

Richard Haynes

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**Mame Warren,
Interviewer**

Warren: This is Mame Warren. Today is February 11th, 1997. I'm in Dallas, Texas, with Dick Haynes.

You are one of the more intriguing people I've come to talk to, because, from what I understand, you have a big gap in your career at Washington and Lee, is that true?

Haynes: Well, I was at Washington and Lee twice, and as I say, it took on me. I was there as a freshman in 1949-'50, and I was there as a senior in law school in 1957-'58, so I did have a hiatus there and lots happened. But I always wanted to go back to Washington and Lee in Lexington. I finally got my dream fulfilled after being in the Air Force for a couple of years, so it was a great, important, and wonderful move.

Warren: Well, tell me what was that pull? What happened in your freshman year that so made you want to go back?

Haynes: I think in my freshman year I grew up. I was a little boy from a little town in Oklahoma, which is a little state, and I was suddenly thrust into this sophisticated Eastern atmosphere. When I first went to Washington and Lee I did not pledge a fraternity, which was a great—what should I say—sorrow to me, but I decided that I was going to make it anyway. Even though I didn't make it on the social scene, I made it on the academic scene. I learned so much and grew so much, and it gave me such great opportunities, I just always knew that's where I ought to be or felt that's where I ought to be. I owe a lot to that school.

Warren: Can you remember your first impressions when you arrived in Lexington and arrived on campus?

Haynes: Well, the first theme we were asked to write in English course was exactly on that subject: What were your first impressions of Washington and Lee? I remember centering mine on my recollection of the columns. I think that theme could have been answered several ways, but I chose to think and talk and speak and write about the literal and the architectural view of Washington and Lee. Those columns are an unforgettable experience, whether you walk through them one time or a thousand times. I think they stand for so much. They stand for honesty and verity and honor and loyalty and hard work and absolute devotion to the truth and to the Honor System. I think Washington and Lee has helped a lot of people grow up.

Warren: That's what I've been hearing. What did the Honor System mean to you?

Haynes: I'd never lived under an Honor System before, but certainly that's the way I was brought up. Even without knowing that I was under an Honor System, I was under an Honor System, so it didn't mean anything so very different. It just put into words what I'd always been taught to do, and I think that's why I was so respectful of it. It was an extension of my life, which was essentially the life of a Southern family, growing up in the 1930s in Ada, Oklahoma.

Warren: How did you choose Washington and Lee?

Haynes: My mother had gone to Randolph-Macon her freshman year, and my father had gone to a college in Meridian, Mississippi, for his first two years of college. So when we started talking about college, it was very natural for Virginia colleges to come up and be mentioned and be looked at. I looked especially at Washington and Lee, and Davidson, and Sewanee, and was admitted to all three of those schools. So then the hard part came and I had to choose which one, and Washington and Lee to me seemed, even from a distance, the greatest challenge of the three. I think I bought into it because it was challenging.

Warren: Well it sure seems that way to me, more so now than then, even. It's a tough school these days.

So you arrived in the year 1949-'50. Were the bicentennial celebrations still going on?

Haynes: They were just closing. They certainly were still using the Washington and Lee stamp. You saw that a lot. But actual celebration had occurred the autumn and spring before.

Warren: I thought that might be the case. You were there with Dr. Gaines. Do you have memories of Dr. Gaines?

Haynes: My memories of Dr. Gaines are that he was declining, and that this was in the twilight of his great service to Washington and Lee. It was getting to be the time to have a new president. Dr. Gaines still favors Washington and Lee, and it's still a strong guiding influence for a lot of people who have favored Washington and Lee, but I was not there during the glory days.

Warren: A lot of people do remember him fondly, though.

Haynes: Oh, yes.

Warren: So can you remember any faculty who made a big difference for you?

Haynes: Deal Gilliam, Dean Leyburn.

Warren: Tell me about them.

Haynes: Dean Gilliam had this unique ability to relate to people, especially little boys from little towns in Oklahoma. He was so supportive of everything I did and everything that a lot of people did. Go talk to a hundred people about Dean Gilliam, and they'll all give you the same story, "He cared enormously about *me*." He was a fantastic man. He did the job that probably three or four administrators are doing today and did it so well. His judgment was so good.

I remember one time going in to talk to him about changing from calculus to Latin. At the conclusion of this talk, he said to me, "Richard, I just don't know whether you're going to be able to do the work here or not."

