

HISTORY CENTER

The History of
United States District Court
and Northern District of Iowa



A New District for a New State

The great state of Iowa actually began as the Iowa Territory. It was part of the famous Louisiana Purchase and then was included at different times in the Missouri Territory, Michigan Territory, and Wisconsin Territory. In 1838 a territorial government was established, which included a supreme court, district courts, and justices of the peace.



U.S. Courthouse, Des Moines and District Court in Des Moines, Ia.

As more U.S. citizens moved into the territory, the call for statehood grew louder and louder. After eight years of petitions, Iowa became the 29th state in 1846. Congress established a federal court as part of the new state, the District of Iowa. The district and its one judge, Judge John J. Dyar, would handle all federal cases in Iowa.



Judge John J. Dyar
1846-1850

A Federal Judiciary Presence

Initially, court was held in one of three locations: Burlington, Iowa City, or Des Moines. People on the western side of the state would have to travel hundreds of miles to get to court.

Judge Dyar served the district just one month in 1846 and his successor was Judge James H. Lane. During Judge Lane's time on the bench the district was divided into four divisions: Hamilton, Franklin, Des Moines, and Clinton Courts.



Judge James H. Lane 1846-1850

WORTHINGTON'S
DAILY PAPER
EDITED FOR THE HOME

Mason City Globe-Gazette

HOME EDITION

U.S. DECLARES WAR

Lawless Casualties Total

Life,
Districts





Judge Linda R. Reade

Graduating in 1980 with honors and Order of the Coif from Drake University Law School, Judge Linda R. Reade began her career in private practice. In 1996, she was appointed an Assistant United States Attorney for the Southern District of Iowa, rising to the position of Chief of the Criminal Division. During her service she received an Excellence in Management Award from the Executive Office of the United States Attorneys as well as numerous commendations from state and federal law enforcement agencies.

In 1993, Governor Terry Branstad appointed Judge Reade to the Iowa District Court.

In 2002, President George W. Bush appointed Judge Reade as a United States District Court Judge for the Northern District of Iowa, making her the first female Presidentially appointed judge in Iowa.

Service to the Judiciary

In addition to presiding over numerous routine civil and criminal trials throughout her judicial career, Judge Reade has also served on local, circuit, and national judiciary committees. In May 2008, she also led the Northern District of Iowa as Chief Judge in executing continuity of operations training in which the entire Cedar Rapids division was relocated to Waterloo in a mock disaster exercise. This leadership and training proved instrumental during the district's successful evacuation and relocation of the court in Cedar Rapids after the Great Flood of 2008.

As Chief Judge she has provided vision and leadership during the three year construction of the new Cedar Rapids courthouse dedicated in November 2012.

*The History of the
United States District Court
for the Northern District of Iowa*



The
District of Iowa

The State
The District

AMERICAN
DAILY PAPER
ENTER FOR THE YEAR

Mason

U.S. DEC

Hawaiian



19th Century



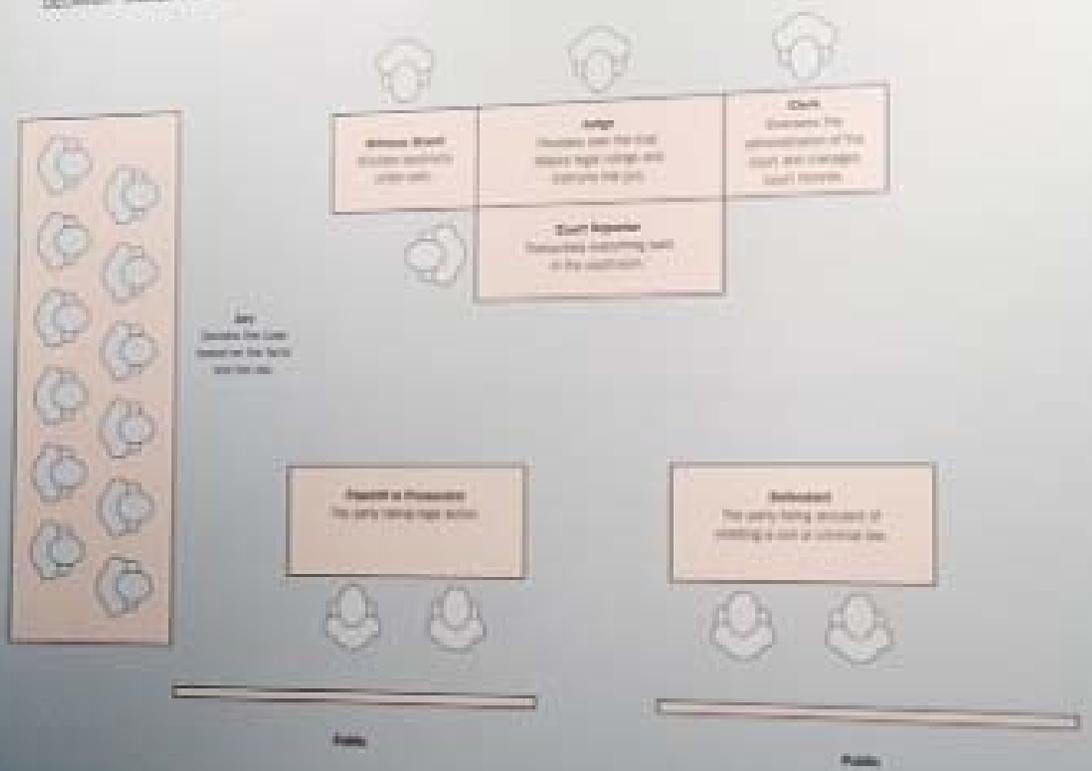
Walter L. ...
a ...
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Know Your Way Around the Courtroom

