

Wilson, Henry Hall, Jr. ^[1]

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by William S. Powell, 1996

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Henry Hall Wilson, Jr., businessman and presidential aide, was born in Monroe, the son of Henry Hall and Annie Vernon Sanders Wilson. He was graduated from [Duke University](#) ^[2] in 1942, served in the army for three and a half years during [World War II](#) ^[3], and returned to Duke where he received a law degree in 1948.

Wilson established a practice in Monroe and remained there until 1961. He also represented [Union County](#) ^[4] in the General Assembly for three terms (1953–57). While campaigning for gubernatorial candidate [Terry Sanford](#) ^[5] he met [John F. Kennedy](#) ^[6], who, after winning the presidency in 1960, named Wilson an administrative assistant to serve as a congressional liaison. Under President [Lyndon B. Johnson](#) ^[7], Wilson remained in the same post until he resigned in 1967 to become president and chief executive officer of the Chicago Board of Trade. At the time he left Washington he was the senior White House staff member.

In 1968 President Johnson named Wilson to head a commission to promote trade with Eastern European countries. Resigning from the Chicago Board of Trade, he ran unsuccessfully in 1973–74 for the seat in the U.S. Senate formerly held by Sam J. Ervin. He then became a business consultant.

A member of the Baptist church, he was married in 1944 to Mary C. Walters, and they had two daughters and a son: Jean, Nancy, and Henry H. III. After nearly a year of declining health, he died in a Charlotte hospital. He was buried in Monroe.

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