

George Daniel Patterson, Jr.



George was born March 2, 1907, in Tallassee, Alabama. His father was a banker, and both his parents were very active in the Methodist church. He had an older sister Margaret and a younger brother and sister, Wilson and Myrtice. His childhood seems to have been a comfortable and conventional small town upbringing distinguished primarily by his fondness for chickens.

He attended Emory University to study "business administration," and appears to have had an active and successful life as an undergraduate. The Tallahassee Tribune picked up a story from the Emory Wheel in April 1925 which mentions that George is the Vice-President of the Freshman Glee Club, and describes him as "a prominent member of the Pi Kappa Phi Fraternity, and an honor roll pupil. He has done considerable work on the Wheel and has made an enviable reputation as a reporter and writer of humorous articles. He is a debater of recognized ability, and is a leader in Phi Gamma Literary Society." He was clearly off to a flying start, though one wonders if this might be an example of his journalism skills. There is another clipping from the Tallahassee Tribune the following year which says he has been elected representative to the student activities council of Emory University from the school of business administration and describes the council as one of the highest elective positions on campus. By this time he is still a member of the debate team and an honor student, but he has become assistant



George and Margaret, who was about 18 months older



The entry for his Christening in his baby book says "He is to be called 'George D.' to distinguish him from his father. It is his Mother's prayer and Father's desire that God shall call you to preach the Gospel -- but whatever your calling in life may be, may 'the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you alway.'"





George always had a talent for fitting in.



George D. and his younger brother, Wilson, who was almost five years younger

manager of the track team and a member of the Y.M.C.A. council. He graduated from Emory with a Bachelor of Business Administration degree in 1928. His transcript shows 9 C's, 17 B's and 11 A's, presumably indicating the high standards set at Emory; and his record was good enough to get him into George Washington Law School. He was clearly proud of his years at Emory and wore his college fraternity ring the rest of his life.



George's fondness for chickens continued for over 30 years. When he and his wife bought the house in Birmingham, there was a vacant lot behind it which he was able to use for a chicken yard and garden.

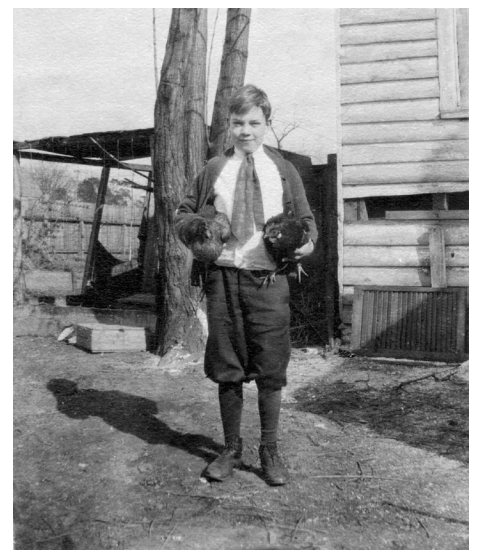


*Probably brothers of Pi Kappa Phi
with their house mother at Emory:
George is third from the left.*

*Early evidence of George's
discriminating sartorial judgment*



*Portrait taken in Atlanta, perhaps during
his first year at Emory University*



*He probably tended his
chicken yard in a coat and
tie as an adult as well.*



"You laughed out loud first for Grandmother when about four months old and you have a smile for everybody." George's sense of humor and his appreciation for the absurd in everyday life were probably his most endearing trait.

He received his Bachelor of Laws degree from George Washington University in October 1932 and was admitted to the Alabama Bar in 1932 and District of Columbia Bar in 1933. Given that the country was in the throes of the Depression, he was perhaps lucky to get a job doing legal work for the National Park Service under Roosevelt's new administration. One can easily imagine that he found his assignment out west to be a grand adventure.