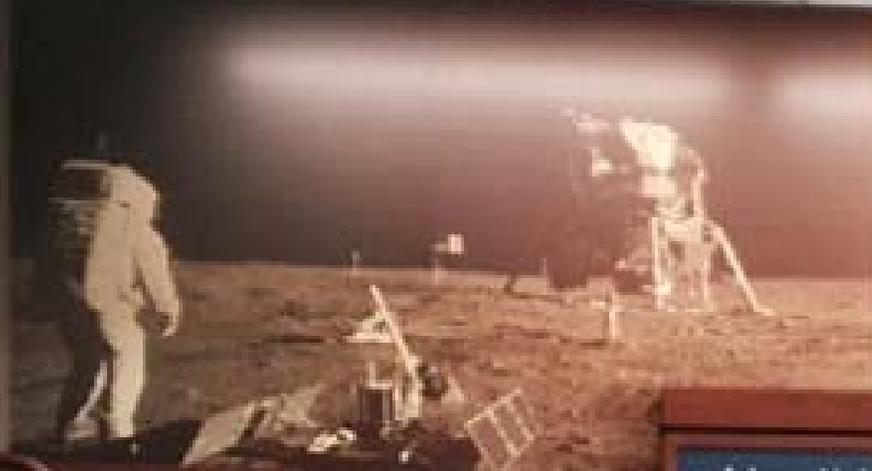
A courtroom can be an intimidating place. Who sits where? Who does what? What is the difference between "sustained" and "overruled"?

Use this diagram and list of common court terms to familiarize yourself with the courtroom.



Legal Lingo

- Appellant:** A defendant accused of a crime is the **appellant**.
- Appeal:** A request for a higher court to review the decision of a lower court.
- Bail:** Money paid to guarantee that an accused person will appear at trial.
- Conviction:** A defendant accused of a crime is **convicted**.
- Grand Jury:** A group of citizens that decides if there is sufficient evidence to charge a person with a crime.
- Indictment:** A formal, written accusation of a crime against a person by a grand jury.
- Motion:** The process of asking a judge to make a decision about a disputed issue.
- Objection:** The opposing side contends that the question being asked of a witness is improper.
- Overruled:** The judge, following an objection, if the questioning is proper.
- Perjury:** Willfully making a false statement under oath.
- Remand:** When a case is sent back to the court which it came for further proceedings.
- Sustained:** The judge, following an objection, if the questioning is improper.
- Verdict:** The jury's decision.



THE HONORABLE
PAUL HARTZ
U.S. JUDGE
NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

The Judges of the Northern District



THE HONORABLE
PAUL HARTZ
U.S. JUDGE
NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

THE HONORABLE
PAUL HARTZ
U.S. JUDGE
NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA



The Most Northern

Ruin and Recovery: The Flood of 2008

The 2008 flood was unlike anything anyone in Cedar Rapids had ever seen before. In fact, the flood of 2008 was the largest in city history.

The flooding began on June 8 and did not end until July 1. At the floodwaters highest point, 10 square miles of Cedar Rapids was underwater.

