

“Miss Mary”

Wife of Governor W. Kerr Scott

Mother of Governor Robert W.
Scott

Mary Elizabeth White Scott

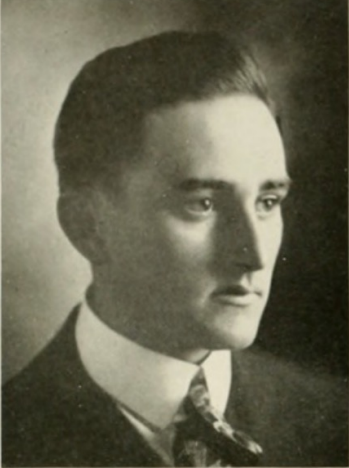
Her life and Times: 1897-1972





Mary Elizabeth White and William Kerr Scott grew up on neighboring farms in rural Alamance County, North Carolina. They attended the same schools and were both members of Hawfields Presbyterian Church.

File 17 Agromeck



WILLIAM KERR SCOTT.....Haw River, N. C.

Agriculture

Age, 21; Height, 5 ft. 10½ ins.; Weight, 170

Honors in Scholarship four years; Varsity Track Team four years; Capt. Fresh. Track Team; Winner Inter-Collegiate Cross-Country Medal, 1914; Winner Raleigh Rotary Club Cup, 1916; Leazar Lit. Soc., Sec'y 1915, Chaplain 1916, Pres. 1917, Inter-Society Orator 1914, Declaimer 1916; Agri. Club, Sec'y 1914, Treas. 1915, Vice-Pres. 1916; Varsity Debating Team three years; Y. M. C. A. Cabinet 1916, Pres. 1917; Inter-collegiate Debating Council, Sec'y 1916, Chairman 1917; Pres. Class (3); Bi-Ag. Society; Alamance Co. Club; Corporal; Asso. Ed. "Red and White"; Senior Debater; Co. "Q"; "Barbecue."

We have often wondered how one man could engage in so many business enterprises, and find time to make Ones. But this is what "SCOTT" has done. To this Alamance County boy belongs the honor of establishing intercollegiate debating teams at A. and M. He has been on the Varsity Track Team here four years, and is one of the best cross-country runners in the State. As president of the Y. M. C. A., he has been a decided success. A man of sterling character, and immovable in his convictions, we honor the president of our Junior year.



Their paths diverged when Kerr enrolled at what is now NC State University. He graduated in 1917. He worked for a year before enlisting during World War I.

Photo credit: Agromeck, 1917

Kerr enlisted in 1918
and was trained at
Field Artillery Camp
Zachary Taylor.





Mary taught for a while and then enrolled at what is now the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

The North Carolina State Normal and Industrial College



Mary taught at a number of schools including:

- Ramseur Elementary in Randolph County
- Woodlawn School in Alamance County
- Anderson School in Caswell County
- Taylorsville School in Alexander County
- It was at Taylorsville that they met again and got engaged.



Kerr and Mary
were married at
Hawfields
Presbyterian
Church on July
2, 1919.

The church was
decorated with
wildflowers.

The couple built their farm on Back Creek. Their home started out as a log cabin which was moved to the property and expanded with the help of family and neighbors. Ultimately, the farm encompassed more than 2,000 acres.



Kerr and Mary
raised three
children: Osborne
(seated),
Mary Kerr, and
Robert (both
standing).



Both Kerr and Mary were active in the Grange, a national organization that advocates for farmers and agriculture.

R: Kerr's "Past Master"
Grange badge.



Mary was a very active member of Hawfields
Presbyterian Church:

Member of the Synodical Board

Chair of her Church Circle

President of the Church Auxiliary

Mary was a Trustee of Flora MacDonald College



In 1929, Kerr became the farm agent for Alamance County. His office was in the basement of the Old Courthouse in Graham.



Image credit: vintage postcard, City of Graham, NC

In 1936, Kerr
decided to
run for
Commissioner
of Agriculture.



Commissioner of Agriculture of North Carolina



Seal of the North Carolina Department of
Agriculture and Consumer Services

Eleven years later,
in 1948, Kerr
decided to run for
Governor of North
Carolina.

