

Nixon, Alfred ^[1]

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Portrait of Alfred Nixon, circa 1881. From the Nixon Family Collection at the Lincoln County Historical Association, Lincolnton, N.C. Used by permission.

^[2]Alfred Nixon, local official and historian, was born in Lincoln County ^[3] near Beattie's Ford, the son of Robert and Millie Womack Nixon. He was descended from William and Elizabeth Black Nixon, who moved from Charlotte County, Va., to Lincoln in 1780. The family was Scot-Irish and originally emigrated from Ireland. Alfred spent his youth on his father's farm and received his earliest education in local schools before attending Rock Springs Seminary, conducted by D. Matt Thompson, in the new community of Denver. He received a B.S. degree from The University of North Carolina ^[4] in 1881.

After graduation he returned to Lincoln County and engaged in farming and teaching. In 1882 he married Lola Jane Robinson, a descendant of Francis Asbury ^[5]. Nixon was sheriff of the county from 1883 to 1892, and at other times he was county surveyor, superintendent of public instruction, clerk of superior court (1892–1924), and mayor of Lincolnton. He never lost an election.

In 1891 The University of North Carolina's class of 1881 held a reunion. Before leaving Chapel Hill as seniors, members of the class had agreed to honor the first son of any member of the class, and at the 1891 reunion young Kemp Battle Nixon, the son of Alfred and Jane Nixon, was declared the winner and awarded a silver cup.

A Presbyterian ^[6] from childhood, Alfred Nixon became a Sunday school teacher, elder, and clerk of the church. He was the lay representative from the Kings Mountain Presbytery to the General Assembly of the Southern Presbyterian Church in New Orleans. Joining the Masonic order ^[7] in 1878, he was master of the Lincolnton Lodge for several years and held other high positions. He was a popular speaker at reunions, club gatherings, church rallies, and school entertainments. As a personal friend of many Confederate veterans, he often spoke at their reunions.

As a local historian, he wrote on many subjects, and his contributions were widely published in newspapers and pamphlets. He prepared a number of family histories including those of the Finger, Hager, Hauss, and Mauney families. Nixon was the author of several church histories, a brief county history, and many lengthy obituaries. He also compiled and published a roster of Confederate soldiers from Lincoln County. His *Cross Woodis: Character Sketch* (1905) dealt with a black man who had a reputation as a conjurer. For his *Annals of Lincoln County*, William L. Sherrill drew on the writings of Nixon.

Nixon and his wife were the parents of nine children.

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