Presenting: Virginia A.G.C. Review

December 1966

Feature Articles

Senators

Harry F. Byrd, Jr. William B. Spong, Jr.

By Guy Friddell
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PAGE FOUR VIRGINIA RECORD Founded 1878
Whatever Became of the Children?

Someone once wrote that among the lovely realities of life (as opposed to the usual “ugly realities”) was the expectancy of a child. In my experience, no reality was lovelier than the expectancy of my two daughters at the approach of Christmas. I remember most poignantly the years from when they were three and five to ten and twelve. I don’t recall with exactitude the years when Santa Claus became a mythical figure to them, as I suspect that the oldest went along with the youngest (and her parents) for a couple of years when she at least harbored some doubts about the reality of the beneficent gift-bringer. But I don’t think the probabilities of the existence of St. Nicholas entered as a controlling element in their total sense of expectancy. They held a sense of wonder about the season itself.

The season started for them at about December, when they could say, “Christmas will come next month.” For nearly two months they talked, more often and more intensely with each succeeding day, about the nature of their wishes. I believe the most heart-breaking aspect of the memory was the innocence of the presents they wanted. Always there were dolls, miniature furniture for the dollhouse, baby-carriages, red-wagons, and once a surry with a fringe on the top. These were the objects of their visions, which grew more vivid as the miraculous day approached.

Along with these main events, we made notes of the casually expressed wishes, made in passing and subject to change. Out of these came books, at first picture books with words and then word books with illustrations, and various kinds of games, which, except for a roulette wheel and cloth—which they still use with visiting friends—usually belonged in the past by New Year’s. Somewhere in there, clothes grew in importance, yielding identical or similar party dresses, hand-bags, and then overnight bags. Faddish raincoats and other articles of wearing apparel of passing fashion would also be mentioned, and—according to the parents’ pocketbook and the possible stability of the fad—these would appear among the main events.

All this in memory is largely background to the most exciting pre-Christmas event of expectation: this was the trip downtown to the stores. They readily understood that Santa lived only for children, and that, as grown-ups gave each other gifts, children should express the spirit of Christmas by themselves “giving” to grown-ups. When I hear parents complain of Christmas as a time they endure “only for the children,” I think of the trips downtown with the two little girls, when the sharing of their expectancy was, in all simple truth, something to be looked to for myself as well.

The trip would begin at the store windows, and it was easy to enter their mood—indeed, it would have been hard not to—by the breathless moment when we entered the wonderland of the store. Hours passed in following them from counter to counter, floor to floor, with—it must be confessed—more excursions toward things for children than for grown-ups. When I grew exhausted, I told them it was time for us to separate into our separate “buying rooms”—the Stag Shop for me and the Fawn Shop for them.

(Continued on page 36)
IDLING around in the mahogany gloom of the almost deserted Virginia Senate late on a winter afternoon in 1960, a reporter spied State Senator Harry F. Byrd, Jr. at his desk clipping a banner headline from a Virginia newspaper. Stretching across eight columns, the headline said: ALMOND BLASTS BYRD, JR.

Why, the reporter asked, was the Senator from Winchester so interested in saving the adverse comment?

"Well," said Mr. Byrd, "17-year-old Harry Byrd, III, like many teenagers, had little interest in politics.

"I thought he might get a kick out of this clipping," he said.

Continuity is a specialty of the Byrds. Certain interests, habits, and looks keep cropping up through eight generations of the family.

Colonial Williamsburg recently completed a color film on the Colonial naturalist, Mark Catesby. The movie-makers in Williamsburg carefully match the actors to the characters through portraits from the period, and when the actor playing William Byrd, II comes on the scene,

(Profile Continues on Page 10)
IN VIRGINIA one of the rituals of Democratic politics is the annual Jefferson-Jackson Day Dinner. In Richmond, just before winter gives way to spring, the politicians meet in the Hotel John Marshall to carve on ham, turkey, and each other. It is a testing time for those who aspire to seek the party’s blessing in the July Democratic primary; and it is as picturesque as the feast of the cannibals in *Robinson Crusoe*.

Especially notable was the J-J Dinner of February 19, 1966. The habitues could smack their chops over a double prospect because both of Virginia’s seats in the United States Senate were at stake in July. Senator Harry F. Byrd, Sr. had retired the previous November, and Senator A. Willis Robertson was running for re-election.

Among half a dozen prospective contenders at the J-J Dinner, the calmest was 46-year-old State Senator William B. Spong, Jr. of Portsmouth, so calm, in fact that word got around among the diners that he had decided not to run. In his crowded suite he seemed abashed, like the new

(Profile Continues on Page 12)
Top photo... "I like people... I like campaigning," says Byrd. One of his tasks was to incorporate young workers among the old-line lieutenants of the Democratic Organization. At left... The famous Byrd handshake, tempered a trifle now, formerly was so hearty as to leave the target shook. And in photo below... Byrd, perusing a newspaper, subscribes to more than 40, and reads history and biography as well.
Top photo . . . opening headquarters at Virginia Beach, Spong found old friends. But in Northern Virginia, at the start, a woman asked, curiously: "What is a spong?" At left . . . Spong greets one of his poll-workers in Norfolk during the July 12 election. Everywhere, he said, he found persons "waiting to be asked" to help in politics. And below . . . Candidate Spong, who won state-wide acclaim for his four-year study of Virginia education, watches an academic procession at Frederick College. With him in Portsmouth is William L. Parker, board chairman of the Norfolk Museum of Arts and Sciences.
state dinner on the first night, Mr. Churchill asked for mustard, and, when word came back that there was none in the kitchen, his hostess, trying to pass it off lightly, said she'd be glad to send someone to the store. Yes, said Mr. Churchill, that's what he would like.

