

JAS. L. WEBB'S INSPIRING CAREER

Judge of the Superior Court

About five miles south of Forest City in the year 1853 and on the twelfth day of November an infant son was born to Rev. and Mrs. G. M. Webb and the baby was named James L. Webb. His grandfather was James M. Webb, who had passed some sixteen years of his life as Clerk of the Superior Court of Rutherford County. The boy's mother, before her marriage to Rev. G. M. Webb, was Miss Priscilla Blanton.

The home was near the old Rutherford-Shelby road and near it was the ford across the Second Broad River and which was known then by the name of Webb's ford. The early childhood of the boy was such as one would expect under the guidance of a wise father and a loving mother. The first school that James L. Webb attended was the Concord School, a subscription one and near the Concord Church which is a landmark of the County to this day.

It was in 1868 that the Rev. Mr. Webb decided to move from Rutherford to Cleveland County and the great reason for the change was to be able to give his children a better education than the schools of this County could give at that time. Making the family home in Shelby the father placed his sons in the school there and it was in the town which has become well known by the synonym of "The Friendly City" James L. Webb completed his preliminary school education.

After several years of school at Shelby the student entered Wake Forest College and after leaving that institution returned to Shelby and with the late W. C. Durham as a partner James L. Webb learned the practical side of printing as well as editorial work, for they published the newspaper, "The Shelby Banner" for some years. Many an interesting story can Judge Webb relate of the history of this paper and the trials and tribulations of a publisher of a County weekly, but, alas, when the Judge tells these stories he adds with his charming smile: "Not for publication."

Mr. James L. Webb, as he was then, began the study of law in the offices of and under the tutelage of the late Captain Plato Durham and at the end of two years he went to Richmond Hill, Yadkin County, a private law school maintained by Judge Richmond Pearson. After eighteen months of diligent study Judge Webb returned to Shelby. He was given his license to practice law in 1877 and at first the young attorney was associated with Captain John W. Gidney and this partnership lasted about twelve years.

So many have been the offices Judge Webb has held that the mere mention of them only can be given; the naming of them, however, is sufficient for all who know Judge James

L. Webb know how faithfully, diligently and well he has performed the labors of every office he has ever accepted. Once as Alderman and twice Mayor of Shelby; State Senator of the district comprising Gaston and Cleveland Counties in the year 1883 and again in 1887; Post Office Inspector for a few months during the first administration of President Cleveland, a position which he resigned because he did not like the work and also because of the illness at that time of his wife; Solicitor of the Second Judicial District for twelve years, first appointed by Governor Holt to fill the unexpired term of Hon. Frank Osborne, who had been elected Attorney General, and then when the term was ended elected to succeed himself; appointed a Judge of the Superior Court by Governor Charles B. Aycock, a position held for twenty-one years and with four years to serve, is not this a sufficient record to speak for itself and to require no comment?

It was in the spring of 1878 Judge James L. Webb married Miss Kansas Love Andrews, the daughter of the late Dr. W. P. Andrews, who was born in Rutherford County, but lived in Cleveland County. Their first child died in infancy. The second, a son, Ralph Lamar Webb died unmarried many years ago. Miss Madge Webb, their third child, married Mr. S. R. Riley, of Greenville, South Carolina, and lives now in that city. The youngest and fourth child, Miss Fay Webb, married Hon. O. Max Gardner, and Gov. and Mrs. Gardner have four children and live, as everybody knows, in Shelby.

Two of the brothers of Judge Webb are living and one, Charles Webb, died in Greenville, S. C. The youngest brother is Judge E. Y. Webb. After he had been licensed to practice law he was associated with Judge James L. Webb in practice of the legal profession in Shelby for a number of years. He was then elected as Representative and served in Congress for sixteen years and was appointed Judge of the United States Court for the Western District of North Carolina.

During the long and honorable career on the bench Judge Webb has had the distinction of presiding at the dedication of five splendid new Court Houses. The first one was that at Lincolnton; then came the Catawba County and following the opening of this Court House were the ceremonies attending the dedication of the Cleveland County Hall of Justice at Shelby. When Caldwell County opened its new Court House it was Judge Webb who presided. It was naturally becoming and fitting the Commissioners and the Bar Association should wish a Judge born in the County to preside at the dedication of the magnificent new Court House of Rutherford County and this His

Honor, Judge James L. Webb, did yesterday, November 3rd, in Rutherfordton.

The record of a public official is known and the greater the man, the longer his career, the better his deeds and actions, his public and private life, his opinions and thoughts are known the greater the good and the better the influence the official has in public and private life and great indeed is the power of Judge Webb for the betterment of men, women and children, social and business life, and all that is worthwhile in every community where he is known, respected, admired and loved.

It is the character of a man which plays the most important part in his life, and the foundations of the character of Judge James L. Webb may be summed up in the following words: "And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity."

The son of a distinguished Baptist preacher Judge Webb has demonstrated to all his deep and abiding faith by the honorable and upright life he has led and no one can talk with him for any length of time without being firmly convinced that faith in a Divine Being is the very rock upon which his life is founded. It is not paraded or brought forth for public show; it is known no great temple could be erected to tower high above all other buildings without having the firmest of foundations and faith is the foundation of the life of Judge Webb.

It is hope, not for himself but for others, which plays a large part in the actions and daily life of a really great man. To strive to make things better, to lend aid; to give encouragement to others; to set an example and to live up to it so the oncoming generation may seek to emulate it; to be a friend in the true meaning of the word; to render comfort to those in sorrow; to see only the best in everyone—do not all these require hope?