While he was at law school, a classmate from Washington introduced him to Elizabeth Wilson, a lady two years younger than he whose beauty may have been surpassed only by her intelligence. She was a graduate of Bryn Mawr who had studied and travelled in Europe and whose father had been shrewd enough to cash out of the stock market before the Crash. Her father died in 1930; and, while George was getting started with his career in 1932, Elizabeth

and her mother took a trip to Asia. By 1934 George was able to persuade Elizabeth to abandon her work as a librarian and marry him.

They were married on December 22, 1934 at All Souls Memorial Episcopal Church, Washington, D.C., in a ceremony that was written up in the New York Times as well as the Tallassee Tribune. The couple may have honeymooned at Yellowstone Park on their way to their first apartment in Salt Lake City, where they expanded their family first with a cocker spaniel named Peter Piper and then with a son named George Daniel Patterson III, born approximately nine months after their wedding.

*"Boss & Mr. Piper"
Salt Lake City 1935:
Peter Piper was the first
member of the family and
the first in a series of pets
ranging from dogs and cats
to goats and salamanders.*



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Received at 278 Main St., Clift Bldg., Salt Lake City, Utah

1935 SEP 26 AM 9 18

UNA40 25 DL=BY BUTTE MONT 26 910A

MRS GEORGE D PATTERSON=

HOLY CROSS HOSPITAL SALT LAKE CITY UTAH=

SWEETHEART MOTHER HAS JUST TOLD ME THE NEWS I AM THE
HAPPIEST MAN IN THE WORLD WILL BE WITH YOU AS SOON AS
POSSIBLE LOVE=

GEORGE.

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DAY LETTER

The wedding party included best man, Wilson Patterson, maid of honor, Frances Chaffee, bridesmaids Jane Bradley and Myrtice Patterson and ushers Robert Chaffee, Edward Cannon, Miles Pillars, and Wirt Harrison.





The family's first house in Birmingham at 2619 Arlington Avenue

As much as George may have enjoyed travelling around the west as part of his job, it soon became clear that this was not a viable arrangement for his family. Early in 1936 they moved to Birmingham, Alabama, where George started a private law practice with Larry Dumas and began to get involved in civic organizations. They rented a house for about a year and then bought the house at 2432 Henrietta Road just after their second child, Charlotte, was born in December 1937.

Another son, John Dwight, was born in February 1941, followed soon after by Richard Gibson, born in June 1942.

George and Elizabeth celebrating something with Myrtice and Ernest Moore and another unidentified friend



George and his namesake shortly after the move to Birmingham



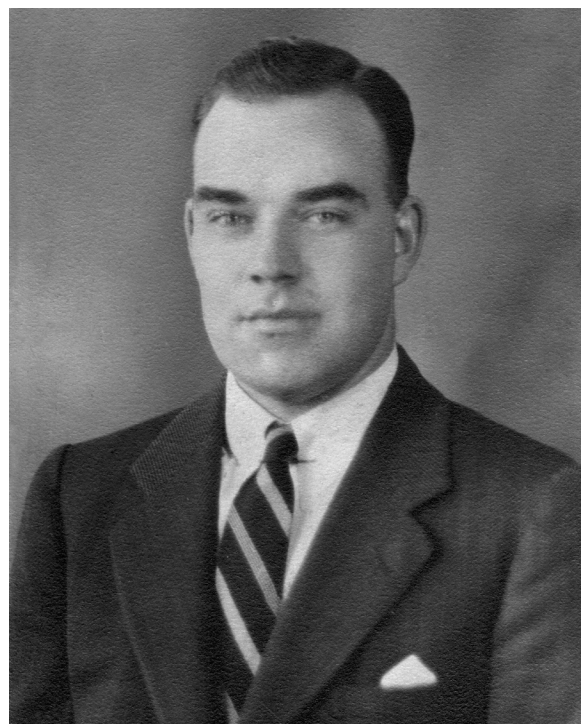
George's profile was the subject of an extended good-humored debate with Elizabeth, and this portrait taken in New York may have been an early piece of evidence used to make his case.

