

OSCAR WILLIAM ADAMS, JR.

Associate Justice: 1980-1993

BORN: February 07, 1925; Birmingham, Alabama

DIED: February 15, 1997; Birmingham, Alabama



***Portrait by JERRY WHITWORTH,
American
Oil on Canvas, circa 1992***

A native of Birmingham, Alabama, Oscar William Adams, Jr., was the son of a Birmingham newspaper publisher. He earned his bachelor's degree from Talladega College in 1944. Upon receiving a law degree from Howard University in 1947, he was admitted to the Alabama State bar and launched what would become a distinguished legal career that spanned more than three decades. Beginning in the early 1960s, Adams' law firm, known as Adams, Baker, and Clem, became one of the nation's leading firms handling complex civil rights litigation.

In 1980, Adams was appointed to the Supreme Court of Alabama by Governor Fob James. In 1982, and again in 1988, Adams successfully ran for the position and became the first African American in the history of Alabama to be appointed and elected to a statewide constitutional office.

Adams first married Willa and they had three children. Willa died in 1982. He second married Anne-Marie in 1984, and had two stepsons.

Junius Moore Riggs Collection

Location: Law Library Reference Area, Heflin-Torbert Judicial Building