served in the U.S. Army. He graduated from the University of Montana with a Bachelor of Law degree in 1965 but was granted a J.D. retroactively. He clerked for the Montana Supreme Court and served as Deputy Big Horn County Attorney. Judge Neill was appointed district judge by Governor Marc Racicot in 1996 and retired in mid-2015. He is married to Sharon Ann Ashton and they have 3 children.



Justice James C. Nelson

James C. Nelson – Associate Justice, Montana Supreme Court 1993-2012. Justice Nelson was born in Moscow, Idaho. He received his BS degree from the University of Idaho in 1966. He served as a first lieutenant in the US Army, 1966-1969. He received his JD from George Washington University in 1974. Justice Nelson worked as a financial analyst with the US securities and Exchange Commission before moving to Montana. He served as the Glacier County Attorney until 1993 and was appointed to the Montana Supreme Court on April 16, 1993 by Governor Marc Racicot. His wife's name is Chari and they have two children.

Robert John Nelson – District Judge, 8th Judicial District, 1957-1976. Judge Nelson was born on December 13, 1913 in Great Falls, Montana. He received his law degree from the University of Montana in 1937. During World War II, he served in the US Navy. Judge Nelson served as Cascade County Attorney, 1949-1950 and was elected to the 8th Judicial District in 1956. He served as President of the Montana Judges Association. He retired in 1976. Judge Nelson died June 25, 1989 at age 75.

Rudolph Nelstead – District Judge, 16th Judicial District, 1936-1945. Judge Nelstead was born in Appleton, Minnesota in 1891. He graduated with an AM degree from the University of Minnesota. He moved to Ekalaka, Montana and started a law practice. Judge Nelstead served two terms as the Carter County Attorney (1920s-1930s) and was made a district judge in 1936. He was married to Jennie D. Iverson and they had one daughter. He died will still in office on February 19, 1945 at age 54.

Brad Newman – District Judge, 2nd Judicial District, 2006-2018. Judge Newman was born in Garberville, California and moved to Helena, Montana when he was two. He graduated from the University of Montana with an undergraduate degree in 1981 and a JD in 1984. Judge Newman served as a prosecutor in Silver Bow County, 1988-2000 and was elected a Montana State Representative in November 2000. In 2006, Judge Newman was elected district judge. He was appointed by Governor Steve Bullock to the Montana Parole Board in 2018, so resigned as district judge on July 13, 2018. His wife name is Debra and they have three children.

David N. Nyquist – District Judge, 15th Judicial District, 1943-1944 and 1949-1952. Judge Nyquist was born in Torsby, Sweden on May 18, 1892. He served in the US Army during World War I. He was elected to the House of Representatives in 1931 and appointed district judge (1943-1944) by Governor Edwin L. Norris to fill the temporary vacancy occasioned by Judge Haven entering Military Service. Judge Nyquist was later elected district judge in November 1948 and served until his death on January 30, 1952 at age 59.

James F. O'Conner – District Judge, 6th Judicial District, 1912-1913. Judge O'Conner was born in California Junction, Iowa on May 7, 1878. He graduated from the University of Nebraska law school in 1904, then moved to Livingston, Montana in 1905. Judge O'Conner was appointed district judge on June 6, 1912 by Governor Edwin L. Norris to fill the unexpired term of Frank Henry. He served as a representative in the Montana Legislature in 1917-1918 and was elected speaker in his first term. He was, then, elected United States Representative for Montana in November 1936 and served until his death. He married Catherine E. Adams in Iowa and they had 2 children. Representative O'Conner died in Washington, DC on January 15, 1945 at age 66.

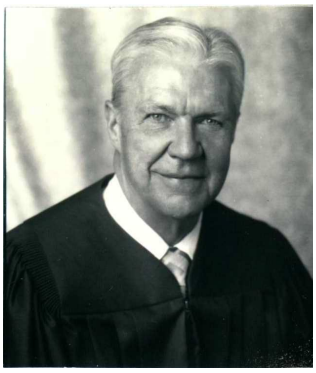
Daniel L. O'Hern – District Judge, 16th Judicial District, 1915-1920. Judge O'Hern was born on January 13, 1883 in Barnum, Iowa. He graduated from the University of Iowa in 1908 and moved to Montana to practice law. Judge O'Hern was elected to the State Legislature for Missoula City in 1910. In 1913, he was appointed as Assistant Missoula County Attorney. Governor Sam V. Stewart appointed him district judge of the 7th Judicial District in 1915 but retired in in 1921 due to his poor health. He later served as the Miles City Attorney for twenty-two years. Judge O'Hern died in 1949 at age 66.

Judge H. R. Obert

H. R. Obert – District judge, 7th Judicial District, 1985-1990. Judge Obert was born on June 20, 1925 in Milton, Oregon and came to Montana in 1976. He served in the US Navy, then received a BS and JD from the University of Wisconsin. Judge Obert engaged in the general practice of law until being elected to the bench in 1984. Wife's name is Myrna and they are the parents of two sons and three daughters. Judge Obert died on November 20, 2007 In Lead, South Dakota.

Jon A. Oldenburg – District Judge, 10th Judicial District, 2012-Present. Judge Oldenburg received his J.D. from the University of Montana. He was elected to the 10th Judicial District in 2012 to replace Judge E. Wayne Phillips.

Judge Jon A. Oldenburg



Judge Arnold H. Olsen

Arnold H. Olsen – District Judge, 2nd Judicial District, 1975-1990. Judge Olsen was born on December 17, 1916 in Butte, Montana. He attended Montana School of Mines and received Bachelor of Laws degree and JD from the University of Montana. Olsen was elected as Attorney General in 1948 and was the youngest Attorney General in the United States when he took office at age 33. He served as Attorney General of Montana 1949-1957, and served in the US House of Representatives 1961-1971. Judge Olsen was appointed to the bench by Governor Thomas L. Judge in February 1975 to fill the vacancy created by the retirement of Judge John B. McClernan then elected in 1976, 1982 and 1988 and served until he died on October 9, 1990. He was a widower and father of three daughters.

Robert 'Bob' G. Olson – District Judge, 9th Judicial District, 2012-Present. Judge Olson was raised in Libby, Montana. He received his J.D. from the University of Montana in 1983. He has spent twenty-nine years practicing various types of law. Judge Olson was elected to the 9th Judicial District in 2012, replacing Judge Laurie McKinnon.

Thomas Andrew Olson – District Judge, 18th Judicial District, 1983-2000. Judge Olson was born on May 30, 1938 in Glendive, Montana. He graduated from Montana State College in General Studies in 1960, and from the University of Montana Law School in 1963. He served as a law clerk for Chief Justice James T. Harrison and was assigned as Legal Officer in the US Marine Corps, attaining the rank of Captain. In 1967, Judge Olson entered the private practice of law in Bozeman and was twice elected Gallatin County Attorney. From 1975-1977, he served as United States Attorney for Montana. He was elected District Judge in 1982 and 1988. Wife's name is Ann and they are the parents of two sons and one daughter. Judge Olson died on February 12, 2017 in Bozeman, Montana.

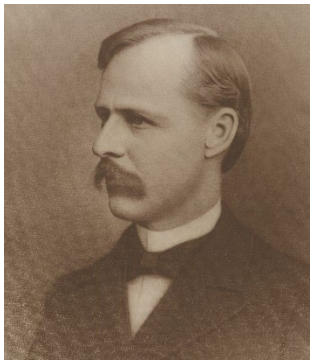
David M. Ortley – District Judge, 11th Judicial District, 2010-2016. Judge Ortley was born in Mankato, Minnesota. He graduated with his J.D. from Hamline School of Law in 1983. He engaged in the private practice of law in Minnesota, until in 1989, when he moved to Montana. In 2000, Judge Ortley was appointed as the Justice of the Peace in Flathead County. In 2009 and 2014, he ran unsuccessfully for Justice of the Montana Supreme Court. In 2010, Judge Ortley was elected to the 11th Judicial District and retired in 2017.

Judge David M. Ortley

Carolyn Ostby – Magistrate, US District Court, 2002-2016. Judge Ostby earned her undergraduate degree from Macalester College in 1972 and her JD from the University of Montana in 1977. She worked for the US Department of Justice, 1979-1981. Judge Ostby was appointed on February 25, 2002 as the first female federal judge in the District of Montana and retired on December 31, 2016.

George W. Padbury, Jr. – District Judge, 1st Judicial District, 1934-1956. Judge Padbury was born on July 1, 1890 in Lewis and Clark County, Montana. He was a Deputy County Attorney in 1920, and served until 1924, when he was made the County Attorney. He was elected to the 1st Judicial District in 1934 to fill the unexpired term of Judge Poorman. In 1954, Judge Padbury was accused of fraud and put on trial. He was acquitted and went back to his seat on the bench. Judge Padbury died on September 10, 1975 in Lewis and Clark County at age 85.

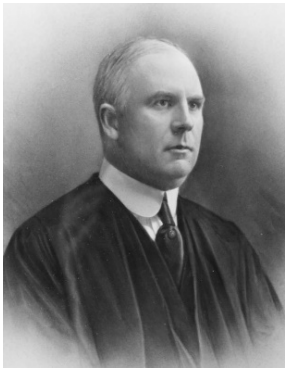
John W. Parker – District Judge, 8th Judicial District, 2017-Present. Judge Parker was raised in Great Falls, Montana. He received his J.D. from the University of Montana in 1999. He was elected to the Montana House of Representatives in 2002 and served three terms. In 2009, Judge Parker became the Cascade City Attorney, and in 2017, was appointed to the 8th Judicial District by Governor Steve Bullock.



Judge Montgomery H. Parker
Photo courtesy of the 5th Judicial District

Montgomery H. Parker – District Judge, 5th Judicial District, 1896-1905. Judge Parker was born on September 16, 1855 in Payette County, Kentucky. He graduated from the University of Kentucky in 1880 with a law degree and moved to Montana later that year. He started as an instructor in Townsend, Montana and then opened a law practice in Radersburg in 1882. He spent five years in that practice before moving again and opening a new law firm this time in Boulder, Montana. He married Mittie M. Kennon in 1884 and they had a son and a daughter. Mittie died in 1888 and he married Florence A. Watson in 1893. In 1889, Judge Parker was elected Jefferson County Attorney and served for five years before being elected to the 5th Judicial District in 1896. He retired in 1904 to resume private practicing. In 1915, he was elected to the Montana State Senate and served until 1921. Judge Parker died in Helena, Montana on April 18, 1938 at age 83.

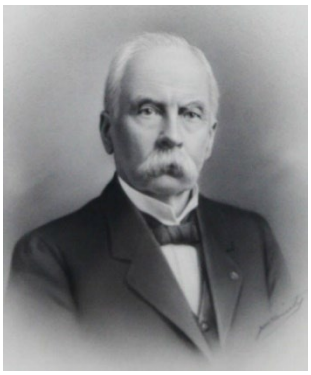
George Y. Patten – Associate Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 1919-1919. Justice Patten was born in Virginia City on April 14, 1876. He began his career as Court Stenographer for Judge Armstrong in 1893. He decided to study law but not go to law school. In 1900, he took the bar exam and passed. He married Eleanor Ferris in 1901. From 1902-1905, Justice Patten worked as the Assistant Attorney General for James Donovan. In 1919, Governor Stewart appointed him to the Montana Supreme Court, but he resigned later that year for personal reasons. Justice Patten returned to Bozeman and worked as the City Attorney as well as president of the Montana Bar Association. He remarried in 1945 to Sarah Francis Smith. Justice Patten died on February 27, 1951 in Bozeman, Montana at age 74.



Justice George Y. Patten

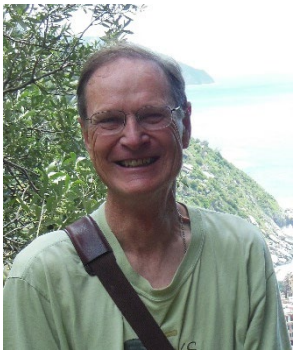
John E. Patterson – District Judge, 4th Judicial District, 1913-1915. Judge Patterson ran for Mayor of Missoula in 1909 but lost to Andrew Logan. In 1913, Governor Stewart appointed him as judge to the 4th Judicial District, but he lost the re-election in 1915. Judge Patterson also campaigned for Chief Justice of the Supreme Court but lost to Justice Theodore Brantley. He again ran for the bench of the 4th Judicial District, but again lost to James Self. Judge Patterson died November 5, 1950.

Spurgeon E. Paul – District Judge, 12th Judicial District, 1925-1932; District Judge, 15th Judicial District, 1932-1937. Judge Paul was born on March 14, 1889 in Brookeville, Illinois. He studied law at the University of Minnesota and received his Bachelor of Law. He was admitted to the Minnesota Bar. Judge Paul married Miss Grace Crossen in 1917. He was elected to the 12th Judicial District in 1924 under the Farmer-Labor party. He resigned in 1938. He died November 29, 1971 in Denver, Colorado.



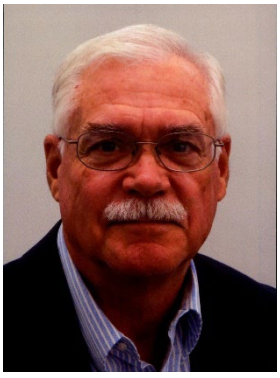
Chief Justice William Y. Pemberton

William Young Pemberton – Chief Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 1893-1899; District Judge, 2nd Judicial District, 1891-1893. Justice Pemberton was born in Nashville, Tennessee on June 1, 1843. He was educated at the Masonic College in Lexington, Missouri and graduated from Cumberland Law School in Lebanon, Tennessee in 1861 with a Bachelor of laws degree. Justice Pemberton came to Montana Territory in 1863 and settled in Virginia City where he practiced law until he moved to Helena in 1865. In 1868, he returned to Missouri and resided there, then resided in Texas until his return to Montana in 1880. At that time, he lived in Butte and in 1882 he was elected District Attorney of the second judicial district and served two terms in that office. Justice Pemberton was a delegate to the Constitutional Conventions of 1884 and 1886. In March 1891, he was appointed District Judge of the 2nd Judicial District and served in that capacity until his election as Chief Justice of the Montana Supreme court, November 1892. He engaged in the private practice of the law until 1909. Justice Pemberton was chosen Librarian of the Montana State Historical and Miscellaneous Library, 1909-1920. He died in Excelsior Springs, Missouri on August 26, 1922 at age 79.



Judge E. Wayne Phillips

E. Wayne Phillips – District Judge, 10th Judicial District, 2000-2012. E. Wayne Phillips was born in Lewistown, Montana. He graduated from the University of Montana with a J.D and was admitted to the Montana Bar in 1990. Judge Phillips served as deputy chief legal counsel for Governor Stan Stephens, as well as agency counsel for Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks. He later went into private practice. Judge Phillips was elected to the 10th Judicial District in 2000 and retired in 2012.



Judge Richard Phillips

Richard G. Phillips – District Judge, 7th Judicial District, 1990-2001. Judge Phillips was born in Kearny, New Jersey. He moved to Montana in 1972 so that he could attend law school. He earned his J.D. from University of Montana School of Law in 1976. Judge Phillips served as the Sidney City Attorney and the Richland County Deputy Attorney. In 1991, he was elected to the 7th Judicial District and retired in 2002 when he finished his 2nd six-year term. Judge Phillips and his wife, Jeannette, have three children.

Juli M. Pierce – District Judge, 13th Judicial District, 2019-Present. Judge Pierce is a Billings, Montana native. She earned her J.D. from the University of Washington School of Law in 2004. She spent thirteen years working as the Yellowstone County Prosecutor as well as the Chief Deputy County Attorney. Judge Pierce was elected to the 13th Judicial District in 2018.

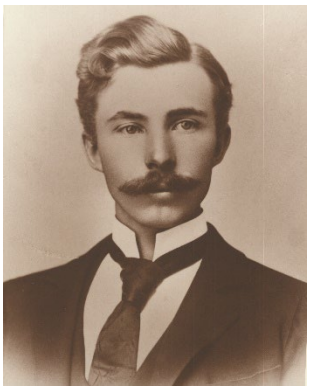
George W. Pierson – District Judge, 13th Judicial District, 1911-1917. Judge Pierson was born on May 21, 1869 in Genesee County, Michigan. He graduated from University of Michigan in 1891. He and his wife moved to Red Lodge in 1894 to practice law. In 1895, Judge Pierson was appointed to the office of County Attorney and then City Attorney in 1902, and in 1908, was elected to the House of Representatives. Governor Norris appointed Judge Pierson to the 13th Judicial District in 1911. He died in Billings, Montana on April 24, 1935 at age 65.

Justice William T. Pigott

William Trigg Pigott – Associate Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 1897-1902 and 1918; District Judge, 1st Judicial District, 1934-1934. Justice Pigott was born on November 3, 1860 in Booneville, Missouri. He graduated from the Law Department of the University of Missouri in 1880 and then moved to Virginia City, Montana. Later in 1880, Justice Pigott was appointed Virginia City, City Attorney and served for ten years. In 1890, he moved to Great Falls, Montana to practice law. He was appointed to the Montana Supreme Court by Governor Robert Smith to replace Justice Horace Buck. Justice Pigott returned to practicing law in 1902 but was re-appointed to the Supreme Court by Governor Stewart to replace Justice Sanner in 1918. In 1934, Governor Cooney appointed him to the 1st Judicial District to replace Judge Poorman. He served out the rest of the term and then resigned on December 3, 1934 to return to practicing law. Justice Pigott died in 1944.

Gregory G. Pinski – District Judge, 8th Judicial District, 2013-2020. Judge Pinkski received his BA from the University of North Dakota in Political Science and Journalism. Before attending law school, he worked in the Office of Presidential Scheduling for President Clinton. Judge Pinski earned his J.D. from the University of North Dakota, School of Law in 1999. He was elected to the 8th Judicial District in 2012 to replace Judge Thomas McKittrick. Judge Pinski and his wife, Amber, have two sons. He retired in October 2020 to return to legal practice.

Judge Gregory G. Pinski



Judge Joseph B. Poindexter
Photo courtesy of the 5th Judicial State District Court.

Joseph Boyd Poindexter – District Judge, 5th Judicial District, 1909-1915. Judge Poindexter was born in Canyon City, Oregon on April 14, 1869. He moved to Montana with his family in 1881. He earned his Bachelor of Laws degree from Washington University in St. Louis and admitted to the Montana Bar in 1892. Judge Poindexter was elected Dillion City Attorney in 1895. He married Margaret Conger on April 22, 1897. He also served as the Beaverhead County Attorney in Dillon, Montana, 1897-1903. In 1909, Governor Edwin Norris appointed him district judge of the 5th Judicial District, and he was re-elected in 1912 and served until 1915. He unsuccessfully campaigned for Associate Justice in the Supreme Court. In 1915, Judge Poindexter was appointed Attorney General by Governor Sam Stewart to replace D.M. Kelly. He served this appointment until 1917, when President Woodrow Wilson appointed him to the United States District Court for the Court of Hawaii. He resigned in 1924 and went back to practicing law. President Franklin D. Roosevelt appointed him as Governor of Hawaii, 1934-1942. In 1943, the Hawaii Supreme Court appointed him trustee of Kamehameha Schools. Judge Poindexter died on December 3, 1951 in Hawaii at age 82.

Charles W. Pomeroy – District Judge, 11th Judicial District, 1895-1896. Judge Pomeroy was born on June 2, 1866 in Jackson County, Kansas. He worked as a teacher for years before studying law at Lawrence. He married Estella Granger in 1889 and moved to Great Falls, Montana to open his own law practice. In 1895, Judge Pomeroy was appointed district judge by Governor J. E. Rickards to the 11th Judicial District. The Senate originally rejected his nomination because he did not live in the jurisdiction and he lacked enough expertise. This caused legislation to change the district boundaries and he was able to accept the nomination. Judge Pomeroy lost in re-election in 1897. He then moved to Kalispell, Montana and opened another law practice. Judge Pomeroy died on April 10, 1935 in Kalispell, Montana at age 69.

W. H. Poorman – District Judge, 1st Judicial District, 1917-1934. Judge Poorman was born on November 2, 1859 in Granville, Indiana. His family moved to Wisconsin in 1861. He spent a few years in the teaching profession then graduated from the law department of the University of Wisconsin in 1888. Judge Poorman moved to Livingston, Montana in 1889 to practice law. In 1902, he was elected as County Attorney for Flathead and appointed as Supreme Court Commissioner in 1903. Judge Poorman was elected to the 1st Judicial District in 1917 and served for seventeen years. He died in while in office in Helena, Montana on August 29, 1934 at age 75.

Michael C. Prezeau – District Judge, 19th Judicial District, 1995-2010. Judge Prezeau was born in Anchorage Alaska. He moved to Montana in 1960 and earned his J.D. from the University of Montana in 1973. Judge Prezeau practiced personal injury and workers' compensation until his appointment to the 19th Judicial District in 1995. He retired in 2010 when his term expired. Judge Prezeau and his wife, Jael, have three children.

James E. Purcell – District Judge, 2nd Judicial District, 1990-2000. Judge Purcell was born on December 29, 1929. He grew up in Butte, Montana and graduated from University of Montana in 1952 with a degree in Journalism. He then served in the Navy for two years. Judge Purcell graduated with his J.D. from the University of Montana Law School in 1958. He married Mary Dawn Sampson on October 11, 1958. In

1990, he was appointed to the 2nd Judicial District by Governor Stan Stephens and retired in 2000. Judge Purcell died on October 29, 2011 at age 81.

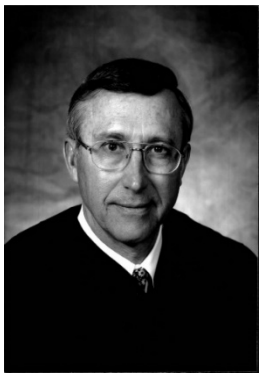
Justice Willington D. Rankin

Wellington D. Rankin – Associate Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 1924-1925. Justice Rankin was born on September 16, 1884 in Missoula, Montana. He received a BA from the University of Montana and his law degree from Harvard in 1908. He studied for a time at Oxford University in England. His Sister, Jeanette Rankin, was the first woman elected to the United State Congress. Mr. Rankin engaged in the private practice of law in Helena, Montana until 1920 when he was elected State Attorney General. He served as Attorney General until August 30, 1924 when he was appointed Justice of the Montana Supreme Court to replace Charles H. Cooper who resigned. He was appointed United States Attorney for the District of Montana by President Calvin Coolidge in 1926 and was reappointed to the post by President Hoover in 1930. Justice Rankin died June 4, 1966 at age 81.

Peter L. Rapkoch – District Judge, 10th Judicial District, 1983-1994. Judge Rapkoch was born in El Paso, Texas. He served in the US Army from 1944-46 and in the Reserves from 1949-68. He received a BS degree in Political Science from Santa Clara University in 1953 and a Bachelor of Laws degree from the University of Montana in 1957. Judge Rapkoch engaged in the general practice of law and served as Fergus County Attorney prior to being elected to the bench in 1982. Wife's name is Patricia and they are the parents of five sons and three daughters.

Timothy W. Reardon – Judge, Montana Workers' Compensation Court, 1981-1994.

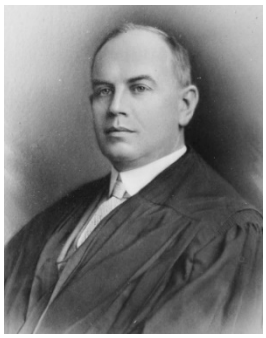
Howard Frank Recht – District Judge, 21st Judicial District, 2019- Present. Judge Recht graduated from Brigham Young University in 1983 with a B.S. in Business Administration and received a JD degree from the University of Montana School of Law in 1986. He started in private practice and served as corporate counsel for an international logging company. Later, Judge Recht served as the chief civil counsel for the Ravalli County Attorney's office starting in 2011 until he was appointed by Governor Steve Bullock on May 21, 2019 to replace Judge Jeffrey Langton.



Justice Jim M. Regnier

Jim M. Regnier – Associate Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 1997-2005. Justice Regnier was born on July 22, 1944 in Aurora, Illinois. He earned his J.D. from the University of Illinois College of Law in 1973 then engaged in private practice for five years. In 1991, he moved to Great Falls, Montana and continued to work in private practice. In 1997, Justice Regnier was elected as Associate Justice for the Supreme Court. He served until 2004 when he decided to retire.

Frank B. Reynolds – Associate Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 1921-1922. Justice Reynolds was born on January 20, 1874 in Quincy, Michigan. He studied law at the University of Michigan and at his father's law firm. In 1895, he earned his law degree and became a co-partner with his father's firm. Justice Reynolds stayed with his father for five years. In 1898, he enlisted to take part in the Spanish-American War. From 1901-1909, he was a probate judge in Michigan. Justice Reynolds moved to Billings, Montana in 1909 to practice law. He was elected to the Montana Supreme Court in 1920. He died in 1922 and survived by his wife and two children.

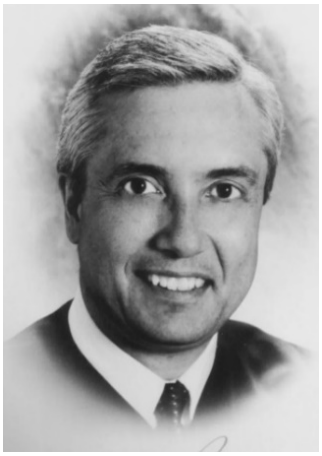


Justice Frank B. Reynolds

James P. Reynolds – District Judge, 1st Judicial District, 2011-2020. Judge Reynolds earned his B.A. at the University of Missouri and his J.D. at the University of Montana in 1978. He clerked for the Montana Supreme Court for one year and then entered private practice in 1979. Judge Reynolds was elected to the 1st Judicial District in 2010. Judge Reynolds and his wife, Niki, have two children. He retired in October 2020.

William Boyd Rhoades – District Judge, 18th Judicial District, 1917-1920. Judge Rhoades was born on April 5, 1878 in Slater, Missouri. He went to Kansas City Law School and was admitted to the Missouri Bar. In 1902, he moved to Montana and, in 1903, settled in Kalispell to practice law. On July 18, 1905, he married Josephine Force. Judge Rhoades served as a State Legislator in 1913 and City Attorney. In 1915, he moved to Helena and became the secretary of the State Railroad Commission. He was appointed District Judge on March 5, 1917 to the newly created 18th Judicial District and resigned on January 10, 1920 to go back to practicing law. Judge Rhoades and his family moved to Oregon in 1931 to benefit his health. He died on February 13, 1933 in Portland, Oregon. He is survived by his wife and three children.

David Rice – District Judge, 12th Judicial District, 2003-2010. Judge Rice began his career in private practice as well as a part-time Hill County Deputy Attorney in 1973. He became a full time County Attorney in 1986, replacing Ron Smith. Judge Rice was appointed to the 12th Judicial District in 2003 to replace Judge John Warner and retired in 2010.



Justice James A. Rice

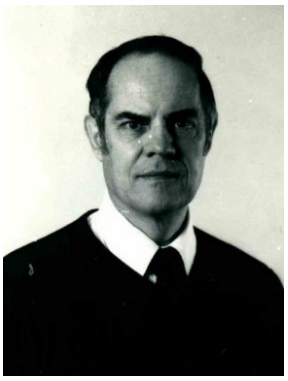
James A. Rice – Associate Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 2001-Present. Justice Rice received his B.S. in Political Science from Montana State University in 1979 and his J.D. from the University of Montana Law School in 1982. He did legal internships for the offices of Missoula City Attorney and Lewis and Clark County Attorneys. Justice Rice was elected to the Montana House of Representatives, 1989-1994, but unsuccessfully campaigned for Montana Attorney General in 2000. In 2001, Governor Judy Martz appointed Justice Rice to the Montana Supreme Court.

Olivia Rieger – District Judge, 7th Judicial District, 2017-Present. Judge Rieger was raised in Belle Fourche, South Dakota. She earned her B.S. from Black Hills State University in South Dakota and her J.D. from University of South Dakota Law School in 2004. She served as Regional Deputy Public Defender in Glendive, Montana. In 2010, Judge Rieger was elected as Dawson County Attorney, and in 2017, was appointed district judge by Governor Steve Bullock to replace Judge Richard Simonton. Judge Rieger and her husband, Blake, have three children.

Judge Olivia Rieger

Frank L. Riley – District Judge, 2nd Judicial District, 1929-1936. Judge Riley was born in 1878. He was a Silver Bow County Deputy Attorney, 1917-1929. In 1929, he was elected district judge of the 2nd Judicial District but lost in re-election in 1936. In 1940, Judge Riley became a Referee for Bankruptcy Court. He died in 1951 at age 73.

Doug Ritter – Associate Judge, Montana Water Court, 2013-2018. Judge Ritter earned his law degree from University of Montana. After law school, he engaged in the private practice of law. In 1992, Judge Ritter became a senior water master for the Water Court. He has served in this capacity until 2013, when Chief Justice McGrath appointed him as Associate Water Judge. He retired from the water court in 2018.



Judge Byron L. Robb

Byron L. Robb – District Judge, 6th Judicial District, 1983-1994. Judge Robb was born May 22, 1930 in Livingston, Montana. He served in the US Army then received a BS in Business Administration and Bachelor of Laws degree from the University of Montana. He engaged in the general practice of law and served as County Attorney for Park County. Judge Robb was elected to the bench in 1982 and 1988. Wife's name is Jeanette and they are the parents of two sons and two daughters. He died in 2004 at age 74.

Joseph E. Rockwood – District Judge, 11th Judicial district, 1932-1941. Judge Rockwood was born on April 17, 1870 in Wilson County, Kansas. He married Minnie Saeger in 1897 and they had two children. He moved to Kalispell in 1901 and in 1903, was appointed City Clerk of Kalispell. In 1906, Federal Judge William Hunt appointed him Referee for US Bankruptcy Court. Judge Rockwood was elected to the Montana House of Representatives for Flathead County in 1926 and elected to the 11th Judicial District in 1932. He served two terms as district judge, retiring in 1942. Judge Rockwood died in Kalispell on May 7, 1966 at age 96.

Roy C. Rodeghiero – District Judge, 14th Judicial District, 1983-2000. Judge Rodeghiero was born on March 28, 1936 in Roundup, Montana. He received a BA in Business Administration (1958) and JD (1961) from the University of Montana. He served as a County Attorney for Musselshell and Golden Valley Counties. Judge Rodeghiero was elected to the bench in 1982 and 1988. He and his wife, Janet, are the parents of two sons and four daughters. Judge Rodeghiero died in Whitefish, Montana on October 2, 2005 at age 69.

Judge Roy C. Rodeghiero

Judge Henry G. Rodgers
Photo courtesy of the 5th Judicial State District Court.

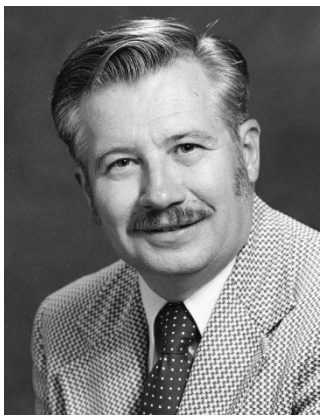
Henry Gillenwater Rodgers – District Judge, 5th Judicial District, 1925-1931 and 1937-1942. Judge Rodgers was born on July 5, 1871 in Jamesville, Illinois. He attended business school while in Illinois and attended Lincoln University. In 1894, he moved to Deer Lodge, Montana, then he moved to Helena to become a stenographer for the United States District Attorney in 1898. He served this office for 10 years while studying law. He was married to Lucy B. Adams on August 23, 1899 and they had two sons. Judge Rodgers was admitted to the Montana Bar in 1900. He later moved to Dillon, Montana to begin his private practice. In 1910, he was elected the County Attorney, serving for one term, then he appointed Dillion City Attorney in 1918, serving for six years. He was elected to represent Beaverhead County in State Legislature (1921-1924). In 1924, Judge Rodgers was elected district judge and served until he resigned in 1931. He was re-elected district judge in 1936. Lucy died in 1930 and he married Mary J. Houghton on September 10, 1931. Judge Rodgers died while serving in office on October 17, 1942, in Dillion, Montana at age 71.

Charles A. Rose – District Judge, 18th Judicial District, 1921-1928. Judge Rose was elected district judge in November 1920.

Joel G. Roth – District Judge, 8th Judicial District, 1977-1995. Judge Roth was born in Billings, Montana. He served in the US Army (1951-1953), then attended the University of Nebraska. He married Annemarie Beatty in August 1955 and they had one son. Judge Roth received a BA in Business Administration (1951) and Bachelor of Laws degree (1957) from the University of Montana. He engaged in the general practice of law and served as Deputy County Attorney for Cascade County. He was a staff attorney with the United States Securities and Exchange Commission (1964-1971); then elected to the Office of Justice of the Peace in Cascade County (1972-1976). Judge Roth was elected district judge in 1976 and served as President of the Montana Judges Association, 1989. He retired in 1995 to pursue other interests.

Judge Joel G. Roth

James M. Salansky – District Judge, 11th Judicial District, 1976-1985. Judge Salansky was born on February 4, 1927 in Great Falls, Montana. He attended Montana State University until he was drafted into the US Army in 1945. After receiving an Honorable Discharge, he completed his undergraduate work at Catholic University of America in Washington, DC, then attended Georgetown University of Law and received his law degree in 1955. While attending law school, Judge Salansky worked for Montana Senator Mike Mansfield. After receiving his law degree, he returned to Kalispell and engaged in private practice of law until his election as Flathead County Attorney in 1968, serving in this capacity for eight years. In June 1976, Judge Salansky was appointed District Judge by Governor Thomas L. Judge to fill the vacancy caused by the resignation of Robert Keller. He was elected to the post in 1976 and again in 1982 and served until his death on September 23, 1985 at age 58.



Judge James Salansky
Image from the Montana Historical Society Research Center Photograph Archives, Helena, MT.

Judge Michael Salvagni

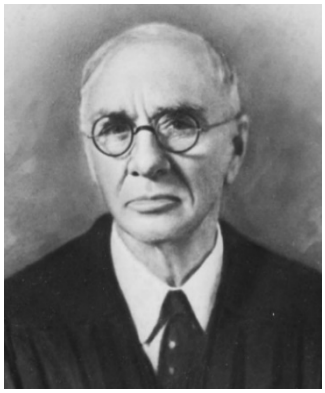
Michael Salvagni – District Judge, 18th Judicial District, 1997-2016. Judge Salvagni is a Walkerville, Montana native. He graduated from the University of Montana in 1973. He began his law career in private practice from 1973-1982. In 1982, Judge Salvagni was elected the Gallatin County Attorney, then elected three more times until 1996, when he was elected to the 18th Judicial District. Judge Salvagni retired in 2016.

Charles B. Sande – District Judge, 13th Judicial District, 1960-1979. Judge Sande graduated from law school in 1939. He practiced law in Great Falls, Montana before moving to Billings, Montana. He served in the US Army (1942-1945). Judge Sande was elected as the County Attorney in 1949 and served until 1952. In 1959, Governor Hugo Aronson appointed him to the 13th Judicial District to replace Judge Ben Harwood. He served from 1960-1979. Judge Sande is married and has three children.