(No out into the night to look for mustard rushed young Harry while his mother slowed down the dinner.)

Recalling the incident after Mr. Churchill's death, the boy who went after the mustard wrote: “Mr. Churchill knew what he wanted and when he wanted it, a characteristic which served him well in war and politics... During his visit, Mr. Churchill made a habit of specifying the time he would like his meals. And then he began to supervise the menu. My mother would have been happier had the Britisher received an emergency call to return to Parliament.”

Top left... at the final gavel of a legislative session, Byrd is off like a shot to join his wife, the former Gretchen Bigelow Thomson, and their children, Harry III (standing), daughter Beverley Bigelou, and Thomas Thomson. And below... Byrd Jr., seen here in his youth, traveled into every county and city in Virginia with his father, and talked with him by the hour, as if they were close friends or brothers.

Harry F. Byrd, Jr. (Continued from Page 6)

walking through the woods with Catesby, he is the stocky, ruddy, blue-eyed, prototype of the family. He easily might have been the late Senator Harry Byrd, Sr., brimming with investigative zest for what was around him in the mountains of the Blue Ridge or the political woods of Washington.

When the elder Senator retired from the United States Senate on November 11, 1965, Governor Harrison appointed Harry Byrd, Jr. to take his place, and when “Young Harry” took his seat in the Senate on January 10, 1966, a buzz of comment ran around the galleries at the remarkable resemblance of the son to the father.

The resemblance goes deeper than “the Byrd look.” When the father was Governor of Virginia, he took the boy with him on trips throughout the State. Before “young Harry” was out of his teens, he had visited every county and city in Virginia.

And he had watched a parade of public men in and out of the Mansion, from the county chairmen of Virginia's remote districts to Winston Churchill, writing history during his political exile, who visited the Governor for 10 days while touring Civil War battlefields around Richmond.

(Continued from the course of a formal...
Young Harry and his father could talk politics, or business 12 hours a day, "or however long we were together."

“Our interests were alike, and we were more like brothers or best friends. I’d just rather talk with him than anybody else," said the son. "When I was growing up, I never had a date until after he had gone to bed."

In some respects, the son’s mannerisms outdid the father’s. Because the confidences he kept were not his own, the younger Byrd learned to be even more close-mouthed with newspapermen.

Whereas the older Mr. Byrd evaded reporters by leaving a message that he was “out in the orchard,” the young Mr. Byrd, when he is being pressed on something he is not ready to disclose,

answers a reporter’s question with a question of his own, laughs uproariously at the witty way in which the reporter replies, beams upon him, pumps the hand of his interrogator—and is gone. (The handshake itself can be demoralizing. When young Mr. Byrd grabs a hand, as if he is preparing to Indian wrestle, for a fearful moment the other fellow feels he may lose his balance and fall to his knees. The Senator has toned it down some, but the veteran reporters are still wary, and now when he doesn’t rattle them to the roots with his handshake, that unsettles them, too, like a person lifting his foot carefully for a step that isn’t there.) It all adds up to a cheerful, positive way of saying

(Continued on page 23)

to tell the Virginia Story

DECEMBER 1966

PAGE ELEVEN
Wm. B. Spong, Jr. (from page 7)

boy at school. He took aside a
newsman to show him pictures of
his two children and he also
made the reporter read an under-
lined passage from The Major
Campaign Speeches of Adlai
Stevenson. Mr. Stevenson wrote
that political campaigns “for off-
ces of great responsibility are
both an opportunity and an obli-
gation to talk sensibly and truth-
fully about public questions and
their full implication.”

The prescription did not seem
promising in view of Adlai’s ex-
perience in pursuing the Presi-
dency; nor is such high-minded
philosophy customary in victory-
minded politicians about to do
battle. The reporter left the suite
convinced that Mr. Spong was
preparing to back away from the
contest for the U. S. Senate.

But Mr. Spong merely was un-
decided. “If I’d been a candidate
that night,” he said later, “they
would have chopped me up 14
ways for Sunday. Pat (Jennings)
came down there and ran into all
that.”

Representative W. Pat Jen-
nings of Marion, who had been
saying for weeks that it was a
“double probability” he would
challenge Senator Harry Byrd,
Jr. for the elder Byrd’s former
seat, decided on his way home
from that J-J Dinner that he
wouldn’t. And in five days Mr.
Spong decided he would get in
the race against Mr. Robertson.

The incident is instructive not
so much of J-J Dinners, which
seldom live up to their billing as
affairs of great consequences, as
of Mr. Spong’s careful, deliberative
temperament.

On the surface, he is what
the teenagers would call “cool,”
which is, I think, what Ernest
Hemingway meant when he ad-
mired “grace under pressure” as
the essence of courage. A ro-
mantic might contend that Mr.
Spong’s cool is reminiscent of
John F. Kennedy, whom he ad-
mired; but the difficulty with
that theory is that the man from
Portsmouth was going his own
low-keyed way in the Virginia
Senate long before the crisp
young man from Hyannisport
made an impact on the national
consciousness.

