

# Supreme Court Justice Robert H. Jackson



Portrait of Justice Jackson  
Photo by Harris & Ewing, via Wikimedia Commons

Robert H. Jackson was born in Spring Creek, Pennsylvania, and raised in Frewsburg, New York.

Despite a modest education, no college degree, and only one year of classes at Albany Law School, Jackson spent approximately 20 years as a successful attorney in Jamestown, New York (within the Western District of New York) before going to Washington, D.C.

In Washington, Robert Jackson served in the Department of Justice as Solicitor General, Attorney General, and ultimately Associate Supreme Court Justice where he participated in a number of historic decisions, including *West Virginia State Board of Education v. Barnette* (1943).

While he was on the Court, Justice Jackson was appointed by President Truman to orchestrate, administer, and implement the trials of the major Nazi war criminals in Germany. At

Nuremberg, he served as the Chief U.S. Prosecutor at the International Military Tribunal. Jackson created a trial format that blended the disparate precedent and procedures of four Allied nations; he coined terms for previously undefined felonies such as crimes against humanity and acts of aggression.

After Nuremberg, Jackson returned to the Supreme Court and continued to play a profound role in decisions that impacted a changing nation, including those involving Civil Rights, racial integration, and the religious rights of individuals.

Through his insightful, articulate, and honorable nature, Jackson's unique life and accomplishments continue to have a remarkable relevance in today's world. The ideals of justice and fairness that he stood for are timeless. Fittingly, the Robert H. Jackson United States Courthouse located at 2 Niagara Square in Buffalo, New York bears his name.



Prosecutor Robert Jackson at Nuremberg  
Photo by Charles W. Alexander, via Wikimedia Commons

*The information in this handout has been adapted from the "Robert H. Jackson Biography," authored by John Q. Barrett, which is posted on the website of the **Robert H. Jackson Center** in Jamestown, New York. For more information on the life and work of Robert H. Jackson, as well as the **Robert H. Jackson Center**, please visit: <https://www.roberthjackson.org>.*