Dirk M. Sandefur – Associate Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 2017-Present; District Judge, 8th Judicial District, 2002-2016. Justice Sandefur was raised in Great Falls, Montana. He originally attended the Montana Law Enforcement Academy and served as a Havre Police Officer from 1987-1990. He then went to the University of Montana Law School and graduated with his JD in 1993. Justice Sandefur spent one year in private practice before serving as Cascade County's Deputy Attorney for 8 years. In 2003, he was elected to the 8th Judicial District. In 2016, he was elected to the Montana Supreme Court. Justice Sandefur has a wife and three kids.

Justice Dirk M. Sandefur

David M. Sandler –Judge, Montana Workers' Compensation Court, 2014-Present. Judge Sandler was born and raised in Billings, Montana and received his B.S. and psychology degrees at Lewis and Clark College in Portland, Oregon, and his J.D. from University of Montana Law School in 1998. He began his law career as a clerk for Justice James C. Nelson, 1998-99. From 1999-2014, he engaged in the private practice of law. Governor Bullock appointed him judge of the Montana Workers' Compensation Court on August 20, 2014. Judge Sandler and his wife, Erika, have a daughter and a son.



Chief Justice Walter B. Sands

Walter B. Sands – Chief Justice, Montana Supreme Court 1936-1938. Justice Sands was born on January 28, 1870 at Maiden Rock, Wisconsin. He received his law degree from the State University of Minnesota in 1894. He came to Montana in fall of 1894 and was admitted to the Montana Bar in January 1895. Justice Sands immediately began the practice of law in Chinook, Montana and was active until his election as Chief Justice of the Supreme Court in 1934. He served as Chief Justice until his death on June 13, 1938.

Judge Sydney Sanner

Sydney C. Sanner – District Judge, 7th Judicial District, 1909-1913. Associate Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 1914-1918. Justice Sanner was born in Maryland on October 16, 1872. He moved to Helena, Montana when he was fifteen years old and began to study law during high school. He continued to study with Judge Henry Smith after graduation. Justice Sanner was admitted to the Montana Bar in 1894. He married Kirtlye Hill in 1901 and they had one daughter. He moved around the state quite a bit and worked in many law firms. In 1908, he was elected district judge to the 7th Judicial District and in 1913, elected Associate Justice of the Montana Supreme Court. He resigned, October 1918 after losing in a preliminary election and enlisted in the US Army's Judge Advocate General Department. Justice Sanner was honorably discharged from the army as a lieutenant colonel and worked at his law practice in Butte, Montana. He later moved to California to better serve his clients. Justice Sanner died on September 3, 1961 in Pacific Palisades, California. He was the oldest practicing attorney in the California Bar Association.

Kathy Seeley – District Judge, 1st Judicial District, 2008-Present. Judge Seeley is native of White Sulphur Springs, Montana. She received her J.D. from the University of Montana School of Law in 1983. She worked as an assistant Attorney General in 1985, and in 1996, took the position of Prosecutor for the Prosecution Services Bureau. Judge Seeley was elected to the 1st Judicial District in 2008. She and her husband, Rex, have two children.

James M. Self – District Judge, 4th Judicial District, 1921-1932. Judge Self was born in 1865. He attended the College of Montana and finished his law studies at Yale Law School, graduating from Yale and admitted to the Bar in 1891. After graduation, he returned to Phillipsburg, Montana to open a law practice. Judge Self ran for County Attorney in 1892 but was defeated in the election. He married Roena Pierce in 1898. Also, in 1898, he was appointed as Deputy County Attorney by County Attorney W. H. Trippet then elected as a Representative for Plains in 1902 and served until 1903. In 1921, Judge Self was appointed to the 4th Judicial District by Governor Joseph Dixon to succeed Judge R Lee McCulloch. He died on April 25, 1934 from cancer.

Justice Francis G. Servis

Francis G. Servis – Associate Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 1872-1875. Justice Servis was born on August 1, 1826 in Hunterdon County, New Jersey. He began his law studies in the office of Colonel J B Lewis and completed it in the office of Wilson & Church. He was admitted to the Ohio Bar in 1853. While studying the law, Justice Servis became the Clerk of the Probate Judge's office. He was elected and re-elected as Mahoning County's Prosecuting Attorney. In 1872, he was appointed to the Montana Supreme Court by President Grant to replace Judge John L Murphy. He served until 1875, when he retired and moved back to Ohio. In 1876, he was elected to as a circuit judge in Ohio. Judge Servis died on March 6, 1877 at age 50.

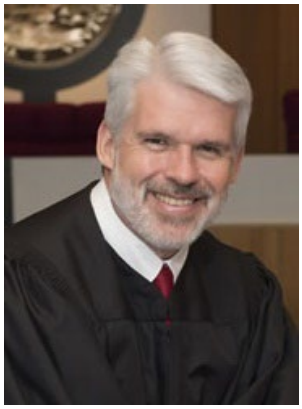
William F. Shallenberger – District Judge, 4th Judicial District, 1957-1959. Judge Shallenberger was born in Louisiana in 1917. He moved to Missoula, Montana in 1923 and graduated from the University of Montana Law School in 1939. After graduating, he engaged in the private practice of law. Judge Shallenberger was appointed as Sanders County Attorney in 1941 to replace Harold Dean. He resigned in 1948 to take over a law practice in Missoula. He was elected to the 4th Judicial District in 1956. Judge Shallenberger died while in office on July 21, 1959 in Missoula, Montana.

Jack D. Shanstrom – District Judge, 6th Judicial District, 1965-1982. Judge Shanstrom was born in Hewitt, Minnesota. He received his law degree from University of Montana Law School in 1957. He entered the United States Air Force and left with the rank of first lieutenant. During that time, he worked for the JAG Corps from 1957-1960. Judge Shanstrom engaged in private practice from 1960-1964. He was elected as Assistant City Attorney for Livingston in 1960 and worked as Park County Attorney from 1960-1965. In 1965, he was appointed to the district judge by Governor Babcock. Judge Shanstrom was then appointed as United States Magistrate Judge, 1983-1990. President George H. W. Bush nominated him to the United States District Court in 1990 to replace Judge James Battin. He retired in 2013 due to a disability.

Justice Daniel J. Shea

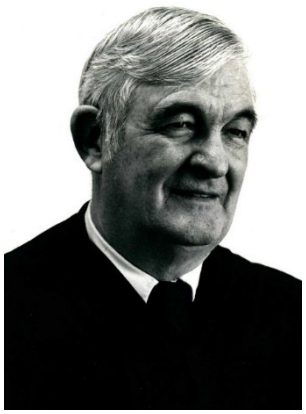
Daniel J. Shea – Associate Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 1977-1985. Justice Shea was elected to the Supreme Court in 1977.

James Jeremiah Shea – Associate Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 2014-Present; Judge, Montana Workers' Compensation Court, 2005-2014. Justice Shea was raised in Butte, Montana. He graduated with a JD from the University of Montana Law School in 1991. He began his career working as a law clerk for Federal District Judge Paul Hatfield. Justice Shea was appointed to the Workers' Compensation Court in 2005 by Governor Schweitzer. In 2014, Governor Bullock appointed him to the Supreme Court to replace Judge Brian Morris. Justice Shea and his wife, Kathy, have 2 daughters.



Justice James J. Shea

James T. Shea – District Judge, 17th Judicial District, 1949-1962. Judge Shea was born on August 9, 1891 in Anaconda, Montana. He attended Silver Bow Law School and apprenticed for law firms in Butte, Montana. He was admitted to the Bar in 1914. Judge Shea married Lilian Pierce in 1916. He practiced law in 1919 and was the publisher of the Madison County Monitor. In 1925, he was appointed as the Milk River Bank Liquidator. He was appointed to the bench on January 3, 1949 by Governor John W. Bonner to replace Judge John Hurley. Judge Shea served until he died on May 6, 1962. He was survived by his wife.



Justice John C. Sheehy

John C. Sheehy – Associate Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 1978-1991. Justice Sheehy was born on January 27, 1918 in Butte, Montana. He originally planned to work in the mines but after an accident, he decided to go to college instead. He received his Bachelor of Laws degree from the University of Montana in 1943. Justice Sheehy and his wife, Rita, were married in 1945 and had eleven children. He served as a member of the Montana House of Representatives in 1959 and 1965 and as a member of the Montana State Senate, 1969-1971. Justice Sheehy was appointed to the Montana Supreme Court on April 12, 1978 by Governor Tom Judge and served until 1991. He died in April 2017 at the age of 99.

Jeffrey Sherlock – District Judge, 1st Judicial District, 1989-2015. Judge Sherlock was born in Great Falls, Montana. He received a BA and JD from the University of Montana, then served as the Helena City Attorney. Judge Sherlock was elected to the bench November 1988. He and his wife, Melissa, have one daughter. Judge Sherlock retired in 2015.

Frank P. Showers – District Judge, 5th Judicial District, 1893-1896. Judge Showers was born in Champaign County, Ohio in August 1855. He married Louise Cralle on September 18, 1878 in Champaign County, Ohio and they had one daughter. He was admitted to the Ohio Bar in 1879 then moved to Boulder, Montana in 1889. Judge Showers was elected to the 5th Judicial District in 1892 and as County Attorney in 1910 but resigned in 1912 to take up mining. He died of exposure to cold in Jefferson County, Montana on March 9th or 10th, 1926 at age 71.

Richard Simonton – District Judge, 7th Judicial District, 1998-2017. Judge Simonton was born on July 7, 1944 in Wahpeton, North Dakota. At a young age, he wanted to be a priest, but later decided that he wanted to serve the people. He began his higher education at Dawson Community College in Glendive and finished at North Dakota State University with a Bachelor of Science. After college, he joined the Peace Corps and spent two years in Ghana. When he returned, he enrolled to University of Montana Law School and graduated with his JD in 1971. Judge Simonton began his law career in private practice until being appointed to district judge by Governor Stan Stephens in 1998. He served for 19 years, retiring in 2017. Judge Simonton died on December 26, 2017 in Glendive, Montana.

David Francis Smith – District Judge, 11th Judicial District, 1896-1904. Judge Smith was born on February 1, 1865 in Benedicta, Maine. He received his education from Ricker Classical Institute and Colby University. He originally practiced at a real estate firm but finished his schooling at Boston University Law School earning a Bachelor of Law degree in 1891. He married Miss Hattie Collins in 1892. After graduating Judge Smith moved to Columbia Falls and in 1896 moved to Kalispell. Later that year, he was elected to the 11th Judicial District to replace Judge Charles Pomeroy. He ran for Supreme Court Justice in 1904 but lost out to Judge Brantley. Judge Smith died on August 8, 1916 at age 51.

Justice Henry C. Smith

Henry Cooper Smith – District Judge, 1st Judicial District, 1896-1906; Associate Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 1907-1913. Justice Smith was born on August 3, 1862 in Fond du Lac County, Wisconsin. He studied law with the firms of Sale & Pierce and Norcross & Dinwiddie before being admitted to the Wisconsin Bar in 1885. He moved to Helena, Montana in 1888 and began practicing law. Justice Smith was elected as a district judge to the First Judicial District in 1896. In 1906, he was elected an Associate Justice of the Montana Supreme Court and served until his term expired in 1913 when he went back to practicing law. He campaigned for the 1912 Senate but was unsuccessful. He was married and had three sons. Justice Smith died on May 15, 1932 in Helena, Montana at age 69.

James Miller Smith – District Judge, 1st Judicial District, 1908-1915. Judge Smith was born on February 10, 1862 in New Brunswick, New Jersey. He graduated from Park College in Missouri and was admitted to the Montana Bar in 1890. In 1890, Governor Toole appointed him to the office of Public Notary. In 1904, Judge Smith was appointed to the office of Assistant District Attorney but resigned in 1908 to campaign for district judge. He was elected to the 1st Judicial District in 1908 but resigned in 1915 to take over the Bullard Law Practice. Judge Smith died April 28, 1934 in Dillon, Montana.

Judge Joseph C. Smith
Photo courtesy of the 5th Judicial State District Court.

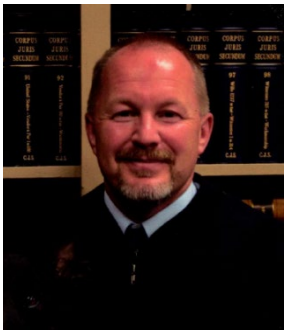
Joseph Clinton Smith – District Judge, 5th Judicial District, 1915-1924. Judge Smith was born on September 25, 1873 in Lowes, Kentucky. He graduated from Kentucky University in 1895, then moved to Montana in 1896, on the day his brother was inaugurated Governor of Montana. It was in Montana that he studied the law with his brother, Robert C. Smith, and E.L. Norris. He was admitted to practice law in Montana in 1900. Judge Smith was appointed County Attorney of Powell in 1902 and served for nine months before moving to take over the practice of E.L. Norris when he became Governor. He moved to Dillon in 1908. He married Clara Rawson in Lisbon, North Dakota on July 15, 1909 and they had two sons. Judge Smith was appointed district judge on October 11, 1915 by Governor Sam V. Stewart to fill the unexpired term of Joseph B. Poindexter, re-elected in 1916 and 1920. He resigned in 1924 to return to private practice. He died in Dillon on November 21, 1942 at age 69.

Kaydee Nicole Snipes-Ruiz – District Judge, 12th Judicial District, 2019-Present. Judge Snipes-Ruiz was born in Great Falls, Montana. She graduated from Gonzaga University with a J.D. in 2011. She began her law career in private practice before being appointed as the Regional Deputy Public Defender, 2014-2018, as well as being an Adjunct Professor for Montana State University. Judge Ruiz was appointed by Governor Steve Bullock, January 7, 2019, to fill the unexpired term of Judge Daniel A. Boucher, who resigned November 9, 2018. Judge Snipes-Ruiz and her husband have one daughter.

Judge Kaydee Snipes-Ruiz

Marvin James Sorte – District Judge, 15th Judicial District, 1969-1994. Judge Sorte was born on February 22, 1931 in Plentywood, Montana. He served in the US Air Force then received a BA in Political Science and History and Bachelor of Laws degree from the University of Montana in 1960. Judge Sorte engaged in the general practice of law and served as Assistant County Attorney and Assistant Attorney General. He was appointed to the bench August 1, 1969 by Governor Forrest H. Anderson. His wife's name is Anne and they have one daughter. He was President of the Montana Judges Association in 1981. Judge Sorte died August 2, 1996 in Missoula, Montana.

Rod Souza – District Judge, 13th Judicial District, 2015-Present. Judge Souza is a Billings native. He received his J.D. from the University of Montana Law School in 1999. He began as the Deputy Yellowstone County Attorney, 1999-2014. In 2014, Judge Souza was elected to the Thirteenth District to replace Judge G. Todd Baugh. He and his wife, Brittney, have three children.



Judge Randal Spaulding

Randal I. Spaulding – District Judge, 14th Judicial District, 2001-Present. Judge Spaulding was born in Circle, Montana. He received his Associates degree for Law Enforcement and a bachelor's degree for Criminal Justice from Minot State University. He also received his J.D. from University of Montana Law School in 1993. Judge Spaulding served as Musselshell/Golden County Attorney from 1998-2000. He was elected to office in 1999 and, at the time, was the youngest district judge. He married his wife, Wanda, in 1988.

Judge William G. Speare

William James Speare – District Judge, 13th Judicial District, 1979-1994. Judge Speare was born on February 14, 1929 in Sioux City Iowa and came to Montana two months later. He served in the US Air Force in the Judge Advocate General Corps then attended Montana State University. He earned a Bachelor of Laws degree from the University of Montana. After graduation, Judge Speare engaged in the general practice of law. He served as County Attorney for Yellowstone County 1959-1965 and in the Montana House of Representatives 1969-1971. He was appointed to the bench in October 1979 by Governor Forrest H. Anderson, reelected in 1982 and 1988. Judge Speare retired in 1994. His wife's name is Shirley and they are the parents of one son and two daughters. He died on July 12, 2010 in Billings, Montana.

James Walter Speer – District Judge, 8th Judicial District, 1948-1956. Judge Speer was born February 25, 1871 in Hanover, Illinois. He graduated from Dixon Law School in 1900. Later that year, he moved to Montana and began practicing law. Judge Speer served as Cascade County Attorney from 1907-1908 and Mayor of Great Falls in 1911-1913. He also served four years on the State Senate. He was appointed to the 8th Judicial District in January 1948 by Governor Sam C. Ford. Judge Speer retired in 1956 at the age of 85. He died August 25, 1961 at the age of 90.

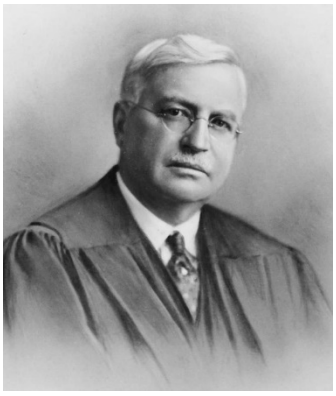
William O. Speer – District Judge, 2nd Judicial District, 1893-1896. Judge Speer was born on August 26, 1846 in Butler County, Pennsylvania. He learned about the law apprenticing for the law firm Brown and Campbell of Davenport, Iowa. He was admitted to the Iowa Bar in 1874. In 1880, Judge Speer moved to Butte, Montana and took part in the formation of Silver Bow County. He was elected to the Montana Legislature in 1884, acting as the Chairman to the Judiciary Committee. He was the Butte City Attorney, 1887-1889. In 1890, Judge Speer was appointed as the Superintendent to the Census, as well as being admitted to the Montana Bar. In 1892, he was elected as district judge to the 2nd Judicial District and served until 1896. He died on February 26, 1924 at age 77.

A. C. Spencer – District Judge, 13th Judicial District, 1915-1924. Judge Spencer was born on March 18, 1877 in White Sulphur Springs, Montana. He graduated from Ann Arbor Law School in 1902. He married Emma Johnson on July 17, 1915 and began his career practicing law from Red Lodge. In 1915, Judge Spencer was appointed to the 13th Judicial District by Governor Stewart. He retired in 1924 to move to Los Angeles, California. He died in 1930 in Los Angeles, California.

Stewart Stadler – District Judge, 11th Judicial District, 2000-2012. Judge Stadler was born and raised in Butte, Montana. He graduated from the University of Montana Law School in 1973. He served 14 months as an infantryman during the Vietnam War. In 1985, Judge Stadler was elected Justice of the Peace to replace Judge George Shay. He served 15 years in this capacity until Governor Marc Racicot appointed him to District Judge for the Eleventh Judicial District; he retired in 2012.

Justice Albert P. Stark

Albert P. Stark – District Judge, 6th Judicial District, 1913-1922; Associate Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 1923-1928. Justice Stark was born on August 11, 1863 at Stark's Corner, Cass County, Michigan. He graduated from Albion College, Albion, Michigan in 1889 and taught school for one year. He then entered the law office of Judge C.A. Withey at Reed City, Michigan to finish his law course. He was admitted to the bar in Michigan in 1891 and remained in the office of Judge Withey until he moved to Livingston, Montana in 1892. Justice Stark served two years as Livingston City Attorney and was the County Attorney of Park County for four years, 1903-1906. In 1912, he was elected District Judge for the 6th Judicial District. Justice Stark served ten years as District Judge until his election as Justice of the Montana Supreme Court in 1922. After the completion of his term as Justice of the Montana Supreme Court, he moved to Kirkland, Washington where he lived until his death on May 5, 1938 at the age of 75.



Justice Sam V. Stewart

Sam V. Stewart – Associate Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 1933-1939. Justice Stewart was born on August 2, 1872 in Monroe County, Ohio. He received his law degree for the State University at Lawrence, Kansas in 1898 and came to Montana on July 5, 1899 to begin the practice of law in Virginia city, Montana. While there, Justice Stewart served three terms as City Attorney and two terms as County Attorney of Madison County. His brother W. R. C. Stewart served as a District Judge for the Ninth Judicial District, 1901-1913 (below). In 1912, he was elected Governor of the State of Montana and served two terms in that office. After completion of his two terms as Governor, Justice Stewart returned to the private practice of law in Helena and in 1930 was elected to the Montana House of Representatives. In 1932, Justice Stark was elected Justice of the Montana Supreme Court as a Democrat and in 1938 he was re-elected Justice on the new non-partisan judicial ballot. He died on September 15, 1939 in Helena, Montana at age 67.

Sid G. Stewart – District Judge, 3rd Judicial District, 1958-1972. Judge Stewart was born in Anaconda, Montana on July 3, 1907. He graduated from the Montana State University Law School in 1930 was the first president of the Montana State University Endowment Foundation. Judge Stewart served as a state senator, 1943-1946. Governor J. Hugo Aronson appointed him to the Third Judicial District in 1958. Judge Stewart died on December 19, 1973 in Missoula, Montana.

William Ross Carle Stewart – District Judge, 9th Judicial District, 1903-1913. Judge Stewart was born on March 21, 1866 in Monroe County, Ohio. He moved to Kansas and then Missouri when he was sixteen years old. In 1892, he moved to Bozeman, Montana to practice law with Luce & Luce. Judge Stewart was admitted to the Montana Bar in 1894. He married Ethel M. Armstrong on May 17, 1894 in Kansas City, Missouri. In 1898, he was elected County Attorney for Gallatin County and served for two years. He ran unsuccessfully for Attorney General in 1900. Governor J.K. Toole appointed Judge Stewart to the District Judge in 1902 to replace Judge W.L. Holloway. He died on July 5, 1926.

Farrand Ebenezer Stranahan – District Judge, 12th Judicial District, 1929-1932. Judge Stranahan was born on August 11, 1860 in California. He was a farmer, lawyer, and banker. He was the first to experiment with electricity to aid irrigation, as well as serve as president of Stockmen's National Bank. He served several terms as Mayor of Fort Benton, Montana. He received his Bachelor of Laws degree from Hastings College in 1882 and practiced law for ten years. In 1892, Judge Stranahan moved to Helena, Montana and began to practice law. In 1895, he married Ella Goodwin and in 1900, they moved to Fort Benton. He was president of Stockmen's National Bank from 1919 until they closed. He was appointed to the 12th Judicial District in August of 1929 by Gov. J. E. Erickson to finish the tern for Judge Charles S. Hartman. Judge Stranahan is the last judge for the old 12th Judicial District before it was absorbed by the 8th Judicial District. He died on November 19, 1940.

Robert C. Strong – District Judge, 13th Judicial District, 1921-1936. Judge Strong was born in 1880 in Nebraska. He graduated from the University of Nebraska law school in 1904 and moved to Montana in 1908. He served as County Attorney from 1912-1921. Judge Strong was elected to the 13th Judicial District in 1920, retiring in 1936. Judge Strong died on November 14, 1945 in a car accident.

Mark P. Sullivan – District Judge, 2nd Judicial District, 1980-1994. Judge Sullivan was born in Great Falls, Montana. He received a BA in Business Administration and JD from Georgetown University. He served in the US Marine Corps, then engaged in the general practice of law. Judge Sullivan served as County Attorney for Silver Bow County before being appointed to the bench in October 1980 and was reelected in 1982, 1988. He is the father of two sons and two daughters.

William Nels Swandal – District Judge, 6th Judicial District, 1995-2012. Judge Swandal was born in Livingston, Montana. He graduated from the University of Montana Law School and was admitted to the Bar in 1978. He served in the United States Army Judge Advocate General Corps. He then spent seven years in the United States Army Reserves and another twenty years in the Army National Guard, finally retiring as a Colonel. Judge Swandal served as the Park County Attorney, 1983-1994. He was elected to the 6th Judicial District in 1995. In 2010, he ran unsuccessfully for the Supreme Court to replace Justice Leaphart. Judge Swandal retired from the bench at the end of 2012 and returned to practicing law. He has served on the Montana State Senate from 2015-2019.

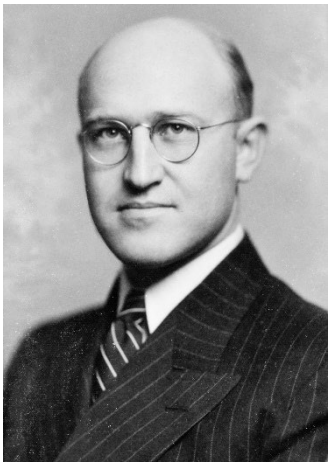
Robert C. Sykes – District Judge, 11th Judicial District, 1967-1983. Judge Sykes was born in Spokane, Washington on February 24, 1919. He served as a Second Lieutenant to the USAAC MAC [the United States Army Air Force -- Mediterranean Air Command], 1942-1946. He received his Bachelor of Laws degree from the University of Montana in 1947. Judge Sykes served as a member of the Montana House of Representatives from 1951-1955. He was later appointed by Governor Thomas L. Judge on August 23, 1967 to succeed Frank I. Haswell, who was appointed to the Montana Supreme Court. He served until December 31, 1982.

Justice George G. Symes

George G. Symes – Associate Justice, Montana Territory Supreme Court, 1869-1871. Justice Symes was born in Ashtabula County, Ohio on April 28, 1840. He enlisted in the Northern Army during the Civil War. He started as private in 1861 but rose to Colonel in the four years that he served. President Grant appointed Justice Symes as an Associate Justice to the Supreme Court in 1869 to replace Justice Lyman Munson. He resigned in 1870 to begin practicing law. In 1880, Justice Symes moved to Denver to practice law. He was elected to the Denver Congress in 1879 and served one term. He died on November 3, 1893. He was married, and they had one daughter.

John W. Tattan – District Judge, 12th Judicial District, 1901-1926. Judge Tattan was born on May 27, 1849 in Middleton, County Cork, Ireland. He came to the United States when he was 18 years old to follow an Engineering profession. In 1870, he was enlisted in the US Army as a private at Fort Shaw. Judge Tattan was elected as a probate judge in in Fort Benton, Montana in 1875 and admitted to the Montana bar in 1877. In 1899, John Tattan was elected as County Attorney. He was appointed district judge by Governor Robert Burns Smith on August 15, 1900 when Judge Dudley Dubois retired. He was later appointed by Governor Joseph K. Toole to the newly created seat on February 25, 1901. In 1905, Henry Winters, a disgruntled Steer rancher, attempted to assassinate Judge Tattan and the stock inspector, but failed. He continued as district judge until his death in Fort Benton on December 29, 1926. Judge Tattan was married and they had one son.

Charles A. Taylor – District Judge, 13th Judicial District, 1917-1920. Judge Taylor was born on February 17, 1880 in Ohio. He was elected to the 13th Judicial District in November 1916 but died August 29, 1924 at 44 years of age.



Judge William Taylor
Image from the Montana Historical Society Research Center Photograph Archives, Helena, MT.

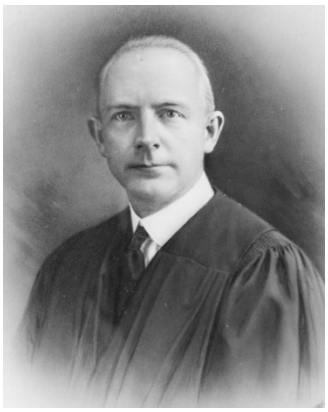
William R. Taylor – District Judge, 3rd Judicial District, 1943-1958. Judge Taylor was born around 1908. He graduated from Montana State University law school. He served as County Attorney in 1935 and a state senator in 1941 and 1943. Judge Taylor resigned in 1958 to return to practicing law. He was succeeded by Judge Sid Stewart. He died in 1981.

Rudolph von Tobel – District Judge, 10th Judicial District, 1921-1924. Judge von Tobel was born in Auburn, New York on Feb. 13, 1855. As a child his family moved around a lot, first to Paris, Ontario and then to Buffalo, New York and finally in 1870 to Stacyville, Iowa. He received his AB degree from Carlton College in Northfield, Minnesota in 1881. He then studied law in Northfield, Minnesota until he moved to Helena, Montana and was admitted to the Bar in 1883. He married Anna Theresa Zillsch in 1888 and they had four girls and a boy. Judge von Tobel was a member of the Fourth Montana Legislative Assembly in 1895. In 1900, he ran for a position as Associate Justice in the Supreme Court but was defeated. He was elected to the Tenth Judicial District in 1920. Judge Tobel died on May 12, 1935.

Bernard W. Thomas – District Judge, 12th Judicial District, 1967-1983. Judge Thomas was born on January 26, 1915 in Terry, Montana. He received a Bachelor of Laws degree from the University of Montana in 1940 then engaged in the general practice of law. He served in the US Navy, 1942-46 reaching the rank of Lieutenant. Judge Thomas was the Blaine County Attorney from 1951-1957 and served as a member of the Montana House of Representatives, 1957-1959. He was appointed October 1, 1967 by Governor Tim Babcock to fill the unexpired term of Charles B. Elwell. He retired from District Court on January 3, 1983 but remained active as senior-status judge and as a Water Judge for many years after 1980. His wife's name is Elise and they have five sons and one daughter. Judge Thomas died on January 6, 2004.

T. A. Thompson – District Judge, 11th Judicial District, 1915-1920. Judge Thompson was born at Long Lake, Minnesota on March 25, 1879. He received his J.D. degree from the University of North Dakota. In 1909, he moved to Kalispell and started a general law practice. Judge Thompson was appointed to office of Attorney of Flathead County, then appointed to district court on March 1, 1915 by Governor Sam V. Stewart to fill the unexpired term of John E. Erickson. Judge Thompson resigned on August 31, 1920. He married Maud Longfellow and had two children. He moved with his family to North Dakota where he held extensive lands. He died on May 24, 1922 of heart failure at age 43.

Gregory R. Todd – District Judge, 13th Judicial District, 2000-Present. Judge Todd received his J.D. from the University of Montana in 1977. He served as deputy Gallatin County Attorney from 1977 to 1980. He later joined a private law firm. Judge Todd was appointed to the 13th Judicial District by Governor Marc Racicot to replace Judge Maurice Colberg, Jr.

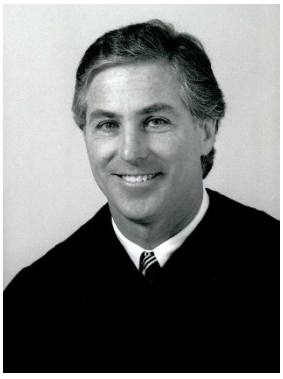


Justice E. Warren Toole

E. Warren Toole – Associate Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 1926-1927. Justice Toole was born on July 5, 1893 in Helena, Montana. He was the son of Joseph K. Toole who served three terms as Governor of the State of Montana. He graduated from Yale University in 1914 and received his JD from Stanford in 1917. He was admitted to the Montana Bar in 1917 and began the practice of law with the firm of Pray (later Federal District Judge) and Callaway (later Chief Justice of the Montana Supreme Court). His practice was interrupted by service in the US Army in World War I. He was discharged with the rank of lieutenant on December 31, 1918 and resumed his law practice. In 1926, Justice Toole was appointed to the Montana Supreme Court to fill the unexpired term of William L. Holloway who died and served until January 3, 1927. After leaving the bench, he moved to Great Falls, Montana and formed a legal partnership with former Governor Roy E. Ayers. He served as City Attorney for the City of Great Falls for seven years. He was elected to the legislature in 1940. Justice Toole was appointed Clerk of the Federal District Court in 1955 and served in that position until 1959 when Judge Murray name him chief US probate officer. He retired in 1965. Judge Toole died on March 8, 1972 in Great Falls at age 78.

Karen Townsend – District Judge, 4th Judicial District, 2010-2019. Judge Townsend received her B.A. from Ohio Wesleyan University in 1964, her M.A. from the University of California in 1965, and her J.D. from the University of Montana School of Law in 1976. From 1976-1998, she served in many positions, including Chief Staff Attorney, Special Assistant to U.S. Attorney, and Chief Deputy Missoula County Attorney, 1998-2006. Prior to her election, she served as a substitute judge for Missoula Municipal Court and Missoula County's Justice of the Peace. In 2010, Judge Townsend was elected to the Fourth District Circuit replacing Judge Douglas Harkin. She was the first woman elected as a district court judge in Missoula County. She was re-elected in 2016. She retired on August 30, 2019.

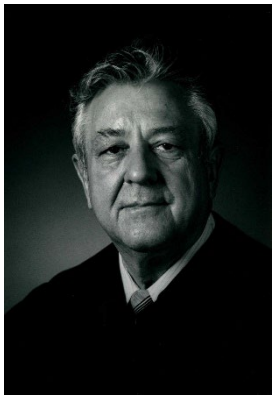
Judge Karen Townsend



Justice Terry Trieweiler

Terry Trieweiler – Associate Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 1991-2003. Justice Trieweiler was born on March 21, 1948 in Dubuque, Iowa. He graduated in 1972 from Drake University School of Law and later moved to Montana to begin a law practice. Justice Trieweiler was elected to the Supreme Court in 1990 and re-elected in 1998. He campaigned twice unsuccessfully to become Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. In 2003, he stepped down from the bench to return to his passion as a trial attorney.

Loren Tucker – District Judge, 5th Judicial District, 2000-2017. Judge Tucker was born in Iowa. He received his BS degree from the University of Iowa in 1969 and his J.D. from the University of Minnesota in 1972 moving to Montana in 1975. Judge Tucker spent twenty years working as a Madison County attorney. In 2000, He was elected as district judge to the Fifth District and retired from the bench in 2017. He continues to be a Water Court Judge. His wife's name is MaryAnn and they have three children.



Chief Justice Jean A. Turnage

Jean Allen Turnage – Chief Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 1985-2001. Justice Turnage was born in St. Ignatius, Montana, on March 10, 1926 as a member of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes. He served in the U.S. Air Corps from 1944-1946 and received his law degree from the University of Montana in 1951. He married Eula Mea in 1952 and they had a daughter and son together. Justice Turnage served as the Lake County Attorney from 1953-1962 then was elected to the Montana House of Representatives in 1962 and served in the Montana State Senate in 1964-1985. He was elected Chief Justice of the Montana Supreme Court in the Fall of 1984 and served until 2000. Justice Turnage died at age 89 on September 27, 2015.

Heidi J. Ulbricht – District Judge, 11th Judicial District, 2012-Present. Judge Ulbricht grew up in Boise, Idaho. She received her J.D. from the University of Idaho in 1988 and moved to Montana in 1992. She served 16 years as a municipal judge in Kalispell, 1996-2012. In 2012, Judge Ulbricht was elected to the 11th Judicial District, replacing Judge Stewart Stadler.

Frank Noah Utter – District Judge, 12th Judicial District, 1911-1915; District Judge 17th Judicial District, 1915-1917. Judge Utter was born in 1871. Governor Edwin L Norris appointed him to the newly created second judgeship in 1911. Governor Sam V Stewart later appointed him to the newly created 17th Judicial District in 1915. He later married Margaret Hawkins on August 25, 1915. Frank Utter was a lawyer, jurist, and banker for Havre. He died on December 23, 1924 in Lafayette, Indiana.

Shane Anthony Vannatta – District Judge, 4th Judicial District, 2019-Present. Judge Vannatta was born in Bainville, Montana. He graduated from the University of Montana with a BA in Political Science in 1990 and with his JD in 1993. Judge Vannatta worked as the Justice of the Peace *pro tem* for Missoula County Justice Court, 2001-2019 and served as president of the Montana Bar Association, 2011-2012. He was appointed district judge by Governor Steve Bullock on February 8, 2019.

