



Photographs and text compiled by  
**Mr. Derry Buckley,**  
District Court Office,  
Galway.

Telephone: 091 562 560  
Fax: 091 564 895

Produced by the  
**Courts Service Information Office,**  
Phoenix House,  
15/24 Phoenix Street North,  
Smithfield,  
Dublin 7.

Telephone: 01 888 6462  
Fax: 01 873 5250  
Website: [www.courts.ie](http://www.courts.ie)

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# Galway Judges 1922 - 2003



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*An tSeirbhís Chúirteanna*

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## Galway Courthouse

This publication has been produced to acknowledge the contribution made by judges of the Circuit Court and the District Court in Galway city since the foundation of the State. Since 1922, there have been eight Circuit Court judges and four District Court judges assigned to administer justice in Galway city. Their names have been handed down from generation to generation, however, few people today may be familiar with them. Mr. Derry Buckley, District Court Clerk, has assembled a collection of photographs of the judges (with the exception of His Honour Judge Robert J. Doyle - the first Circuit Court judge). The photographs will be exhibited in Galway Courthouse as a tribute to these judges.

## Teach na Chúirte, Gaillimh.

Tá an foilseacháin seo curtha amach le admháil a dhéanamh do na Breithiunaí an Chúirt Chuarda agus an Chúirt Duiche sannaithe i nGaillimh ó thus an Stát. Ó thús an Stát i 1922 go dtí inniú bhí ocht Breithiunaí an Chúirt Chuarda agus ceithre Breithiunaí an Chúirt Duiche lionnaithe i Cathair na Gaillimhe. Tá ainmneacha na daoine tugtha síos ó gluain go gluain ach níl aithne ag na daoine inniú orthu. Cun an scéal a reitheach tá griangraef na Breithiunaí sin cruinnithe ag D. O'Buachalla, Cleireach Chúirte, (ach amhain an cead Breitheamh sa Chúirt Chuarda – an Breaiteamh Riobáird S. Ó Dubhghaill) agus beidh siad le feiceal i dTeach na Cúirte i nGaillimh as seo amach.

## History of the courthouse

The present Galway Courthouse stands on the site of the former Franciscan Friary, founded in 1296 by Sir William de Burgh, on what was originally known as St. Stephen's Island, beside the river Corrib. The Friary had a long history and in 1812 a courthouse, designed by the architect Richard Morrison, was constructed on the site. It was first opened to the public in 1815. Major renovations were carried out in 1839 and again in the 1890's when the building was widely remodelled and re-roofed.

The most recent restoration was started in January 1994, when the building was extensively renovated. The two courtrooms, with ceilings some forty feet high were divided and a floor inserted in each about fifteen feet from the ground. This, along with other refurbishments, provided the following facilities: four courtrooms, new office accommodation and consultation and waiting rooms. Some 19th century features survive: the main staircase dating from c.1850 with its turned balusters and newels and moulded handrail, the barrel-vaulted ceilings of the original courtrooms, window shutters and bands of guilloche with lion heads and roses. The ceiling rose has a harp in the centre surrounded by eight panels.

The courthouse was officially re-opened by Ms. Nora Owen T.D., Minister for Justice, in December 1995.



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## Judges of the Circuit Court

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His Honour

*Judge Robert J. Doyle*

In 1922, on the foundation of the State, he held the office of Recorder of Galway and continued in office as Circuit Court judge.  
1922 - 1925



His Honour

*Judge Charles S. Wyse - Power*

1925 - 1948



His Honour

*Judge John Durcan*

1950 - 1975



His Honour

*Judge Stephen Barrett*

1975 - 1976



His Honour

*Judge Frank Martin*

1976 - 1977



His Honour

*Judge Sir John Grattan - Esmonde*

1977 - 1987



His Honour

*Judge John Cassidy*

1987 - 1996



His Honour

*Judge Harvey Kenny*

1996 - Present

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## Judges of the District Court

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*Judge Sean Mac Giollarnáth*

1922 - 1950



*Judge Tomás G. De Búrca*

1950 - 1971



*Judge Seamus S. ÓSioráin*

1971 - 1981



*Judge John Garavan*

1981 - 2003