To be cool does not mean in
Mr. Spong’s case to be uninvolved. He cares immensely. The
four-year study of Virginia’s pub-
lic education which he headed is a model of thoroughness; significantly, it is aimed as much at improving present practices in the school system as in enlarging appropriations.

He is interested in international affairs, and if he draws an assignment on the Foreign Relations Committee, his absorption will assure Virginia a voice as respected in foreign affairs as it formerly enjoyed in fiscal matters.

Mr. Spong does not fit the stereotype of the successful politician (nor do most other politicians, for that matter, but he has fewer of the common denominator traits than almost any of them). He is of a medium build, slightly stooped and scholarly-looking, behind horn-rimmed glasses.

Top photo, in Arlington, Spong, who once wrote sports for The Portsmouth Star and is an avid fan, poses with Little Leaguers. And below, an absorbed Spong hears an early return during the July 12 Democratic primary election. He inspired a new, young, grassroots organization across Virginia.

As a reader, he is voracious and omnivorous. In the 28 minutes in which a jet flies from Norfolk to Washington, he can digest a sub-committee report or a news magazine. He is inclined to read what comes to hand. (At the time of this interview, he was mid-way through Herman Wouk's The Carnival, which he had scooped from a coffee table in the Charlottesville home of William C. Battle, his campaign manager.)

He enjoys tennis and was proficient enough to carry Mr. Battle as a doubles partner until after the Charlottesville attorney had served two years as an ambassador—and on the courts—in Australia. "Now he carries me," said Mr. Spong.

In his speaking he is more of a professor than a stem-winder,

(Continued on page 27)
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PAGE FOURTEEN
VIRGINIA RECORD
Founded 1878
IN THE CONSTRUCTION industry, whenever a high-rise building's superstructure is completed, a “topping-out” ceremony is customarily held. It signifies that the building has reached its first major segment of completion and is cause for celebration and a burst of pride on the part of those who participated.

1966 in Virginia, for those engaged in construction, was indeed cause for a “topping out” ceremony. Commercial, residential, industrial, highway and utility . . . all enjoyed a volume of growth that could be defined as unparalleled in recent years.

Currently, a number of Federal maneuvers are underway which will perhaps curtail similar expansion in 1967, but the public demand for more schools, churches, hospitals, shopping centers, arterial highways, improved utilities, etc., will serve to keep the construction pump primed.

Behind the construction scenes throughout 1966 was the Virginia Branch—Associated General Contractors of America. Engaging in a multiplicity of industry activities, it involved itself in key industry programs designed to improve and expand the image of the general contractor. This was partially achieved through the showing of a sound, color film entitled The General With The Cockeyed Id. It tells the story in capsule form of the growth of...
construction, starting with the pyramids in ancient Egypt, and rapidly brings the viewer up to the 20th Century. This film, which describes today's builders as "... men who are literally changing the face of America today," has been shown to over 150 viewing audiences throughout Virginia.

Also aimed at the general public is a disaster relief program called PLAN BULLDOZER. It entails the listing of over six thousand pieces of construction equipment which has been offered by approximately two-hundred construction firms in the event of a natural disaster occurring anywhere in Virginia. This A.G.C. disaster relief program was officially accepted by Governor Mills E. Godwin, Jr. earlier this year, and is a part of the Commonwealth's official civil defense program, as well as the network of mobilization programs controlled by the Office of Emergency Planning in Washington, D.C.

Safety, an ever-present factor in construction, was a prime target for the A.G.C. in 1966. Two eight-week safety schools were sponsored, one in Waynesboro and the other in Richmond. Entitled Safety Training School for Construction Supervisors, their chief purpose is to enlist the aid of top management in originating and operating a sound day-to-day safety program within the framework of their respective construction firms. The Commonwealth of Virginia simultaneously issued a new Construction Safety Code, affecting all those engaged in commercial and industrial construction, excavation and demolition.

(Please turn to page 18)
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DECEMBER 1966

PAGE SEVENTEEN
DISTRICT LEVEL—Each of the seven Virginia Branch “Districts” meets four to six times each year. Pictured above are the distinguished guests attending the October 26 Richmond District dinner meeting. (Seated I. to r.) Clyde Green, District President; Tim Echols, President, Virginia Road Builders Assn.; Bill Armstrong, Senior Vice President of the National AGC; Marvin Lucas, Virginia Branch President; (Standing, I. to r.) Bobby Lee, Virginia Branch Director; Sam Shrum, Virginia Branch Director; Jim Enochs, speaker; Jim Sprouse, National Staff, Marc Wright, speaker; and Bob Woodward, Virginia Branch Executive Director.

(Continued from page 16)

Inter-industry activities involved joint meetings with allied organizations such as the Virginia Chapter—American Institute of Architects; the Virginia Society of Professional Engineers; the American Public Works Association; and numerous sub-contracting groups. Liaison was maintained with the Virginia Department of Labor and Industry to promote apprentice training, labor harmony and stable wages.

Somewhat new to the field of higher education is the amazing work being done by colleges and universities throughout Virginia in the development of construction curricula. Several of the state’s engineering colleges are turning out bachelor of science degrees in Construction Technology, and are planning advanced degree programs in the same field. Virginia’s Community Colleges Program, headed by Dr. Dana Hamel, will also make a vital contribution to construction education as its schools get into high gear in 1967.

