

## **ABRAM JOSEPH WALKER**

### **Eleventh Chief Justice - 1859-1868**

*BORN: November 24, 1819; Madison, Tennessee*  
*DIED: April 25, 1872; Montgomery, Alabama*

After graduating from the University of Tennessee in 1838, Abram Joseph Walker taught school for two years. He then read law and was admitted to the Tennessee Bar.

In 1842, Walker moved to Alabama. He settled in Jacksonville and gave classes in Latin, Greek, and math while building his law practice. In 1845, he represented Calhoun County in the legislature; he was active in the presidential campaign of 1848 as a Democratic elector; and in 1851, Calhoun County elected him to serve in the state Senate. The next year he moved to Talladega to practice law.

Walker's judicial career began in 1853, when the state legislature elected him to preside over the northern division of the Chancery Court. He served as chancellor until 1856, when the legislature elected him associate justice of the Supreme Court. Three years later he succeeded Samuel F. Rice as chief justice and presided over the high court for nine years. During the latter part of his tenure as chief justice, he served as head of the committee that compiled the Code of 1867. He was ousted from his judicial post in 1868 by the Reconstruction Acts and reportedly refused to administer the oath of office to his successor. He remained in Montgomery to practice law.

Abram Joseph Walker married Sarah Ann Nisbet of Jacksonville in 1847, and in 1871 he married her sister Clara.

*Late nineteenth century photograph*