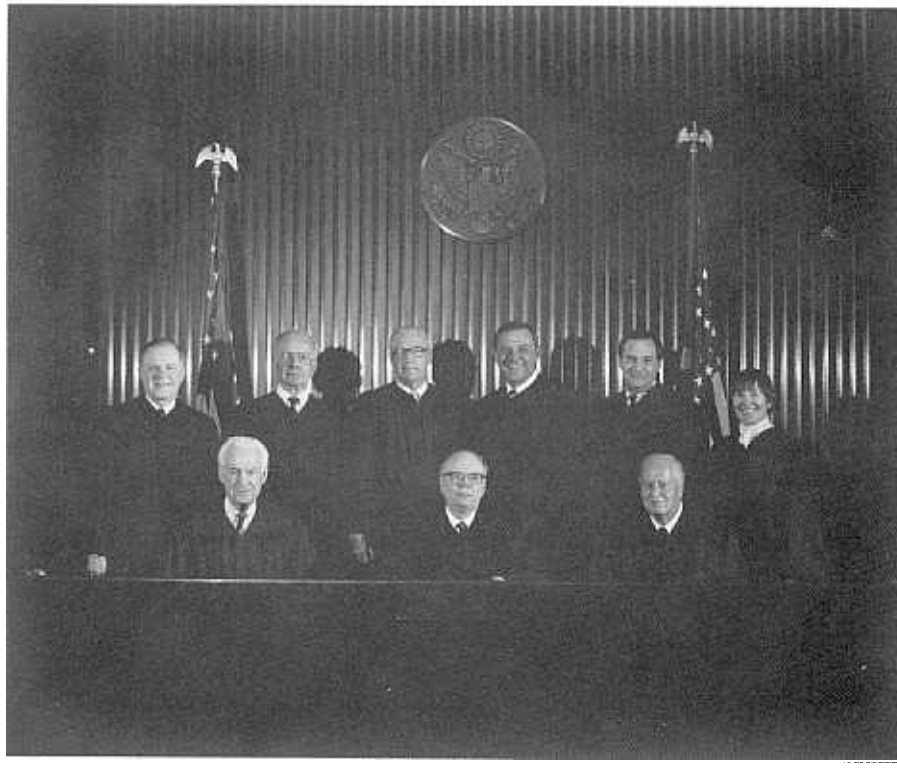


**U.S. District Court Judges: Front row from left, Edward J. Devitt, Donald D. Alsop, Earl R. Larson. Back row, Harry H. MacLaughlin, David S. Doty, Robert G. Renner, Paul A. Magnuson, James R. Rosenbaum, Diana E. Murphy.**

# Judges Who Have Served on the United States District Court for the District of Minnesota

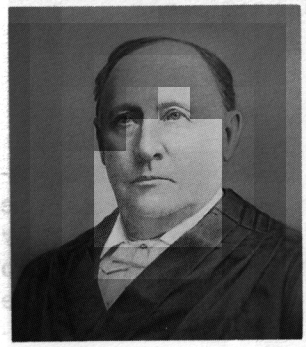
The judges who have served on the federal district court in Minnesota have had diverse backgrounds, experiences, and interests. While almost all of the present judges are native Minnesotans, many early judges moved here from the East, part of the Western migration. Two judges were immigrants: Judges William Lochren and Gunnar Nordbye came from Ireland and Norway, respectively. The first native Minnesotan, John B. Sanborn, did not take the bench until 1925, some sixty-seven years after the federal court in Minnesota was established. Many of the early judges did not attend law school, but "read law" in law offices. The first three judges were educated this way, and a law school graduate did not take the bench until 1908. One judge, Milton Purdy, served an interim appointment, but failed to be confirmed by the United States Senate. He went on to serve as United States District Judge in Shanghai, China, however. Another of the judges also served abroad. Judge Charles Willard was an associate justice of the Supreme Court of the Philippines from 1901–1904. Two of the judges, Wilbur Booth and John Sanborn, went on to serve on the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals.

The judges have also had some similarities in their backgrounds. Fourteen of the twenty-six served as judges in the state court system before being appointed to the federal bench. A number served as United States Attorney. Another common thread running through the judges' lives is military service. Judge Lochren, for example, fought in the Battle of Gettysburg. Judges Edward Devitt, Earl Larson, Donald Alsop, Harry MacLaughlin, and Robert Renner were in the service during World War II, while Judge David Doty served during the Korean War. Judge Devitt received a Purple Heart for injuries sustained during a kamikaze raid. One characteristic which the judges shared until 1980 was that they were all male. Only when Judge Diana Murphy was appointed in that year did a woman enter the group.

The judges have of course had hobbies and outside activities. Several illustrations show how varied these interests have been. Before practicing law, Judge Purdy was a potter. Judge Page Morris, an avid hunter, sometimes kept his dogs with him in his chambers. Judge Larson was an outstanding amateur golfer, once reaching the fourth round of the United States Amateur Golf Tournament.

From 1858 to the present, these judges, no matter what their background or interests, all shared one overriding concern: to dispense justice fairly and competently. Videotaped interviews with the most recent judges are available on cassette; further details are on page 45.

# Rensselaer R. Nelson



Rensselaer R. Nelson became the first United States District Judge for the District of Minnesota on May 20, 1858, the same year that Minnesota became a state. Appointed by President James Buchanan, Judge Nelson served 38 years on the bench. During this time, Minnesota was transformed from a rough and ready territory into a more settled and organized state.

