

December 19, 1945

Mrs. Thomas Dixon  
1507 Hillsboro  
Raleigh, N. C.

Dear Mrs. Dixon:

Your letter of December 14 received and I hasten to reply because I hope something satisfactory to you might be worked out before I go with my wife to Florida December 27 to be gone through January. She has been sick for five weeks and I haven't had a vacation since my son went into service 32 months ago. He is home now and back on his job here at the office.

I have given much thought to the question you asked. Have thought of suggesting that Mr. Dixon be buried here in Sunset Cemetery or out at Prospect church where his father and mother are buried. In the Shelby cemetery his would be another grave among hundreds. At Prospect, there is not room in the Dixon plot and the cemetery in a rural community is never properly maintained.

My suggestion is that his body be placed at the Gardner-Webb College and made a sort of shrine for old and young. Mr. Dixon is the most distinguished product of the county and has brought fame to the county of his birth. The college as you know is not wholly denominational, although it has the support of 100 Baptist churches of this section. The section is predominantly Baptist because of the pioneer efforts of such men as the Revs. T. Dixon, G. M. Webb, Suttle and others. The college physical plant is that of old Boiling Springs College and we have a half million dollar fund in cash, with plans already made for enlargement.

I think it fitting that his remains be at the college, either in a campus grave or in a vault in the library where his books and paintings will be. If you would not object, the remains might be cremated and placed in the library. He has been such a power in the field of literature, on the public platform, on the stage and in the pulpit that the spirit of his presence would be felt among the students of this and future generations.

I do not have the authority to extend this invitation, but have spoken to his life-long friend, Judge E. Y. Webb, chairman of the Board of Trustees and Dr. Phil Elliott, college president who

concur in my suggestion. Before the matter is presented to the governing board which meets next week, I would like to have your reaction. It would take a week or ten days to go through the necessary machinery.

Most certainly his remains should come back to the county of his birth, on which he reflected honor and credit in his long, useful life.

As yet I haven't been able to see the undertaker, Lutz-Austell, both friends of mine but I am sure satisfactory arrangements can be worked out with them. Will advise you about this in a few days. Within the last few years I have buried my father and mother in a worthy manner at a cost of \$800 each. Large city undertakers would charge much more for the same service, nice casket, vault, etc. I believe I can get this handled cheaper, and in a manner becoming Mr. Dixon's distinction and your wishes.

I would like to read his biographical manuscript to better acquaint myself with his most interesting career so proper obituary notice could be made of his life and his return to his native soil. The newspapers would give generous space to a man of his prominence with a interment such as I suggest.

Also in reading the biography I would have enough highlights to present programs before our local civic clubs touching on his wonderful career and unveil at such programs the paintings which go to the college library. This would serve to revive an interest in the tragic reconstruction period which he described and dramatized so vividly in his books and plays. The present and future generations of this section where most of these scenes were enacted should ever appreciate the struggle our forefathers had in leaving us the heritage we enjoy today.

With kindest regards and hoping to hear soon how you feel toward this suggestion and with deepest sympathy in his affliction, I am,

Sincerely,