

## **Webb, John Maurice** <sup>[1]</sup>

### **Webb, John Maurice**

by Eva Burbank Murphy, 1996

**29 Nov. 1847–5 Apr. 1916**

See also: [Webb, William Robert \(Sawney\)](#) <sup>[2]</sup>

John Maurice Webb, educator, was born in [Alamance County](#) <sup>[3]</sup> at a place called Stony Point, near Oaks, the son of Alexander Smith Webb (1804–30 June 1849), who died several months before the last Webb child was born, and Cornelia Adeline Stanford Webb (d. 1889). In the 1850 census John was listed as the tenth of eleven surviving children. His brothers were James Hazel (1829–1902), Sidney Smith (1836–1910), Richard Stanford (1837–1901, father of William Alexander Webb, 1867–1919), Alexander Smith (1840–1928), William Robert (Sawney, 1842–1926), and Samuel Henry (b. 1849); his sisters were Henrietta (1830–82), Susan Ann (Sunny, 1831–1905), Mary Caroline (1833–1904), Amy Pomfret (1838–39), and Adrianna Adeline (Addie, 1845–97). William Robert founded the Webb School, a secondary school for boys, in Tennessee in the 1870s.

John Webb attended the [Bingham School](#) <sup>[4]</sup> (in Oaks) from 1862 to 1865. In 1866 he entered [The University of North Carolina](#) <sup>[5]</sup> and joined the Dialectic Society. During his two and one-half years as a student, he held the offices of recorder, secretary, librarian, vice-president, and archives keeper. In February 1868 he was elected one of two junior debaters. On 4 June 1868 he asked for and received a diploma from the Dialectic Society. Because the university closed after the Civil War (1871–75), he was not granted an honorary degree until 1875. In 1869 Webb returned to the Bingham School, then in Mebaneville, to teach for a year, and by 1870 he had secured a post at an academy in Rockingham. The census of that year listed him as having resided with a Covington family in Wolf Pit, [Richmond County](#) <sup>[6]</sup>. He remained at the Rockingham school until he joined his brother in Culleoka, Tenn., in 1873. From 30 Jan. 1873 until his death, he served as principal and a teacher at the [Webb School](#) <sup>[7]</sup>, which moved from Culleoka to Bell Buckle in 1886.

On 7 Dec. 1876 in Nashville, Tenn., he married Lily Shipp (1849–1929), the daughter of Professor and Mrs [Albert M. Shipp](#) <sup>[8]</sup>, formerly at The University of North Carolina, then at Vanderbilt University. Their children were Albert Micajah (1877–1965), Cornelia (b. 1879), Mary Gillespie (b. 1881), Sarah (b. 1884), and another son, Hazel Alexander (1886–88). Albert taught Romance languages at [Trinity College](#) <sup>[9]</sup> (afterwards Duke University) from 1903 until his retirement in 1947.

John Webb was known for his wide reading and comprehensive learning. He had a keen interest in Dante's works and started a Dante club to encourage his children, nieces, nephews, and others to read good literature. He and his brother William were known for having taught some of Vanderbilt's first and best students. The University of Nashville (later George Peabody College for Teachers) awarded Webb an honorary doctorate in 1895.

Webb was a charter member and president of the Philological Society of Tennessee. He was also a member of the executive committee of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, serving as president in 1899. His reputation of having some business ability earned him a term as president of the Bell Buckle Bank. He was a [Methodist](#) <sup>[10]</sup> and an Independent Democrat. Webb died of a stroke in Bell Buckle and was buried in the Hazelwood Cemetery, named for his infant son.

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#### **Subjects:**

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Educators <sup>[17]</sup>

#### **Authors:**

Murphy, Eva B. <sup>[18]</sup>

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