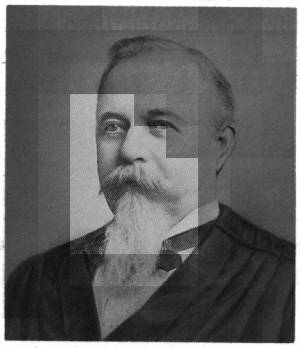
Born May 12, 1826 in New York, Judge Nelson was the son of a noted jurist who sat on the Supreme Court of the United States, the Honorable Samuel Nelson. Judge Rensselaer Nelson graduated from Yale University in 1846. As was then the custom, he "read law" in New York and qualified for the bar in 1849. On the advice of friends, he decided to practice in the undeveloped territory of Minnesota, arriving in St. Paul on May 12, 1850.

In April, 1857, Judge Nelson was appointed an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the Territory of Minnesota, a position he held slightly less than one year. During his service on the Minnesota court, Judge Nelson was presented with an issue of great public interest. An application for mandamus arose to determine whether the territorial legislature's attempt to move the state's capitol from St. Paul to St. Peter was valid. Judge Nelson wrote an elaborate opinion denying the writ.

When the United States District Court for Minnesota was created on May 11, 1858, Judge Nelson was elevated to that bench. This new position required him to travel since court was originally held in Preston and St. Paul and later in St. Paul and Winona. The business of the court increased over the years, but most of Judge Nelson's decisions were unpublished. Some charges to grand juries, principally in the Civil War years, are preserved.

Judge Nelson retired in 1896 at age 70.

# William Lochren



William Lochren succeeded Judge Nelson on May 18, 1896. He was appointed by President Grover Cleveland.

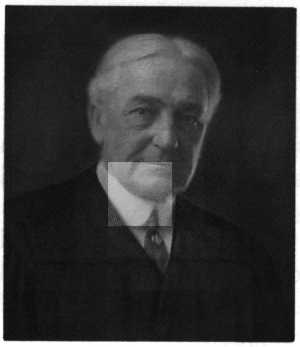
An immigrant from Ireland, Judge Lochren worked in the mills of Vermont before he was admitted to the bar in 1856. Like many others in his time, he studied alone and read law to become a member of the bar.

In 1856, Judge Lochren moved to Minnesota and entered private practice. His practice was interrupted by the Civil War. Judge Lochren served three years in the Union Forces, rising to the position of Regimental Adjutant. He fought in the Battle of Gettysburg before returning to Minneapolis and civilian life.

Judge Lochren later held several public offices. He served as a member of the Minnesota State Senate, Judge of the Fourth Judicial District of Minnesota, and United States Commissioner of Pension before he was appointed to the federal district court.

Judge Lochren presided for twelve years until April 3, 1908. Many of his decisions were given orally from the bench and involved charter rights for the railroads and corporate regulation.

# Page Morris



Page Morris was appointed to a newly-created judgeship in the District of Minnesota on March 9, 1903 by Theodore Roosevelt.

Born in Lynchburg, Virginia in 1853, Judge Morris graduated from the Virginia Military Institute in 1872. After graduation Judge Morris taught for seven years at several colleges, including the Virginia Military Institute, Texas Military Institute, and the Agriculture and Mechanical College of Texas. He then read law and was admitted to the Virginia Bar in 1880.

Judge Morris moved to Duluth, where he became City Attorney. He also served as a municipal and state judge. In 1897, Judge Morris was elected to Congress, where he served until 1903. While there, he helped enact the Panama Canal legislation.

At the end of his term in Congress, Judge Morris was appointed to the federal bench. He principally held court in Duluth. A support staff was lacking, and he did not even have a secretary in the beginning of his twenty years on the bench.

Judge Morris heard many cases concerning the introduction of liquor into Indian territory and, after 1917, Prohibition. He had a

reputation for imposing severe fines, but many who practiced before Judge Morris referred to him as a "Virginia gentleman."

Judge Morris loved to hunt in his spare time and sometimes kept his bird dogs with him in chambers. He retired from the bench in 1923.

## Milton D. Purdy

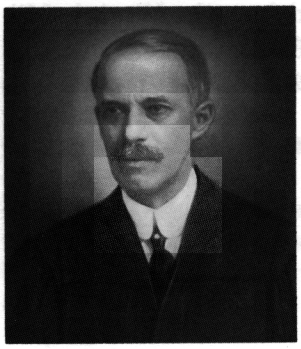
Milton D. Purdy succeeded Judge Lochren on July 6, 1908. President Theodore Roosevelt nominated him during a Congressional recess, but he only served nine months because the Senate did not confirm his appointment.

Judge Purdy was born in Ohio on November 3, 1866. After graduating from high school, he taught school for two years. He then learned and practiced the craft of pottery before coming to Minnesota to finish his education. Judge Purdy graduated from the law school of the University of Minnesota in 1892.

Judge Purdy worked as Assistant County Attorney before serving as United States Attorney. He also was an Assistant to the Attorney General of the United States before being appointed to the federal bench.

After his short tenure on the bench here, he served as Judge of the United States District Court in Shanghai, China until 1934.

## Charles A. Willard



Charles A. Willard was appointed to the bench on May 18, 1909 by President Taft. He served for five years.

