

Dwire, Henry Randolph ^[1]

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by [C. Sylvester Green](#) ^[2], 1986

8 Oct. 1882–17 July 1944

Henry Randolph Dwire, editor and university executive, was born in [Winston](#) ^[3], the son of Henry Xenophon and Mary Hanes Dwire. His father was a deputy collector of internal revenue in Winston-Salem. Young Dwire attended elementary and secondary public schools in that city. Upon graduation in 1898, he entered [Trinity College](#) ^[4] (now [Duke University](#) ^[5]) where he received a bachelor of arts degree in 1902 and a master of arts degree in 1903. While an undergraduate he was a contributor to [The Archive](#) ^[6], the college magazine, and became its editor in his senior year. As a graduate student he served as an assistant in English under [Dr. Frank C. Brown](#) ^[7]. His writings appeared in the [South Atlantic Quarterly](#) ^[8], also published by the college, of which he later became editor.

In the fall of 1903 Dwire was an instructor of English at Fishburne Military Academy, Waynesboro, Va. At the end of the term he resigned his post to assume the editorship of the *Winston-Salem Sentinel* (now the [Twin City Sentinel](#) ^[9]). From 1904 to 1926 he was its chief editorial writer and policymaker and from 1918 to 1926, copublisher. Few newspapers in North Carolina accumulated as much prestige and influence as did *The Sentinel* under his leadership, and his provocative editorials were widely quoted. The Sentinel Printing Company, of which he was secretary and coowner, also published the *Western Semi-Weekly Sentinel*, which had a large and respected circulation.

Dwire's civic service to the Winston-Salem community was broad and innovative. He was chairman of the School Commission (1923–30); secretary of the board of directors, North Carolina Hospital for the Insane (1929–33); founder of the Winston-Salem Fine Arts Foundation, a successful instrument for cultural growth and promotion; member of the board of lay activities, Western North Carolina Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South (1925–29); director of the [North Carolina Art Society](#) ^[10]; chairman of the Winston-Salem chapter, [American Red Cross](#) ^[11] (1927–29); and charter member of the Winston-Salem Rotary Club, organized in October 1915, as well as its president (1918–19) and district governor of Rotary International (1929–30). He later continued his Rotary membership in [Durham](#) ^[12], where he was active in local and district programs and a frequent speaker at local clubs and district conferences. He also belonged to Alpha Tau Omega (social), Phi Beta Kappa (scholarship), and Omicron Delta Kappa (leadership) fraternities. He was a member of the Cosmos Club in Winston-Salem, the [YMCA](#) ^[13] in Winston-Salem and Durham, and the Hope Valley Country Club in Durham. In 1928 he was awarded the civic trophy for distinguished community service by the Winston-Salem Chamber of Commerce.

In 1929 Dwire was enticed from semiretirement to become director of public relations and alumni affairs for his alma mater, [Duke University](#) ^[5]. In addition to the multiple duties of his office, he edited the *South Atlantic Quarterly* and *The Alumni Register* of the university. To each he gave a professional ability that endowed both with new credibility. He served for a time as a trustee of Duke and in 1941 was elected one of its vice-presidents. He also was director of the [Duke University Press](#) ^[14]. Dwire was particularly loyal to the program of worship and community service of the Duke University Chapel. In 1943 [Davidson College](#) ^[15] conferred on him the honorary degree of doctor of letters.

Dwire was a registered [Democrat](#) ^[16] but was not active in politics. He never married. During his later years he maintained a residence in both Winston-Salem and Durham ([Hotel Washington Duke](#) ^[17]). He died at Duke Hospital and was buried in Winston-Salem.

References:

Durham Morning Herald, *Winston-Salem Journal*, *Winston-Salem Twin City Sentinel*, 18 July 1944.

Henry R. Dwire Papers (Manuscript Department, Library, Duke University, Durham).

North Carolina Biography, vol. 1 (1941).

Office of Information, Duke University, Durham.

Who's Who in America, vol. 23 (1945).

Additional Resources:

Inventory of the Henry R. Dwire Papers, 1897-1944, Duke University Libraries:

<http://library.duke.edu/rubenstein/findingaids/uadwire/> ^[18]

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Public service ^[22]

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