

Thomas Grey Wicker Doctor of Laws

Tom Wicker is a senior statesman of American journalism as well as a prolific novelist. After receiving his A.B. in Journalism from Carolina in 1948, he began his newspaper career with short stints in Aberdeen and then Lumberton, both close to his hometown of Hamlet, before moving on to the *Winston-Salem Journal* for eight years. Following two years as associate editor of the *Nashville Tennessean*, Wicker began in 1960 a thirty-year career with the Washington bureau of the *New York Times*, covering the White House, Congress, and national politics. He was traveling with the presidential party when President Kennedy was assassinated in Dallas in November, 1963. His report for the *Times* of that tragic event has been hailed as the most accurate first-hand account of the desperate and confused situation. He was named chief of the Washington bureau the following year. In 1966, Wicker began writing "In the Nation," for the *Times* editorial and opinion pages. Through that column, he rose to become one of the nation's most thoughtful and influential journalists.

In what for many people would have been a career in itself, Wicker found time to write nine novels, among them *Unto This Hour* (1984), *Facing the Lions* (1973), and *Easter Lilly* (1998), and six works of nonfiction including *Kennedy Without Tears* (1964), *JFK and LBJ: The Influence of Personality Upon Politics* (1968), *On Press* (1978), *One of Us: Richard Nixon and the American Dream* (1991), and *Tragic Failure: Racial Integration in America* (1996).

Tom Wicker has held visiting professorships at Davidson College, Middle Tennessee State University, and the University of California. He has been a visiting scholar at the First Amendment Center in Nashville, Tennessee (1998). At Harvard University he has been a Nieman Fellow (1957-58) and a fellow in the Joan Shorenstein Barone Center on the Press, Politics, and Public Policy (1994). At Carolina, he has been inducted into the Order of the Golden Fleece (1969) and has been awarded the Distinguished Alumnus Award (1974). He is one of the first five persons named to the North Carolina Journalism Hall of Fame (1982) and holds an honorary degree from Wake Forest University (1976).