

# History

The office of sheriff has been one of the most important county functions since the selection of the first one in Oregon by the early settlers in 1841. Originally, the Provisional Legislature appointed the sheriff, but since 1846 the office has been elective. The territorial government provided for a sheriff and under the state constitution the sheriff was described as the conservator of the peace in counties.

In 1843 the provisional government designated the sheriff to serve as tax collector. The sheriff collected regular county taxes and other assessments of municipal corporations. He sent the taxes collected to the treasurer, kept records of delinquent tax rolls, instituted foreclosure procedures for real property when taxes were delinquent over 3 years, and sold land acquired for taxes. The tax collection function has been transferred from the sheriff to the tax collector, treasurer, or assessor in Oregon counties.

The sheriff, elected every 4 years, conducts criminal investigations and detects and apprehends law violators. The office is also charged with patrolling and maintaining the security of county roads, private homes and businesses. Other duties include performing search and rescue missions; enforcing marine law; transporting and providing for the security of state and county prisoners while appearing in court; processing and serving civil and criminal documents; operating the county detention facility; housing city, county, state, and federal prisoners; animal control; and enforcing nuisance abatement.

**Sheriff's Years Served**





April 1845 to November 1846 Thomas Owens

December 1846 to 1847 Joseph Caples

1847 to September 1848 Obadiah Cephus Motley

1850 to July 1851 David Egbert Pease

July to September 1851 James Wilson

September 1851 to 1852 James Welch

1852 to 1853 Ira Hicks McKean

1853 to 1855 Thomas Hart

1855 to 1856 John Bartlett

1856 to 1859 Hiram Bliss Parker

1859 to 1868 John Montgomery

1868 to 1870 William Chance

1870 to 1872 Joseph Franklin Barrows

1872 to 1880 William H. Twilight

1880 to 1884 A.M. Twombly

1884 to 1888 William G. Ross

1888 to 1894 H.A. Smith

1894 to 1898 James W. Hare

July 1898 to December 1898 Jack W. Williams

1899 to 1906 Thomas Linville

1906 to 1911 Merritt R. Pomeroy

1911 to 1919 Jack V. Burns

1919 to 1923 Ole Nelson

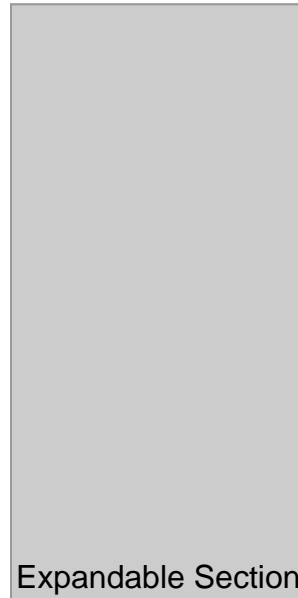
1923 to 1933 Harley J. Slusher

1933 to 1937 Jack V. Burns

1937 to September 1958 Paul Kearney



The Old Clatsop County Jail served as a functioning jail from 1914 to 1976.



Expandable Section

Old Sheriff Patrol Car.

Expandable Section



Sheriff's Office, Clatsop County Oregon Sign.