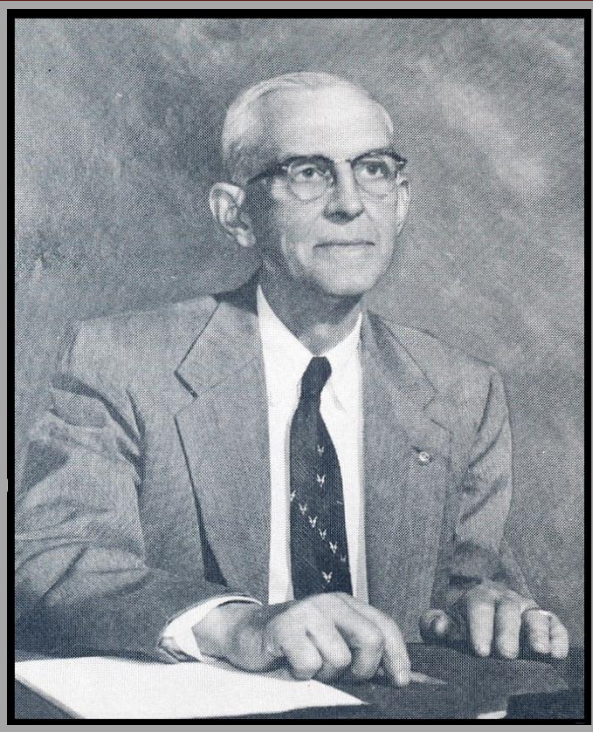


B. REED HENDERSON: PRINCIPAL 1924-1952



“B. Reed Henderson’s life and character are his most enduring monuments....May the students grow in maturity in the image of him for whom their school was named. It is our fondest hope that, in his fashion, they may fulfill their fondest hopes for themselves, the community and the nation.” -*Thomas C. Gawthrop, president judge of Chester County Court of Common Pleas and a 1924 graduate of West Chester High School, speaking at the dedication and renaming of the High School, in 1962. (Daily Local News, 11 November 1964).*

A well-known, well-liked, and respected member of the West Chester community for many years, Benjamin Reed Henderson is best remembered for serving as principal of West Chester High School from 1924 to his retirement in June 1952. Ten years after his retirement, in September 1962, he was honored with the renaming of the High School.

Born in Wallace Township, Chester County, Henderson earned a diploma from Wallace Township High School in 1904 and received a teaching certificate from West Chester State Normal School in 1906. He served as teacher and principal at Lionville High School, Wallace Township High School, and the Soldiers’ Orphans School, Chester Springs. In 1909, he enrolled at Pennsylvania State College, which awarded him an A.B. degree in education in 1913. He then joined the mathematics department of the West Chester High School, and soon after became department head. From January 1918 to February 1919, he served in the U. S. Army at Fort Monroe, Virginia, where he released balloons for the U. S. Meteorological Service. In 1919, he returned to West Chester to teach. In 1924, he succeeded Stanley R. Oldham as principal of West Chester High School. When the Junior High School was established in 1925, Henderson became Joint Junior/Senior High Principal.

After his retirement, Henderson became director of student activities at West Chester State College. He remained active in civic activities and in the Westminster Presbyterian Church. He also established the B. Reed Henderson Memorial Scholarship, still being awarded today.

Henderson died on May 21, 1964, at the age of seventy-six. After his death, a new auditorium at the school was named in his honor.

The above information was adapted from Florence Sechler Miller’s book A Legacy of Learning. (published West Chester, PA: West Chester Area School District 1994.).