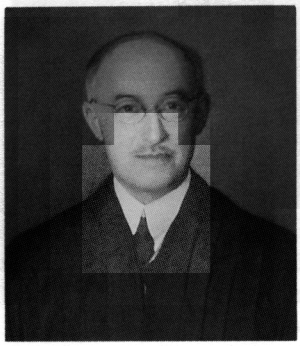
Born in Vermont in 1857, Judge Willard graduated from Dartmouth. He then received a L.L.B. at Boston University and a Doctor of Laws degree from Dartmouth.

After lecturing and practicing law in Minnesota from 1882 to 1901, Judge Willard moved half-way around the world to sit on the Supreme Court in the Philippine Islands. Except for one year when he returned to practice law here, he served as an Associate Justice in the Philippines until 1909. He adapted the Spanish Code in the Philippines to an Americanized version.

While in the Philippines, Judge Willard became good friends with the Governor of the Philippines, William Howard Taft. When Taft became President, he appointed his friend Judge Willard to the federal bench.

Judge Willard usually presided in St. Paul. In this period before World War I, Minnesota was being rapidly settled, and Judge Willard heard many real estate disputes.

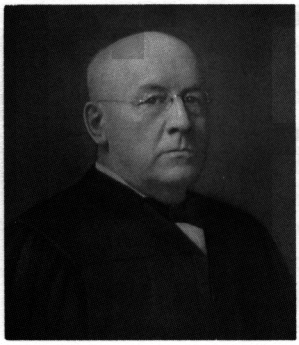
## Wilbur F. Booth



Wilbur F. Booth succeeded Judge Willard on the federal bench in 1914. Appointed by President Woodrow Wilson, he served for eleven years before he was elevated to the Court of Appeals.

Judge Booth was born in Connecticut on August 22, 1861. He graduated from Yale Law School and eventually came to Minnesota in 1889. Judge Booth was in private practice until May 20, 1909, when he was appointed to the district bench in Hennepin County. After five years there, he was named to the federal bench. He was widely regarded for the quality of his service to the federal courts.

## John F. McGee



Appointed by President Warren G. Harding in 1923, Judge John F. McGee was the first to occupy the newly created third judgeship in the District of Minnesota. He served only two years.

Judge McGee was a long time resident of Minnesota. During World War I, he was a member of the Minnesota Public Safety Commission. He also was a prosecuting attorney and a judge of the Minnesota District Court in Hennepin County.

In his spare time, Judge McGee was an avid historian of the Civil War. One Minneapolis editorial writer complimented him by stating:

> Judge McGee's study of the Civil War was merely an avocation in a busy life. But the knowledge he fished up out of all sorts of sources was none of it secondhand, and it was simply extraordinary, a marvelous intellectual performance both in way of research and memory.

Judge McGee met a tragic end in 1925, when he died in the courthouse by his own hand.

# William A. Cant

William A. Cant succeeded Page Morris in 1923 in the second judgeship. Appointed by President Harding, he served on the federal bench until his death in 1933.

Judge Cant was born in Wisconsin on Christmas Day in 1863. After graduating from the University of Michigan Law School, he opened a law office in Duluth in 1886. Judge Cant served in the Minnesota Legislature in 1894. In 1895, he was elected Duluth's City Attorney. Judge Cant was subsequently elected to the bench of the Minnesota District Court for the Eleventh Judicial District. He served there until elevated to the federal bench.

Judge Cant was innovative when handling criminal cases. He was instrumental in introducing the nationally-adopted presentence investigation. Many of his ideas are embodied in present procedures where probation officers investigate a defendant, recommend to the court a sentence, and monitor the defendant's progress after sentencing. Judge Cant served during Prohibition, and Justice Harry A. Blackmun of the United States Supreme Court recalls that he "can still see Judge Cant calling the Minnesota calendar of prohibition violators."

# Joseph W. Molyneaux

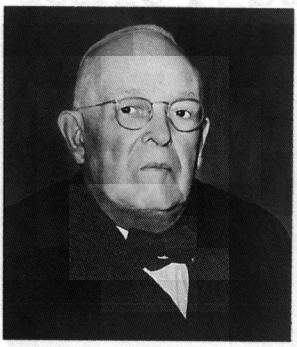
Joseph W. Molyneaux succeeded Judge McGee on the federal bench on March 18, 1925. He was appointed by President Hoover.

Judge Molyneaux was born in Bellevue, Kentucky. He received his law degree from the University of Cincinnati and passed the Minnesota bar in 1884. Judge Molyneaux practiced privately for almost thirty years before being appointed to the Minnesota District Court in Hennepin County in 1913. He served there until elevated to the federal bench.

Many of the cases Judge Molyneaux presided over concerned emergency legislation enacted to cope with the Depression. He also presided over Prohibition violations and the highly-visible trial of W.B. Foshay.

Judge Molyneaux retired after 13 years of service on the federal bench at age 76.

# John B. Sanborn



John B. Sanborn was appointed by President Coolidge in March, 1925 to succeed Judge Booth. He was the first native Minnesotan to serve on the court. He sat as a federal trial judge until 1932, when he was elevated to the United States Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit.

Judge Sanborn was born into a prominent Minnesota family in 1883. His father, General John B. Sanborn, was in command of the Minnesota Fourth Regiment during the Battle of Vicksburg in the Civil War. His cousin, Walter H. Sanborn, served on the United States Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit for many years.

