

# The Sheriffs of Carver County

The First 150 Years: 1855-2005



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John von Walter



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Sesquicentennial Committee, with support and funds granted  
by the Carver County Board



## Notes and Acknowledgements

In mid November 2004 Carver County Sheriff Bud Olson and his Administrative Assistant Pam Raser paid me a visit, knowing that I had been researching the history of the old Town of Carver and Levi Griffin, the first Sheriff of Carver County. They pressed me into joining the Carver County Sesquicentennial Committee, and in particular to research and write the biographies of all the Carver County Sheriffs over the last century and a half.

As a history lover the idea intrigued me, for several years earlier I had tried to find a roster of all the Sheriffs of Carver County, and was unable to do so. I took custody of some files the Sheriff's Office had acquired and compiled over the years, and was soon hooked on the subject, gathering piles and piles of additional materials to assemble into biographies on all of the sheriffs over the last century and a half. The project soon developed into this book, *The Sheriffs of Carver County, The first 150 years: 1855-2005*, with plans afoot to publish the book's individual sheriff biographies in each of Carver County's five newspapers throughout the Sesquicentennial year 2005 as part of the ongoing celebrations of Carver County history.

The biographical material for the book was compiled from many sources: U. S. Censuses, the Mormon Genealogical Library, musty newspapers, clippings, and microfilm of Carver County newspapers, old written histories and books, the Carver County Historical Society, the Chaska Historical Society, the Minnesota Historical Society, the Scott County Historical Society, plodding through old cemeteries, the "Debbie's Genealogy Library" cemetery index website of Debbie Boe of Chaska, old letters, public and private photo collections, scrapbooks, court records, interviews with the present and former sheriffs, interviews with former sheriffs' wives, siblings, and descendants, the Internet, and more.

My thanks go to all who have helped within the Carver County Sheriff's Office and to all those who work and who have tirelessly volunteered by working at the above historical societies, tirelessly sharing knowledge and volunteering time for preserving, tending, and indexing archives, photographs, and artifacts for those who will follow. Thanks too must go to the Carver County Sesquicentennial Committee and the Carver County Board for having the foresight to designate some funds for the publication of this book so that a portion of history compiled at the county's 150th birthday can be preserved for future Carver County generations, whether at county milestone birthdays or not.

John von Walter, March 3, 2005,  
on the day of the 150th anniversary of the creation of Carver County, Minnesota



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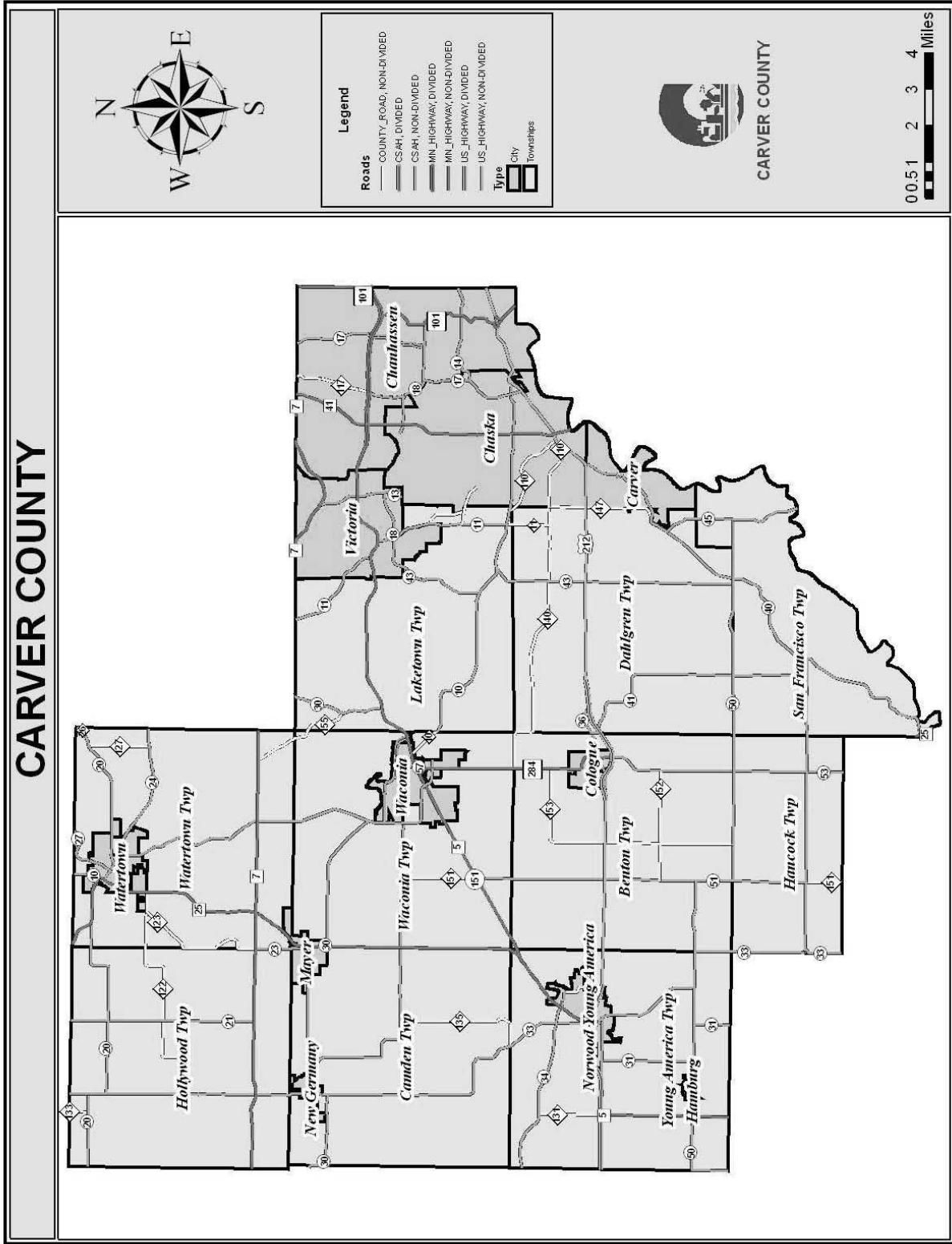


## Roster of Carver County Sheriffs 1855-2005

Levi Griffin (1822-1902)	Sheriff 1855
Ezekiel Ellsworth (1815-1879?)	Sheriff 1856-1862
Frederick Greiner (1829-1900)	Sheriff 1862-1864
Frederick Hecklin (1831/2-1905)	Sheriff 1864-1865
Ezekiel Ellsworth (1815-1879?)	Sheriff 1865-1868
Frederick Hecklin (1831/2-1905)	Sheriff 1868-1872
Frederick Greiner (1829-1900)	Sheriff 1872-1874
Frederick DuToit (1845-1922)	Sheriff 1874-1895
August Johnson (1858-1903)	Sheriff 1895-1902
Gustave "Gus" Gatz (1867-1934)	Sheriff 1903-1922
Frank Trende (1874-1951)	Sheriff 1922-1938
George Thul (1898-1974)	Sheriff 1938-1946
Lester Melchert (1912-1987)	Sheriff 1947-1973
William Schalow (1922-1996)	Sheriff 1974-1983
Jack Hendrickson (1942-)	Sheriff 1983-1986
Allen Wallin (1942-)	Sheriff 1987-1998
Byron "Bud" Olson (1955-)	Sheriff 1999-



# CARVER COUNTY



Carver County Map, 2005 (CCGIS)

## History of the Office of Sheriff

The office of sheriff is one of great antiquity, its origins lost in the mists of time. Since society began creating rules and laws to forge order from anarchy, there has been the need to create an office and officer to enforce them.

Scholars disagree about when the office of sheriff was created. Some put the origins in the office of the ancient pro-consul, prefect, or even governor in the time of Constantine the Great in Roman Britain, but the origins may well even predate Roman times. Most scholars agree that the office goes back at least eleven hundred years to ninth century Anglo-Saxon England and the time of King Alfred the Great, who was crowned in 871.

The office of sheriff is the oldest law enforcement office in the English common law system and the sheriff is the oldest law enforcement official in Anglo-American law. The word sheriff is an amalgam of the words "shire" and "reeve, literally shire-reeve. Alfred the Great divided England into administrative geographical districts, or counties, called shires. Each shire had a royal representative, a reeve, appointed by the crown to maintain order, enforce laws, collect royal levies, and to administer justice by fine, imprisonment, and execution.

The words shire and reeve seem to have been imported into the English language from Continental Europe, even before the time of Alfred the Great. The old English word for shire-reeve is scir-gerefa. The word scir is from the Germanic-Teutonic word skiro, and may have come to the British Isles from the Germanic Saxons, who began arriving in Britain around 500 A.D. The word gerefa, or geraefa, also seems of earlier Germanic origin and is probably related to the Germanic words graf and grave, as well as the Scandinavian word greve, all meaning count.

In the medieval German States the graf was a powerful lord, a count, usually of noble birth, and often connected by blood or marriage to royal or imperial power. Though the graf was usually appointed by royal or imperial power, and a vassal to it, the office and title was very often hereditary to sons or sons-in-law. With the office came great grants of land, wholly owned or in fief, as well as great associated incomes from land, a percentage of taxes and fines, as well as power. A graf, or grave, ruled under king or emperor over a geographical district and often held one or more strategically located castles in the district.

The count of an urban area or town was called a burggraf or burggrave. The count of a rural area was called a landgraf or landgrave. The count of a frontier district, often militarized, was called a margraf or margrave. An altgraf ruled over mountainous areas. And a count of the Rhine River Valley was a pfalzgraf, or count palatine. Like their counterparts in the British Isles, though to a far greater degree, the medieval counts had honor and privilege with sovereign rights to maintain peace, administer justice, maintain dungeons, and in time of war raise an army. In non-Germanic areas

of Europe a graf was variously titled count, compe, comes, or viscount, all having similar function and meaning, usually hereditary and noble, and ruling a territory or county.

After the Norman conquest of Britain in 1066 the shire-reeve, or sheriff, more than ever, became the law enforcement and administrative agent of the English king. In the world-famous political contract between the English king and the people, the Magna Carta of 1215, the role of sheriffs is mentioned twelve times. In Britain the office of the medieval sheriff was in some counties hereditary and noble, as in continental Europe. In Scotland the last office of a hereditary noble sheriff was abolished in 1747; in England the last was abolished in 1850. The fictional Sheriff of Nottingham in the Robin Hood books and movies conjures visions of the medieval English sheriff as a powerful medieval magnate holding sway over a castle, an administrative district, Nottinghamshire, and its people. While taxes were paid to the sheriff in the name of the king in gold and silver, more often they were paid in kind with dried fish, grain, flax, cloth, salt, and animals.

When England colonized America, English law, customs, tradition, and institutions were imported into the New World, including the concept of dividing colonies into geographical areas, called counties. A sheriff, usually appointed by the colonial governor, was charged with enforcing laws, collecting taxes, attending or arranging court, executing criminal and civil processes, maintaining prisoners and a jail, and meting out justice and executions. America's first eight counties were created in Virginia in 1634 and William Stone that same year became America's first sheriff when he was appointed the Sheriff of Accomac County, Virginia. In 1651 America's first sheriff was elected, William Waters, the Sheriff of Northampton, Virginia.

The concept of dividing land into geographical counties administered by a sheriff soon spread to the other American colonies. Most early sheriffs were appointed from the great colonial landowning class, but later sheriffs came to be elected, better reflecting the needs of the people. Colonial sheriffs were charged with making arrests for theft, assault, murder, and even for crimes unheard of today, such as blasphemy, witchcraft, rebellion, violation of the Sabbath, and swearing on holy days. Imprisonments, executions, and fines were meted out to the guilty by the sheriffs, but punishments then included even whipping, branding, mutilation, and time in the public pillory or stocks. Colonial sheriffs, like their medieval predecessors, were often also charged with the collection of debts, fines, taxes, and levies, and many were allotted 10% of the revenues as pay, often in crops such as tobacco, so that the position of sheriff could be a very lucrative office.

As colonies became states and as more states were created, the division into counties served by a sheriff continued. Initially in new states and territories the counties were large, but as populations grew large counties were broken into smaller counties.

Thomas Jefferson, on the need for a constitution, wrote, "The office of the sheriff is the most important of all executive offices in the country". As the United States frontier moved westward, and almost doubled in size with the Louisiana Purchase, more and more territories were created. Territorial governors, themselves U. S. presidential appointees, generally appointed sheriffs and county boards in the new territories until territorial legislatures created counties and county boards, which then gave way to elected boards and sheriffs.

Sheriffs were, and are, the chief law enforcement officials in the counties. Not only law enforcement officers, they serve writs, preserve the peace, investigate crimes, conduct public auctions, transport prisoners to other jurisdictions, enforce evictions, maintain custody of prisoners in the county jail, enforce the sanctity of the court, and swear in deputies.

In early times it was the duty of all citizens to assist the sheriff in keeping the peace. The principle of direct citizen participation survives to the present in the legal procedure known in Latin as *posse comitatus*. In law, *posse comitatus* literally means the force or power of the county. Every county in the U.S. has at its disposal the law of *posse comitatus*, whereby the sheriff can swear in and deputize unlimited numbers of citizens over the age of fifteen, whether the sheriff is present or not, to assist in keeping the peace, arresting felons, etc. While the sheriff's *posse* is probably best known from western films depicting the Wild West, it remains a viable source of manpower yet today, whether through county law enforcement volunteerism, or in states of emergency.

As the American West opened up for settlement people from the East and immigrants from Europe poured into the new territories, lured by the offer of cheap and fertile land, and then by the discoveries of gold and silver. Rapid growth in just a few decades expanded the country from the Atlantic to the Pacific. The Midwest in a short time was no longer on the fringe of the frontier as waves passed it by for land not already taken and for riches and a better life farther west. Among the hordes of peace-loving, hard-working settlers, there were also some misfits, outlaws, and escapees from eastern justice who made more trouble for citizens and sheriffs than others had made in the Midwest. By the 1850s the revolver was being mass-produced and quickly found great currency in the West as a way to settle disputes. It has been estimated that twenty thousand were killed in the Wild West in gunfights.

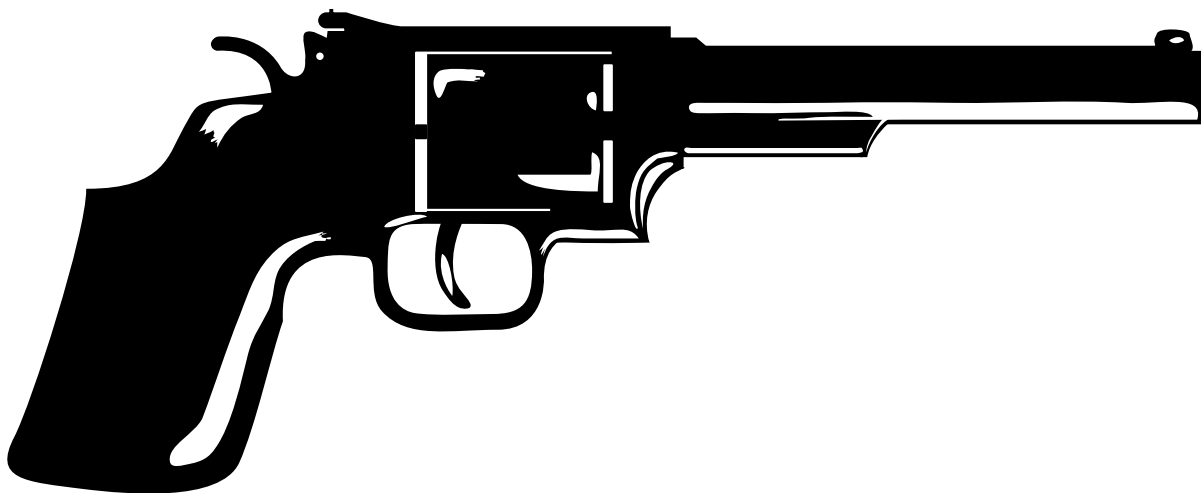
In American culture the sheriff has probably been most visible in the stories and films in the American Wild West. The West in the 19th Century was vast, untamed, and lawless. Many of the misfits and outcasts sought adventure and easy money by forming gangs and rustling cattle, stealing horses, robbing stagecoach lines and trains, and jumping land and mining claims. Even in the Midwest outlaw groups such as the Jesse James-Cole Younger gang terrorized the citizenry in Iowa, Kansas and Missouri, and Minnesota. Lawmen were sparse in territory with few roads. The 19th Century

Sheriff on the American frontier was a man formed largely by his own life experience and personality. There was no formal training, and very little was standardized.

One of the first instances of an effort at sheriff training occurred in 1882 when David J. Cook, the Sheriff of Arapahoe County, Colorado, wrote a book that included some rules on self-preservation for law enforcement officers. The book included such pieces of wisdom as, "It is better to kill two men than to allow one to kill you" and "Never hit a prisoner over the head with your pistol, because you may afterwards want to use your weapon and find it disabled".

From the 19th Century came many famous and colorful sheriffs and deputy sheriffs. Some of these are Pat Garrett, the sheriff of Lincoln County, New Mexico, who killed William H. Bonney (Billy the Kid), William "Bat" Masterson, the Sheriff of Ford County, Kansas and friend of President Theodore Roosevelt, James "Wild Bill" Hickock, the Sheriff of Ellis County, Kansas, who may have killed more men than any other in the Wild West, and Wyatt Earp, the Deputy Sheriff of Pima County, Arizona, famous for the OK Corral gunfight in Tombstone, Arizona, who many regard as the finest lawman of the era. Early in his career President Theodore Roosevelt was himself the Deputy Sheriff of Medora County in the Dakota Territory, and President Grover Cleveland, back east, was once the Sheriff of Erie County, New York.

In 2005 there are more than three thousand county sheriffs in the United States, with all but twelve being elected. Terms generally run two or four years, and there are usually no limits on the number of terms a sheriff can serve. Where once only men served as county sheriff, by 1994 there were eleven women serving. And in the last ten years the number of female sheriffs across the nation tripled to thirty-three by 2004.





## About the Sheriffs of Carver County 1855-2005

From the creation of Carver County in 1855 to the Carver County Sesquicentennial in 2005 there have been only fourteen Sheriffs of Carver County, a very small number. By comparison, since 1855 there have been forty Governors of Minnesota and thirty United States Presidents. Looking at three randomly selected U. S. counties, Milwaukee County Wisconsin has had fifty-five sheriffs over the same century and a half, Montgomery County, Maryland has had thirty-one sheriffs, and Macomb County, Mississippi has had thirty-two sheriffs.

At Carver County's Sesquicentennial there are but three living men who have been Carver County Sheriff, including Bud Olson, the incumbent. In contrast there are five living men who have served as United States President, including incumbent George W. Bush, and five living men who have served as Minnesota Governor, including incumbent Tim Pawlenty.

Three Carver County Sheriffs, Ezekiel Ellsworth, Frederick Greiner, and Frederick Hecklin have served two unconnected terms. By comparison only Minnesota Governor Rudy Perpich served two unconnected terms, and only United States President Grover Cleveland served a second disconnected term.

The youngest Carver County Sheriff to be sworn in was Frederick DuToit, at age twenty-nine. The oldest to be sworn in was William R. Schalow, at age fifty-two. The average age at which the fourteen Carver County Sheriffs took office is thirty-nine. A curious statistic is that from 1855-1922, the average age for the first seven Carver County Sheriffs to be sworn in was thirty-four, while for the last seven sheriffs, from 1923-2005, the average swear-in age is forty-four, a ten-year difference.

Perhaps earlier the vigor of youth, with its strength, brawn, and stamina, was more of a prerequisite to run for office and to be elected. In the 19th and early 20th Centuries, Carver County Sheriffs often had to ride on horseback or in horse-drawn wagons over muddy, rutted roads, in snowstorms, subzero temperatures, in heat and cold rain, and when physical strength was more needed to single-handedly deal with drunk or unruly citizens. These early Carver County citizens often had brawn that was forged in pioneer days by hard work on farms. In recent times the Carver County Sheriff has perhaps needed more age, and the wisdom of life experience, as law enforcement became more political, more complex, more technological, more scholarly, and as roads, transportation, occupations, education, and populations expanded.

The shortest term of a Carver County Sheriff was that of the county's first sheriff, Levi Griffin, who served less than ten months, from March 5 to the end of 1855. The longest tenured Sheriff of Carver County was Lester Melchert, who served from 1947-1973, twenty-seven years.

The longest-lived Carver County Sheriff was the county's first sheriff, Levi Griffin (1822-1902), who died at age eighty. The shortest-lived sheriff was August Johnson (1858-1902), who died at forty-four years of age.

Five Carver County Sheriffs were born before Carver County was created. Three of the fourteen Carver County Sheriffs were born outside of the United States. Frederick Greiner and Frederick Hecklin were born in the German States, and August Johnson was born in Sweden. Four of the Carver County Sheriffs were the children of immigrants. Frederick DuToit's parents were born in Switzerland and France, Gustave Gatz' parents were born in West Prussia in the German States, Frank Trende's parents were born in Pomerania in the German States, and Allen Wallin's father was born in Sweden.

None of the first seven Carver County Sheriffs were born in Minnesota, but every one of the last seven sheriffs was born in Minnesota. Only four Sheriffs of Carver County were born in Carver County. Of the first fourteen sheriffs none were women or minorities, and all were married.

Being Carver County Sheriff was a family affair in nearly every term until the late 1960s. Sheriffs had to be near the seat of government, so sheriffs and their family lived in the county-owned residence in Chaska, next to the jail, and adjacent to the courthouse. Wives and children usually cooked for the prisoners and did their laundry. When female prisoners were involved, wives or daughters were often deputized to assist the Sheriff. As technology advanced, it was often the sheriff's family who answered the sheriff's phone and the sheriff's radio.

Frederick Dutoit was Carver County Sheriff during the U. S. Centennial in 1876. August Johnson was sheriff at the century change of 1900, and Bud Olson was Carver County Sheriff at the 2000 Millenium and the 2005 Carver County Sesquicentennial. Lester Melchert was sheriff at the State of Minnesota Centennial in 1958 and the Carver County Centennial in 1955. William Schalow was sheriff at the 1976 U. S. Bicentennial.

From humble beginnings and a population of 352 when Carver County was created out of a greater Hennepin County on March 3, 1855, the county's population is currently around 75,000 and the county is the second fastest growing county in the State of Minnesota and the fiftieth fastest growing county in the United States. In the 1990s Carver County's growth was 47%. A low estimate expects the county's population to be at least 102,000 in twenty years. From less than \$100 in the 1850s, the average median home in Carver County is valued at some \$175,000 in 2005. From little education in 1855, today 91% of Carver residents graduate from high school and 34% have a bachelor's degree or higher. From 1855, when there was less than one person living per square mile in Carver County, there are now more than 196 persons per square mile.

While many Carver County residents in the 1850s and 1860s were foreign born, today only about 3.4% were born outside of the United States. When once the majority of Carver County residents spoke a language besides English, today only 6.2% regularly speak a second language. Carver County is some 96% White, 2.6% Hispanic, 1.6% Asian. From once having a population that was entirely Native American Indian, the present Carver County Native American Indian population is less than .2%. From having an average annual family income in 1855 that probably didn't exceed \$100, and an economy often based on the barter system, today Carver County residents have an annual household income of some \$66,000 and a per capita income around \$29,000. From a dollar an acre cost in 1855, Carver County land values have exploded thousands-fold, particularly more when not used as rural farmland.

From the same humble beginnings the Carver County Sheriff's Department has increased from a one-man department in 1855 to the 190 full-time, part-time, and volunteer staff members that the Carver County Sheriff oversees in 2005. Of these 148 are full time employees.

Once the Carver County Jail saw the sheriff personally interacting with all of the prisoners, and even as recently as the 1950s still personally monitored the jail, which then averaged only three or four prisoners at any given time. Today the Carver County Jail has grown to be staffed at the Sesquicentennial in 2005 by a staff of 42 jail personnel, with facilities that house ninety to ninety-five prisoners per day, including some fifty Federal and non-Carver County prisoners. From a jail that temporarily housed prisoners before trial or transport to Stillwater or to the Asylum in St. Peter, the jail now houses some thirty Carver County prisoners serving sentences up to a year in duration. Sentences of a year and a day and longer are sentenced to state prisons. The capacity of the jail is today one hundred and fifteen, and one pauses to wonder what the capacity might be at the end of the next one hundred and fifty years.







**Levi Griffin  
(1822-1902)**

**Sheriff 1855**





## Levi H. Griffin, First Sheriff of Carver County

Levi Hoyt Griffin, the first sheriff of Carver County, was born in Vassalboro, Kennebec County, Maine on October 22, 1822. He was the son of William Griffin and Nancy Hoyt. He was named Levi Hoyt after his mother's father, whose English ancestors had been in America in New England in since the 1600s.

Levi Griffin received a common school education and learned the blacksmith trade, which he plied in Boston, Massachusetts. There he met Eliza J. Torrey who was born at Deer Island, Maine on July 22, 1829. They were married in Boston on October 3, 1847. Along with many New Englanders, Griffin heard word of the discovery of gold in California, caught the fever, and in 1849 boarded a ship that took him around Cape Horn in South America and on to California. Griffin seems not to have found gold in the earth, but rather another way of procuring it. After a short stay he returned to Boston where he went into the mercantile business.

