

Walter Hines Page

Walter Hines Page (August 15, 1855 – December 21, 1918) was an American journalist, publisher, and diplomat. He was the United States ambassador to the United Kingdom during World War I.

He founded the State Chronicle, a newspaper in Raleigh, North Carolina, and worked with other leaders to gain legislative approval for what is now known as North Carolina State University, which established as a land-grant college in 1885. He worked on several newspapers, including the New York World and Evening Post. He was the editor of The Atlantic Monthly for several years and also a literary adviser to Houghton Mifflin. For more than a decade starting in 1900, he was a partner of Doubleday, Page & Company, a major book publisher in New York City.

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Biography

Born in Cary, North Carolina to father Allison Francis "Frank" Page and his wife, Catherine Frances Raboteau. His father built the Page-Walker Hotel about 1868.^[1] Walter was educated at Trinity College (Duke University), then at Randolph-Macon College and Johns Hopkins University. His studies complete, he taught for a time in Louisville, Kentucky.^[2]

On November 15, 1880, Page married Willa Alice Wilson. They had a daughter and three sons including Arthur W. Page.

Page began his journalism career as a writer and then editor at the St. Joseph Gazette in Missouri. (The St. Joseph Gazette published in that town from 1845 until June 30, 1888, when its morning position was taken over by its sister paper, the St. Joseph News-Press.) After a short time at the Gazette, in 1881 Page resigned to travel through the South, having arranged to contribute letters on

Walter Hines Page



United States Ambassador to the United Kingdom

In office

May 30, 1913 – October 3, 1918

President Woodrow Wilson

Preceded by Whitelaw Reid

Succeeded by John W. Davis

Personal details

Born August 15, 1855

Cary, North

Carolina, USA

Died December 21, 1918 (aged 63)
Pinehurst, North Carolina

Spouse(s) Willa Alice Wilson

Profession Politician, Editor

southern sociological conditions to the New York World, the Springfield Republican of Massachusetts, and the Boston Post. He intended these letters to educate both the North and the South in a fuller understanding of their mutual dependence. In 1882, he joined the editorial staff of the New York World; among his major work was a series of articles on Mormonism, the result of personal investigation in Utah.^[2]

Later in 1882, Page went to Raleigh, North Carolina, where he founded the State Chronicle.^[2] Two years later, he was a founding member of the Watauga Club, along with Arthur Winslow and William Joseph Peele. Together, they petitioned the North Carolina General Assembly early in 1885 to create an institution for industrial education for "wood-work, mining, metallurgy, practical agriculture" and similar fields; establishing what is now North Carolina State University, a land-grant college, which could receive federal funds.

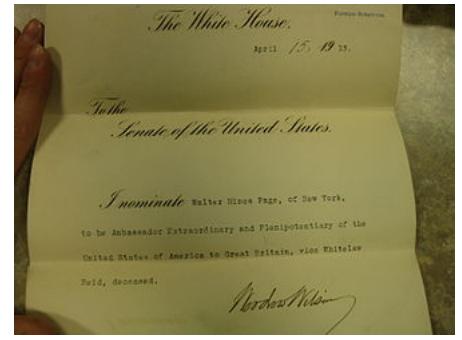
Page returned to New York in 1883 and for four years was on the staff of the Evening Post. From 1887 to 1895, he was manager and, after 1890, editor of The Forum, a monthly magazine. From 1895 to 1900, he was literary adviser to Houghton, Mifflin and Company, and for most of the same period editor of The Atlantic Monthly (1896–99).^[2]

From 1900 to 1913, Page was partner and vice president of Doubleday, Page & Co.; when he joined Frank Nelson Doubleday as a partner, the company's name was changed to include his. He also was editor of World's Work magazine. Doubleday, Page & Co. became one of the great book publishing companies of the 20th century. The company sometimes publishes under the name "Country Life Press" in Garden City, New York, where Page resided in the years prior to World War I. Among the great writers it published in its early years was Rudyard Kipling.^[3] In 1986, it was acquired by Bertelsmann AG.

Page believed that a free and open education was fundamental to democracy. In 1902, he published The Rebuilding of Old Commonwealths, which emphasized that. He felt that nothing (class, economic means, race, or religion) should be a barrier to education.

Ambassador

In March 1913, Page was appointed United States ambassador to the United Kingdom by President Woodrow Wilson,^[2] whom Page had befriended in 1882 when Wilson was a young lawyer starting out in Atlanta.^[4] Page was one of the key figures involved in bringing the United States into World War I on the Allied side. A proud Southerner, he admired his British roots and believed that the United Kingdom was fighting a war for democracy. As ambassador to Britain, he defended British policies to Wilson and helped to shape a pro-Allied slant in the President and in the United States as a whole. One month after Page sent a message to Wilson, the U.S. Congress declared war on Germany.



Page's UK Ambassador nomination

Page was criticized for his unabashedly pro-British stance by those who thought his priority should be defending American interests in the face of British criticism. He and his staff had to deal with the British claim of the right to stop and search American ships, including the examination of mail pouches; the commercial blockade (1915); and the "blacklist,"^[5] the names of American firms with whom the British forbade all financial and commercial dealings by their citizens (1916).^[2]

In 1918, Page became ill and resigned his post as Ambassador to the Court of St. James's. He returned to his home in Pinehurst, North Carolina, where he died.^[6] He is buried in Old Bethesda Cemetery in Aberdeen, North Carolina.

Legacy and honors

- A memorial plaque in his honor was installed in Westminster Abbey in Westminster, London, UK.^[7]
- *The Life and Letters of Walter H. Page* (1923), by Burton J. Hendrick, was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for Biography, and Hendrick's *The Training of an American: The Earlier Life and Letters of Walter H. Page* was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for Biography in 1929.
- Walter Hines Page Senior High School in Greensboro, North Carolina, the Walter Hines Page Research Professor of Literature chair (currently held by Ariel Dorfman) at Duke University, the Walter Hines Page Library at Randolph-Macon College in Ashland, Va., and the London chapter (<http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~engwhdar/walterhinesdar/index.html>) of the Daughters of the American Revolution were named for him.
- Today, scholarships are awarded by the English-Speaking Union (ESU) in Walter Hines Page's name to teachers from the United Kingdom to study in the United States and Canada.^[8]
- Page Hall at North Carolina State University was named in his honor.^[9]

Publication

A Publisher's Confession (1905)

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6. "WALTER HINES PAGE DIES AT PINEHURST; Sacrificed His Health as America's Ambassador to Britain During War. SERVED NATION IN CRISIS As "President's Ear" Abroad He Also Conciliated Opinion ThereWhen Allies Sought Our Aid. Studies Sociological Problems. His Difficult Diplomatic Tasks" (<https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1918/12/23/97055457.pdf>) (PDF). *The New York Times*. 23 December 1918. Retrieved 2017-07-13.
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8. "Walter Hines Page Scholarship" (<http://www.teachers.org.uk/files/WalterHinesPage2007-2008.doc>), Teachers.org
9. "Page Hall" (<https://projects.ncsu.edu/facilities/buildings/page.html>). *projects.ncsu.edu*. Retrieved 2019-12-17.

External links

- [Newspaper clippings about Walter Hines Page](http://purl.org/pressemappe20/folder/pe/013134) (<http://purl.org/pressemappe20/folder/pe/013134>) in the [20th Century Press Archives of the ZBW](#)

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