

Dixon, Archibald ^[1]

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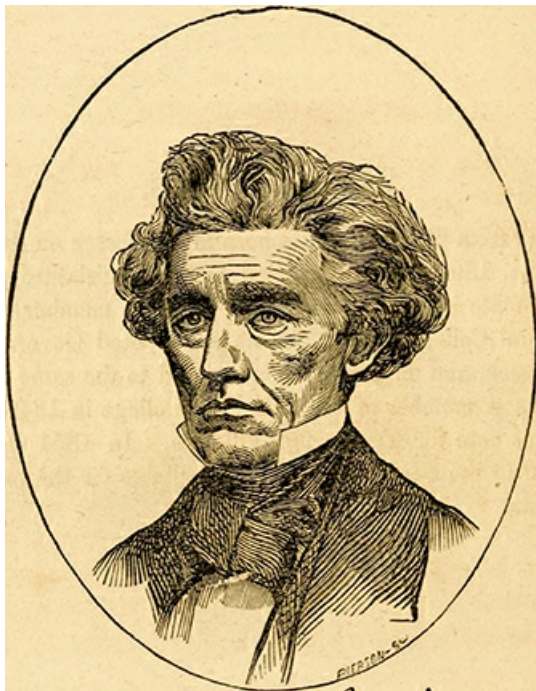


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Dixon, Archibald

by [William S. Powell](#) ^[2], 1986

2 Apr. 1802–23 Apr. 1876



An engraving of Archibald Dixon published in 1856. Image from the Internet Archive.

^[3]Archibald Dixon, U.S. senator and lieutenant governor of Kentucky, was born in the Red House community of [Caswell County](#) ^[4], the son of Wynne and the grandson of [Henry \("Hal"\) Dixon](#) ^[5], both revolutionary officers. In 1805 Wynne Dixon and his family moved to Henderson County, Ky., where Archibald spent the remainder of his life. He was educated by his mother and in the local common schools before beginning to study law at the age of twenty. In 1825 he began to practice law and it was said that because of his talent and learning he enjoyed a wide practice until 1860 when he retired. Young Dixon represented Henderson County in the lower house of the Kentucky legislature in 1830 and in 1841 and in the senate between 1836 and 1840. As a member of the [Whig party](#) ^[6] he served as lieutenant governor during the period 1844–48. In 1849 he was a delegate to the convention that drew up a new constitution for the state; by a vote of 48 to 50 he failed to be elected president of the convention. As a candidate for governor in 1851 he was defeated by 850 votes, but on 30 December of that year he was elected to the U.S. Senate to fill the vacancy caused by the resignation of Henry Clay. In Congress he was the author of the Kansas-Nebraska Bill repealing the Missouri Compromise act of 1820. He served in Congress from 1 Sept. 1852 until 3 Mar. 1855 but was not a candidate for reelection, preferring to return to his law practice and to the management of his plantation.

Prior to the outbreak of the [Civil War](#) ^[7] Dixon was described as "unceasing in his efforts to preserve the peace and the Union." Attending a convention of the Border States, he favored their neutrality in the hope that they might form a barrier to halt the tide of sectionalism. When this failed, he remained loyal to the Union but devoted his efforts during the war to aiding Confederate soldiers and sympathizers who were victims of arbitrary arrest. After the war he opposed Republican plans to humiliate the South. In 1863 Dixon was a delegate to the Frankfort peace convention.

In 1834 Dixon married Mrs. Elizabeth B. Pollit and they were the parents of five surviving children; in 1853 he married Sue Bullitt of Jefferson County, Ky., and they were the parents of three children. He was buried in Fernwood Cemetery, Henderson.

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Additional Resources:

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