

# Chronology of Circuit Court Judges Serving Mason County and the Historical Evolution of the Judicial Circuits Organized to Include the County of Mason

**1805:** January 11 act of the United States Congress dividing the Indiana territory into two separate governments established the organized, incorporated Territory of Michigan effective June 30.<sup>1</sup>

**1827:** April 13 act of the Michigan Legislative Council assigned the three judges appointed to the state supreme court of the territory to preside concurrently as judges of the circuit courts to be held in the counties.<sup>2</sup>

**1833:** Above county courts abolished and replaced by “the circuit court of the territory of Michigan,” the area east of Lake Michigan except Wayne County,<sup>3</sup> with two associate judges for each county and one appointed judge for the entire circuit: William Asa Fletcher (June 26, 1788–September 19, 1852), Judge of the Circuit Court of the Territory from 1833 to 1836; resigned and was appointed first chief justice of the Michigan Supreme Court and was tasked with transitioning the territorial judiciary into the state judiciary when Michigan obtained statehood.<sup>4</sup>



**1836:** An act approved July 16 divided the state into three circuits and required the supreme court to hold annual terms in each and continue to act as circuit judges.<sup>5</sup>

**1837:** January 26 act of the United States Congress approved admission of the State of Michigan as the twenty-sixth state to the Union.<sup>6</sup>

**1840:** April 1 state act laid out, attached to Ottawa, and named what is now known as Mason County “Notipekago,”<sup>7</sup> the Indian name of the Pere Marquette River meaning “river with heads on stocks,” referring to the Pottawatomie near extermination of another band of Indians encamped at the mouth of the river whose heads were cut off and placed on stocks.<sup>8</sup>

**1843:** March 8 state act changed the original name Notipekago to “Mason,”<sup>9</sup> to commemorate Stevens T. Mason, the first governor of the state.<sup>10</sup>

**1850:** Constitution of the State of Michigan made circuit judges elective to a term of six years “on the first day of January next succeeding their election,”<sup>11</sup> with the first election to be “held on the first Monday in April, one thousand eight hundred and fifty-one, and every sixth year thereafter.”<sup>12</sup>

**1855:** January 3 session of the Legislature organized Mason, Manistee, and Oceana out of Ottawa County, and Lake and Osceola were attached to Mason County for judicial purposes.<sup>13</sup>

**1858:** January 29 Public Act 5 denominated the Ninth judicial circuit to comprise 17 counties: Allegan; Ottawa; Newaygo–Mecosta and Osceola attached; Oceana; Mason–Lake attached; Manistee–Wexford and Missaukee attached; Manitou; Grand Traverse–Emmet, Charlevoix, Antrim, and Kalkaska [now Kalkaska] attached.<sup>14</sup>

Allegan: 3d Tues. in Mar., 2d Tues. in July, 4th Tues. in Oct.

Ottawa: 4th Tues. in Mar. and June, 3d Tues. in Oct.

Muskegon: 1st Tues. in Apr., 2d Tues. in Oct.

Newaygo: 2d Tues. in Apr., 1st Tues. in Sept.

Mecosta (Osceola attached): 3d Tues. in Apr., 2d Mon. in Sept.

Oceana: 4th Mon. in Apr., 1st Thurs. in Oct.

Mason: 4th Thurs. in Apr., 1st Mon. in Oct.

Manistee (Wexford & Missaukee attached): 1st Tues. in May, 4th Tues. in Sept.