Well, of course, that was the greatest challenge he could throw out to me, and I assured him that I was going to be able to do the work and would do the work. I made Phi Theta Sigma at the conclusion of my second semester at Washington and Lee, and that was a great signal to me that, yes, I had been able to do the work at Washington and Lee.

W&L was tremendously supportive and endlessly urging me on and the other students on to do better and better. It also was such a maturizing process. By putting on the coat and tie and by wearing the freshman beanie, you had the sense of growing up, of becoming an adult, of becoming a Washington and Lee gentleman. Silly though that may seem today, I kind of yearn for those days, because that was the Washington and Lee I knew when I was a freshman.

Warren: Well, I can see why they wanted me to come talk to you. You are eloquent. This is wonderful. This is marvelous. You're not going to take much editing to make you sound terrific. Great.

You also mentioned Dean Leyburn. He was still dean when you were there.

Haynes: Yes, he was just dean when I was there. I don't know, he'd been there three or four years. I knew him because of Dean Gilliam. He stood for unquestioned scholarship and veracity and honor and hard work. He was such a remarkable man. He could do everything. I read recently a book he wrote on the Scotch-Irish. He wrote it twenty or thirty or forty years ago, and it's a fabulous book. It's so fresh and new and alive. John Wilson, incidentally, later president of Washington and Lee, gave me that book, so it means a lot to me.

Dean Leyburn was a fantastic scholar. He was also a brilliant lecturer. I never heard this lecture, but I'm sure you've heard of it. The last lecture of the year was a lecture on the Greek state and on the Greeks. There would be standing-room only in his class. People who never enrolled in the course came to hear him speak. He was such a brilliant lecturer. I wish I'd done that.

Warren: I think if I could get into a time machine and go somewhere, I'd go into that lecture room. I've heard so many people tell me what a spectacular performance it was.

Haynes: Then, again, he was a brilliant pianist. He was a concert pianist of great talent. He practiced and practiced and practiced. Dean Leyburn did everything to perfection. He certainly did his musical performances to perfection. He was just an incredible man. He brought to Washington and Lee this sense of scholarship which had perhaps been lacking during the 1930s, and he did it brilliantly and very simply.

He never did anything that was divisive. He was very much a wholeness person. He bound people together. He had wonderful ideas, and he supported his ideas with modesty and good scholarship and good learning. He could convince people that his ideas were worthwhile in a very modest, unassuming way. He was enormously effective. He did a lot for Washington and Lee, and I think it's so fitting and proper that the library was named for him a long time after he died. It just shows that the Dean Leyburn aura is alive and well at Washington and Lee. He would be very proud. He should be very proud of himself.

Warren: I'm very curious about that. Were you on the board when that happened, when the library was named for him?

Haynes: No, I was not.

Warren: It had already happened by then?

Haynes: I think it had. John Wilson did that.

Warren: I'm very curious, because, you know, so many of the buildings are named for the big donors at Washington and Lee. I think it says a tremendous amount. I think above all else it says so much about Washington and Lee.

Haynes: It does. Dr. Wilson – and we can talk some about him after a while – was a remarkable person, I think. He was a good friend of mine. He is a good friend of mine. I still call him, and we talk and we write. He does research in an area in which I have some interest, mainly for him, for his sake, but he is a remarkable person.

You sometimes see these giants at Washington and Lee, like Dean Gilliam and Dr. Leyburn, and you wonder if they'll ever come again, and they keep just appearing out of nowhere. Who would ever have thought John Wilson was the giant that he was and is?

Warren: Very impressive person.

Haynes: Very impressive. His judgment was so good and so farsighted and long-lasting. He was an incredible person for Washington and Lee.

Warren: Tell me why.

Haynes: We would never have had coeducation, I don't think, had it not been for John Wilson. He came to Washington and Lee—I think it's the only thing he ever did that was not pretty much a ninety percent vote. His vision was so good. His judgment was so good. He was indeed a good man who had a vision of Washington and Lee that was wider and brighter than the board had or that Washington and Lee had of itself. I was working on a project yesterday that's a John Wilson project. The shadow of John is very long.

Warren: He made some remarkable, remarkable changes.

