

WILLIAM MCKENDREE BYRD

Associate Justice - 1866-1868

BORN: December 1, 1819; Perry County, Mississippi
DIED: September 24, 1874; Selma, Alabama

William McKendree Byrd attended Mississippi College and then LaGrange College in Franklin County. He graduated from the latter school in 1838. After reading law in Holly Springs, Mississippi, he moved to Alabama and was admitted to the bar in 1841. He began practicing law in Linden and was elected in 1851 to represent Marengo County in the state legislature. Two years later he moved to Selma to continue his law practice.

Byrd's judicial career began in 1863, when he was elected chancellor of the middle division of Alabama. Two years later, the legislature elected him associate justice of the Supreme Court, and he assumed the office on January 2, 1866. He was removed from that post in 1868 as a result of Reconstruction legislation passed by Congress. Byrd then returned to Selma to practice law. He died in a train wreck.

William McKendree Byrd married Mariah H. Massie, of Tennessee. They had four children.

Portrait by Nicola Marschall