Grand Traverse (Antrim & Kalkaska attached): 2d Tues. in May, 3d Tues. in Sept.<sup>15</sup>

**Chronology of Circuit Court Judges Serving Mason County**  
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**March 1, 1866–March 6, 1873:** March 21 Public Act 360 of 1865 created the Thirteenth judicial circuit, “on and after the first day of March, in the year of our Lord eighteen hundred and sixty-six,” to comprise 12 counties: “Mason, Lake, Manistee, Wexford, Missaukee, Benzie, Grand Traverse, Kalkaska, Leelanaw [now Leelanau], Antrim, Otsego, and Manitou,” with terms of court “in the several counties mentioned...at the times heretofore fixed for the same.”<sup>16</sup>



Judicial Circuit Courts Lower Peninsula 1891

**1873:** March 7 Public Act 23 took immediate effect and reorganized the Thirteenth and created the Nineteenth Circuit Court, which comprised six counties, whose voters shall elect, on April 7, 1873, a circuit judge, who shall hold office commencing May 1, 1873, and ending January 1, 1876.<sup>17</sup>

Osceola County:

2d Mon. in Jan., 1st Mondays in May and Sept.

Mason County:

4th Wed. in Jan., 3d Wed. in May, 3d Mon. in Sept.

Manistee County:

3d Tues. in Feb., 1st Tuesdays in June and Oct.

Benzie County:

2d Tues. in Mar., 3d Tuesdays in June and Oct.

Wexford County:

1st Tues. in July, 3d Tues. in Dec.

Lake County:

2d Tues. in July, 4th Tues. in Dec.<sup>18</sup>

**1881:** June 3 Public Act 217 reorganized the Thirteenth and Nineteenth judicial circuits and created the Twenty-eighth to comprise Kalkaska, Missaukee, Roscommon, and Wexford Counties.<sup>19</sup>

**1883:** March 22 Public Act 15 detached the County of Benzie from the Nineteenth judicial circuit and attached it to the Twenty-eighth.<sup>20</sup>

**1897:** May 29 Public Act 186 revised arrangement of, and provided for, thirty-five consecutively numbered circuits; Sec. 19: “The nineteenth circuit shall be composed of the counties of Lake, Manistee, Mason and Osceola.”<sup>21</sup>

**1909:** State constitution required circuit courts to convene at least four times each year in every county organized for judicial purposes.<sup>22</sup>

**1976:** May 21 Public Act 125 created the Forty-Ninth judicial circuit to comprise Osceola and Mecosta Counties<sup>23</sup> (Judge Lawrence C. Root).

**1978:** May 25 Public Act 164 rearranged existing local courts and created the Fifty-first judicial circuit, which “consists of the counties of Lake and Mason and has 1 judge.”<sup>24</sup>

19th Circuit Court–Manistee and Benzie Counties (Judge Charles A. Wickens)

28th Circuit Court–Missaukee and Wexford Counties (Judge William R. Peterson)

51st Circuit Court–Mason and Lake Counties (Judge Richard I Cooper)

**Present Day:** Michigan has 57 circuit courts.<sup>25</sup>

## **NINTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT COURT (APRIL 1858–February 28, 1866)**



### **The Honorable Flavius Josephus Littlejohn**

DOB July 20, 1804, Herkimer County, NY; DOD May 14, 1880,<sup>26</sup>  
Allegan County. Interment: Oakwood Cemetery, Allegan, MI.

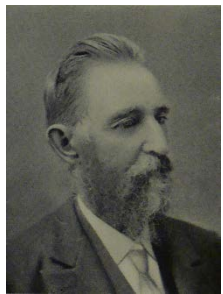
#### **First Judge of the Circuit Court for the County of Mason**

Elected the first circuit judge of Allegan County and served in the Fifth Circuit until reorganization created the Ninth, to which he was elected in 1858. First session in Mason County held September 21, 1858;<sup>27</sup> farewell session in Grand Traverse County held September 20,

1865;<sup>28</sup> resigned from the Ninth Circuit in 1869. Residence: Allegan County.

*Biographical Note:* Author of 1875 *Legends of Michigan and the Old Northwest; Or, A Cluster of Unpublished Waifs, Gleaned along the Uncertain, Misty Line, Dividing Traditional from Historic Times.*

## **THIRTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT COURT (March 1, 1866–March 6, 1873)**



### **The Honorable Jonathan Gannet Ramsdell**

DOB January 10, 1830, Wayne County; DOD February 16, 1903, Grand Traverse County. Interment: Original burial place on homestead; when property sold was interred at Oakwood Cemetery, Traverse City, MI.<sup>29</sup>

#### **Second Judge of the Circuit Court for the County of Mason**

Elected April 2, 1866, to hold office commencing May 1, 1866, and reelected succeeding term. Reorganization created the 19th Circuit

Court. Declined renomination in the 13th for one term held by the Hon. Ruben Hatch; then reelected 1882; retired 1893. Residence: Grand Traverse County.

