



JOHNSON MURPHY CLAGGETT TOWNSEND served on the Court of Appeals of Georgia from 1947 to 1961. He was born in Dade County, Georgia, November 30, 1899, and died October 6, 1961.

He attended schools in Dade County. He was a star baseball player; was graduated from Chattanooga College with an LL.B. degree in 1923 and later received his LL.M. degree. As a student he waited on tables at the Chattanooga Golf and Country Club to earn money to pay his tuition. He joined Delta Theta Phi legal fraternity; practiced law in Dade County and in Chattanooga, Tennessee, for about 15 years; was in partnership in Tennessee with E. B. Baker; was a member of the Georgia and Tennessee Bars.

He married Eva Jane Fryar from Hamilton County, Tennessee, on September 12, 1931. Two sons were born of this union: Johnny Mac Townsend and Allen FrankJin Townsend, an attorney.

He was a member of the Methodist Church, Democrats, Masons, Shriners, Knights Templar, Elks, W.O.W., Gridiron Club, and Lions Club. He was a trustee of the local school district, member of the House of Representatives from Dade County three terms from 1931-1936, Assistant Attorney General 1937-1943, Judge of the Cherokee Judicial Circuit 1943-1947. He was a member of the Wildwood Methodist Church. He attended Inman Park Methodist Church and taught the Friendship Men's Bible Class there for 12 years.

Observations and words of praise are found in the memorial dated February 7, 1962, in 105 Georgia Appeals Reports, pages XXIII-LIV. "He proclaimed the fundamental premise that the 'Bill of Rights' is for every man." It was said: "He was dedicated to the preservation of the constitutional rights of each prisoner before the Bar, whether he be rich or poor, guilty or innocent." While a Judge on the Court of Appeals, he led an attack on the Ku Klux Klan. One lawyer emphasized in argument that he had a good brief, but Townsend replied, "The other lawyer had the best law." He applied the rule of John Wesley: "Do all the good you can...To all the people you can, as long as ever you can." He was a "Great Georgian."