

**Documents Regarding the Nominations, Confirmations,
Recess Appointments, Commissions, Oaths of Office,
Removals, and Terms of the Ten Justices who
Served on the Supreme Court of
Minnesota Territory,
1849-1858**

PART THREE-A

**The Oaths of Office
of the Ten Justices who
Served on the Supreme Court of
Minnesota Territory,
1849-1858**

Compiled

by

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PART THREE - A

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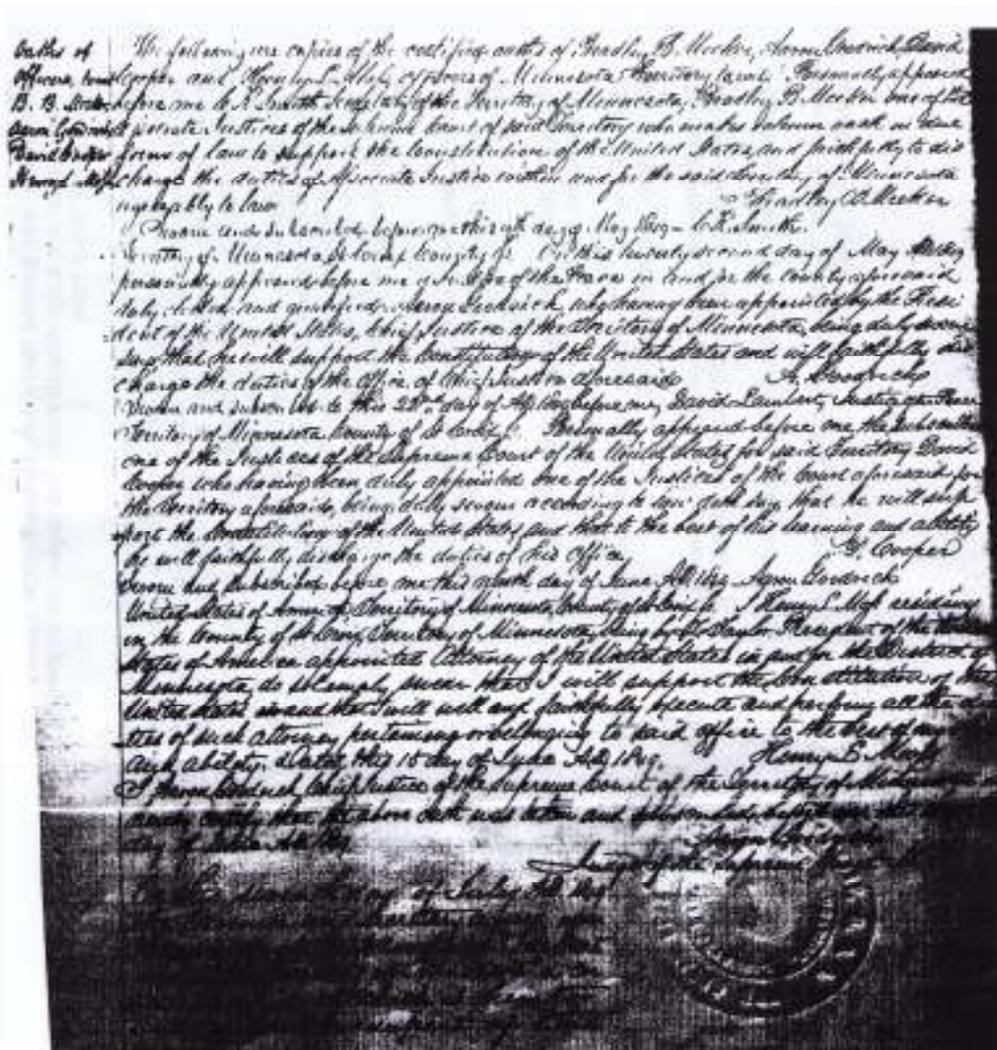
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SOURCES

There are two sources for the oaths of the justices of the Territorial Supreme Court. First, each justice signed a handwritten oath before a qualified person such a justice of the peace, the Secretary of the Territory, a Probate Judge, one of the other justices who had been sworn or, in Rensselaer Nelson's case, the governor. This is the original oath.

Later, each handwritten oath was transcribed or rewritten in longhand in a ledger called the *Executive Journal of the Territory* by the Secretary of the Territory. He rewrote them in one long paragraph. Here is Secretary Charles K. Smith's transcription of the oaths of Chief Justice Goodrich, Associate Justices Meeker and David Cooper, and U. S. Attorney, Henry L. Moss:



The following are copies of the certificate of oaths of Bradley B. Meeker, Aaron Goodrich, David Cooper and Henry L. Moss, officers of Minnesota Territory, to wit: Personally appeared before me C. L. Smith, Secretary of the Territory of Minnesota, Bradley B. Meeker one of the Associate Justices of the Supreme Court of said Territory who makes solemn oath in due form of law to support the Constitution of the United States, and faithfully to discharge the duties of Associate Justice within and for the said Secretary of Minnesota agreeably to law.

