

A TRIBUTE TO G. HARRISON MANN

BY

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C. Harrison Mann, lawyer, member of the General Assembly from 1954 to 1970, and founding President of the Arlington Historical Society, died November 28, 1977, after a long illness.

When Mr. Mann was in the General Assembly, he introduced and succeeded in getting passed more bills than any Representative from Northern Virginia, as well as the State, has ever done. Mr. Mann left the General Assembly in 1970. Northern Virginia's population is composed of so many transient people that his work is probably unknown to a large portion of the population. Virginia is now a better state in which to live because of Harrison Mann's accomplishments. He was, with no exceptions, a model legislator. He had ideas, he had brains, and he was fearless.

Mr. Mann's greatest accomplishment was the founding of the George Mason University. At that time, there were no institutions of learning in Northern Virginia above the high school level. He introduced the bill in the General Assembly for a junior college, a branch of the University of Virginia. The first classes were held in an old abandoned school building on Columbia Pike near Bailey's Cross Roads, with seventeen students. Soon the city of Fairfax gave one hundred and fifty acres, and the first building was erected. Now there are over five hundred acres in the campus with more than nine thousand students.

Harrison Mann was named by the State of Virginia as a member of the First Control Board, and became the Chairman. Later, the junior college became a full four-year college and was given the name of "George Mason University." It is no longer a branch of the University of Virginia. Harrison Mann is considered the "Father" of George Mason University. He was also interested in the establishment of community junior colleges, not only in Northern Virginia but in the entire State of Virginia. He was supported by former Governor Godwin, who was Governor of Virginia at that time.

Harrison Mann is credited more than anyone else with creating the "State Education Authority" to help students obtain a college education. The list is long. Because of his concern and interest, he made it possible for thousands of men and women to obtain a college education. During his last seven years in the General Assembly, Mann sponsored legislative bills for the building of schools throughout the State.

Some of his outstanding achievements are laws that ban obscene literature in Virginia. The Northern Virginia Citizens for Decent Literature had been

established. He became interested and introduced the bill. Arlington County alone won several cases in court where business men refused to obey the law.

Harrison Mann also fought to have numerous other bills passed in the General Assembly. Some of these bills concerned the state-wide driver education bill, medical assistance bill for the aged, and a bill that banned billboards along the interstate highways in Virginia for which, in 1961, he received the annual citation of the Virginia Citizens Planning Association. The banning of billboards prevented many accidents. He also opposed the Truckers Association of Virginia on the additional length of their trucks on the main highways. In June of 1977, Mann was cited by Virginia's Governor Godwin for service to the Commonwealth in undertaking countless and often thankless tasks on study commissions and actions.

Mann was Chairman of Virginia's Highway Traffic and Safety Study Commission from 1960 to 1968. In 1973, he was Chairman of Citizens for I-66 and a leader in the successful battle for completion of I-66 inside the Beltway.

Harrison Mann graduated from the Episcopal High School in Alexandria and earned his law degree from the University of Virginia. In 1970, he received the University's Outstanding Alumnus Award. He was a prominent lawyer and publisher in banking circles. He wrote a number of well-known articles and books on U.S. banking laws. He had a pleasing personality and as a result was invited by many organizations to speak, chiefly on wills, and report from the Assembly after its adjournment in early spring.

Mr. Mann, as well as being founding President of the Arlington Historical Society, was Chairman of the Virginia Chapter of Americans for Effective Law Enforcement from 1970-1975. He was a member of the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars and the Virginia, and District of Columbia and Supreme Court Bars.

Harrison Mann was a resident of Arlington County for forty years and was the Commander of the County's first Militia Company during World War II. He was also in the Marine Corps, serving in the Pacific, and was cited for action in combat in the Philippines.

Harrison Mann spent most of his life giving to others and sharing the knowledge he had acquired. He touched the lives of many who were forgotten. He was a doer; he was interested and active in local and community affairs.