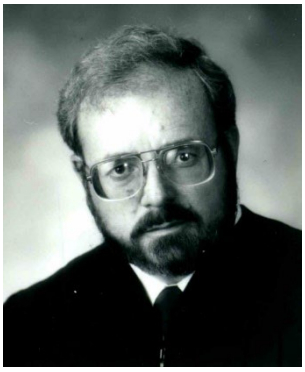
Judge Shane A. Vannatta

Chief Justice Decius S. Wade

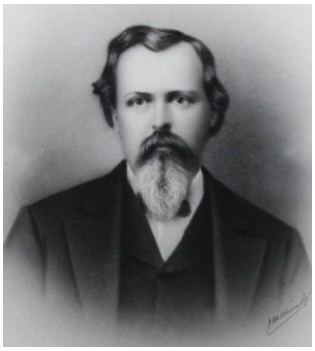
Decius S. Wade – Chief Justice, Montana Territorial Supreme Court, March 17, 1871 - May 2, 1887. Justice Wade was born in Andover, Ohio January 23, 1835. He was educated in the public schools in Andover, Ohio and graduated from Kingsville Academy. At the age of sixteen, he began to teach. During the six years he taught school, under the supervision of his uncle Senator Benjamin F. Wade, he read the law and was admitted to the bar in September 1857. Justice Wade practiced law in Jefferson, Ohio until 1860 when at the age of twenty-five years, he was elected Probate Judge of Ashtabula County and served in this capacity for seven years. In 1869, he was elected to the Ohio State Senate and served two terms. During his service as State Senator, he was appointed Chief Justice of the Montana Territory by President Grant. He was reappointed by Presidents: Grant, Hayes, and Arthur. He was the only Territorial Chief Justice to serve four consecutive terms. Upon his retirement from the bench, Justice Wade practiced law in Helena until the spring of 1890 when he was appointed Chairman of the Commission appointed to codify the laws of Montana. After two years, the Commission produced a Civil Code, a Code of Civil Procedure, A Penal Code, and a Political code. At the completion of the work of the Commission, Justice Wade continued the practice of law in Helena. He died on August 4, 1905.

Matthew J. Wald – District Judge, 22nd Judicial District, 2019-Present. Judge Wald graduated from the University of Montana, Law School and was admitted to the State Bar in 1993. He started his career working as a law clerk for Judge Blair Jones for 2 years. In 2018, he replaced Judge Jones when he was elected to the 22nd District.

John Warner – Associate Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 2003-2009; District Judge, 12th Judicial District, 1989-2003. Justice Warner was born in Great Falls, Montana. He attended the College of Great Falls, received a BA in History and Political Science and a Bachelor of Laws degree from the University of Montana in 1967. He served as District Delegate, Montana Officials Association; Past President of the 12th Judicial Bar Association; Past President of the State Bar of Montana. Justice Warner was elected to the 12th Judicial District in 1988, serving until his appointment to the Montana Supreme Court in May 2003. His wife's name is Katherine and they are the parents of three sons and three daughters.



Justice John Warner



Chief Justice Henry L. Warren

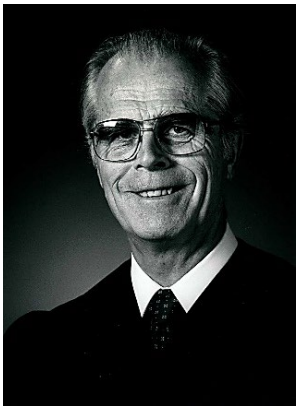
Henry L. Warren – Chief Justice, Montana Territory Supreme Court, 1868-1871. Justice Warren was born in Quincy, Illinois in 1837. He attended the Naval Academy in Annapolis and Brown University and was admitted to the Bar in Missouri in 1858. During the Civil War, Justice Warren was elected as a member of the Illinois State Legislature. In 1865, President Andrew Johnson appointed him as the second Chief Justice of the Montana Territorial Supreme Court, replacing Justice Hosmer. He served the Supreme Court for 4 years before retiring and moving to Santa Fe, New Mexico. He had one son. Justice Warren died in 1900 in Albuquerque, New Mexico at age 63.

Judge Susan P. Watters
Photo courtesy of the United States District Court of Montana.

Susan Pamela Watters – Federal Judge, US District of Montana, 2013-Present; District Judge, Thirteenth Judicial District, 1998-2013. Judge Watters was raised in Billings, Montana. She completed her Undergraduate studies at MSU-Billings and completed her JD at the University of Montana School of Law in 1988. After graduating, she worked as a law clerk for Judge Diane Barz, 1988-1989. She then worked for Yellowstone's County Attorney's Office, 1989-1995. Judge Watters was elected as the 13th Judicial District judge in 1998 replacing Judge Richard Cebull. She served until 2013, when President Obama nominated Judge Watters for the United States District Judge for the District of Montana. This nomination made Judge Watters the first female judge to serve the district of Montana.

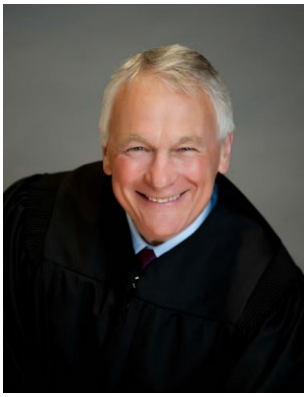
Frederick V. Watts – District Judge, 14th Judicial District, 1944-1959. Judge Watts was born on January 23, 1889 in Butler Center, Iowa. He graduated from Drake University in 1908. Judge Watts married Sara Tregloan on June 28, 1910. They moved to Roundup, Montana in 1928. He served as County Attorney from 1933-1939. He resigned as District Judge on December 9, 1959. Judge Watts died on April 21, 1970 in Roundup, Montana.

Fred J. Weber – Associate Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 1981-1995. Justice Weber was born in Deer Lodge, Montana in 1919. He received his BA and JD degrees from the University of Montana and served in the infantry in World War II. Justice Weber engaged in the private practice of law in Havre, Montana, 197-1980 until being elected to the Montana Supreme Court in 1980. His wife's name is Phyllis and they have one daughter and three sons.



Justice Fred J. Weber

Frederick C. Webster – District Judge, 4th Judicial District, 1900-1913. Judge Webster was born on October 17, 1850 in Litchfield, Connecticut. He studied at Yale for legal coursework and practiced law in Connecticut, and Minnesota. In 1880, he was elected City Attorney in Grand Junction, Colorado. From 1888-1892, Judge Webster served as Missoula's County Attorney. He practiced law with Frank Woody, a previous Mayor of Missoula. F.C. Webster was elected Missoula's 13th mayor but resigned in 1900 when he was elected judge for the Fourth Judicial District. He served for 12 years. After retiring from the bench, he served for two years as county attorney. Judge Webster died in Missoula, Montana on June 14, 1927 at age 77.



Justice Michael E. Wheat

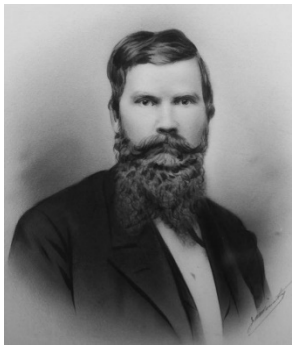
Michael E. Wheat – Associate Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 2010-2017. Justice Wheat was born in Spokane, Washington. He served in the United States Marine Corp during the Vietnam war, 1968-1969 and was awarded the Purple Heart for his service. Michael Wheat received his law degree in 1978 from the University of Montana and was admitted to the Bar in 1978. After graduation, he worked as Deputy County Attorney, until 1981 when he went into private practice. In 2002, Justice Wheat was elected to the Montana State Senate and served twice, 2003 and 2005, serving on the Judiciary Committee, Local Government, and Natural Resources Committees. Governor Steve Bullock appointed him to the Supreme Court in 2010 to replace Justice John Warner. He campaigned for the rest of the term and was elected to office in 2010 and was re-elected in 2014. Justice Wheat retired from the bench in 2017.

James B. Wheelis – District Judge, 4th Judicial District, 1979-1989; District Judge, 19th Judicial District, 2010-2016. Judge Wheelis was born in Childress, Texas. Attended the University of Alabama and received an BA from Harvard University in 1966 and a JD from the University of Texas in 1971. Before moving to Montana, he lived in many places, such as Canada, Nurnberg, Germany, New Orleans, and Cambridge. In 1973, he moved to Montana and was admitted to the bar. Judge Wheelis served as County Attorney and in the Attorney General's office. He was appointed to the 4th Judicial District by Governor Thomas L. Judge to fill the unexpired term of Edward T. Dussault on November 13, 1978. Judge Wheelis resigned February 3, 1989. After retiring from the bench, he moved to Seattle to work in arbitration, moving back to Montana. He practiced law in a private firm, Montana Legal Services Association, public defender, and county attorney. In 1998, Judge Wheelis worked in the Attorney General's office. He was again elected to the 19th Judicial District in 2010 and served from 2011 until 2017 when he retired after serving a term.

John 'Jack' W. Whelan – District Judge, 2nd Judicial District, 1995-2006. Judge Whelan was born in Townsend, Massachusetts. He served for a time in the Marines. Judge Whelan received his Bachelor of Laws from the University of Montana in 1965. He was elected to the 2nd Judicial District in 1994 and served until 2006 when he retired. Judge Whelan and his wife, Roberta, have six children. He also served as a part-time United States Magistrate Judge in Butte, Montana for 10 years.

Robert J. Whelan – District Judge, 2nd Judicial District, 2019-Present. Judge Whelan graduated from the University of Montana, School of Law in 1993. He was an attorney for 25 years before being elected to be judge for the Second District in 2018. Whelan was sworn in by his father, John J. Whelan, who was also a district judge for the Second Judicial District. He and his wife, Lana, of 24 years have two sons.

Lorenzo Parsons Williston – Associate Justice of the Montana Territory Supreme Court, 1864-1868. Justice Williston was born in Binghampton, New York in August 1815. He studied law from his father. In 1856, he was elected to Pennsylvania's Lower House of the Legislature, where he served as a member for four years. On March 27, 1861, President Abraham Lincoln appointed Justice Williston to Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of Dakota. In 1864, President Lincoln appointed him Associate Justice of the first Supreme Court of Montana. He served in Montana until 1868 when he retired and moved back to Pennsylvania. He was married and had four children. Judge Williston died in Pennsylvania on May 22, 1887 at age 72.



Justice Lorenzo P. Williston

Judge Dan Wilson.

Dan Wilson – District Judge, 11th Judicial District, 2017-Present. Judge Wilson was raised in Billings, Montana. He graduated from the University of Minnesota's law school in 1993. He served as Deputy Count Attorney in Great Falls and then became Chief Prosecutor in Chinook. In 2011, Judge Wilson was elected as Justice of the Peace in Kalispell and then replaced Judge David Ortley as district judge for the 11th Judicial District.

Judge Kenneth R. Wilson

Kenneth R. Wilson – District Judge, 16th Judicial District, 1989-1997. Judge Wilson served in the US Air Force. He received a BA in History from Clark University and a Bachelor of Laws degree from Montana State University. Judge Wilson was engaged in the general practice of law and served as Deputy County Attorney for Miles City. He was elected to the bench in 1988 and served until 1997. His wife's name is Joan and they are the parents of two sons and two daughters.

Judge Robert H. Wilson

Robert H. Wilson – District Judge, 13th Judicial District, 1969-1984. Judge Wilson was born in Missoula, Montana. He received a BA from the University of Montana, 1951, a BS from the University of Montana, 1952 and a Bachelor of Laws degree from the University of Montana, 1953. He served as a First Lieutenant in the US Air Force, 1954-1956. Judge Wilson was the Big Horn County Attorney, 1963-1967 and served as a judge for the Tribal Court on the Cheyenne Indian Reservation. He was appointed District Judge by Governor Forrest H. Anderson to fill the unexpired term of Ernest E. Fenton. Judge Wilson retired in February 1984.

George B. Winston – District Judge, 3rd Judicial district, 1904-1932. Judge Winston was born on October 9, 1861 in Jefferson City, Missouri. He was Anaconda's first city attorney and clerk and is credited with being one of the authors of the 1889 Montana State Constitution. Judge Winston was elected to the 3rd Judicial District in 1904 and retired in 1932. He died on August 17, 1936 in Butte, Montana.

Frank H. Woody – District Judge, 4th Judicial District, 1894-1900. Judge Woody was born on December 10, 1833 in Chatham County, North Carolina. He received his schooling in 1851 from New Garden Boarding School (later called Guilford College). He was a teacher before he decided to move out west and helped to discover Missoula in 1856. In 1866, Judge Woody was appointed as a clerk and recorder, as well as being appointed as a Probate Judge. He also spent eight years as a deputy clerk for the Second judicial district court of Missoula County. Judge Woody married Lizzy Countryman in 1871 and had one son and three daughters. He continued in this position until 1880 when he refused to continue. In 1877, Frank Woody was admitted to Montana Bar as Missoula's first attorney. He became Missoula's first mayor on April 19, 1883 and served for 13 months. In 1892, Judge Woody was elected to the office of District Judge and was re-elected in 1896. He died on December 16, 1916 at age 83.

Justice Robert L. Word

Robert Lee Word – Associate Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 1900-1901; District Judge, 1st Judicial District, 1915-1920. Justice Word was born on June 22, 1866 in Virginia City Territory. In 1891, he graduated from Columbia Law School. Before finishing law school, Justice Word was admitted to the Montana Bar in 1890. He served as Clerk of the Court from 1887-1889 and then succeeded Judge Hunt on June 4, 1900 and served as an Associate Justice until 1901. He married Augusta Jones, in 1900; they had three children. He was appointed to be District Judge of the 1st judicial district on August 7, 1915 by Governor Sam V. Stewart to fill the unexpired term of J. Miller Smith. Justice Word died on March 21, 1945 at age 79.

The Montana Supreme Court

History, 1864 – Present

The Territory of Montana was organized by an act of Congress, May 26, 1864[2]. That act vested the judicial power of the territory in a Supreme Court, District Courts, Probate Courts and Justice of the Peace Courts. The Supreme Court consisted of one chief justice and two associate justices[3].

The first term of the Supreme Court of the Territory of Montana was held in Virginia City on May 17, 1865[4]. Hezekiah L. Hosmer was appointed as the first Chief Justice by President Abraham Lincoln on June 30, 1864[5]. On June 15, 1864, Lorenzo P. Williston and Ammi Giddings were nominated as Associate Justices of Montana[6]. Ammi Giddings declined to serve and never came to Montana, but his commission remained in force until March 11, 1865, when Lyman E. Munson was appointed to replace him[7].

In the territorial period of Montana, Justices of the Supreme Court each presided over one of the territory's judicial districts. This arrangement meant that when a case was appealed to the supreme court, one of the Justices personally had tried the case previously[8]. Congress changed this system in July of 1886 by provided for the appointment of a fourth justice and provided for disqualification on appeal of the justice who had tried the case previously[9].

In the initial years of the Court, decisions were rarely given in writing. The Montana Territorial Legislature changed that in January 1872 by providing for written reporting of the Supreme Court's decisions[10].

The July 1889 term of the Territorial Supreme Court was the last term held before Montana became a state on November 8, 1889[11]. When the Territorial Supreme Court adjourned sine die on October 5, 1889, the Territorial period ended, and the modern era of statehood began.

Statehood brought several changes to Montana's Judicial System. During Territorial days, Justices and District Court Judges were appointed by the President of the United States. After 1889, Montanans turned to a system where they elected justices, district, and local judges, and judicial officers. They hoped thereby to encourage "more prompt and accessible administration of justice[12]." Justices, district judges and local judges were elected on a partisan ballot until 1909 when a brief and largely forgotten experiment in nonpartisan judicial elections was established[13]. This law was enacted with only one opposing vote in the closing days of the 1909 session. The law prohibited partisan filings by judicial candidates and required their nomination by citizen petition. 1910 was an "off" year for judicial elections; only the Chief Justice

[2] Organic Act of the Territory of Montana, May 28, 1864.
[3] Organic Act of the Territory of Montana, May 28, 1864, section 9.
[4] A History of Montana by Helen F. Sanders, 1913, Page 581.
[5] Presidential appointment paper, June 30, 1864. Montana memory project. Hezekiah L. Hosmer papers, 1848-1870.
[6] Journal of the Executive Proceedings of the Senate of the United States of America. Vol. 13.
[7] A History of Montana by Helen F. Sanders, 1913, Page 582.
[8] A History of Montana by Helen F. Sanders, 1913, Page 584.
[9] United States Statutes-at-large. Vol. 24, session 1. Ch. 759. July 10, 1886.
[10] Reports of cases argued and determined in the Supreme Court of Montana Territory, vol.1, 1873
[11] Montana: The Land and the People by George Raymer, 1930, Page 363.
[12] Montana: The Land and the People by George Raymer, 1930, Page 363.
[13] Laws of Montana, 1910, Chapter 113.

and two District Judges were to be chosen. Chief Justice Brantly, known as a populist Republican, won a third term receiving 39% of the votes in a field of four candidates[14].

Voters evidently missed party labels since the total vote cast in the 1910 nonpartisan contest was notably small. Fewer than half of those who voted for Clerk of the Supreme Court on the partisan ballot voted for the Chief Justice on the nonpartisan ballot[15]. The experiment was terminated in 1911 when the Supreme Court, on the complaint of a Republican candidate for Butte Police Judge, held the legislation unconstitutional[16]. The 1935 the legislature again made judicial elections nonpartisan[17] but the effect on voter participation was not so dramatic as in the one-election experiment in 1910.

Article VIII of the 1889 Constitution established a three-member Supreme Court with members elected to six-year terms. During the first three decades of statehood, the Supreme Court had three justices, but the caseload required additional resources to keep current. The 1903 Legislature provided for the appointment by the Supreme Court of a three-member Court Commission to assist the Court. The commissioners were paid a salary of $4,000 annually for this work. The term of office for the Court Commission was four years, during which time they were prohibited from engaging in the practice of law.[18] The commission worked hard and in two years had cleared the Supreme Court's backlog and in April 1905 the commission was discharged[19].

The 1919 Legislature increased the membership on the Supreme Court to five members[20]. In 1921, the Legislature approved the second Court Commission and directed the Supreme Court to appoint three members from among elected District Judges to serve as commissioners of the Supreme Court[21]. The Supreme Court remained at five members until May 1979 when the legislature authorized two additional Justice positions to assist in handling the overburdened court calendar[22].

The adoption of the 1972 Constitution did not substantially change the traditional structures of the Montana Judiciary. It did, however, make several modifications; for instance, the terms of Supreme Court Justices were extended from six to eight years and District Court Judges' terms went from four to six years[23]. Structurally more significant, the new Constitution adopted a version of merit recruitment for judicial officers that has been described as a unique hybrid of the Missouri Plan[24]. While the governor appoints judicial officers when vacancies occur, candidates can file against a judge seeking re-election or for a position that is open due to a judge not seeking re-election. After 1974, if a sitting judge is unopposed when seeking re-election, voters are given a Yes or No to retain the judge.

[14] Atlas of Montana elections, 1889-1976, page 42.
[15] Atlas of Montana elections, 1889-1976, page 42.
[16] Atlas of Montana elections, 1889-1976, page 42.
[17] Laws of Montana, 1933, Chapter 182.
[18] Laws of Montana, 1903, Chapter XIII, 23.
[19] L. L. Callaway, Justices of the Supreme Court of the state of Montana, Montana law review, vol.5, issue 1, 1944. https://scholarship.law.umt.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1485&context=mlr
[20] Laws of Montana, Extraordinary Session, 1919, Chapter 29, 86.
[21] Laws of Montana, 1921, Chapter 219, 466-468.
[22]Laws of Montana, 1979, Chapter 683.
[23] Laws of Montana 1979 Vol. III, Chapter 683, 1842
[24] Sheehy, Eileen, "Judicial selection as practiced under the 1972 Montana constitution." 1994. Page 24. https://scholarworks.umt.edu/etd/8560

The Office of Court Administrator was created in 1977, to assist the supreme court with its growing duties[25].

In August 1989, Governor Stan Stephens appointed District Judge Diane Barz to serve as the first woman on the Supreme Court. Judge Barz was also the first woman District Judge in the State of Montana.

The 2001 Legislative Session enacted legislation for what was commonly called "state assumption of district courts". Under this legislation, the state assumed the cost of all district court employees, except employees in the offices of Clerks of District Court and established the District Court Council[26]. As part of the plan 275 formerly county employees became state judicial branch employees that year[27].

In addition, the 2001 Legislative Session created the District Court Council[28]. The Council consists of nine members. The District Court Council is charged with administrating the state funding, developing, and adopting policies and procedures, for the district courts.

[25] Laws of Montana, 1977, Ch.396
[26] Laws of Montana, 2001, Ch.585
[27] Annual report of the Montana Judiciary, 2002
[28] Laws of Montana, 2001, Ch.585

Supreme Court Justices, Territorial Court

Date	Name	District	Remark
1864-1868*	Hezekiah L. Hosmer	1	Appointed Chief Justice, June 30, 1864, by President Lincoln.
1864-1864	Ammi Giddings	3	Appointed, June 22, 1864 by President Lincoln, but resigned immediately due of ill health.
1864-1868	Lorenzo P. Williston	2	Appointed June 22, 1864, by President Lincoln. Previously served on the bench of the Dakota Territory.
1865-1869	Lyman E. Munson	3	Appointed by President Lincoln March 11, 1865, to replace Ammi Giddings.
1868-1971*	Henry L. Warren	1	Appointed Chief Justice, July 18, 1868, by President Johnson to replace Hezekiah Hosmer.
1868-1879	Hiram Knowles	2	Appointed by President Johnson, July 18, 1868. Delegate Constitutional Convention, 1889.
1869-1871	George G. Symes	3	Appointed by President Grant, April 5, 1869.
1871-1872	John L. Murphy	3	Appointed by President Grant, January 27, 1871.
1871-1887*	Decius S. Wade	1	Appointed Chief Justice, March 17, 1871, by President Grant to replace Henry L. Warren.
1872-1875	Francis G. Servis	3	Appointed by President Grant, September 21, 1872.
1875-1880	Henry N. Blake	3	Appointed by President Grant as Associate Justice.
1879-1888	William J. Galbraith	2	Appointed by President Hayes, July 1, 1879. Reappointed by President Arthur in 1884.
1880-1884	Everton J. Conger	3	Appointed by President Hayes, March 2, 1880.
1884-1885	John Coburn	3	Appointed by President Chester, February 19, 1884.
1886-1889	Thomas C. Bach	4	Appointed August 9, 1886 by President Cleveland to fill the office of the fourth Justice created by act of July 10, 1886. Montana Representative, 1892; District Judge, 1st Judicial District, 1907-09.
1886-1888	James H. McLeary	3	Appointed August 6, 1886 by President Cleveland.
1887-1889*	N. W. McConnell	1	Appointed by President Cleveland and sworn in May 2, 1887 to replace Decius S. Wade. Resigned March 1, 1889.
1888-1889	Stephen DeWolf	2	Territorial Representative 1880; Territorial Council 1885. Appointed Associate Justice, January 28, 1888, by President Cleveland.
1888-1889	Moses J. Liddell	3	Appointed April 2, 1888 by President Cleveland.
1889-1889*	Henry N. Blake	1	Appointed by President Harrison to replace N. W. McConnell. District Judge in the 1st Judicial District, 1894-1896. Served as Court commissioner, 1905.

*Chief Justices of the Montana Territorial Supreme Court

Note: Justices of the supreme court at this time also served as federal and state district court judges.

Supreme Court Justices, Statehood to present

Date	Name	Remark
1889-1893*	Henry N. Blake	
1889-1897	William H. DeWitt	
1889-1895	Edgar N. Harwood	
1893-1899*	William Y. Pemberton	Delegate Constitutional Convention, 1866; Delegate Constitutional Convention, 1884; District Judge, 2nd Judicial District, 1890-1893.
1895-1900	William H. Hunt	Delegate Constitutional Convention, 1884; Territorial House of Representatives, 1888; District Judge, 1st Judicial District 1889-1894. Resigned, June 4, 1900.
1897-1897	Horace R. Buck	Territorial Council, 1884; District Judge, 1st Judicial District, 1890-1896. Died in Office December 6, 1897.
1897-1903	William Pigott	Appointed December 21, 1897 to replace Justice Horace R. Buck. District Judge, 1st Judicial District, 1934.
1899-1922*	Theodore Brantly	District Judge, 3rd Judicial District, 1894-1913. Died in office September 16, 1922. Served 23 years and was the longest serving Chief Justice to Date.
1900-1901	Robert L. Word	Clerk of the Montana Territorial Supreme Court, 1887-1889; District Judge, 1st Judicial District, 1917-1920. Appointed June 4, 1900, to replace Justice William H. Hunt.
1901-1907	George R. Milburn	Territorial Council, 1884; District Judge, 1st Judicial District, 1890-1896. Died in Office December 6, 1897.
1903-1926	William L. Holloway	District Judge, 9th Judicial District, 1900-1901. Died in office December 11, 1926.
1907-1913	Henry C. Smith	District Judge, 1st Judicial District, 1896-1906. Montana State Senate, 1924-1930.
1913-1918	Sidney Sanner	District Judge, 7th Judicial District 1909-1913. Resigned October 25, 1918, after being defeated in primary election.
1918-1918	William T. Pigott	District Judge, 1st Judicial District 1934. Associate Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 1897-1903. Appointed November 14, 1918, to replace Justice Sydney Sanner.
1919-1924	Charles H. Cooper	Resigned August 30, 1919, after primary election defeat.
1919-1921	John Hurley	Appointed September 1, 1919, to fill the newly created seat. (L.1919, Extra Session, Ch.31)
1919-1919	George Y. Patten	Appointed August 11, 1919, to fill the newly created seat (1919 laws Extra Session c 31). Resigned November 8, 1919.
1919-1920	John A. Matthews	District Judge, 14th Judicial District, 1913-1919. Appointed November 24, 1919, to replace Justice George Y. Patten. Associate Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 1925-1937.
1921-1933	Albert J. Galen	Montana Attorney General, 1905-1911.
1921-1922	Frank B. Reynolds	Died in office May 19, 1922.
1922-1935*	Llewellyn L. Callaway	District Judge 5th Judicial District 1905-1913. Appointed September 28, 1922, to replace Chief Justice Theodore Brantly.
1922-1923	Frank B. Reynolds	Died in office May 19, 1922.
1923-1929	George W. Farr	Appointed to replace Justice Frank P. Reynolds.
1924-1925	Albert P. Stark	District Judge, 6th Judicial District, 1913-1922.
1925-1937	John A. Matthews	

1926-1927	Warren Toole	Appointed December 20, 1926 to replace Justice William L. Holloway. Served from December 20, 1926, to January 3, 1927.
1927-1929	Henry L. Myers	U. S. Senate, 1916; District Judge, 4th Judicial District, 1907-1911. Appointed December 23, 1926, to fill the seat of William L. Holloway. Warren Toole was appointed to fill the seat from December 20, 1926 to January 3, 1927.
1929-1934	Albert H. Angstman	Also served as Justice of the Montana Supreme Court, 1937-1942 and from 1945-1961. Served a total of 28 years on the Supreme Court.
1929-1933	Sam C. Ford	Attorney General, 1917-1920; Governor, 1941-1948.
1933-1939	Ralph J. Anderson	
1933-1939	Sam V. Stewart	Governor, 1913-1920. Died in office September 15, 1939.
1935-1938*	Walter B. Sands	Died in office, June 13, 1938.
1935-1947	Claude F. Morris	
1937-1942	Albert H. Angstman	
1938-1939*	O. F. Goddard	Constitutional Convention Delegate 1889; District Judge, 13th Judicial District, 1925-1936. Appointed to replace Justice Walter B. Sands June 20, 1938.
1939-1941	Ralph L. Arnold	District Judge, 4th Judicial District, 1936-1939. Appointed September 19, 1939, to replace Justice Sam V. Stewart.
1939-1945	Leif Erickson	
1939-1946*	Howard A. Johnson	Resigned April 1, 1946.
1941-1945	Albert Anderson	
1943-1946	Hugh R. Adair	Montana House of Representatives, 1927 and 1934; Lieutenant Governor, 1937-1940; Chief Justice, 1947-1956; Justice 1956-1968. Served a total of 25 years on the Montana Supreme Court.
1945-1961	Albert H. Angstman	
1945-1947	Edwin K. Cheadle	District Judge, 10th Judicial District, 1900-1913. Resigned October 1, 1947.
1946-1946*	Carl Lindquist	Appointed, April 1, 1946, to replace Howard A. Johnson.
1947-1956*	Hugh R. Adair	
1947-1949	I. W. Choate	Appointed, January 6, 1947, to replace Justice Hugh Adair who was elected Chief Justice.
1947-1949	Fred L. Gibson	Montana House of Representatives, 1898, 1908, 1918 and 1920. Appointed October 1947, to replace Edwin K. Cheadle.
1947-1953	Lee Metcalf	Montana House of Representatives, 1937; U.S. House of Representatives, 1953-1961; U.S. Senate, 1961-78. Died January 12, 1978.
1949-1961	R. V. Bottomly	Montana Attorney General, 1945-1948.
1949-1954	Harrison J. Freebourn	Montana Attorney General, 1937-1940. Died in office, December 12, 1954.
1953-1956	Forrest H. Anderson	Montana House of Representatives, 1943; Montana Attorney General, 1957-1968; Governor, 1969-1972.
1954-1957	Horace S. Davis	Appointed December 21, 1954, to replace Justice Harry J. Freebourn.
1956-1968	Hugh R. Adair	
1957-1977*	James T. Harrison	Appointed Chief Justice January 7, 1957 to replace Hugh R. Adair.

1957-1977	Wesley Castles	Appointed January 7, 1957 to replace Justice Forrest H. Anderson who was elected Montana Attorney General.
1961-1967	Stanley M. Doyle	Appointed April 10, 1961, to replace Justice Albert H. Angstman. Resigned August 1, 1967.
1961-1994	John C. Harrison	County Attorney, Lewis, and Clark County, 1954-1960.
1967-1978	Frank I. Haswell	District Judge, 11th Judicial District, 1959-1967; Appointed August 1, 1967, to replace Justice Stanley M. Doyle.
1969-1970	John W. Bonner	Montana Attorney General, 1941-1944; Montana Governor, 1949-1952. Died in office March 29, 1970.
1970-1983	Gene B. Daly	Appointed to replace Justice Bonner, March 29, 1970.
1977-1978*	Paul G. Hatfield	District Judge, 8th Judicial District 1961-1976. Appointed to the U. S. Senate January 22, 1978. Appointed Federal Judge, May 10, 1979.
1977-1985	Daniel J. Shea	
1978-1985*	Frank I. Haswell	Appointed Chief Justice Montana Supreme Court, March 10, 1978, replace Paul G. Hatfield. Served as Chief Justice until 1985.
1978-1991	John C. Sheehy	Montana House of Representatives, 1959 and 1965. Montana State Senate, 1969-1971. Appointed March 10, 1978, to replace Justice Frank I. Haswell who was appointed Chief Justice.
1981-1987	Frank B. Morrison	Resigned, May 1987.
1981-1995	Fred J. Weber	
1983-1989	L. C. Gulbrandson	District Judge, 7th Judicial District, 1960-1982.
1985-2000	William E. Hunt, Sr.	County Attorney, Liberty County; First State Workers' Compensation Judge, 1975-1981.
1985-2000*	J. A. Turnage	County Attorney, Lake County 1953-1962. Montana House of Representatives 1962-1964. Montana State Senate 1965-1984.
1987-1993	R. C. McDonough	Appointed to replace Justice Frank B. Morrison. Sworn in on May 22, 1987. County Attorney, Dawson County; Delegate Constitutional Convention, 1972; District Judge, 7th Judicial District, 1983-1987.
1989-1991	Diane G. Barz	District Judge, 13th Judicial District, 1979-1989.
1990-2003	Terry N. Trieweiler	
1991-2000	Karla M. Gray	
1993-2012	James C. Nelson	
1995-1997	Charles E. Erdmann	
1995-2010	W. William Leaphart	
1997-2004	Jim Regnier	
2001-2008*	Karla M. Gray	
2003-2009	John Warner	
2005-2014	Brian Morris	
2001-2016	Patricia O'Brien Cotter	
2008- *	Mike McGrath	
2010-2017	Mike Wheat	
2013-	Laurie McKinnon	
2001-	James A. Rice	
2011-	Beth Baker	
2014-	Jim Shea	
2017-	Dirk M. Sandefur	

2018- Ingrid Gustafson
*Chief Justices of the Montana Supreme Court

Year	Remarks
1864	Montana Supreme Court established. First Justices appointed.
1872	Court required to report court decisions in writing.
1889	Last session of the Territorial Supreme Court. All Judicial officials elected by population.
1890	First session of the Statehood Supreme Court
1910	Judicial elections become non-partisan for the first time later repealed.
1919	Bench increased from 3 members to 5.
1935	Judicial elections become non-partisan.
1972	New Constitution adopted; terms were expanded to 8-years.
1979	Supreme Court Justices increased from 5 to 7.
1989	First woman appointed to the Supreme Court
2001	State assumption of district courts, District Council formed.

Court Commissioners for the Montana Supreme Court, 1903-1923

In 1901 the cases before the Montana Supreme Court became so vast that the court found it impossible to keep up with them, specifically the numerous cases related to the mining of ore in Butte. The Legislature took note of this fact but failed to act since they could not agree with the governor who should appoint the new judges. It was not until 1903 that Legislature provided for the appointment by the Montana Supreme Court of a three-member new court commission "of legal learning and personal worth" to assist the court – at a salary of $4,000 per year for commissioners. The term of office for the Court Commission was four years, during which time the commissioners where prohibited for engaging in practice of law. Their work was completed in two years and the commission was discharged in April 1905.

Date	Name
1903-1905	John B. Clayberg
1903-1904	Llewellyn L. Callaway
1903-1905	H. Poorman
1905-1905	Henry N. Blake

The 1921 Legislature approved a second Court Commission and directed the Montana Supreme Court to appoint "from among the duly elected, qualified and acting District Judges of the State of Montana, from any of the various counties or districts three of such judges to act for such period of time as may be designated in the order appointment as Commissioners of the Supreme Court".

