

Shackelford, John Williams ^[1]

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by Tucker Reed Littleton, 1994

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Portrait of John Williams Shackelford from *Memorial Addresses on the Life and Character of John W. Shackelford Delivered in the House of Representatives and in the Senate*, Forty-Seventh Congress, Second Session. Published 1883 by Order of Congress, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. Presented by East Carolina University Digital Collections.

^[2]John Williams Shackelford, congressman, state legislator, Confederate officer, attorney, merchant, and farmer, was born at Richlands, the only child of Dr. John and Indiana Ambrose Humphrey Shackelford. Reared by his maternal grandfather, Colonel William A. Humphrey, Shackelford attended the Richlands Academy. He entered college but left at age seventeen to enter the Confederate army. From the rank of private in Company H of the Third North Carolina Regiment, he rose to the rank of lieutenant in the Thirty-fifth Regiment of North Carolina Volunteers and was taken prisoner near Greenville. In August 1865 he returned home, where on 19 Sept. 1865 he married Mary Catherine Wallace of Richlands.

A Democrat ^[3], Shackelford represented Onslow County ^[4] in the North Carolina House of Representatives from 1872 to 1878 and in the North Carolina Senate ^[5] from 1879 to 1880. In 1880 he was elected a representative to the Forty-seventh Congress ^[6] and served from 4 Mar. 1881 until his death in Washington, D.C. In the state legislature Shackelford served on the Committee on Banks and Currency, the Committee on Fish and Fisheries, and as chairman of the Committee on Engrossed Bills. In the Congress he was a member of the Committee on Public Land Claims.

On the local level Shackelford served twice as a magistrate, farmed, and engaged in various mercantile ventures. He had a cotton gin in 1879, and he was a partner in Harget and Steed (1881) and in Harget, Taylor, and Company (1882). Though he had no children of his own, he raised a girl named Fannie Heath, whose indigent father gave her to the Shackelfords at age two and a half. The foster parents renamed her Katie Williams Shackelford.

Shackelford was a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. He was interred in the Wallace family cemetery at Richlands. A photograph of him can be found in the Tucker Littleton Collection at the North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh.

References:

Biog. Dir. Am. Cong (1971).

J. Parsons Brown, *The Commonwealth of Onslow: A History* (1960).

John L. Cheney, Jr., ed., *North Carolina Government, 1585–1979* (1981).

Kinston Journal, 8 May 1879.

Memorial Address, Life and Character of John Williams Shackelford(1883 [portrait]).^[7]

Additional Resources:

"Shackelford, John Williams, (1844 - 1883)." *Biographical Directory of the United States Congress*. Washington, D.C.: The Congress. <http://bioguide.congress.gov/scripts/biodisplay.pl?index=S000273>^[6] (accessed May 7, 2014).

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[United States Congress]. "Memorial addresses on the life and character of John W. Shackelford, (a representative from North Carolina) delivered in the House of Representatives and in the Senate, Forty-seventh Congress, second session." Washington: Government Printing Office. From the North Carolina History and Fiction Collection, East Carolina University Digital Collections. <http://digital.lib.ecu.edu/16824>^[2] (accessed May 7, 2014).

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Authors:

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Origin - location:

Onslow County^[14]

Richlands^[15]

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Dictionary of North Carolina Biography, University of North Carolina Press.^[16]

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