

Brower, John Morehead ^[1]

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by K. Rodabaugh, 1979

19 July 1845–5 Aug. 1913

John Morehead Brower, congressman and state legislator, was born in [Greensboro](#) ^[2], the son of John W. Brower and his wife. His father was a businessman in Mt. Airy. Brower received his early education from private tutors and at the Mt. Airy Male Academy.

After reaching maturity, Brower devoted most of his energy to tobacco farming and to his mercantile business. But during [Reconstruction](#) ^[3], he also became actively involved in North Carolina politics as a member of the [Republican party](#) ^[4]. He served as a leader of the local [Union League](#) ^[5], and in this capacity he organized significant numbers of black voters for his party. Brower was a delegate to every Republican State Convention held from 1872 to 1896.

After suffering narrow defeats in bids for the North Carolina Senate in 1872 and 1874 and for the North Carolina constitutional convention in 1875, Brower ran for the state senate as an independent in 1878 and defeated [Richmond Pearson](#) ^[6]. That same year he ran for Congress as an independent but lost. When he served briefly in the North Carolina Senate in 1879, he had himself listed as a Republican. In 1886 he campaigned as a Republican and won a seat in the U.S. Congress. After winning reelection in 1888, Brower lost the next race and soon returned to Mt. Airy, where he resumed his agricultural and mercantile pursuits. He again served briefly in the General Assembly as a member of the house of representatives in 1897, before moving to Oklahoma, where he spent the remainder of his life engaged in stock raising, real estate promotions, and lumber production.

Brower married Nannie M. Paine of [Rockingham County](#) ^[7]; they had three sons and three daughters. He died in Paris, Tex., and was buried in Mt. Airy.

References:

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[Brower Family Papers](#) (Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill).^[8]

Greensboro Daily News, 9 Aug. 1913.

North Carolina Manual (1913).

Raleigh News and Observer, 9 Aug. 1913.

[J. S. Tomlinson, *Assembly Sketch Book* \(1879\).](#) ^[9]

Additional Resources:

"Brower, John Morehead, (1845 - 1913)." *Biographical Directory of the United States Congress*. Washington, D.C.: The Congress. <http://bioguide.congress.gov/scripts/biodisplay.pl?index=B000898> ^[10] (accessed December 9, 2013).

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Merritt, Cama Clarkson. John Morehead Brower (1845 to 1913): Businessman and Politician in a Turbulent Time. 1998. Thesis, Wake Forest University. Dept. of Liberal Studies, 1998. <http://find.zsr.wfu.edu/Record/968087/Holdings> ^[12] (accessed December 9, 2013)

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[Public officials](#) ^[16]

Authors:

[Rodabaugh, K.](#) ^[17]

Origin - location:

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[Greensboro](#) ^[19]

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Dictionary of North Carolina Biography, University of North Carolina Press.^[20]

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