

Alexander Allison

The public life of Alexander Allison was well known in his day. Allison was twice elected Mayor of Nashville, in 1847 and 1848. During the time he was Mayor, he was appointed by the Governor to serve as one of the commissioners to establish a "hospital for the insane." The hospital, designed by Nashville architect [Adolphus Heiman](#), was built on the Murfreesboro Pike. First Presbyterian, corner of North Summer (5th Avenue North) & Church Street, where Allison was a member, was destroyed by fire in September 1848. Church members immediately set to work to rebuild. Allison served on the building committee. Also serving on this committee was Samuel D. Morgan. At that time Morgan was the Building Commissioner for the new State Capitol under construction. During 1849, the rebuilding of the new church was suspended because of a cholera epidemic. Planning went forward. William Strickland, architect of the Capitol, was also chosen the architect for the new church. Designed in the Egyptian Revival style, First Presbyterian Church was dedicated on Easter Sunday 1851. (Today now-called Downtown Presbyterian has been designated a National Landmark).

The first Nashville City Directory in 1853 identified the residence of Alexander Allison at 9 North Summer Street. His next door neighbors were Samuel D. Morgan and his family. They lived within a block of the First Presbyterian Church.

Allison was married to Madeline T. Allcorn of Wilson County, Tennessee. Their two sons died young. James Hart Allison, in his 22nd year, was killed at the Battle of Monterey, Mexico, on September 21, 1846. His remains were returned home for burial and interment took place in the family lot at City Cemetery on January 7, 1847. For his tombstone, click-on [James Hart Allison](#). Their second son, John Allcorn Allison, in his 23rd year, died of apoplexy (stroke), on June 22, 1856, and was also buried in the family lot with the same marker.

U.S. Census Slave Schedule listed Alexander Allison with 12 slaves in the City of Nashville and with 20 slaves in Davidson County. Between 1848 and 1863, Allison paid for the burials of nine slaves at City Cemetery. To look at information about one of his slaves, click on [Angeline Brady](#).

Alexander Allison was living at 9 North Summer Street when he died, at 63, on November 3, 1862, nine months after the Federal Army occupation of Nashville during the Civil War. His will was recorded in Davidson County on January 26, 1863. In his will, Allison left his house on North Summer, his 200 acre farm across the Cumberland River and other properties in the city to his wife. In his Inventory,

recorded the following day, the names of twenty-one slaves, who were devised to his wife, were listed. Madeline T. Allison outlived her husband by thirteen years. She died on February 16, 1876. The wills and inventories of Alexander and Madeline T. Allison will be transcribed and posted on this Link for Alexander Allison.

Fletch Coke
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