

REUBEN SAFFOLD

Third Chief Justice - 1835-1836

BORN: September 4, 1788; Wilkes County, Georgia
DIED: February 15, 1847; Dallas County, Alabama

Born and educated in Wilkes County, Georgia, Reuben Saffold left his law practice in Watkinsville to settle in Clarke County, Mississippi Territory, in 1813. Saffold fought in the Creek Indian wars of 1813-14 and served in the territorial legislature in 1818. He was also a member of the Constitutional Convention of 1819 and that same year became one of the circuit judges of the new state. Saffold continued as circuit judge until 1832 when he became one of the three justices chosen to serve on the newly created Supreme Court. He succeeded Abner Lipscomb as chief justice in 1835.

Chief Justice Saffold resigned his position in 1836 and resumed the practice of law, first in Mobile and later in Dallas County. Preferring to remain in private practice, he declined a position as associate justice on the Supreme Court offered to him in 1843 by Governor Benjamin Fitzpatrick.

Saffold was married in 1811 to Mary Phillips, of Morgan County, Georgia. They had 12 children, one of whom, Benjamin, also served on the state Supreme Court.

Portrait by UNKNOWN ARTIST working in Alabama circa 1845
Oil on canvas