

Bourne, Henry Clark ^[1]

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by H. C. Bridgers, Jr., 1979

1 Aug. 1893–19 Nov. 1972

Henry Clark Bourne, attorney, farmer, publisher, and churchman, was born on the farm White Oaks near Tarboro, Edgecombe County ^[2]. He was the son of Maria Toole Clark (25 Dec. 1859–4 June 1907), whose father was Governor Henry Toole Clark ^[3], and Henry Clay Bourne ^[4]. He was educated in a private elementary school in Tarboro operated by Frank Wilkinson, in the Tarboro public schools, and at The University of North Carolina ^[5]. On the death of his father in 1911 he was forced to leave college; he returned to Tarboro and read law under his uncle, John L. Bridgers, Jr. ^[6]. While reading law, he served as editor and business manager of the local newspaper, the Daily Southerner ^[7]. He passed the state bar examination and was admitted to the bar on 28 Aug. 1917.

At the outbreak of World War I ^[8], Bourne enlisted in the army. He rose to the rank of sergeant major in the 156th Depot Brigade and was commissioned second lieutenant before his discharge at Camp Gordon, Ga., in 1919.

After the war he returned to Tarboro, and on 30 Nov. 1920 he married Marion Frances Alston of Raleigh. They had three children: Henry C., Jr.; Laura June, who married Willie J. Long, Jr.; and Joel K. Bourne resumed the practice of law with John L. Bridgers, Jr., and continued his practice until his death. He became the owner and publisher of the *Daily Southerner* and the owner and operator of considerable farm land in Edgecombe County, including the Penelo plantation.

He was county attorney for Edgecombe and solicitor of the county records court during his early practice. Primarily interested in civil law and trial work, he had an extensive practice in Eastern North Carolina and argued many cases in the Supreme Court of North Carolina ^[9] and in the federal courts. He was a long-time member of the North Carolina State Bar Council from the Seventh Judicial District and served on many committees of the state bar and the North Carolina Bar Association ^[10].

Bourne was an active Democrat ^[11] and held many positions in the party organization. He was county campaign manager for Governor William B. Umstead ^[12] and several times a delegate to the state and national conventions. Active in the American Legion, he was elected state commander in 1931 and was immediately faced with the problem of the Bonus March of 1932, in which he played a vital role. He was a lifetime member of Calvary Episcopal Church in Tarboro, serving as a lay reader, member of the vestry, and senior warden. He was a frequent delegate to the diocesan and national conventions of the Episcopal church, was chancellor of the Diocese of North Carolina from 1960 until 1972, and served on many diocesan boards and committees.

Marion Frances Alston and Henry Clark Bourne were both buried in the yard of Calvary Church in Tarboro.

References:

Edgecombe County Court Records (North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh).

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North Carolina Historical Review 51 (1974).

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Additional Resources:

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Authors:

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Origin - location:

Edgecombe County [20]

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