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The College's Contribution In Its Home Area

Many Bridgewater alumni established their homes in Rockingham County and the city of Harrisonburg. In 1980, nearly 1,600 of them, it was estimated, were living in the county and city,¹ and were making a substantial contribution in the life of the area.

Many of those alumni, during the college's first 100 years (1880-1980), were public school teachers. In each of some of the years, they numbered more than 100, records show.²

In each of certain years, more than a dozen public school administrators in the county and city were Bridgewater graduates.

For 54 consecutive years, the superintendents of the public schools in Rockingham County were Bridgewater alumni: John C. Myers, 1917-50, and Wilbur S. Pence, 1950-71.

Three public schools in the county are named for Bridgewater graduates: John C. Myers Middle School at Broadway, Wilbur S. Pence Middle School at Dayton, and John W. Wayland Elementary School at Bridgewater.

At least 40 Bridgewater alumni, down to 1980, served on the faculty and in administrative positions at the institution now known as James Madison University, that school's catalogues reveal. One of them, John W. Wayland, was a member (1909-31) of the school's original teaching staff. Another, William T. Sanger, was the school's first academic dean (1918-19). Two others were on the university's board of visitors: Charles W. Wampler, Jr., later the university's rector, and Winston O. Weaver.

Three buildings and an athletic field at James Madison University today are named for former faculty members who were Bridgewater graduates: Huffman Hall, for Charles Herbert Huffman; Ikenberry Hall, for J. Emmert Ikenberry and his spouse, Katherine Maxwell Ikenberry; Wayland Hall, for John W. Wayland; and Long Memorial Baseball Field, for J. Ward Long, Jr.

Bridgewater alumni have served, also, on the faculty of Eastern Mennonite College, among them Auburn A. Boyers, Harry A. Brunk, and Daniel B. Suter.

James W. Moyers, a Bridgewater alumnus, was Rockingham County's administrator (chief executive officer) for 10 years, from 1968 to the end of 1977, and was the first incumbent in that newly created position.³

¹ *Alumnus*, Dec., 1980, p. 20.

² This chapter is based upon BC Alumni Office records, the files of the *Newsette*, the *Alumnus*, the *Bee*, the *Talon*, the *HDN-R*, and other sources, as indicated hereafter.

³ *Alumnus*, Oct., 1978, p. 3.

Three Bridgewater alumni have been treasurers of Rockingham County: Jacob A. Garber, 1924-29; Dwight L. Estep, 1960-76; and Cecil L. Wampler, Mr. Estep's successor, still in office in 1990.

Two Bridgewater graduates have been Rockingham County's commissioner of the revenue: Frank Moyers, from 1948 through 1951, and Lowell A. Miller, from 1952 through 1957.

Two Bridgewater alumni have served as commonwealth's attorney for Rockingham County and the city of Harrisonburg: Harry M. Strickler, 1916-20, and Lawrence H. Hoover, 1940-48.

For 20 years (1948-68), Lawrence H. Hoover was city attorney for Harrisonburg.

For 19 years (1960-79), a Bridgewater alumnus, George W. Kemper, was clerk of the Rockingham County circuit court.

Down to 1980, seven Bridgewater alumni were elected to represent Rockingham County and Harrisonburg in the Virginia House of Delegates: Frank J. Wright, 1916-20; Jacob A. Garber, 1920-22; William C. Hoover, 1922-24; Howard S. Zigler, 1932-40; Lawrence H. Hoover, 1952-66; Charles W. Wampler, Jr., 1954-66; and Nathan H. Miller, 1972-75.⁴

Two Bridgewater alumni, Jacob A. Garber and Nathan H. Miller, represented a district that included Rockingham County and Harrisonburg in the Virginia State Senate: Garber, 1945-47; Miller, 1976-85.⁵

Jacob A. Garber represented the Seventh U. S. Congressional District of Virginia (which included Rockingham County and Harrisonburg) in the U. S. House of Representatives, 1929-31.⁶

At least 11 attorneys-at-law in Harrisonburg, down to 1980, were Bridgewater alumni: Harry S. Blatt, Clarence A. Claybrook, Lawrence H. Hoover, Richard A. Jackson, Larrie D. McNeill, Nathan H. Miller, David A. Penrod, William H. Ralston, Jr., William L. Stables, Jr., Phillip C. Stone, and Harry M. Strickler. Some were presidents of the Harrisonburg-Rockingham County Bar Association.