Date	Name	District
1921-1922	Hon. William H. Poorman	1st Judicial District
1921-1922	Hon. A. C. Spencer	13th Judicial District
1921-1922	Hon. Joseph R. Jackson	2nd Judicial District
1922-1923	Hon. Albert P. Stark	6th Judicial District
1922-1923	Hon. Roy E. Ayers	10th Judicial District
1922-1923	Hon. A. J. Horsky	1st Judicial District
1922-1923	Hon. Charles W. Pomeroy	11th Judicial District
1922-1923	Hon. Cloyd E. Comer	12th Judicial District
1922-1923	Hon. Theodore Lentz	4th Judicial District
1922-1923	Hon. William L. Ford	14th Judicial District
1922-1923	Hon. Frank P. Leiper	7th Judicial District
1923-1923	Hon. Carl D. Borton	17th Judicial District
1923-1923	Hon. Ben B. Law	9th Judicial District
1923-1923	Hon. Stanley E. Felt	16th Judicial District
1923-1923	Hon. Lyman H. Bennett	5th Judicial District
1923-1923	Hon. Charles A. Rose	18th Judicial District

Montana State Court Judges, by District

First judicial district

Date	Name	Remark
1889-1894	William H. Hunt	Associate Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 1895-1900. Collector of Customs for Montana and Idaho Territories, 1881; Delegate to the Constitutional Convention, 1884; Territorial Attorney General 1886-1887; Member of the 16th and last Territorial Legislature. Appointed Secretary of the Territory of Puerto Rico, 1900; Governor of the Territory of Puerto Rico, 1901-1904.
1890-1896	Horace R. Buck	Associate Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 1897-1897. Appointed February 28, 1891 by Governor Joseph K. Toole to the newly created seat (L.1891, P.221)
1894-1896	Henry N. Blake	Appointed by Governor Joseph K. Toole, January 7, 1895 to fill unexpired term of William H. Hunt who was elected to the Supreme Court. Associated Justice, Territorial Supreme Court, 1875-1885; Chief Justice of the Montana Supreme Court, 1889-1893.
1896-1906	Henry C. Smith	Elected Associate Justice of Montana Supreme Court, 1906.
1896-1900	S. H. McIntyre	
1900-1917	James M. Clements	
1907-1909	Thomas c. Bach	Associate Justice, Territorial Supreme Court, 1886-1889. Appointed by Governor Joseph K. Toole March 7, 1907 to fill the unexpired term of Henry C. Smith. Member of the Montana House of Representatives, 1892.
1909-1915	J. Miller Smith	Retired August 7, 1915.
1915-1920	R. Lee Word	Clerk of the Montana Territorial Supreme Court, 1887-1889; Associate Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 1900-1901. Appointed August 7, 1915 by Governor Sam V. Stewart to fill the unexpired term of J. Miller Smith.
1917-1934	W. H. Poorman	Died in office August 28, 1934.
1921-1952	A. J. Horsky	
1934-1934	William T. Pigott	Associate Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 1897-1903, 1918-1918. Appointed to replace Judge Poorman by Governor Frank H. Cooney, September 3, 1934, until a successor was elected and qualified. Resigned December 3, 1934.
1934-1956	George W. Padbury, Jr.	Elected to fill the unexpired term of Judge Poorman, assumed office December 6, 1934.
1953-1971	Victor H. Fall	Retired December 31, 1971.
1957-1970	Lester H. Loble	Retired January 1, 1971.
1972-1982	Peter G. Meloy	Appointed December 17, 1971, by Governor Forrest H. Anderson to fill the unexpired term of Victor H. Fall.
1971-1988	Gordon R. Bennett	Appointed December 7, 1970, by Governor Forrest H. Anderson to fill the unexpired term of Lester H. Loble.
1983-1989	Henry Loble	Resigned.

1985-2008	Thomas C. Honzel	
1989-2015	Jeffrey Sherlock	Retired December 31, 2015.
1989-2012	Dorothy McCarter	Appointed by Governor Stan Stephens to replace Henry Loble.
2016-2016	DeeAnn Cooney	Appointed by Governor Steve Bullock to fill the recently vacated seat of Judge Sherlock.
2009-	Kathy Seeley	
2011-	James P. Reynolds	
2013-	Mike Menahan	
2017-	Michael McMahon	

Year	**Counties in District**	**Remarks**
1889	Lewis and Clark	Judicial District created by the 1889 Montana Constitution.
1891		Second judgeship added to district (laws 1891, p.221)
1993	Lewis and Clark, Broadwater	After reorganization by the legislature of 1929, Broadwater County was added to the 1st Judicial District.
1985		Third Judgeship added to District
2009		Fourth Judgeship added to District

Second Judicial District

Date	Name	Remark
1889-1896	John J. McHatton	The results of the election were contested. Bothe candidates (John J. McHatton and Levi J. Hamilton) resigned and Governor Joseph K. Toole appointed John J. McHatton on December 29, 1889 to the seat.
1890-1892	William Y. Pemberton	Appointed by Governor Joseph K. Toole to the newly created seat (laws of 1891, p. 211). Chief Justice of the Montana Supreme Court, 1893-1899. Delegate to the Constitutional conventions of 1864 and 1866.
1893-1896	William O. Speer	
1897-1905	William Clancy	
1897-1900	John Lindsay	
1900-1905	E. W. Harney	
1901-1906	John B. McClernan, Sr.	Appointed May 2, 1901 to the newly created seat (Laws of 1901, p.156) by Governor Joseph K. Toole.
1905-1909	George M. Bourquin	
1905-1917	Michael Dolan	
1907-1932	Jeremiah J. Lynch	
1909-1918	John B. McClernan, Sr.	Died in office May 29, 1918.
1917-1919	John V. Dwyer	Resigned October 1919.
1918-1920	Edwin M. Lamb	Appointed June 1, 1918 by Governor Sam V. Stewart to fill the unexpired term of John B. McClernan, Sr.
1919-1924	Joseph R. Jackson	Appointed by Governor Sam V. Stewart to fill the unexpired term of John V. Dwyer.
1921-1932	William E. Carroll	
1924-1928	George R. Bourquin	
1929-1936	Frank L. Riley	Contest for office of District Judge between Jeremiah L. Lynch and Frank Riley.
1932-1964	T. E. Downey	
1936-1948	Jeremiah J. Lynch	Retired after serving a total of 37 years.
1948-1975	John B. McClernan	Retired January 3, 1975. Was the son of Judge John B. McClernan, Sr., served as District Judge, 1909-1918.
1965-1980	James D. Freebourn	Retired
1975-1990	Arnold H. Olsen	Appointed by Governor Thomas Judge to replace John B. McClernan; Attorney General, 1948-1956; US House of Representatives, 1960-1969. Died in office October 8, 1990.
1980-1994	Mark P. Sullivan	
1990-2000	James E. Purcell	Appointed by Governor Stan Stephens in 1990. Retired in 2000.
1995-2006	John W. Whelan	
2001-	Kurt Krueger	
2006-2018	Brad Newman	
2019-	Robert J. Whelan	

Year	Counties in District	Remarks
1889	Silver Bow	Judicial District established by the 1889 Montana Constitution.
1891		Second Judgeship added (Laws 1891, p.211).
1901		Third Judgeship added (Laws 1901, p.156).
1933		Reorganization of the Judicial Districts by the Legislature of 1929 eliminated the third judge.

Third Judicial District

Date	Name	Remark
1889-1893	David M. Durfee	
1894-1898	Theodore Brantly	Chief Justice of the Montana Supreme Court, 1898.
1898-1905	Wellington Napton	Appointed January 3, 1899 by Governor Robert Burns Smith to fill the unexpired term of Theodore Brantly.
1905-1932	George B. Winston	
1932-1943	R. E. McHugh	
1943-1958	William R. Taylor	Resigned April 23, 1958.
1958-1972	Sid G. Stewart	Appointed by Governor J. Hugo Aronson to succeed William R. Taylor who resigned.
1973-1987	Robert J. Boyd	Resigned.
1987-2006	Ted L. Mizner	
2006-	Ray Dayton	

Year	Counties in District	Remarks
1889	Deer Lodge	Judicial District created by the 1889 Montana Constitution.
1893	Deer Lodge, Granite	Granite County created in 1893 and added to the 3rd Judicial District.
1901	Deer Lodge, Granite, and Powell	Powell County created in 1901 and added to the 3rd Judicial District.

Fourth Judicial District

Date	Name	Remark
1889-1893	C. S. Marshall	
1894-1900	Frank H. Woody	
1900-1913	F. C. Webster	
1907-1911	Henry L. Myers	Appointed by Governor Joseph K. Tool to fill newly created seat (L. 1907, Ch. 135). Resigned March 1911. US Senate, 1916; Associated Justice of the Montana Supreme Court, 1927-1929.
1911-1921	Robert Lee McCullough	Appointed by Governor Edwin L. Norris to fill the unexpired term of Henry L. Meyers. Died in office April 14, 1921.
1913-1936	Asa L. Duncan	
1913-1915	John E. Patterson	Appointed by Governor Sam V. Stewart to fill the newly created seat (L. 1913, Ch.4).
1915-1935	Theodore Lentz	Died in office, December 6, 1935.
1921-1932	James M. Self	Appointed by Governor Joseph M. Dixon on April 21, 1921 to fill the unexpired term of Robert L. McCullough.
1935-1956	Albert Besancon	Appointed by Governor W. Elmer Holt to fill the unexpired term of Theodore Lentz, December 15, 1934.
1936-1939	Ralph L. Arnold	Appointed Associated Justice of the Montana Supreme Court by Governor Roy E. Ayers to replace Sam V. Stewart, who died in office.
1939-1960	C.E. Comer	Appointed by Governor Roy E. Ayers October 3, 1939 to fill the unexpired term of Ralph L. Arnold. Retired October 21, 1959.
1957-1960	William F. Shallenberger	Died in office, July 21, 1959.
1960-1971	Emmet Glore	Appointed by Governor J. Hugo Aronson to fill the unexpired term of C.E. Comer. Retired in 1972.
1960-1979	E. Gardner Brownlee	Appointed by Governor J. Hugo Aronson on July 29, 1959 to fill the unexpired term of Wm. F. Shallenberger.
1972-1978	Edward T. Dussault	Appointed by Governor Forrest H. Anderson to fill the unexpired term of Emmet Glore, 1972.
1963-1992	Jack L. Green	Member of Missoula City Council. Appointed March 22, 1963 by Governor Tim Babcock to fill the new created seat (L. 1963, Ch. 229).
1978-1989	James B. Wheelis	Appointed by Governor Thomas L. Judge to replace Edward T. Dussault.
1979-2006	John S. Henson	Appointed by Governor Thomas J. Judge to replace E. Gardner Brownlee. County Attorney, Mineral County.
1981-2010	Douglas G. Harkin	County Attorney Ravalli County.
1989-2018	Ed McLean	Appointed by Governor Ted Schwinden to replace James B. Wheelis who resigned. Judge McLean retired April 30, 2018.
1993-	John W. Larson	
2006-	Robert “Dusty” L. Deschamps III	Appointed by Governor Brian Schweitzer in July 2006.
2010-2019	Karen Townsend	Retired August 30, 2019.
2018-	Leslie Halligan	Appointed by Governor Steve Bullock in 2018 to replace Ed McLean.

2019-	Shane Vannatta	Appointed by Governor Steve Bullock on Feb. 12, 2019 to the newly created fifth judgeship.
2019-	Jason Marks	Appointed by Governor Steve Bullock on August 14, 2019 to fill the unexpired term of K. Townsend.

Year	**Counties in District**	**Remarks**
1889	Missoula	Judicial District created by the 1889 Montana Constitution.
1893	Missoula, Ravalli	Ravalli County created in 1893.
1905	Missoula, Ravalli, and Sanders	Sanders County created in 1905.
1907		Second judgeship added to district (L. 1907, Ch. 135).
1913		Third judgeship added to district (L.1913, Ch.14).
1914	Missoula, Ravalli, Sanders, and Mineral	Mineral County created 1914.
1923	Missoula, Ravalli, Sanders, Mineral and Lake	Lake County created in 1923.
1933		After reorganization of the Judicial District by the Legislature of 1929, the Third Judgeship was terminated (L. 1929, Ch. 91).
1963		Third judgeship added to district (L. 1963, Ch. 229).
1979		Fourth judgeship added to district (L. 1979, Ch. 542).
1983	Missoula, Ravalli, and Mineral	Lake and Sanders Counties removed and became the 20th Judicial District.
	Missoula and Mineral	Ravalli County removed and became the 21st Judicial District.
2017		5th judgeship added to district (L. 2017, Ch. 357).

Fifth Judicial District

Date	Name	Remark
1889-1893	Thomas J. Galbraith	
1893-1896	Frank Showers	
1896-1905	Montgomery H. Parker	
1905-1913	Llewellyn L. Callaway	Chief Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 1922-1935.
1909-1915	Joseph B. Poindexter	Appointed March 4, 1909 to the newly created judgeship by Governor Edwin L. Morris (L. 1909, Ch. 91). Appointed Attorney General, 1915.
1913-1921	William A. Clark	Died in office January 1, 1921.
1921-1937	Lyman H. Bennett	Appointed by Governor Joseph M. Dixon to fill the unexpired term of Judge William A. Clark.
1915-1924	Joseph C. Smith	Appointed October 11, 1915 by Governor Sam V. Stewart to fill the unexpired term of Joseph B. Poindexter.
1925-1931	Henry G. Rodgers	Resigned October 1, 1931. Seat remained vacant until it was terminated January 1933 (L. 1929, Ch. 91). Candidate for Associate Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 1932. Defeated in primary election.
1937-1942	Henry G. Rodgers	Died in office, October 17, 1942.
1942-1952	Lyman H. Bennett	Resigned July 1, 1952.
1952-1952	John Collins	Appointed August 30, 1952 by Governor John W. Bonner to fill the unexpired term of Lyman H. Bennett.
1953-1970	Philip C. Duncan	Died in office May 9, 1970.
1970-1970	Frank M. Davis	Appointed by Governor Thomas L. Judge to replace Philip C. Duncan May 19, 1970.
1971-1982	Frank E. Blair	Madison County Attorney 1929-1935. Elected to the bench at age 80 and served two terms.
1983-2000	Frank M. Davis	
2000-2017	Loren Tucker	
2017-	Luke M. Berger	

Year	Counties in District	Remarks
1889	Beaverhead, Jefferson, and Madison	Judicial District created by the 1889 Montana Constitution.
1909		Second judgeship added to the district (L. 1909, Ch.91).
1933		After reorganization of the Judicial Districts by the Legislature of 1929, the second judgeship was terminated (L. 1929, Ch.91).

Sixth Judicial District

Date	Name	Remark
1889-1912	Frank Henry	Died in office May 27, 1912
1912-1913	James F. O'Conner	Appointed June 6, 1912 by Governor Edwin L. Norris to fill the unexpired term of Frank Henry.
1913-1922	Albert P. Stark	Elected Associate Justice, Montana Supreme Court.
1922-1928	Hugh J. Miller	Appointed December 27, 1922 by Governor Joseph M. Dixon to fill the unexpired term of Albert P. Stark.
1929-1956	Benjamin E. Berg	Resigned June 1956.
1956-1964	George J. Allen	Appointed June 20, 1956 by Governor J. Hugo Aronson to fill the unexpired term of Benjamin E. Berg. Died in office December 1, 1964.
1965-1982	Jack D. Shanstrom	Appointed December 28, 1964 by Governor Tim Babcock to fill the unexpired term of George J. Allen. Named Montana's first full time Federal Magistrate in 1983 and served in that capacity until his appointment as US District Judge May 11, 1990.
1983-1994	Byron L. Robb	County Attorney, Park County.
1995-2012	William Nels Swandal	County Attorney, Park County, 1983-1994.
2013-	Brenda R. Gilbert	

Year	Counties in District	Remarks
1889	Gallatin, Park, and Meagher	Judicial district established by the 1889 Montana Constitution.
1891	Park and Meagher	Gallatin County was removed from the 6th Judicial District to become the new 9th Judicial District.
1895	Park, Carbon, and Sweet Grass	Carbon and Sweet Grass Counties created in 1895 and added to the 6th Judicial District. Meagher County became part of the 9th Judicial District.
1907	Park and Sweet Grass	Carbon County removed from the 6th Judicial District and became part of the 13th Judicial District (L.1907, Ch.2).
1913	Park, Sweet Grass, and Stillwater.	Stillwater County crated in 1913 and became part of the 6th Judicial District.
1933	Gallatin, Park, and Sweet Grass	After reorganization of the Judicial Districts by the 1929 Legislature, Stillwater County became part of the 13th Judicial District and Gallatin county again became part of the 6th Judicial District.
1947	Park and Sweet Grass	Gallatin County removed from the 6th Judicial District and became the newly created 18th Judicial District.

Seventh Judicial District

Date	Name	Remark
1889-1896	George R. Milburn	Associate Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 1901-07.
1896-1909	Charles H. Loud	
1909-1913	Sydney Sanner	Associate Justice, Montana Supreme Court, 1913-18.
1914-1920	C. C. Hurley	
1921-1944	Frank P. Leiper	
1944-1959	F. S. P. Foss	Died in office December 12, 1959.
1959-1982	L. C. Gulbrandson	Appointed December 23, 1959 by Governor J. Hugo Aronson to fill the unexpired term of F. S. P. Foss. Elected Montana Supreme Court Justice 1982.
1983-1987	Russell C. McDonough	Appointed Justice of the Supreme Court in 1987 to succeed Frank B. Morrison who resigned. Delegate at the Montana Constitutional Convention, 1972.
1985-1990	H. R. Obert	
1987-1998	Dale Cox	Appointed by Governor Ted Schwinden to replace R. C. McDonough. County Attorney, Dawson County.
1990-2001	Richard G. Phillips	
1998-2017	Richard Simonton	
2002-	Katherine M. Bidegaray	
2017-	Olivia Rieger	

Year	Counties in District	Remarks
1889	Yellowstone, Custer, and Dawson	Judicial District established by the 1889 Montana Constitution.
1901	Yellowstone, Custer, Dawson, and Rosebud	Rosebud County created in 1901 and became part of the 7th Judicial District.
1907	Custer and Dawson	Yellowstone and Rosebud Counties were removed and became part of the newly created 13th Judicial District.
1914	Custer, Dawson, Richland, Fallon, and Wibaux	Fallon, Richland, and Wibaux Counties were created in 1914 and became part of the 7th Judicial District.
1915	Dawson, Richland, and Wibaux	Custer and Fallon Counties were removed and became part of the of the newly created 16th Judicial District.
1919	Dawson, Richland, Wibaux, and McCone	McCone County was created in 1919 and added to the 7th Judicial District.
1983	Dawson, Richland, Wibaux, McCone, and Prairie	Prairie County Moved for the 16th Judicial District and added to the 7th Judicial District
1985		Second judgeship created in the 7th Judicial District.

Eighth Judicial District

Date	Name	Remark
1889-1896	Charles H. Benton	
1897-1925	Jere B. Leslie	Died in office February 6, 1925.
1909-1948	Harry H. Ewing	Appointed March 4, 1909 by Governor Edwin L. Norris to the newly created seat (L. 1909, Ch. 26). Retired after serving 40 years.
1925-1926	Stephen J. Cowley	Appointed by Governor John E. Erickson May 4, 1925, to replace Jere B. Leslie.
1927-1936	Wellington H. Meigs	
1936-1960	Clifford F. Holt	Resigned December 11, 1959.
1948-1956	J. W. Spear	Appointed by Governor Sam C. Ford July 13, 1948 to succeed Harry H. Ewing.
1957-1976	Robert J. Nelson	
1959-1961	H. B. Hoffman	Appointed December 11, 1959 by Governor J. Hugo Aronson to fill the unexpired term of Cliff F. Holt.
1961-1961	R. V. Bottomly	Died in office in February 1961.
1961-1976	Paul Hatfield	Elected Chief Justice of the Montana Supreme Court.
1965-1978	Truman G. Bradford	
1977-1995	Joel G. Roth	
1977-1983	H. William Coder	Resigned November 1983.
1979-1994	John M. McCarvel	Appointed January 1979 by Governor Thomas L. Judge to succeed Truman Bradford. Lost reelection 1994.
1983-2012	Thomas M. McKittrick	Appointed December 1983 by Governor Ted Schwinden to succeed H. William Coder.
1995-2000	Marge Johnson	
1995-1996	Robert Goff	Died in office July 3, 1996.
1996-2015	Kenneth Neill	
2001-2016	Julie Macek	
2013-	Greg Pinski	
2015-	John A. Kutzman	
2016-	Elizabeth Best	
2002-2016	Dirk M. Sandefur	Elected to the newly created fourth judgeship in 2002. Elected Associate Justice of the Montana Supreme Court, 2016.
2017-	John W. Parker	

Year	Counties in District	Remarks
1889	Chouteau, Cascade, and Fergus	Judicial District established by the 1889 Montana Constitution.
1891	Cascade	Chouteau and Fergus Counties become the newly created 10 Judicial District.
1909	Cascade and Teton	Teton County removed from the 11th Judicial District and becomes part of the 8th Judicial District.
1909		Second judgeship created for the 8th Judicial District.
1914	Cascade, Teton, and Toole	Toole County established in 1914 and added the 8th Judicial District.

1919	Cascade	Teton and Toole Counties become part of the newly created 19th Judicial district.
1933	Cascade, Chouteau	After reorganization of the Judicial Districts by the 1929 Legislature, Cascade and Chouteau became the 8th Judicial District.
1961		Third judgeship added.
1985	Cascade	Chouteau County moved to the 12th Judicial District.
2002		Fourth judgeship added.

Ninth Judicial District

Date	Name	Remark
1891-1900	Frank K. Armstrong	Appointed March 4, 1891 by Governor Joseph K. Toole, to the seat in the newly created 9th Judicial District (L.1891, P. 215).
1900-1902	William L. Holloway	Elected as Associate Justice of the Montana Supreme Court, 1902.
1902-1913	W. R. C. Stewart	Appointed December 13, 1902 by Governor Joseph K. Toole to fill the unexpired term of William L. Holloway.
1913-1932	Ben B. Law	
1932-1957	R. M. Hattersley	Died in office November 1957.
1957-1962	William M. Black	Appointed November 29, 1957 by Governor J. Hugo Aronson to fill the unexpired term of R. M. Hattersley.
1963-1994	Ronald D. McPhillips	Appointed January 5, 1963 by Governor Tim Babcock to fill the unexpired term of William M. Black. County Attorney, Toole County, 1961-1962.
1994-2006	Marc G. Buyske	
2007-2012	Laurie McKinnon	
2012-	Robert “Bob” G. Olson	

Year	Counties in District	Remarks
1891	Gallatin	The Legislature established the 9th Judicial District (L. 1891, P. 215).
1895	Gallatin and Meagher	Meagher County moved from the 6th Judicial District to the 9th Judicial District.
1897	Gallatin, Meagher, and Broadwater	Broadwater County created and was added to the 9th Judicial District.
1904	Gallatin and Broadwater	Meagher County moved to the 10th Judicial District.
1913	Gallatin	Broadwater County became part of the newly created 14th Judicial District.
1933	Glacier, Pondera, Teton, and Toole	After reorganization by the 1929 Legislature, Gallatin County was moved to become part of the 6th Judicial District again.

Tenth Judicial District

Date	Name	Remark
1891-1900	Dudley DuBose	Appointed March 7, 1891 by Governor Joseph K. Toole, to the newly created 10th Judicial District (L.1891, P. 216). In 1900 Judge DuBose was absent from the state for over 60 days and the absence constituted forfeiture of the office. (Art. VIII, §37, Montana Constitution, 1889.)
1900-1901	John W. Tattan	Appointed August 15, 1900 by Governor Robert Burns Smith to fill the unexpired term of Dudley DuBose.
1901-1913	E. K. Cheadle	
1913-1922	Roy E. Ayres	Appointed to the Montana Supreme Court January 1922.
1917-1918	H. L. DeKalb	Appointed March 2, 1917 by Governor Sam V. Stewart to fill the newly created seat (L. 1917, Ch. 35). Resigned May 18, 1918.
1918-1921	Jack Briscoe	Appointed November 9, 1918 by Governor Sam V. Stewart to fill the unexpired term of H. L. DeKalb
1921-1924	Rudolph Von Tobel	
1922-1933	John C. Huntoon	Appointed November 22, 1922 by Governor Joseph M. Dixon to fill the unexpired term of Roy E. Ayers.
1925-1934	Edgar J. Baker	Died in office September 27, 1934.
1934-1934	J. E. McKenna	Appointed October 1, 1934 by Governor Frank H. Cooney to serve until the election and qualification of his successor. Served until December 16, 1934.
1934-1954	Stewart McConochie	Elected to serve the unexpired term of Edgar J. Baker. Assumed office December 16, 1934. Resigned June 1954.
1954-1982	LeRoy McKinnon	Appointed June 29, 1954 by Governor J. Hugo Aronson to succeed Stewart McConochie.
1983-1994	Peter L. Rapkoch	
1994-2000	John R. Christensen	
2000-2012	E. Wayne Phillips	Retired December 2012.
2012-	Jon A. Oldenburg	

Year	Counties in District	Remarks
1891	Chouteau and Fergus	The Legislature established the 10th Judicial District (L. 1891, P. 216).
1893	Chouteau, Fergus, Teton, Flathead and Valley	Flathead, Teton, and Valley Counties created in 1893 and became part of the 10th Judicial District (L.1983, P.198-209).
1895	Chouteau, Fergus, and Valley	Flathead and Teton Counties became the newly created 11th Judicial District.
1901	Fergus	Chouteau and Valley Counties removed and become the 12th Judicial District.
1904	Fergus and Meagher	Meagher County removed from the 9th Judicial District and added to the 10th Judicial District.
1913	Fergus	Meagher County removed and becomes part of the newly created 14th Judicial District.
1917		Second judgeship created (L. 1917, Ch. 35).

1921	Fergus, Judith Basin	Judith Basin Count (created in 1920) became part of the 10th Judicial District.
1926	Fergus, Judith Basin, Petroleum	Petroleum Count (organized in 1923) became part of the 10th Judicial District.
1933		After reorganization of the Judicial District by the 1929 Legislature the second judgeship was removed (L.1929, Ch. 91).

Eleventh Judicial District

Date	Name	Remark
1895-1896	Charles W. Pomeroy	Appointed March 8, 1895 by Governor John E. Rickards to the newly created Judicial District (L. 1895, Rev. Code Civil Proc. Sec. 30).
1897-1905	D. E. Smith	
1905-1915	John E. Erickson	Resigned March 1, 1915.
1915-1920	T. A. Thompson	Appointed March 1, 1915 by Governor Sam V. Stewart to fill the unexpired term of John E. Erickson. Resigned August 31, 1920.
1920-1921	B. F. Maiden	Appointed September 1, 1920 by Governor Sam V. Stewart to fill the unexpired term of T.A. Thompson.
1921-1932	Charles W. Pomeroy	
1932-1941	J. E. Rockwood	
1941-1958	Dean King	Resigned June 1, 1958.
1958-1958	Torrance H. MacDonald	Appointed April 23, 1958 by Governor J. Hugo Aronson to fill the unexpired term of Dean King.
1957-1967	Eugene B. Foot	Appointed to the newly created seat (L.1957, Ch. 91) by Governor J. Hugo Aronson on April 16, 1957.
1959-1967	Frank I. Haswell	Appointed Associated Justice of the Montana Supreme Court, August 1, 1967 to succeed Stanley M. Doyle.
1967-1982	Roberts C. Sykes	Appointed August 23, 1967 by Governor Tim Babcock to fill the unexpired term of Frank I. Haswell.
1968-1976	Robert S. Keller	Resigned May 20, 1976.
1976-1985	James M. Salansky	Appointed June 3, 1976 by Governor Thomas L. Judge to succeed Robert S. Keller.
1983-1994	Michael H. Keedy	
1985-1992	Leif B. Erickson	Appointed by Governor Ted Schwinden to succeed James M. Salansky.
2000-2012	Stewart Stadler	
1992-2015	Ted O. Lympus	
1995-2012	Katherine R. Curtis	
2010-2016	David M. Ortley	
2012-	Robert B. Allison	
2015-	Amy Eddy	
2012-	Heidi J. Ulbricht	
2017-	Dan Wilson	

Year	Counties in District	Remarks
1895	Flathead and Teton	The Legislature established the 11th Judicial District (Revised Code of Civil Procedure, Section 30, 1895).
1909	Flathead and Lincoln	Teton County Moved to the 8th Judicial District (L.1909, Ch.26). Lincoln County was created in 1909 and added to the 11th Judicial District (L.1909, Ch.133).
1957		Second judgeship established.
1977	Flathead	Lincoln County became the newly created 19th Judicial District. Third judgeship added. Fourth judgeship added.

Twelfth Judicial District

Date	Name	Remark
1901-1926	John W. Tattan	Appointed February 25, 1901 by Governor Joseph K. Toole to the newly created seat (L.1901, P.155). Died in office December 30, 1926.
1913-1915	Frank N. Utter	Appointed March 1913. He was appointed to the 17th judicial district in 1915.
1927-1929	Charles S. Hartman	Appointed by Governor John E. Erickson to replace John W. Tattan. Died in office August 3, 1929.
1929-1932	F. E. Stranahan	Appointed August 7, 1929 by Governor John E. Erickson to fill the unexpired term of Charles S. Hartman.
1932-1967	Charles B. Elwell	Retired October 1, 1967.
1967-1983	Bernard W. Thomas	Appointed October 1, 1967 by Governor Tim Babcock to fill the unexpired term of Charles B. Elwell. Retired January 3, 1983.
1983-1988	Chan Ettien	
1989-2003	John Warner	Appointed to the Montana Supreme Court May 2003.
2003-2010	David Rice	Retired
2010-2018	Daniel A. Boucher	Appointed by Governor Brian Schweitzer December 1, 2010. Resigned effective November 9, 2018.
2019-	Kaydee N. S. Ruiz	Appointed by Governor Steve Bullock, January 7, 2019.

Year	Counties in District	Remarks
1901	Chouteau and Valley	12th Judicial District Created.
1911		Second judgeship added (L. 1911, Ch.74).
1912	Chouteau, Valley, Blaine, and Hill	Blain and Hill Counties created in 1912 and added to the 12th Judicial District.
1913	Choteau, Valley, Blaine, hill, and Sheridan	Sheridan County created in 1913 and added to the 12th Judicial District.
1915	Chouteau, Blain, and Hill	Sheridan and Valley Counties become part of the newly created 17th Judicial District.
1917	Chouteau	Blaine and Hill Counties became the newly created 18th Judicial District.
1933	Blaine, Hill, and Liberty	After reorganization of the Judicial Districts by the 1929 Legislature, Blain, Hill, and Liberty Counties became the 12th Judicial District and Chouteau County was made part of the 8th Judicial District.
1983	Chouteau, Hill, and Liberty	Chouteau was moved to the 12th Judicial District and Blain became part of the 17th Judicial District.

Thirteenth Judicial District

Date	Name	Remark
1907-1913	Sydney Fox	Appointed March 5, 1907 by Governor Joseph K. Toole to the newly created 13th Judicial District (L. 1907, S. 6263).
1911-1917	George W. Pierson	Appointed February 11, 1911 by Governor Edwin L. Norris to the newly created seat (L. 1911, Ch. 3).
1913-1915	Charles L. Crum	Assigned to the newly created 15th Judicial District in 1915 (L. 1915, Ch. 51).
1915-1924	A. C. Spencer	Appointed May 13, 1915 by Governor Sam V. Stewart to succeed C. L. Crum who was assigned to the newly created 15th Judicial District. Resigned April 1, 1924.
1917-1920	Charles A. Taylor	
1921-1936	Robert S. Strong	
1925-1936	O. F. Goddard	Constitutional Convention delegate, 1889. Appointed August 8, 1924 by Governor Joseph M Dixon to fill the unexpired term of A. C. Spencer. Appointed by Governor Roy E. Ayers to succeed Walter B. Sands as Chief Justice of the Montana Supreme Court, 1938-1939.
1936-1960	Ben Harwood	Resigned December 9, 1959, effective January 3, 1960.
1936-1967	Guy C. Derry	Retired August 1967.
1955-1969	Ernest E. Fenton	Appointed April 19, 1955 by Governor J. Hugo Aronson to the newly created seat (L. 1955, Ch.18). Died in office August 14, 1969.
1960-1979	Charles B. Sande	Appointed December 9, 1959 by J. Hugo Aronson to fill the unexpired term of Ben Harwood.
1968-1986	Charles Luedke	Appointed September 1, 1967 by Governor Tim Babcock to fill the unexpired term of Guy C. Derry.
1969-1984	Robert H. Wilson	Appointed August 1969 by Governor Forrest H. Anderson to fill the unexpired term of Ernest E. Fenton.
1979-1989	Diane G. Barz	Elected to the newly created seat (L. 1977, Ch. 517). Appointed to the Montana Supreme Court by Governor Stan Stephens in 1989 to succeed L. C. Gulbrandson. First woman District Judge and Montana Supreme Court Justice, 1989-1991.
1979-1994	William G. Speare	Appointed by Governor Thomas L. Judge to succeed Charles B. Sande.
1984-1997	Robert W. Holmstrom	Appointed May 16, 1984 by Governor Ted Schwinden to succeed Robert H. Wilson.
1985-2014	G. Todd Baugh	
1986-1995	Russell Fillner	Appointed by Governor Ted Schwinden to succeed Charles Luedke. Retired in 1996.
1989-2000	Maurice R. Colberg	Appointed by Governor Stan Stephens to succeed Diane G. Barz. Retired November 2000.
1994-2003	Diane Barz	Elected back to the 13th Judicial District in 1994.
2004-2018	Ingrid G. Gustafson	Appointed by Governor Judy Martz to fill the unexpired term of Diane Barz.
1996-2017	Russell Fagg	Resigned October 13, 2017 to run for US Senate.
1998-2013	Susan Watters	Appointed US district judge by President Obama in 2013.

2000-	Gregory R. Todd	Appointed by Governor Marc Racicot in December 2000.
2018-	Jessica T. Fehr	
2017-	Donald L. Harris	
2014-	Michael G. Moses	Appointed by Governor Steve Bullock to fill the unexpired term of Susan Watters. He lost/withdrew from the primary in 2014 to run for Judge Baugh's seat.
2015-	Rod Souza	Was elected to fill Judge Baugh's seat in November 2014.
2010-	Mary Jane Knisely	
2019-	Colette B. Davies	
2019-	Ashley Harada	

Year	**Counties in District**	**Remarks**
1907	Carbon, Rosebud, and Yellowstone	13th Judicial District Created.
1911	Carbon, Rosebud, Yellowstone, and Musselshell	Musselshell County created in 1911 and added to the 13th Judicial District.
1911		Second judgeship created for the 13th Judicial District (L.1911, Ch. 3).
1913	Carbon, Rosebud, Yellowstone, Musselshell, and Big Horn	Big Horn County created and added to the 13th Judicial District.
1915	Carbon, Big Horn and Yellowstone	Rosebud and Musselshell Counties become part of the newly created 15th Judicial District.
1933	Big Horn, Carbon, Stillwater, Treasure and Yellowstone	After reorganization of the Judicial Districts by the 1929 Legislature the 13th Judicial District included Big Horn, Carbon, Stillwater, Treasure and Yellowstone Counties.
1955		Third judgeship created for the 13th Judicial District (L. 1955, Ch. 18).
1977		Fourth judgeship created for the 13th Judicial District (L. 1977, Ch. 517).
1983	Big Horn, Carbon, Stillwater, and Yellowstone	Treasure County moved to the 16th Judicial District.
1983		Fifth judgeship created for the 13th Judicial District (L. 1983, Ch. 293).
1999	Yellowstone	Big Horn, Carbon and Stillwater Counties moved to the newly created 22nd Judicial District (L. 1999, Ch. 454).
2009		Sixth judgeship created for the 13th Judicial District (L.2009, Ch.422).

