

B. F. Dixon, Many Years State Auditor From Cleveland; Married Mrs. Durham

Gastonia Hangs Portrait to Honor Spanish War Vet.
(By Stewart Atkins in Gastonia Gazette.)

On Monday, November 2, the Dan Grier camp of Spanish-American war veterans of Gastonia presented to the War memorial building in Gastonia a portrait of the late Major B. F. Dixon, their beloved commander, the presentation speech was made by Clyde R. Hoey.

A Deserved Tribute.
This portrait, hanging within these dedicated walls, will be not only a fitting but a deserved tribute to the man who, had not his modesty prevented could have laid well founded claim to being North Carolina's most versatile citizen in his generation.

His American soldiers learned his courage in the stormy days on Tybee Island. His few enemies and many friends alike learned it in campaigns both military and political. Soldier, statesman, physician, minister, college president, dutiful husband and loving father, his was a career as full and versatile as it was useful.

Born in Cleveland county near the Kings Mountain battleground on the 27th day of a stormy March in 1845, he was always a true son of North Carolina, holding his love and allegiance due first to his state in every instance. His parents, Thomas and Mary Ann Winter Dixon, are native English.

Eminent Family.
Major Dixon and his kinsman Thomas Dixon, the novelist, are perhaps the best known of the Dixon line but there have been countless other eminent members of the family. His mother Mary Ann Winter was a devout member of the Church of England, holding its prayerbook and customs until death.

God-fearing people his parents were, devout and moral. Yet their veins did not lack the pioneer blood of progressiveness. For young Ben they had ambitions and they were far-sighted enough to understand that these ambitions could be realized only through the slender ladder of education. Accordingly he was sent to the community school and when he had gleaned all possible from it he was sent to the Citadel in Charleston, S. C.

High Standards.
The Citadel had then, as now, high standards and stern discipline. Its founders instilled in it the spark of idealism and development that has made it the third ranking military institution in the United States today. It is easily surmised that life at the Citadel then, as today, was no bed of roses, its courses of study no child's play. Ben Franklin Dixon's record there was untarnished.

But his days there were cut short by the menacing shadow of war. The spark of agitation between the north and south, fanned for so many years, burst at last into flame the guns boomed at Bethel and Bull Run, and young Dixon was off to join the Confederate army at the tender age of 16. Knowing that his parents would naturally object to this procedure, he did not consult them. Even at this early age he seems to have had a streak of military genius. Entering the war as a private he was soon captain of a company from his native section, the "Cleveland Blue."

Defense of Homeland.
Everyone who is a student of the Confederacy is familiar with the peculiar strategy and bloody fighting that surrounded the battle of Petersburg. The Cleveland Blues saw desperate action there. At the battle of Malvern Hill Captain Dixon was the first wounded. Before the four years of blood and suffering were over he was again wounded in valiant defense of his homeland.

Then with a stunning suddenness the war was over. When the immortal Robert E. Lee stood at Appomattox, his banners drooping, his men starving, his silver trumpets in the dust, and surrendered to Grant, Captain Dixon must have had, as all Confederates had: that time a pervading sense of hopelessness and despair.

But he turned with his comrades-at-arms back to the stripped, poverty-stricken south to build anew. Soon, as a licensed minister, he was filling appointments in the South Carolina conference. However, he was forced ere long to give up his ministry on account of trouble with his throat. He returned to the town of Kings Mountain in his native county and practiced medicine.

Family of Soldiers.
In 1870 he married Mrs. Nora T. Durham, widow of Captain Plato Durham. She had three children at the time of the marriage, named: Plato, Robert L. and Stonewall J. Durham. Of this union were born three other children, Wright L. Ben F., and Pearl Dixon. The last named, the only girl of the family, married W. L. Balthus, of Gastonia, and resides there today. Wright L. Dixon is a resident of Raleigh Ben F.

Dixon, named for his gallant father, fell in action in the World War during the breaking of the Hindenburg line and lies buried in a battlefield of France.

Major Dixon was ever an affectionate father to his stepchildren. Plato Durham became one of the foremost ministers of the Southern Methodist church and his death in 1930 deprived the church of one of its most ardent leaders. Robert L. Durham today heads Southern Seminary for girls at Beuna Vista, Va., and is counted among the prominent educators of the south. Stonewall J. Durham, residing now at Bessemer City, has long been known in North Carolina as a brilliant lawyer and a citizen of sterling worth.

Enters Politics.
In 1884, Captain Dixon was elected superintendent of the Oxford Orphan asylum and served there faithfully and well until 1890 when he relinquished this position to become president of Greensboro college for Women. This position he filled for two years, returning in 1892 to his medical practice in Kings Mountain.

Soon after his return to Cleveland county, he took his first step into political circles. In 1895, while residing in Shelby, he was elected to represent Cleveland county in the state legislature. He became active in the house of representatives and soon laid the basis for his later widespread political reputation. His interest and influence in politics grew.