Through Saying, 'You Must Have Wrong Patterson'



The caption for this hot news item read: "Mr. and Mrs. George Patterson Jr., above (the middle initial is D, please) suddenly find themselves in the unaccustomed position of being the only Mr. and Mrs. George Patterson Jr. in town. The other couple by that name (but with the middle initial S) has moved away after a series of mix-ups. The Pattersons in the scene above are pictured at their home, 2432 Henrietta-rd, with their two children, George III and Charlotte."

In the backyard with George, Charlotte and Dwight, 1941





On the campaign trail? Another snapshot from the same occasion reveals that his cuffs are rolled up to protect them from the mud.

When the Second World War began George applied for a naval commission but was rejected. Soon after he was offered a job as a regional director for the newly established Office of Price Administration, charged with controlling wartime prices and administering the rationing of a variety of products. The job presumably made him exempt when a draft notice eventually arrived in 1944, but it did require him to work in Atlanta. Rather than sell the house, he went to Atlanta to work and left the family in Birmingham just as many families were left behind when men went into the military. He continued to work in Atlanta until the OPA was shut down in 1946.

In 1948 George ran for Congress against an incumbent, Larry Battle. According to one story the platform of his campaign was sufficiently radical that the Alabama Power Company arranged to have the power go off at a


radio station while he was making a speech. His main campaign proposals were

- 1) *Immediate Adoption of the Marshall Plan*
- 2) *Lower Cost Housing Facilities*
- 3) *Income Tax Relief Through Fairer Exemption*
- 4) *Strong United Nations*
- 5) *Action to Diversify Industries in This District*
- 6) *Certain Amendments to The Taft-Hartley Law.*

His bid was unsuccessful, and he returned to a private law practice. In 1948 he acquired some property in Tallassee from his family and built The Patterson Building, a two story commercial building on a corner with its name in bold letters on the facade. Among the first tenants was, much to the delight of his sons, a pool hall.

He tried his hand at politics again in 1950 running for County Commissioner, once more against an incumbent whom he was unable to defeat. In 1951 the OPA was resurrected as the Office of Price Stabilization, and George was again made a regional director overseeing eight states from the Atlanta office. Again the family stayed in Birmingham while George worked in Atlanta for two years until the OPS was shut down.

George was then appointed a District Director for the newly reorganized Internal Rev-



**GEORGE
PATTERSON**

**CANDIDATE FOR
CONGRESS**

9th Congressional District

Subject to Action Dem. Primary

May 4 and June 1, 1948

YOUR SUPPORT WILL BE APPRECIATED

Take A State Patrolman On That Holiday Trip And Live To Tell Your Labor Day Experiences

Monday is Labor Day.

That means another long holiday week-end in which Alabama families may enjoy themselves.

There will be picnics, fishing trips, visits to relatives' homes.

And also, experience has taught us, there will be hundreds of deaths throughout the country in traffic crashes, as the highways become clogged with cars and as drivers drink holiday toasts.

How can we hit the highway on the 3rd, 4th and 5th—and be alive and happy with our families on the 6th?

Let's try something.

Let's all take along our own, personal State Highway Patrol officer on our holiday trip. Of course, there aren't enough patrolmen to go around—one for every car.

* * *

* * *

But we can assume that a patrolman is along with us as a guest and friend.

And, with him riding there beside you, would you:

Step on the gas 'til that needle edges up over 60, 70, 80 . . . ?

Whiz through restricted zones in highway towns . . . ?

Straddle the highway . . . ?

Pass other cars on hills . . . ?

Try to beat a red light . . . ?

Take that "last one for the road . . . " ?

Take any of the hundred and one chances which can lead to agony and heartbreak for you and your family, or for someone else and his family?

We don't think you would do these things.

So take your own personal highway patrolman along, and drive accordingly.