Fourteenth Judicial District

Date	Name	Remark
1913-1919	John A. Matthews	Appointed March 7, 1913 by Governor Sam V. Stewart to the newly created 14th Judicial and Associate Justice of the Montana Supreme Court, November 24, 1919.
1919-1920	Edward H. Goodman	Appointed November 28, 1919 by Governor Sam V. Stewart to fill the unexpired term of John A. Matthews.
1921-1940	W. L. Ford	Died in office January 29, 1940.
1940-1944	W. C. Husband	Appointed February 3, 1940 by Governor Roy E. Ayers to fill the unexpired term of W. L. Ford. Died in office March 1, 1944.
1944-1944	Norman R. Barncord	Appointed March 22, 1944 by Governor Sam C. Ford to fill the unexpired term of W. C. Husband.
1944-1959	Frederick V. Watts	Resigned December 9, 1959.
1960-1982	Nat Allen	Appointed December 9, 1959 by Governor J. Hugo Aronson to fill the unexpired term of Frederick Watts.
1983-2000	Roy C. Rodeghiero	
2001-	Randal I. Spaulding	

Year	Counties in District	Remarks
1913	Meagher and Broadwater	14th Judicial District created in 1913.
1917	Meagher, Broadwater, and Wheatland	Wheatland County created and added to the 14th Judicial District.
1933	Meagher, Golden Valley, Musselshell, and Wheatland	After reorganization of the Judicial Districts by the 1929 Legislature the 14th Judicial District included: Golden Valley, Meagher, Musselshell, and Wheatland Counties.

Fifteenth Judicial District

Date	Name	Remark
1915-1918	Charles L. Crum	Assigned to the newly created 15th Judicial District from the 13th Judicial District (L. 1915, Ch 51). Resigned March 19, 1918. Removed by impeachment March 22, 1918.
1918-1920	George P. Jones	Appointed March 26, 1918 by Governor Sam V. Stewart to fill the unexpired term of Charles L. Crum.
1921-1924	George A. Horkan	
1925-1932	G. J. Jeffries	
1932-1938	Spurgeon E. Paul	
1938-1943	Vernon Hoven	Appointed by Governor Roy E. Ayers to fill the unexpired term of Spurgeon E. Paul, died February 1938. Judge Hoven resigned May 1943.
1943-1944	David N. Nyguist	Appointed May 29, 1943 by Governor Sam C. Ford to fill the temporary vacancy occasioned by entry of Honorable Vernon Haven into Military service June 1944.
1944-1949	Vernon Hoven	
1949-1952	David N. Nyquist	Died in office January 30, 1952.
1952-1969	Jack R. Loucks	Appointed February 4, 1952 by Governor John W. Bonner to fill the unexpired term of David N. Nyquist. Died in office June 20, 1969.
1969-1995	M. James Sorte	Appointed August 1, 1969 by Governor Forrest H. Anderson to fill the unexpired term of Jack R. Loucks.
1995-	David J. Cybulski	

Year	Counties in District	Remarks
1915	Rosebud and Musselshell	16th Judicial District created in 1915.
1919	Rosebud, Musselshell, and Treasure	Treasure County created in 1919 and added to the 15th Judicial District.
1920	Rosebud, Musselshell, Treasure and Golden Valley	Golden Valley County created in 1920 and added to the 15th Judicial District.
1933	Daniels, Roosevelt, and Sheridan	After reorganization by the 1929 Legislature, Treasure County became part of the 13th Judicial District, Golden Valley and Musselshell Counties became part of the 14th Judicial District and Rosebud became part of the 16th Judicial District.

Sixteenth Judicial District

Date	Name	Remark
1915-1920	Daniel L. O'Hern	Appointed March 11, 1915 by Governor Sam V. Stewart to the newly created 16th Judicial District (. 1915, Ch. 50).
1919-1920	Charles J. Dousman	Appointed March 10, 1919 by Governor Sam V. Stewart to the newly created judgeship in the 16 Judicial District (L. 1919, Ch. 144).
1921-1965	S. D. McKinnon	Died in office April 13, 1965.
1921-1936	Stanley E. Felt	
1936-1945	Rudolph Nelstead	Died in office February 1945.
1945-1967	Walter R. Flachsenhar	Appointed March 10, 1945 by Governor Sam C. Ford to fill the unexpired term of Rudolph Nelstead. Resigned October 16, 1967.
1965-1988	Arthur Martin	Appointed April 22, 1965 by Governor Tim Babcock to succeed S. D. McKinnon.
1968-1988	Alfred B. Coate	Appointed October 13, 1967 by Governor Tim Babcock to fill the unexpired term of Walter R. Flachsenhar.
1989-1997	Kenneth R. Wilson	
1989-2012	Joe L. Hegel	Retired December 18, 2012.
1997-2013	Gary L. Day	Appointed November 1997. Died in office February 12, 2013.
2013-2016	George W. Huss	Resigned January 1, 2016.
2016-	Nikolas C. Murnion	Appointed March 17, 2016 by Governor Steve Bullock to fill the unexpired term of George Huss.
2013-	Michael Hayworth	Appointed in 2013 by Governor Steve Bullock.

Year	Counties in District	Remarks
1915	Custer, Fallon, and Prairie	16th Judicial District created in 1915.
1917	Custer, Fallon, Prairie and Carter	Carter County created and added the 16th Judicial District.
1919	Custer, Fallon, Prairie, Carter, Garfield, and Powder River	Garfield and Powder River Counties created and added to the 16th Judicial District.
1933	Custer, Fallon, Prairie, Carter, Garfield, Powder River and Rosebud	After reorganization of the Judicial Districts by the 1929 Legislature, the 16th Judicial District included: Custer, Fallon, Prairie, Carter, Garfield, Powder River and Rosebud Counties.
1983	Custer, Fallon, Carter, Garfield, Powder River, Rosebud and Treasure	Prairie County moved the 7th Judicial District and Treasure County was added to the 16th Judicial District.
2013		Second seat added to Judicial District.

Seventeenth Judicial District

Date	Name	Remark
1915-1917	Frank N. Utter	Assigned to the newly created 17th Judicial District from the 12th Judicial District (L. 1915, Ch. 144).
1917-1919	John Hurley	Appointed September 1, 1919 by Governor Sam V. Stewart to the newly created seat on the Montana Supreme Court (L. 1919, Extra Session, Ch.31).
1919-1920	H. Cleveland Hall	Appointed September 6, 1919 by Governor Sam V. Stewart to fill the unexpired term of John Hurley.
1921-1928	Carl D. Borton	
1929-1948	John Hurly	Resigned December 31, 1948. Died June 10, 1949.
1949-1962	James T. Shea	Appointed January 3, 1949
1962-1976	Thomas Dignan	Appointed May 14, 1962 by Governor Tim Babcock to succeed James T. Shea.
1977-1993	Leonard H. Langen	Retired in 1993, died April 7, 2001.
1993-2016	John C. McKeon	Retired November 2016.
2016-	Yvonne Laird	

Year	Counties in District	Remarks
1915	Phillips, Valley, and Sheridan	17th Judicial District created in 1915.
1919	Phillips and Valley	Sheridan County moved to the newly created 20th Judicial District.
1985	Phillips, Valley, and Blaine	Blaine County added to the 17th Judicial District.

Eighteenth Judicial District

Date	Name	Remark
1917-1920	William B. Rhoades	Appointed March 5, 1917 to the newly created 18th Judicial District (L. 1917, Ch. 32). Resigned January 10, 1920
1920-1920	Frank E. Carleton	Appointed January 10, 1920 by Governor Sam V. Stewart to fill the unexpired term of William B. Rhoades.
1921-1928	Charles A. Rose	
1929-1932	Charles B. Elwell	Judge Elwell was reassigned to the 12th Judicial District and the 18th Judicial District eliminated as part of the 1933 Judicial Reorganization.
1933-1947		Judicial District eliminated in 1933.
1947-1948	H. A. Bollinger	Appointed March 22, 1947 by Governor Sam C. Ford.
1949-1982	W. W. Lessley	Retired December 31, 1982.
1979-1989	Joseph B. Gary	Elected to the newly created judgeship. Retired July 31, 1989.
1983-2000	Thomas A. Olson	
1989-1996	Larry W. Moran	
1997-2016	Michael Salvagni	
2000-2003	Mark Guenther	Died November 2003.
2004-	Holly Brown	Appointed by Governor Judy Martz 2004.
2017-	Rienne H. McElyea	Appointed by Governor Steve Bullock 2017.
2005-	John C. Brown	Appointed by Governor Brian Schweitzer to newly created judgeship. October 2005.

Year	Counties in District	Remarks
1917	Blaine and Hill	18th Judicial District created in 1917.
1920	Blain, Hill, and Liberty	Liberty County created and added to the 18th Judicial District.
1933		After reorganization of the Judicial Districts by the 1929 Legislature, the 18th Judicial District was eliminated.
1947	Gallatin	18th Judicial District was recreated by the 1947 Legislature with Gallatin County the only County in the District.
1977		Second judgeship added to the 18th Judicial District.
2005		Third judgeship added to the 18th Judicial District.

Nineteenth Judicial District

Date	Name	Remark
1919-1928	John J. Greene	Appointed March 8, 1919 by Governor Sam V. Stewart to fill the newly created 19th Judicial District (L. 1919, Ch. 166).
1929-1932	R. M. Hattersley	
1977-1988	Robert M. Holter	Appointed July 20, 1977 to the newly recreated 19th Judicial District by Governor Tom Judge. Resigned in 1988 to accept apposition as Federal Magistrate.
1988-1995	Robert S. Keller	Appointed by Governor Ted Schwinden to succeed Robert M. Holter. Retired May 4, 1995 when Michael C. Prezeau was sworn into office.
1995-2010	Michael C. Prezeau	Appointed March 24, 1995 by Governor Mark Racicot to fill the unexpired term of Robert S. Keller.
2011-2016	James Wheelis	
2017-	Matthew Cuffe	

Year	Counties in District	Remarks
1919	Glacier, Pondera, Teton, and Toole	19th Judicial District created in 1919.
1933		After reorganization of the Judicial Districts by the 1929 Legislature, the 19th Judicial District was eliminated.
1977	Lincoln	The 19th Judicial District was recreated by the 1977 Legislature with Lincoln County as the only County in the District.

Twentieth Judicial District

Date	Name	Remark
1919-1924	Cloyd E. Comer	Appointed March 1919 by Governor Sam V. Stewart to fill the newly created 20th Judicial District.
1925-1932	Spurgeon E. Paul	
1985-2013	C. B. McNeil	Elected to the newly created 20th Judicial District. Constitutional Convention Delegate, 1972. Retired September 2013.
2013-	Jim Manley	
2000-	Deborah K. Christopher	

Year	Counties in District	Remarks
1919	Roosevelt and Sheridan	20th Judicial District created in 1919 (L. 1919, Ch. 168).
1920	Roosevelt, Sheridan, and Daniels	Daniels County created and added to the 20th Judicial District.
1933		After reorganization of the Judicial Districts by the 1929 Legislature, the 20th Judicial District was eliminated.
1983	Lake and Sanders	The 20th Judicial District was recreated by the 1983 Legislature.
1999		Second judgeship added to the district (L. 1999, Ch. 454).

Twenty-First Judicial District

Date	Name	Remark
1992-2019	Jeffrey H. Langton	Elected November 1991 to the newly created 20th Judicial District (L. 1991, Ch.642). Retired April 30, 2019.
2002-2018	James A. Haynes	Retired July 30, 2018.
2018-	Jennifer Lint	Appointed in September 2018 by Governor Steve Bullock to fill the unexpired term of James A. Haynes.
2019-	Howard F. Recht	Appointed on May 21, 2019 by Governor Steve Bullock to fill the unexpired term of Jeffrey H. Langton.

Year	Counties in District	Remarks
1991	Ravalli	21st Judicial District created in 1991 (L. 1991, Ch. 642).
2001		Second judgeship added to the 21st Judicial District (L. 2001, Ch. 497).

Twenty-Second Judicial District

Date	Name	Remark
1999-2018	Blair Jones	Appointed by Governor Marc Racicot to fill the newly created 22nd Judicial District (L. 1999, Ch.454).
2019-	Matthew J. Wald	Elected in 2018.

Year	Counties in District	Remarks
1999	Big Horn, Carbon, and Stillwater	22nd Judicial District created in 1999 (L. 1999, Ch. 454) out of the 13th Judicial District.

History of Judicial Districts 1865 – 2019

1864-65*

Justice of the Supreme Court of the Territory of Montana also served as district judges.

District 1 – Virginia City
District 2 – Bannack
District 3 – Helena

1865*

District 1 – Madison, Gallatin, and Big Horn
District 2 – Beaverhead, Deer Lodge, and Missoula
District 3 – Jefferson, Edgerton (Lewis & Clark), and Choteau

1866

Justice of the Supreme Court of the Territory of Montana also served as district judges.

District 1 – Madison, Gallatin, and Big Horn.
District 2 – Beaverhead, Deer Lodge, Missoula.
District 3 – Jefferson, Edgerton (Lewis & Clark), Choteau, Musselshell, and Meager.

1868*

Justice of the Supreme Court of the Territory of Montana also served as district judges.

District 1 – Madison, Gallatin, Big Horn and Beaverhead.
District 2 – Deer Lodge, Missoula, Meager, and Jefferson.
District 3 – Edgerton (Lewis & Clark).

1872*

Justice of the Supreme Court of the Territory of Montana also served as district judges.

District 1 – Madison, Beaverhead, and Gallatin.
District 2 – Deer Lodge, Missoula, Lewis & Clark, Meager, and Jefferson.
District 3 – Choteau, Dawson, and Big Horn

1886*

On July 10, 1886, a fourth judge was added by the United States Congress to the Supreme Court of the Territory of Montana, resulting in a fourth Judicial District.

District 1 – Lewis & Clark, Jefferson, and Beaverhead.
District 2 – Deer Lodge, Silver Bow, and Missoula.
District 3 – Madison, Park, Custer, Yellowstone, and Gallatin.
District 4 – Meagher, Fergus, Dawson, Choteau, And Cascade.

*Approximate Judicial Districts.

1889

The Montana Constitution of 1889 established eight Judicial Districts in Montana. Each Judicial District encompassed one or more of Montana's sixteen counties. Each Judicial District court was allotted one judge.

The Districts established by the Constitution in 1889 were:

- 1st Lewis and Clark
- 2nd Silver Bow
- 3rd Deer Lodge
- 4th Missoula
- 5th Beaverhead, Jefferson, and Madison
- 6th Gallatin, Park, and Meagher
- 7th Yellowstone, Custer, and Dawson
- 8th Chouteau, Cascade, and Fergus

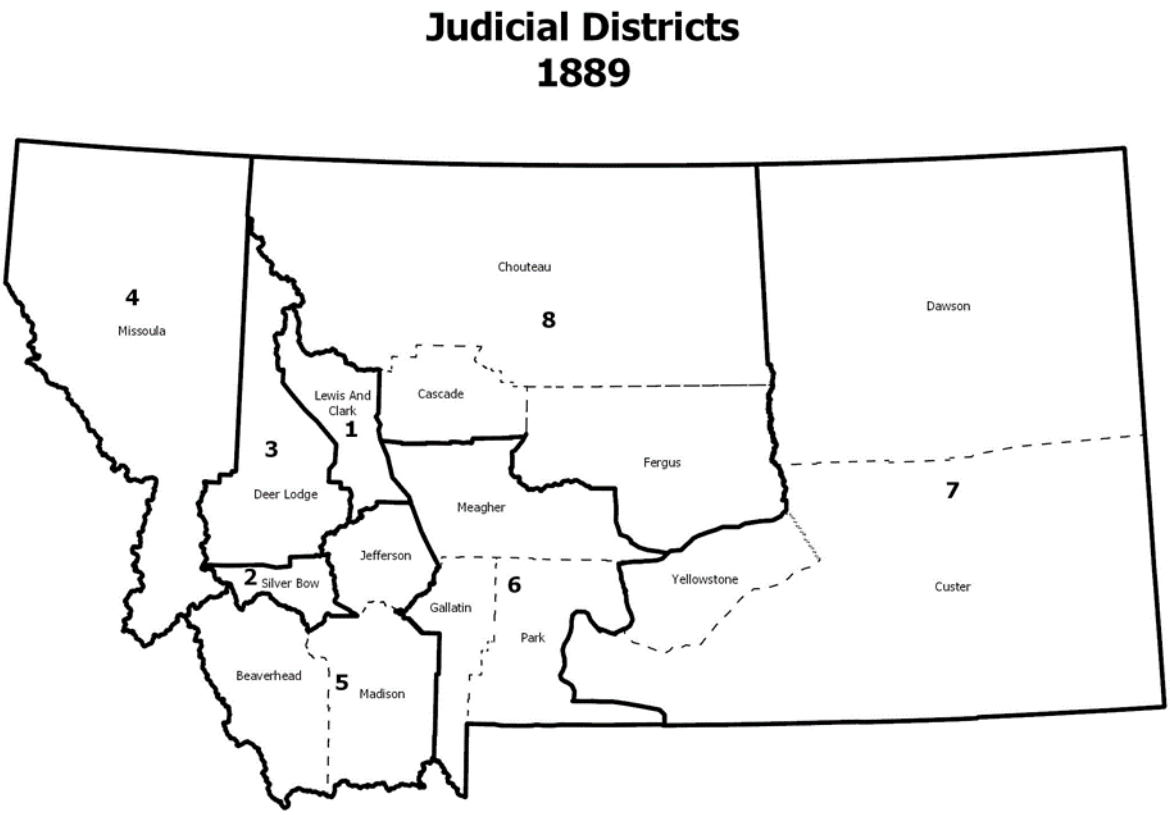


Figure 5 Montana Judicial Districts in 1889

1891

The Montana Constitution of 1889 also authorized the Montana Legislature to increase or decrease the number of districts and judgeships. So, in 1891 the Montana Legislature created the 9th and 10th Judicial Districts and added a second judgeship in the 1st and 2nd Judicial Districts.

The Judicial Districts established by 1889 were:

1st	Lewis and Clark
2nd	Silver Bow
3rd	Deer Lodge
4th	Missoula
5th	Beaverhead, Jefferson, and Madison
6th	Park, and Meagher
7th	Yellowstone, Custer, and Dawson
8th	Cascade
9th	Gallatin
10th	Chouteau, and Fergus

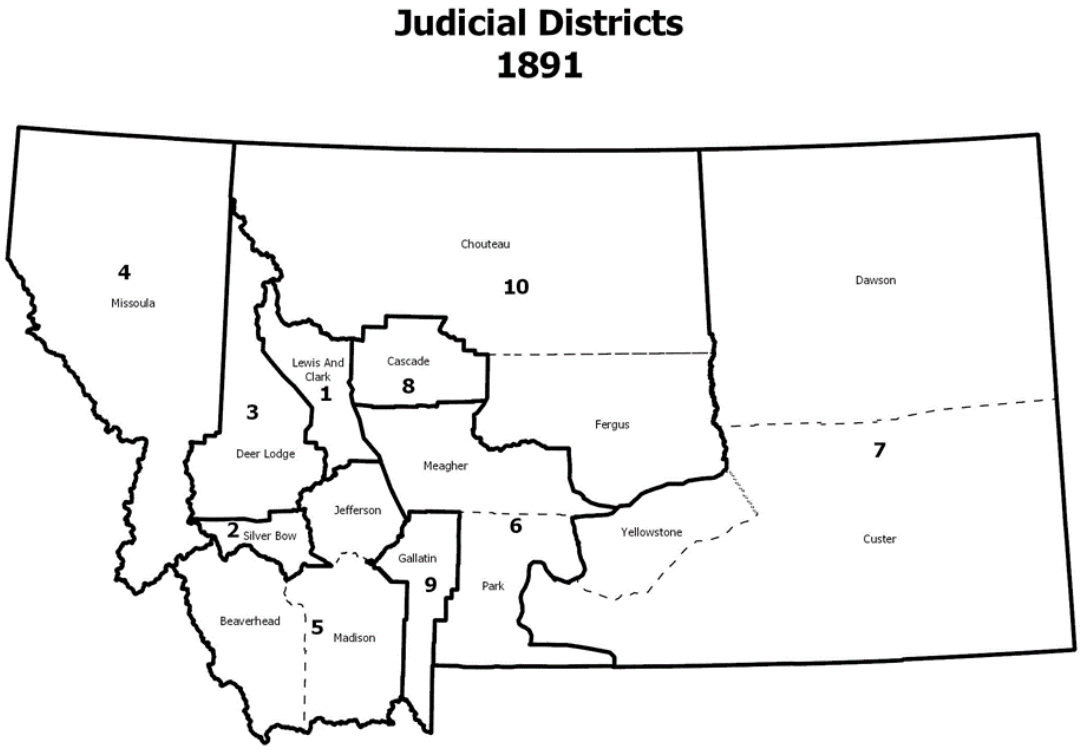


Figure 6. Montana Judicial Districts in 1891.

1893

In 1893, five new counties were created: Granite County was added to the 3rd Judicial District; Ravalli County was added to the 4th Judicial District; and Flathead, Teton, and Valley Counties became part of the 10th Judicial District.

The Judicial Districts established by 1893 were:

1st	Lewis and Clark
2nd	Silver Bow
3rd	Deer Lodge, and Granite
4th	Missoula, and Ravalli
5th	Beaverhead, Jefferson, and Madison
6th	Park, and Meagher
7th	Yellowstone, Custer, and Dawson
8th	Cascade
9th	Gallatin
10th	Chouteau, Fergus, Flathead, Teton, and Valley

1895

In 1895, Carbon and Sweet Grass Counties were established and assigned to the 6th Judicial District. Meagher County was moved from the 6th to become part of the 9th Judicial District. Flathead and Teton Counties were removed from the 10th Judicial District and became the newly established 11th Judicial District.

The Judicial Districts established by 1895 were:

1st	Lewis and Clark
2nd	Silver Bow
3rd	Deer Lodge, and Granite
4th	Missoula, and Ravalli
5th	Beaverhead, Jefferson, and Madison
6th	Park, Carbon, and Sweet Grass
7th	Yellowstone, Custer, and Dawson
8th	Cascade
9th	Gallatin, and Meagher
10th	Chouteau, Fergus, and Valley
11th	Flathead, and Teton

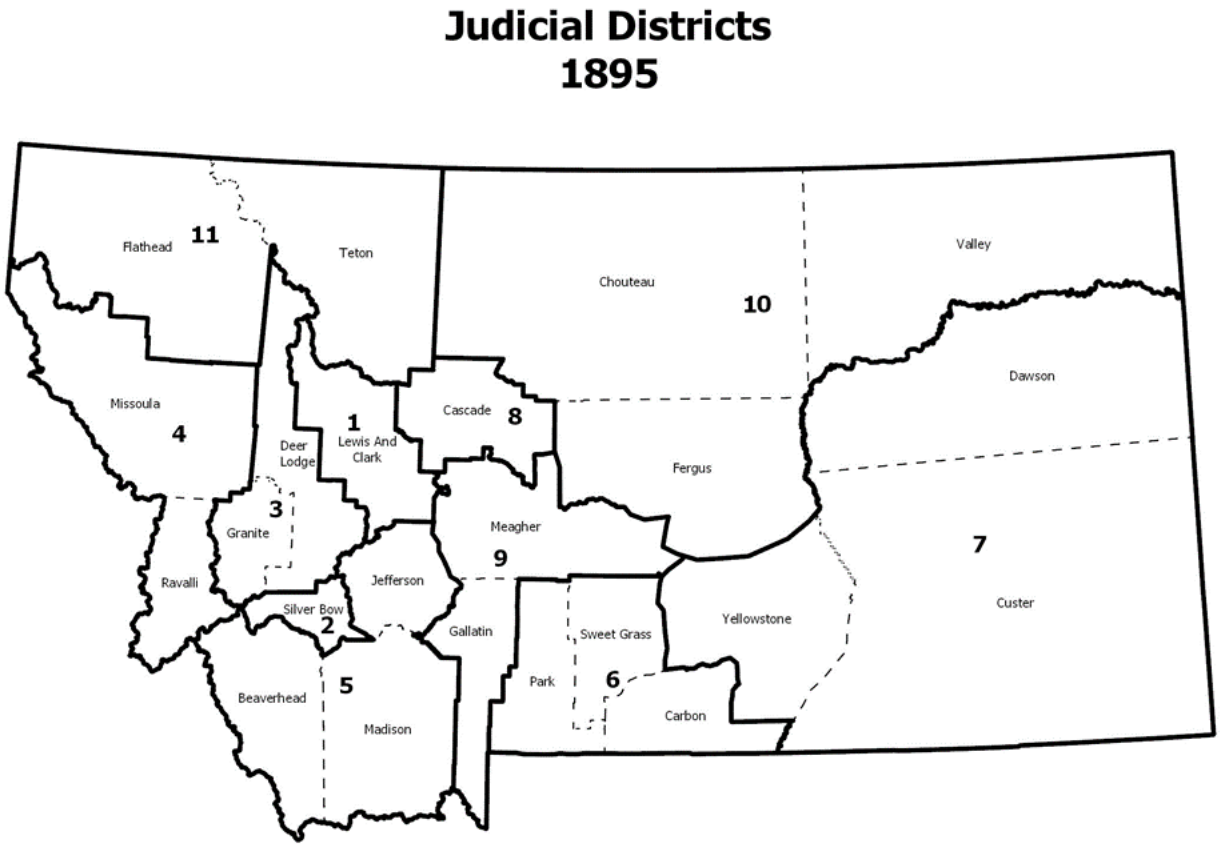


Figure 7 Montana Judicial Districts in 1895

1897

In 1897 Broadwater Count was established and became part of the 9th Judicial District.

The Judicial Districts established by 1897 were:

- 1st Lewis and Clark
- 2nd Silver Bow
- 3rd Deer Lodge, and Granite
- 4th Missoula, and Ravalli
- 5th Beaverhead, Jefferson, and Madison
- 6th Park, Carbon, and Sweet Grass
- 7th Yellowstone, Custer, and Dawson
- 8th Cascade
- 9th Gallatin, Meagher, and Broadwater
- 10th Chouteau, Fergus, and Valley
- 11th Flathead, and Teton

1901

In 1901, Powell and Rosebud Counties were established. Powell County became part of the 3rd Judicial District and Rosebud County was attached to the 7th Judicial District. The legislature also established the 12th Judicial District, which was composed of Chouteau and Valley Counties and Fergus County was moved to the 10th Judicial District. A third judgeship was added to the 2nd Judicial District in Silver Bow County.

That same year, 1901, the Montana Legislature passed a law changing the name of Deer Lodge County to Daly County. However, the Montana Supreme Court held that such a law was special legislation and was prohibited by the Montana Constitution.

The Judicial Districts established by 1901 were:

1st	Lewis and Clark
2nd	Silver Bow
3rd	Deer Lodge, Granite, and Powell
4th	Missoula, and Ravalli
5th	Beaverhead, Jefferson, and Madison
6th	Park, Carbon, and Sweet Grass
7th	Yellowstone, Custer, Dawson, and Rosebud
8th	Cascade
9th	Gallatin, Meagher, and Broadwater
10th	Fergus
11th	Flathead, and Teton
12th	Chouteau, and Valley

1904

In 1904, the Montana Legislature moved Meagher County form the 9th Judicial District to the 10th Judicial District.

The Judicial Districts established by 1904 were:

1st	Lewis and Clark
2nd	Silver Bow
3rd	Deer Lodge, Granite, and Powell
4th	Missoula, and Ravalli
5th	Beaverhead, Jefferson, and Madison
6th	Park, Carbon, and Sweet Grass
7th	Yellowstone, Custer, Dawson, and Rosebud
8th	Cascade
9th	Gallatin, and Broadwater
10th	Fergus, and Meagher
11th	Flathead, and Teton
12th	Chouteau, and Valley

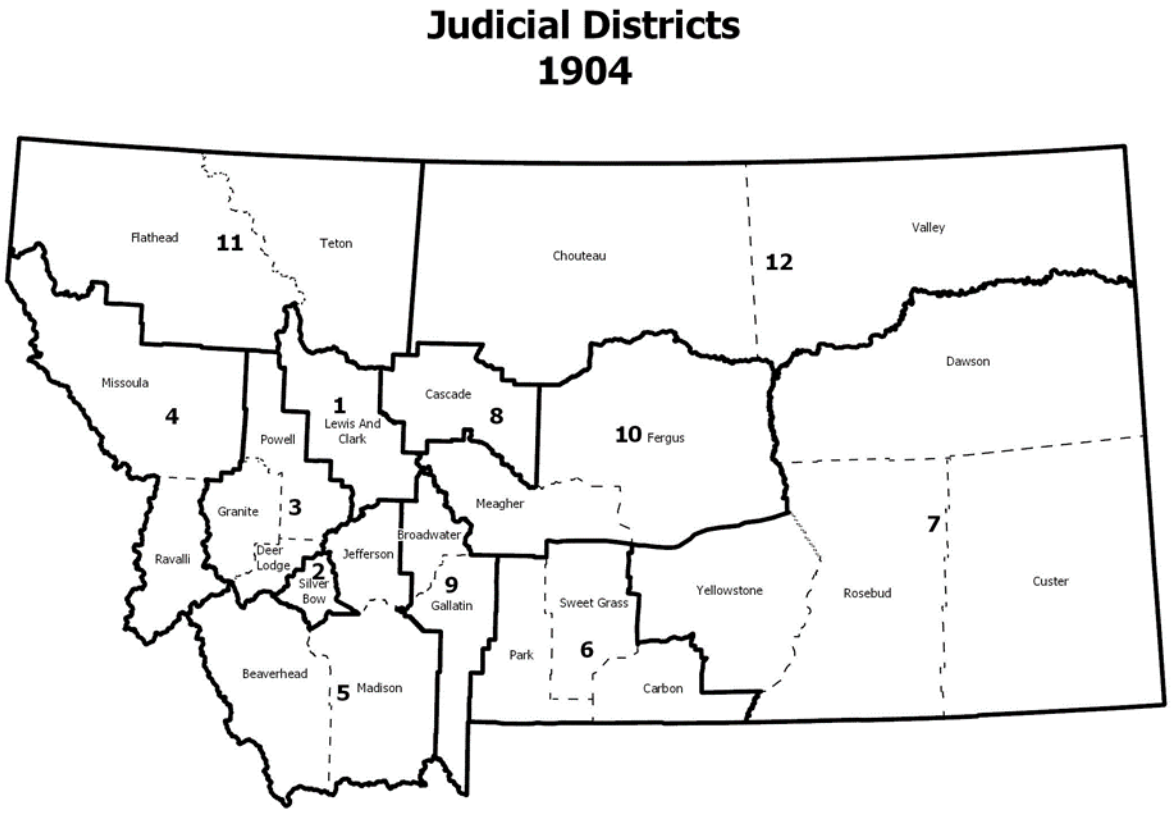


Figure 8. Montana Judicial Districts in 1904.

1905
In 1905, Sanders County was established and added to the 4th Judicial District.

The Judicial Districts established by 1905 were:

1st	Lewis and Clark
2nd	Silver Bow
3rd	Deer Lodge, Granite, and Powell
4th	Missoula, Ravalli, and Sanders
5th	Beaverhead, Jefferson, and Madison
6th	Park, Carbon, and Sweet Grass
7th	Yellowstone, Custer, Dawson, and Rosebud
8th	Cascade
9th	Gallatin, and Broadwater
10th	Fergus, and Meagher
11th	Flathead, and Teton
12th	Chouteau, and Valley

1907
In 1907, the 13th Judicial District was established and Carbon County, removed from the 6th Judicial District, Rosebud and Yellowstone Counties, removed from the 7th Judicial District, were added to it. Also, a second Judgeship was crated for the 4th Judicial District.

The Judicial Districts established by 1907 were:

1st	Lewis and Clark
2nd	Silver Bow
3rd	Deer Lodge, Granite, and Powell
4th	Missoula, Ravalli, and Sanders
5th	Beaverhead, Jefferson, and Madison
6th	Park, and Sweet Grass
7th	Custer, and Dawson
8th	Cascade
9th	Gallatin, and Broadwater
10th	Fergus, and Meagher
11th	Flathead, and Teton
12th	Chouteau, and Valley
13th	Carbon, Rosebud, and Yellowstone

1909

In 1909 Teton Count was moved from the 11th Judicial District to the 8th Judicial District (L.1909, Ch.26). From February to July of 1909 the 11th Judicial District represented only Flathead County. Then in July of 1909 Lincoln County was established and added to the 11th Judicial District (L.1909, Ch.133). A new judgeship was also created for the 5th and 8th Judicial Districts.

The Judicial Districts established by 1909 were:

1st	Lewis and Clark
2nd	Silver Bow
3rd	Deer Lodge, Granite, and Powell
4th	Missoula, Ravalli, and Sanders
5th	Beaverhead, Jefferson, and Madison
6th	Park, and Sweet Grass
7th	Custer, and Dawson
8th	Cascade, and Teton
9th	Gallatin, and Broadwater
10th	Fergus, and Meagher
11th	Flathead, and Lincoln
12th	Chouteau, and Valley
13th	Carbon, Rosebud, and Yellowstone

1911

In 1911, Musselshell County was established and added to the 13th Judicial District and a second Judgeship was created for 13th Judicial District.

The Judicial Districts established by 1911 were:

1st	Lewis and Clark
2nd	Silver Bow
3rd	Deer Lodge, Granite, and Powell
4th	Missoula, Ravalli, and Sanders
5th	Beaverhead, Jefferson, and Madison
6th	Park, and Sweet Grass
7th	Custer, and Dawson
8th	Cascade, and Teton
9th	Gallatin, and Broadwater
10th	Fergus, and Meagher
11th	Flathead, and Lincoln
12th	Chouteau, and Valley
13th	Carbon, Rosebud, Yellowstone, and Musselshell

1912

In 1912, Blaine and Hill counties were established by petition and added to the 12th Judicial District.

