

Reuben Saffold's judicial career - Montgomery Advertiser, 1905-07-09 (excerpt)

Text PDF - selected reading excerpt

Three-paragraph excerpt in column 3, from "As Judge of a Circuit Court" through "attention to his plantation." The earlier biography and subsequent obituary/family narrative are not transcribed.

AI-assisted transcription visually checked by Codex against the selected passage; no independent human proofread. Paragraph/verse wrapping, capitalization of headings, quotation marks and punctuation regularized for reading. This is a reading transcription, not a diplomatic facsimile. The scan remains authoritative. Printed spellings between and Bagly are retained. Image crop includes small traces of adjacent paragraphs; only the explicitly bounded three paragraphs are transcribed.

[Excerpt begins within the article, at the paragraph "As Judge of a Circuit Court".]

As Judge of a Circuit Court, Judge Saffold was ex-officio a member of the Supreme Court of Alabama. The Supreme Court was organized, originally the second Monday in May, 1820, at Cahaba, then the capital of the State. In the dual capacity of Circuit Judge and Judge of the Higher Court, he served until 1832. Of him, Colonel Pickett says that he "held the office of Circuit Judge under various re-elections, with distinguished ability and honor." In 1832, the Legislature having provided for a separate court of final resort, Judge Saffold was chosen as one of three judges of Circuit Courts to constitute the Supreme Court. Colonel Pickett says: "Upon this new theatre of judicial labor he lost none of the high and deserved reputation which he had acquired in the court below." As an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court, Judge Saffold, served until January, 1835. At that time Chief Justice Lipscomb resigned, and Judge Saffold was appointed to the position of Chief Justice. Col. Pickett says: "He occupied this dignified position until the spring of 1836 when he resigned it and bid a final adieu to the bench, having held the office of judge for more than sixteen years. The reports of the Supreme Court of Alabama are enduring memorials of his strength of mind, patient investigation, deep research and profound learning. Before the separate organization, the people of the whole State had it in their power to scan his acts as a Circuit Judge. They remember him to have been firm and dignified, but not austere. Wherever he presided entire order and decorum prevailed, and he was respected and admired by both clients and attorneys. Such indeed, was his reputation throughout the State and such was the confidence reposed in him, that his retirement from the bench was a source of public regret."

During part of the time between 1836 and 1841, Judge Saffold resided in Mobile. In December 1837 he was appointed by Governor Arthur P. Bagly as one of the "Commissioners to inquire into the expediency of establishing a public warehouse or warehouses in the city of Mobile, etc.," William H. Robertson, and William Jones, Jr., each of Mobile, being the other commissioners. This and other positions, including membership in the Board of Directors of a bank, indicate Judge Saffold's intense earnestness as an individual and the durability of public confidence in his integrity and judgment.

Adverse events, financially, induced Judge Saffold to decide that the welfare of his family would be promoted by a return to "Belvoir." He resumed his residence in Dallas County and in 1841 engaged in the practice of law, having an office at his home. Within a brief while he had a large and profitable clientage, men coming over long distances to obtain his advice or to secure his services. In addition to practicing, Judge Saffold gave much attention to his plantation.

[Excerpt ends. The article continues in the preserved full newspaper page.]