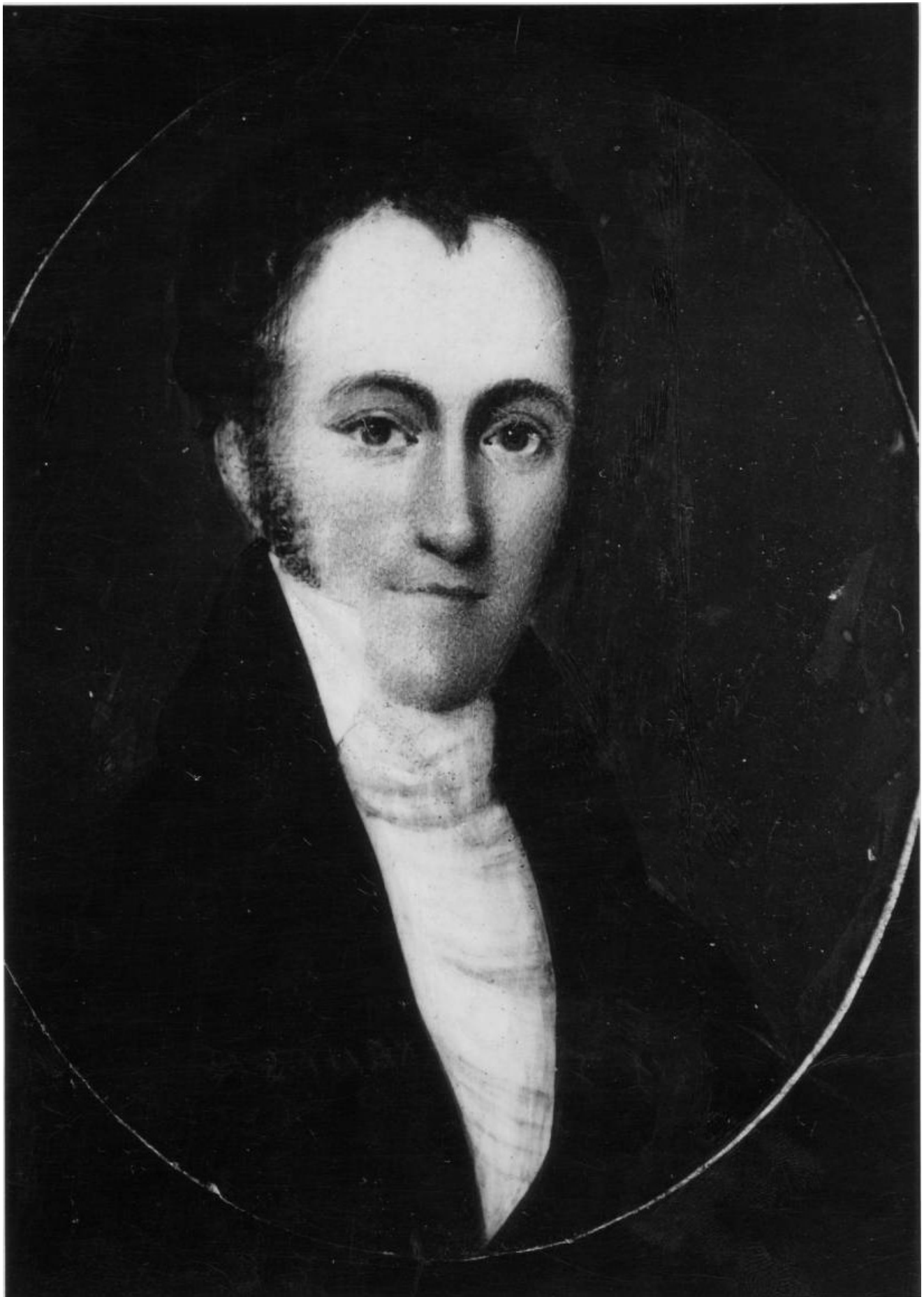


Alexander, William Julius ^[1]

Alexander, William Julius

by Roger N. Kirkman, 1979; Revised by SLNC Government and Heritage Library, April 2023

March 1797–15 Feb. 1857



William Julius Alexander. Image courtesy of University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Wilson Library, North Carolina Collection Photographic Archives.

^[2]William Julius Alexander, speaker of the North Carolina House of Commons, solicitor, and superintendent of the Charlotte branch of the U.S. Mint, was born in Salisbury, the son of William Alexander. He attended Poplar Tent Academy under the direction of a Reverend Dr. Robinson and was graduated from The University of North Carolina ^[3] in 1816. After serving an apprenticeship under Archibald Henderson ^[4] in Salisbury, Alexander was admitted to the bar in 1818. He married Catharine Wilson, daughter of Joseph Wilson, solicitor of the Sixth Circuit.

In 1826 Alexander entered public life as a [Democratic](#) ^[5] representative from [Mecklenburg County](#) ^[6] in the North Carolina House of Commons. He served five consecutive terms from 1826 to 1831 and two additional terms in 1833–34 and 1834–35. He was speaker in 1829–30, 1833–34, and 1834–35. He also served as a trustee of The University of North Carolina from 1827 until 1856. Following the death of his father-in-law in August 1829, he was appointed solicitor in his stead; he resigned in 1833. In 1835 he was defeated by [Romulus M. Saunders](#) ^[7] for a seat on the superior court. In 1846 President [James K. Polk](#) ^[8], a fellow alumnus of the university and member of the same campus literary society, appointed Alexander superintendent of the U.S. branch mint in Charlotte, succeeding [Greene W. Caldwell](#) ^[9], who volunteered to fight in the [war with Mexico](#) ^[10]. Alexander held this position as late as 1851. At his retirement he moved to Lincolnton, where he died.

Additional information from NCPedia editors at the State Library of North Carolina:

This person enslaved and owned other people. Many Black and African people, their descendants, and some others were enslaved in the United States until the Thirteenth Amendment abolished slavery in 1865. It was common for wealthy landowners, entrepreneurs, politicians, institutions, and others to enslave people and use enslaved labor during this period. To read more about the enslavement and transportation of African people to North Carolina, visit <https://aaahc.nc.gov/programs/africa-carolina-0> ^[11]. To read more about slavery and its history in North Carolina, visit <https://www.ncpedia.org/slavery> ^[12]. - Government and Heritage Library, 2023

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Image Credits:

William Julius Alexander. Folder 0028: Alexander, William Julius (b. 1797): Scan 1. Portrait Collection, circa 1720-1997; finding aid: <http://www.lib.unc.edu/ncc/pcoll/inv/P0002/P0002.html> ^[13]. Image courtesy of University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Wilson Library, North Carolina Collection Photographic Archives.

Subjects:

[Biographies](#) ^[14]

[Law and legal history](#) ^[15]

Authors:

[Kirkman, Roger N.](#) ^[16]

Origin - location:

[Mecklenburg County](#) ^[17]

[Salisbury](#) ^[18]

From:

[Dictionary of North Carolina Biography, University of North Carolina Press.](#) ^[19]

1 January 1979 | Kirkman, Roger N.

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