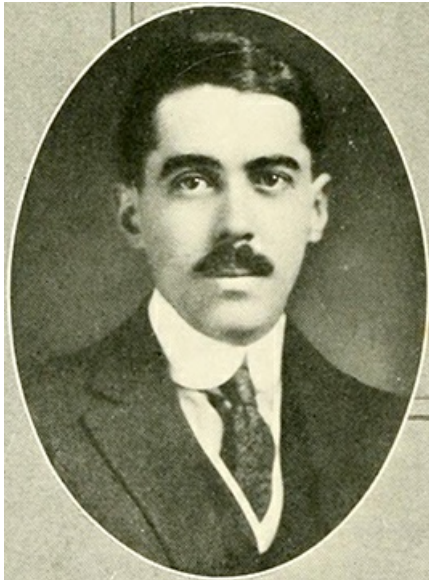


Long, William Lunsford ^[1]

Long, William Lunsford

by Manly Wade Wellman, 1991

5 Feb. 1890–24 Jan. 1964



A photograph of William Lunsford Long published in 1921. Image from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

^[2]William Lunsford Long, business executive and legislator, was born at Longview, his maternal grandmother's plantation near Garysburg, [Northampton County](#) ^[3], the fourth child of Bettie Gray Mason and Lemuel McKinne Long. Among his ancestors were Colonel [Nicholas Long](#) ^[4], [Willie Jones](#) ^[5] of The Grove, and Governor [Hutchins G. Burton](#) ^[6]. Long studied under private tutors and, with his three brothers, enjoyed a vigorous boyhood of farming, fishing, and hunting at Longview as well as at Occoneechee Neck. There also were summer visits to his maternal grandfather's plantation in nearby Brunswick County, Va. He was graduated from [The University of North Carolina](#) ^[7] in 1909, as a member of Phi Beta Kappa, Sigma Alpha Epsilon, the Philanthropic Society, and the Order of the Gimghoul. Throughout his life, Long was devoted to the members of the class of 1909, especially [Kemp Davis Battle](#) ^[8], [Frank Porter Graham](#) ^[9], [Charles W. Tillet](#) ^[10], Jr., and Francis E. Winslow. Between 1909 and 1911 Long studied law at The University of North Carolina; he also taught Greek. In 1911, on his twenty-first birthday, he was admitted to the bar and began to practice in Jackson with the firm of his grandfather, Judge [Thomas W. Mason](#) ^[11]. After Mason's death in 1921, Long established the firm of Long and Crew at Roanoke Rapids.

Beginning in 1916 Long became active in business, serving as vice-president and general counsel of Roanoke Mills at Roanoke Rapids and later as president (1926–28). He also was vice-president and general counsel (1919–26) and later president (1926–28) of the Rosemary Manufacturing Company. After moving to Raleigh in February 1934, Long was president of the Boylan-Pearce Company (1934–41) and vice-president of the Carolina Apartment Hotel Company. Interested in [mining operations](#) ^[12] early in his career, he served as vice-president and general counsel (1936–55) and then as president (1955–57) of Haile Mines, Inc. He was also general counsel and vice-president of the Tungsten Mining Corporation (1949–55) and president of Manganese, Inc. (1955–57); both of these firms had their headquarters in New York City. Although he retired from the business world in April 1958, Long continued as a consultant to the Tungsten Mining Corporation and Manganese, Inc., until his death; in 1955 he organized the Tungsten Institute and served as its president until 1958.

Long was elected to the North Carolina House of Representatives in 1914 and to the state senate in 1916. He served in the senate until 1924 and again in 1927–28. A strong leader of the [Democratic party](#) ^[13] and a powerful speaker, he exercised considerable influence. He was long remembered for a speech advocating the outlawing of the [Ku Klux Klan](#) ^[14] in the state, a measure defeated at the time but afterwards approved. Long played a significant role in securing passage of the state's first [child labor law](#) ^[15], and he helped to overcome strong opposition to a bill for the state's first bond issue for constructing public highways. He contributed significantly towards the creation of the State Board of Public Welfare. A member of the state Democratic executive committee from 1918 until 1928, he no longer held public office after 1928 but was a delegate to the Democratic National Convention in 1932 and 1960 as well as an alternate in 1948. After Long's death, the [Raleigh News and Observer](#) ^[16] commented that he was one of a few men to exercise so much influence

on legislation in North Carolina in the 1920s.

In other public service, Long was a trustee of The University of North Carolina (1917–31) and of Elizabeth City State Teachers College (1956–64). He was a vestryman and warden of Emmanuel Episcopal Church, Warrenton; an honorary life member of Rotary International; and president of the Warren County Historical Society. In the latter position he was instrumental in having a history of the county written and published. During his later life, Long lived in Warrenton. He collected art, enjoyed historical and literary study, and engaged in boating, hunting, fishing, and swimming. A noted host, he entertained a wide circle of friends and acquaintances. He was also a supporter of the North Carolina Museum of Art^[17] and of the Ackland Art Center at The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill^[7] and presented several works of art to both facilities.

On 12 Jan. 1914, at Petersburg, Va., Long married his distant cousin, Rosa Arrington Heath, the daughter of Tarlton Fleming and Rosa Gilmour Arrington Heath; she attended the Southern Female Seminary in Petersburg and St. Mary's School in Raleigh. They became the parents of three children: Rosa Arrington Heath (Mrs. James Payne Beckwith), Ruth Mason (Mrs. Peter Pescud Williams), and Dr. William Lunsford Long, who married Rebecca Davis Williams, sister of Peter P. Williams. Long died at his home in Warrenton and was buried in Fairview Cemetery. A portrait of him is owned by a grandson.

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"W. Lunsford Long Class of 1909 President Pro Tem. Senate of N.C. 1921. Roanoke Rapids, N.C." Photograph. *Yackety Yack* vol. 31. University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill: Dialectic and Philanthropic Literary Societies and the Fraternities. 1921. 16. <http://library.digitalnc.org/cdm/ref/collection/yearbooks/id/546>^[2] (accessed November 5, 2013).

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