A graduate of the St. Paul College of Law, Judge Sanborn held a variety of public positions. He was a state legislator, the Minnesota Insurance Commissioner, and a member of the Minnesota Tax Commission before he was appointed to the state district court. Judge Sanborn presided there three years before being elevated to the federal bench.

One of Judge Sanborn's law clerks was Harry A. Blackmun, who went on to serve on the United States Supreme Court. Justice Blackmun recalls that he revered Judge Sanborn:

> So far as I am concerned, John Sanborn should have come to Washington, not I. He had all that it takes to make a fine Justice of this Court—patience, good judicial reaction, a feel for the jugular, and the ability to write directly and to the point.

Justice Blackmun also remembers that Judge Sanborn was a great storyteller. Judge Sanborn inherited Judge McGee's secretary who was a spiritualist who soon told him that she had been in contact with her old boss and that he did not like the way Judge Sanborn was deciding cases.

Judge Sanborn retired from the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals in 1959, but continued to serve as a Senior Judge at the Court of Appeals until his death in 1964.

# Matthew M. Joyce

Matthew M. Joyce was appointed by President Hoover in 1932 to succeed Judge Sanborn. He served on the federal bench until he retired in 1954.

Born in Emmetsburg, Iowa, Judge Joyce attended two years of law school at the University of Michigan. The summer before his final year there he took and passed the Iowa bar examination and decided he could not afford to return to graduate. He was the last federal judge in this district to preside without having an official law degree, but in 1944 the University of Michigan awarded him a degree as a member of the class of 1901.

Judge Joyce practiced law in Minnesota, Montana, Iowa, and New York before becoming General Counsel for the Minneapolis and St. Louis Railroad. He worked at that position until appointed to the federal bench.

Justice Harry A. Blackmun, who watched Judge Joyce in action, commented that "with his white hair, he looked and glowered like the fictional federal judge, but he was an affable Irishman who worked hard at what he did."

Judge Joyce presided over some dramatic criminal trials, including the prosecution of the kidnappers of William Hamm. He also heard cases involving notorious gangsters like Roger Touhy and Arthur (Doc) Barker.

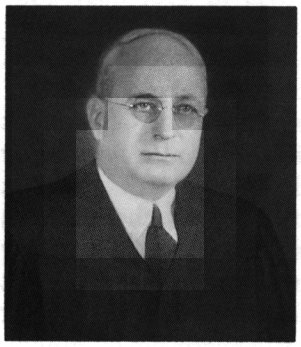
# Robert C. Bell

Robert C. Bell was appointed by President Franklin Roosevelt in 1933 to succeed Judge Cant. He served almost thirty years on the federal bench, retiring in 1961.

Judge Bell was born on a farm in Missouri. After graduating from the University of Missouri Law School in 1908, he practiced law for eight years in St. Joseph, Missouri.

Judge Bell then held a variety of public positions before taking the bench. He first became one of the primary investigators of the "Teapot Dome" scandal, serving as a Special Assistant Attorney General. In his role as special investigator, he came to Minnesota to gather evidence. He was so taken with the state that he later moved to Detroit Lakes, Minnesota where he served as Commissioner of Indian Affairs. He was then elected to the state senate. He is credited with introducing the state's first income tax law.

## George F. Sullivan



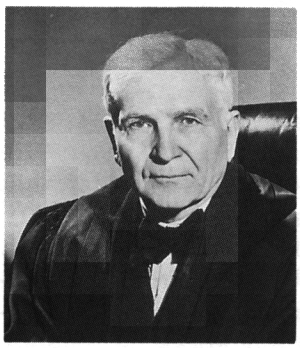
George F. Sullivan was another Franklin Roosevelt appointee. He succeeded Judge Molyneaux on the federal bench in 1937.

Born in Shakopee, Judge Sullivan was the second judge to come from Minnesota. He received his law degree from the University of Minnesota and began practice as City Attorney of Jordan. Later he became Scott County Attorney.

Judge Sullivan continued his career as a prosecutor as United States Attorney for the District of Minnesota. He supervised a series of major criminal prosecutions, including those against Ma and Doc Barker and Alvin Karpis.

After four years of prosecuting federal cases, Judge Sullivan began to preside over them in 1937. He served on the bench until his death in 1944.

## Gunnar H. Nordbye



Gunnar H. Nordbye was appointed by President Hoover on March 18, 1931, during a Congressional recess. He was not confirmed by the Senate until almost one year later due to political maneuvering.

Judge Nordbye was born in Norway, but immigrated to the United States while quite young. His Norwegian heritage later attracted attention due to his habitual Norwegian toast to the sun at the annual Eighth Circuit Judicial Conference. According to a fellow federal judge, Judge Nordbye's unusual ritual involved climbing onto a rooftop at dawn, downing a shot of whiskey, saluting the sun, and exhorting the troops in Norwegian.

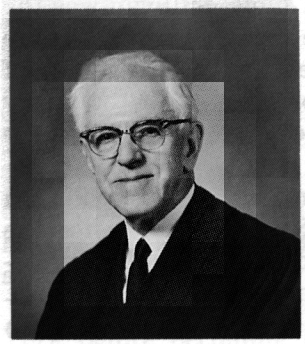
Judge Nordbye graduated from the University of Minnesota Law School and passed the Minnesota bar. He practiced privately in Minneapolis for ten years before beginning his judicial career as a judge of the Minneapolis Municipal Court. After three years on that court, he was appointed a Minnesota District Court Judge where he served until appointed to the federal bench.

