

## Preface

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In 1976, the Nation's Bicentennial year, Judge Edward J. Devitt oversaw the preparation of the first written history of the United States District Court for the District of Minnesota and the judges who have served on the Court. To Judge Devitt we are grateful. In 1987, the Constitution's Bicentennial year, we undertook the opportunity to return to Judge Devitt's history and update it. We invite you now to join us as we look to that history as part of our celebration of the Constitution's Bicentennial.

The District Court in Minnesota is truly a mirror of the people of Minnesota. Although limited in jurisdiction, the District Court has often been a forum, even a sounding board, for the social concerns and legal disputes of Minnesotans. These concerns and disputes have made their way to the District Court in a variety of legal settings. They have provided the District Court with the unique opportunity to set precedents in various areas of law at both the state and national level. As we celebrate the Bicentennial of the United States Constitution, we pause to note and reflect upon a few of the concerns and disputes which Minnesotans have brought to the District Court and which have become constitutionally significant in Minnesota and the Nation. This history examines eight cases which illustrate the role the Court has played in addressing and resolving dynamic constitutional issues of significance to Minnesotans and to all Americans. It also provides brief biographies of those judges who have served on the court.

We are proud to have had the opportunity to serve the State and Nation as Judges of the District Court interpreting the Constitution. We are equally proud of having served this Nation as Minnesotans addressing the concerns and disputes of fellow Minnesotans. We hope that those who read this history share our pride, for together we have helped shape our Constitution and, in turn, our country.

We thank Judge Diana E. Murphy, whose persistence and vision saw to the updating of this history in the Constitution's Bicentennial year. We also acknowledge and thank her co-chair Duane W. Krohnke, Esquire, and the members of the Bicentennial of the Constitution Committee for the District of Minnesota who worked on this worthy project.

DONALD D. ALSOP,  
CHIEF JUDGE

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