The 1966 Session of the Virginia General Assembly turned out many pieces of legislation pertinent to the construction industry, but the prime effort of contractors was directed towards passage of an amendment to the Virginia Sales Tax Law exempting so-called “prior construction contracts” (those entered into prior to the date the Governor signed the Bill) from payment of the sales tax. Although the Governor permitted very, very few amendments to his Bill, the “prior contracts amendment” passed.

On the national legislative scene, the construction industry was heard from forcefully. Outnumbered, out-financed and out-maneuvered at almost every turn, the bulwark of the industry put their collective shoulders together and prevented repeal of Section 14(b) of the Taft-Hartley Labor Act. This sec-
tion of the Act permits individual states to enact "right-to-work" laws, and repeal would have denied them this cherished right. In addition, labor unions got nowhere in their efforts to legalize "secondary boycotts." Passage of this type of legislation would have brought havoc to the construction industry, already beset by constant labor strife, strikes, and picketing in critical locations throughout the nation.

The Virginia Branch—A.G.C. pin-points its statewide efforts through the use of its seven Districts, each having its own set of officers, committees and individual programs. Although this diversification would appear to water down statewide efforts, it actually has an annealing effect in that grass-roots communications bring the membership together in times when "unity" is the prime ingredient.

This "grass-roots" effect is transmitted all the way to the national level because of constant visits from National A.G.C. officers and members of the national staff. The 1966 National Convention and Exhibit was held in Washington, D. C., thus permitting a large number of Virginians to participate actively in the six-day program. The Mid-Year Convention was held in Honolulu, Hawaii, in October, but this long distance still didn't prevent over 1,100 A.G.C. members and their wives from attending.

It was at this Mid-Year Convention that President Alton V. Phillips (Seattle, Washington) announced that the construction industry was tired of being on the legislative defense, and in the 90th Session of Congress would go on the offense. His announcement was met with overwhelming acceptance by the membership.

What is in store for the construction industry in Virginia during 1967? Well, the prophets of doom cite those steps taken recently by the Federal Reserve Board, Secretary of Defense McNamara and President Johnson as examples of moves that will seriously curtail all phases of construction in 1967. The Federal-aid Highway Program in Virginia was curtailed by approximately 17%; residential construction in Virginia is seriously hampered by an apparent inability of prospective purchasers to obtain reasonable financing; and other curtailments can be expected as a result of the Vietnam conflict. But do these add up to an overall reduction in construction volume?

Even the experts disagree on the answer to this question. Here in Virginia, we believe that "supply and demand" will prove to be the equalization factor. A projection of demand for homes, schools, shopping centers, office buildings and the multiplicity of structures needed to house the families, people and businesses should keep the construction industry active on a par with 1966 activities throughout 1967.

No one can foresee what will be the outcome of more drastic curtailments which might be expected as a result of military involvement in Viet Nam and other sensitive areas in the world, so our only course is to surge ahead in the coming months with the expectation that construction will continue at a healthy and realistic pace.
THE CAVALIER MANOR JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL was the second totally air conditioned Junior High to be built by the City of Portsmouth in 1966.

The building encompasses 100,000 square feet on a beautiful 23-acre site with adequate faculty parking and special canopied bus loading and unloading walks.

The school can accommodate 1,200 students in 40 classrooms. The cafeteria and auditorium were combined to form a cafeteria at a considerable saving in the over-all construction costs.

The final finishes in this school are considered elaborate with all floors being terrazzo, and ceramic tile walls in all heavily traveled areas.

The gymnasium was designed to provide adequate space to (Continued on page 35)
Located at 1308 Jefferson Davis Highway, Richmond, the handsome new U. S. Plywood Corporation building was formally opened for public viewing on November 12th. The 44,000 square foot building is rectangular in shape with an office appendage. Two-story planning has been effectuated for the office which adjoins the one-story warehouse.

The structure rests on concrete caissons with a reinforcing concrete foundation over compacted fill. Wood components which have been used extensively throughout include laminated wood beams spanning 68'-6" in the warehouse, wood windows, a built-up roof over a plywood deck, interior walls of wood and floors of wood with vinyl asbestos floor covering in the office. Warehouse floors are of concrete.

Exterior walls are of masonry and concrete with striking stained, abraded cedar paneling sheathing the office section of the building.

Further use of wood in the office includes a full range of U. S. Plywood's prefinished paneling and other products of the company.

SUBCONTRACTORS & SUPPLIERS
(All from Richmond)

Bass Construction Co. was the general contractor and did the foundations, carpentry, and insulation; McKinney Drilling Co., caissons; Capital Concrete Corp., concrete; Wm. E. Tucker, Inc., masonry; Holmes Steel Co., steel, handrails; U. S. Plywood Corp., wood roof deck, structural wood, paneling; Whitley, Inc., roofing, waterproofing; Sash Door & Glass Corp., windows, glazing; Pleasants Hardware, finish hardware; Glidewell Bros., Inc., painting; Consolidated Tile Co., acoustical, resilient tile; Oliva & Lazzari, Inc., ceramic tile; Miller Mfg. Co., Inc., wood flooring, millwork; J. S. Archer Co., steel doors and bucks, overhang doors, toilet partitions; Ben Collier Electrical Contractor, Inc., lighting fixtures, electrical work; Carlett-Johnson Corp., plumbing fixtures, plumbing, air conditioning, heating, ventilating; Bowker & Roden, Inc., reinforced steel.
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Superintendent, S.M.A., Box VC6, Staunton, Va.
no comment," except that Mr. Byrd refrains from saying even that.

