

JUDGE LOGAN E. BLECKLEY. No state in the union surpasses Georgia in the quality of her judicial talent as illustrated in the records of the supreme court of this state; and of all the public men who have adorned the bench by the splendor of their legal gifts and the purity of their exalted lives, no one is more conspicuous than ex-Chief Justice Logan E. Bleckley, whose recent retirement from the bench is more than ordinary loss, if, indeed, it falls short of a calamity. In forming the legal mind of Judge Bleckley it is not improper to assume that generations had been at work. Endowed by nature with peculiar gifts, the early development of these unusual qualities admit of no other explanation. His legal turn of mind began to assert itself in early childhood, and on one occasion, much to the amusement of his grandfather, it declared itself in a manner both precocious and amusing. His grandfather, who had taken him in charge, as he was too young to be sent away from home, being only five years old, decided to apply the rod to his young pupil one day, and accordingly made known to him his intention. The quick ~~www.georgiapioneers.com~~ order to escape the rod, seized upon an idea and he resolved to make a plea of insanity. He told his grandfather that his mind was not sound and for this reason he did not think he ought to be whipped. This circumstance in the life of Judge Bleckley is significant. It shows that his success at the bar and on the bench is not merely the result of discipline, but chiefly the fulfillment of nature's own prediction based upon the rare gifts committed to him at his birth. In his firm grasp of a legal proposition and the clearness of his judgment in arriving at the principles of right and justice involved in any issue brought before him, Judge Bleckley has never had a superior, and perhaps few equals, on the supreme bench. Judge Logan E. Bleckley was born in Rabun county, Ga., among the picturesque mountain views of the extreme northeast corner of the state, on July 3, 1827. At this time the cataracts and waterfalls that plunged through the chasm at Tallulah were in the possession of the Cherokee Indians, together with all that unbroken wilderness. The county of Rabun had been organized but a few years at the time of Judge Bleckley's advent, and the dangers incident to pioneer life in that section of the state were neither trifling nor far apart. The courage of a brave man was needed to battle with the solitudes of that remote

wilderness and the heart of a less heroic man than Judge Bleckley's father might have given up in helpless alarm. Judge Bleckley has written a charming sketch for one of the law magazines in which he gives a lengthy account of himself in a letter addressed to posterity. In this letter he says: "At eleven years of age I commenced writing in the office of my father, who at that time was a farmer without any lands and tenements and with only a few goods and chattels. He lived on a rented homestead, just one mile from Clayton, the county town, and was clerk of three courts—the superior, inferior and ordinary. He was a man of strong intellect, fair information and some business experience. He had been sheriff of the county. A more sterling character was not in the world—certainly not in that large group called the middle class to which he belonged. Loyal to the truth, he scorned sham, pretense and mendacity. He was a native of North Carolina, as was my mother also. His blood was Irish and English combined; familiarity with legal forms and as he grew in usefulness larger shares of work were given him to do. He soon acquired a fondness for law and, strange to say, for an immature boy, found great stores of pleasure, if not romance, in the tedious volumes of the law. He made himself familiar with the constitution of the state and of the United States, and at the age of seventeen borrowed a copy of Blackstone, and a few other legal text-books. There being no resident lawyer in the county, the young applicant for admission to the bar toiled away by himself and explored unaided the deep mysteries of legal science. Now and then he made excursions for the purpose of being catechised, into the adjoining counties, and received encouragement from www.georgiapioneers.com prominent lawyers in this way. Among these the late Judge Underwood took a deep interest in the young student, and the kindness of the great jurist was never forgotten by Judge Bleckley, who paid a beautiful tribute to his memory, a few years ago, from the bench. In April, 1846, at the age of nineteen, the young applicant stood his examination and was formally admitted to the bar. The business of the county, however, failed to support him, and after struggling two years he accepted employment as a bookkeeper for the Western & Atlantic railroad. This brought him to Atlanta in 1848. In this connection it is interesting to observe that, in after years, when the honors of the highest judicial office in the state rested upon him, Judge Bleckley prepared his decisions within a few rods of the spot in which he toiled away, an obscure youth, at the books of the Western & Atlantic railroad. In this position he remained for three years, his salary ranging from \$40 to \$66 a month. He then gave up the position to become the governor's secretary at Milledgeville with a salary of \$1,200. He retired from this position in 1851, having saved enough money to provide himself with a small library, and to keep him above water for several months. He opened a law office in Atlanta and found to his satisfaction, by reason of his late connection with the railroad, that he was largely in demand. His practice grew and his fees with it. In 1853 he was elected solicitor-general of the Coweta circuit, then embracing eight counties. His term of service lasted four years and at the expiration of this time he was married. He continued the practice of law in Atlanta until 1861. Touching upon his military experience during the late war, Judge Bleckley gives this amusing account of himself: "The first battle of Manassas, alias Bull Run, occurred while I was in a camp of instruction, endeavoring to acquire some skill in the noble art of homicide. By nature I am pacific. The military spirit has but a feeble development in my constitution. Nevertheless I tried the fortunes of a private soldier for a short time in behalf of the southern confederacy. I was discharged on account of ill-health, after a few months' service in western Virginia.

