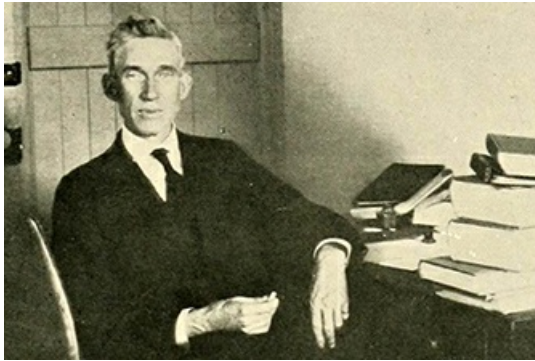


McGehee, Lucius Polk ^[1]

McGehee, Lucius Polk

by William Polk Cheshire, 1991

14 May 1868–11 Oct. 1923



A 1920 photograph of Lucius Polk McGehee.

Image from [Archive.org](#).

^[2]Lucius Polk McGehee, lawyer and educator, was born at Woodburn, his father's plantation in [Person County](#) ^[3]. He was the youngest of four sons of Montford (1822–95) and Sally Polk Badger McGehee (1833–1903), the daughter of [George Edmund Badger](#) ^[4], a U.S. senator and secretary of the navy. McGehee received his early education at Morson's School in Raleigh and was graduated from [The University of North Carolina](#) ^[5] with highest honors in 1887. He then worked briefly as a railway surveyor and on the canal at Weldon. He taught in the Episcopal High School at Asheville, at a school in Enfield, and at the [Bingham School](#) ^[6] near Mebane. Returning to Chapel Hill, he completed the law course in 1891 and was admitted to the bar. Afterwards McGehee moved to New York, where he was a contributing editor and later associate editor (1895–1904) of the *American and English Encyclopaedia of Law*.

In 1904 he returned to The University of North Carolina as professor of law and in 1910 was named dean of the law school, a position he held until his death. He was the author of a legal text, *Due Process of Law under the Federal Constitution* ^[7] (1906), and was one of the commissioners who revised the public laws of North Carolina in 1917. Under his administration, the university law school made rapid strides in prestige and added greatly to the size of its student body and faculty. He spent the final year of his life facilitating the construction of a new law building, but a sudden and fatal paralysis prevented him from seeing it completed. [Louis Graves](#) ^[8], Chapel Hill newspaper editor and a family friend, said of McGehee that "deeply interested as he was in building up the department of the university that was under his charge, probably there was never anybody who talked less about himself, what he had done, and what he planned to do. In an age of automobiles and jazz and all the furor of progress, he somehow seemed to carry over with him the flavor of tranquil days gone by."

On 28 Jan. 1903 he married Julia Leslie Tilley Covert, of Digby, Nova Scotia, who died the following August. McGehee was a [Democrat](#) ^[9] and an [Episcopalian](#) ^[10]; he and his wife were buried in Oakwood Cemetery, Raleigh.

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[Cheshire, William Polk](#) ^[19]

Origin - location:

[University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill](#) ^[20]

[Person County](#) ^[21]

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[Dictionary of North Carolina Biography, University of North Carolina Press](#),^[22]

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