

Haywood, William ^[1]

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Haywood, William

by Alan D. Watson, 1988

1730–79

William Haywood, merchant and politician, was the oldest of seven children of John Haywood and his wife Mary Lovatt of New York (perhaps born in Beverly, Mass., on 27 Nov. 1695). John Haywood was born near St. Michael in Christ Church Parish on Barbados, British West Indies, in 1685; he arrived in North Carolina about 1730. He served as vestryman and churchwarden of the Anglican parish in [Edgecombe County](#) ^[2], [sheriff](#) ^[3], colonel of the county [militia](#) ^[4], member of the Provincial Assembly, and treasurer for the northern counties. He was also employed by Earl Granville as [surveyor](#) ^[5] for Edgecombe County, an office that embroiled him in political disturbances and caused the exhumation of his body after his death in 1758 to verify his demise.

William Haywood's public career spanned two decades beginning in 1760 when he was named justice of the peace of Edgecombe County, commissioned colonel of the Edgecombe militia, and appointed surveyor of the county by Granville. Haywood proved active in county affairs as magistrate by serving on commissions to build bridges, erect a jail, and examine the sheriff's accounts. During the year of his death he was one of the tax assessors of the county. His devotion to public duty is best exemplified by his constant attendance as justice of the peace at the sessions of the county court. Between 1760 and 1775, he missed only eight quarterly court gatherings.

Haywood was also active in provincial politics. He represented Edgecombe County continuously in the Provincial Assembly from 1760 to 1775, and served on committees of propositions and grievances, public accounts, public claims, and privileges and elections. In 1764 legislation he was designated one of the commissioners to relocate the courthouse of Edgecombe County. In 1774, Haywood introduced legislation for the better observance of the Sabbath and the suppression of vice and immorality in the province.

During the colonial struggle with Great Britain for independence, Haywood demonstrated his allegiance to the American cause. The Third [Provincial Congress](#) ^[6], which met at Hillsborough in 1775, appointed him to the [Committee of Safety](#) ^[7] for the Halifax District. In 1776, he represented Edgecombe in the Fourth and Fifth [Provincial Congresses](#) ^[6] at Halifax. In the Fifth Congress he was chairman of the committee on privileges and elections and sat on the committee that drafted the state constitution. The same Congress elected Haywood to the [Council of State](#) ^[8], in which capacity he remained until resigning in 1778. In 1779, he was elected to represent Edgecombe in the lower house of the state legislature.

Haywood belonged to the Anglican church and served as vestryman in St. Mary's Parish. On 2 Mar. 1754 he married Charity Hare, daughter of Moses Hare of [Hertford County](#) ^[9]. They had nine children: Jemima, who married John Whitfield of [Lenoir County](#) ^[10]; [John](#) ^[11], who was state [treasurer](#) ^[12] for forty years; Ann, who married [Robert Williams](#) ^[13] of [Pitt County](#) ^[14]; Charity, who married Josiah Lawrence of Pitt County; Mary, who married Ethelred Ruffin of Edgecombe County; Sherwood, who was U.S. commissioner of loans; Elizabeth, who married Henry Irwin Toole of Edgecombe County; William, who was clerk of a U.S. district court; and Stephen, who was a state senator of North Carolina. William Haywood died in late 1779 and presumably was buried at his home, Dunbar Plantation, in Edgecombe County.

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