

Warlick, Wilson ^[1]

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by Kevin B. Haney, 1996

8 Mar. 1892–30 Jan. 1978

Wilson Warlick, judge and lawyer, was born in [Catawba County](#) ^[2], the son of Thomas McCorkle and Martha Elizabeth Wilson Warlick. He spent his entire life in Catawba County, where he owned 300 acres inherited from his great-great-grandfather, Mathew Wilson, a Scottish [Presbyterian](#) ^[3] who obtained the land by a grant from King George II on 3 Oct. 1775. Warlick was graduated from [Catawba College](#) ^[4] with a bachelor of science degree and received a bachelor of laws degree from [The University of North Carolina](#) ^[5] in 1913, when he passed the bar. He practiced law in Newton for four years before enlisting as a private in [World War I](#). ^[6] He served in France with the Army's Corps of Intelligence Police, then returned to Newton to resume his career.

On 13 Jan. 1949 [President Harry S. Truman](#) ^[7] nominated Warlick to be a federal court judge in the Western North Carolina District. Succeeding Judge [E. Yates Webb](#) ^[8], who retired, Warlick was sworn in on 14 February in [Charlotte](#) ^[9].

A staunch believer in the probation system, Judge Warlick developed an installment plan by which federal prisoners who received suspended sentences could work out monthly payments on fines accompanying the time given. His plan paid off, with only a 6 percent return of offenders on later charges by 1963, a record for which he credited the close supervision of probation authorities.

Warlick was an elder in the Presbyterian church and a member of the [Masons](#) ^[10], Kiwanis Club, Elks Club, Moose Lodge, and Catawba Country Club. He also helped organize Newton Post 16 of the [American Legion](#) ^[11]. On 24 Oct. 1925 he married Kittie Reed Hipp of Ellijay, Ga. They had two children: Mrs. William J. (Martha) Brame of North Wilkesboro and Thomas Wilson, an attorney in Newton.

Once asked what characteristics made a good judge, Warlick replied that patience, clear-minded and logical thinking, and "the ability to see both sides of the controversy" were the most important. He summed up his philosophy in this verse: "Whip light and drive slow, and pay your way before you go." He died in an automobile accident in Newton and was buried there.

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Additional Resources:

"Judge Wilson Warlick." Warlick Family. Catawba County Library. <http://www.catawbacountync.gov/library/gen/warlick.asp> ^[12] (accessed April 1, 2014). [Portrait.]

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[Judges](#) ^[14]

[Lawyers](#) ^[15]

Authors:

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Origin - location:

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[Newton](#) ^[18]

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Dictionary of North Carolina Biography, University of North Carolina Press.^[19]

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