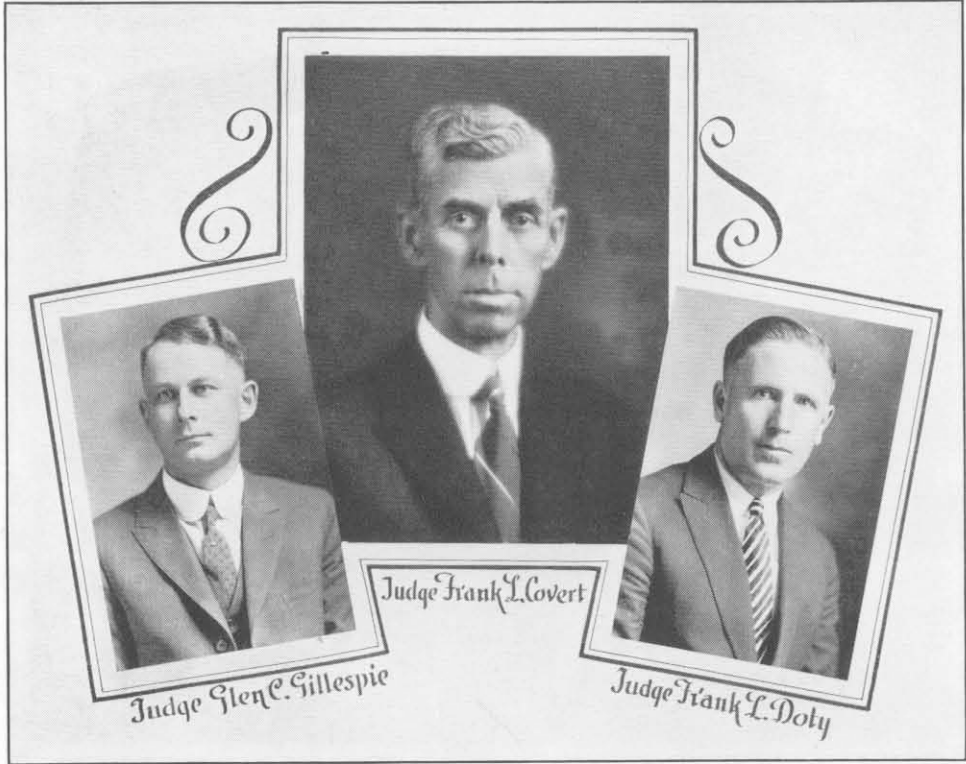


# Judges Oakland County Circuit Court



## TERMS OF COURT COMMENCE:

February . . . . .	First Monday
April . . . . .	Second Monday
June . . . . .	Second Monday
September . . . . .	Second Monday
December . . . . .	First Monday

The two years which have elapsed since the last report to the Board of Supervisors have witnessed many changes in the work of the court. The steadily increasing amount of litigation and the congested condition of the court docket was brought to the attention of the legislature during its 1927 session and resulted in the passage of Act No. 192, authorizing the appointment of a third circuit judge for the Sixth Judicial Circuit. Hon. Frank L. Doty was appointed by Governor Fred W. Green to fill the office created by the act, and commenced the discharge of his duties September 1, 1927. The circuit court for Oakland County is now second to all counties in the state in the number of cases commenced and disposed of. The following tabulation shows the yearly increase in cases during the past six years:

	1922	1923	1924	1925	1926	1927
Cases commenced . . . . .	1126	1099	1332	1776	2142	2305

Cases commenced and disposed of during first seven months of 1928:

	CASES			
	COMMENCED	DISPOSED OF	INCREASE	DECREASE
January . . . . .	173	187		14
February . . . . .	215	244		29
March . . . . .	188	166	22	
April . . . . .	172	199		27
May . . . . .	181	201		20
June . . . . .	215	187	28	
July . . . . .	221	158	63	
Total . . . . .	1365	1342	113	90

On January 1, 1928, there were 804 cases on the calendar which were undisposed of and by August 1st, this number had been decreased to 718 through the constant work of all three judges.

In February, 1928, a new system for the handling of cases ready for trial was inaugurated whereby the printing of a regular calendar was discontinued. Under the old practice a calendar was printed for each term of court which listed all cases at issue regardless of whether or not they might be ready for trial. The size of the calendars had steadily increased until the expense of printing alone amounted to upwards of \$7,000 per year. Under the new plan any attorney who desires to have a case heard, as soon as it is at issue, files a praecipe with the clerk and the clerk each week makes up a list of cases for trial from such praecipies. A copy of the list is printed each week in the Pontiac-Oakland County Legal News, so attorneys are furnished each week with an up to date list of the cases which are on call for trial. Not only does the new plan afford much better service to attorneys and litigants, but it will result in the saving of at least \$3,500 per year for the county.

Additional volumes have been added to the county law library from time to time until we now have most of the books which are required in connection with the average cases. It has been necessary to store many of the books in book cases in the hall and corridor on account of the lack of space in the library. The library now consists of approximately 3500 volumes and is valued at upwards of \$8,500. It supplies a long felt need of the judges and the attorneys and an effort will be made each year to add to the collection. The need for additional library room is still acute.