*Biographical Note:* Brother of Thomas Jefferson (T. J.) Ramsdell, a lawyer and philanthropist, who in 1903 built Manistee's historic Ramsdell Theatre.

## **NINETEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT COURT (MARCH 7, 1873–DECEMBER 31, 1978)**



### **The Honorable Shubael Fish White**

DOB June 17, 1841, Calhoun County; DOD October 3, 1914, St. Louis County, MN. Interment: Unknown.

#### **Third Judge of the Circuit Court for the County of Mason**

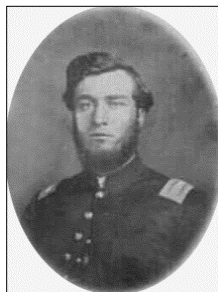
Elected April 7, 1873. First session held in Mason County September 1, 1873, second floor of Pere Marquette Lumber Company. Presided at dedication of new courthouse January 12,<sup>30</sup> 1874; resigned in spring.

**Biographical Note:** First attorney to practice law in Mason County; resumed law practice with Samuel Haight for five years before opening White & McMahon; relocated from Ludington to Duluth, MN, in 1883.



Courthouse 1874–94; later became Ludington Business College, then Mason County Normal

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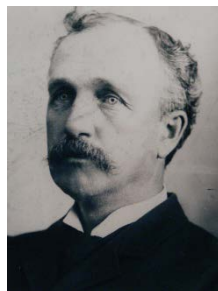
**The Honorable Harrison H. Wheeler**

DOB March 22, 1839, Lapeer County; DOD July 28, 1896, Lapeer County. Interment: Lakeview Cemetery, Ludington, MI.

**Fourth Judge of the Circuit Court for the County of Mason**

Appointed May 1874 “for the residue of the unexpired [White] term”; elected fall of 1874 with the support of both parties; resigned June 1, 1878. Residence: Ludington.

**Biographical Note:** Grand Army of the Republic veteran of the American Civil War; state senator 1871–72 for the 27th District and 1873–74 for the 24th District; resigned judgeship upon appointment as Ludington postmaster, later resumed the practice of law, and was elected to the 52d U.S. Congress, 1891–93.



**The Honorable Aaron Vance McAlvay**

DOB July 19, 1847, Washtenaw County; DOD July 9, 1915, Ingham County. Interment: Mt. Hope Cemetery, Lansing, MI.

**Fifth Judge of the Circuit Court for the County of Mason**

Appointed August 13, 1878, to succeed Wheeler for the unexpired term; returned to private practice at 1879 term's expiration, until June 1901, when reappointed (see McAlvay p. 5). Residence: Manistee County.



**The Honorable Samuel D. Haight**

DOB November 16, 1839,<sup>31</sup> Montgomery County, NY; DOD February 25, 1880, Mason County. Interment: Lakeview Cemetery, Ludington, MI.

**Sixth Judge of the Circuit Court for the County of Mason**

Elected at general election of 1878 to term commencing 1879. First session in Mason County held January 20, 1879; last session presided over February 19, 1880, also in Mason County; died in office.

Residence: Mason County.

**Biographical Note:** Grand Army of the Republic veteran of the American Civil War.



**The Honorable James Byron Judkins**

DOB January 18, 1851, Mercer County, OH; DOD April 23, 1915, Kent County. Interment: Oakhill Cemetery, Grand Rapids, MI.