without having shed any one's blood or lost any of my own. When I consider how destructive I might have been, had my health supported my prowess, I am disposed to congratulate 'gentlemen on the other side' upon my forced retirement from the ranks at an early period of the contest. After my discharge from the army, I served the Confederacy in much of the legal business in and around Atlanta. In 1864, about the time Gen. Sherman left Atlanta on his march to the sea, I was appointed to the office of supreme court reporter. After reporting two volumes, the Thirty-fourth and Thirty-fifth Georgia, I resigned the office. This was in the spring of 1867. From that time until I was appointed to the supreme bench in 1875, I practiced law continuously in Atlanta." Judge Bleckley remained on the bench until 1880, and then resigned on account of impaired health. He closed his term of service with a brief judicial poem, found in the Sixty-fourth Georgia, entitled "In the Matter of Rest." In this connection Judge Bleckley observes in his letter to posterity: "Perhaps I ought to confess that divers other poems, happily none of them judicial, may be laid to my charge. During most of my life I have had a strong and to me unaccountable tendency to metrical transgression. Over and over again I have suffered the pains and penalties of poetic guilt. Besides a score or two of convictions I have had many trials and narrow escapes. But even now I am not a hardened offender for a bashful hesitation always tempers my gallantry with the muses." Remaining in private life until 1887, Judge Bleckley was recalled to the supreme bench to succeed the late Chief Justice Jackson. His term of office expired in 1892, but, in spite of the hardships of his office, becoming daily more burdensome with the weight of advancing years and www.georgiapioneers.com, he consented to a re-election with the hope that by a constitutional amendment an addition might be made to the judicial group on the supreme bench. This would be a great relief to him and would enable him, without personal sacrifice, to remain in the service of the commonwealth. The amendment, however, failed, and he was forced to send in his resignation to Gov. Northen to take effect on Oct. 29, 1894. The resignation was accepted by Gov. Northen with great reluctance, and he took occasion, in behalf of the state, to commend his able and patriotic services and to express his estimate of the state's loss in his retirement from the bench. From a lengthy editorial which appeared in the Atlanta "Constitution," the following is taken: "The resignation of Chief Justice Bleckley will excite sincere regret throughout the state. Full of years and honors, this eminent and learned judge retires from the bench because he believes that it is an impossibility for three men to deal with the rapidly increasing volume of business in the supreme court. The resignation of this great jurist is a public calamity. He has been so wise, so clear in his great office, so just and so lovable that all classes of our people regard him with veneration and affection. He has been not only a great lawyer and a just judge, but he has proved himself a philosopher whose practical wisdom and benevolence have left their impress upon our legislation, our literature and our morals. Chief Justice Bleckley hardly seems to belong to our day and generation. When we measure his scholarship, his purity and noble simplicity of character, he reminds us of such judges as Matthew Hale—wise and good men who devoted their lives to justice and the interests of mankind. Such a man is not seen more than once in a century. If he had been at all ambitious he would have been one of the most famous of Americans, and notwithstanding his modesty and his quiet mode of life, he is to-day one of the most notable figures that ever adorned the bench, and in every state in the union his decisions are quoted and held in the highest esteem." The reputation of Judge Bleckley as a jurist is co-extensive with this entire country. His opinions are models of precision and perspicuity.

