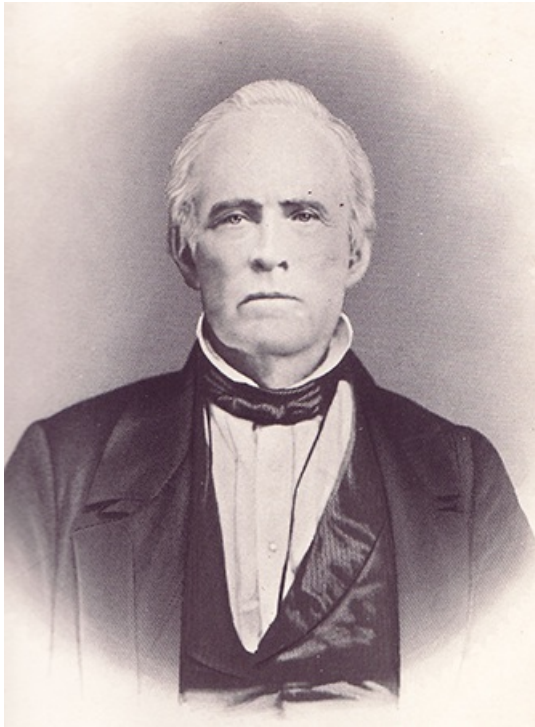


Hawkins, John Davis ^[1]

Hawkins, John Davis

by Armistead Jones Maupin, 1988

15 Apr. 1781–5 Dec. 1858



C.L. Van Noppen. 1906. 160. Image courtesy of the N.C. Government & Heritage Library.

John Davis Hawkins, lawyer, legislator, and planter, was born at Pleasant Hill plantation in [Granville](#) ^[2] (now [Vance](#) ^[3]) County, the fourth of twelve children of [Philemon Hawkins III](#) ^[4] and Lucy Davis. He was a grandson of Colonel [Philemon Hawkins, Sr.](#) ^[5], who was aide-de-camp to Governor [William Tryon](#) ^[6] at the [Battle of Alamance](#) ^[7] in 1771 and held a colonel's commission in the American Revolution. John's brother, [William Hawkins](#) ^[8], was governor of North Carolina during the [War of 1812](#) ^[9].

Hawkins was graduated from [The University of North Carolina](#) ^[10] in 1801 and became a lawyer. At an early age he was made a trustee of the university, a position he held for fifty-one years. He was a member of the Episcopal church.

It has been said that Hawkins "possessed rare and extraordinary qualities—a man of great willpower and force of character, intelligent and influential." He represented [Franklin County](#) ^[11] in the House of Commons in 1821–22 and 1834–35, and in the senate for three terms between 1836 and 1841. For many years he also served as a county judge. In private life, Hawkins was a planter of some magnitude and invested a portion of his wealth in the development of early railroads, particularly the Raleigh and Gaston Railroad.

In 1803, he married Jane Boyd, daughter of Alexander and Ann Swepson Boyd of Boydton, Va. They had thirteen children, born between 1805 and 1827. Hawkins was buried in Oakwood Cemetery, Raleigh.

References:

[Samuel A. Ashe, ed., *Biographical History of North Carolina*, vol. 5 \(1906\).](#) ^[12]

John L. Cheney, Jr., ed., *North Carolina Government, 1585–1974* (1975).

Additional Resources:

Hawkins Family Papers, 1738-1895 (collection no. 00322). The Southern Historical Collection. Louis Round Wilson Special Collections Library. University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.
http://www2.lib.unc.edu/mss/inv/h/Hawkins_Family.html ^[13] (accessed April 11, 2014).

United States Department of the Interior. National Park Service. National Register of Historic Places Inventory - Nomination Form: Pleasant Hill/Rivenoak/Hawkins House. By Catherine W. Bishir and Jim Sumner, Raleigh, N.C. January

11, 1979. <http://www.hpo.ncdcr.gov/nr/VN0008.pdf> ^[14] (accessed April 11, 2014).

Charlotte Hawkins Brown & Palmer Memorial Institute: *What One Young African American Woman Could Do*. UNC Press Books, 1999. <http://books.google.com/books?id=RC0wj1YRuOoC&pg=PA14#v=onepage&q&f=false> ^[15] (accessed April 11, 2014).

"Original Art, Accession #: [H.19XX.135.203](#) ^[16]." 1835-1845. North Carolina Museum of History. (accessed April 11, 2014).

Image Credits:

E. G. Williams and Bro., engraver "Jno. D. Hawkins." Engraving. *Biographical history of North Carolina from colonial times to the present* volume 5. Greensboro, N.C.: C.L. Van Noppen. 1906. 160.

Subjects:

[Biographies](#) ^[17]

[Lawyers](#) ^[18]

[Planters](#) ^[19]

[Public officials](#) ^[20]

Authors:

[Maupin, Armistead J.](#) ^[21]

Origin - location:

[Vance County](#) ^[22]

[Wake County](#) ^[23]

[Raleigh](#) ^[24]

From:

[Dictionary of North Carolina Biography, University of North Carolina Press.](#) ^[25]

1 January 1988 | Maupin, Armistead J.

Source URL: <https://ncpedia.org/biography/hawkins-john-davis>

Links

[1] <https://ncpedia.org/biography/hawkins-john-davis> [2] <https://ncpedia.org/geography/granville> [3] <https://ncpedia.org/geography/vance> [4] <https://ncpedia.org/biography/hawkins-philemon-iii> [5] <https://ncpedia.org/biography/hawkins-philemon-ii> [6] <https://ncpedia.org/biography/tryon-william> [7] <https://ncpedia.org/alamance-battle> [8] <https://ncpedia.org/biography/hawkins-william> [9] <https://ncpedia.org/war-1812> [10] <https://ncpedia.org/university-north-carolina-chapel-hi> [11] <https://ncpedia.org/geography/franklin> [12] <https://archive.org/stream/cu31924092215478#page/n243/mode/2up> [13] http://www2.lib.unc.edu/mss/inv/h/Hawkins_Family.html [14] <http://www.hpo.ncdcr.gov/nr/VN0008.pdf> [15] <http://books.google.com/books?id=RC0wj1YRuOoC&pg=PA14#v=onepage&q&f=false> [16] <http://collections.ncdcr.gov/RediscoveryProficioPublicSearch/ShowItem.aspx?58843+> [17] <https://ncpedia.org/category/subjects/biography-term> [18] <https://ncpedia.org/category/subjects/lawyers> [19] <https://ncpedia.org/category/subjects/planters> [20] <https://ncpedia.org/category/subjects/public-officials> [21] <https://ncpedia.org/category/authors/maupin-armistead-j> [22] <https://ncpedia.org/category/origin-location/piedmont/v> [23] <https://ncpedia.org/category/origin-location/piedmont/w> [24] <https://ncpedia.org/category/origin-location/piedmont-0> [25] <https://ncpedia.org/category/entry-source/dictionary-no>