

Slocumb, Jesse ^[1]

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20 Aug. 1780–20 Dec. 1820

Jesse Slocumb, congressman, was born near the site of the future town of Dudley ^[2] in southern Wayne County ^[3], the son of Ezekiel and Mary (Polly) Hooks Slocumb. He received a modest education locally and began farming, but in 1804, at the time of his marriage to Hannah G. Green, daughter of Colonel Joseph Green of Wayne County, he was described as a merchant in Wilmington ^[4]. For a time he was a member of the Wayne County Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions ^[5] and was register of deeds for the county from 1802 to 1808. In 1810 he completed a questionnaire on his native county in response to a letter from Thomas Henderson, editor of the Raleigh ^[6] *Star*. It survives in Henderson's letter book at the North Carolina State Archives ^[7] as an interesting and detailed report on the history of the county as well as on the contemporary scene. In 1810 Slocumb was an incorporator of Waynesborough Academy, and three years later he was one of the founders of the Wayne County Free School. It probably was as a farmer that he earned a livelihood for his family—his plantation was named Shelburne—and at his death he bequeathed the five people he enslaved as well as farm equipment to his wife.

A Federalist, Slocumb served in the Fourteenth and the Fifteenth Congress—from December 1815 until his death five years later. As a candidate for Congress in 1819, he made no promises but said instead that if he were elected he would do "what shall appear to me the best interest of our country." His uncle, Charles Hooks ^[8], also served in the Fifteenth Congress as well as in several later ones. It was reported that Slocumb was ill when he arrived in Washington for the second session of the Fifteenth Congress beginning on 13 Nov. 1820; he died of pleurisy just over five weeks later and was buried in the Congressional Cemetery in Washington. He was survived by his wife and four children: Julia, Harriet, John, and Junius. In addition, his ward, Nancy Sasser, lived with the family for a number of years.

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