

## **Tate, John Hall** <sup>[1]</sup>

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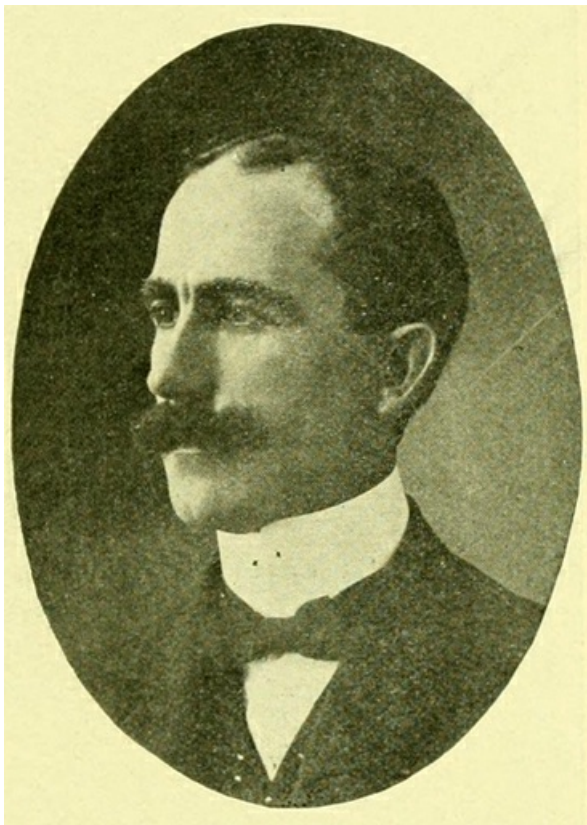


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## **Tate, John Hall**

by William S. Powell, 1996

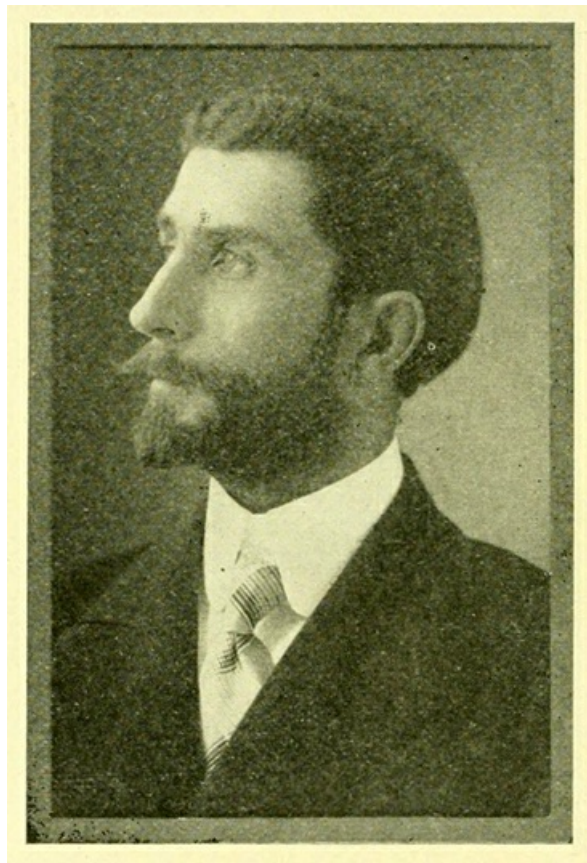
**7 Apr. 1861–8 Apr. 1930**



Portrait of John H. Tate, from J. J. Farriss's *High Point North Carolina* published [1909, Enterprise Printing Company, High Point, NC]. Presented on Archive.org. <sup>[2]</sup>

<sup>[2]</sup>John Hall Tate, pioneer furniture manufacturer, was born in Kilsyth, Ontario, Canada, the son of Edward (1822–83) and Mary A. Tate (1831–1920). His father was a native of England and his mother of Ireland. Both were Presbyterians <sup>[3]</sup> who were married in Canada and in 1871 moved to a farm near Jamestown, N.C., where Tate became a farmer and cabinetmaker. No record has been found of young John Tate's education, but perhaps like his younger brothers he attended school in Jamestown.

John Tate and two of his three brothers were among the earliest furniture manufacturers <sup>[4]</sup> in High Point <sup>[5]</sup>. There Ernest A. Snow <sup>[6]</sup>, a lumberman, who sold lumber to a furniture manufacturer in Baltimore, returned home and remarked to his friends on the great increase in the value of lumber when it was made into furniture. To establish a factory to produce furniture, Tate in the spring of 1889 invested \$3,000 and so did Thomas F. Wrenn <sup>[7]</sup>; Snow agreed to provide lumber and he also became a partner. Tate was president and his brother, Albert E., was secretary and treasurer. Around the first of



Portrait of A.E. Tate, from J. J. Farriss's *High Point North Carolina* published [1909, Enterprise Printing Company, High Point, NC]. Presented on Archive.org. A.E. Tate was the secretary and treasurer of the High

Point Furniture Company. Presented on Archive.org. <sup>[8]</sup>bedroom suites consisting of a bed, dresser, and washstand which sold for \$7.50. Demand grew and in the first year sales amounted to \$75,000. Labor was available from the surrounding area, lumber was plentiful in the forests of Piedmont <sup>[9]</sup> North Carolina, and there were excellent rail connections. These advantages led a number of men to open new factories, all of which flourished. Tate sold his interest in the first factory and in 1893 organized the Tate Furniture Company, of which his brother Albert was secretary-treasurer. He also assisted others in establishing factories and frequently invested in them himself. He was generous with his resources, led in founding the YMCA <sup>[10]</sup>, and was highly regarded in the community.

Tate's first wife was Narcissa Spencer, who died in 1900; they were the parents of a daughter, Genevieve (m. Dorsey Brockett). In 1906 he married Hattie Gavin of Newton; their only child died in infancy. Tate was buried in Oakwood Cemetery, High Point.

#### References:

*The Building and the Builders of a City: High Point, North Carolina* (1947).

*Charlotte Observer*, 9 Apr. 1930.

J. J. Farriss, *High Point, North Carolina: A Brief Summary of Its Manufacturing Enterprises, Together with Sketches of Those Who Have Built Them* (1900 [portrait]) and *High Point, North Carolina* (1911?) <sup>[11]</sup>.

*Greensboro Daily News*, 9 Apr. 1930.

Robert F. Hicks, Jr., "The Spirit of Enterprise': The History of High Point's Formative Period, 1851–1926" (master's thesis, University of North Carolina at Greensboro, 1989).

*High Point Enterprise*, 9 Apr. 1930.

*North Carolina Biography*, vol. 3 (1928).

#### Additional Resources:

Farriss, J. J. *High Point, North Carolina*. [High Point: Enterprise Printing Company.

1909.] <https://archive.org/details/reminiscencesofp00per> <sup>[11]</sup> (accessed March 27, 2014).

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"A. E. Tate." Photograph. [n.d.] Farriss, J. J. *High Point, North Carolina*. [High Point: Enterprise Printing Company. 1909.] <https://archive.org/details/reminiscencesofp00per> <sup>[11]</sup> (accessed March 27, 2014).

### Subjects:

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[UNC Press](#) <sup>[14]</sup>

### Authors:

[Powell, William S.](#) <sup>[15]</sup>

### Origin - location:

[Guilford County](#) <sup>[16]</sup>

[High Point](#) <sup>[17]</sup>

### From:

[Dictionary of North Carolina Biography, University of North Carolina Press.](#) <sup>[18]</sup>

1 January 1996 | Powell, William S.

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[3] <https://www.ncpedia.org/presbyterian-church-0>

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