

Winters, Sellie Robert ^[1]

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by William S. Powell, 1996

21 Sept. 1888–26 July 1953

Sellie Robert Winters, writer, was born near Hester in [Granville County](#) ^[2], the son of William and Mollie Harris Winters. He was a student at [The University of North Carolina](#) ^[3] during the years 1909–11. One of his first contributions to the press was a feature story on the university published in the *Norfolk Landmark* on 26 Nov. 1911 and reprinted in the *University Report*, No. 100, in April 1912. Initially he was the Durham and Washington, D.C., correspondent for the *Raleigh News*, and later he was a Washington correspondent for the *Asheville Citizen*, *Raleigh News and Observer*, *Wilmington Star*, and *Winston-Salem Journal*. Winters then became a free-lance journalist and sold his work to a large number of journals, including *American City*, *American Magazine*, *Breeder's Gazette*, *Commerce and Finance*, *Country Gentleman*, *Country Life*, *Field and Stream*, *Hygeia*, *Journal of Geography*, *Ladies Home Journal*, *Leslie's Weekly*, *Popular Mechanics*, *Review of Reviews*, *Science Digest*, and *Scientific America*. He also contributed regular features to the *Christian Science Monitor* and the *New York Times*.

In response to a questionnaire from The University of North Carolina Alumni Association, Winters once wrote: "If there is any one contribution that I have made it is this: Take the drab scientific fact and put that into popular expression and at the same time retain its authenticity. Around this idea I have developed what I believe to be an unusual journalistic career—writing about facts solely—ever subscribing to the dictum that facts are stranger (and more interesting) than fiction. That 50 or more journals should buy my copy is some evidence that I have succeeded in a small measure in putting the idea across." Apparently he made his last contribution to the press in 1949.

A member of the Methodist church, Winters married Lelia Frances Wyatt of Petersburg, Va., on 25 Dec. 1914. They had two sons, Early Wyatt and Herbert Gates. Winters died of a heart attack at his summer home on Reems Creek near Weaverville in [Buncombe County](#) ^[4].

References:

Alumni Files (University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill).

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[Daniel L. Grant, *Alumni History of the University of North Carolina* \(1924\).](#) ^[5]

Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature (various dates).

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Authors:

[Powell, William S.](#) ^[8]

Origin - location:

[Buncombe County](#) ^[9]

[Granville County](#) ^[10]

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