

EDMUND SPANN DARGAN

Seventh Chief Justice - 1849-1852

BORN: April 15, 1805; Wadesboro, North Carolina
DIED: November 22, 1879; Mobile, Alabama

A North Carolinian by birth, Edmund Spann Dargan moved to Alabama in 1829, settling in Autauga County. There he taught school for a short time, served as justice of the peace, and practiced law. In 1833 he moved his law practice to Montgomery, where he remained for nearly eight years.

Dargan's career in public service began in 1841, when the legislature elected him circuit judge for the Mobile district. He moved to Mobile at once, but resigned his judgeship after two years. He was elected state senator from Mobile in 1844 but resigned this position to serve a term in the United States House of Representatives from 1845 to 1847.

The legislature elected Dargan to fill a vacancy on the state Supreme Court in 1847, and in July of 1849, he succeeded Henry Watkins Collier as chief justice. In 1851, when the legislature increased the number of justices on the Supreme Court from three to five, Dargan became the first chief justice to preside over a five-judge court.

Dargan resigned from the court in December, 1852, to return to the practice of law. The sectional controversy during that decade, however, caused him to return to the political arena. He represented Mobile County in the Constitutional Convention of 1861 and was a member of the first Confederate Congress.

Edmund Spann Dargan married Roxana Brock of Montgomery. Their son, Moro, was an officer in the Confederate army.

Late nineteenth century photograph