Judge Nordbye served on the bench for thirty-five years, earning the title of "Grand Seignor" of the District Court. He personally knew nineteen of the twenty federal judges who had presided since Minnesota's statehood.

Judge Nordbye was recognized as one of the country's outstanding trial judges. Justice Harry A. Blackmun writes that he has "always regarded Gunnar as one of the finest federal trial judges I have ever

known . . . I never failed to be amazed at his ability to comment on the evidence and yet stay entirely neutral."

## Dennis F. Donovan

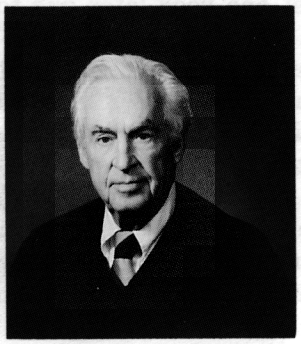


Dennis F. Donovan was appointed by President Truman in 1945 to fill the vacancy left by Judge Sullivan when he died a year earlier. Judge Donovan almost did not get the position, however, for President Roosevelt apparently had chosen another candidate. But Roosevelt died after the vacancy opened in 1944, leaving President Truman free to choose his own nominee, Judge Donovan.

Judge Donovan was born in Ironwood, Michigan. Like two other District of Minnesota federal judges, he graduated from the University of Michigan Law School. Judge Donovan moved to Duluth in 1913. He eventually practiced for the Oliver Iron Mining Company.

After his appointment to the federal bench, Judge Donovan was stationed in Duluth, but sat frequently in St. Paul. He served on the federal bench until he retired in 1965.

## Edward J. Devitt



Edward J. Devitt was appointed to the federal bench by President Eisenhower in 1954. He became Chief Judge in 1957 and served in that capacity until taking senior status in 1981.

Judge Devitt was born in St. Paul in 1911. After receiving his law degree from the University of North Dakota, he served as a Municipal Judge in East Grand Forks, Minnesota. He also taught at the University of North Dakota Law School. In 1939, Judge Devitt moved to St. Paul to serve as Assistant Attorney General. World War II then interrupted his legal career, and he became a Lieutenant Commander in the Navy. Serving as Intelligence Officer on a naval destroyer, he was injured during a kamikaze raid on his ship. Judge Devitt received a Purple Heart for those wounds.

He retired to less hazardous public service by teaching at the St. Paul College of Law in 1946 and serving in the United States House of Representatives in 1947–1948. After his congressional term, Judge Devitt practiced in St. Paul until 1950, when he was elected Ramsey County Probate Judge. He served there until elevated to the federal bench.

Through his prolific writings and legal innovations, Judge Devitt has worked to improve the quality of federal court practice. He co-authored the widely-used reference work "Federal Jury Practice and

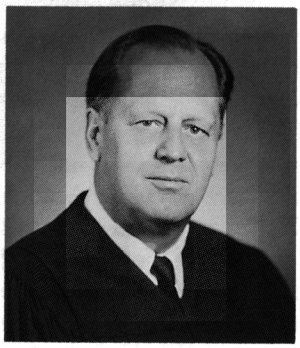
Instructions." He also was the first judge to use, by Rule of Court, a six-person jury in civil trials, rather than the previous twelve-person juries. This change not only saved money for taxpayers, but resulted in speedier federal trials. Today, all but a handful of United States District Courts have adopted the six-person rule.

Judge Devitt has been active in a number of organizations devoted to improvements in the justice system. He has chaired and served on many committees of the American Bar Association and the Judicial Conference of the United States.

In 1981, the Edward J. Devitt Distinguished Service to Justice Award was created by the West Publishing Company to honor an outstanding federal judge each year.

Judge Devitt continues to carry a heavy caseload as a Senior Judge.

# Earl R. Larson



Earl R. Larson was appointed by President Kennedy in 1961 and served sixteen years before taking senior status in 1977. As a Senior Judge, he has handled district court cases and sat frequently on the Court of Appeals.

Born in Minneapolis, Judge Larson attended the University of Minnesota as an undergraduate and a law student. He was president of the All-University Student Council in 1934–35. He also became an outstanding amateur golfer, reaching the fourth round of the United States Amateur Golf Tournament in 1954.

Judge Larson practiced privately for five years before being appointed Assistant United States Attorney. He entered the United States Navy in 1942 where he did air intelligence work, earning the rank of Lieutenant Senior Grade.

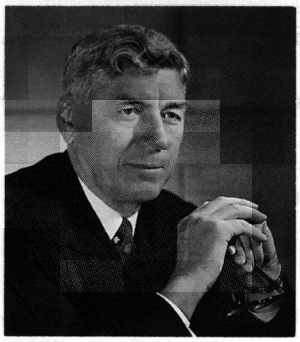
When the war ended, Judge Larson helped found the Minneapolis law firm of Larson, Loevinger, Lindquist, Freeman and Fraser. The law firm's alumni served in many important governmental posts and include Orville L. Freeman, former Governor of Minnesota and United States Secretary of Agriculture; Walter F. Mondale, former Vice-President and United States Senator; Donald M. Fraser, former United States Congressman and current Minneapolis mayor; and, Harry H. MacLaughlin, former Minnesota Supreme Court Justice and now United States District Court Judge.

