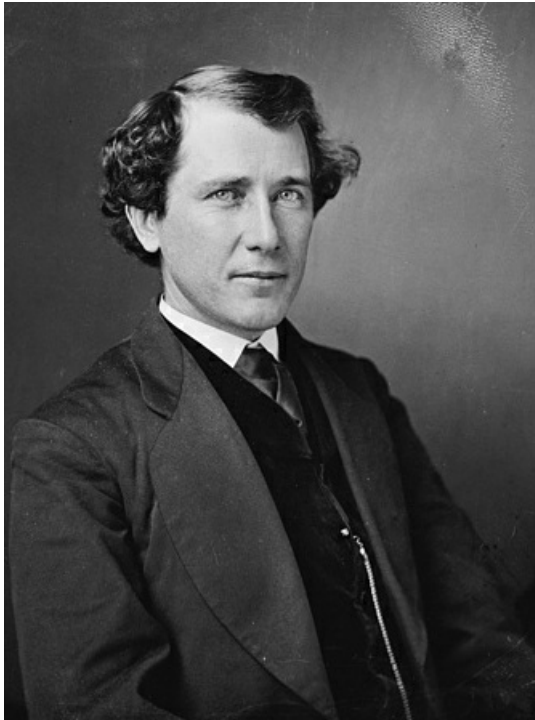


Cobb, Clinton Levering ^[1]

Cobb, Clinton Levering

by C. Sylvester Green ^[2], 1979

5 Aug. 1842–30 Apr. 1879



A photograph of Clinton Levering Cobb from between 1860 and 1870. Image from the Library of Congress.

^[3]Clinton Levering Cobb, lawyer, merchant, and congressman, was born in Elizabeth City, the son of Thomas R. and Emily Harrington Cobb. A contemporary described him as having an average education. His father was a merchant, and as a youth, Cobb worked as a clerk in his dry goods store. In 1863 he participated in a public meeting in Elizabeth City at which resolutions were adopted that opposed blockade-running ^[4] and sought the removal of a token state force, not strong enough to protect the area; in return for such action the town was to be free of any molestation by Federal troops then occupying Roanoke Island.

Cobb was admitted to the North Carolina bar in 1867 and began practicing law in his home town. At a Fourth of July celebration there in 1867, he was one of only two whites on the platform. He also engaged in mercantile business until 1868, when he ran as a Republican ^[5] for Congress. He was successful and served in the Forty-first Congress (1869–71); reelected for two more terms, he continued to serve until 1875. Then, although he apparently had a better reputation than most Southern scalawags, he was defeated by Jesse J. Yeates ^[6], a Conservative ^[7] from Hertford County ^[8]. As a congressman, Cobb acted on behalf of President Grant in trying to get Randolph Abbott Shotwell ^[9], a North Carolina Conservative convicted upon false evidence, to implicate some leading Conservatives in Ku Klux Klan ^[10] activity; in return for this information, Cobb promised Shotwell a pardon, but Shotwell refused and was imprisoned in Albany, N.Y. Cobb was also active in the establishment of the Life Saving Service ^[11] along the coast.

After his defeat, Cobb returned home to resume his law practice. In 1872 he married Pattie Gaskins Pool, daughter of George D. Pool; the Cobbs were the parents of Paul and Clinton L. After an illness of several weeks, Cobb died in Elizabeth City at the age of thirty-seven and was buried in the Episcopal cemetery there.

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Additional Resources:

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"Cobb, Hon. M.C.". Photograph. [between 1860 and 1870]. LC-BH8266- 3604. Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress. <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/brh2003000066/PP/> ^[3] (accessed January 10, 2014).

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