The Judicial Districts established by 1912 were:

- 1st Lewis and Clark
- 2nd Silver Bow
- 3rd Deer Lodge, Granite, and Powell
- 4th Missoula, Ravalli, and Sanders
- 5th Beaverhead, Jefferson, and Madison
- 6th Park, and Sweet Grass
- 7th Custer, and Dawson
- 8th Cascade, and Teton
- 9th Gallatin, and Broadwater
- 10th Fergus, and Meagher
- 11th Flathead, and Lincoln
- 12th Chouteau, Valley, Blaine, and Hill
- 13th Carbon, Rosebud, Yellowstone, and Musselshell

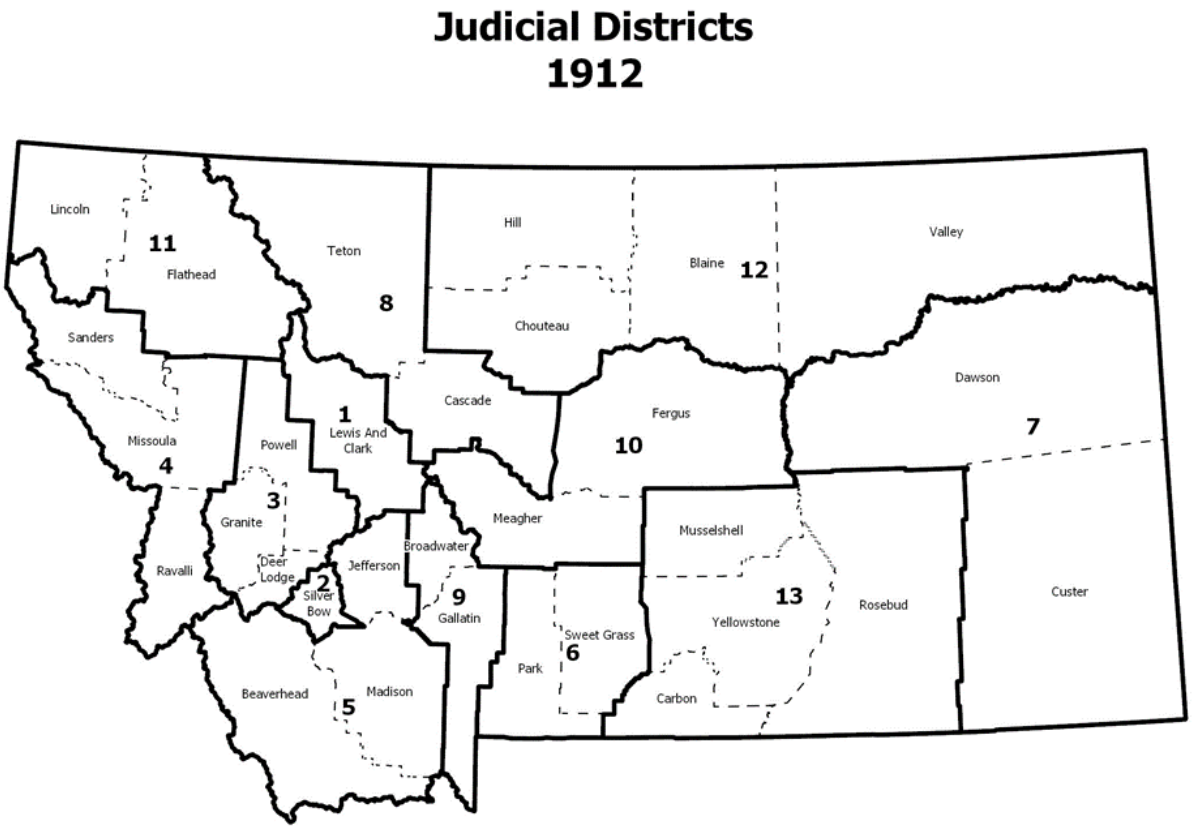


Figure 9 Montana Judicial Districts in 1912

1913

In 1913, Big Horn, Fallon, Sheridan, and Stillwater Counties were established. Big Horn County became part of the 13th Judicial District. Sheridan County became a part of the 12th Judicial District. Stillwater County was attached to the 6th Judicial District. Fallon County was established in December of 1913 and attached to the 7th Judicial District in 1914. Also, in 1913 a third judgeship was added to the 4th Judicial District, the 14th Judicial District was established, and Meagher and Broadwater Counties added to it.

The Judicial Districts established by 1913 were:

- 1st Lewis and Clark
- 2nd Silver Bow
- 3rd Deer Lodge, Granite, and Powell
- 4th Missoula, Ravalli, and Sanders
- 5th Beaverhead, Jefferson, and Madison
- 6th Park, Sweet Grass and Stillwater
- 7th Custer, and Dawson
- 8th Cascade, and Teton
- 9th Gallatin
- 10th Fergus
- 11th Flathead, and Lincoln
- 12th Chouteau, Valley, Blaine, Hill, and Sheridan
- 13th Carbon, Rosebud, Yellowstone, Musselshell, and Big Horn
- 14th Broadwater, and Meagher

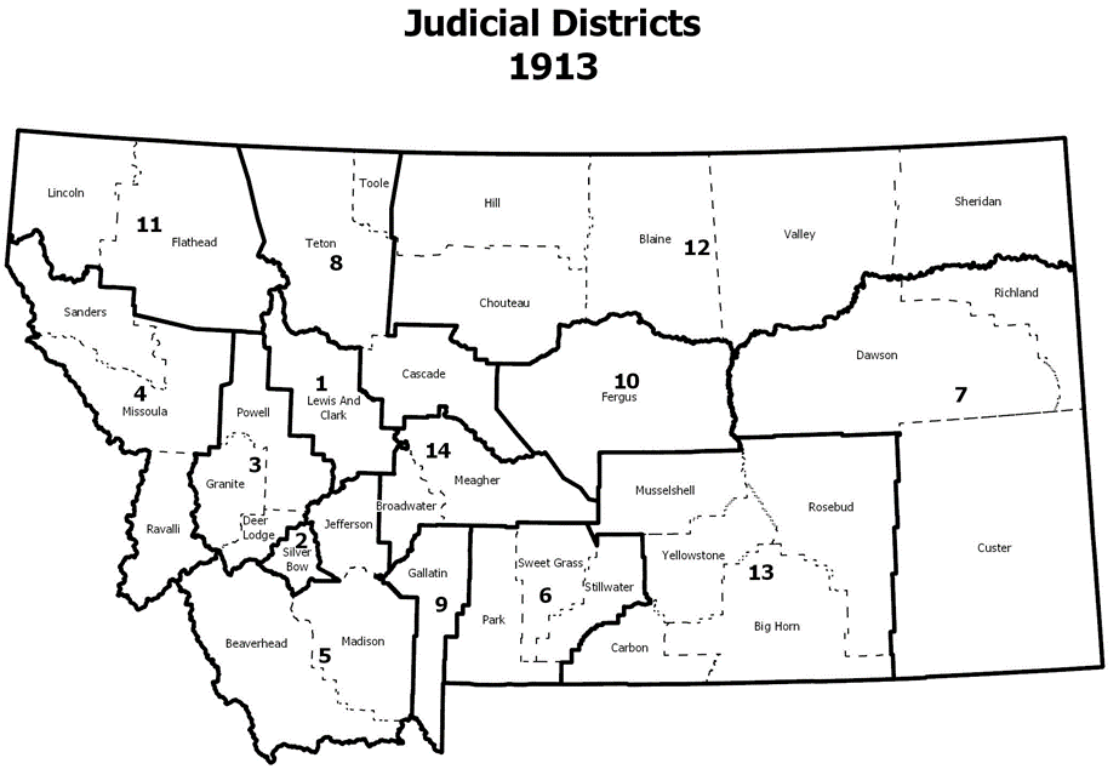


Figure 10. Montana Judicial Districts in 1913.

1914

In 1914, Mineral, Richland, Toole, and Wibaux Counties were established. Mineral County was attached to the 4th Judicial District, while Richland, Wibaux and Fallon Counties became part of the 7th Judicial District. Toole County was assigned to the 8th Judicial District.

The Judicial Districts established by 1914 were:

- 1st Lewis and Clark
- 2nd Silver Bow
- 3rd Deer Lodge, Granite, and Powell
- 4th Missoula, Ravalli, Sanders, and Mineral
- 5th Beaverhead, Jefferson, and Madison
- 6th Park, Sweet Grass and Stillwater
- 7th Custer, Dawson, Richland, Wibaux, and Fallon
- 8th Cascade, Teton, and Toole
- 9th Gallatin
- 10th Fergus
- 11th Flathead, and Lincoln
- 12th Chouteau, Valley, Blaine, Hill, and Sheridan
- 13th Carbon, Rosebud, Yellowstone, Musselshell, and Big Horn
- 14th Broadwater, and Meagher

1915

In 1915 Phillips and Prairie Counties were established and the Montana Legislature created the 15th, 16th, and 17th Judicial Districts. Custer and Fallon Counties removed from the 7th Judicial Districts and became part of the new 16th Judicial District with Prairie County. Sheridan and Valley Counties were removed for the 12th Judicial District and became part of the new 17th Judicial District with Phillips County. Rosebud and Musselshell Counties became the new 15th Judicial District.

The Judicial Districts established by 1915 were:

- 1st Lewis and Clark
- 2nd Silver Bow
- 3rd Deer Lodge, Granite, and Powell
- 4th Mineral, Missoula, Ravalli, and Sanders
- 5th Beaverhead, Jefferson, and Madison
- 6th Park, Stillwater, and Sweet Grass
- 7th Dawson, Richland, and Wibaux
- 8th Cascade, Teton, and Toole
- 9th Gallatin
- 10th Fergus
- 11th Flathead, and Lincoln
- 12th Blaine, Chouteau, and Hill
- 13th Big Horn, Carbon, and Yellowstone
- 14th Broadwater, and Meagher
- 15th Musselshell, and Rosebud
- 16th Custer, Fallon, and Prairie
- 17th Phillips, Sheridan, and Valley

1917

In 1917 the 18th Judicial District was established from Hill and Blaine Counties, from the 12th Judicial District. Two new counties were established: Wheatland County, which was added to the 14th Judicial District; and Carter County, which was added to the 16th Judicial District. A second judgeship was added to the 10th Judicial District.

The Judicial Districts established by 1917 were:

1st	Lewis and Clark
2nd	Silver Bow
3rd	Deer Lodge, Granite, and Powell
4th	Mineral, Missoula, Ravalli, and Sanders
5th	Beaverhead, Jefferson, and Madison
6th	Park, Stillwater, and Sweet Grass
7th	Dawson, Richland, and Wibaux
8th	Cascade, Teton, and Toole
9th	Gallatin
10th	Fergus
11th	Flathead, and Lincoln
12th	Chouteau
13th	Big Horn, Carbon, and Yellowstone
14th	Broadwater, Meagher, and Wheatland
15th	Musselshell, and Rosebud
16th	Carter, Custer, Fallon, and Prairie
17th	Phillips, Sheridan, and Valley
18th	Blaine, and Hill

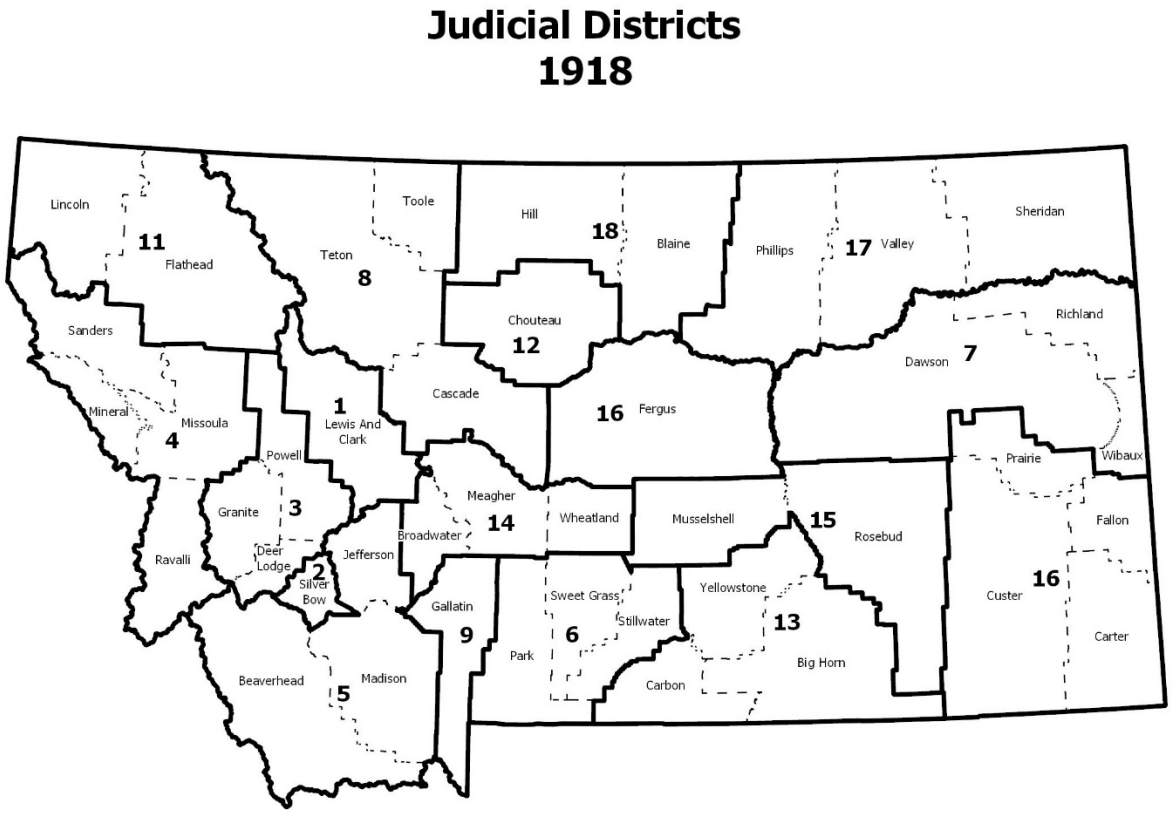


Figure 11. Montana Judicial Districts in 1918

1919

In 1919 seven new counties were organized and two additional Judicial Districts were created. McCone County was added to the 7th Judicial District, Treasure County became part of the 15th Judicial District, while Powder and Garfield Counties were attached to the 16th Judicial district. Teton and Toole Counties were removed from the 8th Judicial District and together with Glacier and Pondera formed the newly created 19th Judicial District. Sheridan County was removed from the 17th Judicial District and combined with Roosevelt County to become the new 20th Judicial District.

The Judicial Districts established by 1919 were:

1st	Lewis and Clark
2nd	Silver Bow Missoula,
3rd	Deer Lodge, Granite, and Powell
4th	Mineral, Ravalli, and Sanders
5th	Beaverhead, Jefferson, and Madison
6th	Park, Stillwater, and Sweet Grass
7th	Dawson, McCone, Richland, and Wibaux
8th	Cascade
9th	Gallatin
10th	Fergus
11th	Flathead, and Lincoln
12th	Chouteau
13th	Big Horn, Carbon, and Yellowstone
14th	Broadwater, Meagher, and Wheatland
15th	Musselshell, Rosebud and Treasure
16th	Carter, Custer, Fallon, Garfield, Powder River, and Prairie
17th	Phillips, and Valley
18th	Blaine, and Hill
19th	Glacier, Pondera, Teton, and Toole
20th	Roosevelt, and Sheridan

1920

In 1920 Daniels, Golden Valley, Judith Basin and Liberty Counties were organized. Golden Valley County was added to the 15th Judicial District, Liberty County was added to the 18th Judicial District and Daniels County became part of the 20th Judicial District. Judith Basin County was added to the 10th Judicial District in 1921.

The Judicial Districts established by 1920 were:

1st	Lewis and Clark
2nd	Silver Bow
3rd	Deer Lodge, Granite, and Powell
4th	Mineral, Missoula, Ravalli, and Sanders
5th	Beaverhead, Jefferson, and Madison
6th	Park, Stillwater, and Sweet Grass
7th	Dawson, McCone, Richland, and Wibaux
8th	Cascade
9th	Gallatin
10th	Fergus
11th	Flathead, and Lincoln
12th	Chouteau
13th	Big Horn, Carbon, and Yellowstone
14th	Broadwater, Meagher, and Wheatland
15th	Golden Valley, Musselshell, Rosebud and Treasure
16th	Carter, Custer, Fallon, Garfield, Powder River, and Prairie
17th	Phillips, and Valley
18th	Blaine, Hill, and Liberty
19th	Glacier, Pondera, Teton, and Toole
20th	Daniels, Roosevelt, and Sheridan

1921

In 1921 the only change in the Judicial Districts was the addition of Judith Basin County to the 10th Judicial District.

The Judicial Districts established by 1921 were:

1st	Lewis and Clark
2nd	Silver Bow
3rd	Deer Lodge, Granite, and Powell
4th	Mineral, Missoula, Ravalli, and Sanders
5th	Beaverhead, Jefferson, and Madison
6th	Park, Stillwater, and Sweet Grass
7th	Dawson, McCone, Richland, and Wibaux
8th	Cascade
9th	Gallatin
10th	Fergus, and Judith Basin
11th	Flathead, and Lincoln
12th	Chouteau
13th	Big Horn, Carbon, and Yellowstone

14th Broadwater, Meagher, and Wheatland
15th Golden Valley, Musselshell, Rosebud and Treasure
16th Carter, Custer, Fallon, Garfield, Powder River, and Prairie
17th Phillips, and Valley
18th Blaine, Hill, and Liberty
19th Glacier, Pondera, Teton, and Toole
20th Daniels, Roosevelt, and Sheridan

1923

In 1923 Lake Count was organized and became part of the 4th Judicial District.

The Judicial Districts established by 1921 were:

1st Lewis and Clark
2nd Silver Bow
3rd Deer Lodge, Granite, and Powell
4th Lake, Mineral, Missoula, Ravalli, and Sanders
5th Beaverhead, Jefferson, and Madison
6th Park, Stillwater, and Sweet Grass
7th Dawson, McCone, Richland, and Wibaux
8th Cascade
9th Gallatin
10th Fergus, and Judith Basin
11th Flathead, and Lincoln
12th Chouteau
13th Big Horn, Carbon, and Yellowstone
14th Broadwater, Meagher, and Wheatland
15th Golden Valley, Musselshell, Rosebud and Treasure
16th Carter, Custer, Fallon, Garfield, Powder River, and Prairie
17th Phillips, and Valley
18th Blaine, Hill, and Liberty
19th Glacier, Pondera, Teton, and Toole
20th Daniels, Roosevelt, and Sheridan

1925

In 1925 Petroleum County, the last county to be organized in the State of Montana, became part of the 10th Judicial District.

The Judicial Districts established by 1921 were:

1st Lewis and Clark
2nd Silver Bow
3rd Deer Lodge, Granite, and Powell
4th Lake, Mineral, Missoula, Ravalli, and Sanders
5th Beaverhead, Jefferson, and Madison
6th Park, Stillwater, and Sweet Grass
7th Dawson, McCone, Richland, and Wibaux
8th Cascade
9th Gallatin
10th Fergus, Judith Basin, and petroleum
11th Flathead, and Lincoln
12th Chouteau
13th Big Horn, Carbon, and Yellowstone
14th Broadwater, Meagher, and Wheatland
15th Golden Valley, Musselshell, Rosebud and Treasure
16th Carter, Custer, Fallon, Garfield, Powder River, and Prairie
17th Phillips, and Valley
18th Blaine, Hill, and Liberty
19th Glacier, Pondera, Teton, and Toole
20th Daniels, Roosevelt, and Sheridan

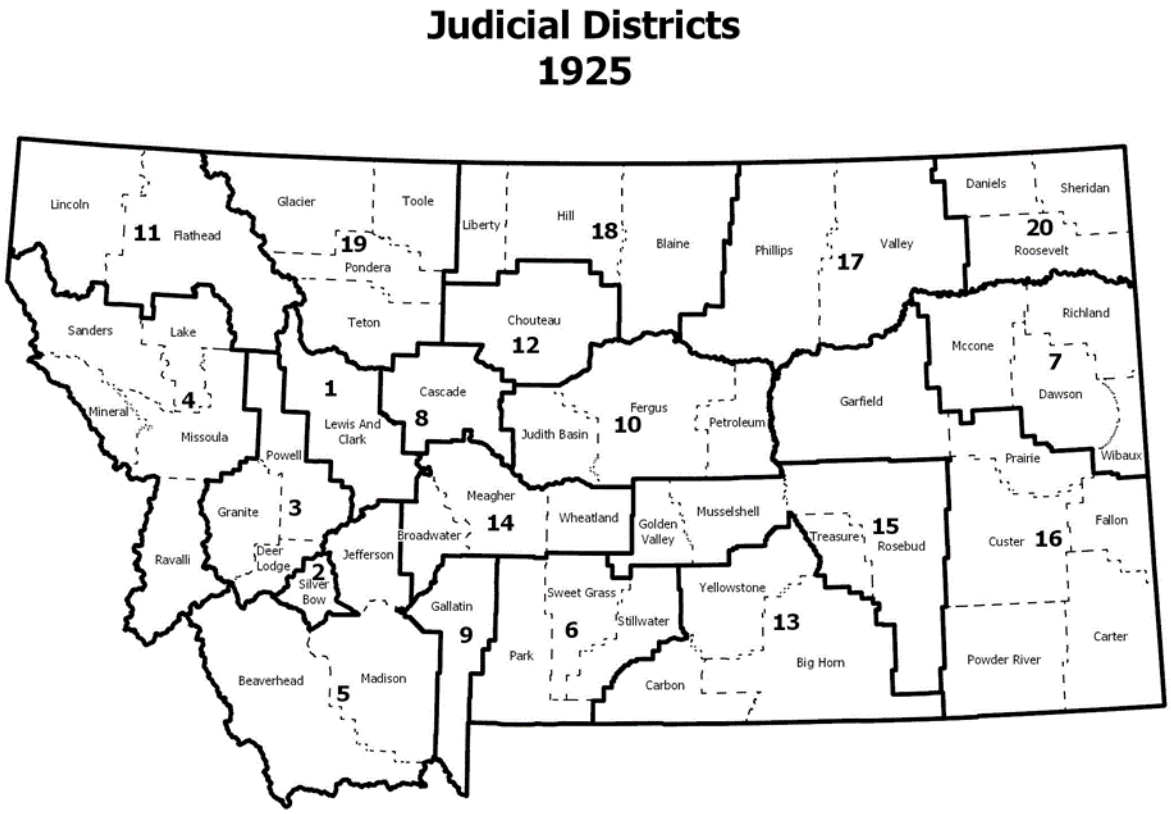


Figure 12. Montana Judicial Districts in 1925.

1933

The Montana land boom of the 1910s went bust in 1921. Many counties lost population as fast as they gained it. As a result of economic depression and decreases in population, accompanied by reduced judicial caseloads, the 1929 legislature commissioned a special committee to study the "business transacted by the several District Court of the State." The result of the study was that the Montana Legislature completely reorganized several judicial districts and eliminated three districts and seven judges. These changes became effective on January 1, 1933.

The Judicial Districts established by 1933 were:

1st	Broadwater, and Lewis and Clark
2nd	Silver Bow
3rd	Deer Lodge, Granite, and Powell
4th	Lake, Mineral, Missoula, Ravalli, and Sanders
5th	Beaverhead, Jefferson, and Madison
6th	Gallatin, Park, and Sweet Grass
7th	Dawson, McCone, Richland, and Wibaux
8th	Cascade, and Chouteau
9th	Glacier, Pondera, Teton, and Toole
10th	Fergus, Judith Basin, and petroleum
11th	Flathead, and Lincoln
12th	Blaine, Hill, and Liberty
13th	Big Horn, Carbon, Stillwater, Treasure, and Yellowstone
14th	Golden Valley, Meagher, Musselshell, and Wheatland
15th	Daniels, Roosevelt, and Sheridan
16th	Carter, Custer, Fallon, Garfield, Powder River, Prairie, and Rosebud
17th	Phillips, and Valley

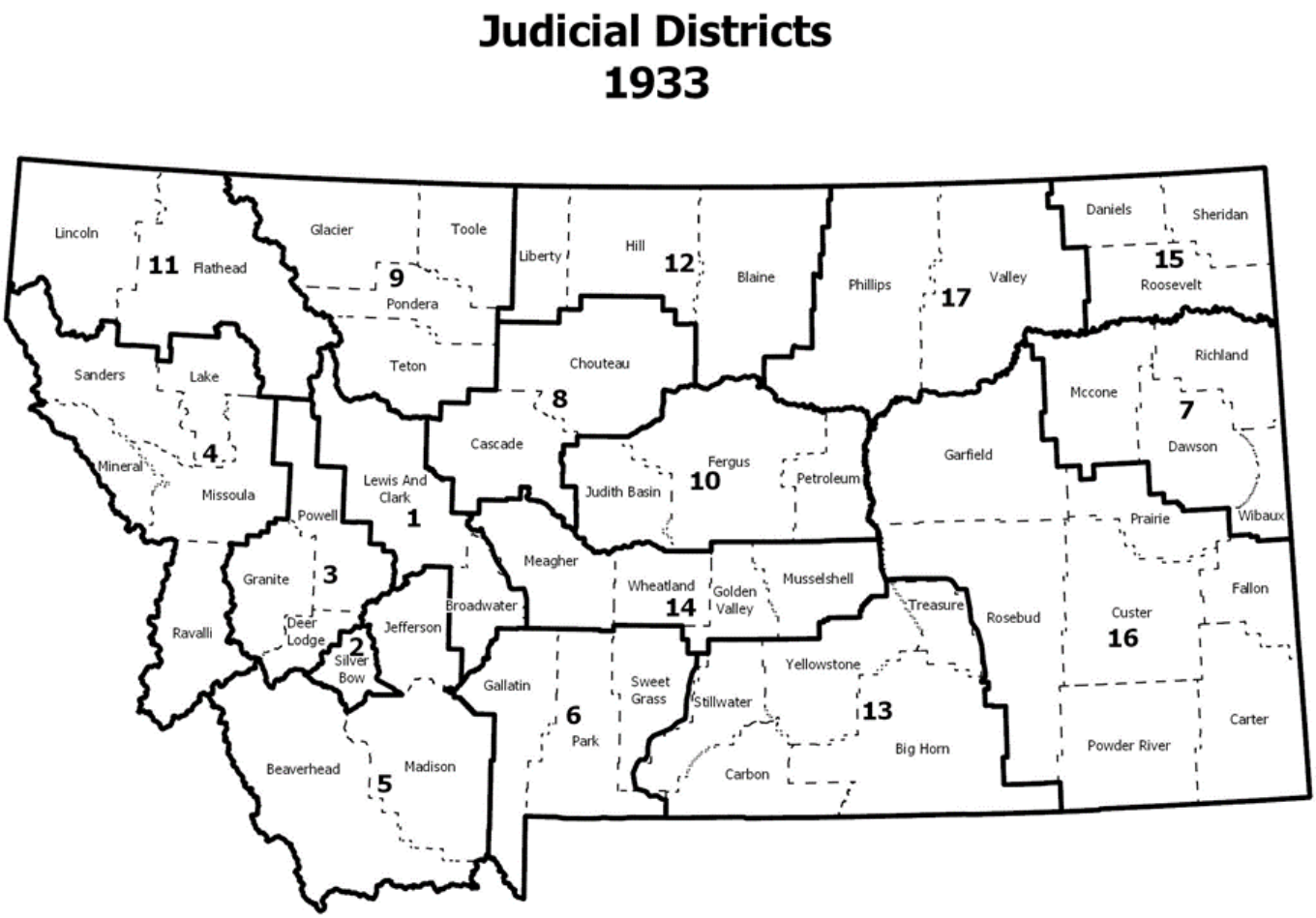


Figure 13. Montana Judicial Districts in 1933.

1947

In 1947 the Montana Legislature removed Gallatin County from the 6th Judicial District and created the 18th Judicial District with Gallatin County as the district.

The Judicial Districts established by 1947 were:

1st	Broadwater, and Lewis and Clark
2nd	Silver Bow
3rd	Deer Lodge, Granite, and Powell
4th	Lake, Mineral, Missoula, Ravalli, and Sanders
5th	Beaverhead, Jefferson, and Madison
6th	Park, and Sweet Grass
7th	Dawson, McCone, Richland, and Wibaux
8th	Cascade, and Chouteau
9th	Glacier, Pondera, Teton, and Toole
10th	Fergus, Judith Basin, and petroleum
11th	Flathead, and Lincoln
12th	Blaine, Hill, and Liberty
13th	Big Horn, Carbon, Stillwater, Treasure, and Yellowstone
14th	Golden Valley, Meagher, Musselshell, and Wheatland
15th	Daniels, Roosevelt, and Sheridan
16th	Carter, Custer, Fallon, Garfield, Powder River, Prairie, and Rosebud
17th	Phillips, and Valley
18th	Gallatin

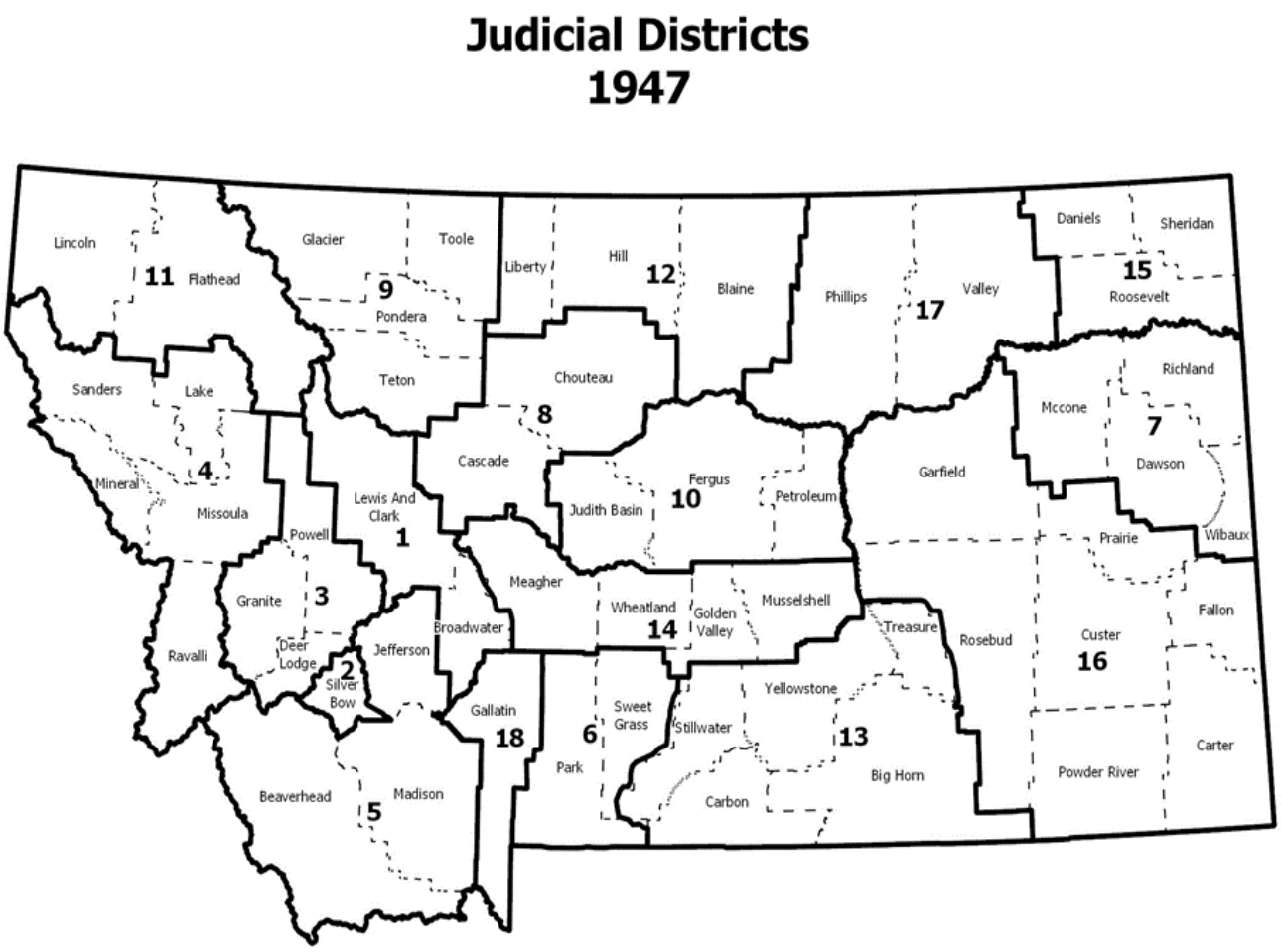


Figure 14. Montana Judicial Districts in 1947.

1955
In 1955 the Montana legislature created a third judgeship in the 13th Judicial District.

1957
In 1957 the Montana legislature created a second judgeship in the 11th Judicial District.

1959
In 1959 the Montana Legislature created a third judgeship in the 8th Judicial District.

1963
In 1963 the Montana Legislature created a third judgeship in the 4th Judicial District.

1977
In 1977 the Montana legislature authorized a fourth district judge in the 13th judicial District and a second Judgeship in the 18th Judicial District. The 1977 Legislature also established the 19th Judicial District by removing Lincoln County from the 11th Judicial District, making both Lincoln and Flathead single county judicial districts. The judgeships created in the existing districts were to be elected at the general election held in 1978, while the judgeship in the newly created 19th Judicial District was initially appointed by the Governor.

The Judicial Districts established by 1977 were:

- 1st Broadwater, and Lewis and Clark
- 2nd Silver Bow
- 3rd Deer Lodge, Granite, and Powell
- 4th Lake, Mineral, Missoula, Ravalli, and Sanders
- 5th Beaverhead, Jefferson, and Madison
- 6th Park, and Sweet Grass
- 7th Dawson, McCone, Richland, and Wibaux
- 8th Cascade, and Chouteau
- 9th Glacier, Pondera, Teton, and Toole
- 10th Fergus, Judith Basin, and petroleum
- 11th Flathead
- 12th Blaine, Hill, and Liberty
- 13th Big Horn, Carbon, Stillwater, Treasure, and Yellowstone
- 14th Golden Valley, Meagher, Musselshell, and Wheatland
- 15th Daniels, Roosevelt, and Sheridan
- 16th Carter, Custer, Fallon, Garfield, Powder River, Prairie, and Rosebud
- 17th Phillips, and Valley
- 18th Gallatin
- 19th Lincoln

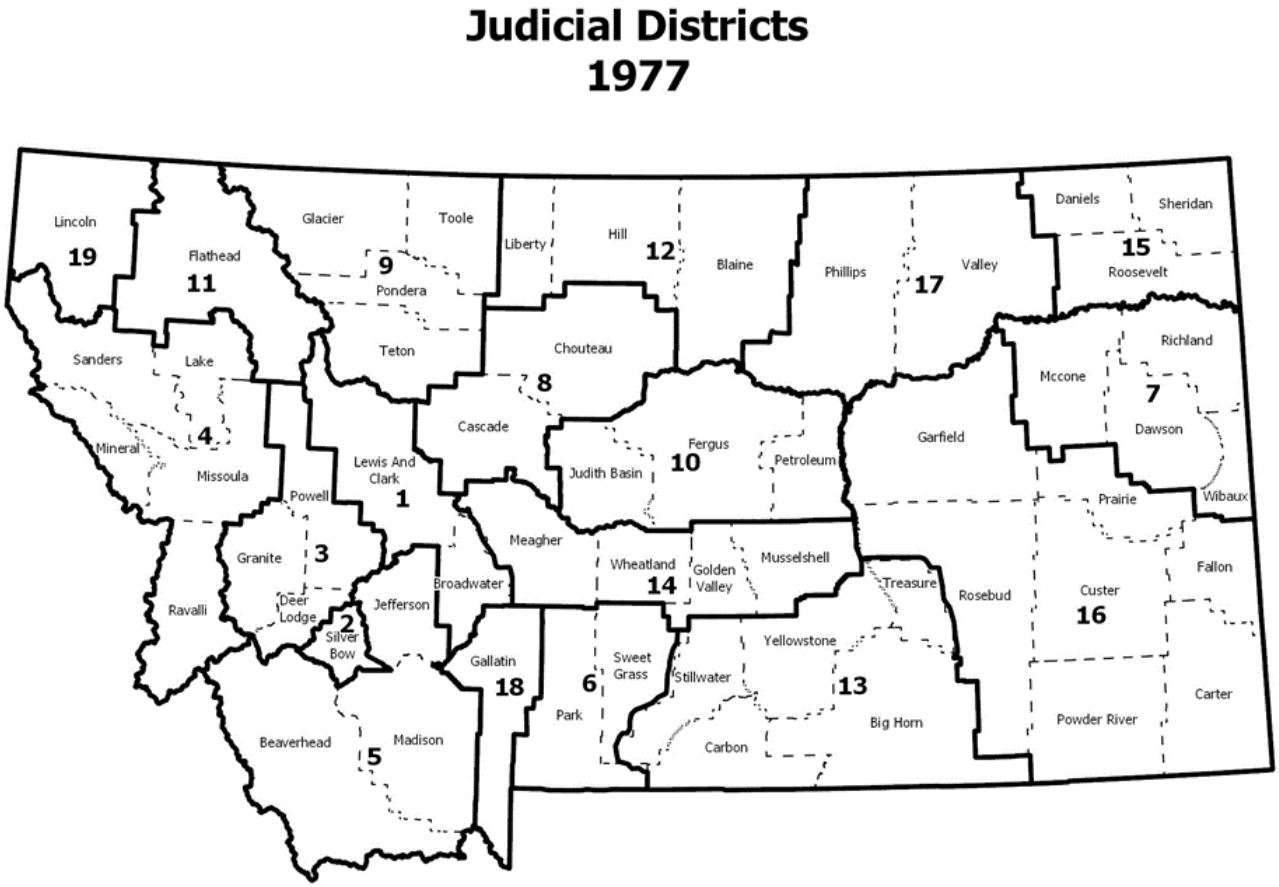


Figure 15. Montana Judicial Districts in 1977.

