

Webb, Edwin Yates ^[1]

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by H. Holt Mcpherson, 1996

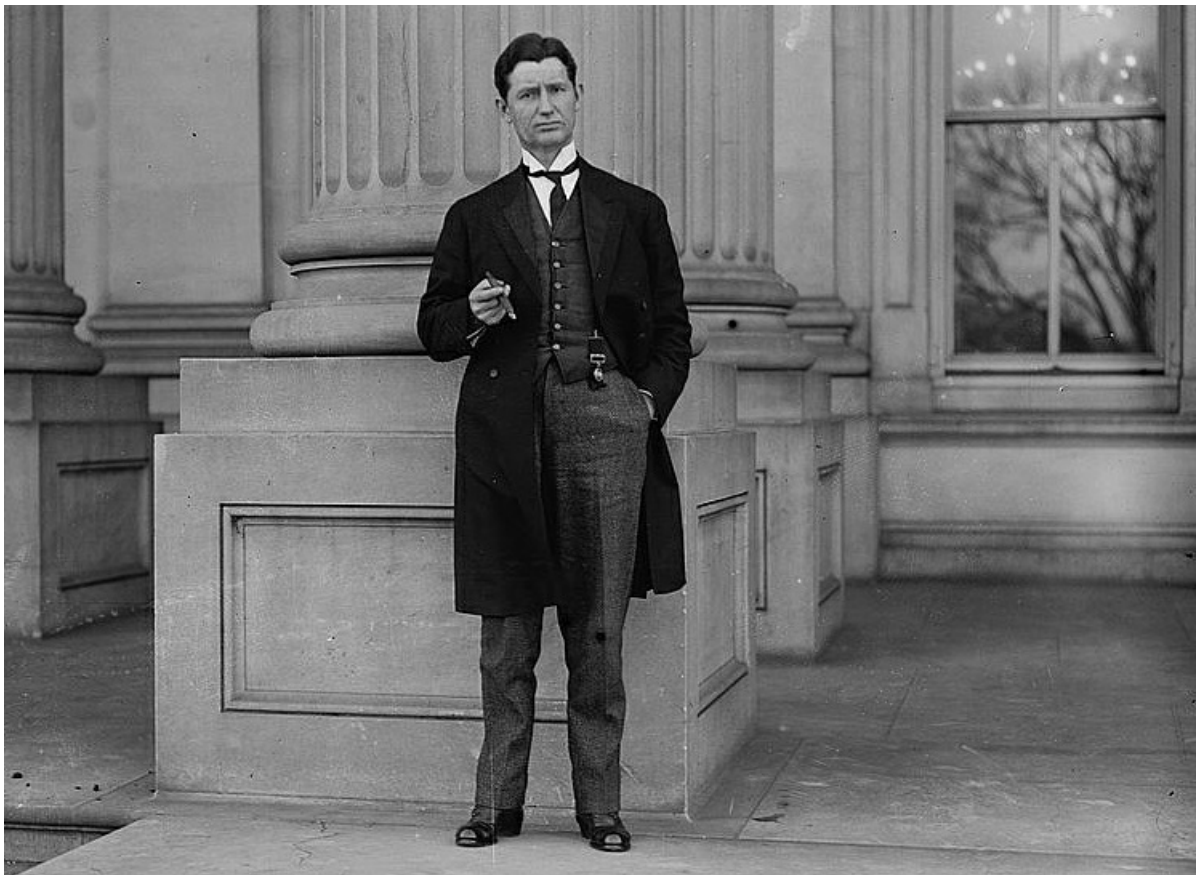
23 May 1872–7 Feb. 1955



Photograph of Edwin Yates Webb, between 1911 and 1917. Image from the Library of Congress.

^[2]Edwin Yates Webb, congressman and federal judge, was born in Shelby, the son of the Reverend George M., a Baptist minister, and Priscilla Jane Blanton Webb. He received an undergraduate degree from [Wake Forest College](#) ^[3] (1893), studied law at [The University of North Carolina](#) ^[4] (1893–94), did postgraduate work at the University of Virginia, and was awarded the LL.D. degree by [Davidson College](#) ^[5] (1918). In 1894 he was both admitted to the bar and elected to the state senate. He won a seat in Congress in 1900 and served eight terms; he was coauthor of the [Webb-Kenyon Act](#) ^[6] and the bill establishing the [Boy Scouts of America](#) ^[7]. He introduced the Webb Export Act, helped to write the Eighteenth Amendment, and played a significant role in shaping the Pure Food and Drug Laws. He also submitted the bill for appropriations to erect a monument at [Kings Mountain](#) ^[8] commemorating the American victory there on 7 Oct. 1780.

Webb and his brother, state senator and superior court judge James L. Webb, and other men in their part of the state



Edwin Yates Webb circa 1910-1915. Image from the Library of Congress.

^[9]associated

themselves in support of political activities. For many years in the 1920s and 1930s they gave North Carolina and the nation leaders so outstanding that their effectiveness came to be labeled "The Shelby Dynasty"^[10]. The Webbs' concerns were broader than mere politics, as they promoted broad educational and religious interests throughout a state in which their constructive involvement was widely acclaimed. Their role was recognized in the establishment of Gardner-Webb College^[11], a four-year Baptist institution at Boiling Springs, near Shelby. Webb was honored with a testimonial dinner at the college on his eightieth birthday, and a portrait of him hangs in its library. Other portraits of Webb are in the federal courtroom in Charlotte and in the Cleveland County Courthouse, in Shelby, where he presided for thirty-six years.

He was a leading layman of the First Baptist Church of Shelby, moderator of the Kings Mountain Baptist Association, and a member of the Kiwanis Club. Webb's first wife was Willie Simmons of Wake Forest, and they were the parents of Elizabeth, Edwin, Jr., and William. His second wife was Mrs. Alice Pender Taylor of Tarboro and Asheville. He was buried in Sunset Cemetery, Shelby.

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Harris & Ewing. "Webb, E.Y. Representative From New York [sic]." Photograph. Harris & Ewing Collection. Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress. <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/hec2008004640/> [2] (accessed April 18, 2013)

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Origin - location:

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From:

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1 January 1996 | Mcpherson, H. Holt

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