**Seventh Judge of the Circuit Court for the County of Mason**

Appointed March 10, 1880, to succeed Haight. First session in Mason County held April 19, 1880. Elected without opposition November 1880 to fill unexpired term; reelected without opposition spring of 1881 to the same office for the full term<sup>32</sup> ending December 31, 1887;<sup>33</sup> and again reelected to succeeding term ending December 31, 1893.<sup>34</sup> Residence: Osceola County.

**Biographical Note:** Former law partner of the Hon. Cassius M. Beardsley.



### **The Honorable James B. McMahon**

DOB April 17, 1848, Washtenaw County; DOD March 15, 1901, Mason County. Interment: Lakeview Cemetery, Ludington, MI.

#### **Eighth Judge of the Circuit Court for the County of Mason**

Elected April 3, 1893, with opposition (defeating Charles A. Withey),<sup>35</sup> to term commencing January 1, 1894; reelected succeeding term with opposition;<sup>36</sup> died in office. Residence: Mason County.

**Biographical Note:** Assistant attorney for the Western District of Michigan Northern Division in 1893 while residing in Grand Rapids.<sup>37</sup>



Taken shortly after 1893 construction



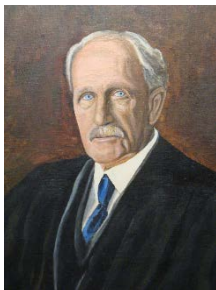
### **The Honorable Cassius M. Beardsley**

DOB: August 1849, Oakland County; DOD June 10, 1901, Osceola County. Interment: Lakeview Cemetery, Clarkston, MI.

#### **Ninth Judge of the Circuit Court for the County of Mason**

Appointed March 26, 1901, to succeed McMahon; died in office. Residence: Osceola County.

**Biographical Note:** Osceola County Prosecuting Attorney multiple terms. The June 13, 1901, *Ludington Record Appeal* reported that “Judge Beardsley held court here but once, the April term,” and that “Mrs. Beardsley accompanied her husband owing to his ill health.”



### **The Honorable Aaron Vance McAlvay**

DOB July 19, 1847, Washtenaw County; DOD July 9, 1915, Ingham County. Interment: Mt. Hope Cemetery, Lansing, MI.

#### **Tenth Judge of the Circuit Court for the County of Mason**

Reappointed to fill vacancy June 13, 1901; November 4, 1902, elected without opposition; December 31, 1904, resigned due to election to the Michigan Supreme Court. Residence: Manistee County.

**Biographical Note:** Elected a justice of the state supreme court November 8, 1904, for a three-year term and reelected for the full eight-year term April 1, 1907; named chief justice years 1907, 1914; died in office.



### **The Honorable Charles H. Rose**

DOB August 26, 1853, Washtenaw County; DOD August 28, 1909, Osceola County. Interment: Forest Hill Cemetery, Ewart, MI.

#### **Eleventh Judge of the Circuit Court for the County of Mason**

Appointed March 1, 1905, to succeed McAlvay; nominated for the short [vacancy] and long [full] term and elected April 3, 1905, to a term of six years, defeating Hal L. Cutler; resigned August 21, 1909, due to ill health.<sup>38</sup> Residence: Osceola County.

**Biographical Note:** Osceola County prosecuting attorney 1893–94.



### **The Honorable Charles A. Withey**

DOB: June 24, 1849, Livingston County; DOD March 2, 1934, Genesee County. Interment: Woodland Cemetery, Reed City, MI.

#### **Twelfth Judge of the Circuit Court for the County of Mason**

Appointed August 25, 1909, to succeed Rose; elected November 8, 1910, without opposition, to the unexpired term; reelected April 3, 1911, to term ending December 31, 1917; resumed private practice in Flint. Residence: Osceola County.

**Biographical Note:** Friend and former law partner of the Hon. Charles H. Rose.



### **The Honorable Hal L. Cutler**

DOB October 12, 1873,<sup>39</sup> Kent County; DOD March 18, 1957, Mason County. Interment: Pleasant Hill Cemetery, Luther, MI.