When in 1900 Charles B. Aycock, running on the democratic ticket for governor, launched his whirlwind campaign to free the state from the regime of Daniel Russell, the last republican governor of North Carolina ever had, Dixon occupied a prominent seat on the Aycock band wagon. Together Aycock and Dixon stumped the state from end to end. They became strong personal as well as political friends. An intimate relationship grew up between the two men.

Great Stump Speaker.
Stonewall Durham related the following incident:
"During the strenuous campaign against Russellism, Governor Aycock stayed overnight at my house. While in conversation on the front porch, Governor Aycock told me that personally he considered Major Dixon the greatest campaigner ever produced in the Old North State, not excepting Zebulon B. Vance. Governor Aycock followed the usual political custom of repeating the same speech in different towns every night during the campaign. Major Dixon, during all his political career, was never known to repeat a speech. During the campaign he spoke almost every night.

As the result of this famous 1900 campaign, Major Dixon was awarded the position of state auditor, which he held until his death. He filled it conscientiously and capably. He was also closely identified with the launching of Governor Aycock's great educational drive, which laid the basis for our present superior educational system.

Offers His Services.
At the outbreak of the Spanish-American war Auditor Dixon, true to his heritage of courage, was the first among the volunteers. He was made a major, serving in the second battalion, made up of native North Carolinians. He was beloved by the men under his command from the beginning and was held in high regard by his superior officers.

The following incident related by Dr. T. A. Wilkins, Gastonia Spanish American war veteran, who served in company B of the second battalion, throws light on Major Dixon's prestige as a commander. He says:
"Co. B of the second battalion was the first company to form in line for the regimental dress parade every evening. The other companies of our battalion formed on us and then the first, third and fourth battalions formed on our battalion. This required some little maneuvering, perhaps 15 or 20 minutes. Our battalion had to come to attention which the other battalions were forming.

"When Major Dixon had his battalion in present form, he too came to attention. It was picturesque to see him sitting on his fine black horse. His stately carriage and fine physique made a picture of soldiery I would look forward to every day. Every one of his men loved him and would speak to him as 'our Major.' He was kind, but kept strict discipline. In all our regimental dress parade formations, Colonel W. H. S. Burgwyn never once had to criticize him for imperfect formation.

Another incident recalled by Corporal Wilkins shows the excellent marksmanship of the major:
"During a training camp," he says "we set up after a three-days march out from Raleigh. Several of the boys were hard at their routine target practice. The target was many yards away over on another hill. The boys uttered exclamations of delight if they came within a foot

of it. Major Dixon rode up and asked for my rifle, which I handed to him. Inspecting it closely and seeing it was in perfect shape, he fired seemingly without aim, from the saddle and rung a perfect bulls eye on the distant target. He smilingly told the boys that was the way they must learn to shoot and rode off."

Amazing Marksmanship.
Other incidents of his amazing marksmanship are recalled by his stepson, Stonewall Durham, who for years carried in his pocket a copper-jacketed .32 calibre bullet with which Major Dixon split a thin willow wand at 100 yards.

Many of his men who were with him on Tybee Island thanked him for saving their lives. His stepsons, R. L. Durham and Plato Durham, who, as captain and second lieutenant of the company respectively, were stationed on the island with him, spoke often of the happening from which the story grew.

The men had been stationed on the island for some days, when a terrific hurricane caught the surrounding waters in its grasp it hurled the foaming waves up and over the banks of the island until its entire area became a whirlpool of death. The soldiers speedily retired to an old phosphate dock adjoining the island. As the minutes wore quickly on, the situation grew worse. An old tugboat used for many years to carry the phosphate ore mined on the island was just putting out for mainland.

Saved His Command.
The tugboat captain, intent upon saving his own life, was in no mood to incur further risk by waiting for the soldiers to load aboard. When they attempted to board him, he swore at them violently and finally struck several of them with one of his heavy metal buckets which he swung wildly about his head.

Major Dixon, arriving on the scene, took the situation quickly in hand. He ordered his men to train their guns on the old captain and to shoot him down at the first move he made. Thus was the vessel captured and the soldiers loaded aboard. This quick decision saved the lives of the major and his men, for shortly after they put out to sea the old phosphate dock fell amid the swirling water. Thus the confiscation of the old private vessel, al-

though necessarily high-handed proved a life-saving move.

Duties As Auditor.
Following the war and the hectic 1900 campaign Major Dixon threw his enormous energy into the capable handling of his duties as state auditor. He was ever the close friend and confidante of Governor Aycock, and stood out prominently in the administrations with which he was associated. His attention remained centered on the competent handling of the work for his beloved North Carolina until his death on September 26, 1910. The entire state was thrown into mourning at his death.

An editorial published in the Raleigh News and Observer just after his death said:
"He did well whatever he undertook, and had a genius for versatile employment. He rejoiced with those who rejoiced, he mourned with those who mourned and could

cheer and divert and interest and entertain in a manner that made him a charming companion and a genial comrade. He had the old-time southern chivalric spirit and loved everything that touched the south. There were no farewells when he embarked and those who lived close to him do not doubt that with gladness he met his Pilot face to face."

Finders Keepers.
One-Night Tourist—Did you see a twenty-dollar bill on the bureau when you made up your room?
Maid—I surely did, sir. Thank you very much.