and are characterized by their sound judgment and correct apprehension of the law. Explaining the preparation of his decisions Judge Bleckley says: "I reconsider, revise and scrutinize; then I revise the scrutiny and then I scrutinize the revision." Judge Bleckley has never sought the accumulation of riches, and the lesson of his life may be summed up in his own noble declaration: "Service is better than salary and duty more inspiring than reward." Judge Bleckley has been twice married. He was first married in May, 1857, to Miss Clara Caroline Haralson, who died in March, 1892, leaving five children, three boys and two girls, one of the latter dying in infancy. His second marriage was to Miss Chloe Herring, in August, 1893, who has borne him two sons.

CAPT. W. W. BOYD, formerly of the firm of E. Van Winkle & Company of Atlanta, is a native of Spartanburg, S. C., and is of Scotch-Irish ancestry. When a child he removed with his father to Marietta, Ga., and attended the primary schools of that prospering little north Georgia city. When he reached a suitable age and when he was sufficiently advanced he was enrolled among the members of the Georgia Military institute, then in its flourishing condition, with an attendance of nearly two hundred cadets. He obtained a splendid education, but his studies were interrupted by the outbreak of the civil war. When only eighteen years of age he enlisted in the Sixty-fourth Georgia regiment, commanded by Col. John W. Evans. His courageous conduct is known to all his comrades and friends. He was captured immediately before the surrender, but suffered little inconvenience, as he remained in captivity only two days. Returning home, with a determination as strong as his heart was brave, he began to reconstruct his fallen fortunes. During 1880 he bought a half interest in the E. Van Winkle Manufacturing company, which, without the aid of municipal or national backing, has acquired a magnitude and prominence that is not felt by a similar industry in the state. It is a prodigious industry, employing about 150 hands, and supplying the states west of the Mississippi with their cotton-presses, cotton-gins and like machinery used in the preparation of market cotton. So rapid has been the growth of the business that a branch house was lately established in Dallas, Tex., to facilitate and supply the increasing demand. Mr. Boyd is an officer in the First Presbyterian church, and lends his aid and wealth to the furthering of religious labors, and especially the mission work. His heart goes out in sympathy to those in poverty and distress, and his open charity is a specific characteristic. During his life from earliest youth he has prominently interested himself in stock raising and now owns one of the largest Jersey farms in the south, on which may be found the finest stock, both native and imported. His wife was a beautiful, talented lady from the old north state, and the seven children who survive her are justly the pride of their father. Mr. Boyd's father was a gallant colonel of the Nineteenth Georgia regiment, attached to Phillips' legion, a stalwart command that left traces of their heroism on the hills of northern Virginia. Mr. Boyd has lately served on the board of aldermen of the city government, and his popularity may be inferred when it is known that he polled the heaviest vote on the citizen's ticket, composed of many popular candidates. He is public-spirited and generous and bears for the community a genial affection.

H. A. BOYNTON, one of Atlanta's best known wholesale grocers, is a native of Lumpkin, Stewart Co., Ga. He was born Oct. 12, 1842, and resided in that city until thirty-three years of age, when he came to Atlanta, where he has since lived. He received his early education in the schools of Stewart county, and attended these until 1858, and then accepted a position as clerk in a retail



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I. E. BLECKLEY
Memoirs of Georgia, Fulton County Sketches