

WELLBORN MITCHELL BRAY, a practitioner of zest, earnestness and superior worth at the Atlanta bar, was born in Henry county, Ga., Aug. 29, 1835, and in 1847 moved with his parents to Atlanta. Here his mind was drilled in the primary branches and prepared for a higher education. He spent two years in the state university at Athens, Ga., and in 1855 graduated from Emory college, Oxford, Ga., with the degree of A. B. He read and studied law with Col. James Milner, of Cartersville, Ga., and was admitted to the active practice of his profession in 1858, at Cassville, Ga., and afterward located in Calhoun, Ga. During April, 1862, he enlisted in the Fortieth Georgia regiment, as a private. Earlier in the war he was elected captain of the Toombs volunteers, organized at Calhoun, but by reason of severe illness was unable to accept the command. After serving six months in the Fortieth regiment, he was authorized by the secretary of war to raise a siege artillery company. This he accomplished near Savannah, Ga., was chosen first lieutenant, and served in this capacity until early in 1865, when by reorganization this was changed into an infantry company, and Mr. Bray made captain of it. The close of the conflict found him in that position. He fought with laudable valor in the following battles: Dalton, Resaca, Rocky Ford, Kennesaw

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mountain, Atlanta, Franklin, Nashville and Pulaski, Tenn., and at New Hope church. In this last-named engagement he was wounded by the explosion of a shell. After the surrender Capt. Bray returned to Atlanta and established the first school in the city's limits. This he continued with unusual success and popularity, being associated with Prof. W. A. Pass and other noted instructors, until the public school system was founded. He was then elected principal of the Ivy street grammar school, taught there through the year 1873, and then resumed the practice of law. In 1886-87 he represented Fulton county in the state general assembly. While a member of this body he was appointed on the finance, educational and the committee on corporations, and bitterly opposed the convict lease system. His argument was termed "able, eloquent and masterly," and elicited the approval of the entire commonwealth. The peroration of his speech contained these memorable words: "No man is utterly irredeemable. But if you extinguish within him the light of hope, you educate him in crime. The lease system is an educator in crime, denying all the principles of humanity. Treat the convict as a human being and you may reform him." Capt. Bray was elected a member of the board of education in 1889, and was lately re-elected for a second term. He is a master Mason, a Red Man and a member of the Atlanta Pioneer society, and warmly co-operates with each. He is a city father who has guarded Atlanta's welfare faithfully.