

## **John Gilmer, Jr.**

*Researched and written by Elon University School of Law student Matthew Kraus, Summer 2011*

Born John Alexander Gilmer on April 22, 1838 in Greensboro, North Carolina.<sup>1</sup> Gilmer went on to go to college at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He graduated with distinction in 1858. He then decided to go into a career in law. He at first studied law under his father John Adams Gilmer, Sr., but soon decided to enter the University of Virginia to complete his legal studies.<sup>2</sup> After law school, Gilmer, Jr. joined his father, John Adams Gilmer, in his law practice in 1860. Soon thereafter 1861, Gilmer joined the Guilford Grays at the outset of the Civil War.<sup>3</sup> He did this despite the fact that he and his father both strongly opposed secession.<sup>4</sup> Despite this, he rose to the rank of colonel by November of 1862. After numerous injuries in battle, and a malignant fever, Gilmer, Jr. had to leave his military duty. He went back and returned to Greensboro and continued his legal practice.<sup>5</sup> After returning to Greensboro, Gilmer, Jr. met his wife Sallie L. Lindsay. They married July 14, 1864 and went on to have three children. In 1866, Gilmer, Jr. was appointed Adjutant General of North Carolina by Governor Jonathan Worth. He held that position for one year and then returned to his legal practice in Greensboro.<sup>6</sup> Back in Greensboro, Gilmer, Jr. served his district in the State Senate from 1871-1872. He also served as a Delegate at the Democratic National Convention in NYC in 1868 and was a Delegate at numerous state conventions.<sup>7</sup> In 1879, Gilmer, Jr. was chosen as a ruling elder of the First Presbyterian Church in Greensboro.<sup>8</sup> That same year, Governor J.J. Jarvis appointed Gilmer, Jr. Judge of the Superior Court of the Fifth Judicial District to fill out an unexpired term. He was elected to a full term in 1882. He resigned from the position in 1891 and went back to his law practice once again in Greensboro. He died the following year on March 17, 1892 and was buried in Green Hill Cemetery.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> C. Alphonso Smith, *Founders and Builders of Greensboro* (Greensboro: Jos. J. Stone & Company, 1925), 295.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, at 296.

<sup>4</sup> *Cyclopedia of Eminent and Representative Men of the Carolinas of the Nineteenth Century* (Madison: Brant & Fuller, 1892) 2: 152.

<sup>5</sup> Smith, *Founders and Builders of Greensboro*, at 297.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, at 298.

<sup>7</sup> *Cyclopedia of Eminent and Representative Men of the Carolinas of the Nineteenth Century*, 2: 151.

<sup>8</sup> Smith, *Founders and Builders of Greensboro*, 298.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, at 299.