

## **Yeates, William Smith** <sup>[1]</sup>

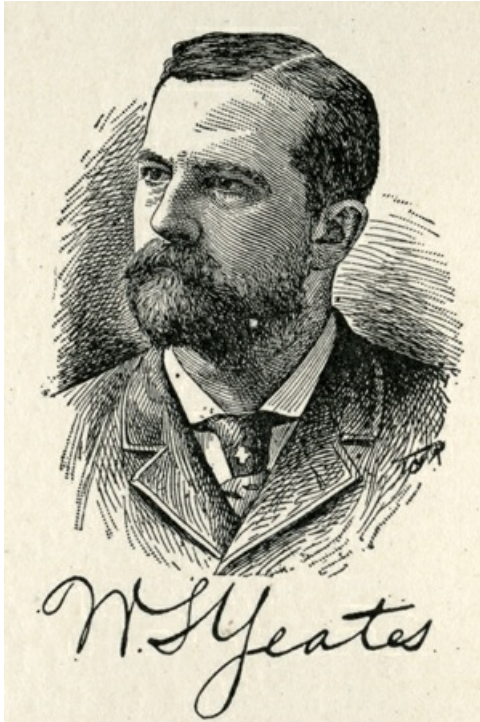


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## **Yeates, William Smith**

by James Elliott Moore, 1996

**15 Dec. 1856–19 Feb. 1908**

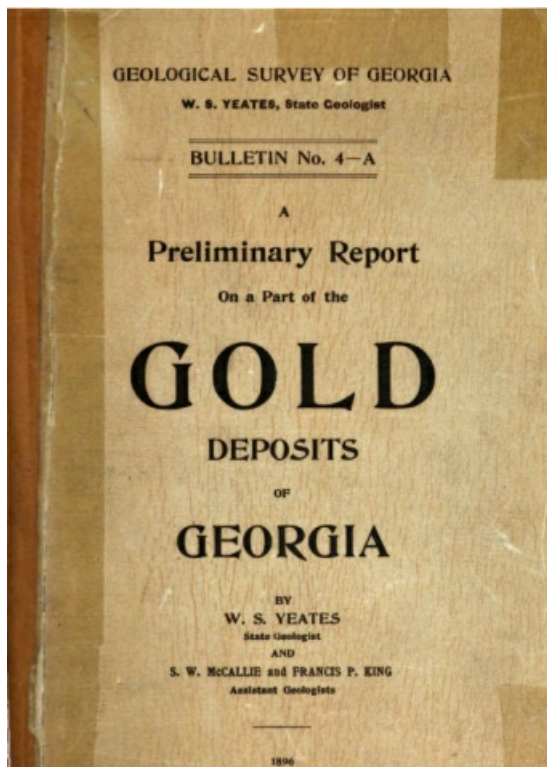


Engraving of William Smith Yeates, from *The National Cyclopaedia of American Biography*, published 1906. From the collections of the State Library of North Carolina.

William Smith Yeates, first state geologist of Georgia, was born at Murfreesboro, the son of Jesse Jackson, a prominent attorney and U.S. congressman, and Virginia Scott Yeates. He attended the primary and high schools of Murfreesboro; [Randolph-Macon College at Ashland](#) <sup>[2]</sup>, Va., for a year and a half; and [Emory and Henry College](#) <sup>[3]</sup>, at Emory, Va., for three and a half years, where he received a B.A. degree in June 1878. Three years later Emory and Henry awarded him a master of arts degree in consideration of further literary and scientific studies.

In the spring of 1879 Yeates was appointed a messenger for the U.S. Fish Commission and was involved in the distribution of young fish from the hatchery at Avoca. He was then the principal of two high schools before becoming a clerk with the Fish Commission in 1880.

Long interested in geology, Yeates in 1881 was named assistant to the curator of the Department of Minerals and Economic Geology at the National Museum in Washington, D.C. He advanced rapidly in the system and soon became assistant curator of the mineral collection as well as professor of mineralogy and professor of geology at the Corcoran Scientific School of Columbian University. He also was responsible for organizing important mineral displays at the Cincinnati and New Orleans expositions in 1884 and the Chicago World's Fair of 1893.



Cover to *A Preliminary Report on a Part of the Gold Deposits Of Georgia* by W. S. Yeates, S. W. McCallie, and Francis P. King, published 1896. Presented by the Hathi Trust.

In 1893 Yeates was appointed the first state geologist of Georgia and moved to Atlanta. During his tenure, he published nine works on Georgia's geological resources, including: *A Report on . . . Marbles . . .*, *A Report on . . . Corundum Deposits . . .*, *A Report on . . . Water Deposits . . .*, *A Report on . . . Gold Deposits . . .*, *A Report on . . . Phosphates and Marls . . .*, *A Report on the Artesian Well Systems . . .*, *A Report on . . . Clays . . .*, *A Report on the Roads and Road-Building Materials . . .*, and *A Report on . . . Granites and Gneisses . . .* He also collected and organized an extensive display of Georgia's minerals, ores, and building stones and woods. During his career Yeates was a Fellow of the Geological Society of America and a member of the Philosophical Society of Washington, D.C., Geological Society of Washington, D.C., American Chemical Society, American Institute of Mining Engineers, American Association for the Advancement of Science, and International Congress of Geologists (1891).

On 16 January 1884 he married Julia Wheeler Moore, daughter of the historian [John Wheeler Moore](#) [4]. They had three children: Julia Moore (died young), William Smith, Jr., and Charles Moore. Still serving as state geologist Yeates, died in Atlanta and was buried at Glenwood Cemetery, Washington, D.C.

#### References:

Henry Poellnitz Johnston, *William R. King and His Kin* (1975).

*The Official Sketchbook, 1898–1899* (1899).

*Who Was Who in America*, vol. 1 (1943).

#### Additional Resources:

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Whilte, James T. (ed). 1906. *The National Cyclopaedia of American Biography Volume XIII*. 60. New York: J.T. White. <http://hdl.handle.net/2027/nyp.33433000047443> [5] (accessed January 17, 2014).

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Whilte, James T. (ed). 1906. *The National Cyclopaedia of American Biography Volume XIII* 60. New York: J.T. White.

#### Subjects:

[Biographies](#) [7]

Engineers <sup>[8]</sup>

Mines and mineral resources <sup>[9]</sup>

Public service <sup>[10]</sup>

Scientists & Inventors <sup>[11]</sup>

**Authors:**

Moore, James Elliott <sup>[12]</sup>

**Origin - location:**

Hertford County <sup>[13]</sup>

Murfreesboro <sup>[14]</sup>

**From:**

Dictionary of North Carolina Biography, University of North Carolina Press.<sup>[15]</sup>

1 January 1996 | Moore, James Elliott

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