

## Buncombe <sup>[1]</sup>

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## Buncombe

by Ronnie W. Faulkner, 2006

The word "Buncombe" has, along with its variations of "bunk" and "bunkum," entered *American slang* <sup>[2]</sup> as a term synonymous with meaningless speech. The popular term for pretentious and nonsensical talk originated with Felix Walker <sup>[3]</sup>, a U.S. congressman (1817-23) who represented a region in western North Carolina that included Buncombe County <sup>[4]</sup>. Walker gave a high-sounding speech on a militia <sup>[5]</sup> pension bill to a nearly empty congressional chamber. Afterward, when questioned about his reasons for the verbiage, he reportedly stated that he was "speaking . . . to Buncombe." This elicited the response: "And buncombe your talk certainly was." Thereafter the term was used to refer to insincere political speech but was later expanded to include any trivial and overblown application of language.

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[UNC Press](#) <sup>[13]</sup>

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### Origin - location:

[Buncombe County](#) <sup>[15]</sup>

### From:

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