#### **Thirteenth Judge of the Circuit Court for the County of Mason**

Elected in primary held March 7 and in general April 2, 1917, for term commencing January 1, 1918; reelected two succeeding terms; retired December 31, 1935. Residence: Mason County.

**Biographical Note:** Lake County prosecuting attorney 1899–1902; author of 1917 *Ne-bo-shone (At the Bend of the River)*.



### **The Honorable Max E. Neal**

DOB May 9, 1878, Seneca County, NY; DOD March 31, 1962, Manistee County. Interment: Oak Grove Cemetery, Coldwater, MI.

#### **Fourteenth Judge of the Circuit Court for the County of Mason**

Elected with opposition April 1, 1935, for term commencing January 1, 1936; reelected without opposition April 7, 1941; reelected to two succeeding terms April 7, 1947, and April 6, 1953, both with opposition; retired December 31, 1956, in fourth term expiring

December 31, 1959. Residence: Manistee County.



### **The Honorable Allan Seymour Lidke**

DOB: August 24, 1907, Lake County; DOD: January 31, 1985, Muskegon County. Interment: Laketon-McLaughlin Cemetery,<sup>40</sup> North Muskegon, MI.

#### **Fifteenth Judge of the Circuit Court for the County of Mason**

Appointed to succeed Neal effective December 31, 1956; defeated in February 18, 1957, primary to fill vacancy, against Rupert B. Stephens, et al., and served until successor Stephens was elected and qualified.

Residence: Mason County.

**Biographical Note:** Lake County prosecuting attorney 1937–41, then moved to Scottville and was city attorney, and was Mason County circuit court commissioner<sup>41</sup> 1941–43; later entered into private practice in Muskegon and was public administrator in North Muskegon from 1949 to appointment.



**The Honorable Rupert Baxter Stephens**

DOB April 11, 1907, Mason County; DOD January 22, 1966, Mason County. Interment: Maple Grove Cemetery, Free Soil.

**Sixteenth Judge of the Circuit Court for the County of Mason**

Elected with opposition February 18 (primary) and April 1, 1957, to fill Neal vacancy, to term ending December 31, 1959; reelected to succeeding term ending December 31, 1965,<sup>42</sup> extended by statute to January 1, 1967;<sup>43</sup> died in office. Residence: Manistee County.

**Biographical Note:** Manistee County prosecuting attorney 18 years; circuit court commissioner two years.



**The Honorable Charles Arley Wickens**

DOB October 11, 1921, Scott County, Arkansas; DOD June 7, 1995, Manistee County. Interment: Oak Grove Cemetery, Manistee.

**Seventeenth Judge of the Circuit Court for the County of Mason**

Elected with opposition November 8, 1966, in four-county circuit, to term commencing January 1, 1967; reelected without opposition November 7, 1972,<sup>44</sup> to term ending January 1, 1979; 1976 Osceola detached. Residence: Manistee County.

**Biographical Note:** Reelected unopposed November 7, 1978, to 19th Circuit Court term ending January 1, 1985; Lake County probate judge 1953–66; son the Honorable Mark S. Wickens is the present-day chief judge of the Lake County Trial Court.

**51ST JUDICIAL CIRCUIT COURT (JANUARY 1, 1979\*–PRESENT)**

(\*EFFECTIVE DATE OF CHANGES IN COMPOSITION OF JUDICIAL CIRCUITS FOR JUDICIAL PURPOSES<sup>45</sup>)



**The Honorable Richard I Cooper**

DOB December 28, 1940, Osceola County

**Eighteenth Judge of the Circuit Court for the County of Mason**

Elected November 7, 1978, with opposition to term commencing January 1, 1979; reelected without opposition to five succeeding terms ending January 1, 2015; age restricted from seeking reelection. Residence: Mason County.

**Biographical Note:** Longest-serving circuit judge to date; Lake County probate judge 1977–78; father Dic I and son Craig Richard, respectively, former and present-day prosecuting attorneys for Lake County; retired 2017 after one year as son's assistant.