The Byrds all dote on work. When young Harry was 10, he went to work in the orchards during vacations and on weekends, first at "ground hogging"—(picking up fallen apples)—and then when he was 15 at "thinning" (picking off the apples which grew too close together) and by the time he was 16, working in the packing house in the center of the orchard. When a dangerous drop in temperature threatened the trees in the spring, the old Senator and his three sons supervised the "smudging" to save the fruit and came home in the morning black with soot. (He still is active in the management of the orchards, with his two younger brothers, B. Beverley Byrd, production manager, and Richard E. Byrd, who directs the canning plant at Berryville.)

After two years at the Virginia Military Institute, young Harry transferred to the University of Virginia, and began to show an interest in newspapering, so much so that his professor of commercial law and banking said there was no point in young Mr. Byrd's taking his exam when he had spent all his time with his head buried in The New York Times. "I got a pretty good mark on it," recalled Mr. Byrd, "but I must say that I studied like hell." (He speaks like his father, too, peppering his remarks with mild profanity, like punctuation, his tone rising in force at the end of a sentence, like the crow of a rooster.)

He wrote the old Senator that he would like to run The Winchester Evening Star, (which his father had rescued from bankruptcy when he left the Shenandoah Valley Academy at 15). The younger Byrd enclosed a long list of suggestions to improve the paper.

"Why don't you come up and do something about it?" the father answered. "Try out your ideas. Most of them seem good. You'll put some into effect, and you'll make some mistakes. If you make too many mistakes, you're gone!"

At 20 he went to work on The Star. As an early chore, he undertook to collect $1,000 a well-to-do lawyer had owed the paper for 20 years. The lawyer insisted there was no proof his legal advertisements had been published. Mr. Byrd recruited two dozen men from all departments to pull
down the annual files of two decades. With each man holding a bulky volume on his head, they marched, single file, along Winchester’s main street.

“From my office window,” recalled a resident, “I saw them coming across the Court House plaza. The long line of men with burdens on their heads looked like a safari in darkest Africa, with Harry, like explorer Stanley, stepping along in front.”

They piled the tomes about the lawyer’s office, and Mr. Byrd offered, courteously, to go through them with him. But the lawyer paid, quickly.

In 1937 the young editor wrote a series of front page editorials criticizing Winchester’s police court justice for what he asserted was flagrant favoritism of the wealthy while giving stiff sentences to the less fortunate. The editorials won the Lee Editorial Award, presented jointly by the Virginia Press Association and the Lee Memorial Journalism Foundation at Washington and Lee University.

He modernized both The Star and The Harrisonburg Daily News Record. In typography layout, and the use of color photography, they are among the finest of Virginia’s smaller dailies. Regularly, the editor made trips abroad. On a tour of Europe in 1951 for Gannett newspapers, he interviewed Winston Churchill.

Mr. Churchill could cut the mustard still. On the topic of building a legislative hall, he advised Mr. Byrd to make it oblong rather than semi-circular—“and put one party on one side and one on the other side, and make them stay there.”

When the editor observed that Britain’s Parliamentary system had some advantage over America’s governments the Briton replied: “Ah, yes, Mr. Byrd, but don’t forget this. The basic strength of America, in my judgment, lies in the fact that the 48
and say very gruffly, 'Good morn-
ing, Miss Thomson,' as if he'd
never seen me except around the
office. Oh, it made me mad!"

In the 1963 special session, the
Virginia Senate enjoyed a bit of
by-play that, as it turned out, was
a portent. Retiring from the Sen-
ate, Armistead L. Boothe of Alex-
andria observed humorously that
since his break with the Demo-
cratic Organization, he had not
received the box of apples which
Mr. Byrd customarily sent his
friends at Christmastime. He
added that he hoped his retire-
ment would mean his return to
the apple list.

"That," said Mr. Byrd, bob-
ing up and down vigorously as
he spoke, "would depend on Mr.
Boothe's attitude."

In 1966, when Mr. Jennings
backed down, Mr. Boothe made a
bid for all the apples and entered
the Democratic primary race to
fill the unexpired term of the eld-
er Mr. Byrd.

Mr. Byrd scarcely could have
drawn a stronger foe than the per-
sonable Mr. Boothe. Of his vic-
tory by a margin of 8,225 votes,
Mr. Byrd said, "I didn't expect it
to be quite this close, but from the
beginning I felt it was going to be
a hard, tough, difficult fight."

The general election campaign
also posed difficulties as he was
attacked energetically from the
left by Republican Lawrence M.
Traylor and vociferously from the
far right by the third party con-
servatives who claimed to have
inherited the political mantle of
the elder Mr. Byrd.

"I was in a helluva fix," he said.
"I was damn lucky to get elected,
I guess."

What interested him was that
he had won without a poll tax or
restrictions of any kind. "I've been
convinced," he said, "that the
larger the vote, the better off I
am. If we'd gotten out another
100,000, we'd have been that
much better off. Those against
you are coming out anyway."