Wanted Song in Reality.
Singer—"And for Bonnie Annie Laurie I'd lay me down and die."
Listener (rising)—"Is Miss Laurie in the audience?"

BOY FRIEND OF BAD GIRL WILL BE WITH A "SOB SISTER" Monday - Tuesday CAROLINA

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OF SPECIAL INTEREST TO WOMEN—join the GE circle on the air every week day (except Saturday) at noon, E. S. T.
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FINANCIAL STATEMENT AS OF SEPTEMBER 30, 1931

ASSETS
Cash Due from Banks \$ 4,327.95
Loans and Discounts 66,285.70
Stocks and Bonds 7,500.00
Premium on \$10,000 Life Insurance 275.26
Furniture and Fixtures 106.90
TOTAL \$78,495.75

LIABILITIES
Capital, Common \$36,900.00
Capital, Preferred 14,400.00 51,300.00
Surplus Profits Reserve 4,459.59
Reserve for Insurance 464.00
Certificate of Investment 22,272.16
TOTAL \$78,495.75

Made 175 loans averaging \$137.30, amounting to \$24,027.51 during quarter ending Sept. 30th. In same period we collected \$26,222.71. By discontinuing making loans for 60 days we could pay off every certificate of investment. Average loan 1-3 of 1% of Capital Stock.

3 Years without missing a quarterly dividend.
3 Years without a loss in loans.
8% cumulative Preferred Stock and Common Stock may be obtained. Terms if necessary.

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OF SHELBY, N. C.

COMMISSIONER'S SALE.
By virtue of the power and authority vested in me by the superior court of Cleveland county, N. C., in the case entitled "The County of Cleveland, N. C., plaintiff vs. John G. Gable, et al. defendants," I, Commissioner duly appointed, will sell for cash to the highest bidder at public auction, at the court house door in the town of Shelby, N. C., on

Monday, December 7th, 1931,
at 12 o'clock M., the following described real estate situated in No. 4 township Cleveland county, N. C., and described as follows:
One tract of land containing 22 acres, situated in the L. Arrowood farm, and being the farm of Arrowood, Roberts and others.

This is the 1st of October, 1931.
J. C. WHITSITT, Commissioner.
At Nov. 4

COMMISSIONER'S SALE.
By virtue of the power and authority vested in me by the superior court of Cleveland county, N. C., in the case entitled "County of Cleveland, N. C., plaintiff vs. Lewis Patterson, et al. defendants," I, Commissioner duly appointed, will sell for cash to the highest bidder at public auction, at the court house door in the town of Shelby, N. C., on

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This is the 1st of October, 1931.
J. C. WHITSITT, Commissioner.
At Nov. 4

COMMISSIONER'S SALE.
By virtue of a judgment and decree of the superior court of Cleveland county, N. C., made in the case entitled, "Atlantic Joint Stock Land Bank of Raleigh, a corporation, plaintiff, vs. Basil Borders, et al. defendants," I, as commissioner duly appointed, will sell for cash to the highest bidder at public auction at the court house door in the town of Shelby, N. C., on

Saturday, December 5th, 1931
at 12 o'clock M., the following described real estate situated in No. 4 township Cleveland county, N. C., and described as follows:
First Tract: Situated on Buffalo Creek and containing originally 20 1/2 acres, and being a part of the Hugo Borders home place, which was conveyed to G. W. Wray by the executors of Hugo Borders, deceased, and fully described in a deed from G. W. Wray and wife to Mike Borders, dated December 31, 1890, and recorded in book BH of deeds, page 20, of the register's office of Cleveland county, excepting, however, from the above 1 acre and 20 poles deeded to J. C. Byers and others by Mike Borders on December 23rd, 1893, and 1 acre and 22 poles conveyed to J. Shuford by James Borders and others on October 30th, 1915, both of which deeds are recorded and reference is hereby had to each for the descriptions of the boundaries excepted.

Second Tract: Lying on Beaver Dam branch of Buffalo Creek and containing 2 acres and 23 poles, and being the tract conveyed to Mike Borders by J. C. Byers and others on December 15th, 1902, as appears in book NN of deeds, page 267, of the register's office of Cleveland county, N. C.

Third Tract: Located on Borders branch and containing 1 acre, 2 rods and 23 poles, and being that part of land cut off by the new channel of Buffalo Creek and lying between the Borders branch and the old and new channels, and deeded to James Borders and others by J. J. Shuford and wife on December 3, 1915, as said deed being recorded in book DDD, page 613, of the register's office of Cleveland county, N. C.

The net acreage, as represented by the above three tracts, is 20.9 acres and is fully described in a mortgage from Basil Borders to the Atlantic Joint Stock Land Bank of Raleigh and recorded in book NN at page 485, "T" in the register's office of Cleveland county, N. C., and reference is hereby made to said mortgage for full description by metes and bounds of each tract, the same being the property known as the Basil Borders farm.

This November 3rd, 1931.
CLYDE R. HOEY, Commissioner.
At Nov. 4

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