**The Honorable Susan Kasley Sniegowski**

DOB: April 7, 1968, Midland County

**Nineteenth Judge of the Circuit Court for the County of Mason; first female judge elected in Mason County in 159-year history**

Elected with opposition November 4, 2014, to first term commencing January 1, 2015, and expiring January 1, 2021. Residence: Mason County.

**Biographical Note:** First female prosecuting attorney in Mason County, elected with opposition to four-year term commencing January 1, 2005.

## Chronology of Circuit Court Judges Serving Mason County

and the Historical Evolution of the Judicial Circuits Organized to Include the County of Mason

### Personal Assistance

Anderson, Dr. William M.: Local historian, former director  
Michigan Department of History, Arts and Libraries  
Bessinger, Jeff: Archivist, Lakeshore Museum Center  
Keson, Kathy: Mason County Deputy Clerk  
Koster, Mary: 49th Circuit Court, Mecosta County  
McLouth, Mark: Lake County Trial Court  
Micinski, Bruce: Lake County Historical Society  
Petersen, David K.: Local historian, columnist

### References

*A History of Northern Michigan and Its People*,  
Vols. I and II (1912)  
*Early History of Michigan with Biographies of State  
Officers, Members of Congress, Judges and  
Legislators, Published Pursuant to Act 59 (1887)*  
*History of Mason, Oceana and Manistee Counties,  
Michigan, with Illustrations and Biographical Sketches  
of Some of Its Prominent Men and Pioneers (1882)*  
"Mason County: A Tale of Early Times," *Ludington Daily  
News*, Sept. 27, 1920, by attorney C. G. Wing  
*Men of Progress of Michigan: embracing biographical  
sketches of representative Michigan men (1900)*

### Resources

49th Circuit Court, Osceola County  
Laketon Township Clerk's Office, North Muskegon, MI  
*Ludington Daily News*  
Manistee County Historical Museum  
Mason County Clerk's Office  
Mason County District Library–Ludington  
White Pine Village

### Websites

accuracyproject.org  
allegancountylegaldocs.wordpress.com  
babel.hathitrust.org  
ballotpedia.org/Michigan  
books.google.com  
familysearch.org  
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genealogytrails.com  
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news.google.com/newspapers  
newspapers.com  
politicalgraveyard.com  
sparedshared12.wordpress.com

### Image Sources

Beardsley, Cassius M.: 49th Circuit Court, Osceola County  
Cooper, Richard I: 51st Circuit Court, Mason County  
Cutler, Harold L.: Lake County Historical Society  
Fletcher, William A.: Michigan Supreme Court Historical Society Website  
<http://www.micourthistory.org/justices/william-fletcher/>  
*Judicial Circuits of Lower Peninsula: Michigan Legislative Manual and Official Directory for Years 1893-94*  
Judkins, James B.: 49th Circuit Court, Osceola County  
Lidke, Allan S.: Jan. 8, 1957, *Ludington Daily News*  
Littlejohn, Flavius J.: Littlejohn, Flavius. *Legends of Michigan and the Old Northwest*. Allegan, MI:  
Northwestern Bible and Publishing Company, 1875  
Mason County Courthouse, third of four structures (first was Probate Judge Burr Caswell's house, on  
original site at present-day White Pine Village, 1855–Apr. 16, 1861, when county seat moved to Village  
of Lincoln [fka Little Sable Town] and a space above the general store was "cleared and partitioned to  
form a courtroom and a jury room."); construction approved Apr. 23, 1873; dedicated Jan. 12, 1874:  
*Historic Not-a-pe-ka-gon*, Anderson, Russell (1933) p. 51  
Mason County Courthouse, fourth of four structures; construction approved by voters 1892 fall election,  
per April 1892 board resolution to place bond issue on ballot. Tower clock installed 1907:  
[http://www.wikiwand.com/en/Mason\\_County\\_Courthouse\\_\(Ludington,\\_Michigan\)](http://www.wikiwand.com/en/Mason_County_Courthouse_(Ludington,_Michigan))  
McAlvay, Aaron V.: Manistee County Historical Museum (p. 4 photograph and p. 5 portrait)  
McMahon, James B.: 51st Circuit Court, Mason County  
Neal, Max E.: 51st Circuit Court, Mason County  
Ramsdell, Jonathan G.: Manistee County Historical Museum  
Rose, Charles H.: 49th Circuit Court, Osceola County  
Sniegowski, Susan K.: 2014 campaign literature  
Stephens, Rupert B.: 51st Circuit Court, Mason County  
Wheeler, Harrison H.: David K. Petersen, Black Creek Enterprises LLC  
Wickens, Charles A.: 51st Circuit Court, Mason County  
Withy, Charles A.: 49th Circuit Court, Osceola County