But the American West had gotten into Griffin's blood and in 1851 he headed again for California, this time overland by covered wagon. His father-in-law, William Torrey, also caught the fever and headed out on the ship Lenore, probably to meet Griffin in California, but died at sea while rounding Cape Horn. Levi Griffin again didn't stay long in California and again found no gold, but the overland trip had taught him yet more ways of obtaining gold on the American frontier.

By April 1853 Levi Griffin was in the fledgling town of St. Paul in the Minnesota Territory. There he set up a blacksmith operation and made the acquaintance of Alexander Ramsey, the Governor of the Territory of Minnesota. Entering a friendship and business relationship, Griffin, Ramsey, and five other investors formed the Carver Land Company. In February, 1854 the Carver Land Company bought 415 acres some 32 miles upstream from Fort Snelling on the Minnesota River from a Norwegian immigrant squatter and lumberman, Axel Jorgenson. This investment land was to become the Town, Village, and later the City of Carver. It was Ramsey who suggested the town site be named Carver, after British explorer Jonathan Carver, who had visited the area in 1766-67. It is from Jonathan Carver that Carver County also came to be named.

In October 1854 Griffin became the first of the Carver Land Company investors to move to Carver. He took up residence in Axel Jorgenson's claim shanty, a shabby building Jorgenson passed off as the Hotel Luxsenborg to unwary travelers and immigrants. In 1854 Griffin's wife Eliza joined him in Carver, the first White woman there. On May 29, 1855 a daughter was born. Also called Eliza, she was the first White child born in Carver. Griffin's widowed mother-in-law, Sarah Pressey, also came to Carver in 1855 and would live with family members there until her death on May 22, 1883.

Griffin quickly capitalized on commercial ventures observed from his California experiences. He built a Carver structure that was both a dwelling place and a mercantile store along the river. He founded the first ferry across the Minnesota River at Carver and founded the first stagecoach line there. Soon he was engaging in the hotel business.

Already in early February 1855 Levi Griffin was advertising in the St. Paul newspapers, trying to attract settlers to the Carver area of Carver County. In the advertisements Griffin touted a new Carver mercantile warehouse that was stocked with a large assortment of dry goods, clothes, boots, shoes, iron, provisions, tea, coffee, and groceries of all sorts, and at a price lower than ever before offered on the Minnesota River.

On March 3, 1855 the Minnesota Territorial Legislature created several new counties, including Carver County, which was created largely out of a once much bigger Hennepin County. Newly founded Carver County's temporary seat was San Francisco, southwest of the Carver town site. Territorial Governor Willis A. Gorman was vested with the authority to appoint well-qualified people to fill important Carver County positions until a November general election could be held to fill them.

On March 5, 1855 Levi Griffin was appointed the first Sheriff of Carver County by Governor Gorman. With San Francisco as county seat, Griffin had to use Hennepin County for judicial purposes, though at least one term of the district court had to be held for Carver County, this "at such time as the judge should fix".

During Levi Griffin's term as sheriff, Carver County in the Minnesota Territory was a wild, unsettled place. Almost all settlers and immigrants arrived by steamboat at St. Paul, from where many went via steamboat or barge to Chaska, Carver, and San Francisco. Frontier river towns were raucous, riotous places, where bedlam ruled. The levees of the river towns were filled with boats and barges, carts and wagons, animals and cargo, possessions and baggage, workmen and travelers, sinners and saints. Much of the framework for civilized, organized society was not yet in place. Few structures were yet erected for civilized living or government activities. The few houses in the towns were built of milled lumber, mostly shipped from St. Paul. Early church services were held in private homes, but trained clergymen were hard to find.

In the summer of 1855 a man, never identified, was knocked off the steamboat Equator at the Carver levee and killed. The incident may have been the first Carver County Sheriff's death investigation. It was Levi Griffin who said words over the man's body before burial, this being the first funeral service in Carver, and probably the county's first "John Doe" burial. The man's burial took place in Mount Hope Cemetery in Carver on land purchased from Frederick Greiner, who himself in 1862 would be elected Sheriff of Carver County. The unidentified man marked the first death and burial recorded in Carver and at Mount Hope Cemetery. The second Carver death and

Mount Hope Cemetery burial, and the first known by name, was that of a daughter of Levi and Eliza Griffin. She was Angelette Alberta Griffin, who died later that summer on August 16, 1855 at the age of two years and five months.

In the towns men were setting up businesses, working get rich quick schemes, making land deals, engaging in real estate speculation. Many reinvented themselves repeatedly as businesses and careers failed. Cash was short and the barter system prevailed. Interest rates were very high for high-risk loans.

In rural Carver County, away from the towns, the White population was extremely sparse, for only in 1851 had the area been opened for settlement through the treaties with the Sioux (Dakota) at Traverse des Sioux and Mendota. And even the Indian population was sparse, as the majority had relocated to other areas. The majority of the Territorial settlers of Carver County until 1860 were transplants from the eastern states, so English was then the predominant language, followed by the German and Swedish of early immigrants. Homesteaders were just starting to come in droves. Many 1850s homes were log cabins or temporary sod dwellings, and frame homes were very rare in rural areas as area sawmills were not yet in operation, and overland transportation of quantities of milled lumber was extremely difficult without adequate roads. Settlers cleared the woodland for farming and building materials, and for heat in Minnesota's harsh climate.

Levi Griffin's term as Carver County Sheriff was short, as in November 1855 general elections were held, and an elected sheriff probably began service at the start of 1856. Little survives of Griffin's term of office during Minnesota's Territorial era and it is not known if he sought office after his 1855 appointed term.

In 1856 a countywide vote was taken to select the seat for Carver County. Levi Griffin and others favored Carver, while various opposition groups favored Chaska and San Francisco. When several Chaska businessmen promised them \$10,000, Levi Griffin and his group backed off campaigning for a Carver seat. Chaska was thus selected as the Carver County seat and remains so to the present. Griffin and his group never received the promised \$10,000 and were furious.

After his term as sheriff Levi Griffin continued to live in Carver where he found great success in business and in public service. Griffin began construction on a large hotel, Carver House, which was near completion and waiting plastering when it was destroyed in a fire in October 1855. Undaunted, he rebuilt again on the original site at Third and Broadway in Carver. In the 1860s he advertised the Carver House Hotel regularly in the local newspapers. In the 1850s and 1860s many immigrant servant girls married immigrant homesteaders in the parlors of the hotel. Griffin personally operated it for most of the years 1856-1866 until he sold it to Swedish immigrant Charles A. Blomquist in 1866. Blomquist renamed the hotel Planter's House.

During the Sioux Uprising of 1862 Carver House Hotel was filled to capacity with settlers seeking refuge in Carver and other river towns. At the height of the uprising even local Carver settlers crowded the riverfront, seeking safety in numbers near water transportation. Years later, Griffin's daughter, Eliza, wrote that he persuaded the Carver residents to return to their dwellings, and that if there were trouble he would ring the hotel's dinner bell.

When word reached Carver that Glencoe was in ashes and that Young America was burning, the hotel bell was rung and soon steamboats and barges were loaded with settlers heading for safety at Fort Snelling and St. Paul. Griffin took his own family to Chaska, and then on to Shakopee, but returned to Carver the same day when word of the burning of Glencoe and Young America was found to be untrue.

Levi Griffin also owned a blacksmith shop and store in Carver. The store stood on Carver's Minnesota River front for many years and was sold to pioneer Carver merchant, Enoch Holmes, who was forced to move the building uphill on Broadway and away from the river and flooding.

Griffin acquired much farmland around Carver and hired workers to run the farms and to cut hay along the Minnesota River Valley for sale. At the U. S. Census of 1860 Griffin appears as the richest man person in the Town of Carver, and the second richest in Carver County, behind only miller Caleb Lewis in Watertown.

Griffin also owned a sawmill about three miles from Carver, which made the doors and casings for at least one of his Fourth Street homes in Carver. He also had his hands in other activities including relaying the mail from Glencoe to St. Paul and handling the local election returns in the 1860 election of President Abraham Lincoln.

During the Civil War Griffin's age and health made him unfit for active duty. Instead he was appointed Provost Marshall under Captain Keith of St. Paul. Among his duties was the unpleasant task of collecting the men who were drafted, many not wanting to serve.

Griffin at one point served as a deputy U. S. Marshall, and in 1874 he was a Carver County Commissioner, spending much time attending to cutting roads, building bridges, and looking after the needs of the poor.

Levi Griffin and related family members lived in a cluster along Fourth Street East near Oak Street during the pioneer era in Carver. Among those living near him during the pioneer era were his mother-in-law, Sara Torrey, his wife's brother, Joshua Torrey, who was a steamboat builder and lumberman, and his wife's two sisters who were married to George Bennett, who was Carver's first teacher, and Joseph W. Hartwell, a Carver Land Company partner who in 1856 built a Fourth Street East house for Griffin.



Also in the neighborhood cluster was Levi's cousin, Dr. William A. Griffin, who was Carver's first physician. Dr. Griffin was one of the leading figures in the "Carver Gold Rush" of 1858, when gold was purportedly discovered in Spring (or Virgin) Creek.

Two of Levi Griffin's properties survive to the present and are listed on the National Register of Historic Places in Carver's Historic District. They are located at 113 Fourth Street East, the Federal style home where he lived with his family from 1877-1900, and the eastern half of 201 Fourth Street East, which seems to have been built in 1856-57 by Griffin's brother-in-law, Joseph Hartwell, and which Griffin owned in 1857, and where he probably lived 1857-1876. The western half of 201 Fourth Street East was owned and lived in by Levi Griffin's brother-in-law, Joshua P. Torrey, who by 1876 owned the whole building. Unfortunately Griffin's Carver House Hotel, later called the Planter's House Hotel, on Broadway at Third Street East, was torn down in the 1940s; its lot today is the site of the Carver Gazebo Park.

In 1900, after 46 years in Carver, 78 year-old Levi Griffin retired from active life and went to live in North Dakota where his son had taken up a homestead. Levi Griffin died at his son's home in Flaxton, Dale Township, North Dakota on December 22, 1902 at the age of 80. He would be the longest-lived Sheriff of Carver County in the county's first one hundred and fifty years. He is buried there with his wife, who died ten years later on July 30, 1912 at Larson, Keller Township, North Dakota. His wife and seven children survived him at death.

**NEW STORE AT CARVER.**

**New Goods and New Scale of Prices.**

NOW OPENING AT THE WAREHOUSE IN CARVER,  
*A large assortment of Dry Goods, Hats and Caps,  
Boots and Shoes; all kinds of Groceries and  
Provisions, &c., &c.*

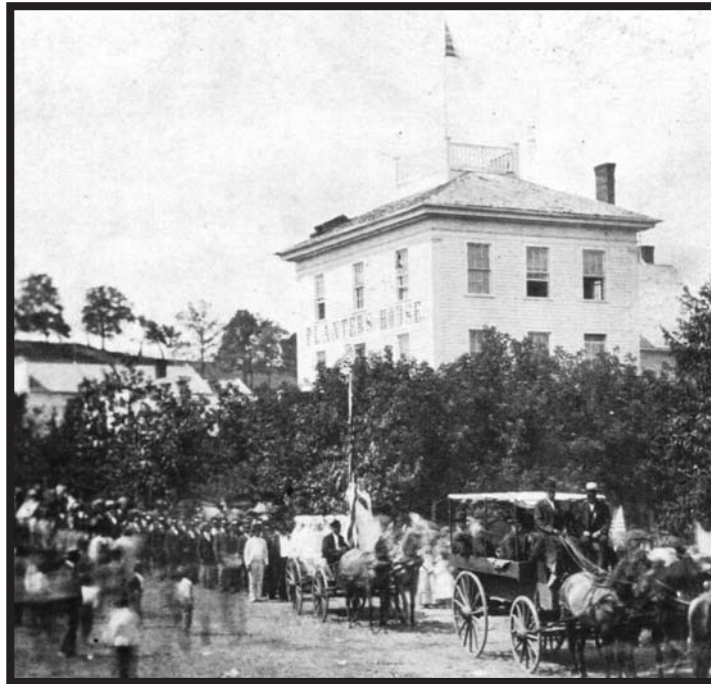
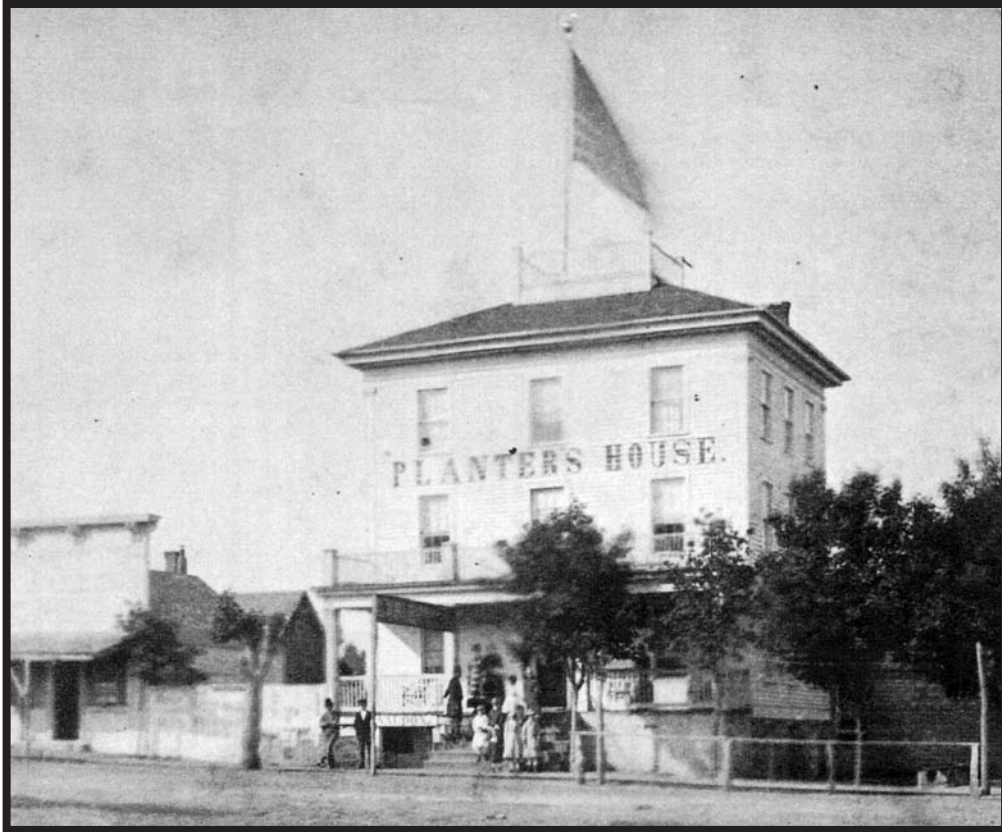
**A**LL of which will be sold at prices lower than ever before offered on the Minnesota River, viz: Salt Pork, 12 ½ cents per pound; Fresh Pork, do.; good Overcoats from \$4.25 up to \$14; Calicoes, per yard, 9 cents and upwards; good Sugar, 9 ¼ pounds for \$1; excellent Teas at 65 cents per pound, the same that is sold in St. Paul for 75 cents; Coffee, 6 pounds for \$1; Iron 6 to 9 cents a pound; Flour \$14 per barrel; and everything else in proportion.

**L. H. GRIFFIN.**

**Carver, February 1, 1855.**

In Early 1855 Levi Griffin was trying to attract settlers to Carver through advertisements in St. Paul, Minnesota newspapers that touted his new general store. (CCHS/MHS)





Levi H. Griffin built the Carver House Hotel in 1856. He sold it in 1866 to Charles Blomquist who renamed it the Planter's House. Shown here about 1885, it survived into the 1940s at Broadway and East Third Street in Carver. (BS)



The east (left) side of the house was built in 1856-57 and was probably the Levi H. Griffin family residence from 1857-1876. Griffin's brother-in-law, Joshua P. Torrey and his family, lived in the west side of the building. In 1876 the Torreys came to own the entire building. By 1893 the John Hebeisen family had ownership and smoothly fit the entire structure(s) into an Eastlake Queen Anne Revival home. The house, often called the Gables, survives on Fourth Street East in the Carver Historic District and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Shown here in 2005. (JvW)



Levi H. Griffin House, built about 1860, and shown here in 2005. It was the Griffin family residence from 1877-1900. Located on Fourth Street East in Carver, it is now in the Carver Historic District and listed on the National Register of Historic Places. (JvW)



**Ezekiel Ellsworth  
(1815-1879?)**

**Sheriff 1856-1862  
Sheriff 1865-1868**





## Ezekiel Ellsworth Jr.

Ezekiel Ellsworth Jr. was born in Oct. 1815 in Northampton or West Springfield, Massachusetts. He was the fourth of the nine known children of Ezekiel Ellsworth and Abigail Taylor. His Ellsworth ancestors had been in the Hartford, Connecticut area since the 1600s before his father moved to Massachusetts.

Ezekiel, who one day would be Carver County Sheriff, was married probably before 1841 to Abigail Holmes, who was two years younger than him and who came from the same area in Massachusetts. Their first child, Sarah, was born in Massachusetts about 1841 and by 1845 they were living in Pennsylvania where they had two more children, Harriet, born about 1845, and George, born about 1848.

In 1854 the family moved to the frontier town of Chaska in the Minnesota Territory where they are reckoned among the Carver County pioneer settlers. In 1855 Ellsworth built a Chaska home that was then considered a "palatial estate". The hard wood for the house was sawed at a Smithtown Bay sawmill near Lake Minnetonka and the soft wood for it was cut by Basset Brothers of Minneapolis and hauled to Chaska by ox team. The residence burned in the late 1890s, though by then it was no longer in the Ellsworth family. In 1855 Ezekiel Ellsworth also erected another building in Chaska that came to be called the Ellsworth Building, which survived until 1891, when it too was destroyed by a fire. There was once an area in Chaska on 2nd Street East that was called "The Ellsworth Block" in honor of Ezekiel Ellsworth and his holdings.

Ezekiel Ellsworth was an early Republican supporter in Carver County, and he became prominent in county politics when he ran for Sheriff of Carver County in November 1855, the first election to choose Carver County officials. He won the election and on Jan. 1, 1856, at age forty, he took office as the second Sheriff of Carver County and the first to be elected. He replaced Levi Griffin, the county's first sheriff, who had been appointed by Territorial Governor Willis Gorman under an act of the Minnesota Territorial Legislature.

On July 17, 1856, six months into Ellsworth's term, the first Carver County District Court session was held in a frame building owned by the Fuller Brothers on the bank of the Minnesota River in Chaska. Carver County's first murder case was tried in the session with Judge Andrew G. Chatfield hearing the case, which was prosecuted by Carver County Attorney J. A. Sargent, and defended by attorneys J. M. Holland and Frank Warner of Carver. The defendant in Carver's first murder case, John Schlemline, was accused of murdering Nicholas Barton, Carver County's first murder victim, near Chaska in a land claim fight. The case also marked the first time a jury was impaneled in Carver County District Court. Precisely where Sheriff Ellsworth held the accused in custody before and during the trial is not known, but it is known that Schlemline was not convicted in the case.



Early in Ezekiel Ellsworth's term an 1856 countywide vote selected Chaska to be the Carver County seat over contestants San Francisco and Carver, with Chaska garnering sixty percent of the vote. Also during Ellsworth's first term as sheriff construction began on the old Carver County Courthouse in Chaska. Started in 1857, its completion was long delayed when the Panic of 1857, a major U. S. depression caused by risky land investment, high interest rates, and over-speculation, created a virtual lack of cash in the western territories.

About 1858 the county-owned sheriff's residence was completed next to the courthouse. For the next 107 years the courthouse building would serve the judicial and administrative needs of the county. And the Sheriffs of Carver County, with their families, would live in the adjacent sheriff's residence, the sheriffs' wives usually cooking meals for the prisoners in the nearby Carver County Jail.

Ezekiel Ellsworth served two unconnected terms as sheriff, first from Jan. 1856 to about September 1862, and then was appointed on April 28, 1865 to replace the resigning Frederick Greiner. Ellsworth's second term expired at the end of 1868 when Frederick Hecklin took over as sheriff. During Ellsworth's tenure as sheriff on the American Frontier a lawman had to be courageous and burly, for supporting officers were few and often far distant.

Life on the frontier held some of the lawlessness seen on television and in film. Frontier and river town saloons were often riotous places with drunkenness, gambling, and brawls. Claim jumping of land often lead to deadly confrontations. Theft of food and animals was common, and problems often arose between pioneer settlers, and those just passing through. The river towns brought tramps and "river rats" preying on the settlers. And many people were flowing to the towns, both for day work and for permanent jobs.

Early sheriff's had to be fearless men with strong personalities. Often they were self-made men who were also successful in private life. Already by 1857 Ellsworth was a prominent citizen of Chaska. At the U. S. Census of 1860 Ellsworth listed himself as a carpenter, rather than sheriff, and his net worth of \$5,150 was the third highest in Chaska, behind only attorney T. D. Smith at \$9,300 and merchant Charles A. Warner at \$13,000. Ellsworth also owned a harness shop on Third Street in Chaska, and it is known that in May 1866 he erected a new building to house his harness shop. The census also indicates that the Ellsworth's had a fourth child, a daughter Clara, born about 1858 during Ezekiel's first term as sheriff.

Ezekiel Ellsworth seems to have died in late August or early September 1879, though it is not known where he is buried. After his death his wife, Abigail, moved to Minneapolis to live with her daughter, Mrs. L. W. Noble, as all of the Ellsworth children had moved from Carver County. Abigail Ellsworth died on March 27, 1896.



Construction on the Carver County Courthouse in Chaska began in 1857 during Ezekiel Ellsworth's first term as sheriff. It survived until 1965 when it was torn down and replaced by the present courthouse. (CHS)



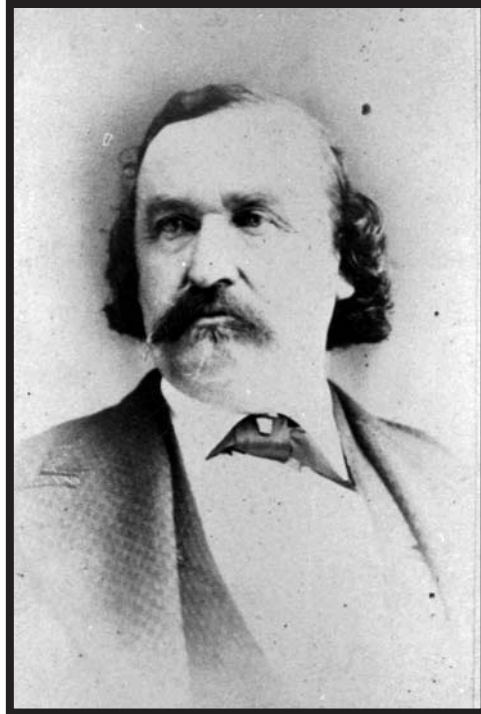


**Frederick Greiner  
(1829-1900)**

**Sheriff 1862-1864  
Sheriff 1872-1874**







Frederick Greiner, about 1890. (CCSO)

## Frederick Greiner

Frederick Greiner, the third Sheriff of Carver County known to history by name, was born on April 13, 1829 at Adelberg, Schoendorf, in Württemberg in the German States. As a German immigrant he would be the first Carver County Sheriff who was not born in America.

As a youth Frederick Greiner received a public school education, then studied architecture and graduated in July 1845 from the Academy of Fine Arts at Stuttgart in Wurttemberg. It is not known if he worked in architecture while in Europe and there is no evidence that he worked at it professionally in America, though he undoubtedly had input into a grand Victorian home he built for himself later in life.

In 1849, at age 20, Greiner immigrated to the United States, first living at St. Louis, Missouri for a year. In 1850 he moved to the fledgling town of St. Paul, in the Minnesota Territory where he met Catherine (Katrina) Faber, who was born in Luxembourg or Hesse in the German States in 1835. The two were married in 1853. In 1854 they moved to Chaska, along with Katrina's brother, George Faber, and they were among the first pioneer settlers, not only in Chaska, but in Carver County as well. Greiner homesteaded some acreage between Chaska and Carver and tried farming from about 1854-56. A son was born to Frederick and Katrina on Christmas Day, 1855, Frederick Greiner Junior, who was one of the first White children born in the Chaska area. Frederick Greiner Junior would one day serve as Mayor of Chaska.

About 1855 the parcel of land comprising Mount Hope Cemetery in Carver was purchased from Frederick Greiner. As this parcel lies roughly between Carver and Chaska it may have been a part of the original Greiner farmstead. The first burial took place at the public cemetery in the summer of 1855.

As early as 1855 Frederick Greiner became involved in Carver County politics and in November of that year he was elected one of the first three Carver County Commissioners as proscribed by the Minnesota Territorial Legislature. The three new elected commissioners replaced men appointed by Minnesota Territorial Governor Willis Gorman on March 3, 1855 at the creation of Carver County. Greiner took his Carver County Commission seat on January 7, 1856 and thus became one of the first County Commissioners from Chaska.

Around 1856 Greiner was a Chaska merchant in partnership with a certain Mr. Walters. And by 1857 Greiner was regarded as one of Chaska's most prominent citizens. That year he began operating the Chaska House Hotel, said at that time to be the leading hotel in the Minnesota River Valley, and which included a saloon. Greiner seems to have operated the hotel and saloon during the period 1857-62 when Chaska was a bustling boomtown, served daily by steamboat runs on the Minnesota River between St. Paul and Carver.

