

Alfred Hume  
November 2, 1808 – October 29, 1853

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Alfred Hume was born in Nashville on November 2, 1808, to Rev. William and Rebecca Hume. On August 12, 1834, in Nashville, he married Louisa H. Bradford, daughter of John and Elizabeth Bradford. Louisa was born August 25, 1811 and died December 21, 1861. Being the son of William Hume, who came to Nashville from Scotland as a Presbyterian minister, Alfred Hume served for many years as the Superintendent of the First Presbyterian Sabbath School.

Hume was a teacher in “a select classical school,” located in a frame building on a part of the lot where Hume-Fogg now stands. He served as an Alderman on the City Council. He grew increasingly concerned about the need for public schools in the town. Commissioned by the Mayor and Board of Aldermen in 1852, he visited Philadelphia, New York, Boston and other Eastern cities to learn about their public schools. His report was presented to the Board of Aldermen and to the public at the Odd Fellows Hall on August 26, 1852. Hume’s report was adopted as the basis for the public school system.

In 1854, the first building was erected on the corner of Broad (Broadway) and Spruce (8<sup>th</sup> Avenue North) and named “Hume High and Grammar School” in Alfred Hume’s honor. The same year Francis B. Fogg was chosen to serve as President of the Board of Education. Hume School, for all 12 grades, opened in 1855. Regrettably Alfred Hume did not live to see this day because he had died on October 29, 1853. He was only forty four years old.

During the Civil War occupation of Nashville by the Federal Army, most local schools were closed. When schools re-opened, the Hume School was found inadequate to serve the students in the district. The City purchased and moved a wooden building, used during the war years as a Federal troops’ mess hall, from South Vine Street (7<sup>th</sup> Avenue South) to a lot adjoining the Hume School. This wooden building was replaced in 1875 by a new brick building which was named “Fogg School” and served as the high school. In 1912, both of these earlier buildings were razed and replaced by the present Hume-Fogg High School.

Alfred Hume has rightly been called “Father of the Public School System of Nashville.” His obituary praised him by saying that “He was scrupulous as he was fearless and determined in the discharge of what he deemed duty and left no obligation unperformed.” Hume family members are buried in the Hume lot at City Cemetery.

#### Sources

Davidson County Marriage August 12, 1834 Alfred Hume & Louisa H. Bradford  
Obituary *Republican Banner* November 1, 1853 Alfred Hume  
Obituary *Nashville Union & American* December 22, 1861 Mrs. Louisa Hume  
Clayton’s *History of Nashville*. 1880. “Public Schools of Nashville” pp.249-250  
*Early History of the Nashville Public Schools* by Leland Hume 1921 On-line

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