## Chronology of Circuit Court Judges Serving Mason County

and the Historical Evolution of the Judicial Circuits Organized to Include the County of Mason

### ENDNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> Library of Congress: U.S. Statutes at Large, Eighth Congress, Session II, Chapter 5: "An Act to divide the Indiana Territory into two separate governments"
- <sup>2</sup> *Men of Progress of Michigan: embracing biographical sketches of representative Michigan men* (1900), p. 12
- <sup>3</sup> *Michigan Legislative Manual and Official Directory for the Years 1937-38*, p. 194
- <sup>4</sup> Michigan Supreme Court Historical Society Website <http://www.micourthistory.org/justices/william-fletcher/>
- <sup>5</sup> *Official Directory and Legislative Manual of the State of Michigan for the Years 1889-90*, p. 321
- <sup>6</sup> Library of Congress: U.S. Statutes at Large, Twenty-fourth Congress, Session II, Chapter 6: "An Act to admit the State of Michigan into the Union, upon an equal footing with the original States"
- <sup>7</sup> Powers, Perry F., *A History of Northern Michigan and Its People*, Vol. I. ed. H.G. Cutler (1912) p. 88
- <sup>8</sup> Powers, Perry F., *A History of Northern Michigan and Its People*, Vol. I. ed. H. G. Cutler (1912) p. 99
- <sup>9</sup> Powers, Perry F., *A History of Northern Michigan and Its People*, Vol. I. ed. H. G. Cutler (1912) p. 88
- <sup>10</sup> Powers, Perry F., *A History of Northern Michigan and Its People*, Vol. I. ed. H. G. Cutler (1912) p. 99
- <sup>11</sup> Constitution of Michigan of 1850, Schedule, Section 28
- <sup>12</sup> Constitution of Michigan of 1850, Article VI, Sections 6 and 20
- <sup>13</sup> *History of Mason, Oceana and Manistee Counties, Michigan, with Illustrations and Biographical Sketches of Some of Its Prominent Men and Pioneers* (1882) p. 10
- <sup>14</sup> *Acts of the Legislature of the State of Michigan Passed at the Extra Session of 1858*, pp.15-16
- <sup>15</sup> *Grand Haven News*: November 23, 1859, "Terms of the Circuit Courts in the Ninth Judicial Circuit" as noticed by "F. J. LITTLEJOHN, Circuit Judge of 9th Judicial Circuit"
- <sup>16</sup> *The Compiled Laws of the State of Michigan, Compiled and Arranged Under an Act of the Legislature, Approved January 25, 1871*, Vol. II, pp. 1520-21
- <sup>17</sup> *General Acts and Joint and Concurrent Resolutions of the Legislature of the State of Michigan, Passed at the Regular Session of 1873*, pp. 21-22
- <sup>18</sup> *Manual for the Use of the Legislature of the State of Michigan 1877*, p. 181
- <sup>19</sup> *Public Acts and Joint and Concurrent Resolutions of the Legislature of the State of Michigan, Passed at the Regular Session of 1881*, p. 260.
- <sup>20</sup> *Public Acts and Joint and Concurrent Resolutions of the Legislature of the State of Michigan, Passed at the Regular Session of 1883*, p. 9
- <sup>21</sup> *Public Acts of the Legislature of the State of Michigan Passed at the Regular Session of 1897*, pp. 241-42
- <sup>22</sup> Constitution of Michigan of 1909, Article VII, Section 8
- <sup>23</sup> Michigan Compiled Laws 600.549a
- <sup>24</sup> *Public and Local Acts of the Legislature of the State of Michigan Passed at the Regular Session of 1978*, p. 407
- <sup>25</sup> Michigan One Court of Justice Website: <http://courts.mi.gov/courts/trialcourts/pages/default.aspx>