On May 11, 1856 Greiner attended a Chaska township organizational meeting and was elected to the newly formed Chaska Township Board as the Board's chairman, a position equivalent to mayor. Many of Chaska's early pioneers were immigrants from the German States and Greiner, having already been in America for seven years, was undoubtedly well spoken in both German and English.

By the time of the 1860 U. S. Census the Greiners were doing well. Frederick then called himself a hotel operator and his net worth was given as \$3500, putting him in the top twenty percent of Chaska residents in terms of wealth. A son, Frederick Greiner Junior, was born about 1856, followed by daughter Matilda about 1858 and daughter Sophie about 1859.

From September 1862 until August 1864 and from 1872-74 Frederick Greiner seems to have served two disconnected two-year terms as the Sheriff of Carver County. Sheriff Greiner was regarded as scrupulously honest and as one of the best-known and most esteemed men in Carver County. During his first term in the 1860s he advertised himself and his sheriff's office in the local newspapers alongside the merchants and businessmen of the county. In 1864 the county constructed a brick jail for the Sheriff's Department in Chaska. One can speculate if his architectural schooling came into play during the jail's construction. The jail survived until 1893 when it was torn down and replaced by another.

The most troubling event of Greiner's first term was undoubtedly the Sioux Uprising of 1862, which occurred in August and September. Many of the Sioux (Dakota Indians) had become disgruntled by overdue treaty payments promised by the Federal Government. These payments had become interrupted by the Civil War. Hundreds of pioneer settlers were slaughtered by the Dakota in southwestern and western Minnesota. Many settlers, fearing for their lives, fled to the Minnesota River Valley's towns where they found safety in numbers and were adjacent to transportation to Fort Snelling, if needed. Greiner undoubtedly had to deal with great chaos in the river towns of Carver and Chaska as populations swiftly swelled and town resources of lodging and food were pushed to the limit. Worse yet, most of Minnesota's trained soldiers were away fighting in the Civil War so the sheriff's duties undoubtedly involved planning for the potential civil defense of the towns. Fortunately enough volunteers rapidly enlisted and the uprising was quelled under General Henry Hastings Sibley.

On Saturday, April 29, 1865, at the close of the Civil War, some fifty men of the First U. S. Cavalry were encamped just below Chaska on their way to Fort Snelling to be discharged from military service. John Pryor, angry about a small unpaid debt, walked up to fellow soldier James E. Stillfox and shot him in the chest, killing him instantly and injuring another soldier. Frederick Greiner avoided involvement in the case when it was decided that Pryor would be tried by military court martial.

In 1864, between his terms as sheriff, Greiner took a position as Carver County Registrar of Deeds. He would continue to hold this position until 1892, despite serving his second term as sheriff from 1872-74. Around 1872, during his sheriff tenure, a move was afoot to relocate the Carver County seat from Chaska to Benton. The plan failed in a general election and Chaska remains the county seat to the present day.

After his second term as sheriff, Frederick Greiner continued to play a very active part in his community. He held several local Chaska offices and belonged to the Chaska Lodge, International Order of Odd Fellows #25, and to the King Solomon Lodge A. F. & A. M. of Shakopee. An avid hunter, he organized sports clubs as well as hunting and fishing trips. He was also an involved member of the Moravian Church in Chaska.

His wife died in 1890 and from then until 1899 when he suffered a debilitating stroke he poured himself into the insurance and conveying/transportation business.

Suffering from stroke-related paralysis for eight months, Frederick Greiner died at his residence on Tuesday, April 24, 1900. Seven children survived him. He is buried in Mount Pleasant Cemetery in Chaska.

Frederick Greiner's fine brick residence at 319 East Third Street in Chaska survives to the present and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. It was built about 1870 with later additions and is fitted out in the Stick/Eastlake architectural style. The brick carriage house to it yet stands but is now on a separate lot since the property was divided.



Frederick Greiner, about 1885. (CCHS)





Frederick Greiner House on East Third Street in Chaska, taken about 1895. (CHS)



Frederick Greiner House on East Third Street in Chaska, today listed on the National Register of Historic Places, taken in 2005. (JvW)





**Frederick Hecklin  
(1831/2-1905)**

**Sheriff 1864-1865  
Sheriff 1868-1872**





## Frederick Hecklin

Frederick Hecklin, twice Carver County Sheriff, arrived with his pioneer family in Carver County when it was a wilderness in the Minnesota Territory and lived to see it explode into a wealthy and flourishing community.

Frederick Hecklin was born in Stuttgart, Württemberg in the German States possibly in 1831 or 1832. Not all sources agree as to his year of birth, and even the 1860 U. S. Census lists him at 32 years old in 1860, making his birth year closer to 1828. In 1852 he was married to Carrie Hoelsken, called Henrietta in the U. S. Census of 1860, who was born in Prussia in the German States. The following year the Hecklins immigrated to America where they first settled in Racine, Wisconsin. A son, Frederick Jr., was born there in 1853, and a daughter, Bertha, was born there in 1855.

Already in 1854 Frederick Hecklin was looking away from Racine for a way and a place to make a living. He seems to have settled alone for a short time in the fledgling river town of Mankato in the Minnesota Territory in 1854, intending on opening a store there, and then planning to send for his wife if things worked out. In 1854-55 Hecklin and a business associate, Captain John Groetsch, were bringing a barge of merchandise upstream on the Minnesota River to the Mankato settlement to stock a store. But low water on the river would not let them pass the Carver Rapids so instead they decided to settle in Carver County.

What became of Hecklin's plans for a store are not known, but in 1855, the same year that Carver County was created, he homesteaded a farm site adjoining Augusta Station, in what is today Dahlgren Township and was joined by the rest of his family. About 1856 he entered into Carver County public service when he became the county's first elected surveyor. It may be that he had received some training in surveying, either in the German States or early in his time in America.

On May 11, 1858 Frederick Hecklin attended an organizational meeting for Chaska Township and was elected constable of the new township along with Stephen Poland. By 1860 Hecklin and his family had sold their farm and moved to Chaska. The U. S. Census of 1860 notes that the Hecklins had had two more children, born in 1858 and 1859 and that Frederick still called himself a farmer. The census indicates that the family's financial situation was above average and in the top third for the fledgling town of Chaska, with a net worth of about a thousand dollars in 1860. Sometime in the early 1860s Frederick Hecklin purchased or built the Chaska House Hotel, which may first have been a residence with some additional rooms to let.

In September 1864 Frederick Hecklin became Carver County Sheriff, probably by appointment of the Carver County Board, as elected two-year terms then generally ran from the beginning of the year until the end of the year. It may be that his appointment came on the strength of his having served as constable in Chaska.

Also in September 1864 he sold the Chaska House Hotel to Mattias Gates for fifteen hundred dollars. Possibly the Hecklin family was living in the hotel and they instead decided to take up lodging in the county-provided sheriff's residence, which was adjacent to the Carver County Jail and Courthouse.

Hecklin's term was short, only about eight months, for he resigned on April 28, 1865, the same date that the assassinated President Abraham Lincoln's body lay in state in Cleveland, Ohio on the long journey to his final resting place. In November 1867 Hecklin ran for Carver County Sheriff and was elected, taking office in January 1868 for what would be a pair of back to back two-year terms.

During Sheriff Hecklin's second term on old respected citizen, Samuel Burgener, was brutally murdered on a public road in Hancock Township on February 18, 1871. In Burgener's hand was a shock of hair believed to belong to his murderer. After investigation Peter Wirtz was arrested and taken to the Carver County Jail where he was charged with first-degree murder. Wirtz was tried, and in 1872 sentenced to death by hanging in what could have been Carver County's first execution. But Minnesota Governor Horace Austin commuted Wirtz' death sentence to a life imprisonment at Stillwater Prison. Wirtz, in 1886, after almost sixteen years in prison, was pardoned for good behavior by Minnesota Governor Lucius Hubbard. Peter Wirtz had plans to "go west", because a return to Carver County "would not be wise".

One of Hecklin's sheriff's deputies was Nicholas Schoenborn, who later would serve as a Carver County Deputy under Hecklin's successor, Sheriff Frederick DuToit. When Hecklin completed his term as Carver county Sheriff in 1872 he was described in the Chaska newspaper as a faithful and intelligent official.

Concurrent with Hecklin's service as Carver County Sheriff, as early as 1870 he owned a butcher shop in Chaska, which he may have sold about 1873 when the Hecklins moved to Todd County, Minnesota. By 1877 the family was living in Cold Spring, Minnesota and sometime not long after this his wife, Carrie/Henrietta, seems to have died. She may be the same person as Hattie Hecklin, born April 22, 1835, whose grave is found in Chaska's Mount Hope Cemetery, and who seems to have died in Minneapolis on March 14, 1880 after having been ill for several years. She was brought to Chaska by her son, and her funeral held at the Chaska Moravian Church.

By April 1883 Frederick Hecklin was back in Chaska constructing a new brick butcher shop next to Brinkhaus Hall. And by 1889 Hecklin was appointed Chaska Meat Inspector. In March 1895 the sixty-three year old Frederick Hecklin was appointed by newly elected Carver County Sheriff, August Johnson, to be the jailer at the new Carver County Jail, as well as bailiff of the grand jury. But Hecklin's service under Sheriff Johnson was short lived.

On July 3, 1895 Sheriff Johnson was out of town and left Hecklin in charge of the jail and the prisoners. At a little after six p.m. Hecklin let the prisoners out of their cells to eat. An arrested horse thief named John Gregg (alias John Anderson) reportedly slipped out and concealed himself in the Sheriff's Office or the corridor, and as Hecklin returned at around eight p.m. to lock the prisoners back into their cells he purportedly left the doors open behind him and Gregg escaped unnoticed, leaving a note saying that "he wished to enjoy the 4th like the rest of our liberty loving citizens". Details of the escape were provided by another of the prisoners who was in custody for stealing a cow. It was not until the next morning when Hecklin returned that the escape was discovered, and he either failed to report it or mount a search, or decided to wait to take action until Sheriff Johnson returned later in the day.

When Sheriff Johnson returned and learned what had happened he took the keys to the jail and dismissed Hecklin. Hecklin claimed that someone outside with keys caused the escape, though the Sheriff averred that there were only two sets of keys, one for himself and one for Hecklin. Former Sheriff Frederick DuToit wrote an article in his *Weekly Valley Herald* on July 11, 1895, extolling the security of the jail and assuring his readers that the newly elected Sheriff Johnson was in no way at fault, and that the blame rested with Hecklin. The next week Hecklin submitted his own version of the escape, which was also printed in the *Herald* on July 18. Hecklin rebutted claims that he was at fault and insisted that Gregg had had outside help in the escape. Hecklin noted that the only witness against him was a cow thief who was in jail. Hecklin wrote that during his terms as sheriff there was not a single escape, and that in this instance he was not negligent. Moreover, he cited the fact that while DuToit had been sheriff John Gregg had also escaped from him.

By 1902 Frederick Hecklin was living in Stearns County, Minnesota, but he died in Chaska on Saturday, September 16, 1905 of heart failure at the home of his son, Hugo Hecklin, who was an alderman (councilman) in Chaska. He was at least 73 years old and at his death he was survived by six children, with two other children having died young. He is buried in the family plot in Chaska's Mount Pleasant Cemetery.





**Frederick DuToit  
(1845-1922)**

**Sheriff 1874-1895**







Frederick E. DuToit, about 1895. (DP)

## **Frederick E. DuToit**

Frederick Eugene DuToit was born September 14, 1845 in Harrisville, Lewis County, New York. He was the son of Frederick C. DuToit, a merchant from Mouden, Switzerland, and Eliza Gresset, from France, who were married in France and immigrated to the United States in 1841.

Young Frederick was the oldest of four known siblings who were born in New York during the period 1845-55. The family seems to have lived in New York for at least ten years before Frederick's father relocated to Chaska in the Minnesota Territory in 1856. In May 1857 young Frederick's mother and the four children joined their father in Chaska, being one of the area's pioneer families.

The DuToit family prospered in Chaska, and by 1857 young Frederick's father was regarded among the prominent citizens in the fledgling river town. When the 1860 U. S. Census was taken he indicated that his net worth was \$600, probably a little above average for a Chaskaite of the period. For a time he was employed in the store of the Chaska Townsite Company before being drawn into Carver County public service as Deputy Clerk of Court, Deputy Registrar of Deeds, Clerk of Court, and later Registrar of Deeds. He became Registrar of Deeds in January 1862 but died in office in Oct. 1862, only forty-five years old, leaving his widow with five children, two sons and three daughters, who were to reach adulthood and prominent lives in Chaska, Carver, and Carver County.

Young Frederick DuToit was already on his own at the time of his father's death. He had ended his education at the sixth grade and was apprenticed for two years in the printing trade with the Belle Plaine Enquirer newspaper in neighboring Scott County. When the Civil War broke out, Frederick answered the Union call and, at age sixteen, on Sept. 26, 1861 enlisted as a private in Company A of the Fourth Minnesota Volunteer Infantry Regiment under Captain (later Judge) Baxter of Carver County. In late spring and early summer 1863, DuToit served at the Siege of Vicksburg, Mississippi. He was promoted to sergeant in the Fourth Minnesota Regiment under Colonel John B. Sanborn and was sent north to serve as a drillmaster and to send new recruits to the South. In October 1864 Frederick was promoted to second lieutenant in the First Minnesota Heavy Artillery unit when it was organized at Fort Snelling. Three months after the Civil War ended he was mustered out of military service at Louisville, Kentucky on July 9, 1865.

Frederick DuToit returned to Chaska and in 1866, with his brother Aloys L. DuToit, bought the Weekly Valley Herald newspaper from C. A. Warner and Company. The firm was initially called A. L. DuToit & Company. The newspaper, founded in 1862, would be edited and published wholly or in part by DuToit for more than 50 years before it was passed to his son, and remained in family ownership for more than a century, until sold in 1969. The newspaper is yet in business and is today called the Chaska Herald. DuToit was an ardent Democrat and published the newspaper as an independent Democratic paper.

In 1867 DuToit was one of the organizers of the Minnesota Editorial Association. And at an early date he was a member of the Chaska Fire Department, a membership later rolled into an honorary life membership.

In 1867 Frederick DuToit personally ventured into local politics as a Democrat, being elected Chaska Township Clerk, a position he held from 1867-69. He then was elected Carver County Commissioner, serving 1869-71. In 1871-72 he was Carver County Superintendent of Schools and in 1872 was elected to the Minnesota House of Representatives, where he served for two terms. While serving in the Minnesota House he introduced a bill providing for biennial legislature sessions. He also served terms as alderman (councilman) and president (mayor) of Chaska Village before it was incorporated into a City.

In 1873 Frederick DuToit ran for Sheriff of Carver County and was elected, beginning his service in 1874. He would win reelection many times and would serve for 22 years, until the end of 1895.

Frederick DuToit served as sheriff during the July 4, 1876 celebration of the American Centennial and oversaw partying revelers. Later that summer, in mid-August, 1876, members of the Jesse James-Younger Brothers Gang arrived in Minnesota in two groups and were checking out small town banks for the right one to rob. Tradition has

it that some members of the gang sat in on a game of poker with Sheriff DuToit and friends in the lobby of Chaska's Minneapolis Hotel where some gang members were spending the night, just days before their disastrous September 7 bank robbery in Northfield, Minnesota.

Frederick DuToit was the U. S. Census taker for Chanhassen and Chaska in 1880. During the census DuToit was living in the county-owned Sheriff's quarters on the west side of the old Carver County Courthouse, near the Carver County Jail. In 1880 he listed himself as a thirty-five years old with the occupation of sheriff and jailer. At the census taking the jail held but one prisoner, a 54 year-old Prussian named Albert Koslesky. The Sheriff's quarters were more fully occupied, as Sheriff DuToit, since May, 1879 was living there and married to a French woman, Josephine, who had been previously married to a Chaska man named Brinkhaus. In addition there were three Brinkhaus stepchildren from his wife's previous marriage, Joseph, five years old, Eddie, seven, and Emma, age nine.

Frederick DuToit's mother died on April 4, 1880 and she was buried along with her husband in Chaska's Mount Pleasant Cemetery. In April 1881 Frederick's brother Aloys died and Frederick became sole owner of the Weekly Valley Herald. DuToit's wife Josephine also seems to have died about 1880 or 1881, leaving him to juggle many tasks, including being a single parent, sheriff, jailer, editor, and publisher. On November 29, 1882 Frederick married Anna M. Kunz, who was born in Berkheim, Rhineland, in the German States and who in 1868 had immigrated to America as a ten year old with her family, settling in Carver County after a brief stay in Wisconsin. Frederick and Anna had three more children, George, who died in infancy, a daughter Gertrude, and son Frederick E. DuToit Junior, who one day would take over for his father as publisher and editor of the Weekly Valley Herald.

In 1884 a strange incident occurred during the Sheriff's term that involved Mount Pleasant Cemetery in Chaska. Sheriff DuToit was informed that a grave robbery was taking place at the cemetery. On Dec 29, 1884 Eugene Mattaz was buried in Mount Pleasant after dying of a heart ailment. Later that night a young Chaska lad, Henry May, was passing by the cemetery on his way home when he heard the sounds of a pick and shovel. Looking more closely in the dark he observed a person standing near a grave while others were working. The Sheriff and local constable were advised and put the cemetery under surveillance. At length a sleigh drawn by two horses and carrying three persons appeared. A chase ensued and the sleigh went into a snow bank, with its occupants fleeing into the woods, leaving a corpse on the sleigh. Pursued by Sheriff DuToit's posse, two of the body snatchers made their way to Minneapolis, arriving the following day in a very frostbitten state from extremely cold temperatures. The body of Mattaz was brought back to the Mount Pleasant Cemetery and reburied. The grave robbery involved the brother of a doctor at a Minneapolis hospital, as well as a medical student there, who were in need of cadavers to study and dissect to advance their medical knowledge.

In August 1889 Sheriff DuToit became personally involved in a murder case and its aftermath concerning the horrible shotgun death of Mrs. Charles Hesse by her husband, Charles Hesse, which took place in Hollywood Township. The shooting, originally thought a tragic accident, took on a different character when Charles Hesse was charged with first-degree murder. Rumors circulated that that some citizens were considering removing Hesse from jail and lynching him.

Hesse's murder trial took place almost immediately, with unusually little time for trial preparation, despite the fact that there were between fifty and sixty witnesses slated to testify for the prosecution. On one day of the trial DuToit escorted the jury to the scene of Mrs. Hesse's death. During the trial Hesse got no support from his family, from the family of his wife, or from their friends. In an expensive Carver County trial that the local newspaper called the most important and complicated trial ever held in the courts of the county, Hesse was found guilty and sentenced to life imprisonment in Stillwater Prison. Motions were filed on his behalf for a new trial.

During the trial Sheriff DuToit became well acquainted with Charles Hesse as he was detained in DuToit's custody in the Carver County Jail. The Sheriff seems to have had some misgivings about the jury's verdict, as evidenced by some of the articles that appeared in his newspaper. At least one article questioned if there had been a miscarriage of justice. Moreover Hesse wrote letters to DuToit from Stillwater Prison, bewailing that all of his family refused to visit or write him. Hesse professed his innocence, and claimed that his family set him up. On at least one occasion DuToit seems to have written him back, providing Hesse's impetus to write more letters. In DuToit's Weekly Valley Herald, a long editorial appeared questioning if it was an accident or murder, as there were no eyewitnesses to the shooting. The article, perhaps written by DuToit himself, was signed by a pen name "Omnibus Justitia", which means "Justice for All" in Latin.

Whether guilty or innocent, only Hesse really knew. Charles Hesse, just forty years old, died in Stillwater Prison of consumption on May 8, 1898. The Weekly Valley Herald wrote of Hesse's death stating that "he probably never would have been arrested had he not been seen with a certain young lady of that town [Hollywood Township] before and immediately following her [his wife's] death". DuToit seems to have been affected by Hesse and the case, for during the last thirty years of his life he would retain a letter from Hesse. The letter remained in the DuToit family for more than a hundred years following Hesse's death.

In the summer of 1891 Frederick DuToit began construction on a fine brick house on Hickory Street in Chaska, probably in anticipation of leaving the Sheriff's Office and the county-owned lodging it provided him. The house, now painted white and missing its original turret, survives to the present at 121 Hickory Street in Chaska and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Privately owned, the house is currently under restoration.



In 1893, late in Sheriff DuToit's term, the old Carver County Jail was demolished by Anton Simons. The old jail was located in an alley behind the old post office that itself was replaced by a telephone company building. Built in the 1860s, the jail had been regarded as unsafe and unhealthy, and in recent years been serving as a stable for Christian Eber. During the final months of DuToit's term a new Carver County Jail was under construction, but it wasn't ready for use until three weeks after he left office. Never the less, Frederick DuToit's name appeared on the cornerstone of the new jail along with the names of the serving Carver County Commissioners, Auditor, and County Attorney. When the new jail was torn down in 1965 for yet another new jail, the cornerstone was saved, along with an 1894 copy of DuToit's *Weekly Valley Herald* newspaper that was found as a time capsule inside of it. The 1894 jail cornerstone survives to the present, located in the atrium between the Carver Courthouse and the Sheriff's Office and jail.

In January 1895 fifty-year old Frederick DuToit retired from office. At the time of his retirement no other county sheriff in Minnesota had served as long as he had as sheriff of Carver County. He gathered up the family possessions and moved out of the county's sheriff quarters and took up residence in his brick house on Hickory Street. But for DuToit, retiring from the Sheriff's Department did not mean retirement from public service. After devoting his full attention to the *Weekly Valley Herald* from 1895-98, he again sought public service. In 1898 he was elected to the Minnesota State Senate. Re-elected in 1902 and 1906, he served as a Minnesota State Senator for twelve years. In the Senate DuToit served on many committees dealing with important issues of the time: elections, drainage, grain and warehouses, labor, immigration, public buildings, reapportionment, temperance, towns and counties, and the Soldier's Home.

In 1905 Frederick DuToit turned over a half interest in the *Weekly Valley Herald* to his son, Frederick DuToit Junior, though he would remain the newspaper's head until about 1910, when he answered a local call to service and was elected Mayor of Chaska, serving several terms into his seventies. Through the years while holding various offices, Frederick never neglected the newspaper. Even in his last year of life he was gathering news items and reading proofs.

In his day Frederick E. DuToit was the best-known and most respected man in Carver County. The esteem in which he was held can be seen in the confidence of the people who repeatedly elected and re-elected him to important offices in city, county, and both state houses. Whether through public office, or via his newspaper, DuToit was involved in almost every undertaking for the advancement and promotion of Chaska and of Carver County. Though a staunch Democrat, Frederick never hesitated to support a candidate of another party if he felt that he was a better person.

In later years he was President of the Chaska Commercial Club, a Director of the Minneapolis Sugar Company, and was involved in Civil War veterans memorial activities with the GAR (Grand Army of the Republic). Though always a good



businessman, he was interested in public service, not in becoming rich.

In November 1921 Frederick was stricken with a severe case of jaundice, from which he never fully recovered. During the next six months he was able to make it to the Herald office only a half dozen times. Frederick DuToit died at 10:05 a.m. on May 22, 1922 at the age of seventy-six years. His funeral was one of the largest ever held in Chaska, with people attending from miles around, many wearing the uniforms of their various departments and organizations. His body lay in state at his family home with services at home and at Guardian Angels Catholic Cemetery. Frederick DuToit is buried in Guardian Angels Cemetery in Chaska. Few Carver County citizens have lived a more involved, more useful, unselfish life in public service. As soldier, journalist, politician, and sheriff, for sixty-six years the self-made DuToit played a major part in everything that was good for Carver County.

After Frederick's death his wife Anna became involved in the Herald for several years , gaining the moniker "Herald Mother", before leaving it fully to their son, Frederick E. DuToit Junior. Anna died in 1942 and is buried with her husband. The newspaper is yet in operation, today called the Chaska Herald.



