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## Dedication to Walter H. Beckham, Jr

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## Dedication to Walter H. Beckham, Jr.

In the exchange of the famous letters between John Adams and Thomas Jefferson, Jefferson observed, "I agree with you that there is a natural aristocracy among men. The grounds of this are virtue and talents."<sup>1</sup> Walter H. Beckham, Jr. is the embodiment of a true Jeffersonian aristocrat.

Walter Beckham, was born in Albany, Georgia on April 18, 1920. He is a man of strength, character, intellect, and leadership. He has served with loyalty, distinction, and honor his family, his community, his country, his university, and his profession.

Walter is a devoted husband, father, and grandfather. His wife, Ethel Koger Beckham, is an accomplished and lovely lady and his children and grandchildren have made him proud. He has contributed immeasurably to each member of his family by the help, devotion, and love that he has given to them.

Just as Walter has been available when his family has called, so too has he been available when his community and his country have called. He was in the Pacific Theater of War in 1942 on active duty in the United States Naval Reserve when he participated in six major naval engagements. He was on active duty from 1941 to 1946. He continues to hold the rank of Captain (Retd.) in the United States Naval Reserve.

As a man of conscience, Walter Beckham has served his community as President of the Easter Seal Society of Dade County, as President of the Greater Miami YMCA, as a member of the Dade County Mental Health Board and the Kiwanis Club. He has been an activist and a trustee of the YMCA Blue Ridge Assembly and a member of the Two Hundred Club of Miami.

Walter has a distinguished educational background. He is a graduate of Harvard Law School where he served as an editor of the *Harvard Law Review* and he is a member of Phi Beta Kappa. He is also Professor of Law, Emeritus, of the University of Miami School of Law. He retired from the regular faculty in June 1982 after serving as Professor of Law from 1967 to 1982, as Associate Professor of Law in 1948-1949, and as Adjunct Professor of Law in 1950-1951. He rendered outstanding service to the School of Law as a scholar, teacher, faculty adviser to the *University of Miami Law Review* in 1948-1949, and as chairman of many important committees both within the Law School and the University. Above all, he made his most splendid contribution as an inspiring teacher.

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1. Letter from Thomas Jefferson to John Adams (Oct. 28, 1813), reprinted in J. BARTLETT, *FAMILIAR QUOTATIONS* 473 (14th ed. 1968).

Gifted with exceptional intelligence and a superbly analytical mind, he presented to his students the best of legal theory as well as a deep, penetrating insight into the practice of law and the rich experience of life. All of this he communicated effectively, with graciousness, wit, enthusiasm, and warmth.

His magnificent career as a law professor has been equaled by his extraordinary career as a trial attorney. As a partner in the trial firm of Nichols, Gaither, Beckham, Colson, Spence & Hicks from 1952 to 1967 and as of counsel to the trial firm of Podhurst, Orseck, Parks, Josefsberg, Eaton, Olin & Meadow from 1967 to date, Walter Beckham is widely recognized as one of the best trial lawyers in the nation. He has been accepted to membership in the American Law Institute, the American College of Trial Lawyers, the Association of Trial Lawyers of America, and the International Academy of Trial Lawyers, of which he is a past president. He is also Chairman-elect of the National Institute of Trial Advocacy.

Walter Beckham, we honor you for your many outstanding achievements and we know that your future will be as brilliant as your past.

HONORABLE GERALD T. WETHERINGTON  
Chief Judge of the 11th Judicial Circuit  
in and for Dade County, Florida