In selecting a team that could
gee and haw, the moderate Mr.
Spong and the conservative Mr.
Byrd, Virginians, who quite often
do things by halves, seemed to be
saying that they wished to move
nearer the middle of the road.

Mr. Byrd seemed alert to the
signals. "My father made his rec-
ord; now I must make mine," he
said.

"I feel that legislators, like
businessmen and individual citi-
zens, must continuously look for-
ward—as times and conditions
change.

"I would like to consider my-
self a progressive in the sense that
it is important to continue to look
forward in order to serve the best
interests of all the people. There
are certain fundamentals that
don't change—the constitutional
concepts of government, and I
feel that true progress can only be
made through fiscal responsibili-
ty."

Some other things don't
change. When a reporter visited
the newly-elected Senator in
Washington, he found an office
that for nearly a year had been
on a seven-day-a-week operation.
The stack of papers, which the
Senator was attacking, was truly
stunning in its height. As the
newsmen went, he looked back and
cought a glimpse of young Harry
reaching for the paper on the top
of the pile, his face concentrating,
his tongue thrust forward in his
upper lip, in precisely the manner
of Old Harry.

Out in the corridor, the report-
er talked briefly with M. J.
"Peachy" Menefee, who had
come to Washington with the
father and who was staying long
enough with the son to help ease
the routines of the office.

"Along with other similarities,"
said Mr. Menefee, "he's got some-
thing rare his father had. Lots of
times when it seems easier and
much more politically expedient
to say yes, he can listen, carefully
and politely—and say no."
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PAGE TWENTY-SIX
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and he enlivens his generally dry, drawling delivery with an especially dry wit, often at his own expense, which, again, runs contrary to the common run of Virginia politicians who are not much inclined to regard themselves or their careers with the slightest levity.

At the start of the primary campaign, when he was unknown through much of the Old Dominion, he liked to tell of the woman who approached campaign manager Bill Battle in Northern Virginia, studied the button in his lapel, and asked: "What is a spong?"

He found that the most effective way to combat rumor is with humor. Denying that his primary campaign was being financed with Kennedy money, Mr. Spong told how two of his young aides had posted in his Richmond headquarters a newspaper picture of Robert Kennedy, bullhorn in hand, surveying a crowd from a convertible limousine in New York City. Under the picture Mr. Spong’s aides had scrawled: "Don’t just stand there! Send the money!"

Where he departs furthest from the political norm is his habit of declining, politely but firmly, to rely on any line but that of his own thinking. In a quiet, unassuming way, the most astonishing thing about him is his high degree of political independence. He wasn’t identified as a member of the dominant Democratic Organization; nor, on the other hand, could he be counted among the extreme pinions in the liberal wing of the Democratic Party.

When he got ready to run, he did not seek the nod of Sidney Kellam of Virginia Beach, the Democratic National Committee man.

Neither did he ask commitments from Negro leaders. "Having talked with them over a long period, I felt I knew their views, as well as those of any other segment of my constituency," he said. "If the white leadership fails in this, we’ve all had it. How are you going to reason with them, if you can’t even talk to them?"

How, then, did he win the Senate seat? Some of his success is explained by forces from the outside: the court-ordered reapportionment which gave urban areas a fairer share of seats in the Virginia General Assembly; Congressional abolition of the poll tax in Federal elections, which stimulated greater numbers of Negroes to vote; the rising migration of newcomers to Virginia (somewhat as a result, ironically, of the Democratic Organization’s hunt for industry.)

Much of his support simply grew, Topsy-like, into being with young men and women reaching their 20’s and 30’s who liked him and saw his candidacy as a coming of their age in Virginia politics. They swarmed around his headquarters. When a Danville newspaper sought to dismiss them as “pygmies” trying to fell a THE BANK OF WESTMORELAND, INC.
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mighty oak, they gloried in the nickname. "The pygmies," said Mr. Spong, "were tremendous."

A billboard depicting the candidate wearing a striped tie caught the public's fancy as a symbol of youthfulness, and nearly every day's mail brought a cravat from an admirer as a token of support, a tie that binds.

In one locality after another, Mr. Spong discovered young persons who had discovered in themselves an interest in politics, first out of a sense of commitment on certain issues and, secondly, through a fascination with the mechanics of campaigning. (Having instigated a thriving organization at the grassroots, he faces the question of what to do with it: let some of his cohorts cultivate it in the 1969 race for Governor; or wait and try to invoke it, like Prospero, for his own race for re-election six years hence, or keep in close touch with it as a continuous force for what he deems to be progressive in Virginia.)

But if the times improved the odds for a change in Virginia's representation, the young challenger had to win the confidence of a majority of voters in competition with a seasoned, widely-beloved veteran. It used to be said that Senator Robertson had hunted and fished with enough individuals in Virginia to win any State-wide office. (In greeting the dawn of an era with Mr. Spong, the heralds might find it humbling—and healthy—to consider that the courtly incumbent's contemporaries could remember Mr. Robertson's political beginnings as an energetic progressive in the House of Representatives, inspired to public service by the teachings of a liberal professor at the University of Richmond.

It is necessary, perhaps, that each generation think of itself as building anew, else it might be discouraged from starting the cycle at all, tired before its time. But
somewhere the overlord of the revolving pageant must possess either an enormous patience or an endlessly consuming curiosity.)