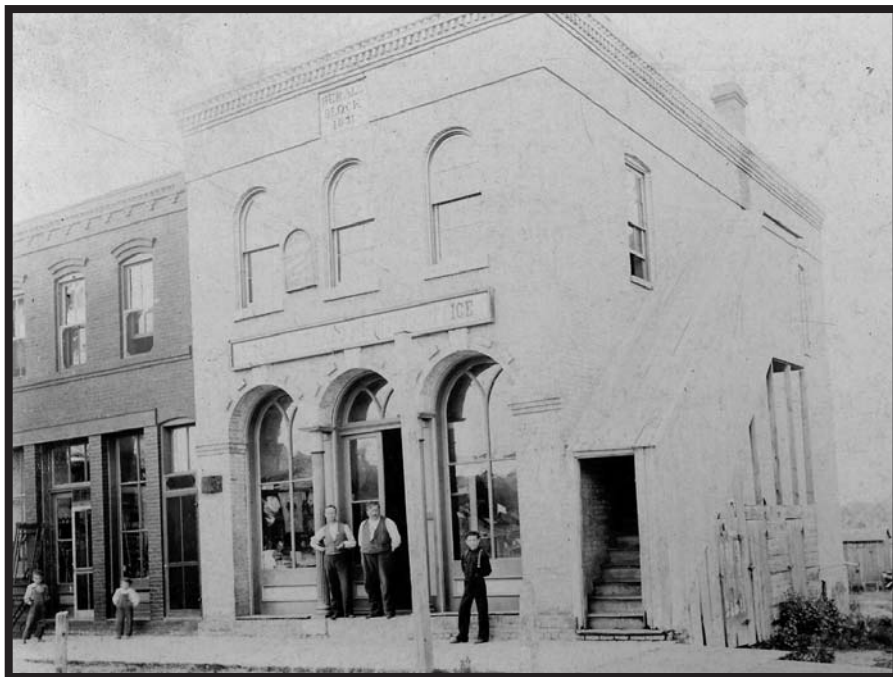
Frederick E. DuToit and his family in front of their home on Hickory Street in Chaska, circa 1900. (DP)



Frederick E. DuToit House, taken in 2005, listed on the National Register of Historic Places. (JvW)



Leg Irons dating to 1876 and the term of Sheriff Frederick DuToit. (CCHS/JvW)

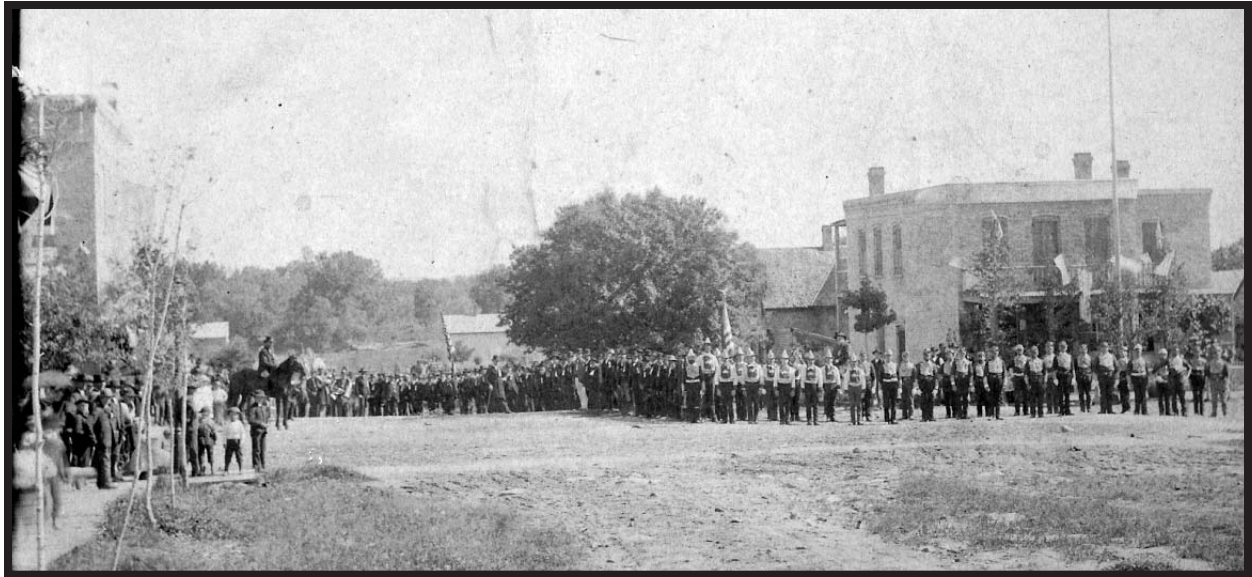


Weekly Valley Herald newspaper office, circa 1900, publisher Frederick E. DuToit in the doorway with hands behind his back. It stands on its original site at 123 West Third Street in Chaska, today in business as the Chaska Herald. (DP)





Frederick E. DuToit in the 1880s. (CCHS)



Frederick DuToit participated in many Civil War Reunion events in Chaska (DP)



Frederick E. DuToit and his family in front of their home on Hickory Street in Chaska, 1890s. (DP)



**August Johnson  
(1858-1903)**

**Sheriff 1895-1902**









August Johnson, about 1895. (CCSO)

## **August Johnson**

August “Gus” Johnson was born in Sweden in 1858. In 1863, while the United States was involved in the Civil War, five-year old August immigrated to America with his parents, who settled in Hancock Township in Carver County, Minnesota. August was one of at least eight children, with some of them perhaps born in America.

August Johnson received a common school education in Hancock where he learned English, though at home his family undoubtedly spoke mostly Swedish. When he left school he moved to Waconia, which then had a large contingent of Swedish immigrants, particularly along the eastern side of Clearwater Lake, which is today called Lake Waconia. In Waconia August was engaged in the hotel and saloon business, where he undoubtedly learned to communicate well and to handle drunken and rowdy patrons who spoke German, Swedish, and English.

In 1888 August Johnson married Ida Jansen in Waconia. The couple made their home in Waconia and had a son and daughter. August was a staunch Republican supporter, and in 1894 he ran for Carver County Sheriff, seeking to replace the retiring Frederick E. DuToit, who had served for more than twenty years. August Johnson won the election, and in January 1895 he was sworn in and began his term as sheriff.

On January 14, 1895 August and his family moved from Waconia to Chaska where they took up residence in the sheriff quarters provided by Carver County and attached to the west end of the old Carver County Courthouse. In the days before the automobile and good roads it was advantageous for the county, and for the sheriff himself, to have permanent lodging close to the seat of county government, which included the court

house, jail, and other county offices.

During August's first two or three weeks of service as sheriff, a new Carver County Jail was completed and ready for occupancy. It may be that the first resident of the new jail was a certain horse thief named Anderson who Sheriff Johnson was scheduled to pick up about January 20 at the Scott County Jail for transportation to the Carver County Jail. In March 1895 Sheriff Johnson appointed former Carver County Sheriff Frederick Hecklin to be the grand jury bailiff, as well as the jailer in the new jail. Horse thief Anderson seems to have still been in jail when Hecklin took over as jailer and embarrassing escape occurred.

On July 3, 1895 Sheriff Johnson was out of town with Hecklin in charge of the jail and prisoners. When Hecklin let the prisoners out of their cells to eat dinner an arrested horse thief named John Gregg (alias John Anderson) reportedly slipped out and concealed himself in the corridor or the Sheriff's Office. When Hecklin returned at around eight p.m. to lock the prisoners back into their cells he reportedly left the doors open behind him and Gregg escaped unnoticed, leaving a note saying that "he wished to enjoy the 4th like the rest of our liberty loving citizens". Testimony to the details of the escape was provided by another of the prisoners, who was in custody for stealing a cow. The next morning Hecklin returned and discovered the escape, and he either failed to report it and mount a search, or decided to wait to take action until Sheriff Johnson returned later in the day.

When Sheriff Johnson returned and learned what had happened he took the keys to the jail and dismissed Hecklin. Hecklin claimed that an outsider with keys caused the escape, though the Sheriff stated that there were only two sets of keys, one set for himself and one set for Hecklin. Former Sheriff Frederick DuToit wrote an article in his Weekly Valley Herald on July 11, 1895, extolling the security of the jail and assuring his readers that the newly elected Sheriff Johnson was in no way at fault, and that the blame rested with Hecklin. Hecklin, the following week rebutted DuToit's article in the paper and professed his innocence of negligence in the escape.

In February 1900 Carver County Treasurer Gerhard Bongard disappeared along with several thousand dollars of Carver County funds from the county safe. Bongard was removed from office and replaced as treasurer by A. L. Skoog of Carver, an audit was undertaken to determine the extent of funds missing, and a search for the whereabouts of Bongard was undertaken. Bongard was arrested in Canada and resisted extradition back to Carver County. At length extradition was allowed and Sheriff August Johnson made the trip to Olds in the Northwest Territories in Canada and returned Bongard to the Carver County Jail in late October 1900 to stand trial for embezzlement in what came to be known as the "Bongard Defalcation". In November 1900 Gerhard Bongard pled guilty in the theft of the county's funds and was sentenced to three and a half years in Stillwater Prison. Bongard was released from prison early and died in February 1905.

In June 1900 August investigated what was first believed to be the drowning of the wife of Frank A. Hunt in Long (today Lotus) Lake in Chanhassen. Evidence mounted that Hunt may have murdered his wife and he was arrested. His wife's body was disinterred and examined, her death officially ruled an accidental drowning, and Hunt exonerated.

August Johnson was reelected to three more two-year terms as sheriff, and served for a total of eight years, to the end of 1902. He was active in his community on several fronts. He was a member of the Chaska fire Department, the Sons of Herman, the Odd Fellows Lodge, and a Chaska fishing club.

During Sheriff Johnson's term there occurred one of Carver County's most infamous murders. In early June 1901, Andrew Tapper, a stable hand and sometimes bar tender at the Basler House Hotel in Carver Village, viciously attacked fellow employee Rosa Mixa in a jealous rage in the hotel's laundry room, stabbing her to death. Tapper fled the scene and jumped into the Minnesota River, then returned to the murder scene, and then fled on foot to Chaska where, still bloody, he turned himself in at the Sheriff's Office. The murder and the ensuing murder trial made headlines in the Twin Cities newspapers during most of 1901.

Sheriff Johnson, of course, was involved in the investigation, and as jailer, had custody of Tapper before, during, and after his trial. Sheriff Johnson's wife, Ida, in the adjacent Sheriff's residence, probably was cooking meals for the prisoners, including Tapper, as was then the custom for the wives of the Carver County Sheriff. The Sheriff was an acquaintance of Tapper and had even attended Lutheran Confirmation classes with two of Tapper's sisters. The jury deliberations were short, just thirty-five minutes, and Andrew Tapper was found guilty and was sentenced to death by hanging. Sheriff Johnson, wrote the Carver County News, would have a "neck-tie social on his hands in the near future".

The hanging was scheduled for February 18, 1902, shortly after midnight at the start of the day. Although others in Carver County convicted of first-degree murder had been sentenced to death by hanging, no one in the county had actually been hanged. Earlier Carver County death sentences had all been commuted to life prison terms by Minnesota Governors. Never the less, Sheriff Johnson went ahead with preparations as if Tapper's execution would take place. Johnson procured a gallows for the hanging, which had been made in Granite Falls, Minnesota in 1898 for another hanging. The gallows was transported to Chaska and set up near the old courthouse, at a location near the present-day Chaska Post Office loading dock, and Sheriff Johnson supervised preparations for the execution.

This time a stay of execution was not granted by the Governor, and on February 18, 1902, as scheduled, the hanging went forward. Chaska hotel bars and saloons were

ordered closed at 11 p.m. on February 17, and some 150 witnesses began arriving inside the gallows enclosure. These 150 were sworn in as sheriff's deputies more, perhaps, to share in the ultimate mandate of the citizenry, than to perform actual security. At around midnight Sheriff Johnson came for Tapper, telling him that the time had come. Andrew Tapper, his hands bound in leather straps, was escorted to the gallows by Sheriff Johnson and four other county sheriffs.

A black gown was pulled over Tapper's suit, and a dark helmet-shaped cloth mask with a lead-weighted flap was placed over his head. A rope noose was then put around his neck and Reverend Henry Raedeke of Carver, who had been ministering to Tapper during his time in jail, began reading the Lord's Prayer. When the Reverend said the words "and deliver us from..." Sheriff Johnson sprung the trap door, dropping Andrew Tapper through the gallows scaffold, the lead-weighted flap falling to cover his face. Tapper died instantly from a broken neck.

Besides the deputized witnesses, at least 500 other citizens came to witness the event, which would go down in history as the only legal hanging in Carver County, and one of the last in Minnesota. Nine years later, in 1911, the Minnesota Legislature abolished capital punishment in Minnesota. Between 1860 and 1906, when Minnesota's last execution took place, there were 27 executions in the state, not including the Federal execution in Mankato of 38 Indians condemned in the Sioux Uprising of 1862.

The hood worn by Andrew Tapper survives to the present in the collections of the Carver County Historical Society in Waconia, as is part of the rope said to have been used in the hanging.

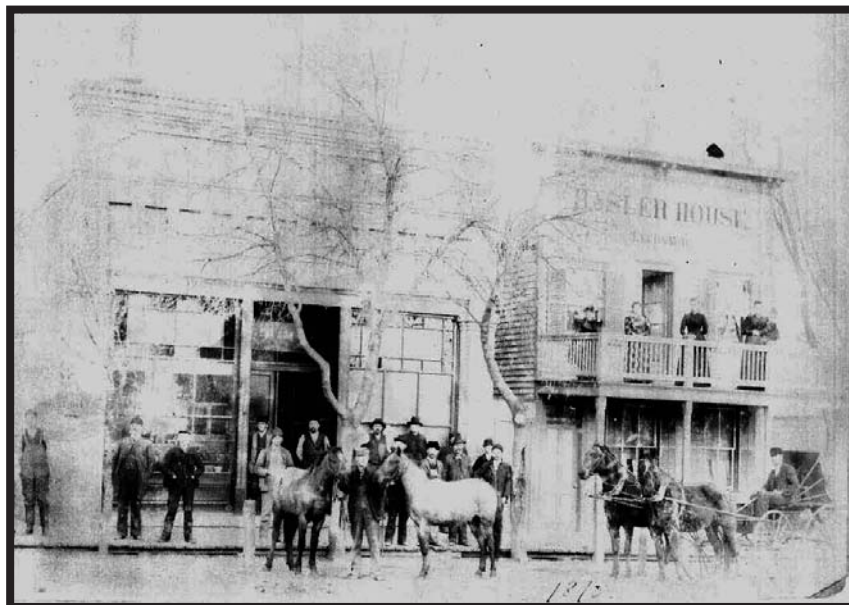
For several years August Johnson had been subjected to an ongoing illness, which he was able to tough his way through by an otherwise strong constitution. Sometime during 1902 he had made the decision not to seek reelection to the sheriff's office. In late December 1902 illness drove him to bed in great suffering. So ill was he that he finished out his final term as sheriff in bed, and was unable to move out of the county's sheriff residence for many weeks. Sheriff Gustave Gatz, who succeeded Johnson, was forced to take temporary lodging elsewhere for several weeks until Johnson could be moved. Many came to visit the ailing Johnson, including his old deputy and friend, Henry Heimkes from Young America.

The sheriff remained bedridden and in great suffering throughout the balance of December, all of January, and into February of the new year. At five o'clock on Sunday morning February 15, 1903 Sheriff August Johnson died, still in the sheriff's residence. He was forty-five years old and would die younger than any Carver County Sheriff during the first one hundred and fifty years.

Sheriff August Johnson's body lay in state in the Chaska Town Hall and many came to his funeral, including thirty-seven people by train. A horse drawn hearse was followed by a funeral procession as it made its way to the cemetery. August Johnson was survived by his wife Ida and their two children, as well as by his parents, who were living at Cambridge, Minnesota, and five brothers and two sisters.



The hood and rope used by Sheriff August Johnson in the 1902 hanging of Andrew Tapper for the murder of Rosa Mixa. (CCHS/JvW)



Basler House Hotel, site of the 1901 murder of Rosa Mixa by Andrew Tapper, pictured here in 1890. It was once located on Broadway at Main Street East in Carver. (CC)



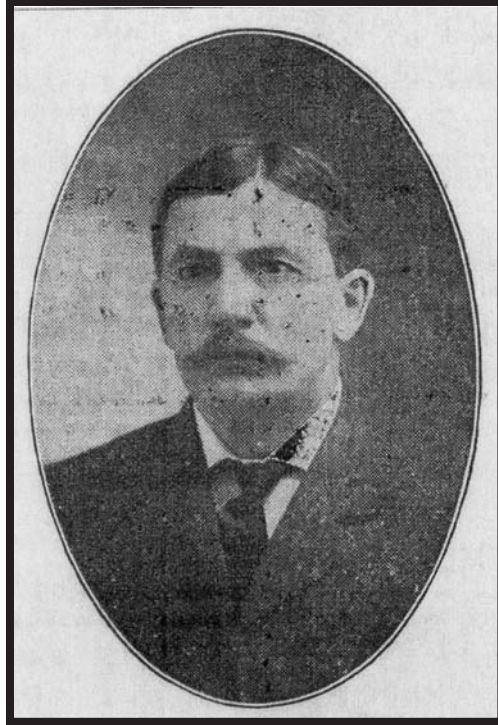
**Gustave "Gus" Gatz  
(1867-1934)**

**Sheriff 1903-1922**









Sheriff Gustave F. Gatz in 1906. (WVH)

### Gustave “Gus” Gatz

Gustave A. Gatz was born on the family farm in Waconia on April 22, 1867. His parents probably came from West Prussia in the German States and immigrated to Minnesota in the Mayer-Waconia area of Carver County where many with the surname Gatz settled in the 1860s.

As a youth Gustave Gatz received a country education in public schools in Waconia, where he probably received some schooling in both English and German. Undoubtedly at home Gustave spoke German, and his family would have certainly been involved in the local German community and probably attended Trinity Lutheran Church in Waconia. Later Gustave spent a year in commercial work at Glencoe High School while working on his father’s farm and performing carpentry work.

Six feet tall and straight as an arrow, young Gustave left the family farm at about nineteen years of age and traveled to the American West in Seattle and Spokane, Washington, where he did carpentry work. After returning to Carver County, Gustave Gatz, age 22, on June 2, 1890 married Anna Mueller of St. Bonifacius in Hennepin County at the St. Peter Lutheran Church of Watertown. The couple made their home in Mayer in Carver County and came to have two daughters and two sons.

During the couple's first years of marriage Gustave was engaged in the hotel and saloon business in Mayer in Carver County. In August 1894 Gustave was appointed to work as an agent at a new Mayer grain elevator. At his appointment the Carver County News newspaper said of him, "all wool and a yard wide and straight as a shingle he is in business matters", and "well liked and popular in the community".

In December 1895 Gustave Gatz purchased a half interest in a Mayer sawmill owned by Charles Gongoll and operated under the firm name of Kusske and Gongoll. The new sawmill was renamed Kusske and Gatz, and plans were afoot to add a flourmill to the facility. In March 1898 the owners hired Herman Terwedow do sawing for them.

Gustave Gatz was recognized as a progressive man and a Democrat in the county, and it was on the Democratic ticket that he ran for Carver County Sheriff in November 1902 when he was 35 years old. Gatz promised "to do all in his power for the good of the county and the welfare of the people". With the support of former Carver County Sheriff, Frederick DuToit, who wrote that Gatz paid much in taxes in Carver County, he ended up running unopposed and won election. In late December his family made preparations for Gustave's swearing in and for their move into the county-provided sheriff's residence located at the west side of the old Carver County Courthouse in Chaska.

Gustave Gatz' swearing in went fine, but complications arose with the move into the sheriff's residence. The outgoing sheriff, August Johnson, had been gravely ill during late December and was bedridden to the point that he was unable to vacate the residence. Johnson's illness and inability to be moved dragged on for weeks, throughout all of January 1903 and into February. By early February Sheriff Gatz and his family had taken up temporary rooms above the Maerz Drug Store so that the sheriff could be at hand to manage his duties. Already in his first month as sheriff, Gatz hitched up his horse and wagon to transport his first prisoner/patient to the Minnesota State Hospital asylum in St. Peter.

In February 1903 Sheriff Gatz appointed Olof H. Holm, the former proprietor of the Norwood Creamery to serve as his deputy in the western part of Carver County. On February 15, 1903 former sheriff August Johnson died, and after a suitable period Sheriff Gatz and his wife took up residence in the county's sheriff's residence.

Sheriff Gatz served as the Sheriff of Carver County for twenty years 1903-1922, being repeatedly reelected. One campaign advertisement described him as "well educated, honest, fearless, and above all faithful to his trust". He has further been described as a "modest man who stayed out of the limelight".

As sheriff, Gustave Gatz was involved in all of the county's varied law enforcement problems. In 1906 Gatz quietly investigated a case of cruelty to an eleven-year old girl in "immoral circumstances". In early August 1913 he investigated the death of a

construction foreman, James Smith, who was working on a railroad project near eastern Chanhassen when he was beaten to death with a hammer in an apparent robbery. Gatz arrested three men in connection with the murder. His term saw an escalation of curfew violations and many rowdy young people. In December 1913 Gatz was involved in the case of five youths who had stolen brass grease caps and other items from Klein Brothers' Brickyard in Chaska and sold them to a junk dealer.

For a time in December 1916 Gustave Gatz was seriously ill while in office, as had been his predecessor. He was taken to Ashbury hospital in Minneapolis and had surgery for intestinal problems and spent some three weeks in the hospital before returning to the sheriff's residence in Chaska.

Gustave Gatz had long been engaged in Masonic work and served as Master of the Masonic Lodge in Chaska, where his two sons also came to be master masons. Anna, Mrs. Gatz, served in the Eastern Star in Chaska, a branch of the masons involving women.

At the end of 1922 Gustave decided not to seek reelection. His trip to the American West had left something in his blood and he had often talked about the West he came to love as a young man, and of retiring there. In 1923 Gustave, Anna, son William and two daughters left for California where Gustave planned on going into business. Only a son, Walter, remained in Minnesota. Gustave Gatz was described in the newspapers as "the ideal peace officer, with scrupulous habits and character" as a man of "strong character" giving "sterling service in office" and of having "a long unblemished record as Carver County Sheriff".

During his retirement years in California Gustave joined a masonic lodge in California and made two trips back to Minnesota to visit his friends and family.

Gustave Gatz died at the family home at 9805 Hannon Drive in Culver City, near Los Angeles, California, on April 22, 1934, on his sixty-seventh birthday. Though he had been in bad health for two years, he had just been planning another trip back to Minnesota when he was struck by what was called an attack of pernicious anemia. Abdominal problems developed, and on April 17 he was forced to have an operation. On Sunday April 22 his condition deteriorated and he suffered a heart attack, dying at 5:20 p.m.

Gustave Gatz was buried in Inglewood Park Cemetery in Los Angeles, California. He was survived at death by his wife, Anna, a son, Walter, in Belle Plaine, Minnesota, and two daughters, Mrs. John L. Skoog and Mrs. Adolf W. Steller, of Culver City, California, as well as five grandchildren. Another son, William, had died in Culver City some ten years earlier.



Gustave F. Gatz, at age twenty-two, taken at his 1889 wedding. (CCHS)



Handcuffs dating to the term of Sheriff Gustave Gatz. (CCHS/JvW)

**Frank Trende  
(1874-1951)**

**Sheriff 1922-1938**









Frank Trende, about 1921 when he first ran for Carver County Sheriff. (CCSO)

## **Frank Trende**

Frank Trende was born on his parent's farm in Dahlgren Township in Carver County on November 14, 1874. He was the son of Ernest Trende and his wife, Johanna Poschelke, who were both born in Pomerania in the German States, and had immigrated to America in May 1873, a year and a half before Frank and his fraternal twin sister Elizabeth were born. Frank and his sister Elizabeth were the youngest of five children. Frank's sister Elizabeth would one day marry Helmuth B. Sell, who became Carver County Treasurer. Two older sisters, Bertha and Minnie, and a brother, Albert, who one day would take over the family's original homesteaded Dahlgren farm, were born in Pomerania and immigrated with their parents.

Frank's father Ernest purchased eighty acres of virgin woodland in Dahlgren Township for \$1400 and moved the family on to it. He cleared the land to create a working farm, and later purchased more land, expanding the farm to two hundred and forty acres. Living on the farm with his family, young Frank undoubtedly helped with farm chores and spoke German at home. Frank received a country public school education and attended the Zoar Moravian Church in Laketown with his family. Frank attended Sunday school there and he was confirmed on April 15, 1888. Frank was an active and involved member of the Laketown Zoar Moravian Church, and left it only years later to transfer to the Zoar Moravian Church in Chaska, where he would take part in many activities.

Frank Trende, a lifelong Republican, became active in public service and politics at an early age. Already in 1885, at age twenty-one, he was a school board member. The following year he was elected to the Dahlgren Township Board, serving for six years. Following that he served for seven years as Carver County Assessor.

On May 26, 1898 twenty-three year old Frank Trende married Bertha Zimmerman, the stepdaughter of August Splettstoesser of Laketown Township. In 1899 Frank and Bertha purchased a 128-acre farm that adjoined his parent's original homestead farm in Dahlgren Township. Frank worked hard on his farm, modernizing it with the latest equipment and techniques. Though a farmer, Frank continued to be active in the community and in public service in a variety of offices.

Frank served as clerk of his school district for twenty-eight years. In 1910 he was elected a Commissioner on the Carver County Board, serving from the Dahlgren-Carver area. Re-elected to the Carver County Board in 1914, he served as its chairman. He also served a four-year stint as Carver County Supervisor. In 1921 Frank Trende ran for the office of Carver County Sheriff in the primary against five other candidates, and then won the general election for sheriff in November. He took office as the sheriff of Carver County in January 1922.

Frank and Bertha left their farm and moved into the county-provided sheriff's residence in Chaska on the west end of the old Carver County Courthouse building, adjacent to the jail. Bertha, like many of the Carver County Sheriffs' wives, cooked meals for the prisoners in the jail.

Frank Trende owned a Colt automatic pistol and was regarded as a fine marksman. It is said that he could shoot a tin can on the ground and keep it moving it along with repeated shooting. Despite his pistol marksmanship, Trende was proud of the fact that he never had to shoot anyone in the course of his duties as sheriff.

