

Burgwyn, William Hyslop Sumner ^[1]

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by [William S. Powell](#) ^[2], 1979

22 Jan. 1886–24 Jan. 1977

William Hyslop Sumner Burgwyn, lawyer, judge, and bank president, was born in Jackson, the son of George Pollock and Emma Ridley Burgwyn. He attended John Graham's School in Warrenton, Episcopal High School in Virginia, and Georgetown College in Washington, D.C., and was graduated from The University of North Carolina Law School in 1908. He began the practice of law that year and in 1911 moved to Woodland. He represented [Northampton](#) ^[3], [Bertie](#) ^[4], and [Hertford](#) ^[5] counties in the North Carolina Senate from 1917 until 1921 and again in 1925, and in 1923 he represented Northampton in the house. In 1925 he was president pro tem of the senate and in 1928 an unsuccessful candidate for lieutenant governor in the Democratic primary. From 1915 until 1932 he was a member of the board of trustees of [The University of North Carolina](#) ^[6]. In 1918 he became a director of the Farmers Bank of Woodland, and in 1934 he became its president. From 1932 until 1937 he was solicitor of the Third Judicial District. Appointed a special superior court judge in 1937, he held the position until 1953. During his long career on the bench, Burgwyn held court in eighty-eight of the state's hundred counties.

Burgwyn served as vice-chairman of the Roanoke River Basin Authority and was chairman of the Roanoke Valley Flood Control Committee, which played a major role in the construction of [Buggs Island Dam](#) ^[7] in the late 1940s.

In 1911 he was married to Josephine Griffin of Woodland; they became the parents of John Griffin [W. H. S., Jr.](#) ^[8], [Margaret E.](#) ^[9], and Henry K.

Burgwyn was buried in the family cemetery at Woodland.

References:

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Raleigh News and Observer, 17 June 1953, 17 Dec. 1967.

Samuel T. Peace, *"Zeb's Black Baby": Vance County* (1955).

Additional Resources:

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Interview number C-0030 in the Southern Oral History Program Collection (#4007) at The Southern Historical Collection, The Louis Round Wilson Special Collections Library, UNC-Chapel Hill.
<http://dc.lib.unc.edu/cdm/ref/collection/sohp/id/10211> ^[11] (accessed July 31, 2013).

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