Twenty-seven physicians and surgeons in the Harrisonburg-Rockingham County area, down to 1980, were Bridgewater alumni: George C. Andes, C. Sherrill Armentrout, Lawrence D. Burtner, Galen G. Craun, Galen G. Craun, Jr., William F. Driver, John T. Glick, Jr., Joseph L. Glick, Charles P. Harshbarger, Jacob C. Harshbarger, Hollen G. Helbert, Charles W. Hertzler, William J. Hotchkiss, Harold E. Huffman, Jacob S. Huffman, Rufus C. Huffman, Charles S. Miller, Ephraim R. Miller, John D. Miller, Mark E. Myers, George M. Nipe, Richard Q. Penick, William E. Reish, Clifford T. Riddel, Jr., George S. Row, George G. Tanner, and John E. Wine. Ten of them were presidents of the Rockingham Memorial Hospital's medical staff.

Bridgewater alumni (besides the physicians named above) who were prominently associated with the Rockingham Memorial Hospital, down to 1980, were Edgar C. Wine, president of the hospital's board of trustees for 21 years (1950-71); Charles W. Wampler, Jr., president of the trustee board for 10 years (1977-87); and James Nelson Liskey, the hospital's administrator for 25 years (1952-77). John Henry Hoover, a Bridgewater alumnus, and Walter B. Yount, the Bridgewater College president, were two of the 12 original trustees of the hospital from the time of its incorporation in Harrisonburg in 1908. Since then, other Bridgewater alumni have served as trustees.⁷

⁴Cynthia M. Leonard, ed., *The General Assembly of Virginia, 1619-1978* (Richmond, Va., 1978).

⁵*Ibid.*

⁶*Biographical Directory of the American Congress, 1774-1949* (Washington, D. C., 1950), pp. 637, 648, 1194.

⁷Ruth Z. Bowman, *Rockingham Memorial Hospital and the School of Nursing Yesterday and Today, 1912-1973* (Harrisonburg, Va., 1973), pp. 8, 9, 35, 40, 42; *HDN-R*, April 2, 1987, p. 1; *Alumnus*, June, 1977, p. 22.

At least nine dentists in Rockingham County and Harrisonburg, down to 1980, were Bridgewater alumni: Edward H. Allen, Charles E. Beall, Donald R. Brown, Emerson C. Gambill, Emerson C. Gambill, Jr., Floyd L. Leonard, Dwight H. Shull, Charles E. Strickler, and Robert E. L. Strickler.

At least three veterinarians in the Harrisonburg-Rockingham County area, down to 1980, were Bridgewater alumni: Shelvin L. Arey, Albert W. Miller, and James G. Simmons. Another veterinarian was Oda F. Foley, a Bridgewater Academy graduate.

Twenty-four (or more) certified public accountants in Harrisonburg and Rockingham County in 1980 were Bridgewater alumni.

Bridgewater alumni have been prominently associated with the Rockingham Public Library. Paul Haynes Bowman was a charter member of the library association, was its vice president, 1928-48, and its president, 1948-53. Joyce Moyers, a Bridgewater alumna, who became the head librarian in 1960, was still in that position in 1990.

Alumni have also been prominent in town governments in Rockingham County. In the town of Bridgewater (down to 1980), at least 30 councilmen, eight mayors, two treasurers, an engineer, and a recorder were Bridgewater alumni, the town's records reveal. Alumni have been active, also, in the governments of other Rockingham County towns.

Two public highways in Rockingham County are named for Bridgewater alumni: Harpine Highway (for Jacob W. Harpine), that portion of State Route 42 from Harrisonburg northward to Broadway, and Wayland Highway (for John W. Wayland), the "Old Port Republic Road" (State Route 659) east from the city limits of Harrisonburg to U. S. Route 340, east of Port Republic.⁸

For 25 years, a Bridgewater alumnus, Charles W. Wampler, Jr., was the president and general manager of the Rockingham County Fair Association, and a fellow alumnus, R. Carlton Cupp, was elected to the same position in 1978, and again in 1979.⁹

Bridgewater alumni in Rockingham County and Harrisonburg have been clergymen and active laymen in various churches, bank officers, corporate and business executives, county board supervisors, county surveyors, farm bureau presidents, baseball league officials, and political party leaders. Others have contributed their expertise and leadership in various other types of service.

