

Bryan, Washington ^[1]

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by Gertrude S. Carraway, 1979

14 Aug. 1853–3 May 1927

Washington Bryan, attorney and financier, was born in New Bern, the younger surviving son of [James West Bryan](#) ^[2] and Ann Mary Washington. His paternal grandparents were James Bryan and Rachel Heritage; his maternal grandparents were John Washington and Elizabeth Heritage Cobb.

After attending St. Clement's Hall, a preparatory school at Baltimore, Md., and the University of Virginia, Bryan was graduated from Trinity College, Conn., receiving a number of scholarship medals and honors. He was a member of Phi Beta Kappa and of Alpha Delta Phi Fraternity. Besides having mastery of Latin and Greek, he spoke four modern languages.

While residing in the New Bern home of his parents, Bryan practiced law; he gave up the practice to pay more attention to his duties as president of the state-controlled Atlantic and North Carolina Railroad Company. After the death of his wife, Mary Winder, on 12 Dec. 1886, at Raleigh, he moved to New York City and dealt in stocks and bonds until his retirement.

Foreign travel then became his avocation. Making a special study of the [Jewish](#) ^[3] people, he spent much time in Palestine. He declined appointments to consular or diplomatic service, but he made personal visits to Queen Victoria at Windsor, to the Court of Spain, and to the Vatican.

Intensely interested in [Masonic affairs](#) ^[4], Bryan joined St. John's Lodge, New Bern, in 1875; he was its 1877 junior warden.

Because of his aid in the building of the [Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York](#) ^[5], his body was taken to its Chapel of St. James, and a memorial service was held there 5 May 1927. The funeral was held in Christ Episcopal Church, New Bern, where he had been baptized and had long been a member. Interment was in his paternal grandfather's vault in Cedar Grove Cemetery at New Bern, under a willow tree he had transplanted from the Island of St. Helena.

References:

Bryan Family Records (in possession of Charles H. Ashford, Jr., New Bern).

Gertrude S. Carraway, *Years of Light: History of St. John's Lodge* (1944).

Christ Church Records (New Bern).

Additional Resources:

Atlantic and North Carolina Railroad Company. *Proceedings of the... annual meeting of the stockholders of the Atlantic & North Carolina R.R. Co.* New Bern, N.C. [N.C.]: William J. Williams, printer, 1928.

https://digital.ncdcr.gov/documents?adv_53=19364658|AND&searchtypes=Full%20text|Metadata&applyState=true ^[6] (accessed December 17, 2013).

"Supreme Court." *The Carolina Watchman*. June 17, 1877. 1. <https://newspapers.digitalnc.org/lccn/sn84026488/1877-06-17/ed-1/> ^[7] (accessed December 17, 2013).

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Authors:

[Carraway, Gertrude S.](#) ^[13]

Origin - location:

[New Bern](#) ^[14]

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