While in practice, Judge Larson lectured in business law at the University of Minnesota. He also served as Chairperson of the Governor's Human Rights Commission from 1955 to 1960.

Judge Larson was appointed to the federal bench during a time of growing awareness of discrimination and corresponding legal remedies. One of his most notable cases involved desegregation of the Minneapolis School District. After his initial decision established minority enroll-

ment goals for the district, Judge Larson kept jurisdiction of the case for approximately twelve years to modify the enrollment standards and to ensure compliance with the court's rulings.

## Philip Neville



Philip Neville was appointed by President Johnson in 1967 to succeed Judge Nordbye upon his retirement. He served until his death in 1974.

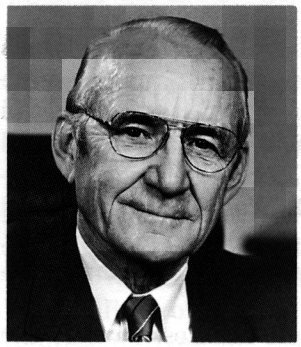
Judge Neville was born in Minneapolis, Minnesota, the son of an editorial writer for the *Minneapolis Journal*. He received his undergraduate and law school degrees from the University of Minnesota.

Following his graduation, Judge Neville clerked for the Chief Justice of the Minnesota Supreme Court. He then entered private practice.

While in private practice, Judge Neville was active in academics and in the bar. He taught law at the University of Minnesota and at the Minneapolis College of Law. He also served as president of the Hennepin County Bar Association and the Minnesota State Bar Association.

Judge Neville served as municipal judge in Edina before being appointed United States Attorney for the District of Minnesota. He served there until his appointment to the federal bench. Judge Neville served as a federal district judge for seven years, braving a long period of illness before his death.

## Miles W. Lord



Miles W. Lord was appointed to the federal bench by President Johnson in 1966, succeeding Judge Donovan. He became Chief Judge in 1981 and served until he retired in 1985.

Born in Crow Wing County, Minnesota, Judge Lord earned his undergraduate and law degrees from the University of Minnesota. He worked his way through the University at such diverse jobs as janitor, postal clerk, night watchman, packing house worker, and "cat skinner" welder.

Judge Lord served as Assistant United States Attorney before being elected Minnesota's Attorney General. He successfully ran for re-election in 1956 and 1958.

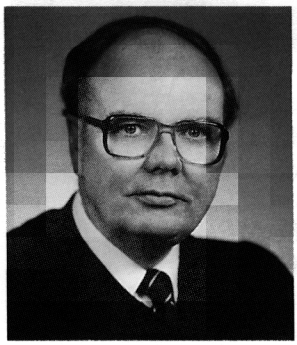
Judge Lord returned to federal service when he was appointed United States Attorney for the District of Minnesota. He relinquished

the role of chief federal prosecutor five years later when he was appointed to the federal bench.

Judge Lord tried some highly-publicized cases during his tenure and often used innovative methods to manage his caseload. These included use of two juries in a long antibiotics trial and extensive use of special masters.

Judge Lord re-entered private practice upon his retirement from the federal bench in 1985.

# Donald D. Alsop



Donald D. Alsop was nominated for appointment to the federal bench by President Richard Nixon on August 8, 1974, and was commissioned by President Gerald Ford on December 20, 1974. He became Chief Judge on May 20, 1985.

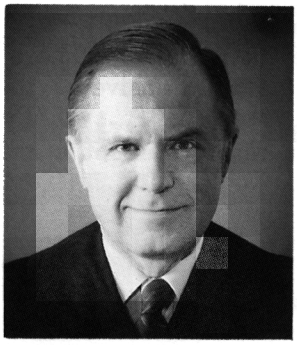
Judge Alsop was born on August 28, 1927 in Duluth, Minnesota. He grew up in Duluth and attended the Duluth public schools. In his youth, Judge Alsop worked as a caddy, sold shoes, poured hot tar, swabbed the decks of the ships in Duluth harbor, and carried mail. After serving in the United States Army from 1945–46, he attended the University of Minnesota, Duluth.

Judge Alsop graduated from the University of Minnesota Law School in 1952. While a law student, he served on the student editorial board of the Minnesota Law Review and was elected to the Order of the Coif.

Judge Alsop began his practice of law with the firm of Felhaber & Larson in St. Paul, Minnesota. In 1954, he moved to New Ulm, Minnesota and joined the firm of Gislason, Alsop, Dosland & Hunter. His practice centered on trial work. Judge Alsop was active in the community, serving as president of the Chamber of Commerce, chairman of the area Red Cross chapter, and as a participating member of many other community organizations.

Judge Alsop was a partner in the New Ulm firm until he assumed the office of United States District Judge on January 17, 1975. During his judicial tenure, he has served on the Judicial Conference Committee to Implement the Criminal Justice Act, as president of the Eighth Circuit District Judges Association, and as a member of the Eighth Circuit Judicial Council.

# Harry H. MacLaughlin



Harry H. MacLaughlin was appointed by President Jimmy Carter in 1977, succeeding Judge Larson after he took senior status.

