

Stone, David ^[1]

DAVID STONE

Governor: 1808-1810

by Wilson Anglely

Research Branch, NC Office of Archives and History, 2005.

<https://www.dncr.nc.gov/about-us/history/division-historical-resources/nc-highway-historical-marker-program> ^[2]

See also: [David Stone](#) ^[3], *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography*



^[4]David Stone (1770-1818), a follower of Thomas Jefferson politically, was the builder of the now-restored [Historic Hope plantation](#) ^[5] near Windsor. Born in [Bertie County](#) ^[6] on February 1, 1770, he was the only son of Zedekiah Stone and the former Elizabeth Hobson. Little is known of his early education, but in 1788 he graduated from the College of New Jersey (now Princeton University) with honors. Stone's first wife was Hannah Turner of Bertie County, whom he married in 1793. She died in 1816; six of their eleven children reached adulthood. In 1817 he married Sarah Dashiell of Washington, D.C.

Stone studied law under William R. Davie at Halifax and was admitted to the bar. He served as a Federalist at the [Fayetteville convention of 1789](#) ^[7] that ratified the federal Constitution, and was subsequently elected to the state House of Commons, where he represented Bertie County from 1790 to 1795. Following four years as a superior court judge, he was elected to the United States House of Representatives, where he served from 1799 to 1801. It was while in Congress that Stone switched his political affiliation from Federalist to Republican, supporting Thomas Jefferson for president in 1800. The following year he resigned from the House to accept a seat in the United States Senate. There he remained until 1807. In both chambers of Congress Stone generally supported Jeffersonian policies while still maintaining a high degree of political independence.

Stone returned to North Carolina and to the [state judiciary](#) ^[8] in 1807, and on November 28th of the following year, was elected to the first of two terms as governor. As chief executive, he struggled to protect property owners from the land claims of Lord Granville's heirs, encouraged broad-based education, and urged improvements in agriculture, transportation, and finance. It was during his second term as governor (1810) that the State Bank was chartered.

Declining to stand for a third term, Stone ended his governorship in December of 1810 but returned to the state House of Commons in 1811 and 1812. During the latter year he was again elected to the United States Senate, where he served for two additional years. As senator, Stone's persistent opposition to the [War of 1812](#) ^[9] provoked a resolution of censure from the North Carolina General Assembly, whose members supported the Madison administration and the War by a substantial margin. Stone vigorously defended his actions as based on principle, but in 1814 resigned his Senate seat and returned to North Carolina as a private citizen and gentleman planter. His landholdings were quite extensive, through both

inheritance and acquisition, his principal plantation residences being "Hope" in Bertie County and "Restdale" near Raleigh. Renewing his earlier interest in internal improvements ^[10], he endeavored during his last years to improve navigation along the upper reaches of the Neuse River ^[11]. Stone died at his Wake County ^[12] plantation on October 7, 1818, and was buried there on the grounds.

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