When Frank Trende took office as sheriff, America's "Noble Experiment" of 1920-1933, the national prohibition of alcohol had only just started. Prohibition, it was believed, would reduce poverty, reduce crime, reduce alcoholism, solve social problems, improve hygiene and health, and empty prisons and government poorhouses. Prohibition, in fact, became one of America's most dismal legislative failures. Legitimate taxpaying businesses were bankrupted, alcohol production became the providence of organized crime and bootleggers, crime increased, court and prison systems were stretched to breaking points, government and police corruption was widespread at many levels, government spending increased and government tax revenues decreased, and alcohol itself, unregulated and uninspected, became more dangerous than ever to consume. Prohibition may have been one of the underlying causes of the Great Depression of 1929-1941.

Frank Trende served as Sheriff of Carver County for sixteen years, 1922-1938, including almost all of the years of the Great Depression and of Prohibition. It is not surprising that many of his duties as sheriff centered around keeping Carver County dry and its citizens sober. Working independently or with Federal Revenue agents, Sheriff Trende and his deputies conducted raids on illegal moonshine production operations, raids on purported "soft" drink parlors and speakeasies, and monitored the roadways.

Highway #212, then called Highway #12, was a main road for the transport of bootleg liquor. Because the highway went through Carver County, the county became a natural spot to offload some of the contraband liquor. And certainly there were many Carver County residents willing to take some of it off bootleggers' hands, both for personal use, and to fortify beverages in the county's speakeasies, root beer saloons, and "near beer" saloons.

In 1927 Sheriff Trende, his deputy, Theodore Hunziker, and two local police chiefs raided a Carver County farm in Hollywood Township, securing what was then said to be the largest and most complete moonshine liquor facility in this part of the state. Trende's confiscations attracted large crowds in Chaska to view the equipment, the mash, and supplies, which had reportedly filled seven trucks when transported to the county seat. Two other Prohibition-related incidents occurred in 1929 when a rumrunner's truck was involved in an accident, and when two bogus Internal Revenue Agents beat up a Mayer resident.

On another occasion Sheriff Trende participated in raids on illegal alcohol distilleries in the New Germany and Bongard areas. At New Germany items confiscated required six trucks for transport back to Chaska. Included were ninety-three barrels of mash, seventy-five gallons of moonshine, and two truckloads of corn sugar.

Frank Trende was a husky man. In his younger years he sported a handlebar moustache and had his hair parted slightly left of center. As he aged he put on weight, wore suspenders, and trimmed his mustache into a Hitler-like style. In his time he was one of Carver County's most widely known citizens. He has been described as "energetic, enterprising, and a public-spirited citizen" who always worked for the good of his church and community. As Sheriff of Carver County he was known not to play favorites, but to give safe service for the good of all and in an "outstanding and fearless manner".

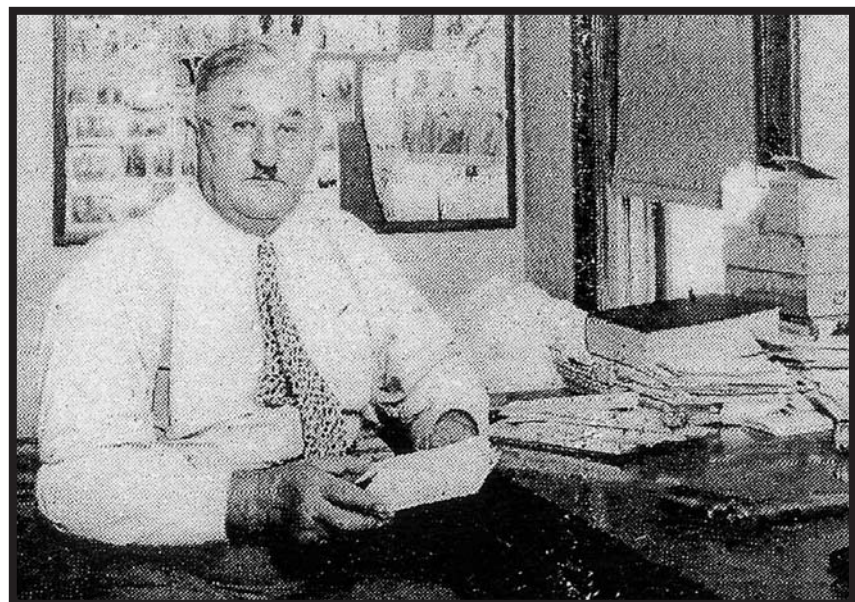
In 1937, after sixteen years of service, Sheriff Trende announced that he would not seek reelection, opting instead for retirement at the end of the year. In private life in 1938 he moved out of the sheriff's residence and into a home he purchased on Oak Street in Chaska. He served as secretary, treasurer, and general manager of the Farmer's Creamery Association of Cologne, a firm he helped create and promote. In 1948 Frank and his wife Bertha celebrated their fiftieth wedding anniversary.

Frank Trende died at Nagel Hospital in Waconia on April 5, 1951 at the age of seventy-six. He had been ill for some time with a heart ailment and confined to bed since March 19. Frank was survived by his wife, Bertha (who lived until 1960), a son Orville, who had taken over his farm, three grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren. His funeral was held in the Moravian Church of Chaska and he was buried near his parents and other relatives in the Zoar Moravian Church Cemetery in Laketown.



Bertha Zimmerman and Frank Trende, both twenty-three years old, at their May 26, 1898 wedding. (CCHS)

Frank Trende, in 1936 at his Carver County Sheriff Office. (CCHS)



**George Thul  
(1898-1974)**

**Sheriff 1938-1946**









George Thul, taken about 1946. (CCSO)

## **George R. Thul**

George Rudolph Thul was born on June 24, 1898 in Marystown in Scott County, not far from Shakopee, Minnesota. He was the youngest child of five sons and two daughters born to Peter Thul and Anna Weiser, who themselves were pioneer children born in the 1850s in Scott and Carver Counties. George's paternal grandfather, also called Peter, was born in 1825 in Beilingen, in the Rhineland district of the German States and immigrated to America in the 1840s. After trying a few locations he finally settled in the Sand Creek area of Scott County in 1854 and took up an early homestead. In the 1860s George's pioneer grandfather, Peter, enlisted and served in the Civil War in Company H of the Fourth Minnesota Infantry Regiment. George's grandmother, Anna, was born in Young America in Carver County where her grandson would one day serve as sheriff.

George's parents made their home in a small house in Marystown. The family attended St. Mary's of the Purification Catholic Church in Marystown. Young George Thul received a country education at the St. Mary's Catholic School. Because his family lived near the church and school, George was assigned the task of arriving early and starting up the wood stove so that the school was warm by the time the pupils and their father-teacher arrived. George attended Confirmation classes at St. Mary's, with instruction being given in German. His German prayer book remains in the family. As George grew older he came to work on a neighboring farm in the Marystown area.



On December 18, 1917 nineteen-year old George Thul married Lillian Madera, the daughter of Ignatz Madera and Mary Zbanovec, immigrants from Bohemia who owned a farm in Jordan in Scott County. By 1921 George and Lillian were living across the Minnesota River in Chaska in Carver County, the county where they would live for most of their lives.

George Thul worked for a time for a sugar plant and also worked making mail deliveries for the Chaska Post Office. Soon he had a horse and wagon delivery business of his own, a dray enterprise he turned into a small trucking business. One of the places to which George delivered was the office of the *Weekly Valley Herald* newspaper in Chaska. George was a clean-shaven, strong, husky man and he hoisted large paper rolls on his shoulders and carried them from his truck into the *Herald*. It may be there that George first met the *Herald's* long-time owner and the former Sheriff of Carver County, Frederick DuToit, and developed an interest in law enforcement.

In 1922 George Thul became a Carver County Sheriff's Deputy under the newly elected sheriff, Frank Trende. Frank Trende gave George his service revolver, a gun that yet remains in Thul family ownership. Carver County deputies at that time were still only part time and on call for various emergencies and situations. George served as deputy under Sheriff Trende from 1922-1938, the whole of Trende's term which encompassed almost the whole of the Prohibition and Depression Eras. As deputy, Thul assisted Sheriff Trende on many of the law enforcement activities surrounding the illegal making, sale, and transportation of bootleg alcohol.

In 1937 Sheriff Trende decided not to run again for office. George Thul decided to run for the office. Against him ran Frank Boyle, Val Linder of Waconia, and Chaska jeweler Oscar H. Iltis. George, probably on the strength of his years of deputy experience, won the election and was sworn in at the start of 1938. A grandson has one of his campaign signs that was found years later in a Carver County tavern.

As was customary for the Sheriff of Carver County, George Thul moved his family into the county-provided sheriff's quarters near the jail at the west end of the old Carver County Courthouse. Lillian Thul and the Thul daughters cooked meals for the jailed prisoners, but the Sheriff wanted them to go no farther than the outer cellblock door, preferring that he or a deputy brought the food in to the inmates. The Sheriff deputized his daughter Delores, and she sometimes helped out as a court bailiff or in the transportation of female prisoners to other jails or juvenile facilities.

During the period 1940-1942 Carver County was experiencing a flurry of thefts, burglaries, and a livestock theft and butchering ring. In response, Sheriff Thul set up Carver County's first regular system of night patrol. In February 1942 George Thul was honored when his photograph was featured on the cover of the Minnesota Police and Peace Officers Association Journal. The journal discussed his career and noted that by 1942 the Thuls had four children.

In December 1945 Sheriff Thul was nearly killed while on duty. One evening he was patrolling the Cologne area at about 1:45 in the morning, watching for chicken thieves known to be active in the county. He came upon two men alongside a road who were changing their license plates. When he turned around to investigate further, the men got into their car, which sped toward Sheriff Thul, who was by then on foot. One of the men leaned out of the window with a gun and fired twice at the Thul, who threw himself on the ground, barely avoiding be hit. One bullet pierced the squad car's left door, barely missing Thul's head, the other bullet went through the door's window and lodged in the rear seat. Thul fired back, but the distance was too great. He gave chase, but lost the car, which he believed to be traveling at eighty or ninety miles per hour. Although he searched for the suspect's car until five in the morning he was unable to locate it. Thul suspected that he had interrupted robbery plans.

In the spring of 1946 Sheriff Thul became involved in one of Carver County's most heinous crimes, or rather series of crimes. Carver County, like most counties, has suffered a few multiple murders, usually involving drugs or a murder-suicide scenario. But a grisly 1946 discovery attests to Carver County's only serial murders, though it has never been ascertained that the murders actually took place in Carver County, only that the bodies were found there.

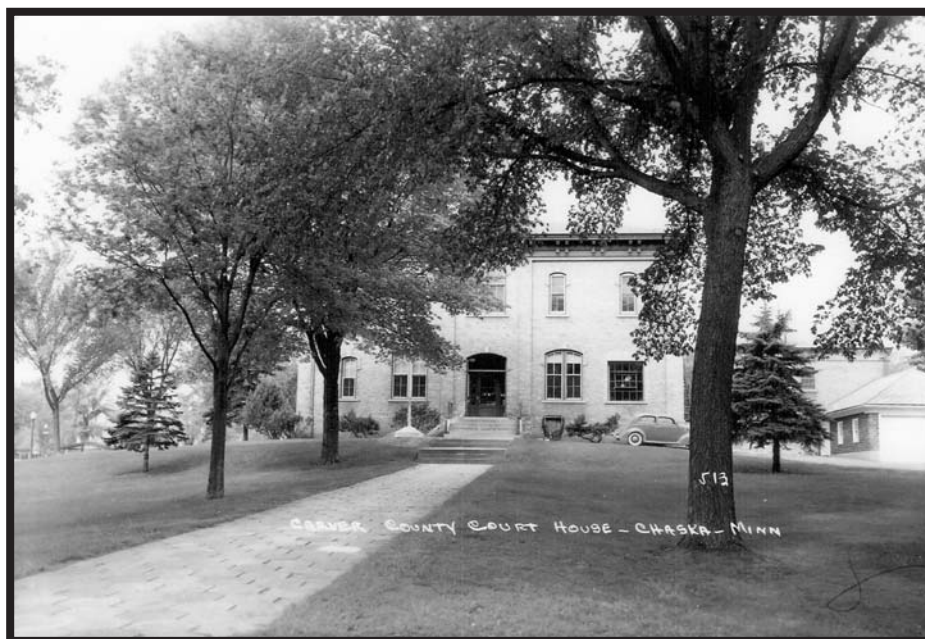
On Monday, April 2, at six-thirty in the evening, two men from Carver, Scott Hartley and George Neunsinger, were boating on the Minnesota River between Carver and Chaska when they observed a suitcase floating along the Carver County side of the river. When they fished out the suitcase and opened it they found the bodies of three tiny strangled infants, all boys. Each infant had a rag stuffed in its mouth and a cloth strip of bed sheet or towel twisted around its neck. Each baby was wrapped in Minneapolis newspapers from different dates: one from March 23, 1943, one from December 29, 1944 and January 2, 1945, and the third from March 10, 1946. The 1946 infant appeared to be the most recently murdered, while the babies from 1943 and 1944/1945 were mummified and appeared to have been dead for some time.

Sheriff Thul, who believed the babies were born of the same woman, requested the assistance of the Minnesota State Crime Bureau and the FBI Crime Laboratory in Washington. Autopsies were performed at the University of Minnesota by the Carver County Coroner, while evidence was sent to Washington, D. C. The coroner determined that all three infants had been live births and that they had been strangled and suffocated a short time after birth. A suitcase test was run on the Minnesota River, which indicated that the suitcase had been in the water for but a very short time before discovery, and had probably been put in on the Carver County side of the river. Despite all efforts, the crime seems never to have been solved. The perpetrator(s), if yet living, may have carried decades of guilt and might now be at around eighty years old.

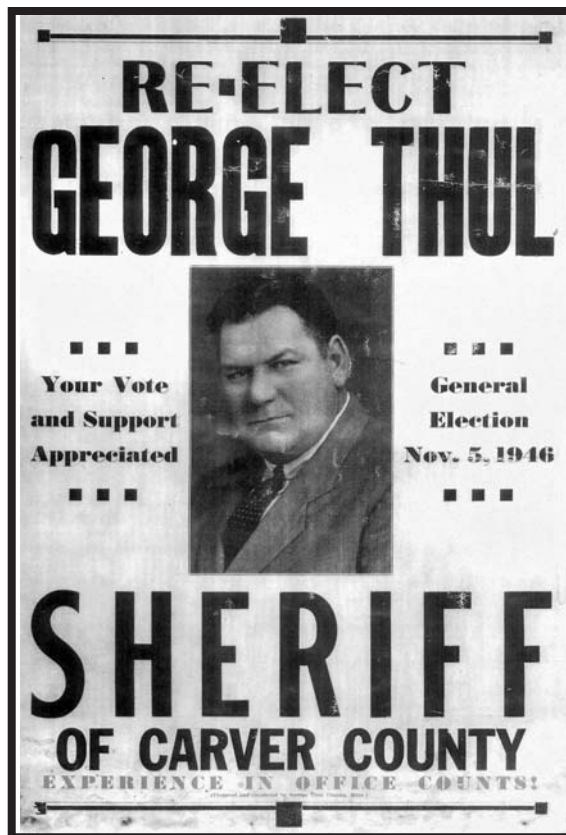
At the end of 1946 George Thul was defeated in election by Lester Melchert, ending his two terms of service as Carver County Sheriff at eight years and his overall service to the Carver County Sheriff's Department at twenty-five years. The Thuls moved out of the sheriff's residence and in March 1947 purchased eighty acres with a small house near Jordan in Scott County. The Thuls took possession about April 1 and tried their hand at farming with a few cows, chickens, and pigs. George Thul then served for a time as the Jordan Police Chief.

In 1952 the Thuls moved to Fifteenth Avenue in Hopkins to be near their daughter, though they continued to be members in Guardian Angels Catholic Church in Chaska. George loved to hunt and fish and had a collection of old guns, later divided among family members, with his old sheriff's badge. He also maintained a scrapbook collection of newspaper clippings from his years with the Carver County Sheriff's Department, though its location is not known. George Thul was an early member of the American Automobile Association and the Minnesota Police and Peace Officers Association.

In later years George Thul suffered from diabetes, which became quite severe in 1974. He died at the University of Minnesota Hospitals on Saturday, December 28, 1974 at the age of seventy-six. His wife Lillian, suffering from cancer, died six weeks later. George and Lillian Thul were buried in Grandview Cemetery in Edina. They were survived by four daughters, four grandchildren, and five great grandchildren.



Carver County Courthouse with squad car garage at right and jail behind, about 1946, near the end of George Thul's final term.



George Thul campaign poster, 1946 sheriff's election. (CHS)



**Lester Melchert  
(1912-1987)**

**Sheriff 1947-1973**







## Lester W. Melchert

Lester Wallace Melchert was born in Chaska, Minnesota on December 13, 1912. He was the son of Frederick Melchert and Alma Steinhart, both of German origins. Frederick Melchert came to America with his parents in 1884 and carried a German accent through life. He owned a farm of some 160 acres on the east side of Chaska, a part of which is today incorporated into the Gedney Pickle Company land. Lester's only sibling, a brother named Frederick after their father, was two years older and once ran the Gedney Pickle operation in Chaska.

Lester grew up on the farm and lived in the family's farmhouse, which survives to the present at 1130 Stoughton in Chaska. Lester was baptized and confirmed at St. John's Lutheran Church in Chaska and grew up in the family's Chaska home, attending parochial school there at St. John's and later at Chaska High School.

Lester Melchert's grandmother paid for him to take some violin lessons, though on occasion he would hide his violin in a culvert, skip the lesson, and play at sports with friends. But still Lester became proficient at the violin, as well as the accordion, and ukulele. He only played for fun, and into middle age would sometimes play at parties, picnics, and family events, though not at all in his later years. In the early 1930s he did play and march in parades with the Chaska American Legion Drum and Bugle Corps.

Young Lester Melchert was on the tall side with a muscular build, though not as big as earlier Sheriffs of Carver County. Athletic, Lester played on the Chaska Hawks high school basketball team from 1929-1932. Les was a starter during the 1930-31 season when the team went 9-8, and a starter again during the 1931-32 season when the team went 11-2 and won the Minnesota Valley Conference title.

Lester worked on his father's farm and did odd jobs after high school, and at age twenty-four, on May 9, 1936, at Carver's Trinity Lutheran Church, he married Fern Regna Johnson of Carver, Minnesota. Fern, half Swedish, half Norwegian, was the daughter of Hanna and Christopher Johnson, a traveling salesman, who lived on Sixth Street West in Carver. The Melcherts rented a house at 523 East Fourth Street in Chaska, directly across the street from the home of the Shalow family. William Julius Shalow worked part time as a deputy sheriff with Carver County, and it may be that through acquaintance with the Schalows that Les Melchert first had thoughts of a career with the sheriff's department. Several years later the Schalow's son, William Richard would serve as deputy sheriff under Melchert and would even come to succeed him in office.

For a time Lester Melchert hauled gravel by truck, and later worked as a security guard at the Minneapolis Moline facility where he operated a motorcycle to patrol the complex. When World War II broke out Lester went into military service with the Merchant Marine and served from about 1942-45. When his service ended he returned

to Chaska where in 1946 he mounted an energetic campaign for the office of the Sheriff of Carver County.

In 1946 many people approached Melchert, encouraging him to run for election in the fall. Melchert decided to run and ran a vigorous campaign against incumbent George Thul. Melchert's son Maurice remembers his father and friends crafting and painting wooden campaign signs in the garage. Melchert also had some campaign cards printed up which he distributed around the county. The cards, about two and three quarter inches by four and three quarter inches featured Melchert's picture on the front and on the reverse a detailed description and resume entitled "**Why You Should Consider Melchert Your Candidate for Sheriff**". The reverse reads:

*He is HONEST, ALERT, EDUCATED, EXPERIENCED and is thoroughly prepared to serve you as sheriff. He has had many years of study and training needed to guarantee that he is the most capable and trustworthy candidate for that office.*

*Training which qualifies him for sheriff started as special police in Chaska, followed by appointment as guard at Moline plant in Hopkins and later and for 2 \_ years as supervisor of guards. Served in the capacity of assistant supervisor of investigation at the Gopher Ordnance Works. Possesses medals for target and pistol firing; was instructor on the pistol range at University of Minnesota; fire arms instructor on range at Fort Snelling; posted in identification through special studies. Member of the National Rifle Association of America. Enlisted in the U. S. Maritime Service during the war and was assigned to U. S. Maritime Security Department as police and investigator, working in conjunction with New York Police Force. He has had contacts with various law enforcement agencies, including State and Federal, in numerous investigations. He has proof to substantiate his background of experience.*

*A life-long resident of Carver County, Lester Melchert was born in Chaska and reared on a farm. Graduate of Chaska High School. Married and family, and has several years business experience.*

In November 1946 Lester Melchert was elected Sheriff of Carver County, defeating incumbent George Thul. The election was not without contention, and it was claimed that Melchert's campaign violated legal spending limits. In January 1947 a district judge ruled that Melchert's campaign did not violate campaign-spending limits and Lester Melchert took office at the beginning of 1947.

Taking office with Lester in January 1947 was Sheriff Deputy Kermit (Pete) Lohmar, who had been serving as Carver County Deputy Clerk of Court from 1945-46. Lohmar was Carver County's first full time sheriff's deputy. Sixteen months later, in April 1948, Lohmar was injured by gunshot and hospitalized in an alcohol-related domestic situation in Chaska. Lohmar would recover and served throughout Sheriff Melchert's term as his Chief Deputy, filling in during Melchert's absence. Lohmar retired from the Carver County Sheriff's Office in 1977.

In early 1947 Lester Melchert and his family moved into the old cream-colored county-provided sheriff's residence that was splashed with ugly green polka dots that made it easy to spot for those seeking business with the sheriff. Located at the west end of the old Carver County Courthouse, adjacent to the jail, the residence was equipped with a telephone and radio which Melchert family members regularly answered and logged for the sheriff. His wife, Fern, as was the custom for Carver County Sheriffs' wives, did all of the laundry and cooking for the prisoners, and Fern, Lester, and son Maurice shared the carrying of meals from the sheriff's residence to the waiting prisoners in the old jail.

In the early years Melchert and Lohmar worked a five and a half day workweek and took turns covering every other weekend, though they were always on call to handle situations that arose. Melchert and Lohmar monitored KSTP AM Radio to hear Minnesota State Patrol messages. Carver County's early radio system was just one-way, though later Melchert purchased a two-way radio system from a defunct taxicab company, making Carver County one of the first in Minnesota to have a two-way radio system, which used the call numbers KAF485 at the base station. Melchert also went to uniforms for himself and Lohmar, making the Carver County Sheriff's Office one of the first in the state to use designated uniforms.

Sheriff Melchert took to carrying a .38 caliber snub-nosed Smith and Wesson revolver and settled into his new responsibilities and in time would come to be the longest serving Carver County Sheriff, and one of the most visible and involved sheriffs that Carver County has seen on the state level.

During Melchert's time it was the sheriff's and chief deputy's responsibility to buy their own squad car and maintain them, with Carver County reimbursing for mileage. Melchert always had black squad cars with lights mounted on the top. The squads were called Car #1 and Car #2 when using the radio.

During his tenure as sheriff, Lester Melchert took four or five delinquent youths into his home, trying to set them straight and to get them to finish school. At least one of the youths kept contact with the family for some fifty years.

In October 1951 Sheriff Melchert was involved in a high-profile murder case in the extreme northeast portion of Carver County along Christmas Lake. Mrs. Mary Pett, lying on her bed, was severely beaten about the head and stabbed twenty times. Reports also indicated that she was also shot once in the eye with a rifle found at the scene. The prime suspect in the case was Mrs. Pett's seventeen year-old adopted son, Robert Pett, who could not be located. Eventually Robert Pett was arrested in Clearwater, Florida where he confessed to the crime. Melchert went to Florida and brought Pett back to Carver County to stand trial. Pett, pleading insanity, was found

guilty and sentenced to life imprisonment. The case garnered local and national media attention, and was even featured in the February 1952 issue of Headquarters Detective, a national true crime magazine.

In 1951 Lester Melchert was elected Secretary of the Minnesota Sheriff's Association. In 1952 he was reelected, and by 1953 he had become President of the Minnesota Sheriff's Association. In March 1953 he was named a member of the Minnesota Safety Council.

In March 1954 Lester Melchert was invited to attend the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Academy in Washington, D. C. He accepted the invitation and graduated from the academy in June 1954, with a certificate still in his family's possession that is signed by the renowned FBI Director, J. Edgar Hoover. He attended the academy again in 1957 and again in 1959 for a retraining convention. In February 1958 he served on the Governor's Juvenile Committee under Minnesota Governor Orville L. Freeman.

During the 1960s and 1970s Lester Melchert's star continued to rise. In February 1962 he was named to the Governor's Advisory Council during the term of Minnesota Governor Elmer L. Andersen. Four months later, in June 1962, Melchert received a Minnesota Safety Council traffic safety award for his work in safety promotion in Carver County. In 1963 he founded the Carver County Peace Officers Association and in the same year was elected President of the Metropolitan Sheriff's Association. In February 1965 he received the Care Award.

During the 1960s Lester Melchert brought several new programs to the forefront in Carver County. In 1961 five people drowned in Carver County, prompting Melchert in 1962 to create the Carver County Water Patrol. In its first year of action not a single accident or drowning occurred. The Carver County Water Patrol is yet an active arm of the Carver County Sheriff's Department.

