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The Virginia Law Reporters Before 1880

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Preface

For a long time I wondered who called Jefferson, Hen. & M., Gilm., and the other Virginia legal authorities. A cursory inventory of the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century law reports bear their own names, include the highest political and legal visibility. Thomas Jefferson and George Wythe, as well as persons less known. My curiosity having been aroused by a series of biographical sketches of the persons whose publications are cited by their own names, I undertook an older custom. This volume brings together a common interest in law reporting a century and a half before the first law professor in America, a postmaster of the United States, a United States attorney general, a Virginia Supreme Court justice, many Virginia judges, legal scholars, court reporters, a poet. These sketches are arranged according to the official series of *Virginia Reports* with the miscellaneous reports following in alphabetical order.

I would like to conclude this prefatory note with the generosity of the Faculty Publication Fund of the University of Richmond for their support of this book.
For a long time I wondered who or what was meant by Gratt., Hen. & M., Gilm., and the other references to the older Virginia legal authorities. A cursory investigation revealed that the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century law reporters, whose reports bear their own names, include in their number men of the highest political and legal visibility, such as Thomas Jefferson and George Wythe, as well as persons who are very little known. My curiosity having been aroused, I organized this series of biographical sketches of the Virginia law reporters whose publications are cited by their own names, according to the older custom. This volume brings together through their common interest in law reporting a colonial attorney general, the first law professor in America, a president of the United States, a United States attorney general, a United States Supreme Court justice, many Virginia and federal politicians, Virginia judges, legal scholars, court clerks, a preacher, and a poet. These sketches are arranged according to the order of the official series of *Virginia Reports* with those of the compilers of the miscellaneous reports following in chronological order.

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W. H. B.