

Judge Augustus Reese.

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No stronger man ever lived in the State and no truer man ever left it than Judge Augustus Reese, who died at his residence in Madison.

He was a favorite with the great body of the people because he was one of them; he was a leader because they trusted him; as a legislator, serving in both houses of the Georgia General Assembly, as Solicitor General and Judge of the Ocmulgee circuit he developed not only the highest integrity and ability, but showed a manhood and an independence which raised him into wide favor throughout the State. Judge Reese was a robust example of a great, granitic Georgian. He was unyielding in all that looked to sacrifice of principle, and unflinching before everything which looked to encroachment of power. He was opposed to secession, sharing Mr. Stephens' opposition to the formation of a new Confederacy, but he was the staunchest defender of State's rights and civil liberty. He refuted from the bench with memorable power the orders of Gen. Pope, which he believed would corrupt the jury box, and this correspondence, arraying the powers of an indignant and outraged judiciary against the demands of military satrapy, serves to stand in history with Gen. Hancock's letter to the Department of the Gulf, and Linton Stephens' defence of civil liberty before Commissioner Swayze.

He was as high-minded as he was fearless. His life as a lawyer was without taint and his political ambition was free from demagogism and trickery. He belonged to no rings, and as a biographer said of him, "disdained to be a camp follower of the bread and butter brigade of wire-pullers." Judge Reese's distinguishing traits were his enmity to corruption, his hatred of intrigue, his hostility to all cant and hypocrisy and his rigid, rugged adherence to what he held as true. He was simple in his taste, severe in his principles. He was devoted to Georgia, for if there ever was a Democrat and a patriot he was one, but in the Constitutional Convention of 1877 he attacked with vigor some of the accepted policies of the party. He opposed the present convict system, and was not a believer in the school tax, except to educate the children in the elementary branches of an English education. He thought there was a fanaticism growing up in Georgia on this subject, and contended that only after the diffusion of wealth among the people would higher education follow, and only under those conditions should it have place.

Judge Reese was the father of Hon. Seaborn Reese, member of Congress from the Eighth district of Georgia. His death will produce universal regret, as his life was crowned with universal favor.