Anyway, a man has to be fit to answer the call of his times. Mr. Spong's readiness traces to his civic-minded parents. His mother served as chairman during 13 of her 23 years on the Portsmouth School Board and won the Distinguished Service Award of the Virginia Education Association in 1951. Her forebear—Thomas Veale—gave a part of his farm to form Portsmouth, the first annexation. (And her son has been helping annex territory for the past 10 years.)

Without any thought about philosophies or political labels, his father was a humanitarian, forever helping somebody out of trouble. At his death, a newspaper editorial noted that there was no telling how many overcoats he had donated to needy persons. His wife remembers meeting on the bus one morning a familiar, distinctively tailored overcoat on a trampy individual, and then noting that evening, without surprise, that her husband was coatless, again. "He was," said his son, "very much concerned with people who didn't have very much."

The elder Mr. Spong headed the advertising department of The Portsmouth Star and aided the publisher-editor, Norman R. Hamilton, in three classic campaigns against Colgate W. Darden, Jr. Mr. Spong's boy Billy aided, too, in posting Hamilton placards around the town. (Introducing the young senatorial candidate at a Virginia Beach rally in the 1966 general election, Mr. Darden observed that young Spong had entered politics at an early age by tearing down his posters. Mr. Darden mused that he had caught up with him at last on a platform at the Beach, but a force of eight men hadn't been able to contain the one boy
Almost the first story about the boy concerns his loyalty to friends. His mother recalls that when he was five, she arranged a birthday party for him and invited a few friends—and Billy marched into the house with a host of neighborhood playmates he had rounded up.

He startled his first grade teacher, Miss Nan Stewart, by choosing as a topic for a speech “The Causes of World War I.” In high school he was a cheer leader, president of the senior class, and “best all round.” And pharmacist William P. Orwin, who hired him for a time as a soda dispenser, recalls that “he was a fine young man who ate a lot of ice cream.”

Among his friends at Hampden-Sydney College were boys...
whose families were active in Virginia's public life: John S. Battle, Jr., son of former Governor Battle; Lester Dillard, the step-son of Governor Tuck; William Trinkle the son of Governor Trinkle; Vernon Spratley, Jr. and A. A. Buchanan, Jr., the sons of two Justices of the Virginia Supreme Court of Appeals. "Politics was not the predominance of our conversation," said Mr. Spong, "but it was always there."

His tendency to law and politics was rivaled, however, by his interest in newspaper work. He enjoyed covering college sports for the campus news bureau.

On his return from service with the 8th Army Air Corps in Europe during World War II, he applied for admission to both the Columbia University School of Journalism and the University of Virginia Law School. Word of his acceptance at Charlottesville arrived first, or he might have
wound up in an editor's chair instead of a seat in the United States Senate. (Even for a couple of years after he was practicing law, he covered Saturday games for The Portsmouth Star under the nom de plume of Bill Belser.) After graduation from Law School, he studied international law and forensic medicine at the University of Edinburgh and comparative government at Cambridge. (Another taboo—study abroad—fell with Mr. Spong's election. During one era of Virginia politics, any candidate who happened to have been a Rhodes Scholar worked under a considerable handicap.)

He hadn't been home from Scotland a month before he was helping manage the local campaign for John S. Battle in the gubernatorial race of 1949. In 1954 he won a seat in the House of Delegates and in 1956 he entered the State Senate.
In the July, 1965 primary, as one of five candidates to represent Portsmouth, Chesapeake, and Virginia Beach, Mr. Spong led the field, receiving more than 23,000 votes out of the 27,000 cast.

The seeming ease with which he moves untouched through political broils mystifies his opponents. "I have never been above the battle," he said. "Portsmouth is a hard school of politics. You don't survive over here without having some notion of the dynamics that move people.

"I genuinely like the political side of it. I like to get the feel of a community, quietly analyzing the situation, and, without telling others what to do, make suggestions. Everywhere I went I found capable young people waiting around to be asked to help.

"But I don't think you can be a good legislator and run around continually worrying about the
These political difficulties in the localities can consume you. On the other hand, if you default all of it to somebody else, you’re somebody else’s man.”

Mr. Spong continues to go his independent, progressive way.

And when a foe tries to charge him with being alarmingly liberal, there are friends who spring to his defense to point out that the picture is scarcely consistent with a man who has been president of the Portsmouth Rotary Club, chairman of the trustees of the Portsmouth General Hospital, a member of the Imps and ribbon societies at the University, chairman of his city’s United Community Fund, and president-elect of the Virginia State Bar Association. What binds his supporters to him is his stubborn adherence to the truth, and a boyish insistence on being himself.

He is married to the former Virginia Wise Galliford, the girl around the corner who was always away at school until a friend brought her to a party at the Spong home. They live in a 100-year old house in Portsmouth and have two children—Martha, 5, and Tommy, 3.

The night after the election a newsmen went by the Spong household for an interview, and found Mrs. Spong quietly enjoying the spectacle of the two children engrossed in the antics of “Mr. Freeze” on Batman, and, stretched out prone on the rug beside them, sleeping blissfully, that apostle of change, Virginia’s newly-elected representative to the United States Senate.
Byrd, Spong, Friddell & Plutarch

In the course of putting together a pair of profiles on Virginia's two new United States Senators for The Virginia Record, Guy Friddell remarked that the great biographer and master profilist, Plutarch, would have enjoyed this age of acute interest in political affairs.