1979

In 1979 the Montana Legislature authorized a fourth district judge for the 4th Judicial District. This seat was initially filled at the 1980 general election and the judge elected took office on January 1, 1981. The principal office of the newly created judgeship was Lake County and the Chief Judge of the 4th Judicial District was given the authority to assign one judge to the seat.

1983

In 1983 the Montana Legislature created the 20th Judicial District by removing Lake and Sanders Counties from the 4th Judicial District. Prairie County was removed from the 16th Judicial District and added to the 7th Judicial District. Chouteau County was removed from the 8th Judicial District and became part of the 12th Judicial District. Treasure County was added to the 16th Judicial District and remove from the 13th Judicial District.

The Montana Legislature also created additional judgeships in the 1st, 7th, and 13th Judicial Districts. All changes became effective January 1, 1985. The judgeships created by the 1983 Legislature were initially filled at the 1984 general election and the judges elected were to take office on the first Monday of January 1985. However, the Legislature provided that the seats could be filled at the 1983 general election if the majority of the county commissioners in each county within the judicial district where the judge was to be elected agreed to conduct the election. If an elected were conducted in 1983, the judge elected would take office on the first Monday of January 1984.

The Judicial Districts established by 1983 were:

1st	Broadwater, and Lewis and Clark
2nd	Silver Bow
3rd	Deer Lodge, Granite, and Powell
4th	Mineral, Missoula, and Ravalli
5th	Beaverhead, Jefferson, and Madison
6th	Park, and Sweet Grass
7th	Dawson, McCone, Prairie, Richland, and Wibaux
8th	Cascade
9th	Glacier, Pondera, Teton, and Toole
10th	Fergus, Judith Basin, and petroleum
11th	Flathead
12th	Blaine, Chouteau, Hill, and Liberty
13th	Big Horn, Carbon, Stillwater, and Yellowstone
14th	Golden Valley, Meagher, Musselshell, and Wheatland
15th	Daniels, Roosevelt, and Sheridan
16th	Carter, Custer, Fallon, Garfield, Powder River, Rosebud, and Treasure,
17th	Phillips, and Valley
18th	Gallatin
19th	Lincoln
20th	Lake, and Sanders

1985

In 1985 the Montana Legislature moved Blaine County from the 12th Judicial District to the 17th Judicial District.

The Judicial Districts established by 1985 were:

- 1st Broadwater, and Lewis and Clark
- 2nd Silver Bow
- 3rd Deer Lodge, Granite, and Powell
- 4th Mineral, Missoula, and Ravalli
- 5th Beaverhead, Jefferson, and Madison
- 6th Park, and Sweet Grass
- 7th Dawson, McCone, Prairie, Richland, and Wibaux
- 8th Cascade
- 9th Glacier, Pondera, Teton, and Toole
- 10th Fergus, Judith Basin, and petroleum
- 11th Flathead
- 12th Chouteau, Hill, and Liberty
- 13th Big Horn, Carbon, Stillwater, and Yellowstone
- 14th Golden Valley, Meagher, Musselshell, and Wheatland
- 15th Daniels, Roosevelt, and Sheridan
- 16th Carter, Custer, Fallon, Garfield, Powder River, Rosebud, and Treasure,
- 17th Blaine, Phillips, and Valley
- 18th Gallatin
- 19th Lincoln
- 20th Lake, and Sanders

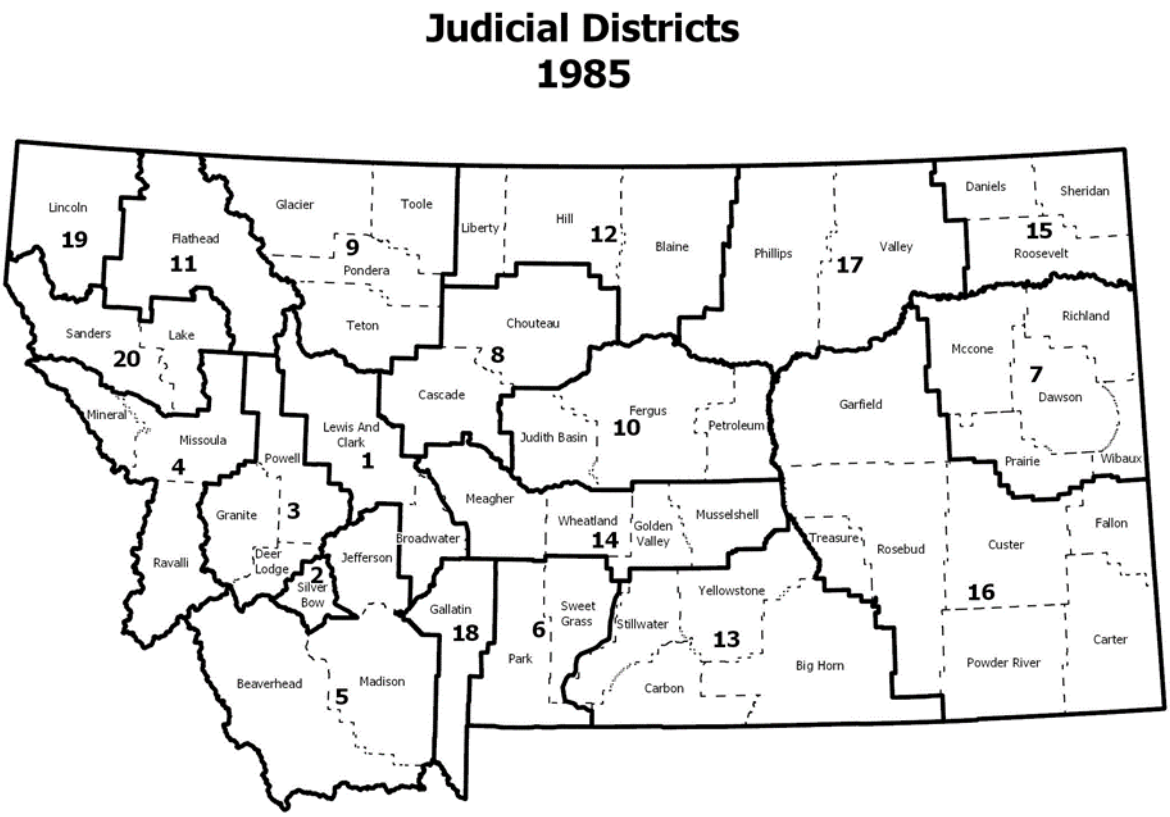


Figure 16. Montana Judicial Districts in 1985.

1991

The Judicial Districts established by 1991 were:

- 1st Broadwater, and Lewis and Clark
- 2nd Silver Bow
- 3rd Deer Lodge, Granite, and Powell
- 4th Mineral, and Missoula
- 5th Beaverhead, Jefferson, and Madison
- 6th Park, and Sweet Grass
- 7th Dawson, McCone, Prairie, Richland, and Wibaux
- 8th Cascade
- 9th Glacier, Pondera, Teton, and Toole
- 10th Fergus, Judith Basin, and petroleum
- 11th Flathead
- 12th Chouteau, Hill, and Liberty
- 13th Big Horn, Carbon, Stillwater, and Yellowstone

14th Golden Valley, Meagher, Musselshell, and Wheatland
15th Daniels, Roosevelt, and Sheridan
16th Carter, Custer, Fallon, Garfield, Powder River, Rosebud, and Treasure,
17th Blaine, Phillips, and Valley
18th Gallatin
19th Lincoln
20th Lake, and Sanders
21st Ravalli

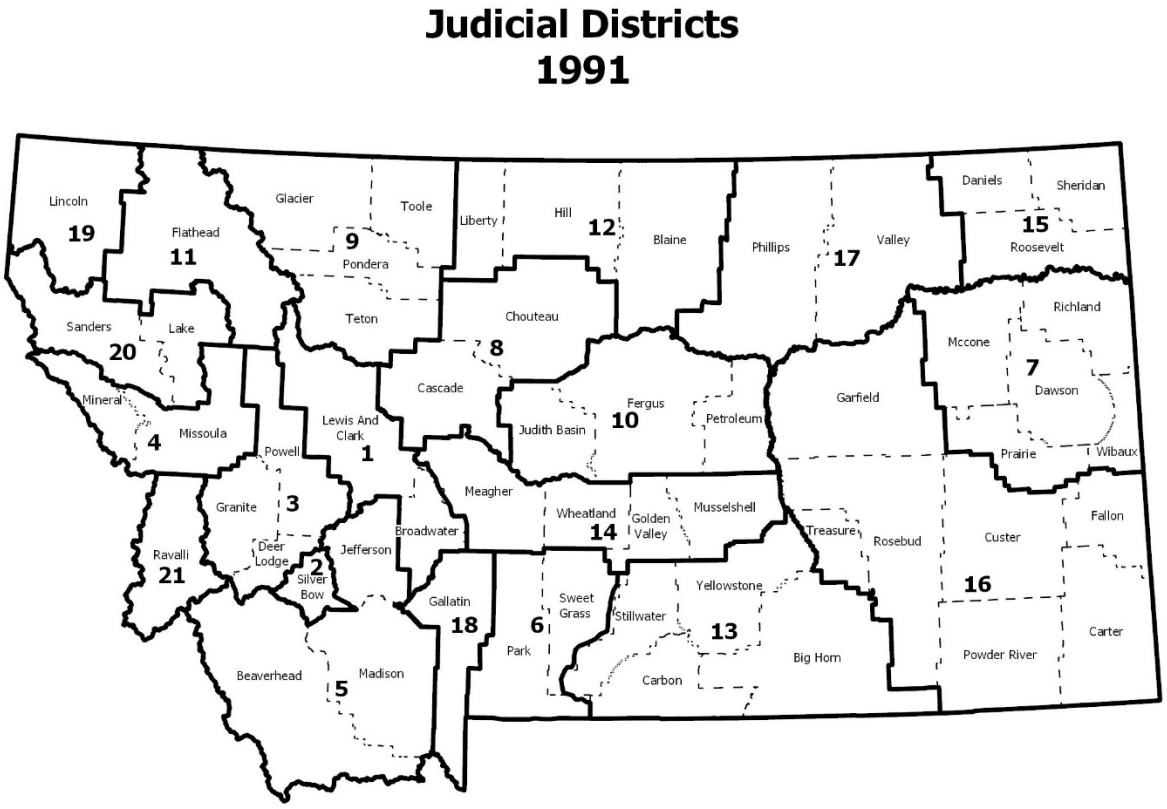


Figure 17. Montana Judicial Districts in 1991.

1999

The Judicial Districts established by 1999 were:

- 1st Broadwater, and Lewis and Clark
- 2nd Silver Bow
- 3rd Deer Lodge, Granite, and Powell
- 4th Mineral, and Missoula
- 5th Beaverhead, Jefferson, and Madison
- 6th Park, and Sweet Grass
- 7th Dawson, McCone, Prairie, Richland, and Wibaux
- 8th Cascade
- 9th Glacier, Pondera, Teton, and Toole
- 10th Fergus, Judith Basin, and petroleum
- 11th Flathead
- 12th Chouteau, Hill, and Liberty
- 13th Yellowstone
- 14th Golden Valley, Meagher, Musselshell, and Wheatland
- 15th Daniels, Roosevelt, and Sheridan
- 16th Carter, Custer, Fallon, Garfield, Powder River, Rosebud, and Treasure,
- 17th Blaine, Phillips, and Valley
- 18th Gallatin
- 19th Lincoln
- 20th Lake, and Sanders
- 21st Ravalli
- 22nd Big Horn, Carbon, and Stillwater

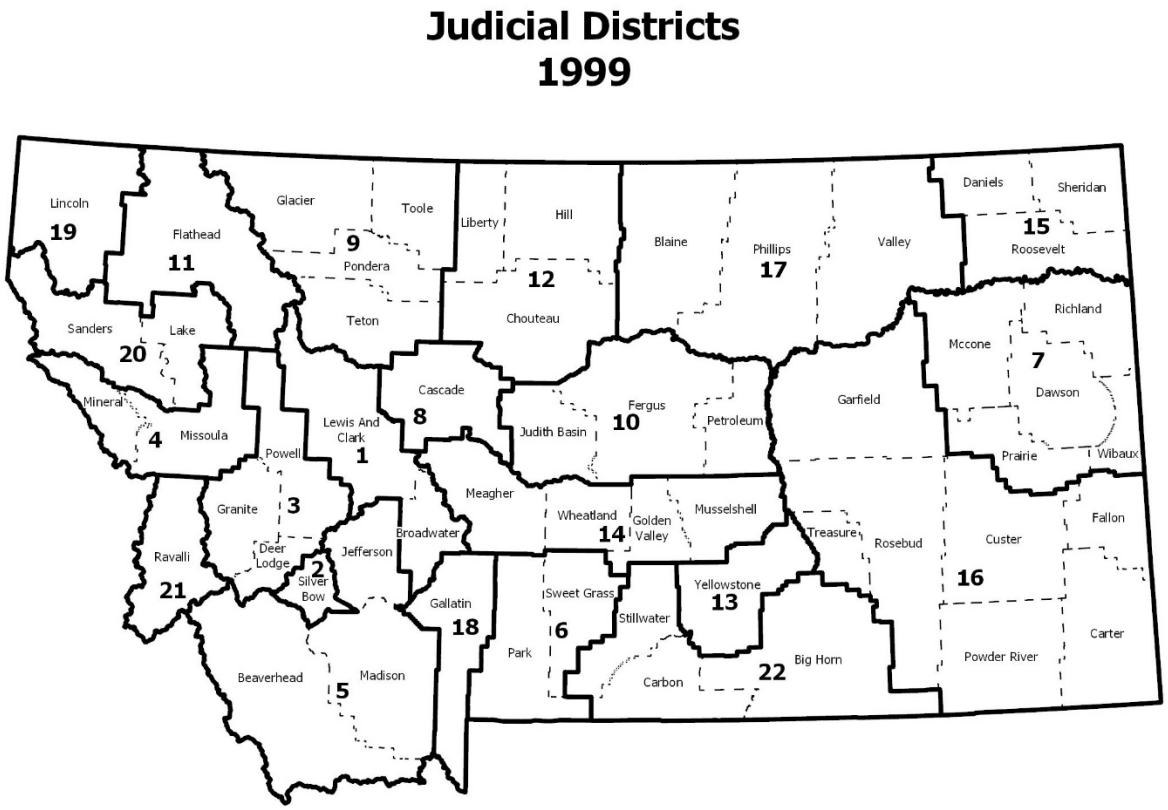


Figure 18. Montana Judicial Districts in 1999.

The Montana Workers' Compensation Court

History

Montana's Workers' Compensation Court was created by the Montana Legislature on July 1, 1975.[29] Initially called the Office of the Workers' Compensation Judge, the court's mission is to provide an effective and efficient forum to resolve disputes arising under Montana's Workers' Compensation Act (enacted in 1915), and other issues related to occupational hazards. The Workers' Compensation Court also serves as the Court of Appeals for decisions made by the Montana Department of Industry and Labor. The Montana Supreme Court in *Skrukrud v. Gallatin Laundry Co.* characterizes the court as 'quasi-judicial' being both administrative and adjudicatory in nature[30].

The court was created in response to the outcry following an audit conducted in 1974 by the Montana Legislative Auditor found numerous problems with the current review system[31]. One of the key problems was the dual role assume by the administrator of the Montana Division of Workers' Compensation. This position was responsible for both the administration and enforcement of the law as well as the execution of the state insurance fund, which underwrote the Workers' Compensation Insurance in Montana. The dual role played by the administrator posed an inherent conflict of interest[32]. In response to the report the Montana Legislature mandated the formation of a select committee to make recommendations to the legislature to resolve this conflict. This led to the removal of the adjudication process from the Division of Workers' Compensation and the creation of the Office of the Workers' Compensation Judge[33].

Judges

Date	Name	Remark
1975-1981	William E. Hunt	First Judge
1981-1993	Timothy W. Reardon	
1993-2005	Michael O. McCarter	
2005-2014	James J. Shea	Appointed to the Montana Supreme court in 2014.
2014-	David M. Sandler	

*Judges are appointed by the governor for six-year terms usually starting in September.

Clerks of Court

Date	Name	Remark
1975-1983	Virginia L. Broughton	Resigned on July 14, 1983
1983-2006	Patricia J. Kessner	Hired, September 6, 1983 and resigned, September 29, 2006.
2006-2013	Clara Wilson	Hired in October 2006 and resigned in March 2013.
2013-	Jacqueline G. Poole	Hired on June 11, 2013.

[29] Laws of Montana, 1975, Ch.537.
[30] 171 Mont. 217, 557 P.2d. 278 (1976) at 221.
[31] Office of the Legislative Auditor. "Report on review of certain insurance and disability compensation operations." June 1974.
[32] Office of the Legislative Auditor. "Report on review of certain insurance and disability compensation operations." June 1974.
[33] Hunt William E., and Gregory A. Luinstra. "The Montana Workers' Compensation Court: A Status Report." *Montana Law Review*, vol. 41, 1980.

The Montana Water Court

History

Over 170 years pioneer farmers and miners began to move into the American West and establish homesteads and mines. Because of the arid nature of the west, water rights were (and still are) a big deal. To manage water rights in the West, the custom was adopted that the first person to claim the water and put it to some beneficial use would have the first right to that amount of water[34]. This custom was later articulated by the California Supreme Court in 1855 as "First in time, First in right"[35]. The Montana Supreme Court first recognized this principle in 1921[36]. As disputes arose and were settled by the state district courts. But over time, it became difficult to track the numerous water rights along a water course and the water became over-appropriated[37]. By 1939 the Montana Legislature recognized the need to organize the legal system around water rights.

Very little happened though until the 1972 Montana Constitution which recognized existing water rights and directed the state to establish a system of centralized records to administer and regulate those water rights.[38] In 1973 the Montana legislature passed the Water Use Act, which launched the adjudication process. The Montana Department of Natural Resources, now the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC) was tasked with determining existing water rights while the State District Courts would issue decrees established each water right that existed before 1973[1]. The task soon became overwhelming and it was estimated the process would take over one hundred years to complete. Litigation from the federal government and tribes further complicated matters[1].

So, in 1979 the Montana Legislature established a special system of water courts to adjudicate the process[39]. They coupled this with mandatory file of water claims. Today the DNRC examines each claim and submits its findings to the water court. The water court conducts the litigation phase of adjudication, holds public notices and issues final decrees across entire water basins. The following decade saw a marked increase in the verification of water right claims and issuing of decrees. However, there was not clear demarcation of duties and the agency and court often disagreed on responsibilities.[40] So, in 1987 the Montana Supreme court established, 'Water right claim examination rules' to clarify entity responsibilities[41]. This has smoothed the process out significantly.

The water court was designed to be a temporary body. The process, however, has proved more difficult than anticipated. The current estimate to completion puts the end of the water court's work in 2028. With most of the future work to be carried out by the district courts or DNRC. Today the Montana Legislature continues to examine the future of Montana's Water Court.

The water court is made up of the Chief judge an assistant judge and several water masters. On occasion it is one of four district court judges is also called on to adjudicate a case.

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[34] Montana State Legislature, W. P. (2015). A short history of the water court. Helena, Montana: Montana State Legislature, 2. https://leg.mt.gov/content/Committees/Interim/2015-2016/Water-Policy/Meetings/Sept-2015/WaterCourt_history.pdf

[35] Irwin V. Phillips, 5 Cal. 140 (1855)

[36] Mettler V. Ames Realty Co., 61 Mont. 152, 169, 201 P. 702 (1921)

[37] University of Montana, School of Law, W. P. (2014). Water rights in Montana. Missoula, Montana: University of Montana. https://courts.mt.gov/Portals/189/Water/UM_WaterRightsStudy.pdf

[38] Article IX, section 3, 1972 Montana constitution.

[39] Montana Senate Bill 76, 1979.

[40] Legislative Audit Division, 09P-09: Water Rights Adjudication (2010), 1.

[41] Environmental Quality Council, Montana's water – where is it" Who can use it? Who decides? (2004), 24.

Water Court Judges

Date	Name	Position
1979-1990	W. W. Lessley	Water Judge
1990-2013	C. Bruce Loble	Chief Water Judge
2011-2013	Russell McElyea	Associated Water Judge^
2013-2018	Doug Ritter	Associated Water Judge
2013-	Russell McElyea	Chief Water Judge
2019-	Steve Brown	Associated Water Judge

^Note: Associated Water Judge position created by the Montana Legislature in 2011.

Water Court Masters

Andrea Collins
Anika Stern
Anna Stradley
Ben Sudduth
Colleen Coyle
Dan Cole
Dana Pepper
Douglas Ritter
Hugh McFadden
Jay Porteen
Julia Nordlund
Kathleen Brandis
Kathryn Lambert
Madeleine Weisz
Melissa Brown
Nathan Block
Peter Fritsch
Terryal Ann Dawson

Clerks of the Water Court

Anna M. Burton

US District Court Judges of Montana

Date	Name	Seat	Remark
1890-1904	Hiram Knowles	1	Appointed to the newly created seat (25 Stat. 676).
1904-1910	William H. Hunt	1	
1910-1911	Carl L. Rasch	1	
1912-1934	George M. Bourquin	1	
1924-1957	Charles N. Pray	2	Appointed to the newly created 2nd seat (42 Stat. 837).
1935-1944	James H. Baldwin	1	
1945-1948	Robert L. Brown, Sr.	1	
1949-1965	William D. Murray	1	
1957-1969	William J. Jameson	2	
1966-1979	Russell E. Smith	1	
1969-1990	James F. Battin	2	
1979-1996	Paul G. Hatfield	1	
1985-2000	Charles C. Lovell	3	Appointed to the newly created 3rd seat (98 Stat. 333).
1990-2001	Jack D. Shanstrom	2	
1996-2011	Donald W. Molloy	1	
2001-2013	Richard F. Cebull	2	
2001-2012	Sam E. Haddon	3	
2011-	Dana L. Christensen	1	
2013-	Susan P. Watters	2	
2013-	Brian M. Morris	3	

Notes:
Dates only include active terms, and do not include the time spend in senior status.
See the Biographical Directory of Federal Judges for more information.
https://www.fjc.gov/history/judges

US Bankruptcy Court Judges of Montana

Date	Name	Seat	Remark
1999-	Ralph B. Kirschner		
2019-	Benjamin P. Hursh*		

* Chief of the United States Bankruptcy Court of Montana

US District Court Magistrates of Montana

Date	Name	Seat	Remark
1988-	Robert M. Holter		
1991-	Richard W. Anderson		
2002-2016	Carolyn S. Ostby	Blng	
2006-2019	Jeremiah C. Lynch	Msla	
2015-	John T. Johnson	GF	
2016-	Timothy J. Cavan	Blng	
2019-	Kathleen DeSoto	Msla	

Notes:
The role of Magistrate Judges was established with the Federal Magistrates act of 1968 (82 stat. 1107) and was further refined in 1971. Before 1968, the role of magistrate was fulfilled by Court Commissioners.

Clerks of the Montana Supreme Court, 1865-

Date	Name
1865-1866	A. W. Tarbet
1886-1867	J. Allen Hosmer
1867-1870	Lucius S. Peck
1870-1887	Isaac R. Alden
1887-1889	Robert L. Word
1889-1892	William J. Kennedy
1893-1899	Benjamin Webster
1899-1905	Henry C. Rickerts
1905-1915	J. T. Athey
1915-1922	John T. Carroll
1923-1924	Dana W. Easton
1924-1935	J. Ward Crosby
1935-1942	Arthur T. Porter
1942-1942	Peter T. Rigg
1942-1957	Frank Murray
1957-1959	Edna Hinman
1959-1982	Thomas J. Kearney
1983-1988	Ethel M. Harrison
1989-2018	Ed Smith
2019-	Bowen Greenwood

Clerks of the District Courts, by county

Beaverhead County

Date	Name	Remark
1900-1904	George W. French	
1905-1912	F. A. Hazelbaker	
1913-1916	Charles W. Conger	
1917-1920	Fred Rife	
1921-1924	William E. Stephenson	
1925-1938	Fred Rife	
1949-1970	Norman Giles	
1971-1984	Margaret S. Dumke	
1985-1994	John Poundstone	
1994-2012	Sheila Brunkhorst	Appointed in 1994.
2013-	Carly Jay Anderson	Elected November 2012.

Big Horn County

Date	Name	Remark
1913-1920	Frank A. Nolan	
1921-1926	George H. Miller	
1927-1954	R. P. Ross	Retired July 31, 1954.
1954-1967	Goldie Finlayson	Appointed August 1, 1954 to fill the unexpired term of R. P. Ross.
1968-1982	Lois Platz	
1983-1998	Janice Heath	Retired December 31, 1998.
1999-2003	Michelle Massine	Appointed, January 1, 1999 to fill Ms. Health's unexpired term.
2004-	Karen Jean Yarlott-Molina	

Blaine County

Date	Name	Remark
1912-1912	J. Dwight Jones	
1912-1928	A. W. Ziebarth	Took office in June 1912.
1929-1936	Ed Fredlund	
1937-1954	Michael A. McCarty	Served until August 1954.
1954-1955	Madeleine Marsonette	Filled the unexpired term of Michael A. McCarthy. Served from August 1954 to January 1955.
1955-1960	Fred H. Elsner	Served as Blaine County Treasure 1951-1955.
1961-1970	Monica D. Miller	
1971-1984	Eleanor J. Felton	
1985-2016	Kay O'Brien Johnson	
2017-	Tami Mitchell	

Broadwater County

Date	Name	Remark
1898-1899	George Lambert	
1899-1936	Fred Busber	
1937-1958	F. M Sperry	
1959-1966	George Flynn	
1967-1970	Hilda Perry	
1971-1980	Mary Lou Meyer	
1981-1996	Nellie B. Sayer	
1997-2001	Judy R. Gillespie	
2002-	Valerie J. Hornsveld	

Carbon County

Date	Name	Remark
1895-1896	H. E. Newkirk	Appointed May 7, 1895 by Carbon County Commissioners.
1896-1900	J. E. Mushback	
1900-1906	E. E. Esselstyn	
1907-1916	H. A. Simmons	
1917-1920	G. L. Finley	
1921-1924	H. P. Sandels	
1925-1928	G. L. Findley	
1929-1939	C. P. Larkin	Died in office November 17, 1939.
1939-1940	Charlotte Dilworth	Appointed November 20, 1939 to serve the unexpired term of C. P. Larkin.
1941-1942	Albert Mervisch	Inducted into military on August 7, 1942.
1942-1943	Leonard E. Johnson	Appointed August 1942 to fill the unexpired term of Albert Mervisch. Resigned March 24, 1943.
1943-1946	Hilda Richeson	Appointed to replace Leonard E. Johnson, March 1943. Resigned May 8, 1946.
1946-1949	Wallace W. Penttila	Appointed May 8, 1946 to fill the unexpired term of Hilda Richeson. Resigned November 7, 1949.
1949-1951	Della Cobetto	Appointed to fill the unexpired term of Wallace Penttila, November 1949.
1951-1951	Paul A. Pilati	Elected November 1950 and took office on first Monday in January 1951. Was inducted into military on January 18, 1951.
1951-1982	Clara H. Timonen Jarvi	Appointed to fill the unexpired term of Paul A. Pilati, January 1951.
1982-2004	Gayle Stausberg-Hilderman	Retired December 31, 2004.
2005-2007	Susan L. Godbey	Elected November 2004, resigned October 2007.
2007-	Rochelle Loyning	Appointed 2007.

Carter County

Date	Name	Remark
1917-1920	L. J. O'Grady	
1921-1948	Hallie B. Campbell	
1949-1949	Wilford T. Kennedy	Died in office
1949-1952	Josephine Dodd	Appointed to succeed Wilford T. Kennedy, January 17, 1949.
1953-1984	Margaret S. Renshaw Munro	
1985-2009	Carole Carey	
2009-2013	Marilyn Hutchinson	
2013-	Tracey Walker	Was elected November 2012.

Cascade County

Date	Name	Remark
1900 -1904	John T. Athey	
1905-1908	Charles T. Proctor	
1909-1920	George Harper	
1921-1924	Alex Remneas	
1925-1940	George Harper	
1941-1966	Agnes Schrapps	
1967-1970	Jean Ryan	
1971-1989	Florence McGiboney	Died in office.
1989-2007	Nancy J. Morton	Appointed to succeed Florence McGiboney.
2007-2011	Ruthie Reeves	Appointed to succeed Nancy Morton.
2011-	Faye McWilliams	Appointed to succeed Ruthie Reeves.

Chouteau County

Date	Name	Remark
1887-1889	J. W. Tattan	Territorial Probate Judge.
1890-1892	T. J. Todd	
1893-1896	T. F. Healy	
1897-1912	Charles H. Boyle	
1913-1924	George D. Patterson	
1925-1959	Harold Roudebaush	Resigned May 1959.
1959-1964	W. J. Shirley	Appointed June 1, 1959 to fill the unexpired term of Harold Roudebaush.
1965-1972	Irma M Harris	
1973-1996	Louise V. Sagan	
1997-2000	Terrianne Andreasen	
2001-2008	Larry R. Stollfuss	
2009-	Rick Cook	

Custer County

Date	Name	Remark
1887-1887	L. C. Dear	
1888-1888	William C Dear	
1889-1892	Fred M. Schwartz	
1893-1897	W. J. Zimmerman	
1897-1908	Alexander T. McAusland	
1909-1916	James C. Ramsey	
1917-1936	C. A. Lindeberg	
1937-1946	Floyd H. Walden	
1946-1946	Andrus J. Tyler	
1947-1948	Gordon W. Spear	
1949-1961	Gladys Brundage	
1962-1962	Harvey A. Milton	
1963-1964	Richard J. Conway	
1965-1976	Marjorie H. Kraudy	
1977-1986	Erlys Bartels	Retired June 1986.
1986-1992	Margaret Reid	Appointed June 1986 to fill the unexpired term of Erlys Bartels.
1992-2006	Bernice Matthews	Retired in December 2006.
2006-	Hazel Parker	Appointed December 2006 to fill the unexpired term of Bernice Matthews.

Daniels County

Date	Name	Remark
1920-1929	John Shippam	Died in office February 3, 1929.
1929-1950	George H. Jones	Appointed to fill the unexpired term of John Shippam February 6, 1929. Died in office February 6, 1950.
1950-1950	E. Helen Hansen	Appointed February 9, 1950 to fill the unexpired term of George H. Jones. Defeated in the general election 1950.
1951-1965	Melfred Eide	Died in office March 29, 1965.
1965-1980	Catherine Darchuk	Appointed March 29, 1965 to fill the unexpired term of Melfred Eide.
1981-2012	Patricia McDonnell	
2013-	Joan Bjarko	Prefers to spell her name JoAn Bjarko.

Dawson County

Date	Name	Remark
1890-1892	James G. Ramsay	
1893-1900	Charles F. Bean	
1900-1904	James Rivens	
1905-1914	Harry Sample	Resigned January 30, 1914.
1914-1915	August Colin	Appointed January 30, 1914 to fill the unexpired term of Harry Sample.
1915-1933	Frank Parrett	
1933-1947	Donald T. Lynch	Resigned December 31, 1947
1948-1949	Forrest H. Currens	Appointed to fill the unexpired term of Donald T. Lynch.
1949-1951	Joe Kurtenbach	Resigned January 31, 1951.
1951-1958	Albert A. Stark	Appointed January 31, 1951 to fill the unexpired term of Joe Kurtenbach. Died in office June 19, 1958.
1958-1959	Zulah O. Harsh	Appointed June 19, 1958 to fill the unexpired term of Albert A. Stark. Served until January 5, 1959.
1959-1959	Marlin Mullet	Died in office October 28, 1959.
1959-1960	Harry P. Bogart	Appointed to fill the unexpired term of Marlin Mullet, October 28, 1960. Served until November 10, 1960.
1960-1961	Katherine Keys	Appointed November 10, 1960 and served until January 2, 1961.
1961-1977	C. C. “Bill” Hatterscheid	Resigned May 1, 1977.
1977-1987	Elaine M. Oliver Wester	Retired October 31, 1987.
1987-2003	Ardelle Adams	Appointed November 1, 1987 to fill the unexpired term of Elaine Wester; retired March 31, 2003.
2004-2008	Judith Galle	
2009-	Tammera Helmuth	

Deer Lodge County

Date	Name	Remark
1900-1904	William E. Thomas	
1905-1908	Ira C. Gnose	
1909-1912	Barney Hogan	
1913-1916	M. L. McDermont	
1917-1920	James White	
1921-1924	E. B. Heagy	
1925-1928	Anna K. Heagy	
1929-1936	Aime Page	
1937-1964	Frank B. McGrath	
1965-1970	Margaret Shea	
1971-1980	Helen L. Meloy	
1980-1997	Theresa Sladich	Appointed September 1, 1980.
1997-	Susie Krueger	Appointed June 1997. (AKA Susan McNeil.)

Fallon County

Date	Name	Remark
1915-1928	Ralph Keener	
1929-1944	Cecil M. Carey	
1945-1957	W. L. Riddle	
1959-1980	Colleen Peck	Resigned February 1980
1980-1999	Carol Wade	
2000-	Jeraldine “Jerrie” A. Newell	

^Not all dates in office confirmed.

