

= Alexander W. Monroe =

Alexander W. Monroe (December 29 , 1817 ? March 16 , 1905) was a prominent American lawyer , politician , and military officer in the U.S. states of Virginia and West Virginia . Monroe served as a member of the Virginia House of Delegates (1850 ? 1851 and 1862 ? 1865) and West Virginia House of Delegates (1875 ? 1877 and 1879 ? 1883) representing Hampshire County . He was the Speaker of the West Virginia House of Delegates during the 1875 ? 1877 legislative session . Monroe also represented Hampshire County in the West Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1872 .

Monroe was born in Hampshire County , Virginia (present @-@ day West Virginia) in 1817 . At the age of 18 , he and his siblings were orphaned and he became a schoolteacher to provide for the education of his brothers and sisters . He later became a county surveyor , and studied jurisprudence . Monroe was elected to the Virginia House of Delegates (1850 ? 1851) , during which time he participated in the 1851 reform of the Constitution of Virginia . He was admitted to the Virginia bar in 1858 and in 1861 , he purchased the Virginia Argus and Hampshire Advertiser newspaper , which he operated until the onset of the American Civil War .

In 1861 , Monroe commanded the 114th Regiment of the Virginia militia with the rank of colonel ; he was the oldest person in that commissioned rank within the state 's militia . The 114th Regiment took part in several skirmishes in Hampshire County . Following the regiment 's disbandment , Monroe volunteered and raised a battalion of cavalry within the 18th Virginia Volunteer Cavalry Regiment of the regular Confederate States Army . He later commanded the rear guard during the withdrawal of Confederate forces under the command of General Robert E. Lee from the Battle of Gettysburg in 1863 , successfully protecting the 27 @-@ mile (43 km) -long wagon train . Monroe served in the Virginia House of Delegates throughout the Civil War .

Monroe returned to the practice of law and in 1872 was a participant in the West Virginia Constitutional Convention . From 1875 to 1877 , he was a member of the West Virginia House of Delegates and was twice elected speaker . He was the first delegate to represent Hampshire County in both the Virginia General Assembly and the West Virginia Legislature . Monroe was twice appointed as a director of the West Virginia Hospital for the Insane . He again served in the West Virginia House of Delegates from 1879 to 1883 . Monroe retired to his farm on the Little Cacapon River and died in 1905 .

= = Early life and family relations = =

Alexander W. Monroe was born on December 29 , 1817 , in Hampshire County , Virginia (now West Virginia) , and was the oldest child of Robert and Elizabeth Monroe . His parents were of Scottish descent . Monroe 's great uncle , Dr. John Monroe , was an early physician and Baptist minister in Hampshire County . Monroe had four younger brothers and two sisters : Robert W. Monroe , James W. Monroe , J. Walker Monroe , Marion Monroe , a Mrs. Snapp , and Sarah Ann Monroe Garrett . His brother , Robert W. Monroe , was later appointed by United States President Grover Cleveland as an Indian agent in Idaho .

At the age of 18 , Monroe and his siblings were orphaned , and Monroe took responsibility for the rearing and education of his four younger brothers and two sisters . To accomplish this feat , he taught school during the winter months , and worked the family 's farm during the growing season .

= = Early professions and political career = =

Monroe studied surveying and began his career in public service as the county surveyor for Hampshire County . During his tenure , he surveyed the majority of the county 's land tracts . Monroe read law in Romney under prominent local attorney , Alfred P. White . While studying law , he was elected to represent Hampshire County in the Virginia House of Delegates alongside William P. Stump between 1850 and 1851 . Monroe was a member of the Virginia House of Delegates during the 1851 reform of the Constitution of Virginia . In 1857 , he was nominated as a Democratic

candidate to represent the Hampshire County district in the Senate of Virginia . Monroe was admitted to the Virginia bar in 1858 at the age of 41 and engaged in a law practice in Romney . In 1859 , he was elected the Commonwealth 's Attorney for Hampshire County .

Monroe and Job N. Cookus purchased the Virginia Argus and Hampshire Advertiser newspaper in Romney in 1861 . During their joint ownership , the offices for the Virginia Argus and Hampshire Advertiser were located in an old stone building that formerly housed the Romney Academy behind the Hampshire County Courthouse . Monroe and Cookus continued serving as its editors and publishers until the Union Army closed down the Advertiser 's offices in August 1861 , after which the newspaper was not revived .

= = Military career = =

Following the outbreak of the American Civil War in July 1861 , Monroe commanded the 114th Regiment of the Virginia militia with the rank of colonel . At age 43 , Monroe was the oldest colonel , by his commission , serving in the Virginia militia .