"In his immortal gallery of famous men," said Mr. Friddell, "he paired off Greek and Roman public servants in parallel lives. I wish he were here to treat our new Senators, Harry F. Byrd, Jr. and William B. Spong, Jr., in that fashion. Perhaps he would place Mr. Spong, for his love of study, among the Greeks, and Mr. Byrd, with his turn for organization, among the Romans."

But, along with contrasts between the two men, Mr. Friddell's interviews disclosed some interesting parallels:

"Both men have family roots that trace far back into Virginia history, Mr. Spong's to the founding of Portsmouth, Mr. Byrd's to a forefather who explored the land of Virginia when, indeed, it was the virgin wilderness that its name implies. In their own day, both men are devoted to their own family circle. Each grabs every spare moment to spend at home. Mr. Byrd was never one to loiter around Richmond on the weekend during General Assembly sessions for cocktail parties; Mr. Spong, in the midst of campaigning, would get off the plane in Norfolk, where his wife would meet him with their two children, and the four of them would take some precious time in the sun at the Beach—and then back to campaigning. Both men are interested in newspaper work as a profession. Mr. Spong, at a crucial crossroads in his career, almost took the route to journalism. A facet of Mr. Byrd's career is as the publisher and editor of two newspapers in the Valley and a share-holder in a chain of newspapers in Northern Virginia.

"Both men, too, are independent. At some points, they are positively unbudge-able. Mr. Spong is considered by many political observers to be moderate, although he shows a bent for economy; Mr. Byrd is tabbed as a conservative, although in his first year in the Senate certain bills got his vote that lent credence to his declaration that he would make his own way, just as his father before him had made his.

"Each of the new young Senators, right or wrong, will vote on the issues as he sees them, and the spectacle should be fascinating for all of us."

As to Mr. Friddell, he is editor of the editorial page of The Virginian-Pilot in Norfolk. His new book, What Is It About Virginia?, is an impressionistic account of what goes into the making of the Mona Lisa of the States. Sponsored by the Virginia State Chamber of Commerce, the book is now going into its second edition. It is a pleasure to have Mr. Friddell visit our pages, in the company of the young senators.

THE EDITORS

Wm. E. Waters Jr. High
(Continued from page 20)

hold co-educational gym classes at the same time period and a fully automatic folding partition separates the two class areas. A total seating capacity of 1,000 is accomplished by opening the dividing partition and a full regulation basketball court is provided.

The final building cost for this project was nearly $1,500,000.00 with the owner furnishing the very latest audio-sound, wood and metal shop, and science equipment.

On May 18, 1966, the Portsmouth City School Board named this school The William E. Waters Junior High School in honor of the late principal of long standing with the Portsmouth School System.

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The Associated General Contractors of America is the only national trade association representing contractors engaged in heavy engineering, building, highway, municipal and utilities construction.

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“Whatever Became of the Children?”

(Continued from page 5)

In the Stag Shop, I sank gratefully into an easy chair, gulped at the welcome if weak coffee, and relaxed with a cigarette until some agreeable young lady took my list of purchases. It was a wonderful kind of fatigue, thinking of them acting as young ladies with their list of purchases in the Fawn Shop, and restoration came very pleasantly.

Afterwards we met at the balcony, where they refreshed themselves from a Coke machine, and chattered in bright, ecstatic voices about the presents they had “bought” (charged). With both talking together, I heard only a few words, but that was of no consequence. The look on their faces, their shining eyes, was a reward for so much that had been endured before that moment—work when tired, work when ill, illness itself, snide attacks by irresponsible people on my published work, anxieties, and the terribly destructive diversion of energy into small worries. Everything that had not been a positive good, along with everything that had been a positive evil, was forgotten in that joyous moment, and I felt myself among the blessed.

Then Christmases began subtly to change. There was decreasing emphasis on dolls, until finally the Christmas came when there was not a single doll—not carriages, no wagons, no games. With that came an increasing emphasis on clothes. When the last box was opened, the last robe and nightgown of that season appeared, with arms laden and no radiance: they were preoccupied with the business of shopping. Instead of telling me excitedly what they had bought, they told me of their tribulations in not getting everything they wanted. When I suggested we might try another day, they said, sympathetically but independently, that I looked tired and why didn’t I go on home. They would come in a cab. So, for the first Christmas trip in many years, I came home alone—without the voices of expectancy chattering away beside me.

That was the beginning of the end. Last Christmas, I was not feeling well on the day they wanted to go and, quite offhandedly—or so it seemed to me—they decided to go by themselves. They said very sweetly they would miss me, but, after all, they were no longer children. No indeed: they were twelve and fourteen years old.

Every change in the life of a growing individual is fascinating to watch, and each age has its rewards to the parents. But this Christmas I know that I shall not share again the lovely reality of a child’s expectancy. Many aspects of the preparations for Christmas will be less, toilsome—such as building the Christmas tree after the children have gone to bed, laboring until the early morning hours. They help with the tree now, several days before Christmas, and they seem to find as much joy in placing ornaments—in playing at decorators—as they formerly did on their tour of wonder through the store. In fact, in some ways, Christmas seems more meaningful to them, and brings a different kind of satisfaction to the whole family.

Yet, in enjoying each stage of their growth, in this Christmas season I remember the poignant lines in Phyllis McGinley’s poem: “But whatever became of the children?”

[Signature]

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