

Anderson, Robert Burton ^[1]

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Anderson, Robert Burton

by Jean A. Bernhardt, 1979

8 Jan. 1833–3 Dec. 1899

Robert Burton Anderson, [Presbyterian](#)^[2] minister, [Confederate](#)^[3] chaplain, and teacher, the son of James and Eliza Williams Burton Anderson, was born in Williamsboro, [Vance](#)^[4] (then Granville) County. His father had come to America from his native Kilmarnock, Scotland, at the age of twenty-one. Soon after the birth of Robert, the family moved to [Lincoln County](#)^[5]; there Robert attended a small local school, before enrolling in the [Caldwell Institute](#)^[6] in Hillsborough. Later he entered [Princeton University](#)^[7] and was graduated in 1854. Apprenticed to William Murphy of Salisbury to learn the mercantile business, he was forced by poor health to change his occupation and turned to teaching for a time.

In September 1856, at Popular Tent Church (Presbyterian) in [Cabarrus County](#)^[8], he felt called upon to prepare himself for the ministry, and he subsequently enrolled in the Columbian Theological Seminary, Columbia, S.C. Following his graduation in 1859, he was licensed by the [Presbyterian church](#)^[2] and served in [Mecklenburg County](#)^[9] until October 1863, when he joined the Fourth North Carolina Regiment as chaplain. Because of ill health, he resigned in August 1864; after regaining his health, he served the Presbyterian church in Concord for a time. In January 1867 he removed to Yorkville, S.C., took charge of the Yorkville Institute for Young Ladies, and also served a local church. After three years the school was sold, and poor health prevented Anderson's acceptance of a call to the local church. Instead, he returned to North Carolina and began in 1871, on a part-time basis, to serve churches in the vicinity of Morganton and Newton. In 1875 he was installed as the regular minister of the church in Morganton, where he remained for the rest of his life.

In 1881, [Southwestern University](#)^[10] awarded Anderson an honorary D.D. degree. He served as a trustee of [Davidson College](#)^[11] from 1863 until 1869 and again from 1884 until his death. For two years during the latter period, he was president of the board of trustees.

Anderson was married to Jennie H. Thornwell in 1860, and they were the parents of two sons and a daughter: James Henley, Thornwell, and Nancy Thornwell. Anderson died in Morganton.

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Additional Resources:

Robert Burton Anderson Papers, 1828-1898 (collection no. 00021). The Southern Historical Collection. Louis Round Wilson Special Collections Library. University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. http://www.lib.unc.edu/mss/inv/a/Anderson,Robert_Burton.html^[12] (accessed January 22, 2013).

[Presbyterians in North Carolina: Race, Politics, and Religious Identity in Historical Perspective](#), by Walter H. Conser, Robert J. Cain^[13]

[Encyclopaedia of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, Volume 3](#), edited by Alfred Nevin^[4].

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[Biography](#)^[16]

[Clergy](#)^[17]

[Educators](#)^[18]

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[Dictionary of North Carolina Biography](#), University of North Carolina Press,^[22]

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[14] http://books.google.com/books?id=pd4xAQAAMAAJ&pg=PA1067&dq=Robert+Burton+Anderson+presbyterian&source=bl&ots=yRxzkJ1aH&sig=3U59J3ufna-CrRlsQrQdczuuFUE&hl=en&sa=X&ei=QM_UJyZOpG69gS6q4HYBg&ved=0CElQ6AEwAzgK#v=onepage&q=Robert%20Burton%20Anderson%20presbyterian&f=false&printsec=frontcover#v=onepage&q&f=false

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