

Lawler, Joab ^[1]

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by George David Terry, 1991

12 June 1796–8 May 1838

Joab Lawler, minister, educator, and politician, was born in [Union County](#) ^[2]. Little is known about his parents except that his father was a small farmer who, shortly after the birth of his son, moved the family to Tennessee. From there the family went to the Mississippi Territory where Lawler attended public schools.

He settled in Alabama in 1815 and four years later established residence in Shelby County. Between 1821 and 1826 he was a circuit court judge and then county judge. While serving on the bench in Shelby, he studied theology; he received ordination as a [Baptist](#) ^[3] minister in 1826 and began officiating as pastor of a local church. In the same year he was elected to the state senate. In 1827, however, Lawler resigned from the senate to accept an appointment as receiver of public moneys for the Coosa land district. To obtain the post, he was required to move to the town of Mardisville in Talladega County where the land office was situated. During his residence there he founded two churches and officiated in the town until 1835. He also became treasurer of the [University of Alabama at Tuscaloosa](#) ^[4] in 1833 and held the position until 1836.

In 1835 Lawler was elected as a [Whig](#) ^[5] to the Twenty-fourth Congress. Described as "a fluent orator . . . and a pious man," he was one of a number of native North Carolinians to serve in the House of Representatives from Alabama during this period. He was elected to a second term in 1837 but died suddenly in Washington, D.C. The same day Congress resolved to wear "crape around the left arm for thirty days" in his memory and voted unanimously to attend the funeral, held on 9 May 1838.

Lawler married the sister of Robert A. Baker of Dallas, Tex.

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Additional Resources:

"Lawler, Joab, (1796 - 1838)." *Biographical Directory of the United States Congress*. Washington, D.C.: The Congress. <http://bioguide.congress.gov/scripts/biodisplay.pl?index=L000129> ^[6] (accessed August 28, 2013).

Lawler, Joab 1796-1838 in WorldCat: <http://orlabs.oclc.org/identities/lccn-no2007-155769> ^[7]

Joab Lawler, History, Art & Archives, US House of Representatives: <http://history.house.gov/People/Listing/L/LAWLER,-Joab-%28L000129%29/> ^[8]

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Authors:

[Terry, George D.](#) ^[13]

Origin - location:

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[Dictionary of North Carolina Biography, University of North Carolina Press.](#) ^[15]

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