Bradley B Meeker

Sworn and subscribed before me this 9th day of May 1849 — C. K. Smith, Secretary of Minnesota, St. Croix County ss. On this twenty second day of May A.D. 1849 personally appeared before me a Justice of the Peace, in and for the aforesaid county duly elected and qualified, Aaron Goodrich who having been appointed by the President of the United States, Chief Justice of the Territory of Minnesota, being duly sworn says, that he will support the Constitution of the United States and will faithfully discharge the duties of the Office of Chief Justice aforesaid. A. Goodrich

Sworn and subscribed to this 22nd day of A.D. 1849, before me, David Lambert, Justice of the Peace, Territory of Minnesota County of St. Croix. ss Personally appeared before me the subscriber one of the Justices of the Supreme Court of the United States for said Territory David Cooper who having been dully appointed one of the Justices of the Court aforesaid for the Territory aforesaid, being duly sworn according to law doth say, that he will support the Constitution of the United States and that to the best of his learning and ability he will faithfully discharge the duties of his office. D. Cooper

[Oath of Henry Moss omitted]

At the Minnesota Historical Society, the *Territorial Executive Records* can be found in four leather bound notebooks, each about 15” wide and about 20” tall, each weighing 15 lbs. or more. Each book has about 200 pages (they are not numbered), but only the first 30 or so pages of each have entries, the rest being blank. In one of these large books, the oaths of the justices of the territorial court (and other civil appointments such as the territorial secretary and the U. S. attorney) are written in ink in longhand (different persons made different entries over the years).

The original oaths are filed in a folder marked “Territorial Secretary: Bonds and Oaths—Territorial Offices” in the box of “Territorial Records of the Territorial Secretary” at the Minnesota Historical Society. Each has been retyped and is posted in the entry for each territorial justice in Part Two.

Scanned copies of the originals are posted below. Several were written on blue-colored paper; copies of these are dark and barely legible on a computer screen.

For a discussion of the importance of the oaths, see “Documents Regarding the Terms of the Justices of the Territorial Supreme Court: Part One: Introduction” 34-37 (MLHP, 2009-2014). 

**A. Oath of Chief Justice Aaron Goodrich before
David Lambert, Justice of the Peace, May 22, 1849.**

Territory of Minnesota }
St. Croix County }
On this twenty second day of May
A. D. 1849 personally appeared before
me a Justice of the Peace in and for the County aforesaid duly
elected and qualified, Aaron Goodrich who having been ap-
pointed by the President of the United States Chief Justice of
the Territory of Minnesota, being duly sworn says that he
will support the Constitution of the United States and will
faithfully discharge the duties of the office of Chief Justice
aforesaid.

Sworn and subscribed to
this 22^d day of May, 1849 }
Before me.


David Lambert
Justice of the Peace

B. Oath of Associate Justice David Cooper taken before
Chief Justice Goodrich, on June 9, 1849, in St. Croix County.

Territory of Minnesota
County of St. Croix

Personally ap-
peared before me, the subscriber, one of the justices of
of the Supreme Court of the United States for said
Territory David Cooper, who, having been duly ap-
pointed one of the justices of the Court aforesaid, for
the Territory aforesaid, being duly sworn according
to law soth day, that he will support the Constitution
of the United States and that to the best of his learning
and ability he will faithfully discharge the duties
of his office.

Witness my hand and seal at St. Croix
this ninth day of June
A. D. 1849

D. Cooper

J. A. Goodrich

C. The Oath of Justice Bradley B. Meeker before
Charles K. Smith, Secretary of the Territory, May 9, 1849.

Personally appeared before me C. K. Smith, Sec-
retary of the Territory of Minnesota, Bradley B.
Meeker, one of the Associate Justices of the Supreme
and Appeal Territory, who making solemn oath
in due form of law to support the Constitution
of the United States and faithfully to discharge
the duties of associate Justice within and for
the said Territory of Minnesota as one able
to serve.

Bradley B. Meeker

Given to and subscribed
before me this 9th day
of May 1849.

C. K. Smith

**D (i). First oath of office of Chief Justice Fuller on
October 25, 1851, in Albany County, New York.**

State of New York
County of Albany } for Jerome
Fuller do solemnly swear that
I will administer justice without
respect to persons, and do equal right
to the poor and to the rich, and that
I will faithfully and impartially
discharge and perform all the duties
incumbent on me as Chief Justice
of the Supreme Court of the United
States for the Territory of Minnesota,
according to the best of my abilities
and understanding, agreeably to the
constitution and laws of the United States,
So help me God.
Subscribed & sworn } Jerome Fuller
to this twenty fifth day of }
October 1851 before }
S. Wilson
Adj. Justice
Sup. Ct. U.S.