Like other residents and businesses located in downtown Cedar Rapids, the Northern District was forced to evacuate the courthouse. In order to not disrupt the court's schedule, offices and courtrooms were moved to a temporary location southeast of downtown Cedar Rapids.

As cleanup began and 80,000 tons of debris were removed to landfills, Congress authorized the building of a new federal courthouse, which you are standing in today.



Flood Facts

- River Crest: 31.12 feet
- Homes Damaged: 5,238
- Businesses Damaged: 940
- Damage Cost: 3 billion dollars (estimate)
- Deaths: 0



When the floodwater receded from the courthouse it left behind mud, debris, and even fish.

U.S. v. Spears: *Which Ratio is Right?*

Steven Spears was convicted in 2005 of conspiracy to distribute crack and powder cocaine, but it would take nearly four more years for his sentence to be decided.

The issue was not whether Mr. Spears was guilty, but rather what guidelines should be used to determine how many years he would spend in prison. The Federal Sentencing Guidelines called for crack cocaine to be weighted 100 times more than powder cocaine. Under these rules Spears would have spent 27 to 34 years in prison.

Judge Bennett, who presided over the trial, believed the 100-to-1 ratio was too severe. He based his decision instead on a 20-to-1 ratio, reducing Spears' imprisonment to 20 years.

A Nationwide Impact

The 8th Circuit Court reversed Judge Bennett's decision, holding that federal judges must follow sentencing guidelines. The case was appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court.

The Supreme Court upheld Judge Bennett's decision and found the Federal Sentencing Guidelines regarding crack cocaine were just that: guidelines. Federal district judges could reject the 100:1 ratio and use whatever ratio they deemed appropriate.



Protecting the Consumer:

Kehm v. Procter & Gamble

In the early 1980s an alarming number of women were dying of toxic shock syndrome, a disease caused by exposure to harmful bacteria. After an investigation, it was believed that their deaths were linked to chemicals in Rely tampons, a Procter & Gamble product.

The company recalled the product, but questions remained. Did Procter & Gamble know their product could be harmful? Did the company neglect to warn its customers?

The death of Patricia Kehm, a Cedar Rapids woman, was linked to Rely. Her family sued Procter & Gamble, arguing the company was responsible for her death. The case caught the nation's attention because it would set a precedent for hundreds of other lawsuits.

Judge McManus presided over the high profile trial and the jury awarded damages to the Kehm family.



"An Absolute Necessity":

The Creation of the Northern District

By 1882 the population of Iowa was over 1 million people and quickly approaching 2 million. Many believed the state was too big and that there were too many cases for a single district to handle.

Rep. Moses McCoid pointed out that over the course of eight years the court had spent \$611,760.78 and that "this would have been reduced had there been facilities for disposing of the business with promptness, and if the courts had been nearer to the people."

On July 20, 1882 Congress passed H.R. No. 4256, authorizing the creation of two judicial districts in Iowa. It also called for the appointment of a judge, district attorney, marshal, and clerks.



Moses McCoid, 1882, was a strong advocate for the creation of the Northern District.

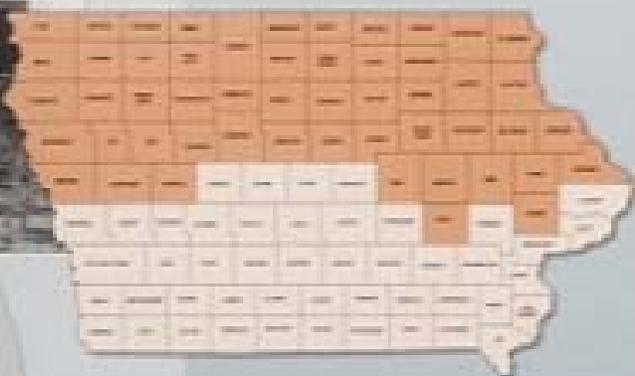
"The business of the district and circuit courts in this State is now so great as to make an increase of the judicial force an absolute necessity."

—Rep. Moses McCoid, 1882

A District Divided

H.R. No. 4256 divided the old District of Iowa into southern and northern districts. It is believed that the state was divided along north-south county lines because many of Iowa's major railroad lines ran east to west. This made travel between eastern and western parts much easier than traveling north or south.

Both districts were further divided into eastern, central, and western divisions. If the new Northern District court was held in Dubuque, Fort Dodge, and Iowa City.



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