

Biographies of West Virginia statehood leaders were prepared by Marshall University Humanities Program graduate students enrolled in Dr. Billy Joe Peyton's Fall 2010 "Historical Studies" class at Marshall's South Charleston campus.

By Carolyn S. Quinlan

**THOMAS WILLOUGHBY HARRISON** was born on October 28, 1824 at Clarksburg, [West] Virginia where he received his early education at the Randolph Academy. He later studied law with his father, Judge William A. Harrison who eventually became one of the first judges of the Supreme Court of Appeals in West Virginia. At the age of twenty-one he was admitted to the bar. He succeeded his father as judge of the circuit court, made up of Marion, Harris and Barbour Counties. Randolph County was added and the name of the circuit was changed to the Fourth Circuit. He served in that position until Charles S. Lewis took over on January 1, 1873.

Thomas married Mary Platt Robertson on October 30, 1848. Six years later, her sister, Julia Augusta Robertson, married Francis H. Pierpont. They were members of the Presbyterian Church and they opened their home at "Broad Oaks," for entertaining. They were known for their hospitality.

Sources: Atkinson, George Wesley and Alvaro F. Gibbens, *Prominent Men of West Virginia*, Wheeling: W. L. Callin, 1890.  
<http://books.google.com/books?id=vLYUAAAAYAAJ&printsec=frontcover&dq=prominent+men+of+ww&source=bl&ots=9mO46TGFfl&sig=d3B9o7HLgIMG2tPSb9a87-#v=onepage&q=HARRISON&f=false>.

Ambler, Charles H., Frances Haney Atwood and William B. Mathews, eds. *Debates and Proceedings of the First Constitutional Convention of West Virginia, (1861-1863)*. Huntington: Gentry Brothers. 75.

