

Texas' 50th speaker of the house, Wingate Stuart Barron, established a commendable record of public service to his state and the community of Bryan, where he resided for almost 80 years. Born on February 6, 1889, he grew up in Grimes County and received his education at Sam Houston Normal Institute in Huntsville. In 1910, after teaching school in Grimes County, Barron was elected that county's school superintendent.

Barron left the education field to pursue a law career, and three years after he was admitted to the bar in 1914, he established his practice in Bryan. In 1924, he successfully sought a seat in the house of representatives. Barron served three consecutive terms as a member of the 39th through the 41st legislatures and was chosen speaker of the house by his colleagues in 1929 during his last term in office.

Throughout his six years in the legislature, Barron worked toward the improvement of the state's public school system. During his term as speaker, several important changes were made in the system's administration, including the passage of legislation reorganizing the State Board of Education. Measures fixing the minimum age of school children at six years and establishing a physical education program in public schools were also passed during the 41st Legislature. As a state representative and speaker of the house, Barron also consistently promoted legislation on behalf of the Agricultural and Mechanical College of Texas (Texas A&M University). In 1930 the school received a portion of the university available fund through an agreement reached by its board and the governing board of The University of Texas.

At the end of his term as speaker in 1931, Barron was urged by many of his colleagues to run for statewide elective office. He chose to decline their offers to support and financially back another campaign on his behalf, and he decided to return to Bryan. There he resumed his law career and pursued his community and business interests. During the Depression years Barron devoted much of his time to his responsibilities as the local secretary-treasurer of the Federal Land Bank and assisted the area's hard-hit farmers with obtaining loans.

In 1940 the former speaker of the house was appointed judge of the 85th District, an office he held until his retirement in 1955. He then served as a member of the Board of Directors of the State Bar of Texas from 1956 to 1959. After his retirement as a lawyer and judge, Barron was recognized within the community of Bryan for his many years of civic involvement and for his professional and judicial contributions to the state.

Judge Barron died in Bryan on February 12, 1984, at the age of 95.