

Genealogical Guide to Monroe County, New York

Divorce Records

Divorce trial records in New York State are sealed for 100 years. The "judgment" of the divorce is open to the public. The judgment is the record that gives the names of both parties along with the place and date of divorce. Many years ago the divorce judgments in Monroe County used to be hidden behind the clerk's desk. They are now on open shelves. Those divorce judgments from 1860 to the present are located at the [Monroe County Clerk's Office](#), 39 W. Main St., Rochester, NY 14614.

Prior to 1966 acceptable grounds for divorce in New York State were adultery or abandonment. It was much easier to go to another state to be divorced. In the 1800s, often times marriages would end less formally, either by abandonment of one party or mutual consent without ever going to court. In some cases, there may have been an advertisement in the newspaper stating that a party was no longer responsible for the debts of another. That is an indicator that the marriage was in trouble.

<p>NOTICE. MY wife Catharine has left my bed and board without reasonable provocation.—this is to forbid all persons harboring or trusting her on my account, as I will pay no debts of her contracting after this date. ELIAS STREETER. Chili, Nov. 20, 1832.</p>