On October 26 , 1861 , Monroe 's 114th Regiment took part in a skirmish against a unit within the left column formation of Union Army troops under the command of Brigadier General Benjamin Franklin Kelley . The skirmish took place at present @-@ day Blues Beach where a wire bridge carried the Moorefield and North Branch Turnpike across the South Branch Potomac River at the Lower Hanging Rocks . Monroe also led 300 soldiers of the 114th Regiment in the Battle of Blue 's Gap on January 7 , 1862 .

Monroe remained the commanding officer of the 114th Regiment until its disbandment by the Congress of the Confederate States in April 1862 . While serving in the Confederate States Army , Monroe completed another term as a member of the Virginia House of Delegates between 1862 and 1865 . He participated in the Virginia General Assembly for each legislative session conducted during wartime , returning to his military duties following each session 's adjournment .

Following the passage of the Conscription Bill by the Confederate States Congress , Monroe volunteered and raised a battalion of cavalry within the 18th Virginia Volunteer Cavalry Regiment of the regular Confederate States Army . He was elected major of the 18th Virginia Cavalry , which was known as the North Western Brigade , shortly after its creation . While he served in the 18th Virginia Cavalry , it was under the command of Brigadier General John D. Imboden .

Monroe was later in command of the rear guard during the withdrawal of Confederate forces under the command of General Robert E. Lee from the Battle of Gettysburg in 1863 . In this capacity , Monroe successfully protected the 27 @-@ mile (43 km) -long wagon train . Monroe fought for the Confederate Army throughout the duration of the war , until 1865 . Following the war , he was paroled by Union authorities .

= = Later political career = =

During the Reconstruction Era , Confederate veterans were initially prohibited from holding public office or from practicing law in West Virginia without taking a test oath . The West Virginia House of Delegates passed a bill in 1868 that allowed Monroe to practice law without having to swear an oath . Following the passage of this bill , he resumed the practice of law in Romney . In 1872 , he represented Hampshire County at the West Virginia Constitutional Convention in Charleston . In 1875 , Monroe returned to politics when he was elected as a Democrat to represent Hampshire County in the West Virginia House of Delegates for one two @-@ year term . It was during this legislative session that Monroe served as Speaker of the West Virginia House of Delegates . He was the first delegate to represent Hampshire County in both the Virginia General Assembly and the West Virginia Legislature .

In March 1875 and a year later in March 1876 , he was appointed by Governor John Jeremiah Jacob and the West Virginia Board of Public Works as a director for the West Virginia Hospital for the Insane in Weston . In June 1876 at the state Democratic convention in Charleston , Monroe was selected as a delegate from West Virginia 's 2nd congressional district to attend the 1876

Democratic National Convention in St. Louis .

Monroe again served as a member of the House of Delegates representing Hampshire County from 1879 to 1883 . He was nominated for the house speakership but lost to George H. Moffet . In 1881 , Monroe was a member of the Joint Revisory Committee , which was charged with amending the laws and statutes of the West Virginia Code .

Throughout his political career , Monroe continued to engage in the practice of law in Romney . In 1887 he and Samuel Lightfoot Flournoy were the defense attorneys for Annie Offner , who had been accused of murdering her lover Benjamin Brooks .

= = Business pursuits = =

On February 23 , 1871 , the West Virginia Legislature passed an act incorporating the South Branch Railway Company , responsible for the construction and operation of a branch line connecting Romney with the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad main line at Green Spring . Monroe was named by the legislature as one of the commissioners of the South Branch Railway Company , charged with the responsibility of signing up investors to purchase capital stock in the company .

= = Later life and death = =

During his later years , Monroe resided on his farm on the Little Cacapon River in the Barnes Mill community of Hampshire County . Monroe succumbed to heart failure and died the night of March 16 , 1905 , at his home near Romney . Monroe was survived by his second wife Margaret and their four children . Monroe is interred with his wife Margaret at Indian Mound Cemetery in Romney .

= = Marriage and children = =

In 1852 , Monroe married his first wife , Sarah A. French , daughter of John and Eleanor French . Monroe and his wife Sarah had one son , James W. Monroe . Following Sarah 's death , Monroe married his second wife , Margaret Ellen Pugh , daughter of Benjamin and Sarah Pugh , on November 21 , 1866 . Monroe and Margaret had at least four children :

Robert Pugh Monroe (October 14 , 1867 ? 1924) , married Elwilda Idelle Kidner on March 20 , 1906

Sallie Elizabeth Monroe Haines (born October 20 , 1869) , married Charles William Haines on January 31 , 1893

Ellen G. Monroe Tharp , married Wilbur L. Tharp on November 29 , 1899

Annie H. Monroe