Judge MacLaughlin was born on August 9, 1927 in Breckenridge, Minnesota. He grew up in Wahpeton, North Dakota where his father owned a small business. After graduating from high school, Judge MacLaughlin joined the U.S. Navy. He then became a student at the University of Minnesota and graduated in March 1949 from the School of Business Administration.

Judge MacLaughlin attended the University of Minnesota Law School, graduating in the top ten percent of his class in 1956. While in law school, he was a member of the editorial board of the Minnesota Law Review.

Judge MacLaughlin clerked for a justice of the Minnesota Supreme Court before entering private practice in 1956. He first practiced with the law firm of Larson, Loevinger, Lindquist, Freeman & Fraser. Within a short time, Judge MacLaughlin left that firm to form his own firm with Walter F. Mondale under the name MacLaughin & Mondale. The firm now continues as Harstad & Rainbow.

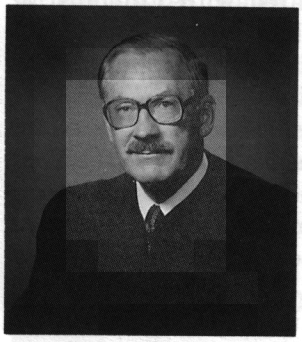
While practicing, Judge MacLaughlin taught law at the William Mitchell College of Law. Since 1973, he has been a member of the Moot Court Law Faculty at the University of Minnesota Law School.

In 1972, Judge MacLaughlin was appointed to the Minnesota Supreme Court. He served there until 1977, writing more than 250 opinions, signed and per curiam.

Judge MacLaughlin was then named to the federal bench. He assumed the office in a ceremony held in the Roosevelt Room of the White House.

Judge MacLaughlin has been active in many legal and civic organizations. He has served as a member of the Eighth Circuit Judicial Council and on a number of committees of the Council. He has also served on several committees of the Minnesota State and Hennepin County Bar Associations, is a past member of the Minnesota State College Board, the Minnesota Judicial Council, the Minneapolis Charter Commission, and the National Advisory Council for the Small Business Administration.

# Robert G. Renner



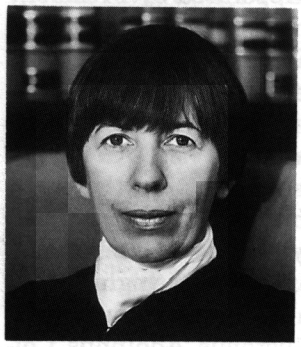
Robert G. Renner was appointed to the federal district court bench by President Carter and took the oath of office on February 22, 1980.

Judge Renner was born in 1923 in Nevis, Minnesota and raised in Walker, Minnesota. His college career at St. John's University was interrupted by World War II. Judge Renner enlisted in the Army on March 6, 1943 and was assigned as a corporal to a tank-destroyer battalion. He served on the European front and was honorably discharged on January 1, 1946.

Judge Renner graduated from St. John's University in January 1947 with a B.A. in Economics. He started law school at Georgetown University in January 1947 and graduated in 1949. Judge Renner joined Ed Rogers, Minnesota's first Indian attorney, in private practice in January 1949 in Walker, Minnesota. He maintained a general practice during his years in Walker.

From 1957 to 1969, Judge Renner was a member of the Minnesota State Legislature representing Cass County. In August 1969, he resigned from the legislature to become the United States Attorney for Minnesota. He resigned from that position on June 3, 1977, to become a United States magistrate for the District of Minnesota. He served as a magistrate until he was elevated to the federal bench in 1980. Judge Renner and his colleague, Judge Murphy, were appointed to fill two new judgeships created by Congress.

# Diana E. Murphy



Diana E. Murphy became a United States District Judge in 1980. Appointed by Jimmy Carter, she is the first woman to sit on the federal bench in Minnesota.

Born January 4, 1934 in Faribault, Minnesota, Judge Murphy received most of her higher education at the University of Minnesota. She graduated with a B.A. magna cum laude in 1954 and a J.D. magna cum laude in 1974. Recipient of a Fulbright Scholarship, Judge Murphy did graduate work in history during the years 1954–1958, at the Johannes Gutenberg University in Mainz, Germany and at the University of Minnesota where she was a teaching assistant. Her academic honors include Phi Beta Kappa, Order of the Coif, and membership on the editorial board of the Minnesota Law Review.

Before being appointed to the federal bench, Judge Murphy was a state trial judge. She served on the Hennepin County Municipal Court,

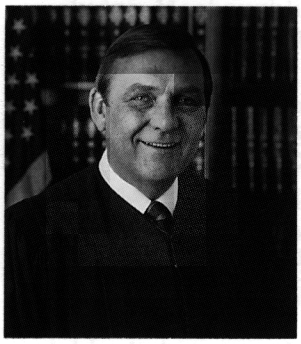
from 1976–1978, and the Minnesota District Court, from 1978–1980. She previously practiced law in the litigation area with Lindquist & Vennum in Minneapolis.

Judge Murphy has been active in a wide variety of organizations devoted to the law and improvements in the justice system. She is Vice President and a member of the Executive Committee and the Board of Directors of both the American Judicature Society and the Federal Judges Association. She is a member of the American Law Institute, a Fellow of the American Bar Foundation, and a member of the National Association of Women Judges. She has also served on national and state bar association boards and committees. She was chair of the Minneapolis Charter Commission and of Operation De Novo (pretrial diversion program) and member of the Minnesota Constitutional Study Commission.

