

Pate, Zebulon Vance ^[1]

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by Eva Murphy, 1994

2 May 1866–17 Aug. 1941

Zebulon Vance Pate, businessmen, merchant, banker, landowner, and farmer of [Scotland County](#) ^[2], which was a part of [Richmond County](#) ^[3] at the time of his birth, was born on the Thoroughgood Pate plantation near [Gibson](#) ^[4]. He was the third child of George Thoroughgood (1836–1922) and Mary Ann Adams Pate (1840–1920), the latter of Marlboro County, S.C. His siblings were Dr. William Thoroughgood (1860–1917), James Franklin (b. 1864), Artemus Ward (1868–1928), Charles Thomas (1870–1943), Annie Jane (Mrs. John A. McGregor, 1872–1948), George Mary (1877–1944), Duncan Alpheus (1882–1944), and Sallie Adams (1883–94).

Pate's business interests, including banking and investing, railroads, manufacturing, and trade, occupied much of his efforts. In 1882, at age sixteen, he went to work for John F. McNair (whose daughter he later married) in a [Laurel Hill](#) ^[5] general store, and in 1900 he bought the store and established the firm of Z. V. Pate, Inc. In 1935 the firm expanded to include his stores in [Purvis](#) ^[6], [Osborne](#) ^[7], and Gibson. He was president and treasurer of the family business until his death. In 1923 Z. V. Pate General Merchandise in Laurel Hill was advertised in a [Charlotte](#) ^[8] newspaper as "one of the largest stores under one roof between Richmond and Atlanta."

At his death Pate was president of the McNair Investment Company, director of the Commercial State Bank (Laurel Hill and Hamlet) and the Bank of Gibson, and director and vice-president of the State Bank of [Laurinburg](#) ^[9]. His financial investments included an interest in railroads. In 1909 he had been treasurer of the [Laurinburg and Southern Railroad](#) ^[10] Company, which line ran from Johns to [Raeford](#) ^[11].

His ties with local manufacturing firms were many. He served as president of the Liberty Manufacturing Company [Red Springs](#) ^[12], chairman of the board of directors of Waverly Mills, Inc., vice-president of John F. McNair, Inc., and of Laurinburg Oil Company, and treasurer of the Dixie Guano Company. At his death he was president of the Robeson Manufacturing Company ([Lumberton](#) ^[13]), president and manager of Dixie Guano, and an officer of the Laurinburg Milling Company.

Pate's commercial responsibilities involved three local companies. At his death he was president of Pate's Supply Company ([Pembroke](#) ^[14]), the Dundarrach Trading Company, and the Hamlet Gin and Supply Company.

As a landowner and farmer he was known for having turned to profit the fruit, vegetable, and cotton crops from the Sandhills property of Joe's Creek Farm. During his life he owned land in Richmond, Scotland, [Robeson](#) ^[15], and [Hoke](#) ^[16] counties, and in Marlboro County, S.C.

Pate was educated at public schools in (then) Richmond County and Marlboro County, S.C. He lived in Laurel Hill from 1884 until 1921, when he moved to Laurinburg. He belonged to the Laurel Hill Presbyterian Church from July 1889 until he joined the First Presbyterian Church of Laurinburg in September 1923.

On 27 Dec. 1893 he married Sallie Patterson McNair (22 May 1869–4 June 1934), daughter of John F. and Mary Jane Lytch McNair, of Laurel Hill. They had four children: John McNair (1896–1924), Edwin, Sarah (Mrs. William Bartel Townsend), and Mary (Mrs. John Duncan Currie). The surviving son, Edwin, a state senator when his father died, had been active in the family business and was then vice-president of the corporation.

In politics Page was affiliated with the [Democratic party](#) ^[17]. He died at his home on Church Street and was buried two days later in Hillside Cemetery, Laurinburg.

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