* * *

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Illustrating the idea here for The Post are Mr. and Mrs. George D. Patterson Jr., and their four children, Charlotte, 11, George, 13, Dwight, 8, and Richard, 7, with Highway

Patrol Officer L. A. Blythe.

Have a good time on your holiday, and let Death Take a Holiday, too!

From the front page of the Birmingham Post sunset edition of Thursday, September 1, 1949: Perhaps a way to stay in the public eye between election years; or maybe someone just knew he had a large family and a photogenic red Mercury convertible.

enue Service in November 1952. His appointment by an outgoing Democratic administration ruffled some feathers in Congress, and the newspaper ran stories questioning the politics involved in his selection; but George settled happily into his new career which provided him with a fair amount of prestige in Birmingham

and permitted him to live fulltime with his family.

A new addition to the family, Betsy, arrived in January of 1953 just after his oldest son had gone off to college. George was delighted to have a baby girl to dote on and was very involved in her upbringing. He also



With Betsy he was probably able to enjoy being Daddy in a way that had not been possible with the other children.



January 1953 as Richie hones his photographic skills in preparation for Betsy's arrival

began devoting himself to the family cabin on Lake Martin, a project which probably provided him with even more satisfaction than his chicken yard behind the house in Birmingham.

George was always a liberal Democrat, but his civil service position was secure under Eisenhower's two terms. He was a great admirer of Adlai Stevenson and John F. Kennedy and even distanced himself from many other Southerners including some of his relatives by admiring Robert Kennedy's efforts as Attorney General.

January 1953: Relaxing at night with a Pall Mall in "his chair," the secure haven from which he surveyed life and the world



Father of the Bride: June 1958





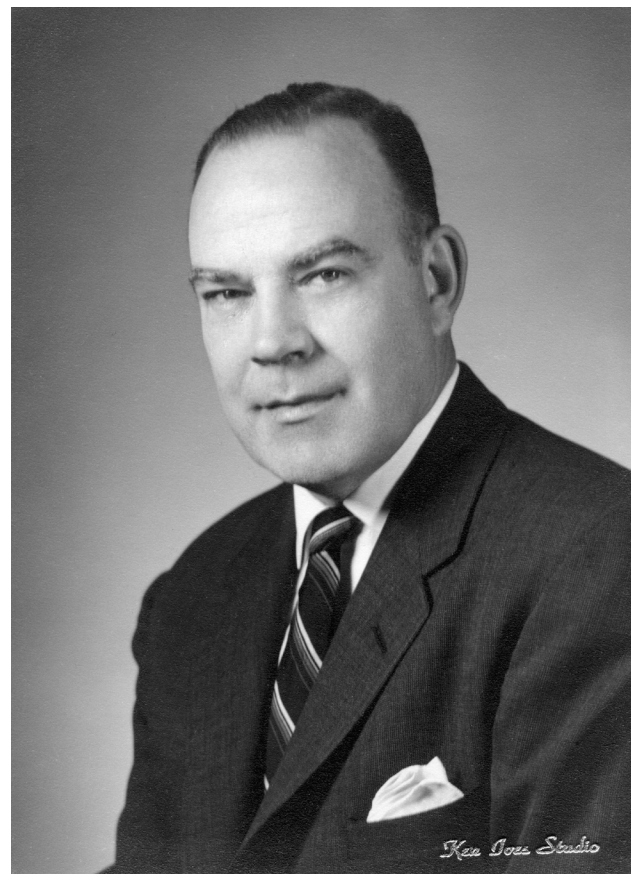
The first pier at Lake Martin during the off-season when the water level was down: The 48 lb. aluminum boat with its Martin 75 and custom steering wheel is parked at the water's edge read for a run.



George and Wilson relaxing on the flagstone patio that he designed as part of the cabin remodel: This is probably how he imagined heaven.



The newly remodeled cabin at Lake Martin which was George's principal hobby after began working for the IRS



He may not have attended, but he kept the invitation.

