

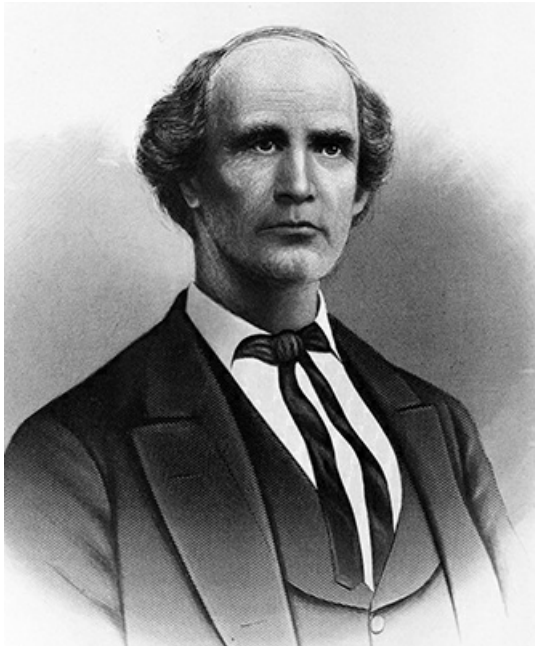
Horner, James Hunter ^[1]

Horner, James Hunter

by [William S. Powell](#) ^[2], 1988

3 Apr. 1822–13 June 1892

See also: [Horner School](#) ^[3]; [Junius Moore Horner](#), ^[4] and [Jerome Channing Horner](#) ^[5], sons.



A 1917 engraving of James Hunter Horner.
Image from the N.C. Government and Heritage Library.

James Hunter Horner, educator, was born near Flat River at Red Mountain, [Orange County](#) ^[6] (now Rougemont, [Durham County](#) ^[7]), the son of Colonel William Horner, a native of Pennsylvania who moved to North Carolina in the early nineteenth century. Following his graduation from [The University of North Carolina](#) ^[8] in 1844, he taught for a few years in Florida and in eastern North Carolina. He then founded and became principal of the [Horner School](#) ^[3] at Oxford (which later moved to Hillsborough for a brief period) where he taught from 1851 until his death, with the exception of about a year during the [Civil War](#) ^[9] and a brief illness in 1874 and 1875. Military features were introduced in 1880 and it became Horner Military School.

The customary M.A. degree was bestowed upon Horner by The University of North Carolina, as it was upon most graduates of the time who entered one of the professions. In 1891 he also was honored with an LL.D. degree.

Horner was regarded as a superior teacher, and countless young men who became leaders in the state were graduates of his school. On 5 June 1861, at age thirty-nine, he was elected captain of Company E ("Granville Targetteers"), Twenty-third Regiment, which arrived in Virginia just after the first Battle of Manassas. For most of the summer and winter the regiment encamped near Fairfax Station, but for brief periods was elsewhere in Virginia. On or about 16 Apr. 1862, he was defeated for reelection as captain and returned home to resume teaching. (On 10 May Abner D. Place, aged twenty-three, also of [Granville County](#) ^[10], was elected captain of the company.)

Preferring to teach in his own school, Horner declined several opportunities to join the faculty of The University of North Carolina. Nevertheless, he lectured at the Normal School there in the summer of 1879, the first summer school in the nation. He also was a trustee of the university from 1885 to 1892. An active member of the [Episcopal church](#) ^[11], he served for many years as a vestryman and senior warden of St. Stephen's Church, Oxford. The tower of the handsome stone church, erected in 1904, is a memorial to him.

On 18 Sept. 1850 Horner married Sophronia Moore, the granddaughter of General [Stephen Moore](#) ^[12]. They were the parents of seven daughters and three sons.

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Additional Resources:

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E.G. Williams & Bro. "J. H. Horner." *Biographical History of North Carolina*, vol. 8. Greensboro, N.C.: Chas. L. Van Noppen. 1917. 253.

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