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# New Law School Accepted 'As a Gift From Virginia'

By Willford Kale  
Times-Dispatch Staff

**WILLIAMSBURG** — William B. Spong Jr., dean of the Marshall-Wythe School of Law at the College of William and Mary, accepted the newly completed law school building yesterday on behalf of the faculty and students "as a gift from the people of Virginia."

"How this building is used," Spong told an audience of about 1,000 persons "will determine if we are worthy of our rich heritage, worthy of the long struggle for survival and worthy of the faith of the people of this commonwealth."

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A major feature at the ceremony was the announcement of two new endowed professorships at the law school: the John Stewart Bryan Professorship of Jurisprudence and the Mills E. Godwin Jr. Professorship of Law.

D. Tennant Bryan of Richmond, chairman of the board of Media General, Amanda B. Kane of Charlottesville and Elizabeth G. Henry of New York City, members of the family of the former William and Mary president, John Stewart Bryan, have pledged \$100,000 for the professorship.

Bryan served as president from 1934 to 1942 and is credited with moving the college out of the depths of the Depression. His initial objective was to increase the size and quality of the faculty and to strengthen the departments and create a new emphasis on the arts with a fine arts department and its divisions of music, theater, painting, architecture and sculpture.

**THREE OF THE STATE'S** best-known businessmen, Richmond financier Lawrence Lewis Jr., Lloyd U. Noland Jr. of Newport News, chairman of the board of Noland Co., and R. R. Smith, chairman of the board of Smith's Transfer Corp. of Staunton, have pledged more than \$100,000 to establish the professorship honoring the two-term Virginia governor.

Godwin, a William and Mary alumnus, Virginia governor from 1969-70 and 1974-78 had served in the General Assembly for 12 years and for one term as lieutenant governor.

The dedication program was held in front of the red-brick law school building, which cost nearly \$6 million.

While the eyes of the school's faculty and students are, understandably, on the future, Spong said it was perhaps a contradiction for him to turn to Thomas Jefferson. He said he turned to Jefferson "mindful that there is much the law schools should do to sharpen oral and written skills and to examine more carefully the moral and mental fitness of students for the practice of law."

**SPONG RECALLED** Jefferson's advocacy of university-related legal education, which resulted in the appointment of George Wythe in 1779 to the first chair of law in America, and he wondered aloud what Jefferson would think today.

"(Unquestionably, [Jefferson] would be surprised to hear his wisdom on a variety of subjects quoted and hailed by persons of every philosophy," Spong said. "He would recognize the intellectual laziness presently abroad in the land. This would be familiar, but there are new manifestations.

"For instance, the belief that serious national problems can be solved by a 60-second television commercial," Spong said. But he thought Jefferson "would be pleased to find the better law schools eschewing calls for predominately artisan education and determined to encourage students to think, to make decisions, to reason and to lead."

Gathered on the platform in addition to Godwin were two other former Virginia governors, Albertis S. Harrison and J. Lindsay Almond, Virginia Chief Justice Lawrence I'Anson, a William and Mary alumnus and law school patron, led a host of state legal leaders.

Gov. John N. Dalton had a previous commitment as did former Gov. Linwood Holton, who helped nurture this building alone.



Staff Photo by Bill Lane

Former Govs. J. Lindsay Almond, Mills Godwin, Albertis Harrison, Dean William Spong.