

HOWELL THOMAS HEFLIN

Twenty-Fourth Chief Justice: 1971-1977

BORN: June 19, 1921; Poulan, Georgia

DIED: March 29, 2005; Tuscumbia, Alabama



**Portrait by MARGUERITE EDWARD,
America, 1943-
Oil on Canvas, 1974**

After graduating from Birmingham-Southern College in 1942, Howell Thomas Heflin joined the Marine Corps and served in the Pacific during World War II. Upon being discharged, he attended the University of Alabama School of Law and was admitted to the Bar in 1948. For the next twenty-three years, he practiced law in Tuscumbia. Heflin also served on the faculties of the University of Alabama and Florence State University, where he lectured on government and political science. He was President of the Alabama State Bar for the 1965-66 term.

Running for Alabama's highest judicial post in 1970, Heflin was elected as Alabama's twenty-fourth chief justice. Under his leadership, judicial reform through legislation designed to streamline and modernize the court system at all levels became a reality. Even before the end of Heflin's term, Alabama's Unified Judicial System came to be recognized nationally as an example of "what can be done...to improve the quality of justice in state courts."

In 1978, Heflin was elected to the United States Senate; he was re-elected in 1984 and in 1990. Howell Heflin married Elizabeth Ann Carmichael of Tuscumbia in 1952, and had one son.

Heflin was inducted into the Alabama Lawyer's Hall of Fame in 2007 and the Alabama Men's Hall of Fame in 2011.

Junius Moore Riggs Collection

Location: Grand Staircase, 3rd Floor, Heflin-Torbert Judicial Building