Fergus County

Date	Name	Remark
1887-1896	D. A. Meagher	Also served as Probate Judge.
1897-1904	Edmund Write	
1905-1912	J. B. Ritch	
1913-1920	James L. Martin	
1921-1928	Bert Replogie	
1929-1932	Burt Walker	
1933-1936	Minnie R. Ritch	
1937-1969	Tom G. Gregory	Died in office May 28, 1969
1969-1980	Nina L. Kent	Appointed May 29, 1969 to fill the unexpired term of Tom G. Gergory.
1981-1985	Lorraine T. Samuel	Resigned August 31, 1985.
1985-1996	Greta M. Ross	Appointed September 1, 1985 to fill the unexpired term of Lorraine T. Samuel.
1997	Phyllis D. Smith	

Flathead County

Date	Name	Remark
1893-1894	H. G. Swaney	H. G. Swaney and A. W. Swaney were brothers.
1895-1898	A. W. Swaney	
1899-1900	C. A. Goodrich	
1901-1908	James K. Lang	
1909-1916	Same D. McNeey	
1917-1924	R. N. Eaton	
1925-1932	Own W. Olesen	
1933-1948	Oliver S. Vose	
1949-1960	Jacie Willis	
1961-1972	Iola G. Weller	Retired November 30, 1972. John Van, who was elected November 1972, was appointed to fill the unexpired term of Iola G. Weller.
1972-1992	John Van	
1993-	Peg L. Allison	

Gallatin County

Date	Name	Remark
1904-1908	Charles B. Anderson	
1909-1912	J. A. Johnston	
1913-1924	William L. Hayes	
1925-1930	Fred F. Lay	Elected County Attorney, November 4, 1930.
1931-1931	W. S. Erwin	Appointed January 5, 1931 to fill the unexpired of F. Lay who had died in office.
1932-1952	Lee E. Hays	Appointed March 7, 1932 to fill the unexpired term of W. Erwin
1953-1972	Evelyn Thompson	
1973-1977	Paul Reese	
1978-1980	Gelina (Julia) Smiley	Died in 1980.
1980-1981	Florence Aldrich	Appointed in 1980 to fill the unexpired term of G. Smiley.
1982-2003*	Lorraine Van Ausdol	
2003-	Jennifer Brandon	Appointed December 1, 2003, to fill the unexpired term of L. Ausdol.

*In 1986 the office of the Clerk of the District Court and the office of the Public Administrator were consolidated by Gallatin County.

Garfield County

Date	Name	Remark
1918-1928	J. P. McDonald	
1919-1932	Guy L. Scott	
1933-1934	George O. Ayer	
1935-1944	George H. Hetherington	Resigned
1945-1949	Mary Hetherington	
1949-1954	Ruth H. Gallinger	Appointed June 7, 1949 to succeed Mary Hetherington.
1955-1980	Ruthe Hageman Pidal	
1981-1982	Linda D. Mallo	
1983-1985*	Betty Jean Cooley	Resigned November 1985.
1985-1988	Marlene Shawver	Appointed December 1, 1985 to fill the unexpired term of Betty Jean Cooley.
1989-1995	Charlotte Herbold	
1996-2004	Connie Nielsen	
2005-	Jennifer Crawford	

*In 1984 the office of the Clerk of the District Court and the office of the County Treasure were consolidated by Garfield County. Since that time, the Clerk of the District Court has also served as the County Treasurer.

NOTE: *Not all dates in office confirmed for Garfield County*.

Glacier County

Date	Name	Remark
1918-1920	Iden Rasmussen	
1921-1930	Thomas B. Magee	Died in office, August 1930.
1930-1930	Jessie Allison	Appointed August 6, 1930 to fill the unexpired term of Thomas B. Magee.
1930-1936	Henry L. Magee	Took office November 6, 1930.
1937-1944	Dan S. Welch	
1945-1948	Elvina Welch	
1949-1953	James Gerard	
1954-1960	A. E. Armstrong	Died in office
1960-1964	Alfred E. Allison	
1965-1969	Violet D. Berger Durham	Resigned July 1969.
1969-1972	Ann Pendergress	Appointed to fill the unexpired term of Violet Berger Durham.
1973-1988	Margie Jackson	
1989-1996	Mary Phippen	
1997-2011	Diane D. Anderson	
2011-	Janine R. Scott	

Golden Valley County

Date	Name	Remark
1920-1932	M. J. Dourte	
1933-1962	John A. Slayton	
1963-1984	Albert R. Lasater	Died June 28, 2019
1985-1988	Louise I. Bracha	
1989*-1997	Aileen Mattheis	County Clerk and Recorder, 1968-1987
1998-2005	Kathleen Ott	
2006-2016	Mary Lu (Ringler) Berry	Changed name from Ringler back to Berry
2017-	Brent Nice	

*January 1989 the office of the Clerk of the District Clerk, the office of the County Clerk and Recorder of Golden Valley and the office of the County Surveyor were consolidated.

Granite County

Date	Name	Remark
1900-1904	James E. Abbey	
1905-1912	George O. Burke	
1913-1924	William B. Calhoun	
1925-1933	Ralph E. Williams	
1933-1958	E. J. Donnelly	
1959-1978	Mrs. S. M. Puyear	
1979-1988	Joyce Schneider	
1989-2008	Beverly L. Kulaski	
2009-	Carol Bohrnsen	

NOTE: *Not all dates in office confirmed for Granite County.*

Hill County

Date	Name	Remark
1912-1925	G. W. Glass	Served until August 13, 1925.
1925-1936	M. C. MacKenzie	Appointed August 14, 1925, served until December 31, 1936.
1937-1948	Levi Fossum	
1949-1959	Ben Daggett	Served until May 16, 1959.
1959-1968	Susie Schlatter	Appointed May 25, 1959.
1969-1971	Virginia Brobst	
1972-1990	Maryhelen Habeger	Resigned September 30, 1990.
1990-2013	Dena Tippets	Appointed to fill the unexpired term of Maryhelen Habeger, October 1, 1990. Retired August 30, 2013.
2013-	Kathie Vigliotti	Appointed September 1, 2013 to fill the unexpired term of Dena Tippets.

Jefferson County

Date	Name	Remark
1870-1872	George F Cowan	
1872-1875	William L. Hall	
1876-1878	Charles Mann	
1878-1889	A. E. Wells	During Mr. Wells' term, occasionally, the Lewis and Clark County Clerks of Court would travel to Jefferson County with their Judge(s). On those days, Mr. Wells would file court documents as deputy clerk.
1889-1892	Frank Harlow	
1893-1898	Henry G. Rickerts	Retired December 1898.
1899-1904	A. J. Holloway	Appointed to fill the unexpired term of Henry G. Rickerts, January 1899.
1905-1908	George Pfaff	
1909-1912	William T. Sweet	
1913-1920	W. B. Hunley	
1921-1932	James S. Flaherty	
1933-1970	W. A. McCullough	Resigned September 1970.
1970-1970	Grace W. Nelligan	Appointed to fill the unexpired term of W. A. McCullough until the November 1970 special election. Was the first woman to serve as Clerk of the Court in Jefferson County.
1970-1971	Charles A. Ford	Elected in the special election of November 1970 to fill the unexpired term of W. A. McCullough. Retired April 1971.
1971-1976	Grace W. Nelligan	Appointed May 1971 to fill the unexpired term of Charles A. Ford. Elected in 1972. Was the first woman to serve as Clerk of the Court in Jefferson County.
1977-1987	Viola M. Trettin	Retired May 1987.
1987-2000	Marilyn J. Stevens	Appointed June 1987 to fill the unexpired term of Viola M. Trettin.
2001-2016	Marilyn A. Craft	
2017-	Dorianne Woods	

Judith Basin County

Date	Name	Remark
1921-1924	F. Clark Grady	
1925-1932	Anna Peck	
1933-1968	Annie Laurie Leslie	
1969-1984	Kathryn A. Humphrey	
1985-2000	Acelia “Ann” Leach	
2001-2017	Julie Peevey	(AKA Julie Anderson)
2017-	Jennifer Taylor	Clerk of Court/Superintendent of Schools

Lake County

Date	Name	Remark
1923-1932	D. A. Cubbage	
1933-1952	James Harbert	
1953-1958	Mabel E. Violette	
1959-1968	Margaret Seines	Appointed October 16, 1959 to fill the unexpired term of Mabel E. Violette.
1969-1977	Vera Lansing	Resigned December 1977.
1978-1979	Maurine Theiler	Appointed January 25, 1978 to fill the unexpired term of Vera Lansing until a successor was elected and qualified.
1979-1980	Ethel M. Harrison	Elected to fill the unexpired term of Vera Lansing. Elected Clerk of the Montana Supreme Court November 1980. First woman elected as Clerk of the Montana Supreme Court.
1981-2005	Katherine E. “Kitty” Pederson	
2006-2007	Julie Knutson	Term Jan 2006-June 2007
2007-	Lyn Fricker	Appointed June 15, 2007.

Lewis and Clark County

Date	Name	Remark
1870-1870	W. S. Scribner	Clerk of Third District Court
1870-1876	Henry Addoms	Clerk of Probate Court
1876-1877	James M. Young	Clerk of Probate Court
1877-1884	A. H. Beattie	Clerk of Probate Court
1884-1886	John L. Glendenen	Clerk of Probate Court
1886-1889	Albert G. Clerke, Jr.	Clerk of Probate Court
1889-1895	John Bean	
1895-1896	C. W. Burton	
1896-1898	Jess C. Ricker	
1898-1900	James Allen	
1900-1904	Finlay McRea	
1905-1908	Sidney Miller	
1909-1920	F. L. Reece	
1921-1952	Will Whalen	
1953-1964	David R. Kemp	
1965-1976	Nora Smole	
1977-1993	Clara Gilreath	
1994-2016	Nancy Sweeney	
2017-	Angie Sparks	

Liberty County

Date	Name	Remark
1920-1948	George H. Gau	
1949-1987	Richard Darby O'Brien	
1988-2000	Patricia Seidlitz	
2001-	Anne Seidlitz-Melton	

Lincoln County

Date	Name	Remark
1909-1912	P. R. Long	
1913-1920	Timothy Miller	
1921-1958	Fred F. Clark	
1959-1963	Leslie W. Leigh	
1963-1987	Elliott W. Holder	Retired January 1987.
1987-1990	Viona Lamey	Appointed to fill the unexpired term of Elliot W. Holder, February 2, 1987. Retired August 31, 1990.
1990-1992	Dena tippets	Appointed September 5, 1990 to fill the unexpired term of Viona Lamey.
1993-1998	Lucille “Cecil” Briggs	
1999-2007	Nadine Pival	
2008-2016	Susan Farmer	Retired December 2, 2016.
2016-	Tricia Brooks	Appointed as Interim Clerk of Court and Public Administrator, December 2, 2016.

Madison County

Date	Name	Remark
1864-1864	R. W. Hagaman	
1865-1865	A. M. Torbet	
1866-1866	J. Hosmer	
1867-1869	L. S. Peck	
1870-1870	C. C. Menaugh	
1871-1885	Theo. Muffley	
1886-1886	R. H. Norton	
1887-1887	Frank E. Corbett	
1888-1888	James M. Farlane	Served the first part of 1888.
1888-1889	Tomas A. Garrett	Served in the latter part of 1888.
1890-1892	William Marr	
1892-1896	Thomas Duncan	
1896-1908	James G. Walker	
1909-1936	Matthew Carey	Died in office.
1936-1936	W. D. Hustead	Appointed to fill the unexpired term of M. Carey.
1937-1970	Paul H. Love	Madison County Treasurer, 1933-1936.
1971-1986	Mary Carey Stiles	
1987-1996	Jerry R. Wing	
1997-2013	Bundy K. Bailey	
2014-2014	Kacey Smart	Appointed to fill the unexpired term of B. Bailey.
2015-	Karen J. Miller	

McCone County

Date	Name	Remark
1919-1920	F. S. Kalberg	
1921-1924	C. F. Campbell	
1925-1928	George E. Lytle	
1929-1976	John Vejtasa	
1977-1997	Betty L. Robinette	Resigned July 31, 1997.
1997-2008	Trudy Kirkegard	Appointed on August 1, 1997, resigned October 1, 2008.
2008-2016	Debra Porter	Appointed October 2, 2008 resigned June 27, 2016.
2016-	Savannah Kirchner	Appointed June 27, 2016.

Meagher County

Date	Name	Remark
1900-1904	Baker W. Badger	
1905-1908	A. C. Grande	
1909-1916	F. H. Mayn	
1917-1921	George H. Bell	
1922-1932	F. H. Mayn	Died in office.
1932-1932	John V. Potter	Appointed October 4, 1932 to fill the unexpired term of F. H. Mayn.
1933-1936	Marvin E. Corkill	
1937-1960	M. D. Holmes	
1961-1966	Opal R. Eggert	
1967-1992	Kenneth Twichel	
1993-	Donna Morris	

Mineral County

Date	Name	Remark
1914-1916	George L. Dean	Undersheriff – 1917; Bailiff – 1919.
1916-1920	Blanche M. Hyde	First woman to serve as Clerk of the Court.
1921-1924	Herold B. Ives	
1925-1933	George E. Heckeroth	Resigned March 1933.
1933-1940	Hans G. Scharf	Appointed March 1933 to fill the unexpired term of George E. Heckeroth.
1941-1946	Clarence E. LaCombe	
1946-1946	B. M. Hyde	
1947-1948	Walter L. Robb, Jr.	
1949-1950	Morris W. Miles	
1951-1958	Mary H. O'Neill	
1959-1968	Jo P. Bailey	
1969-1984	Elizabeth Tamietti	
1985-1992	Audrey Peden	
1993-2004	Cheryle Demmon	
2004-2006	Sharon Gull	Appointed in 2004.
2006-	Kathleen M. Brown	Appointed in 2006.

Missoula County

Date	Name	Remark
1890-1892	Jno. L. Sloane	
1893-1896	F. N. McConnell	
1896-1897	George C. Higgins	
1897-1900	Jno. L. Sloane	Left office in March 1900.
1900-1908	R. W. Kemp	
1909-1916	Thomas R. Conlan	
1917-1932	Harry Rawn	
1933-1964	J. R. Donehoo	
1965-1972	Alma R. Samsel	Retired
1972-1980	Lea D. LaFriniere	Retired
1981-1988	Bonnie J. Henri	
1989-2002	Kathleen Breuer	
2002-	Shirley E. Faust	Appointed in the second half of 2002.

Musselshell County

Date	Name	Remark
1913-1917	W. G. Jarrett	
1918-1920	Reed Hunt	
1921-1924	Henry F. Whitman	
1925-1928	W. R. Evans	
1929-1932	George E. Arnold	
1933-1934	Margaret Huppe	
1935-1948	George E. Arnold	
1949-1954	Theresa Scott	
1955-1976	Marian E. Pratt Cebull	
1977-1988	Alice Johnson Brower	
1989-1993	Dona C. Robson	
1994-2016	Connie Mattfield	
2017-	Barb Halverson	

Park County

Date	Name	Remark
1900-1912	Arthur C. Davis, Jr.	
1913-1920	William Pethybridge	
1921-1924	H. J. Reese	
1925-1940	William B. Calhoun	Died in office.
1940-1952	George W. Mason	Appointed to fill the unexpired term of William B. Calhoun.
1953-1956	Arleda Guthrie	
1957-1958	F. C. Brooking	
1959-1962	Gail K. DeAtley	
1963-1966	Francis Pugliano	
1967-1968	Florence Skillman	
1969-1982	Emma Bowers-Nelson	
1983-	June Little	Appointed to the unexpired term of Emma Bowers-Nelson.

Petroleum County

Date	Name	Remark
1925-1932	Ida S. Rigg	
1933-1940	Dorothy Bowen	
1941-1962	Velma R. Merten*	Resigned November 30, 962.
1962-1969	Boony Dengel	Appointed December 1, 1962; resigned March 31, 1969.
1969-1971	Doris Carrell	Resigned July 31, 1971.
1971-1976	Orene Barbee	Resigned December 31, 1976.
1977-1978	Carol Schaffer	Discharged February 1978.
1978-1978	Larraine Bauer	Served for two months.
1978-1983	Rose Beanblossom	Resigned January 1, 1983.
1983-1998	Bonnie L. Allen	(AKA Bonny Dengel)
1998-2009	Mary Brindley	
2009-2010	Ashely Obrigewitch	
2010-2014	Leslie Mitchell	
2014-2017	Kim Doman	
2017-	Janel Tucek	

*In 1942 Petroleum County adopted the County Manager form of government. Since that time, the Office of the Clerk of the District Court and Recorder have been consolidated and the combined office is an appointed position.

Phillips County

Date	Name	Remark
1915-1932	C. M. Porter	
1933-1941	D. W. NcNutt	Died in office on September 1, 1941.
1941-1942	William E. Grove	Appointed September 3, 1941 to succeed D. W. McNutt.
1943-1945	B. H. Koke	Died in office November 11, 1945.
1945-1958	Emanuel Sklower	Died November 16, 1958.
1959-1980	Doris D. Hendrickson/Rummel	Retired, December 31, 1980
1981-2002	Frances M. Webb	Retired, September 2002.
2002-2012	Iris Robinson	Term ended December 31, 2012.
2013-	Tami R. Christofferson	

Pondera County

Date	Name	Remark
1919-1919	C. B. Schwarder	
1919-1951	C. H. Shepherd	Appointed Clerk of the District Court on April 2, 1919 upon the resignation of C. B. Schwarder. Died in office in March 1951.
1951-1968	Wilma Hays	Appointed on March 5, 1951 to fill the unexpired term of C. H. Shepherd.
1969-1981	Sarah M. Rowe	Resigned July 1, 1981.
1981-1984	Robert Leiva	Appointed July 1, 1981 to fil the unexpired term of Sarah M. Rowe.
1985-2005	Anita Vandolah	Resigned on June 27, 2005. (AKA Anita White and Anita Jones)
2005-2012	Kara Thompson	Appointed June 27, 2005 to fill the unexpired term of A. Vandolah.
2013-	Laurie Eisenzimer	

Powder River County

Date	Name	Remark
1919-1949	H. R. Straiton	Resigned July 1949.
1949-1956	John H. Straiton	Appointed July 1949 to fill the unexpired term of his father H. R. Straiton.
1957-1972	Edith Boyes McLain	
1972-1984	Sandra J. Popp Orestad Trucano	
1985-2002	ArLynn Borla Archer	
2003-	Aletta Shannon	

^Not all dates in office confirmed.

Powell County

Date	Name	Remark
1900-1912	R. Lee Kelley	
1913-1920	Robert Midtlying	
1921-1921	Robert Lee Kelley	Died in office 1921.
1922-1940	Gertrude A. Kelley	Married to R. L. Kelley.
1941-1941	Hugh K. Evans	Died in office 1941
1941-1965	Ethel E. Evans	Appointed on April 1, 1941 to fill the unexpired term of Hugh Evans, her husband.
1966-1976	Beth Burks	
1977-1996	Mary Ann McKee	
1997-2008	Sharon Applegate	
2008-2016	Joan Burke	
2017-	Jill Paull	

Prairie County

Date	Name	Remark
1915-1916	C. R. Marks	
1917-1920	W. A. Cameron	
1921-1936	Sherman A. Barber	Died in office, September 6, 1936.
1936-1936	Agnes E. Barber	Mrs. Barber was appointed October 5, 1936 to fill her husband's unexpired term.
1937-1960	Katherine Otis	
1961-1977	Borghild Carlson	Died in office, December 25, 1977.
1978-1992	Gladys Helen Young	Appointed January 2, 1978 to fill the unexpired term of Borghild Carlson.
1993-2006	Lisa Kimmet	
2007-2014	Toni Kalfell	
2015-2017	Piney Helmuth	Appointed January 1, 2015 and elected in 2016.
2018-2019	Ruth Peck	Appointed Mid-2018.
2019-	Shari Robertson	Elected to office Nov 2018; assumed Jan 2019.

*The office of the Clerk of the District Court and the Clerk and Recorder are merged.

Ravalli County

Date	Name	Remark
1900-1904	J. F. Cone	
1905-1906	A. C. Bahn	
1907-1912	A. C. Baker	
1913-1920	J. T. Coughenour	
1921-1928	J. Q. Adams	
1929-1952	Marshall Anderson	
1953-1958	Harriet Snow	
1959-1980	Helen Carruthers	
1981-1988	Margaret A. Stelling	
1989-2012	Debbie Harmon	
2013-	Paige Trautwein	

Richland County

Date	Name	Remark
1914-1928	Guy L. Rood	
1929-1944	E. J. McCullough	
1945-1947	F. W. Wilder	Resigned February 1, 1947.
1947-1947	Ida Mae Enghusen	Appointed February 1, 1947 to fill the unexpired term of F. W. Wilder. Resigned September 1, 1947.
1947-1948	Ester Koch	Appointed September 1, 1947 to replace Ida Mae Enghusen
1949-1953	E. J. McCullough	Resigned May 1, 1953.
1953-1968	Alma Murphy	Appointed to fill the unexpired term of E. J. McCullough.
1969-1980	Ilene Dawe	
1981-2012	Arlene Carranza Riggs	
2013-	Janice Klempel	

NOTE: *Not all dates in office confirmed for Richland County*.

Roosevelt County

Date	Name	Remark
1919-1940	Thomas R. Forbes	
1941-1962	Guy A. Miller	Served until October 1962.
1962-1971	Addie A. Carpenter	Served until December 19741.
1972-1991	M. Lorene Roberts Knudson	Retired April 1991.
1991-2014	Patricia A. Stennes	Appointed April 1991; retired July 31, 2014
2014-	Jeri Toavs	Appointed to fill the unexpired term of Patricia Stennes in 2014.

Rosebud County

Date	Name	Remark
1900-1901	James B. Grierson	
1901-1928	D. J. Muri	
1929-1936	Frank D. Lawrence	
1937-1942	Harry M. Thompson	
1942-1950	Edith M. Thompson	
1950-1950	Jessie Duthie	
1951-1964	Fred H. Ingram	
1965-1970	Louise C. Fleming	
1971-1988	Ellen G. Clark	
1989-1991	Collene Hill	Removed from Office for Malfeasance, 1991.
1991-1992	Sharon Borla	
1993-2008	Marilyn Hollister	
2009-	Elizabeth T. Ball	

Sanders County

Date	Name	Remark
1906-1906	L. E. Smith	
1907-1908	C. E. Livesay	
1909-1912	W. E. Nippert	Served as Justice of the Peace, 1913-1928.
1913-1920	William Strom	
1921-1932	L. E. Smith	
1933-1936	Lucille Norve	
1937-1965	James H. Smith	Resigned June 1, 1965.
1965-1966	Paul Hill	Appointed July 8, 1965 to fill the unexpired term of James H. Smith.
1967-1980	Winnifred I. Diehl VanDerhoff	
1981-1988	Carol Thomas	
1989-1992	Lisa Ferkovich	
1993-1997	Evelyn Cox	
1998-2012	Dianne F. Rummel	Appointed in 1998.
2012-	Candace Fisher	Appointed in 2012.

Sheridan County

Date	Name	Remark
1913-1916	Ludvig J. Onstad	Appointed February 11, 1913. Resigned July 3, 1916. Moved to Broadus, Montana in 1933. Died there on March 3, 1942.
1916-1919	Oscar R. Girard	Served as Deputy Clerk from July 1913 to July 1916. Was appointed Clerk in July 1916 and elected November 1916. Resigned November 1919 and moved to Rhode Island.
1919-1920	Albert R. Chapman	Born in 1865. Was appointed Clerk November 11, 1919.
1920-1924	Carl B. Peterson	Was elected Clerk in 1920. Died in Plentywood, Montana on February 19, 1953.
1924-1928	Daniel J. Olson	Elected Clerk November 1924.
1928-1953	Carl B. Peterson	Was re-elected November 1928.
1953-1988	Lucille C. King Stewart	Served as deputy clerk until 1953. Was appointed Clerk on Feb. 21, 1953. She retired in Dec. 1988 and moved to Weyburn, Canada.
1988-2010	Cheryl A. Olson	Deputy clerk, 1967-1988. Elected Clerk in 1988. Retired Nov 31, 2010.
2010-2015	Teresa McCauley	Deputy Clerk 1997-2010. Appointed Clerk Dec. 2010. Retired July 2015.
2015-	Kristin Kelm	Deputy Clerk 2010- July 2015. Appointed Clerk July 2015.

Silver Bow County

Date	Name	Remark
1891-1892	Will L. Clark	First elected Silver Bow County Clerk of Court.
1893-1896	Henry A. Niedenhofen	
1897-1901	Clinton C. Clark	
1901-1904	Samuel M. Roberts	
1905-1908	W. E. Davies	
1909-1916	John J. Foley	
1917-1920	Otis Lee	
1921-1928	J. F. Driscoll	
1929-1936	Francis P. Kelly	
1937-1948	Elmer Shea	
1949-1968	Frank J. Gabse	
1969-1978	William J. “Babe” Maloney	Died in office December 19, 1978.
1978-1986	Dan Bukvich	Appointed in 1978 to fill the unexpired term of William J. Maloney. Died in office, October 25, 1986.
1986-2016	Lori Maloney	Appointed to fill the unexpired term of Dan Bukvich, December 2, 1986. First woman Clerk of Court in Silver Bow County. Daughter of Wm. J. Moloney. First female Clerk of the District Court in Silver Bow County.
2017-	Thomas E. “Tom” Powers	Elected November 2016.

Stillwater County

Date	Name	Remark
1913-1928	Guston Iverson	
1929-1940	Lemuel Lathom	
1941-1960	W. E. Craig	
1961-1968	Alice Marvin	
1969-1972	Alice Parker	
1973-1981	Betty Walton	Died in office, June 1981.
1981-1994	Marlene Johnson	Appointed to fill the unexpired term of Betty Walton, July 1981.
1995-1996	Cynthia S. Culp	Cynthia Culp was appointed to fill the unexpired term of Marlene Johnson, December 1995 – December 1996.
1997-2008	Jean Bare	Retired December 2008.
2009-	Sandy Fox	Sworn into office January 2009.

Sweet Grass County

Date	Name	Remark
1895-1900	Charles N. Skillman	
1900-1903	Benjamin Mjelde	
1903-1908	H. C. Pound	
1909-1920	F. M. Lamp	
1921-1930	J. E. Rees	
1931-1936	Emma B. Rees	
1937-1944	Dick Armstrong	
1945-1960	Beulah Patterson	
1961-1975	Victoria Braaten	
1975-1996	Patty Jo Henthorn	
1997-2018	Deanna Novotny	Retired 2018.
2019-	Barb Swanson	

Teton County

Date	Name	Remark
1900-1908	Sterling McDonald	
1909-1916	James Gibson	
1917-1919	Paul Jacobson	Died in office, August 5, 1919.
1919-1932	Blanche M. Jacobson	
1933-1937	Frances Rosengren	Died in office January 7, 1937.
1937-1946	Halvor M. Daley	
1946-1946	A. H. Doughty	
1947-1956	George J. Gunther	Died in office April 4, 1956.
1957-1960	Helen J. Vance	
1961-1976	Elmer Erickson	
1977-1980	Nina Greyn Stapel	
1981-1991	Karen Brown Peebles	Dates in question still
1991-2004	Emile Kimmet	
2005-	Lisa J. Sinton	

Toole County

Date	Name	Remark
1914-1920	Perry Day	
1921-1924	M. P. Lyons	
1925-1943	Erma Day	
1944-1951	Bernice D. Lutz	Resigned August 6, 1951.
1951-1953	Marie Clapper	Appointed August 6, 1951. Served until January 12, 1953.
1953-1984	Vivian S. Hall	
1985-1994	Penny P. Underdahl	
1995-2000	Carol Swoboda	
2000-2014	Sandra Peers	
2015-	Debra Munson	

Treasure County

Date	Name	Remark
1918-1924	J. D. Clark	
1925-1932	Marguerite M. Jacobs	
1933-1940	J. P. Gallagher	Died in office.
1940-1940	Mr. J. P. Gallagher	Appointed October 16, 1940 to replace J. P. Gallagher.
1941-1960	Harold S. Wolff	
1961-1962	Ann Dust	
1963-1970	Laura Goodale	
1971-1982	Dortha Jones	
1983-1994	Sally Van Hemerlyck	
1994-1998	Kay Rexford	
1998-2018	Ruth Baker	
2018-	Renee Zent	

Valley County

Date	Name	Remark
1900-1904	John Survant	
1905-1912	C. C. Beede	
1913-1917	Walter Shanley	
1918-1920	Oscar Cutting	
1921-1932	J. B. Christopherson	
1933-1936	Edith L. Span	
1937-1968	Blanche Grotjan	
1969-1980	Alice H. Nelson	
1981-1988	Marian Estrem	
1989-2004	Patricia A. Hill	
2005-2009	Melissa G. Greenhagen	Died January 21, 2009.
2009-	Shelley Bryan	

NOTE: *Not all dates in office confirmed for Valley County.*

Wheatland County

Date	Name	Remark
1917-1931	A. T. Anderson	Resigned.
1931-1936	Alma Berquist	Appointed February 2, 1931 to succeed A. T. Anderson.
1937-1952	Elizabeth Thomson	
1953-1956	Henry M. Jordet	
1957-1960	Anne M. Benson	
1961-1992	Mary Helen Muggenburg	
1993-2016	Janet Hill	Retired December 2016.
2017-	Joseph Keller	

Wibaux County

Date	Name	Remark
1915-1920	Art E. Jeffers	Appointed August 15, 1914; died in 1920.
1921-1924	C. L. Deringer	
1925-1936	Hazel L. Carlock Young	
1937-1948	Hortense B. Keys	
1949-1956	Claire M. Samson	
1957-1996	Roger J. Barnaby	Retired from office for medical reasons.
1996-1996	Debra Zinda	Was appointed to fill the unexpired term of Roger Barnaby.
1997-	Michael W. Schneider	

Yellowstone County

Date	Name	Remark
1881	R. W. Norton	
1882-1886	Theodore Muffly	
1887	James McFarlane	
1888	Thomas A. Garrett	
1888	John D. Matheson	
1889-1891	George M. Hays	
1892-1895	Frank L. Mann	
1896-1903	T. A. Williams	
1904-1909	Fred H. Foster	
1910-1916	Lorin T. Young	
1917-1927	Fred Inabnit	
1928	George W. Graff	
1929-1930	Harry W. Hill	
1931-1938	George M. Hays	
1939-1944	A. W. Stow	
1945-1956	Katie Davies	Died in office.
1957-1964	Andrew W. Palo	
1965-1984	Hardin E. Todd	
1985-1994	Charmaine R. Fisher	Retired.
1995-2003	Jean A. Thompson	Retired January 31, 2003.
2003-2008	Laura A. Brent	
2009-2012	Carol Muessig	
2013-2016	Kristie Boelter	
2017-	Terry Halpin	

The Office of the Montana Court Administrator, 1975-

History

In October 1975 the Montana Supreme Court established the office of the Court Administrator.[42] The Montana Legislature made the office permanent in 1977.[43] The Court Administrator is appointed by the court and holds the position at the pleasure of the court. The office assists the court with its administrative duties. These duties include preparing and managing the judicial budget, compiling court statistics, coordinating judicial education services, administrating the court case management system, providing centralized court staffing, and long-range planning.

Montana Court Administrators

Date	Name
1975-1978	Ray Stewart
1978-1986	E. C. “Mike” Abley
1986-1993	Jim Oppedahl
1993-2001	Patrick A. Chenovick
2001-2003	Rick Lewis
2003-2006	Jim Oppedahl
2006-2011	Lois Menzies
2011-	Beth McLaughlin

[42] Montana Courts Judicial Report, 1988, p.17.
[43] Laws of Montana, 1977, Ch.396

The State Law Library of Montana

History[44]

Since the first Justice appointed by President Lincoln, to the Territory of Montana first held court in Virginia City in 1865 there has been a clear need for a law library. The moment the Territory was carved out of the Territory of Idaho, all previous law ceased to apply. This meant all the law of the period had to be created whole cloth or imported as case law from another state. But without law reporters that too was incredibly difficult. To aid the courts, the Montana Territorial legislature created the library in 1866. However, it took five years for the first books, paid for by the United States Congress, to arrive in Montana.

During those early years, the state auditor held the law library in his office and oversaw supervising the law library. The law library soon became scattered and fell into disorder. So, in 1881, the state legislature incorporated the law library as a division into the newly formed state library. It would remain a division until 1949. The justices of the Montana Supreme Court became the library's trustees and the Clerk of the Supreme Court, Mr. Isaac Alden, became the ex-officio librarian. Shortly thereafter, in 1881, the first catalog of the law library was created and listed about 2,000 books in the collection. In 1887 the law governing the law library was re-codified and required the appointment of a librarian to manage the library. In compliance with this law Governor Potts appointed Miss Lou Guthrie as librarian on March 30, 1887.

The law library has moved around to be near the Montana Supreme Court. From 1883-1902 it was on the third floor of the Lewis and Clark County Courthouse. Then in 1902, when the Supreme Court moved into the newly build Capitol building the law library followed. Eventually the library settled in the east wing of the capitol building and it remained there until 1983 when the new Mazurek building was completed.

The law library's main mission is to fulfill the needs of the Montana Supreme Court. To meet this challenge and the needs of the state's legislature, officers, employees, member of the state bar and the public, the library has evolved. It has grown from a library of one part-timer to a staff of 7 full time employees. From a starting collection of about 2,000 volumes the library now has over 215,000 volumes. Its collections now include many subjects not imagined by its founders, including treaties on environmental law, and equitable distribution. It collects not only books, but also, audio/visual, and digital materials as well.

State Law Librarians, 1866-present

Date	Name
1866-1880	[Position held by the state auditor.]
1881-1887	Isaac Alden (ex-officio)
1887-1901	Lou Guthrie
1902-1904	Oliver Crane
1905-1937	Ashburn Barbour
1937-1954	Adeline J. Clarke
1954-1976	Katherine Orchard
1976-1984	Clarie Engle
1984-2013	Judith Meadows
2013-2016	Lisa Mecklenberg Jackson
2016-	Sarah McClain

[44]Summary of "*A Historical Sketch of the State Law Library of Montana*," 3rd edition, 2019

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Figures

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Figure 1. Flowchart of the Montana Judicial System. Created by the law library 2019, based on a chart from Ballotpedia https://ballotpedia.org/Courts_in_Montana.

Figure 2. Flowchart of the United States Judicial System. Created by the law library 2019, based on a chart from Ballotpedia https://ballotpedia.org/Courts_in_Montana.

Figure 3. Map of the Geographic Boundaries of the US Court of Appeals. From the US district court's website https://www.uscourts.gov/sites/default/files/u.s._federal_courts_circuit_map_1.pdf

Figure 4. Map of the divisions of the US District Court for Montana. From the US district court's website https://www.mtd.uscourts.gov/district-montana-profile

Figures5-19. Created in 2019 for the State Law Library of Montana based on maps used in first edition, curtesy of the Montana Department of Justice, IT services Division.

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