A Bridgewater alumnus of Harrisonburg, John W. Wayland, wrote a history of Rockingham County and a history of Harrisonburg, each considered to be the standard work on its subject.

Bridgewater College faculty members have also made their contribution. Ten of them were Bridgewater town councilmen and two were the town's mayors. Nelson T. Huffman was the music director at the summer Massanetta Springs Bible Conference for 31 years, and Ruth E. Weybright (later, Mrs. Edgar E. Stauffer) was the pianist there for 25 years. Harry G. M. Jopson served on the Rockingham county school board for 19 years and was the board's chairman for three years. These were only a few of the faculty who were active in the life of the college's home area.

The college's presidents, also, made their contribution, as already indicated in earlier chapters.

During the 100 years down to 1980, the college was, and still is, an important educational center in the county, an institution where many young men and women of the area went, and still go, to continue their learning and to prepare themselves for a place in society. The

⁸*HDN-R*, Dec. 16, 1955; *Newsette*, April, 1961, p. 21.

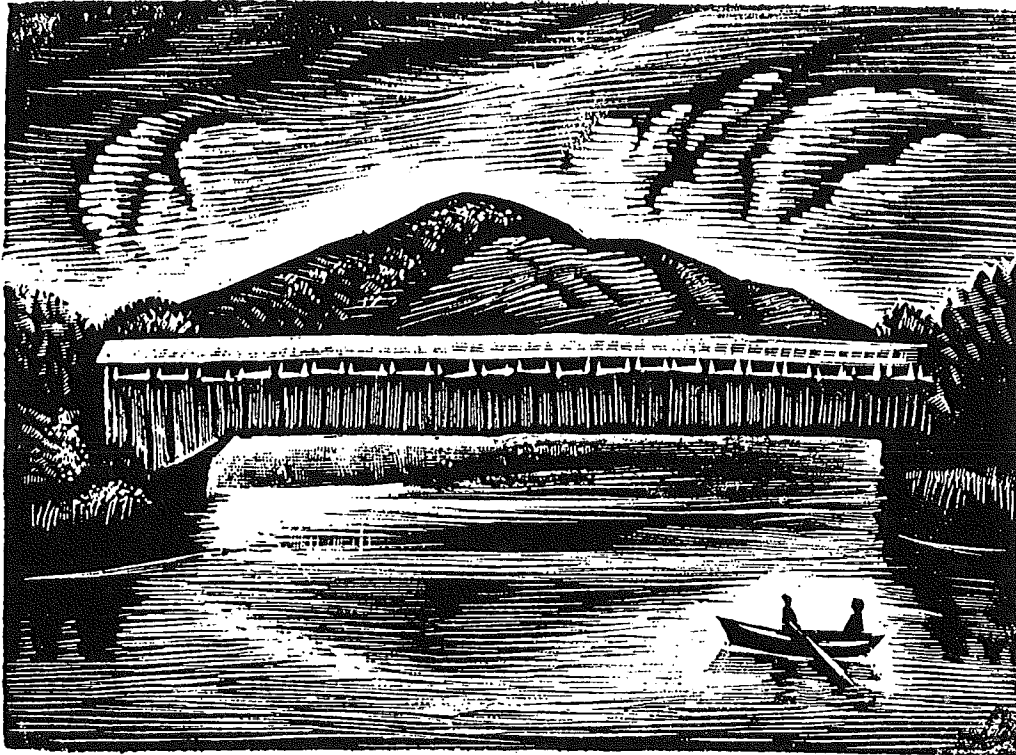
⁹*Alumnus*, June, 1978, p. 27; June, 1979, p. 20; *HDN-R*, Jan. 28, 1989.

college's baccalaureate degree programs predate by 30 years the availability of any other such programs elsewhere in the county, or in the city of Harrisonburg.

The college enriched the cultural life of its area by presenting musical programs, dramatic performances, religious institutes, art exhibits, distinguished speakers, and other special offerings.

By 1980, it was estimated, the college was generating in Harrisonburg and Rockingham County, through its expenditures and those of its students, visitors, and alumni, in excess of \$16 million annually.¹⁰

¹⁰*HDN-R*, Dec. 2, 1981.



The single span covered bridge (1878-1916) over North River of the south fork of the Shenandoah River at Bridgewater, Virginia. A wood engraving by Isaac J. Sanger.