In 1966 Melchert organized the Carver County Mounted Posse as a volunteer, self-supporting and non-profit arm of the Carver County Sheriff's Department. Still active, the Mounted Posse yet functions as a reserve component of the Carver County Sheriff's Department. Today it has twenty-five active members and several associate and charter members. The posse does search and rescue and provides auxiliary community service for fairs, parades, special events, security, community outreach, and assists the Sheriff as needed. Each posse member pays for his or her horse, transportation, and uniforms.

During Melchert's term the Carver County Peace Officers Association was constituted. The association consisted of the Sheriff, regular Sheriff's deputies, part-time deputies, police officers, as well as a host of men who volunteered freely of their time for civil defense, water patrol, fairs, and other assists to the Sheriff.

A hot issue during Lester Melchert's term for Sheriff was the need for a new courthouse and how it was to be financed. In 1962 the issue was resolved by the passage of an \$850,000 Carver County referendum coupled with \$550,000 bequeathed to the county by Chaska industrialist and banker Charles Klein who had died the previous year. By March 1965 the new courthouse construction was completed, the new facility being located on the former site of the old Klein brickyard. In April 1965 the new courthouse was opened and occupied. Just ten days after its opening, the Great Flood of 1965 sent Minnesota River waters to the new facility, requiring the pumping of water and protection by sandbagging.

Sheriff Melchert and his family were the last to occupy the old sheriff's residence and the last to use the old county jail. The 1857 Carver County Courthouse, the Carver County Jail from 1894, and the 19th Century sheriff's residence were torn down in 1965 when the new facilities were completed. Melchert's son Maurice remembers that the old sheriff's residence had two doors at the front. The left door led to a living room, then a dining room, with a kitchen at the rear. The right doorway led to the sheriff's office and a second office used by Deputy Lohmar. A stairway led to a basement with fieldstone walls. A second story held four bedrooms and a bathroom. Above the second story was an attic with a floor of loose boards. A door at the rear led to a garage for the sheriff's squad car. It was just a short walk to the jail.

The old jail had a front entrance facing the side of the sheriff's residence, as well as an entrance on the side to lead prisoners into the courthouse. On the right were a room and two cells, and on the left was a cellblock with six separate cells, each with double bunks. One could walk around the entire cellblock. Small holes in the cells allowed for the passage of meals. While at times the jail was at capacity with fourteen prisoners, there generally were three to four prisoners in custody at any given time. One of the regular prisoners, a perpetual drunk from Carver, often appeared to check into jail, like Otis Campbell, the town drunk in *The Andy Griffith Show*, checking into Sheriff Andy Taylor's county jail.

In the new jail there were twenty-six cells plus offices for the sheriff's deputies above. The new sheriff's residence was upstairs in the rear, the new residence smaller than the old. The Melcherts lived in the new sheriff's quarters until about 1967-68 when they built a house and moved out. The sheriff's quarters were never again used as a residence for the sheriffs, but instead were given over to administration offices and a jail work-release program.

Another hot issue in the 1960s was that of contract policing. As Carver County populations began to grow and crime began to increase in the county's cities and towns, many communities wanted increased police coverage, but couldn't afford the start up and perpetual costs involved in creating their own police departments. Many communities preferred the option to receive dedicated hours of coverage by the Carver County Sheriff's Department, this in addition to the basic coverage already provided to



the county at large.

In 1966 Lester Melchert began the practice of contract policing in Carver County, negotiating contracted hours and fees for Carver County Deputy and car coverage to contracting communities. Some communities took advantage of the contract policing, while other local government bodies passed due to costs. Chaska, the only community in Carver County with its own police force, declined. This created contentious issues for succeeding sheriffs and the Carver County Board, which would last for the next forty years. The central issue for the citizens of Chaska was the concern that their tax dollars were subsidizing contract policing for other communities. Carver County contract policing by the Sheriff's Department remains an option for communities yet today, with several towns and cities taking advantage of it.

In December 1972 Lester Melchert was named to the National Sheriff's Association, being chosen to assist in the NSA's efforts to reduce burglary and larceny, both nationally and in Carver County. His selection was based on his demonstrated concern for the safety of the citizens of Carver County and evidenced through his support of the citizen-involved program known as Operation Neighborhood Watch.

In 1973 the Minnesota Legislature created Minnesota's first State Parole Board, to be comprised of full-time members. In November 1973 Minnesota Governor Wendell Anderson appointed Lester Melchert to serve on the newly created board. To serve on the parole board Melchert had to resign from his position as sheriff. Melchert made recommendation to the Carver County Board that his deputy, William Schalow, be appointed sheriff to fill out the balance of his term. As recommended, Schalow would become Melchert's successor in January 1974.

But before Melchert could finish his term, tragedy hit the Carver County Sheriffs Office. On November 28, 1973 two Carver County part time Sheriff Deputies were en route to an automobile accident near the east end of Chaska when their squad car was struck by a train. Deputy Ronald Jerome Kalkes, twenty-three years old, was killed at the scene. Deputy Richard Allan Lura, thirty years old, was rushed to the hospital where he too died. It was a sad time for the Carver County Sheriff's Office, for the deputies' families and friends, and for the people of Carver County. They were the first Carver County Sheriff's Deputies to be killed in the line of duty, and for the Carver County Sheriff's Office it was the worst tragedy in one hundred and eighteen years of its history.

When Les Melchert resigned he had served for twenty-seven years as Carver County Sheriff, longer than had any other sheriff in the county's history. In early elections he called on people door-to-door to introduce himself, even leaving calling cards when no one was home. In later elections he usually ran unopposed. Melchert had been sheriff for so long that many of Carver County's citizens knew no other sheriff but him. Melchert's family was the last to live in the old county-provided sheriff's residence at

the rear of the courthouse; Melchert was the last to serve in the old courthouse, and the first to serve in the new facility. He had for many become the office, an institution in himself.

In July 1977 Lester Melchert resigned from the parole board, then in his sixty-fifth year. In his private life he was busy as well. He founded a private security company in Wayzata, Minnesota, called Metropolitan Security Agents, Incorporated, which performed patrol and guard service, as well as conducted investigations. But his interest in the private security company didn't last very long. In 1960 he was President of the Chaska Lions Club. He was a lifetime member of St. John's Lutheran church in Chaska where he was active on the Cemetery Board and Men's Club. He served on the board of the Carver County Historical Society and headed the Carver County Civil Defense and Disaster Relief Program.

After his service as sheriff Melchert moved to Pearson Lake on County Road #10 between Chaska and Waconia in Carver County. Several years earlier the Melcherts had purchased sixty acres of land next to the Pearson Lake public landing. They maintained a cabin there where Melchert engaged in his favorite pastimes of hunting and fishing. Later they sold off some of the land to build a more permanent home. But with advancing years, the Melcherts in 1982 moved back to Chaska where they purchased a townhouse on Von Herten circle.

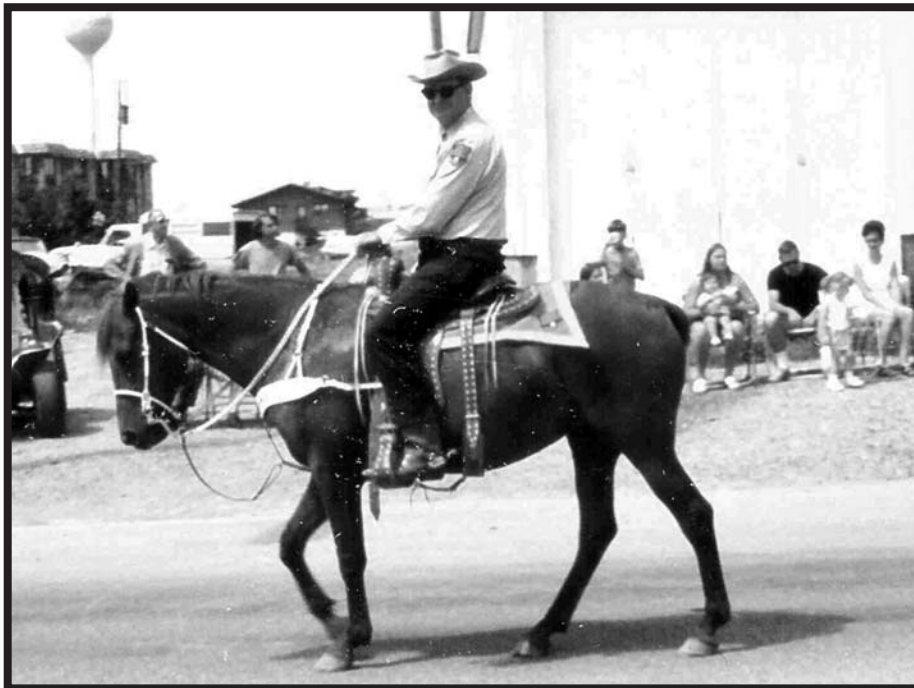
In January 1987 Lester Melchert suffered a brain aneurysm. He died two days later at seventy-four years of age on January 22, 1987 at St. Francis Regional Medical Center in Shakopee. He was survived by his wife, a son and daughter-in-law, a daughter, and five grandchildren. He is buried in St. John's Lutheran Cemetery in Chaska.

Lester Melchert donated several pieces of Carver County Sheriff and jail memorabilia to the Carver County Historical Society, where they remain today. These include the keys to the old Carver County Jail, which Melchert carried from 1947-1965 and a padlock from the 1894 jail. The Melchert family retains Melchert's service revolver, his badge, a uniform shirt, a collection of newspaper clippings from his term, and his saddle used with the Carver County Mounted Posse.





Melchert farmhouse, the childhood home of Lester Melchert, 2005 photo. (JvW)



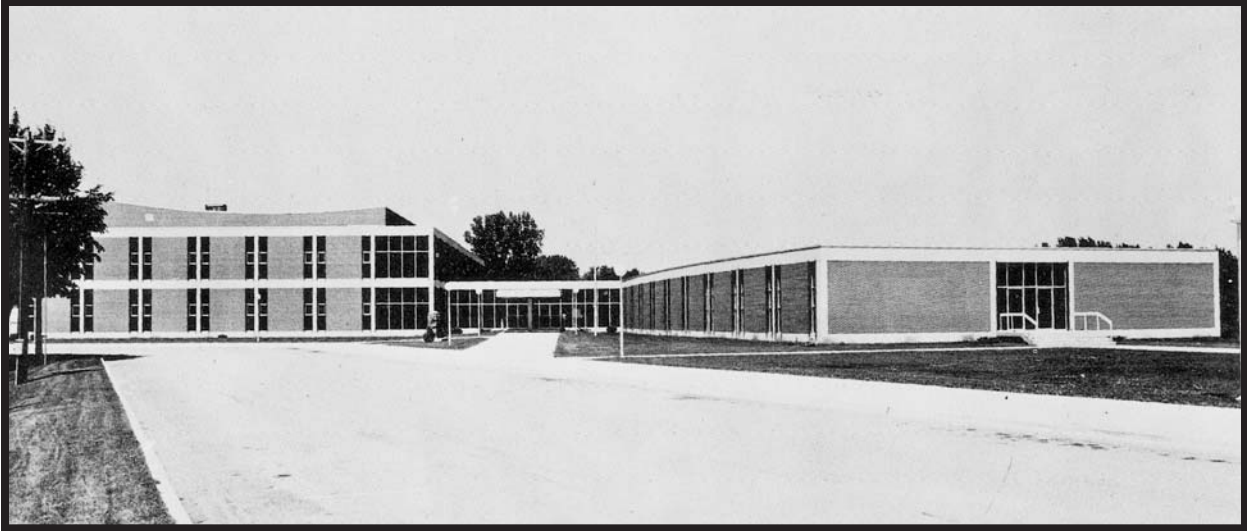
Sheriff Melchert founded the Carver County Mounted Posse in 1966. Here, about 1970, he marches as part of the posse in a parade. (MM)



Front side of Lester W. Melchert's campaign card from 1946. (MM)



Sheriff Lester W. Melchert family about 1948. (MM)



In April, 1965, during Sheriff Lester Melchert's term, the new Carver County Courthouse, Jail, Sheriff's Quarters, and Government Center was opened, replacing the 1857 courthouse and 1894 jail. Shown here about 1965. (MM)



Lester W. Melchert, about 1955. (CCSO)

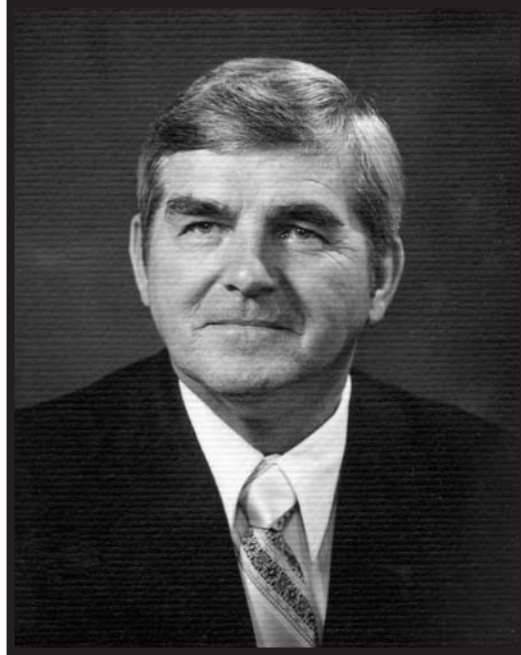
**William Schalow  
(1922-1996)**

**Sheriff 1974-1983**









William R. Schalow, about 1974. (CCSO)

## **William R. Schalow**

William Richard Schalow was born in Chaska, Minnesota on July 16, 1922. He was the son of William Julius Schalow and Frieda Koelpin. William (Bill) Richard Schalow's parents were both Chaska natives. Bill's paternal grandparents, Julius (1860-1913) and Wilhelmina (1857-1941) Schalow, and his maternal grandparents, Gustave (1857-1939) and Hulda (1866-1914) Koelpin were all of German origins and are buried in Mount Pleasant Cemetery in Chaska.

Bill Schalow was named after his father, William Julius, whose ancestral origins were in Mecklenburg-Pomerania in the German States. Bill's father was a hard-working man who was always working odd jobs to support his wife, three daughters, and Bill, the youngest of the four children. The family attended St. John's Lutheran Church in Chaska.

The family's Chaska home was at 522 East Fourth Street, a modest corner house that yet stands near the site of the present day Carver County Courthouse complex. The home, still in family ownership, now houses its fifth generation of the Schalows, though it has been remodeled over the generations and today exhibits a trim Craftsman Bungalow Style with a porch and large dormer at the front.

Even in the 1920s the house was close to schools, playgrounds, and skating rinks in the winter, so there was always something for the Schalow children to do. Bill's father had a dream of owning a farm and he was willing to work long hours and at many occupations to fulfill his dream. Among other jobs the elder Schalow was a volunteer

Chaska fireman, was Chief of Police in Chaska, and served as a part time deputy sheriff under Carver County Sheriff Frank Trende. As a deputy he often worked the dance pavilion along the Minnesota River in Carver at the end of Prohibition, when many people, including teenagers, were just starting to learn how to drink alcohol. Perhaps some of his father's stories kindled the desire for young Bill to later follow in his father's law enforcement footsteps.

In time Bill's father attained his dream and purchased a farm of some ninety acres, located between the present-day Carver County Courthouse and the Minnesota River. Because the farm was just a few blocks from the family home the Schalow's were able to keep living in the same place. Young Bill, the family's only son, helped his father work the farm and build a barn in the lowlands near the river. In his free time young Bill Schalow could be seen from an early age playing baseball at the playground with neighborhood children.

Once, when Bill was barely old enough to swing a baseball bat, he found a baseball mitt at the playground and brought it home. When his father saw the glove he gave him a lesson on honesty and made him return the mitt to where he had found it. Perhaps Bill learned more than honesty, for by playing without a glove Bill developed the good hands that made him a fine baseball player and a superb shortstop. As children, Bill and his playmates put together a baseball team, and then even a league that played on various Chaska playgrounds.

Attending Chaska schools, Bill Schalow developed into a tall, lean athlete and played football, basketball, and baseball for Chaska High School, where he graduated in 1940. In his senior year he led the Chaska Hawks to a state championship in varsity baseball as the team's captain and an all-conference selection. After high school Bill attended the University of Minnesota and played football under College Hall of Fame coach Bernie Bierman and starred on the university's baseball team. Soon Bill, a shortstop, attracted the attention of baseball scouts and was signed to a professional contract with the Brooklyn Dodgers (today the Los Angeles Dodgers). Leaving the university after one year, Bill was put on the minor league roster of the St. Paul Saints, the American Association farm team of the Brooklyn Dodgers. Bill attended Florida spring training for the Dodgers, who used him at first base, though he was rostered as a utility player, one who could play many positions.

In December 1941 the United States was attacked at Pearl Harbor and drawn into World War II. Many of Bill's friends began enlisting in the armed forces, but Bill, as the only son of a farmer, received a deferment. But Bill had the desire to serve his country so he left the St. Paul Saints and enlisted in the U. S. Air Force. For a time Bill was stationed overseas, but when the Air Force realized he was a fine ballplayer, he was transferred to Texas to play on the Air Force team. Although Bill never played professional baseball again he was talented enough that the Brooklyn Dodgers kept him under contract for several years. After the war Bill returned to Chaska and helped



his father raise milk cows on the farm. Soon baseball was back in Bill's blood and he was playing again, this time for the Chaska Cubs. In 1947 he led them to a state baseball championship.

At the dance pavilion in Carver Bill Schalow met Joyce Burling, a young lady of Swedish ancestry who at the time was living in Minneapolis, but who was from East Union in Carver County. They married and the couple made their home in Chaska and together they had three sons and two daughters.

Bill worked odd jobs and helped out on the family farm with his father, uncle and other relatives, where they raised milking cows and alternated soybean and wheat crops, which went to the granary in Cologne. In November 1955, Bill's father died at age sixty-two, but Bill continued to work the farm with family members. Bill tried his hand at raising mink and won some ribbons for his efforts at the Minnesota State Fair. Bill also began working part time as a deputy for the Carver County Sheriff's Department, and he was formally hired as a deputy under Sheriff Lester Melchert on April 13, 1960.

In 1972 Bill Schalow's wife was diagnosed with cancer. Joyce Burling Schalow died on October 22, 1972, only forty-four years old.

As a deputy sheriff Bill Schalow worked in all areas of the department, including a long stint he loved as a detective under Sheriff Melchert. In November 1973 Minnesota Governor Wendell Anderson appointed Lester Melchert to serve on the state's newly created full-time parole board. To serve on the board Melchert had to resign as sheriff. Melchert made recommendation to the Carver County Board that his deputy, William Schalow, be appointed sheriff to serve the balance of his term. As recommended, the Carver County Board in December 1973 unanimously voted to appoint William Richard "Bill" Schalow as Sheriff of Carver County. Bill would succeed Melchert immediately and hold the position through 1974, with the next scheduled sheriff's election being in November 1974.

Sheriff William Schalow retained Melchert's chief deputy, Kermit "Pete" Lohmar, as Chief Deputy in the Carver County Sheriff's Department. Lohmar would continue as Schalow's chief deputy until 1977 when Lohmar retired after thirty years with Carver County. For the balance of his tenure as Sheriff Schalow took long-time Carver County Sheriff Deputy Bill Meyer as his chief deputy.

Bill Schalow settled in as Carver County Sheriff and began tackling two of the issues that had cropped up during the latter years of his predecessor's term as sheriff: the issues of contract policing to local cities and towns, and manpower shortages. Both of these the issues were the ultimate result of a rapidly expanding Carver county population. In August 1974 Bill told the Carver County Board that the entire department consisted of only twenty-four men, including the sheriff, to staff the jail and carry on all other duties of the department. He stated that they were four people short and that some deputies were working twelve-hour shifts.

In November 1974 Bill Schalow won the sheriff's election and began serving his first elected term in January 1975. The year 1975 was a momentous one for Sheriff Schalow. On a private level, after almost three years as a widowed father of five, on June 27, 1975 he married Madelyn Fink of Victoria, and it was to Victoria that the family then moved. And in January 1975 Bill Schalow was elected President of the Metropolitan Sheriffs' Association.

On a public level in 1975 he continued to deal with the hot issue of the sheriff's department doing contract policing for specific periods for contracting cities and towns. The City of Chaska, with its own police department, early in the year was threatening a lawsuit. Its citizens felt that they were paying county taxes at a mill rate that subsidized other local communities' policing contracts, while at the same time they were also paying taxes to support their own city police department. Some citizens wanted actual hourly service policing charges billed to each local district, rather than the lower flat hourly rate then in effect in sheriff's department policing contracts. The now infamous Arthur Andersen and Company did an analysis for the year 1975 and determined that the actual patrolling costs were \$14.57 per hour and that that figure could be used for policing rates in contracting cities and towns. Some communities signed sheriff policing contracts, while others opted out, settling just for the basic statute-guaranteed emergency and call-in service only.

By October 1975 inflation was running rampant and any Arthur Andersen and Company figures were probably going to be skewed. Moreover Bill Schalow and the Carver County Board were involved in departmental contract negotiations and arbitration seemed imminent. Carver County was offering a 9% increase, while department members were asking for a 38% increase.

The big sheriff's office story of 1975 was a May 31 escape from the Carver County jail that had the media buzzing. In the escape an Eden Prairie man at the jail on business was kidnapped, as was a Chaska police officer, who along with his squad car was taken at gunpoint by two escaping prisoners. One of the escaping prisoners was a convicted murderer, the other a federal prisoner who was temporarily in custody in the Carver County jail. In the ensuing escape the Chaska squad car was used to pull over two vehicles, with one vehicle being commandeered by each prisoner. Later one of the prisoners grabbed a man outside of his home and forced him into his house for about

an hour before driving him to downtown Minneapolis. The escape ended for one prisoner when he was captured six hours later. The other prisoner was at large for five days before he was captured in Duluth.

In the ensuing investigation two Carver County deputies were suspended. One was suspended for failure to obey the Sheriff's orders for safeguarding against such an escape attempt, the other for not obeying orders by allowing contraband—the gun used in the escape—in the office. Besides Schalow's enforced suspensions of two days and five days, the Carver County Board imposed three-week suspensions on each deputy.

The Minnesota State Department of Corrections investigated the Carver County Jail and found it to be short-staffed. Recommended changes included more manpower and a written policy of jail procedures. To get more staffing the sheriff's department discussed freeing up deputies by using civilian dispatchers.

Bill Schalow served as sheriff during the nation's 1976 bicentennial, as had Frederick DuToit at the centennial a hundred years earlier. By the 1970s crime was more prevalent, populations were greater, more people were living in the cities and towns, and law enforcement was becoming much more expensive and complicated. In 1978 Sheriff Schalow deputized the department's first female patrol officer, this into the volunteer reserve unit known as the Safety Patrol.

Besides finishing the final year of Les Melchert's term Bill Schalow was elected to two four-year terms in his own right. In the 1978 sheriff's election Schalow's strongest challenger was Les Bridger of Chanhassen, who was a detective sergeant with the Eden Prairie Department of Public Safety, and formerly with the Edina, Minnesota Police Department and the Riverside, California Police Department.

Contract policing continued to be a tough issue during his second term. In 1977 Carver County began two types of policing contracts with contracting local communities: One called for scheduled patrolling service, the other just for on-call general service. While ten of the twelve Carver County municipalities had annual contracts with the Sheriff's Department before 1977, by 1979 nine municipalities had turned down contract patrols, due to escalating costs from rampant inflation. By 1981 only Watertown was contracting for police coverage and contract discussions were debating an hourly rate as opposed to a per capita rate. Despite the decline, Bill predicted that for Carver County the idea for municipality police departments would diminish and that county policing by contract would grow. Chaska, with its own police department, continued to threaten litigation on grounds that Chaska taxpayers were subsidizing other municipalities.

In 1983 Bill Schalow, now nearing his sixty-second year, made the decision not to seek another term, but to instead retire. Perhaps it was not lost on him that his father died

at sixty-two. Bill told his deputies of the decision and advised them to start planning their campaigns if they were going to run in the fall election. Bill retired at the end of the year and was succeeded by Carver County Deputy Jack Hendrickson.

In retirement Bill Schalow continued to work the family farm as a hobby farm along the river with his sons, as well as his own small farm along Highway #5 in Victoria. In 1987 some youths had a drinking party on the farm and had to be chased off. Shortly after the incident, around Halloween 1987, the farm's barn was destroyed by fire. The Schalow family still retains seventy-five acres of the farm's land along the river bottom, though a portion of the land not subject to flooding has been developed.

Bill also found retirement enjoyment in his other favorite pastimes, hunting and fishing. He fished for salmon, hunted turkeys in Missouri, and hunted out of the family's hunting shack at Correl on Marsh Lake in Big Stone County, Minnesota. On October 22, 1996 William Richard Schalow passed away at age seventy-four from a heart attack in his sleep at the family's hunting shack. He died twenty-four years to the day after his first wife Joyce died. Bill Schalow was survived by his wife Madelyn (Fink) Schalow, two daughters, and three sons. Two sons went into public service. Son Richard was Chaska's Public Works Director, and son William served as a county administrator in Douglas County Minnesota. Son John has Bill's service pistol and badge, and the family retains a scrapbook of clippings compiled while Bill Served as Sheriff. Bill is buried in the St. John's Church Cemetery in Chaska.



