A large part of the voluminous writings of Thomas Dixon, the Baptist minister and lawyer, were the stories "The Birth of a Nation," the first million-dollar film, and "The Clansman," a notable historical novel. Mr. Dixon's writings on various sports, especially baseball, football, and boxing, were well-known. He was also known for his work on the lesser-known sports of curling, figure-skating, and polo.

Notables Among 300 At Sheldon Funeral

THOMAS DIXON, 64, Expert in Many Fields, Dies

Sports Writer for 41 Years

- "Reckless Individual"

- "White Supremacy"

- Subject of His Novels

Also Was Lawyer, Lecturer

Book Was Basis for 'Birth of a Nation'

On Tribune, Time, Post

HARRY CROSSTON, 64, Expert in Many Fields, Dies

On Tribune, Time, Post

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On Tribune, Time, Post
Produced in 1815 and directed with infinite skill by David Wark Griffith, "The Birth of a Nation," despite the highly controversial nature of its theme, was widely regarded by film experts as a landmark in cinematic history. The picture ran for many years and grossed more than $18,000,000, breaking all box-office records for the film industry. Its production cost $500,000. It depicted Civil War fighting and the ruins afterward, with emphasis on the alleged Galahad-like qualities of the first Ku Klux Klan, of which Mr. Dixon's father was a founder and in which his uncle held the title of Grand Titan of the Invisible Empire.

Its world première was held on March 3, 1915, and THE NEW YORK TIMES review said: "The Birth of a Nation," an elaborate new motion picture taken on an ambitious scale, was presented for the first time last evening at the Liberty Theatre. With the addition of much preliminary historical matter, it is a film version of the melodramatic and inflammatory material contained in "The Clansman" by Thomas Dixon. A great deal might be said concerning the spirit revealed in Mr. Dixon's review of the unhappy chapter of Reconstruction and containing the sordid service rendered by its plotting at old wounds."

Film Revisited in 1922

In 1922, when the film's showing had been revived, a reviewer for THE TIMES wrote that it "comes closest to historical truth when it is furthest from Thomas Dixon." In a letter the author averred the truth of "The Clansman." Although in the Nineteen Twenties Mr. Dixon repeatedly denounced the second Ku Klux Klan as bigoted and in no way resembling its predecessor, he said that he regarded whites as "superior" to Negroes. However, he said that it was the duty of the whites to "lift up and help the weaker race." Discussing the Klan's attitude toward other minorities, he called persecution of Jews "idiotic," pointing out that Christ's mother was Jewish, and he lauded the loyalty and good citizenship of Catholics.

Interviewed in 1905, the year "The Clansman" was published, Mr. Dixon spoke proudly of his ancestral connections with the first Klan, saying that "the circumstances of its birth were among my alma mater's most cherished traditions."

Evidence that his opinions did not fundamentally change through the years was given by Mr. Dixon in 1936, when, at an anti-Roosevelt Democratic meeting in Macon, Ga., he called the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People "an organization of Negroes for the advancement of themselves."

Mr. Dixon died today after a brief illness. He was 85.

Mr. Dixon had been an actor for years, he returned to Vienna he had dyed his hair and beard blond and pretended to be a Tyrolean peasant. Seeking out Max Reinhardt, he told the producer he had never been in a theatre, but wanted to act. He succeeded in getting an audition and played the mad scene from "Macbeth."

Mr. Royce so impressed Reinhardt that the producer proclaimed him the find of the century. He was said to be of the Old School and was named a member of Baseball's Hall of Fame Committee, which supervises the balloting for baseball immortals to be enshrined in the Hall of Fame at Cooperstown, N. Y. He was also a member of the Football Writers Association.

He leaves a widow, Maria C. Cross, who was born in 1904; a stepson, Charles Cross, and a daughter, Miss Mary Cross, both of New York; and three brothers, Charles Cross of Washington, D. C.; Arthur B. Cross of Naugatuck, and William Cross of New York.

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HIKOTARO ICHIKAWA

Japanese Ex-Minister to Iran Dies Delivering Speech

TOKYO, April 3 (AP)—Hikotaro Ichikawa, former Japanese Minister to Iran, died of apoplexy while delivering a speech at a liberal rally, the Kyodo News Agency reported today. His age was 51.

Mr. Ichikawa was Japanese Minister to Tehran when British and Russian troops were in that city during the recent war. On April 14, 1942, he and his staff received one week’s notice to leave the country. Iran broke off diplomatic relations with Japan because, it was said, the Japanese Legation was a center of subversive activity directed against the Allied Powers.

MISS E. C. SEARS DIES, 100

Ridgewood Resident at One Time Was Church Organist

RIDGEWOOD, N. J., April 4 (AP) — Miss Emily Couch Sears, who celebrated her 100th birthday on Dec. 30, died here today in the home of a niece, Miss Emily Lee, at 45 Godwin Avenue.

Born in Sharon, Conn., Miss Sears was the daughter of Benjamin and Emily Couch Sears. At one time she was organist of the Congregational Church there. After a brief residence in Sharon she returned here and became organist at the Unitarian Church.

Surviving besides Miss Lee is a nephew, Edwin Sears Williams of Washington, D. C.

CHARLES J. BAER

Special to The New York Times

ROSELLE, N. J., April 3—Charles J. Baer of this place, sales manager of the Jones Bowling Company of Hillside, N. J., at one time a pitcher with the Newark Bears of the International Baseball League, died last night at the Elizabeth (N. J.) General Hospital after an illness of three months. His age was 55.

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REv. IVAN OTIS WILSON

The Rev. Ivan Otis Wilson, pastor of the Presbyterian Church in Fairview, Pa., for many years was a Presbyterian missionary at Tehran, until his resignation in 1934. Died on March 22 at Erie, Pa., at the age of 59, it was learned here today.