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Hammer, Minnie Lee Hancock [1]

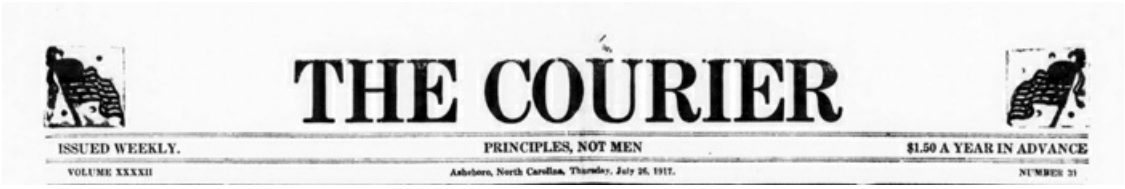
Hammer, Minnie Lee Hancock

by Ralph Hardee Rives, 1988

14 Dec. 1873–30 Oct. 1959

See also: Hammer, William Cicero [2] (from the *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography*)

Minnie Lee Hancock Hammer, religious, civic, and cultural leader, and newspaper manager, was the daughter of Dr. J. M. and Jane Page Hancock and the granddaughter of James Page, doorkeeper in the Congress of the Confederate States of America. Her father was a major in the Confederate Army. After graduating from Salem College [3] in 1893, she married, on 21 December, William Cicero Hammer [2] who served as solicitor, U.S. district attorney, and member of theU.S. House of Representatives [4]. Mrs. Hammer assisted her husband in his political activities and took an active part in the management of the *Asheboro Courier* [5], which they owned and operated for more than forty years. She was a member of the North Carolina Press Association [6] and in 1938 was made an honorary life member. Following her husband's death, on 26 September 1930, Mrs. Hammer was asked by the Democratic [7] party to fill his unexpired term in Congress, but she declined because of her family and business interests.


THE COURIER

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VOLUME XXXXII Asheboro, North Carolina, Thursday, July 26, 1917. NUMBER 31

Image of the masthead of *The Courier* (Asheboro, NC), July 26, 1917. Minnie Lee Hancock Hammer was an owner, with her husband, of the paper and took an active role in its management. Presented on DigitalNC. [8]

Mrs. Hammer was for twenty-five years president of the Woman's Missionary Society of the North Carolina Annual Conference of the Methodist Protestant church [9]. When the Foreign and Home Missionary societies were merged into the United Branch of Missions of the Methodist Protestant church, she was made the national president of that group. In 1910, she conceived the idea of creating the Methodist Protestant Children's Home [10], which was first located in Denton but moved to High Point [11] in 1913. To the hundreds of children who went to live in this home, Mrs. Hammer was affectionately known as "Mother Hammer." In addition, she took an active role in the establishment of High Point College [12] by the North Carolina Annual Conference. She was a charter member of the Asheboro Methodist Protestant Church (now the Central Methodist Church) and for several years before her death was a member of the board of trustees of the Methodist Retirement Home of the Western North Carolina Methodist Conference in Charlotte.

Mrs. Hammer was the first woman to be named a member of the executive committee of the General Conference of the Methodist church after the unification, in 1939, of the three splinter branches.

For fifty-one years, she was president of the Randolph Book Club. She also served as president of her local chapter of the United Daughters of the Confederacy, as a member and president of the Randolph County Historical Society, as first president of the Asheboro Woman's Club, and as chairman of the Seventh District, North Carolina Federation of Woman's Clubs.

Her daughter, Harriette Lee Hammer Walker, a feature writer, editor, and author, died on 26 September 1943. Mrs. Hammer, generally regarded as "Asheboro's First Citizen," was buried in Asheboro City Cemetery.

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