

## **Strange, Robert** <sup>[1]</sup>

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by William S. Powell, 1994

**27 July 1823–24 Jan. 1877**

Robert Strange, army officer and lawyer, was born in [Fayetteville](#) <sup>[2]</sup>, the son of Judge [Robert](#) <sup>[3]</sup> and Jane Kirkland Strange. After graduation from [The University of North Carolina](#) <sup>[4]</sup> in 1841, he read law, was admitted to the bar, and moved to [Wilmington](#) <sup>[5]</sup>. He was solicitor of the Wilmington District for two terms—the first by appointment of Judge [Romulus Saunders](#) <sup>[6]</sup> and the second by election. For a number of years he was a director of the [Bank of Cape Fear](#) <sup>[7]</sup>.

Strange served as a major in the [War with Mexico](#) <sup>[8]</sup>, and between 1849 and 1852 he was a paymaster in the U.S. Army in Washington, D.C. At some time prior to 29 July 1852 he was promoted to colonel. He represented [New Hanover County](#) <sup>[9]</sup> in the [North Carolina House of Commons](#) <sup>[10]</sup> in 1852. As the [Civil War](#) <sup>[11]</sup> approached, he was an aide to Governor [John W. Ellis](#) <sup>[12]</sup>. Strange was a member from [New Hanover County](#) <sup>[9]</sup> of the 1861–62 [Secession](#) <sup>[13]</sup> Convention and of the Constitutional Convention for the same period.

At the beginning of the war he became aide to General [Braxton Bragg](#) <sup>[14]</sup>, a post he filled faithfully throughout the conflict with the title of major. In the early months of the war he also was a member of the Wilmington [Committee of Safety](#) <sup>[15]</sup>, created to secure the support of both the state and the Confederate governments in obtaining troops and supplies to protect southeastern North Carolina from Federal invasion. As late as March 1862 delegations from the committee went to Raleigh and Richmond in a vain attempt to secure protection for coastal North Carolina. Referred to as major, he was called upon several times to survey and make reports on railroads and bridges in southeastern North Carolina, and on one occasion he inspected and reported on the railroads from Richmond to Wilmington for the Confederate government. He was an unsuccessful candidate for the Confederate Congress in 1863.

By his first wife, Sarah Caroline Wright, who died on 6 Apr. 1866, Strange was the father of three sons—Thomas Wright, [Robert](#) <sup>[16]</sup>, and Joseph Huske. His second wife was Mrs. Bettie Andrews Lane, of Henderson, by whom he had two daughters—Caroline Wright and Jane Hawkins. Strange collapsed and died in court while representing a client. An [Episcopalian](#) <sup>[17]</sup>, he was buried in [Oakdale Cemetery](#) <sup>[18]</sup>, Wilmington.

#### **References:**

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[Daniel L. Grant, \*Alumni History of the University of North Carolina\* \(1924\).](#) <sup>[19]</sup>

[Robert Strange, Jr., Papers \(Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill\).](#) <sup>[20]</sup>

*War of the Rebellion . . . Official Records* <sup>[21]</sup>, vols. 9, 36, 47 (1883, 1891, 1895).

[John H. Wheeler, ed., \*Reminiscences and Memoirs of North Carolina and Eminent North Carolinians\* \(1884\).](#) <sup>[22]</sup>

*Wilmington Daily Journal*, 25–26 Jan. 1877.

*Wilmington Morning Star*, 25 Jan. 1877.

#### **Subjects:**

[Biographies](#) <sup>[23]</sup>

[Lawyers](#) <sup>[24]</sup>

[Military personnel](#) <sup>[25]</sup>

[Public officials](#) <sup>[26]</sup>

#### **Authors:**

[Powell, William S.](#) <sup>[27]</sup>

#### **Origin - location:**

[New Hanover County](#) <sup>[28]</sup>

[Wilmington](#) <sup>[29]</sup>

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