1989

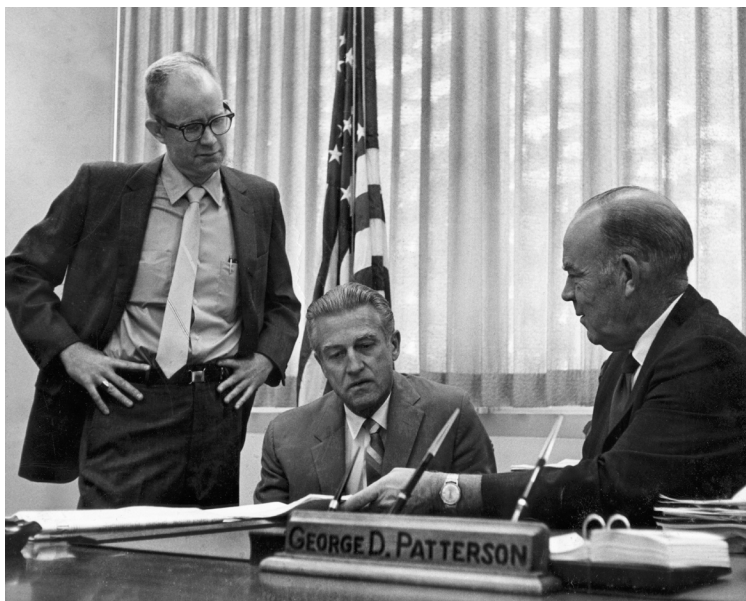
1961

The Inaugural Ball

To honor The President of the United States and Mrs. Kennedy and The Vice President of the United States and Mrs. Johnson, it is proposed to give a Ball, to which you are cordially invited, in the National Guard Armory, City of Washington, on Friday evening, the twentieth of January, at nine o'clock.

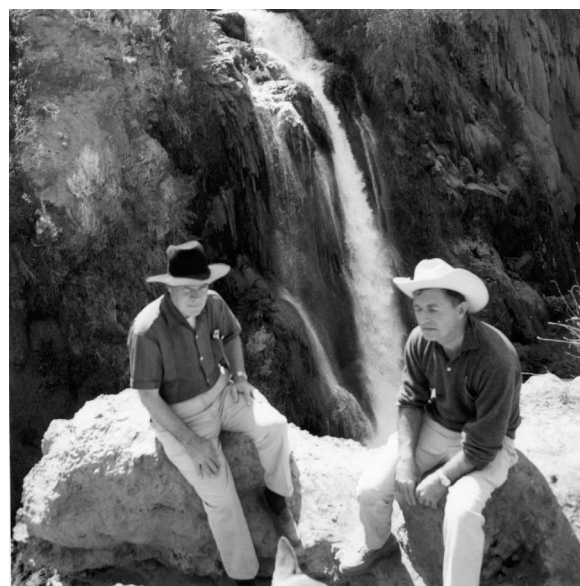
The subscription list will be under the supervision of the Inaugural Ball Committee.

