

Dowd, Clement ^[1]

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by K. S. Melvin, 1986

27 Aug. 1832–15 Apr. 1898

Clement Dowd, congressman, author, and lawyer, was born in Moore County ^[2], the son of Willis Dickerson Dowd, a longtime clerk and a state senator in 1860, and Ann Mariah Gaines. He was the grandson of Major Cornelius Dowd, who served Moore County as deputy and sheriff, legislator in the North Carolina House of Commons, clerk of court and register of deeds, and state senator, and of Mary Dickerson Dowd. His great-grandfather was the Tory leader, Connor Dowd, who was forced to seek exile in England for his part in aiding the Crown ^[3].

Young Dowd attended the local private schools and then became a teacher at the age of seventeen. In 1852 he entered The University of North Carolina ^[4] where he obtained the A.B. degree in 1856. He returned to Carthage and for a time taught at the Carthage Male Academy; he also served on its board of trustees. On 10 Feb. 1857 he married a young widow, Lydia Josephine Person, the daughter of Dr. Samuel C. Bruce of Carthage. He was admitted to the bar in 1859 and began to practice law in Carthage. At the approach of the Civil War ^[5] he joined a volunteer group, the Moore Independents, which became part of Company H, Twenty-sixth North Carolina Regiment. He first held the rank of lieutenant; following the Battle of New Bern, where his captain, William Pinkney Martin, was killed, Dowd was made a captain. In 1862 he was forced to resign because of ill health. Back home, he became a major in the home guard.

In the fall of 1866 Dowd moved his family to Charlotte. There he formed a law partnership with his old commander and former governor of the state, Zebulon B. Vance ^[6]. The partnership continued for the next six years. Later he was to write Vance's official biography, The Life of Zebulon B. Vance ^[7] (1897). Dowd served two terms as mayor of Charlotte. He was elected to Congress in 1880 and 1882. In 1885 he was appointed collector of internal revenue for the Sixth District of North Carolina, and in 1888 he was named receiver of the State National Bank at Raleigh. He was president and founder of Merchant's and Farmer's Bank and the Commercial National Bank, both of Charlotte. He was also closely connected with other members of the Dowd family who bought several local newspapers; his nephew, W. C. Dowd ^[8], owned the *Charlotte News* and *Mecklenburg Times*.

A man of wealth and influence, Dowd died at his North Tryon Street home. After services in the North Tryon Methodist Church, he was buried at Elmwood Cemetery, Charlotte. He was survived by his widow, who died in 1910, and by his children Ella, Mattie, Willis D., Jerome ^[9], Julia, Nan, and Herman.

References:

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Additional Resources:

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