Five generations of Schalows, including Sheriff William Schalow, have lived in the family home on East Fourth Street in Chaska. (JvW)

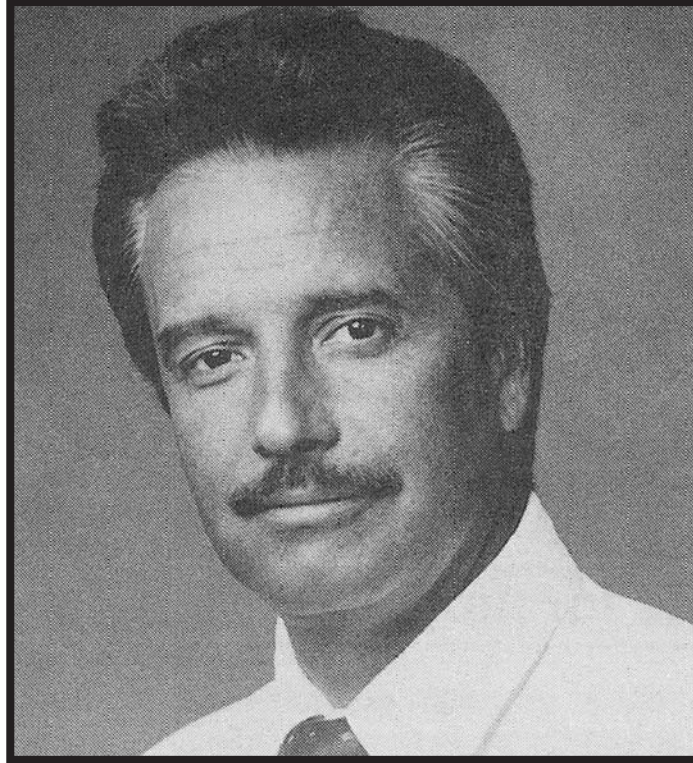
**Jack Hendrickson  
(1942-)**

**Sheriff 1983-1986**









Jack L. Hendrickson in 1986. (JH)

## **Jack L. Hendrickson**

Jack Leon Hendrickson, the first Carver County Sheriff to be born and raised in a large city, was born in Minneapolis, Minnesota on October 15, 1942. He was the son of Leon Grant Hendrickson, of Norwegian ancestry, and Josephine Bluebaugh, who was of French, Norwegian, and German extraction. Jack Hendrickson, an only child, grew up in South Minneapolis near 59th and Clinton. As a youth Jack wanted to be a fireman. Jack attended Windom Elementary School, Ramsey Junior High School, and Washburn High School, all in South Minneapolis.

After high school Jack attended the University of Minnesota Liberal Arts College for two years before transferring to St. Cloud State University where he received his Bachelor of Arts Degree, majoring in economics and business administration, with side work in sociology and computers.

Being born early during World War II, Jack was too young for the Korean War service and on the old side for the peak of Vietnam service, but Jack did test for the military, finishing in the top three percent of those tested.

After college Jack went to work as a controller at the Ford Motor Company in St. Paul. Later he worked for the Dayton Hudson Corporation as a programmer analyst, designing and directing the writing of computer systems. Between the two jobs Jack



garnered eight years of corporate management experience to add to his college education.

Around 1972 Jack responded to a newspaper advertisement recruiting part time Carver County Sheriff Deputies for directing summer event traffic. Jack was accepted for the position and became a part time paid deputy and received eight to ten weeks of in-house training. By 1973-74 Jack was a full time Carver County Deputy Sheriff and had attended the state police basic training academy conducted by the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension.

Jack Hendrickson advanced to Sergeant Patrol Deputy in the Carver County Sheriff's Office, and by the early 1980s he was covering the Chanhassen-Victoria area in the east end of Carver County. He also headed the department's civil service division. In 1982 Sheriff Bill Schalow told his deputies of his plans to retire at the end of the year and encouraged anyone thinking of running for sheriff to start making election plans. Jack thought it over and decided to throw his hat in the ring.

At least three Carver County Deputies and one Hennepin County Deputy vied for the office. The November election in 1982 was a hotly contended event, with Jack Hendrickson being elected Sheriff of Carver County over fellow deputy, Captain Allen Wallin. Jack was sworn in on January 3, 1983, the first Carver County Sheriff with a college degree. Later in January he selected Duane Bickett as his Chief Deputy, a post Bickett would hold throughout Jack's service as sheriff.

When Jack took office the Sheriff's Office had seven civilian dispatchers, twenty-three patrolman, three civil process servers, four jailers, three police administrators, two investigators, one jail cook, eight persons in records, and a one and a half million dollar annual budget. The jail had twenty-six cells and was ninety percent filled, often with prisoners from surrounding areas as well as federal immigration prisoners, with outside agencies paying Carver County fifteen dollars per day per housed prisoner. Prisoners then cost the county \$3.50 per day for food.

Jack ran for sheriff because he believed he could be an agent for change and make a difference in the quality of life in Carver County. Making a difference was what he most liked about the office. Jack set about making many changes in the sheriff's office, some to modernize the office, some to streamline the office, and, as always with change, some of them being controversial.

He changed the way cases were assigned, made changes in the department's investigations, he moved the department from the age of paper to the age of the computer, instituted a new comprehensive departmental policy book, changed work loads, created a departmental policy when dealing with domestic abuse on the street, instituted a shift supervisor system, and instituted a victim feedback system on investigation outcomes. Some of the changes showed dramatic results. Solved crimes

nearly doubled, from twenty-six percent to almost fifty percent.

Other changes instituted under his term included reviving the volunteer Carver County Mounted Posse, starting an Explorer Post to involve teenage high school students in law enforcement, implemented the Neighborhood Crime Watch, introduced a school liaison program, brought the Carver County Jail into compliance with new Minnesota requirements, and started a formalized and advanced deputy training program within the department.

Besides training for deputies, Jack Hendrickson improved his own abilities to run the sheriff's office. He took a course from the Minnesota Sheriffs' Association for new sheriffs, received supervisor and management certificates from the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension, served on two chemical dependency boards, took ongoing police management and training courses, including the U. S. Department of Justice Child Abuse Investigation course.

Jack also improved his skills and professional associations by professional memberships and service. He served on the U. S. Dept. of Justice Juvenile Advisory Board, two chemical dependency boards, was Secretary of the Metropolitan Sheriffs' Association, and belonged to the Minnesota Sheriffs' Association, the Minnesota Peace and Police Officers Association, and the National Sheriff's Association.

Like his predecessors, Sheriff Hendrickson had to deal with the perpetual hot issue of contract policing to local communities by the Carver County Sheriff's Office, as well as Chaska's belief that Chaska, with its own police department not needing extra policing, was subsidizing other communities' policing contracts through its tax levies. In 1984, trying to solve the ongoing contract policing issues, Carver County came up with a flexible policing contract that offered communities service at a base level with additional patrol service available that could be purchased above the base level minimum. In 1985 Laketown Township contracted for one hour of daily county sheriff's patrol, marking the first time in six years that a township purchased a contract sheriff patrol from Carver County Sheriff's Office.

The year 1986 proved to be one of the most eventful in Sheriff Jack Hendrickson's life, and one which drew much attention to the Carver County Sheriff's Office, and not all of it good.

At 5:45 p.m. on Sunday, Feb 2, 1986 in southeastern Chanhassen Mary Bicek, thirty-two years old, and Christina Bicek, age one, the wife and child of Duane Bicek, were killed in the family's 1978 Chevrolet Monte Carlo sedan when a large grisly explosion occurred as Duane Bicek was outside putting on jumper cables to start the car. The trunk of the car contained one hundred pounds of packaged Tovex 700, a dynamite-like explosive that Bicek purportedly was going to use for blowing stumps out of the ground. Another fifty pounds of Tovex 700, which detonated, had been in the car's

rear seat in an opened condition. Mary Bicek was thrown thirty feet from the car and Christina Bicek some two hundred feet into a tree.

Duane Bicek, after a year's investigation, was charged with two counts of first-degree murder in a case that drew great media attention, and even national attention as Sheriff Jack Hendrickson was featured on the cover of the Bureau of Alcohol Tax and Firearms (ATF) magazine. Bicek was defended by one of Minnesota's ablest defense attorneys, Ronald Meshbesh, in one of Carver County's longest trials. Prosecuting the complicated case were Carver County Attorney Mike Fahey, in his first major case since becoming Carver County Attorney at the beginning of the year, together with U. S. Assistant Attorney Thomas Heffelfinger, who later would become the U. S. Attorney for the Minnesota area. After four weeks of testimony by one hundred and twenty-seven witnesses, and five days of jury deliberations, Bicek was exonerated of murder by the jury and convicted of manslaughter and sentenced to six years in prison.

Tough times came for the Carver County Sheriff's Office during the summer and fall of 1986 in two separate incidents involving the county's sheriff deputies, one occurring while on duty, the other while off duty.

On July 28, 1986, near Norwood in western Carver County, a Carver County Deputy and three other squads from Carver and Wright Counties gave chase to a motorcycle carrying a male driver and female passenger. The motorcycle, reportedly stolen, left the road and drove one half mile across an alfalfa field and into a cornfield, eight feet tall with a late summer crop. A Carver County Deputy followed in pursuit into the cornfield and ran over and killed the female passenger, nineteen-year old Vickie Otten, who, unseen, had fallen off in the tall corn.

Ten charges were filed against the motorcycle driver, who later pled guilty to three of them. Alleged deputy violations of the Carver County Sheriff's Office policies led to a grand jury investigation of the deputy's actions, which didn't return an indictment. The Minnesota State Attorney General also issued a decision not to file criminal charges against the deputy, but the father of the killed nineteen-year old woman pursued civil litigation against the county.

Sheriff Jack Hendrickson pursued disciplinary action against the deputy for departmental policy violations. The Sheriff believed the disciplinary action should match the seriousness of the policy violation, which in this case the Sheriff believed called for firing. For Hendrickson the decision to seek the deputy's firing was a difficult, but he didn't see any other option. Moreover, the Sheriff's decision to fire was controversial with some employees of the Scott and Carver Sheriff's Office, the Chaska and Shakopee Police Departments, and the Minnesota State Patrol supporting the deputy's actions.

Later in 1986 another incident brought negative attention to the Carver County

Sheriff's Office. On October 25 a Carver County Deputy was arrested by the Glencoe Police and charged with driving under the influence, careless driving, and fleeing a police officer. The deputy later pled guilty to driving while intoxicated and fleeing a police officer, with reckless driving charges dropped. The deputy was required to serve forty-five days in the McLeod County Jail and complete a chemical dependency rehabilitation program.

While the negative events were in progress Sheriff Jack Hendrickson was campaigning for reelection to a second term. His strongest opponent was Carver County Deputy Captain, Allen Wallin, against whom he ran in 1982. With the negativity and the motorcycle accident controversy in the Sheriff's Office during the proceeding three months so emotionally fresh in the departmental and public minds, winning the election became impossible for Jack Hendrickson. Allen Wallin won the election and would take office on January 5, 1987.

Jack's term as sheriff was not to end quietly. On December 20, 1986 thirty-five year old Cindy Mae Kechely, stopped in to deliver Christmas presents to her parents in Carver. A married mother of two, Cindy Kechely told her parents she was going for a walk. Leaving her car in her parents' driveway and her purse in their home, Cindy headed out, never to return. The Carver County Sheriff's office mounted a massive search for her, assisted by helicopters, horses, dogs, volunteers, and other police agencies, all with negative results.

As Jack's term ended the search was still ongoing and Sheriff Allen Wallin's administration took over responsibility for the search and investigation into the disappearance. Five months later, on May 23, 1987, a farmer walking his dog along the Minnesota River near Chaska found a body. The Hennepin county Medical Examiner determined that it was that of Cindy Kechely, and that she had died from drowning with no foul play in evidence. Speculation was that Kechely fell, jumped, or even was pushed, but there was no evidence for any of the theories. Meanwhile Jack Hendrickson dealt with the aftermath of the November election.

Losing the 1986 election was at the time one of the toughest things Jack Hendrickson had to go through. He felt that the changes and computerization he was implementing were good for the county and felt bad that he was not going to be able to continue the ongoing work. There were parts of the sheriff's job he was not going to miss. The hardest parts were the politics in the Sheriff's Office, politics between county departments and the county board, and some of the difficulties in creating affordable contract policing that gave maximum service to communities for the lowest price. But public service was important to Jack and, though he felt badly in losing the election, he was always able to find something good in every day.

After the lost election the Carver County Civil Service Commission allowed Jack Hendrickson to return him to active status as a deputy in the Carver County Sheriff's

Office. Jack was the first Sheriff of Carver County to be unseated in an election, while still having the unenviable situation of returning to the office as a subordinate of others he once commanded. As a deputy Jack served as a sergeant shift supervisor for the entire county and was the Director of the Control (SWAT) Team as well as a training officer for the county and surrounding police departments.

While Jack was Carver County Sheriff in the mid 1980s he provided sheriff's security and assisted the U. S. Secret Service when Ronald Reagan's Vice President, George Bush, made a visit to the Molnau Farm in Cologne in Carver County. When Vice President Bush won the 1988 election, Jack, now a deputy sheriff on the Bush Campaign Committee, obtained tickets to the January 1989 Presidential Inauguration of President George Bush and Vice President Dan Quayle in Washington, D. C. and was privileged to be within just feet of the president, with better seating than many other dignitaries.

Jack served as a Carver County Deputy for eight more years until he retired at the end of 1994. In retirement Jack worked a stint at the U.S. Department of Justice and for Digital Biometrics Incorporated, which later became Visionics, and now is Identix. In the company, which produces security technology that includes facial recognition, live-scan fingerprinting, and wireless identification, Jack has traveled around the world meeting with high-ranking foreign officials on security matters.

Jack Hendrickson was married first to Regina Margaret Kesteloot, who he met while attending the University of Minnesota. Regina was the daughter of Octoff and Dora Kesteloot from Mineota, Minnesota. Jack and Regina had five daughters together and made Chanhassen their home beginning in the late 1960s before divorcing. Jack later remarried to Beverly Jo Klein, the daughter of Francis and Dolly Klein of Chanhassen, Minnesota. Together Jack and Beverly have a daughter and two sons. For about twenty-seven years Jack and his family have made their home on a Carver area hobby farm.

In his working retirement in 2005 Jack lives on a farm in Carver County along County Road #40 in the East Union/San Francisco Township area where he rotates alfalfa, corn, and soybean crops. Jack's retirement hobbies include small game hunting, basketball, volleyball, and other sports with his children, and working on his farm. Jack serves as a church elder at St. John's Lutheran Church in Chaska.



Jack Hendrickson at his office desk, 1986. (JH)

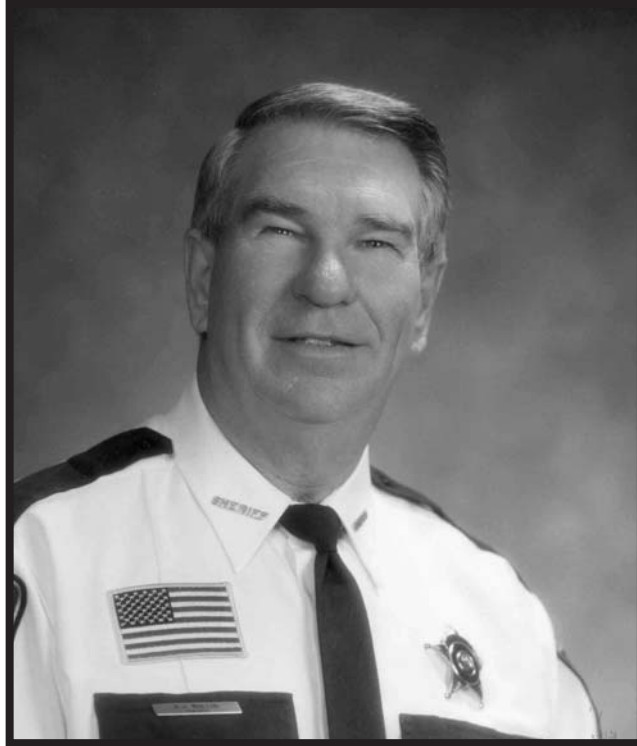
**Allen Wallin  
(1942-)**

**Sheriff 1987-1998**









Allen Wallin, about 1995. (CCSO)

## **Allen J. Wallin**

Allen James Wallin was born on a farm near St. Bonifacius along Minnesota State Highway #7 in Carver County on October 19, 1942. His father, (Ted) Wilgoth Wallin, was an immigrant from Malmo, Skane in southern Sweden who came to be a farmer in Minnesota. His mother was Alice Leudtke. Allen was one of four children, the only son, with three older sisters.

Allen Wallin grew up on the family farm and went to grade school in Victoria and attended Waconia High School where he played football. After high school he worked for a time at Homedale Nursery and attended Saint Cloud State University in Minnesota for two years. After college he worked odd jobs, including for the street department in Edina, Minnesota. Allen always thought he would be a farmer but he developed an interest in police work.

In 1965 Allen enlisted in the Minnesota National Guard Reserve, where he served six years, until 1971. During that time, around 1966, he became a reserve Carver County Sheriff's Deputy under Sheriff Lester Melchert. A year later, in 1967, he became a part time Carver County Sheriff's Deputy. In January 1968 he became a full time sheriff's deputy with the county, being hired to cover Chanhassen, which in December 1966 was the first local community to sign a policing contract for regular patrols by the Carver County Sheriff's Office.

On August 3, 1968 Allen Wallin was married to Sharon Ann Kunz, the daughter of Lawrence and Ethel Kunz of Stillwater, Minnesota. The Wallins rented an apartment in Chanhassen for a year, then made their home in Chaska for the next thirty-four years, living there throughout Wallin's career as a sheriff's deputy and later as the Sheriff of Carver County. The Wallins lived first on Prairie Street for seven years, from 1969-1976, where they had three daughters. Then from 1976-2003 they lived on Crest Drive in Chaska.

In 1971 Allen Wallin was promoted to sergeant and assigned to working the day shift, and four years later, in 1975, he was promoted to lieutenant. In 1976 he was promoted to captain in the Carver County Sheriff's Office and one of his duties under Sheriff William Schalow came to be the administration of sheriff's policing contracts with local communities. Adminstrating the policing contracts gave Wallin invaluable experience. In January 1979 Wallin spelled out to the local communities how non-emergency calls were to be answered in non-contracted townships, and related that non-emergency calls would be only be answered if squads were free of other calls.

In 1982 Sheriff William Schalow announced to his deputies that he was retiring at the years' end, and that if any were thinking of running for the office it was time to start making preparations. Allen Wallin was one of four running for sheriff in the November election, but was defeated by Carver County Sheriff's Deputy Jack Hendrickson. Wallin settled in for the next four years, working under his third sheriff.

As the 1986 election approached things were not going well for the Carver County Sheriff's Office. During the summer a deputy involved in a chase of a motorcycle followed it through an alfalfa field and then into a field tall with corn. Unseen, a female motorcycle passenger had fallen off and was ran over and killed by the deputy's squad car, which also badly injured the motorcycle driver. The deputy was routinely put on administrative leave, pending investigation. While he was not charged by either a Carver County grand jury or the Minnesota Attorney General's Office, Sheriff Jack Hendrickson and the Carver County Board found the deputy in violation of departmental rules forbidding off-road chases and for carrying on an unsafe chase.

Because of the seriousness of the resulting accident the Sheriff and County Board fired the deputy, an action that was unpopular with many law enforcement officers, including personnel in the Carver County Sheriff's Office. The motorcycle driver subsequently pled guilty to three charges, lawsuits against the county were filed by the families of the woman killed as well as the driver. Captain Allen Wallin, desiring to make a difference in the Sheriff's Office, garnered strong support within the Sheriff's Office, pushing him to run for Carver County Sheriff in the November 1986 election.

Allen Wallin won the November 1986 election. In December Sheriff-elect Wallin made the choice for his Chief Deputy, naming James Castleberry who was the Public Safety Director for the City of Chanhassen. In January 1987 Wallin was sworn in as Carver

County Sheriff and James Castleberry as Chief Deputy. Castleberry's swearing in marked the first time that a Carver County Chief Deputy was hired from outside the deputy ranks since 1946, when Carver County's first Chief Deputy was hired by Lester Melchert.

Sheriff Wallin related that he went outside the Carver County Sheriff's Office in hiring Castleberry because he wanted to heal wounds within the department created by opposing views on the firing of the deputy involved in the motorcycle incident, as well as by the election campaign. Wallin selected Castleberry, based on his qualifications, and because he was highly recommended. As Public Safety Director in Chanhassen he knew eastern Carver County and was a liaison with the Sheriff's Office. Moreover Castleberry had a master's degree, taught at Mankato, had law enforcement experience, and was well-organized, which Wallin felt would be an asset to the Sheriff's Office. In retrospect, Castleberry's hiring would be the first and the greatest mistake Wallin made during his tenure as Carver County Sheriff. Moreover, Castleberry would later come to blemish the Carver County Sheriff's Office in a way that would be unsurpassed in the county's first century and a half. Only the Bongard Defalcation of 1900, when Carver County Treasurer Gerhard Bongard absconded with some six thousand dollars from the county safe, would rival the letdown to the county's citizenry.

Sheriff Wallin's term started out at full throttle with three highly visible newsworthy events. On December 20, 1986, while Wallin was still sheriff-elect, thirty-five year old Cindy Mae Kechely, visited her parents in Carver to drop off some Christmas presents. A married mother of two from Shakopee, Minnesota, Cindy Kechely decided to go for a walk. Leaving her car and purse at her parents' place, Cindy headed out, never to be seen again alive. The Carver County Sheriff's office mounted a massive search for her, assisted by helicopters, horses, dogs, volunteers, and other police agencies, all with negative results. With his swearing in Sheriff Allen Wallin's administration took over responsibility for the ongoing search and investigation into the disappearance. Five months later, on May 23, 1987, a farmer walking his dog along the Minnesota River near Chaska found a body. The Hennepin county Medical Examiner determined that it was that of Cindy Kechely, and that she had died from drowning with no foul play in evidence. Speculation was that Kechely fell, jumped, or even was pushed, but there was no evidence for any of the theories.

Wallin's second high-visibility event at the start of his term concerned the arbitration case in the firing of a Carver County sheriff's Deputy who was involved in a 1986 motorcycle chase and which resulted in the death of a passenger and the serious injury of the driver. Wallin himself testified at the arbitration hearing. When finally resolved, the deputy was returned to duty with back pay. But the most visible of the events to unfold in Wallin's first weeks as sheriff was the Gennrich farm foreclosure case.

The Gennrich family owned a farm in Cologne which was in financial difficulty due

nonpayment of debts. On Monday, February 2, 1987 the Carver County Sheriff's Office was called upon by Production Credit Association (PCA) personnel who were making a legal confiscation of grain, cattle, and farm machinery as part of a legal foreclosure action on the farm of Herman and Beverly Gennrich. Sheriff's deputies and PCA people were met with armed resistance by Herman Gennrich and his son, Robert Gennrich. The elder Gennrich carried a high-powered rifle and his son a shotgun. A bulldozer rammed a hauling trailer. Herman Gennrich was arrested for two felonies, criminal damage to property and issuing terroristic threats, as well as for a gross misdemeanor, obstructing a legal process. Son Robert Gennrich was charged with felony criminal damage to property as well as for obstructing a legal process.

The Gennrichs' arraignment became a well-covered media event, complete with a farm rally with people coming from as far away as South Dakota in support of the Gennrichs. Wallin had to implement special courthouse security measures, complete with lockups made of certain areas. The event became a media and courthouse circus, with the Gennrichs leveling charges against the judge, Carver County Attorney Mike Fahey, the Federal Government, the Carver County Sheriff's Office, and claiming that they didn't have to answer to the public court. Fringe groups lended support to the Gennrichs, particularly since a portion of their land was scheduled to be auctioned off on May 11 to help offset several hundred thousand dollars owed to the Federal Land Bank on two mortgages.

Later the Gennrichs were arrested and charged with contempt of court for failure to appear at their hearing. The event dragged on with Herman Gennrich, his wife Beverly, and son Robert all being arrested in a scuffle. The Gennrich story made news throughout the state, and on April 8 Sheriff Wallin spoke of the sheriff's position to the media, explaining that sheriff involvement is the last resort and that the sheriff's office is naturally put into the middle of such unpleasant situations. Ultimately the Gennrichs pled guilty to the original charges and support for their cause waned. In January 1989 ten Carver County Sheriff's Deputies were dispatched to keep the peace when a moving and storage company went to the farm and packed up the Gennrichs, who still had not vacated the property. Beverly Gennrich had to be physically removed from the property and was charged with trespassing and obstructing a legal process.

These manpower-draining events of 1987 contributed to the Carver County Sheriff's office going over budget for the year, but there were other contributing factors such as drug investigations, workman's compensation costs, and high inmate populations, requiring extra jailers. Sheriff Wallin went before the County Board to explain the deficits.

Tragedy struck the Carver County Sheriff's Office on August 2, 1988 when Deputy Donald F. Reimann, just forty years old, died of a heart attack during a police chase. He was the first full-time Carver County Sheriff's Deputy to die on duty. His father had been a Sergeant with the Sheriff's Office.