After the appointment of the third judge, the Board of Supervisors authorized the remodeling of the supervisors' room in the basement into a third court room and plans are now under way to create a jury room to be used in connection with the third court room. It frequently happens, however, during the year that it is necessary for the Board of Supervisors to use the third court room and it has been impossible to find a place in the county building for holding a third court. During the past year numerous condemnation proceedings have been heard and it has been impossible at times to provide adequate quarters for these hearings.

There is still no place available for the jurors, who are obliged to congregate in the halls and about the court rooms, where they are thrown in contact with attorneys and litigants. This is an extremely undesirable condition, but little relief can be afforded until a new court house is constructed. There is still no way to comply with the state law providing for separate jury rooms where a mixed jury is used and almost daily during the terms of court it is necessary to confine male and female jurors in the same room with inadequate toilet facilities. There seems to be no way, however, in which this condition can be remedied at the present time.

The supreme court has decided the action to quiet title to the court house property in favor of the county. The way is now clear, if the citizens of the county desire, to dispose of the present court house site. This litigation was carried on in connection with the Oakland County Bar Association and the culmination of the case marks a most important point in the history of Oakland County's court house.

GLENN C. GILLESPIE.



# Officers

## COURT CRIERS

N. B. Babcock, Henry H. Van Dusen  
Elmer F. Barnes

## COURT DEPUTIES

Fred Cox      David Bird

## CLERK

Burton P. Daugherty

## ASSIGNMENT CLERK

Russel V. Thurston

## DEPUTY CLERKS

Carl Bruan      Lloyd Niles      Don C. Noggle

## REPORTER

Dorothy Daniell

## DEPUTY REPORTERS

Ione B. Doig      Ferne L. Widdis  
Dorothy P. Lyons

## JUDGES' SECRETARY AND LIBRARIAN

Helen Kingsbury

## JUDGES' SECRETARY

Alice Trerice

## FRIEND OF THE COURT

Anne Reese

## ASSISTANT FRIEND OF THE COURT

Hazel Demond      Rhea Miller

## SECRETARY

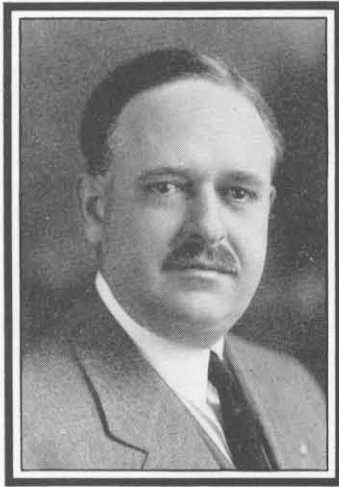
Pauline Begick

## CIRCUIT COURT COMMISSIONERS

Ralph T. Keeling      George B. Hartrick



## Circuit Court Commissioner



RALPH T. KEELING  
*Circuit Court Commissioner*



GEO. B. HARTRICK  
*Circuit Court Commissioner*

RALPH T. KEELING, Circuit Court Commissioner, was appointed by Governor Albert E. Sleeper, May 16, 1917, to fill vacancy caused by the death of Elmer E. Blakeslee, and re-elected on the Republican ticket for the past five consecutive terms.

The office of Circuit Court Commissioner, formerly looked upon as one of the minor offices in the County, has, because of the rapid growth of the County, become of major importance. The duties of the Circuit Court Commissioner are numerous and varied and his court has wide jurisdiction, even having bestowed upon it the powers of a Circuit Judge in Chancery at Chambers in certain matters. A great many matters that might ordinarily come up in the Circuit Court can also be heard in the Circuit Court Commissioner's Court, thus relieving the Circuit Court of considerable work.

THE office of George B. Hartrick, Circuit Court Commissioner of Royal Oak, has been a scene of great activity during the past two years.

The following information from Mr. Hartrick will be of interest:

Two thousand four hundred forty complaints were filed in my office during the year of 1927 and up to and including August 15th of this year; there were 1378 complaints filed. Most of these cases are for the foreclosure of land contracts and very few of them are landlord and tenant cases.

Besides this, during the past year, we have handled several examination of judgment debtors and have also taken care of several mechanic's liens and chancery mortgage sales.

I would estimate that more than ninety per cent of the foreclosures coming before the commissioners are on vacant property and that we find in most cases where a foreclosure is had and the vendee has a substantial equity there is a redemption.

The time has come in this county when the foreclosure of land contracts has become an important matter, and I believe that the present law should be changed so that summary proceedings for the foreclosure of land contracts should come before the Circuit Court Commissioner and a Justice of the Peace should not have jurisdiction in this matter. It might be proper, however, for a Justice of the Peace to have jurisdiction in landlord and tenant cases.

I believe also that in all cases where there is a foreclosure had on a land contract that the files of the commissioners should be kept at the Court House, carefully indexed, so that a person desiring to know if a foreclosure was had, might be able to obtain that information at the county offices and might also there inspect the records to see if the legal procedure was followed and a proper foreclosure had. This matter has become important enough so that proper and permanent records should be kept.