

ELISHA WOLSEY PECK

Twelfth Chief Justice: 1868-1873

BORN: August 7, 1799; Blenheim, New York

DIED: February 13, 1888; Tuscaloosa, Alabama

No likeness of Chief Justice E.W. Peck, either in the form of portrait, photograph, or drawing, is known to exist. The authors of the *National Cyclopedia of American Biography*, in their biography of E.W. Peck, wrote that "He never had a likeness of himself made." *NCAB*, volume VIII, p.53.

Elisha Woolsey Peck began the study of law in 1819 and was admitted to practice in New York in 1824. That same year, he moved to Elyton, Alabama the county seat of Jefferson County. In 1832, Peck moved to Tuscaloosa, where he established a law practice. He was appointed Chancellor of the Middle Division by Governor Arthur P. Bagby in 1839, and held that position for two years.

Peck was a member of the Whig party remaining so until the dissolution of the party and actively opposed secession. While not disloyal to his adopted state during the Civil War, he openly expressed sentiments in support of Union goals. During Reconstruction, he was elected to represent Tuscaloosa County in the Constitutional Convention of 1867, where he was chosen presiding officer. That assembly nominated him the Republican candidate for chief justice, and he assumed that office in the summer of 1868.

He remained on the bench until 1873, when he resigned and returned to Tuscaloosa where he continued to practice law.

In 1828, Peck married Lucy Lamb Randall of Talladega and they had four children together.

In 2008, Chief Justice Peck was inducted into the Alabama Lawyers Hall of Fame.