Go Forward with **SCOTT**



SCOTT FOR **GOVERNOR**

THE PEOPLE'S CANDIDATE

1948
KTS

Mary was an active campaigner for her husband. She attended events and made speeches in support of his campaigns.



Outgoing Governor and Mrs. Cherry on the podium with Governor-elect W. Kerr Scott and Mrs. Scott



Photo credits: L: North Carolina Division of Archives and History

The Inaugural Ball



R: North Carolina Museum of History

- First Lady Mary White Scott was asked to oversee a renovation project at the Governor's Mansion.

- The work included both exterior repairs and interior decoration.

Photo credit:
historicsites.nc.gov



Mary kept in touch with her siblings from wherever she was.



On November 29,
1954, Sam Ervin
and W. Kerr Scott
were both sworn
into office at the
United States
Senate



Photo credit: visitthecapitol.gov

At first, the Scotts rented a small suite in the Carroll Arms Hotel in Washington D.C., across the street from the Senate Office Building.



In 1955 Mary was invited to the White House for a luncheon for Senators' wives hosted by First Lady Mamie Eisenhower.

Photo credits:

L: whitehouse.gov

R: IMDb



The Scotts moved to a larger apartment in the Westchester, five miles from Kerr's office. By 1956, Kerr had decided to run again in 1960. But in 1958 . . .

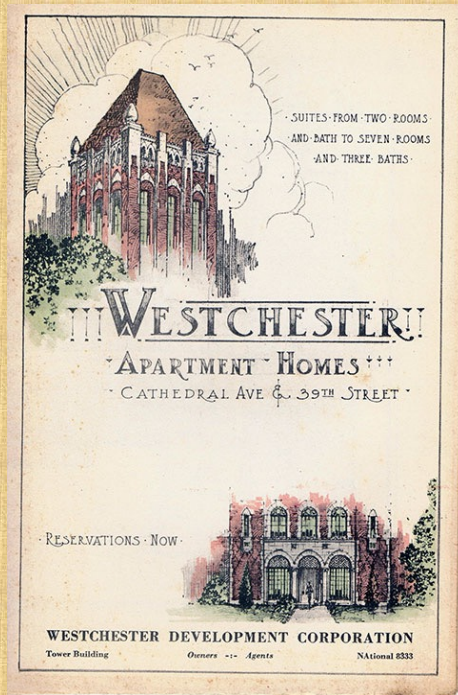


Photo credit: westchesterdc.com

Kerr died suddenly on a visit home in 1958. Senator Sam Ervin announced the sad news on the Senate Floor. He led a motorcade from Washington to attend the funeral which took place at Hawfields Presbyterian Church. Another motorcade was led by then Gov. Luther Hodges.

Photo credit: https://blogs.lib.unc.edu/ncm/p082_1-3_up58-05/



Mary moved back to the farm in Haw River after Kerr died. Her son Osborne helped her move out of the apartment in Washington.

Mary and her brother in law, Jim Scott, were co-executor of Kerr's estate. There was so much land, it would take two years to settle the estate.

Mary enjoyed
spending time with
her grandchildren:



Top: Mary with
Margaret Lowdermilk

L-R: W. Kerr Scott II
Mary Ella Scott
Margaret Rose Scott
Susan Rae Scott
Janet Louise Scott



MARY'S FAMILY GATHERED FOR A CEREMONY AT WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA UNIVERSITY



Mary received many awards for her service:

1949: "Woman of the Year" by the *Progressive Farmer*

1951: "Woman of the Year" by the N. C. state Grange

1952: "Award of Merit" from the American Red Cross

1966: "Distinguished Service Award" of the National Arthritis and Rheumatism Foundation

1970: recognized by North Carolina State University for her lifetime of contributions to the people of North Carolina.



Miss Mary passed away on April 23, 1972, one week before her 75th birthday.

- Kerr and Mary made a wonderful team.
- He valued her support and often wore a rose in his lapel in her honor.



Photo credit: State Archives of North Carolina

Mary White
Scott
1897-1972



(Photo Courtesy of
North Carolina
Museum of History)

“He leadeth me beside the still waters, he restoreth my soul.”

Psalm 23

Produced by the Staff of the Scott
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