

Ferebee, Percy Bell ^[1]

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by George Myers Stephens, 1986

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Senior portrait of Percy Bell Ferebee, from the 1913 North Carolina College of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts yearbook *The Agromeck*. Item #agromeck1913nort, Agromeck Yearbooks, Rare & Unique Collections, NCSU Libraries.

^[2]Percy Bell Ferebee, banker and developer, was born in Elizabeth City, the son of James B. and Alice Bell Ferebee. Upon graduation from North Carolina State College ^[3] in 1913 he became an engineer for the U.S. Forest Service ^[4]; however, he soon became interested in public financing and bought a bank, which he served as president for forty years. After his bank was sold to Wachovia Bank and Trust Company ^[5], he continued as chairman of its local advisory board. Residing in Andrews, he was publisher and editor of the *Andrews Sun* between 1915 and 1918, and served as mayor of the town for a number of years. From 1929 until his death he was president and treasurer of the Nantahala Talc and Limestone Company; president of Ferebee and Company; dealer in municipal bonds, from 1918 until his death; and president of the Andrews Development Corporation.

During his long career, Ferebee was active in public affairs statewide. He served in the North Carolina General Assembly ^[6] (1957–59) and was chairman of the Western North Carolina Regional Planning Commission, which he helped to organize. He also served on the North Carolina National Park, Parkway, and Forest Development Commission and was president for five terms of the Western North Carolina Association of Communities, which launched the outdoor drama, *Unto These Hills* ^[7], through the Cherokee Historical Association ^[8] of which he also was an officer. Ferebee was a member of the board of trustees of The University of North Carolina ^[9], of the State Highway and Public Works Commission, of the board of the North Carolina Department of Conservation and Development, and of the North Carolina Battleship Commission. He was sometime treasurer of the North Carolina Bankers Association ^[10], a trustee of the John C. Campbell Folk School ^[11], and benefactor of the District Memorial Hospital of Southwestern North Carolina. He donated a 6,000-acre tract in scenic Nantahala Gorge ^[12] to the U.S. Forest Service.

In 1920 Ferebee married Florence Flood of Watkins Glen, N.Y., and they were the parents of a son, James B. Ferebee II.

He was buried in Valleytown Cemetery near Andrews.

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