By 1989 the Carver County Jail had become too crowded and out of date, with the Minnesota Department of Corrections pushing for it to be brought up to current Minnesota specifications. The jail was no longer state-certified to hold juveniles or females. Twenty-five to twenty-seven sentenced prisoners were being held daily in the Carver County Jail, and on any given weekend arrests might swell requirements to thirty-five or more, while at the same time the jail was only state-certified to house twenty-nine prisoners. Often the Carver County Sheriff's Office was forced to send ten or more prisoners to other jails, at a cost of forty dollars per prisoner per day, plus transportation costs and deputy down time. Moreover, Carver County Jail space limitations might force a drunk driving suspect to be housed in the same cell as a murderer or assault prisoner. In 1989 the Carver County Board approved a jail remodeling budget for \$750,000, but there were concerns that by 1995-96 that something more substantial might have to be done.

Another pressing issue for Sheriff Wallin in 1989 was an exploding Carver County population that required more manpower, and that deputies have more specialized duties. And additional reporting requirements were also calling for added staff.

As Wallin's first term came to a close he could look back and see some accomplishments. He had played a role in the establishment of the interagency South Metro Drug Task Force. He put sheriff's deputies in Carver County elementary schools to help children avoid involvement in drug use in what was called the DARE Program (Drug Awareness Resistance Education). In 1989 he had served as the President of the Metropolitan Sheriff's Association. He also was involved in a new communications center for the Carver County Sheriff's Office, and was working to enhance department morale by opening up internal avenues of communication among departmental personnel. He also implemented new schedules for patrol deputies to provide better county wide protection with the same number of personnel. And on a private level in 1990 he served as President of the Carver County Chapter of the American Cancer Society.

In 1991 the Carver County Sheriff's Office was involved in logistics and traffic management when the U. S. Open was held at Hazeltine National Golf Course in Chaska. Won by Payne Stewart and marred by a spectator death from lightning, it was the largest golfing event held to that point in Minnesota.

In 1991 the Carver County Sheriff's Office gave 582 DARE programs to Carver County students at all grade levels in an effort to be preventative, rather than reactive, in the fight against drug abuse. That same year an increased county population resulted in 15,000 calls to the Carver County Sheriff's Office. And on 234 days the Carver County Jail was filled at more than 100% capacity, setting plans in motion in 1992 for a new jail.

In 1993 after much input from the Carver County Sheriff's Office, construction on a new Carver County Jail and Courthouse was begun. By 1995 it was opened and in



operation. The year 1995 saw a drop in crime in almost every category in Carver County, but a drug-related triple homicide in Watertown Township made everything appear worse than it was.

Around 11:45 p.m. on May 23, 1995 James Greenwood returned to his Navaho Avenue residence in Watertown Township and went upstairs to go to bed. Passing the open bedroom door of his roommate he noticed his roommate's girlfriend, Treesa Woods, age 26, lying face down on the floor. Checking her he found that she was dead. Carver County Sheriff's Deputies were called to the scene and confirmed her death. Outside the house they found two more bodies, those of Troy Tholkes, age 28, and James M. Walters, age 30, who was Treesa Woods' boyfriend. All had been shot by a nine millimeter handgun. The Carver County Sheriff's Office and the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension investigated and quickly developed a suspect, crack dealer Adrian Dominic Riley, who was located and arrested within forty-eight hours by a SWAT team using teargas at a Minneapolis residence, where he was found hiding in the attic under a blanket. Riley was subsequently convicted of three counts of first and second-degree murder and was sentenced to three consecutive life terms in prison.

The year 1995 was one of the darkest in the history of the Carver County Sheriff's Office. During that year a deputy jailer was accused of selling drugs to inmates. Sheriff Wallin immediately called in an outside agency, the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Investigation, to investigate. But another situation garnered much more media attention, attention that lasted throughout 1995.

Early in the year one of the Carver County Deputies, a sergeant, came to Sheriff Wallin, telling him of alleged improprieties concerning Chief Deputy James D. Castleberry, including a marriage before a prior marriage divorce was fully finalized. In February 1995 Wallin called Castleberry aside and asked him if it was true, but got no straight answer. He asked if there was anything else he should know about, but again got no straight answer. Wallin was devastated and felt Castleberry had betrayed him, as well as the citizens of Carver County. He asked for Castleberry's resignation and received it.

Wallin then called in the state auditor and the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension to investigate. A Carver County Deputy, Lt. Robert Bergman, was made Wallin's Chief Deputy, and became the key detective in the sheriff's office working with the state auditor and the BCA. Though an audit had been carried out yearly without flagging problems, the 1995 audit marked the first time that problems were flagged in the Carver County Sheriff's Office. The audit painted an unflattering picture of the way the sheriff's office had been managing its books in recent years. Among problem areas flagged were use of credit cards, checking accounts, gifts and donations, vehicle purchases, vehicle sales and trade in practices, law enforcement personnel performing service outside the normal scope of their work, and internal controls regarding Drug Awareness Resistance Education (DARE) funding and programs.



Moreover, the audit and BCA investigation linked Castleberry to many problem areas and indicated that Castleberry might be criminally involved. One area flagged the fact that Drug Task Force checks that were allegedly coming to Castleberry every month, had allegedly been deposited in Carver County coffers only every other month.

While the Carver County Commissioners worked on passing resolutions aimed at correcting some of the problems and to restore public trust, Castleberry in March 1995 was arrested in Colorado. Back in Minnesota Castleberry went on trial in November 1995, the trial being held in Dakota County with a neutral prosecutor. Sheriff Wallin was among those called to testify at Castleberry's trial. The five-day trial ended in December 1995 with James Castleberry being found guilty of mail fraud and embezzlement. He was sentenced to five years' imprisonment and was required to make restitution of more than \$126,000, with monthly payments of no less than \$50, a joke some said, for if he only paid the monthly minimum, full restitution would not be made in his lifetime.

Later, in another unrelated case, Castleberry was indicted in federal court on eight counts involving an allegedly fraudulent scheme involving the acquisition of a franchise of a business known as Mailboxes, Etc. that was allegedly carried out in 1995-96. Under a plea agreement Castleberry pled guilty to two of the eight counts, wire fraud and bank fraud.

Allen Wallin calls the Castleberry incident the low point in his career. While the Castleberry incident tarnished an otherwise excellent term of service as Sheriff of Carver County, Wallin said the Castleberry incident served to make his office a better department, and served to change how many sheriffs' offices conducted business and bookkeeping.

In 1998 Sheriff Wallin decided not to run for another term of office, opting instead for retirement after thirty years with the Carver County Sheriff's Office, his final twelve years as Sheriff of Carver County. He would come to miss serving the local communities, working with the Carver County Commissioners, meeting people, and the city and town council meetings he made a point of attending annually.

Wallin, of his tenure as sheriff, is proudest of three things. One is continuing the year-to-year computerization of the Carver County Sheriff's Office that was started by his predecessor, Jack Hendrickson. Secondly, he is proud of getting the new jail built and into operation. Thirdly, he is proud of getting the Carver County Sheriff's Office started onto the 800 MHz trunk radio system, and of Carver County being the first county in the United States to become fully implemented on it when it was completed during the term of his successor, Byron "Bud" Olson. The 800 MHz trunk system allows for sharing of radio frequencies with other agencies so that deputies will always have an open frequency and not have wait for a single assigned frequency to be quiet before using it. The system also allows for simple reconfigurations to talk directly with

with other agencies in emergencies, or to create special communication frequencies, such as in hostage situations.

In 2002 Wallin and his wife built a retirement house on ten acres of hobby farm land they bought near East Union in Carver County in the early 1990s. In retirement the Wallins love to travel. Since retirement they have been to Germany, Austria, Italy, the Holy Land, and in the fall of 1999 to Sweden, where they met Allen's relatives, some as close as first cousins. Allen loves to fish, winter or summer, and even has flown into Canada to fish. On their hobby farm they have cattle, horses, and chickens. Allen keeps busy by babysitting for grandchildren and doing volunteer work, such as for Meals on Wheels. They also have a small lake cabin on Lake Osakis in Minnesota where they spend time during the summer.

The Wallins attend Crown of Glory Lutheran Church in Chaska, where they have been members since 1970, and where Allen has served on the church council.



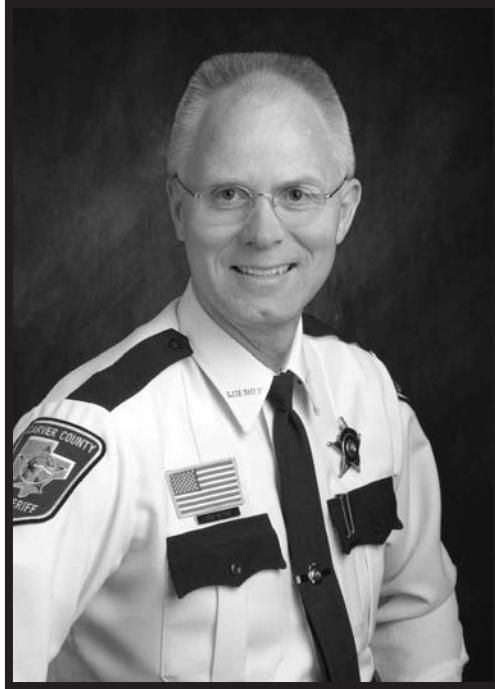
The Carver County Justice Center annex was built during the term of Sheriff Allen Wallin. At left of a center atrium are the offices of the Carver County Attorney, courtrooms, and court staff. Construction began in 1993, and by 1995 the annex and jail were in operation. At right are the offices of the Carver County Sheriff, with the new jail in the rear. Photo, 2005. (JvW)

**Byron "Bud" Olson  
(1955-)**

**Sheriff 1999-**







Byron "Bud" Olson, about 2004. (CCSO)

## **Byron "Bud" Olson**

Byron "Bud" Ardell Olson was born August 6, 1955, a full century after Carver County was created and when Levi Griffin, the first Sheriff of Carver County, served in 1855. Bud was born in Montevideo, Minnesota, the son of Roland Ardelle Olson and Virginia Austin. Bud was the youngest of three children, with two older sisters.

Bud's father was of Swedish/Norwegian ancestry and a meat cutter by trade, though he finished his working career as a United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) meat inspector. Bud's mother was from Troy, Alabama and of French and English origins. It was an aunt who first took to calling young Byron Olson "Bud", and "Buddy", and the nickname of Bud stuck.

The Olson family lived in Appleton, Minnesota for a couple of years, and then moved to Marshall, Minnesota when Bud was five years old. Bud attended elementary school at both East Side and West Side Elementary Schools in Marshall before moving on to Marshall Junior High School and then to Marshall Senior High School, from where he graduated in 1973. By the time he graduated from high school Bud had no firm career choice in mind, but knew he wanted to do something connected to the law.

While Bud was in school he played the coronet, played football, intramural basketball, and intramural baseball. During the summers he also worked as a lifeguard at the Marshall Municipal Swimming Pool and taught swimming lessons there. By the time he was eighteen he was Assistant Manager of the Marshall Municipal Pool. During his

first years in college Bud worked at a gas station car wash.

From 1973-75 Bud attended Southwest State University to begin his college experience. He then attended the School of Criminal Justice at Michigan State University from 1975-77 and received his bachelor's degree. At Michigan State he worked part time as a referee for basketball games, and during the summer of 1976 worked undercover for Pinkerton Security in a window and door manufacturing plant that was losing materials to employee theft.

Bud graduated from Michigan State University in 1977 on a Friday, and the following Monday he began his career in law enforcement when he started work for the Wayne State University Department of Public Safety in Detroit, Michigan. While at Wayne State, Bud attended and graduated from the ten-week Detroit Police Academy, which was then was pretty rough with some poorly qualified police candidates. The academy graduated only thirty-two of sixty-six police cadets. Bud then was a commissioned Detroit police officer working for the university police department.

After eighteen months Bud left Detroit and returned to his home state, taking a position in August 1979 as a police officer on the St. Paul Park Police Department in Washington County. The following year, in 1980, Bud married Linda Fox, the daughter of John and Nancy Fox from Cold Spring, Minnesota, who he had met through a friend at a wedding in Marshall. They would be married for nine years and live in St. Paul Park with an adopted son, before divorcing in 1989.

In his off duty hours at night at St. Paul Park Bud started studying for his master's degree at the Mankato State University Extension campus. He served for seven and a half years on the St. Paul Park Police Department, and even tested for the Chief of Police post there, finishing second in the competition.

In 1986 Bud took a position on the Minnetonka Police Department in Hennepin County. At Minnetonka he served first as a corporal in patrol and then advanced to sergeant. As sergeant Bud also handled investigations, community relations, SWAT (Special Weapons and Tactics), and training for the Minnetonka Police Department. While at Minnetonka Bud finished his graduate school studies and received a Master's Degree in Public Administration, doing his thesis on how a policy manual can protect an agency from civil liability. In 1997 Bud further advanced his education when he attended and graduated from the Northwestern University Police Staff and Command School in Illinois.

At the Minnetonka Police Department Bud met his future wife, a fellow Minnetonka Police Officer. Bud married Mary Elizabeth Mielke, the daughter of Robert and Yvonne Mielke from Delano, Minnesota. Mary had a daughter from a previous marriage, Bud had a son from his first marriage, and together they had two more children, a boy and a girl. After living in Plymouth and Maple Plain the Olsons in 1993 moved to



Chanhassen in Carver County, and have lived there since.

In 1997 a group of acquaintances approached Bud Olson about running for Sheriff of Carver County in the fall 1998 election. With three-term incumbent Allen Wallin retiring, the field of candidates would be wide open. After a meeting with friends at a Chanhassen residence Bud decided to throw his hat into the ring. His opponents in the November election were all command officers in the Carver County Sheriff's Office: Wallin's Chief Deputy Robert Bergman, Jail Administrator Edward Hjermsstad, and Captain Ronald Holt.

Byron "Bud" Olson won the November 1998 election and was sworn in as Sheriff of Carver County in January 1999, leaving his post at the Minnetonka Police Department after thirteen years. Bud was the second Carver County Sheriff to have a bachelor's degree, and the first to have earned a master's degree. For Bud's Chief Deputy he went outside the Carver County Sheriff's Office, as had Sheriff Wallin before him, and selected Dennis Owens, who had retired from the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension. Owens would serve as Chief Deputy throughout Bud's first term as Sheriff until retiring. For Chief Deputy during his second term Bud called on Paul Tschida, who had been the Sheriff of Morrisson County, Minnesota for twenty years.

As Sheriff of Carver County, Bud Olson took over ongoing projects started by his predecessor. One of those projects was getting Carver County fully implemented on the 800 trunked radio system. The system allows for faster communication and for simple reconfigurations to communicate directly with other agencies and departments in emergencies, such as fire departments or the state patrol, or even to create special communication frequencies, such as in hostage situations. Carver County became the first county in the United States to be fully operational on the 800 trunking radio system.

Another ongoing project that Bud had to deal with was the eighteen-year old contract dispute and 1987 court order between Carver County and the City of Chaska over the issue of funding contract policing. Chaska, the only community in Carver county with its own police department, for years complained that its citizens, through property taxes, were unfairly subsidizing contract policing to other communities in the county because the county wasn't charging enough for contract policing. Bud Olson and the Carver County Board grappled with the issue for six years of his term before coming to an agreement to end the dispute in January 2005. By then the sheriff's office was providing contract police services to eleven municipalities: Carver, Chanhassen, Cologne, Hamburg, Laketown Township, Mayer, New Germany, Norwood Young America, Victoria, and Watertown.

The Carver County Sheriff's Office, with the help of a consultant, made a detailed study of how to best provide contracted policing service to local municipalities in the year 2005 and beyond. Among changes was a new method to select specific personnel

for contracting municipalities, which used a combination of inputs from the particular municipality, a bidding deputy, and the Sheriff's Office, with the Sheriff's Office making the final appointment. The new selection system didn't come off without a hitch. A few deputies who preferred the old seniority bidding system carried out a concerted work slowdown in handing out traffic citations, a violation of state labor law, which resulted in disciplinary action and a firing. The new system is intended to better tailor sheriff's service to the particular needs of the contracting municipality. Another change is the use of Community Service Officers (CSOs) in the Sheriff's Patrol Division to increase sheriff's service by working part time in city and county parks. The CSO's are often studying to be deputies and police officers and work at a reduced wage as they gain experience under the sheriff's umbrella, while cost effectively relieving the work load of the Patrol Division.

The first major news crime of Bud Olson's term came three months into his service as sheriff. On the evening of March 24, 1999 a 911 call was placed to the Carver County Sheriff's Office reporting a stabbing at a home in Waconia. Upon arrival a deputy found Richard Happ, Senior, age 62, and his wife Angela Happ, age 59, dead on the kitchen floor from stabbing wounds. Suspected in the homicides was Richard Allen Happ, age 30, who was believed to be somewhere in the house. The 911 telephone call was made by Happ's brother. The deputy asked the brother to go lock his squad car while he conducted a search of the premises. The suspect later fled the house, smashed a window, and fled with the squad car, finally being arrested after a police chase near Lord Fletcher's restaurant on Lake Minnetonka. Richard Happ was charged with two counts of first-degree murder, along with several other counts. Happ, who was bipolar and hadn't been taking his medicine, was acquitted on all charges due to mental incompetence and committed to St. Peter Regional Treatment Center in St. Peter, Minnesota.

Two years into Sheriff Olson's term there was a brazen armed robbery of the Chanhassen American Legion on the night of February 18, 2001 by three masked suspects, with employees and patrons present. It was a crime of the type not seen in Carver County and the robbery and subsequent investigation garnered great media attention. A month later two suspects from Minneapolis, ages 25 and 22, were in custody, each charged with ten counts of aggravated first-degree robbery, and in August a third suspect was arrested and charged in the case. All three suspects later pled guilty and were sentenced to five or more years of prison in a case that garnered praise for both the Carver County Sheriff's Office and the County Attorney's Office under Mike Fahey.

Still in Bud Olson's first term, a drug-related homicide occurred in Norwood Young America on September 3, 2002 with a 27 year old California man charged in the stabbing death of Christopher Tanchin, 42, of Minneapolis, Minnesota.

In 2002 the Carver County Sheriff's Office was involved in initial planning and

provided communication coordination for Minnesota's largest ever golf event. From August 12-18, 2002 the 84th PGA Championship, won by Rich Beem, was held at Hazeltine National Golf Course in Chaska, with hordes of vendors, players, family, caddies, volunteers, and spectators in attendance.

The most vivid American history event to occur in the young 21st Century happened during Bud Olson's term as sheriff on September 11, 2001 when nineteen skyjackers hijacked four commercial U. S. airplanes. Two aircraft were deliberately crashed into the twin towers of the World Trade Center in New York, one was crashed into the U. S. Pentagon in Washington, D. C., and the fourth fell short of either the White House or U. S. Capitol Building when passengers foiled the plans of the skyjackers and brought it down in Pennsylvania. Thousands were killed in the four hijackings.

A little known fact is that the so-called twentieth hijacker, Zacharias Moussaoui, was being held in the Carver County Jail in custody of the U. S. Immigration Service on an immigration violation on the day now known as 9/11. Moussaoui, an alleged al-Qaeda operative, as were the 9/11 hijackers, had been detained on an immigration charge after a Minnesota flight training school became suspicious and called authorities, reporting that flight student Moussaoui was not particularly interested in learning how to land or take off aircraft, but just how to steer them. Moussaoui was the only person accused of conspiracy to commit terrorism in conjunction with the 9/11 attacks.

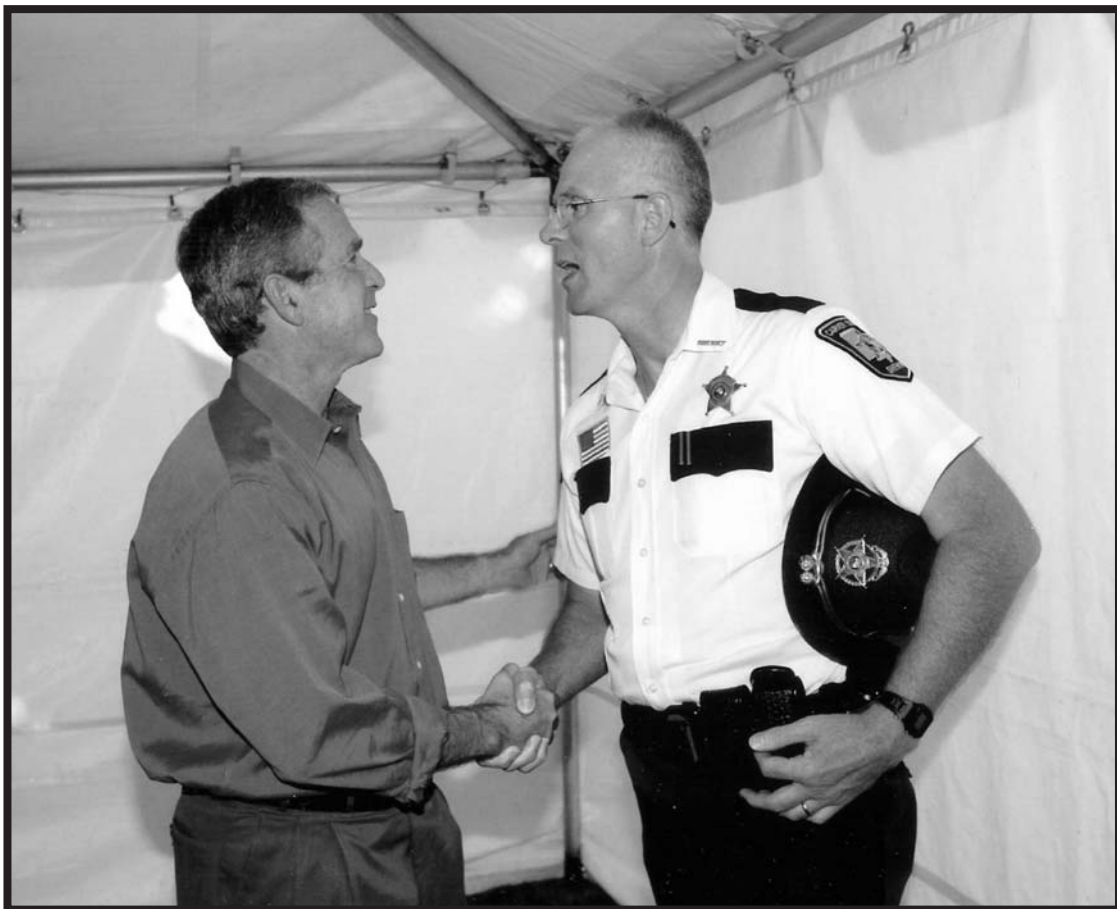
Since taking office in 1999 Sheriff Olson has met a number of dignitaries in the course of his duties. Among those he has met are Minnesota Governors Tim Pawlenty and Jesse Ventura, the New York City Mayor during the 9/11 attacks, Rudy Giuliani, and U. S. President George W. Bush. On October 9, 2004 President George W. Bush appeared in Chanhassen for the largest campaign rally in Carver County history, with the Carver County Sheriff's Office managing traffic control and working with the U. S. Secret Service on presidential security matters. The President spoke outdoors near the Chanhassen City Hall for forty-five minutes in front of some 17,000 ticketed supporters.

Bud Olson has been an active member in many law enforcement associations. He is a former member of the Minnesota Police and Peace Officers Association, the Fraternal Order of Police, and a current member of the Minnesota Sheriff's Association, having been on its Board of Directors for six years and serving as President for two terms. On the cover of Volume 42, Issue Number 1, 2004 of Minnesota Sheriff magazine, Bud Olson and his entire family appeared, this in honor of his election as President of the Minnesota Sheriff's Association. Bud also belongs to the National Sheriff's Association, the Law Enforcement Memorial Association, the Suburban Law Enforcement Association, and was the President of the 81st Class of the National Sheriff's Institute. Less publicly he is a member of the Chanhassen Rotary Club, Mount Cavalry Church in Excelsior, as well as an assistant coach in youth football and basketball.

Bud finds that the greatest challenges of being sheriff in 2005 are balancing the needs of the county's communities with the needs of the employee groups under his command. Other challenges involve maintaining a quality workforce and getting the Carver County Sheriff's Office prepared for the future with respect to projected Carver County population expansion and probable expanded contract policing with municipalities.

Bud enjoys hunting and fishing, biking, running, reading, and spending time with his children and his wife, Mary, who is currently a detective on the Bloomington, Minnesota Police Department. The family is building a vacation home in the Black Hills of South Dakota, which one day may be a retirement home. It is situated in the southern hills on twenty acres that was part of an old ranch.

Bud has no exact plans for how long he'd like to be sheriff. "As long as it's enjoyable, or until they say I'm no good", he says.



Sheriff Bud Olson had the opportunity to meet President George W. Bush when the Carver County Sheriff's Office was called upon to give service and security during Bush's campaign stop and rally in Chanhassen on October 9, 2004. (CCSO)

## **Photo/Graphics Source Code**

BS - Barbara Swanson, Carver, Minnesota

CCGIS - Carver County Graphic Information Systems Department

CCHS - Carver County Historical Society, Waconia, Minnesota

CCSO - Carver County Sheriff's Office, Chaska, Minnesota

CHS - Chaska Historical Society, Chaska, Minnesota

CC - City of Carver Heritage Preservation Commission, Carver, Minnesota

DP - Debbie Poppitz, Chaska, Minnesota

JH - Jack Hendrickson, Carver, Minnesota

JvW - John von Walter, Carver, Minnesota

MHS - Minnesota Historical Society, St. Paul, Minnesota

MM - Maurice Melchert, Rockford, Minnesota

WVH - Weekly Valley Herald Newspaper, Chaska





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