As a solicitor and with twenty-one years of experience upon the bench Judge Webb had the opportunity to see the frailties of human nature which the years spent in Court can give to a man. Only those who have manifold duties; the laborious work; been, or are Judges, can know the legal knowledge required; the many heartaches which come often from seeing and hearing men and women perhaps at their worst; the grave responsibility of pronouncing sentences; the effort to comply with the laws of the State and Nation and yet to temper their sternness with mercy demands the utmost a man can give and the greater the man the more he gives. Truthfully it can be said of Judge James L. Webb that he gives to his utmost.

To witness day by day the sordidness of human life, the meanness and the petty jealousies is a strain which too few realize and without faith, hope and charity few indeed would be the Judges who could bear up under it without having the milk of human kindness turned sour.

Judge James L. Webb is an honor to the bench, to the County wherein he was born and to the County where he lives and finally to himself. Residing in Shelby, known as "The Friendly City," it is but right to say Judge Webb is "The Friendly Judge."

Curfew For Youths Urged By Judge James L. Webb

Greensboro, March 4.—"If I had my way about it, a bell would sound every night in the cities of High Point and Greensboro at 9 o'clock at which time every boy and girl under the age of sixteen would be in their homes," declared Judge James L. Webb, in ordering three juveniles to be sent to Jackson Training School, in Superior Court. Judge Webb stopped during a busy session in Superior Court to discuss the functions of parents. "We are inclined to brag of our State institutions, our great schools and roads and yet without question the greatest institution in the State is the North Carolina home. You can't make a man out of anything but a boy nor a woman out of anything but a girl and if they are allowed to roam the streets at night without home restraint then you just as well expect that they are going to do something wrong. They do not have the discretion of men or women of mature age and the natural tendency is for them to go wrong. You fathers and mothers must keep a hold on your children if you expect to keep them out of the jails. I wish that I could save them but releasing them from punishment will not do it and the power was laid in your hands in a large measure."

NEW COURT HOUSE IS DEDICATED BY JUDGE J. L. WEBB

Mar. 4-1926

Delivers A Fine Speech Of Presentation Of The Magnificent Hall of Justice on Wednesday.

A LOCAL HISTORY EPOCH

In The Afternoon Hon. Clyde R. Hoey Delivered Address Presenting Judge Justice's Portrait.

MANY CITIZENS PRESENT

Court Room Is Crowded To Its Capacity. Prominent Citizens And Visitors Are Present.

The new court house was dedicated yesterday. The weather was beautiful and the court room was filled to its utmost capacity. Mr. M. L. Edwards was Master of Ceremonies and, after the Benediction by Rev. M. A. Adams, with a few well chosen words opened the service. The first verse of "America" was sung, after which Mrs. Nelle Norris gave several solos.

Mr. Fred D. Hamrick in a short and excellent speech introduced Hon. James L. Webb, Judge of the Superior Court, who made the Dedictory Address. Gathered around the rostrum were Mr. R. S. Eaves, President of the Rutherford County Bar Association, Mr. M. L. Edwards, City Attorney, Mr. S. P. Dunagan, Hon. Thomas J. Moss, Mr. N. C. Harris, County Attorney, Mr. Will Blanton, Solicitor for this District, Mr. P. McBrayer, of Shelby, Hon. O. C. Erwin,

Senate of 1887

Mr. Toby Turner, of North Wilkesboro, was kind enough to send us the picture of the 1887 Senate which appears on the opposite page.

The first thing that undoubtedly will strike your attention is the fact that out of the entire group there are only two men with smooth-shaven faces—Mr. James H. Pou and Mr. E. M. Stevenson. (Young Jim tells us that his father was only 26 years old at the time.)

In the upper right corner is Judge Francis D. Winston. And, although he has a moustache, we believe we can see a resemblance between Charles F. Warren and his distinguished son, Lindsay.

See how many of these names are familiar to you:

Top Row: W. P. Shaw, W. J. Griffin, W. D. Turner, C. M. Stedman, J. H. Pou, W. I. Terrell, and F. D. Winston.

Second Row: J. I. Purcell, D. E. McIver, K. Elias, S. E. Williams, S. J. Pemberton, S. Murrow, and C. A. Cook.

Third Row: I. H. Bailey, C. F. Warren, W. C. Fields, W. L. Crouse, S. B. Alexander, J. J. Fox, and J. F. Crowder.

Fourth Row: H. E. Williamson, J. A. Spruill, G. W. Wilson, H. B. Adams, J. Tull, J. B. Eaves, and W. Arthur.

Fifth Row: E. M. Stevenson, J. McCormick, J. L. Webb, T. S. Collie, E. W. Kerr, J. A. Lillington, and T. S. Harrison.

Sixth Row: J. A. Thorpe, J. A. Bryant, W. G. Broadhurst, W. R. Williams, J. W. Saunders, W. C. Matthews, and R. S. Taylor.

Seventh Row: H. D. Mason, H. N. Simpson, W. J. Sutton, J. B. Mason, G. Green, Jr., W. R. Jenkins, and H. Epps.

The two gentlemen at the bottom are W. V. Clifton and we can't quite make out the other man's name. It looks as though it ends in —ockey. Mr. Turner also advises us that Frank Shober did not have his picture taken in this group although he was a member of the Senate at the time.



LIVES OF WEBBS ARE DISCUSSED IN PUBLICATION

Nov 26-1940

The lives of Judge Edwin Yates Webb, of Shelby, and of the late Judge Jim Webb are discussed in a feature article appearing in the current edition of "The State," magazine published at Raleigh by Carl Goerch.

The article, entitled "The Webbs of Cleveland," paid tribute to the service of the late Jim Webb and to the service thus far of Judge Edwin Yates Webb.

Judge Jim Webb became one of the state's outstanding superior court jurists, and Judge Edwin Yates Webb has already completed 21 years of service as a federal jurist, having been commissioned by President Woodrow Wilson.