*Mr. Stanley Woodward
Mrs. Hale Boggs
Chairmen*

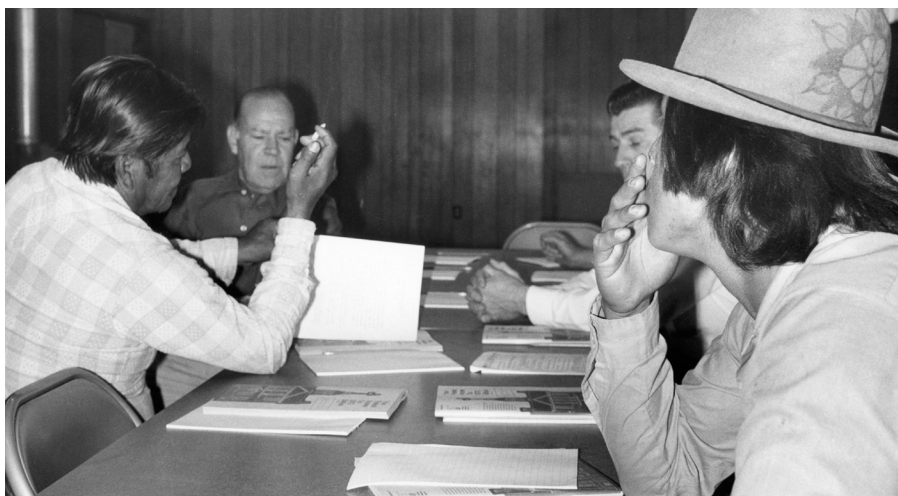


The Director at his desk in Phoenix

In 1964 the Internal Revenue Service transferred George to the Arizona District. It was theoretically a policy with the IRS that Directors should be periodically rotated from one district to another, but the impetus for his transfer may have come from a conflict with his immediate superior over the way in which the IRS was attempting to computerize its operations. He was probably much too attuned to the human dimension in collecting taxes to be very enthusiastic about the ways in which computers could mess things up while the system was being debugged. He could laugh in private about the way in which the computer issued a \$100,000 refund check to an unsuspecting taxpayer, but it is not hard to imagine his being viewed as an obstructionist by someone who was hellbent on replacing inefficient human beings with a machine.



George rode down to the bottom of the Grand Canyon to explain to the Havasupai that there were Social Security benefits associated with filing of a tax return. It wasn't really a publicity stunt; but it did get some coverage, and it was a bit of an adventure for him.





Vacationing with Dwight vacationing in Mexico ca. 1967



George and Elizabeth on their way to Europe on the Queen Elizabeth 2 in 1970



Probably the last of a host of photo portraits he had made over the years: This one may have been occasioned by his appointment to the Board of Directors for the Alabama State Fair Authority in 1974.

Summer 1978: "Poppa Daddy" with his granddaughter Harriet: His grandchildren seemed to enjoy him as much as he enjoyed them.



He and Elizabeth and Betsy moved to Phoenix during the summer of 1964 after attending Richard's college graduation. The move was more of an adjustment for Elizabeth than for the other two, but eventually they all got used to having grapefruits fall on the lawn instead of leaves and were able to enjoy having a swimming pool in the backyard.

George continued to work as Director for the Arizona district until his retirement in 1971. He learned that their old house in Birmingham was back on the market, so he snatched it up; and they moved back to Birmingham as Betsy went off to college. He had sold The Patterson Building in Tallasse as well as the cabin on Lake Martin, but he and Elizabeth were both glad to be back "home." He became involved in civic activities and in 1974 was appointed to the Board of Directors of the Alabama State Fair Authority. He was also inducted into the Royal Order of Jesters, which was probably more up his alley.

George took his first trip abroad in 1970 with Elizabeth and Betsy to visit his son, George, in Austria. They crossed the ocean on the Queen Elizabeth and took a boat down the Danube to Budapest. When he retired George seized the opportunity to realize a long-standing dream of visiting Austraila. Elizabeth had no interest in Australia, so she told him to go without her. She may have regretted the decision when he expanded his itenerary to include New Zealand, Fiji, Burma, Singapore, Hong Kong, Thailand and India; but she let him go alone anyway. The following year they both took a trip to Scandana-
via.

George died of lung cancer in August 1979 at the age of 72. He did not live to see Betsy marry or to meet his last two grandchildren, but the rest of his grandchildren were a source of great delight to him during his retirement.



What began in his imagination as a trip to the last frontier of Australia turned into a Grand Tour of Asia and was surely the crowning adventure of his retirement years.

Maybe the reason he wanted Betsy to make her debut was so that he could have one more excuse to wear white tie and tails. He did not live to attend her wedding, but he may have gotten almost as much pleasure out of her debut.