During her tenure on the federal district court, Judge Murphy has organized a number of projects. She worked with members of the bar to form and train a panel of lawyers willing to represent pro se plaintiffs in civil rights cases. She also co-chaired a bicentennial committee to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the United States Constitution.

Throughout her life, Judge Murphy has taken an active role in the community. She has served as Chairman of the Bush Foundation; Regent of St. John's University; President of the University of Minnesota Alumni Association; President of the Minneapolis League of Women Voters; and on the boards of the United Way, Twin Cities Public Television, Inc., the Minnesota Civil Liberties Union, the Minneapolis Urban Coalition, and the Minnesota Science Museum.

# Paul A. Magnuson



Paul A. Magnuson was appointed by President Ronald Reagan to the first judgeship of the United States District Court for the District of Minnesota on November 16, 1981, to succeed retiring Judge Devitt.

Born on February 9, 1937, Judge Magnuson was raised on a farm near the small town of Carthage, South Dakota. He attended a one-room elementary school and recounts with some pride that of his 13 high school classmates, 12 went on to higher education.

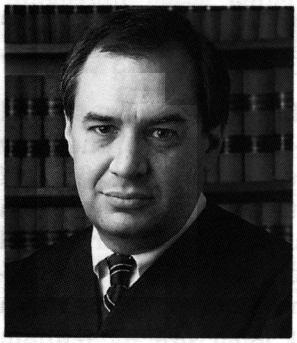
Judge Magnuson left Carthage to attend Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter, Minnesota. Upon graduation in 1959, Judge Magnuson moved to St. Paul where he worked and attended William Mitchell College of Law.

In 1963, he joined the South St. Paul law firm of Levander, Gillen & Miller. Although a relatively small law firm in size, its influence on national, state and local politics has been great with members of the firm having included former Minnesota governors Harold Stassen and

Harold Levander, former United States Representative Elmer Ryan, former United States Attorney and Minnesota Supreme Court Justice Fallon Kelly, and United States Senator David Durenburger.

Judge Magnuson has been an active member of the Republican Party, serving on or participating in numerous Republican committees and campaigns. His legal practice and political involvement flourished during the 18 years before his appointment to the District Court. He presently serves as a trustee of his alma mater, Gustavus Adolphus College.

# James M. Rosenbaum



James M. Rosenbaum was appointed by President Ronald Reagan on July 19, 1985, to the newly created seventh judgeship for the District of Minnesota. Appointed at the age of 40, Judge Rosenbaum is the youngest judge to serve on Minnesota's federal bench during the last century.

Judge Rosenbaum was born at Fort Snelling, Minnesota, on October 12, 1944. He grew up in the Highland Park area of St. Paul and graduated from St. Paul Central High School. He attended the University of Minnesota, receiving his undergraduate degree in 1966 and his law degree in 1969.

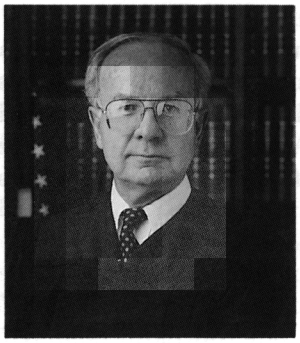
Following law school, Judge Rosenbaum worked in Chicago as a civil rights lawyer for VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America). He established a legal aid clinic in one of Chicago's housing projects. He also began a program which provided free legal assistance to indigents at criminal court hearings held on weekends and holidays in Chicago.

In 1972, Judge Rosenbaum returned to Minnesota and entered the private practice of law. He continued in private practice until 1981. During two years of that time, he worked in partnership with his wife, Marilyn Brown Rosenbaum.

In 1981, Judge Rosenbaum was appointed United States Attorney for the District of Minnesota. He held that position until his appointment to the federal bench in 1985.

Throughout his college, law school, and post law school days, Judge Rosenbaum was active in the Republican Party. From 1974 to 1981, he was chairman of Senator Rudy Boschwitz's campaign steering committee.

# David S. Doty



David S. Doty was appointed to the federal district court by President Reagan and formally took the oath of office on May 21, 1987.

Judge Doty was born June 30, 1929 in Coon Rapids, Minnesota. He grew up in Minneapolis, Minnesota, graduating from Marshall High School and attending the University of Minnesota. He was commissioned a Second Lieutenant in the U.S. Marine Corps in 1952 and served until 1958 when he resigned as a Captain. He served on sea duty, as an infantry company commander, and as an artillery battery commander, ending his military career on Okinawa.

Judge Doty attended the University of Minnesota Law School graduating in 1961 with honors, having been an editor of the Law Review. He then practiced law for 26 years, leaving the firm of Popham, Haik, Schnobrich, Kaufman & Doty to ascend the bench in 1987. Judge Doty had an active practice concentrated on trial and administrative law. He represented many individuals and organizations, including the Metropolitan Transit Commission. He was also a Special Assistant Attorney General and taught labor law at William Mitchell College of Law.

Judge Doty has been active in bar and civic matters, serving as the President of the Minnesota State Bar Association and a member of the Board of Governors for more than 10 years. He was also President of the Hennepin County Bar Association and served on various committees of both bar associations. He was elected to the Minneapolis Public Library Board, and served as a member of the Minneapolis Foundation Board and as a Board Member and President of the Law School Alumni Association.