**D (ii.). Second oath of Chief Justice Fuller before
Probate Judge Henry A. Lambert, on November 24, 1851,
in Ramsey County, after he learned that the Organic Act required
the oath to be taken in the Territory.**

Territory of Minnesota
County of Ramsey } I Jerome Fuller
do solemnly swear that I will support the
Constitution of the United States and faithfully
discharge the duties of the office of Chief
Justice of the Supreme Court of said Territory
to which I have ~~been~~ appointed. So help me
God. Jerome Fuller
Subscribed & sworn to this
24th day of November 1851 }
by the said Jerome Fuller }
before me
Henry A. Lambert
Judge of the Probate Court
of the County of Ramsey

E. Oath of office of Chief Justice Henry Z. Hayner
before Orlando Simons, Justice of the Peace, October 6, 1852.

27. 1852
I, Henry Z. Hayner
County of Boone } do hereby swear
that on the sixth day of October 1852 before
my personal appearance before Orlando Simons
who being to me duly sworn make out
that he is a Just Justice of the Peace
of the United States and that he would
faithfully discharge the duties of the office
of Chief Justice of the U.S. for the circuit
of Missouri
Sworn to
Orlando Simons
Justice of the Peace

**F. Oath of office of Chief Justice William H. Welch,
before Orlando Simons, Justice of the Peace,
April 25, 1853, in St. Paul.**

*I, William H. Welch, do solemnly swear
and affirm to support the constitution of the
United States and that I will faithfully and
impartially execute the office of Chief Justice of the
Territory of Minnesota.*

William H. Welch

Orlando S. Simons
Justice of the Peace

*before me at St. Paul Minn
on this 25th day of April 1853*

A further note about Welch's oath on the same sheet of paper.

Be it remembered that on this 35th day of April
1853 before me personally appeared William
H. Welch to me known to be the identical
person and who being duly sworn says
that he will support the Constitution of the
United States, and that he will faithfully
discharge the duties of the office of Chief
Justice of the Territory of Minnesota.

Orlando W. Moore
Justice of the Peace in
& for the County of Ramsey
Minnesota Territory

**G. Oath of Associate Justice Andrew G. Chatfield,
Before Chief Justice Welch, May 31, 1853.**

United States of America }
Secretary of Minnesota — }
do solemnly swear that I will support the consti- }
tutions of the United States and that I will faithfully }
discharge the duties of the office of Associate Justice }
of the Territory of Minnesota — }
Subscribed and sworn this 31st } Andrew G. Chatfield
day of May A.D. 1853 before me }
H. H. Welch }
Chief Justice

I William H. Welch Chief Justice }
of the Territory of Minnesota do hereby certify }
that on this day personally appeared before }
me at the city of Saint Paul in said Terri- }
tory Andrew G. Chatfield and subscribed }
and took before me the foregoing oath of }
office as Associate Justice of the Territory of }
Minnesota.

Given under my hand at Saint }
Paul this 31st day of May A.D. 1853. }
H. H. Welch }

H. Oath of Associate Justice Moses Sherburne
before Justice Chatfield, June 6, 1853, in Ramsey County.

Territory of Minnesota }
Ramsey County } I, Moses Sherburne do
solemnly swear that I will support the Con-
stitution of the United States, and that I
will faithfully discharge the duties of the
office of Associate Justice of the Territory of
Minnesota. -
Subscribed & sworn this 6th }
day of June AD 1853 before me }
Amos H. Chatfield }
Associate Justice }
of the Ter of Min. }
M. Sherburne

I. Oath of Associate Justice Rensselaer R. Nelson before
Territorial Governor Samuel Medary, May 11, 1857,
in Ramsey County.

Territory of Minnesota
County of Ramsey }
I, Rensselaer R. Nelson do
solemnly swear that I will support the
Constitution of the United States and that
I will faithfully discharge the duties of
Associate Justice for the Territory of
Minnesota to the best of my ability, So
help me God.

Rensselaer R. Nelson

Subscribed & sworn to
before me this 11th
day of May A.D. 1857
S. Medary
Governor of M.T.

**J. Oath of Associate Justice Charles E. Flandrau before
Charles L. Chase, Secretary of the Territory,
August 8, 1857, in Ramsey County:**

Territory of Minnesota }
County of Ramsey } Ad.
I Charles E. Flandrau
having been duly appointed Associate
Justice of the Supreme Court of the
Territory of Minnesota do solemnly
swear that I will support the Constitu-
tion of the United States, and faithfully
discharge the duties of said office.
Given and subscribed
by me this 8th day } Charles E. Flandrau
of August 1857. }
Charles L. Chase
Sec. Terr. Treas.