- <sup>26</sup> [www.findagrave.com](http://www.findagrave.com) memorial No. 89435804 (month and day of death variously reported; May 14 engraved on headstone)
- <sup>27</sup> *Ludington Daily News*, September 27, 1920, "Mason County: A Tale of Early Times," by Ludington attorney C.G. Wing
- <sup>28</sup> *Grand Traverse Herald*, September 22, 1865
- <sup>29</sup> [www.findagrave.com](http://www.findagrave.com) memorial No.102065889
- <sup>30</sup> Courthouse dedication date also reported by various sources as January 14; date of Monday, January 12, 1874, confirmed via June 24, 1967, *Ludington Daily News* p.2 reprint of statement appearing in the January 16, 1874, *Ludington Weekly Appeal*: "Such showing up of written history is seldom witnessed as was made at the dedication of the Court House last Monday."
- <sup>31</sup> Feb. 27, 1880, *Mason County Record* reports Haight date of birth as May 18, 1841; Nov. 16, 1839, engraved on headstone.
- <sup>32</sup> *Early History of Michigan with Biographies of State Officers, Members of Congress, Judges and Legislators, Published Pursuant to Act 59, 1887*, p. 384
- <sup>33</sup> *Legislative Manual and Official Directory of the State of Michigan for the Year 1885*, pp.315-16.
- <sup>34</sup> *Official Directory and Legislative Manual of the State of Michigan for the Years 1893-4*, pp. 410-11
- <sup>35</sup> *Official Directory and Legislative Manual of the State of Michigan for the Years 1893-4*, p. 714
- <sup>36</sup> *Michigan Legislative Manual and Official Directory for the Years 1899-1900*, p. 304, compiled by Justus S. Stearns, SOS
- <sup>37</sup> *Official Directory and Legislative Manual of the State of Michigan for the Years 1893-4*, p. 417
- <sup>38</sup> Powers, Perry F., *A History of Northern Michigan and Its People*, Vol. II. ed. H.G. Cutler (1912) pp. 582-84
- <sup>39</sup> Cutler's handwritten draft card indicates 44 years of age at date of registration Sept. 17, 1918, and the birthdate "October 12th 1873," contrary to photograph of headstone with birth year 1874 found at [www.findagrave.com](http://www.findagrave.com) memorial No. 43390408.
- <sup>40</sup> Personal inspection of Mr. Lidke's headstone by compiler reveals a first-name spelling *Alan*, as does the January 8, 1957, *Ludington Daily News* referenced above; all other references spell *Allan*, including a microfilmed document retrieved by Lake County Trial Court staff wherein Mr. Lidke's signature "Allan S. Lidke," as the Lake County prosecuting attorney, appears.
- <sup>41</sup> *Circuit Court Commissioner's Guide: Law and Practice: State of Michigan*; Straker, David Augustus (1897) pp. 10-12: Legislature provided for election of, or designation by a circuit judge of, a circuit court commissioner, vested with ministerial and quasi-judicial powers, in each county within the circuits.
- <sup>42</sup> *Michigan Manual 1965-1966*, p. 140
- <sup>43</sup> Public Acts 1963 Second Extra Session—No. 59, Section 168.416a : "The terms of office of all elected circuit court judges serving as of December 31, 1965 expire at 12 noon, January 1, 1967."
- <sup>44</sup> Public Acts 1963 Second Extra Session—No. 59, Sec.168.416b: "The first general election of judges of the circuit court shall be held in 1966."