Haynes: He did, and he was a remarkably modest man. I kid him about telling him that his finest hour was choosing John Elrod, and he would deny vehemently that he had any idea that John Elrod would be his successor. He can deny that all he wants to, but I think that this is just typical of John Wilson. I think that without even realizing it, he was choosing a successor and putting John Elrod in a position so that he could succeed John Wilson. I think that he didn't do this consciously, but he was thinking about Washington and Lee 110 percent of the time. He just, without even knowing it, chose the person who would be his successor.

I think that John Wilson knows the institution probably better than anyone has ever known the institution, even General Lee. I think he had a vision of Washington

and Lee which was very broad and was needed. He was there at the right time, doing the right thing.

Warren: How do you think he got such a profound knowledge of the institution when he was coming from entirely different places?

Haynes: I think because he had been at three universities that I know of, maybe there had been four, but he was a man who was just a man for all seasons. He had soaked up through his life experiences a lot about private and public education in this country in the 1980s, '70s. I think he had just learned a lot. He was very profound and very deep, and he thought constantly about what was the best for this university, and tried to help put that in place. I think he stood for scholarship; he stood for a great faculty; he stood for doing the right thing for the staff at the university.

He will be profoundly missed at Washington and Lee, but he provided for somebody who has his same values and ideas and had thought through the same problems that he had on behalf of Washington and Lee, so that really John Elrod had a ten-year training course in how to be president of Washington and Lee.

Warren: He sure did. He just kind of slipped right in there.

Haynes: Exactly.

Warren: The transition was very smooth. The transition was very, very smooth. Let's jump back to your youth.

Haynes: A hundred and fifty years ago.

Warren: When you left Washington and Lee, you left for, from what I understand, a very dramatic reason. Can you talk to me about that?

Haynes: What year are you talking about?

Warren: In 1950.

Haynes: I don't know that it was a dramatic reason. I just simply decided that my parents – well, let's just say that it wasn't easy for my parents to send me to Washington and Lee, and I felt that I probably should go back home and should finish my education

where my parents had finished their education, at the University of Oklahoma. I did go back, but I must say what I'd learned at Washington and Lee was so profound that I was having a good time, but I was not totally comfortable with what I was doing. The lectures at the University of Oklahoma were very comparable to the lectures at Washington and Lee. I had some brilliant professors.

The things that were different were twofold: The student body, you couldn't sit down at lunch and discuss Eliot's *Wasteland* as you could do at Washington and Lee. And the other thing that was not comparable was the amount of written work that was required. Those two things made an enormous difference in the education that one received at one of the institutions vis-a-vis another.

I decided early on that if I ever could go back to Washington and Lee, I would. I, through my college career, was in ROTC and was called up to service to serve two years in the Air Force, and I saved my money then to send myself back to W&L for my last year in law school. That's one of the best things I've ever done.

Warren: Let's talk about that. Tell me about your law school experience at Washington and Lee.

Haynes: Well, it was very interesting, because I had been out of school—I'd been away from Washington and Lee five or six years, and here I was coming back, and I'd been in the service and I was older than a lot of the guys, but they accepted me at the Beta House as if I were their long lost brother, which maybe I was. I don't know. They gave me a lot of opportunity to provide some leadership, I think, in the house. I was this outsider that was kind of an insider. At least I was an older voice in the house and I had been someplace else and had been a Beta for a long time. That seemed to have some efficacy in the whole.

Warren: This is sort of an aside, but I'm kind of intrigued that all three of you that I came to talk to here in Dallas, you're all Betas.

Haynes: That's right.

Warren: So what does it mean to be a Beta?

Haynes: Well, Betas were very strong in Dallas. I guess that's one of the sad things, the things that I regret the most, is that hasn't continued. W&L Beta House seemed to be filled with strong young men who were pretty good athletes but at the same time pretty good scholars. I knew some people at the Beta House at W&L that literally changed my life.

I remember a guy who introduced me to Vivaldi. Now, you don't just meet people that introduce you to Vivaldi every year. This was Bill Wisdom from New Orleans. I heard that music, and I was just struck. "Where did you get this? How did you find out about it? Who told you about Vivaldi?" He's now somebody that I have the greatest admiration for, and who has brought such pleasure to my life. I just think that's what a fraternity ought to be. Bill Wisdom died a long time ago, and I always wished I could tell him thanks for "Mr. V."

Warren: Well, maybe he's hearing us now. That's quite a legacy he left to you. How about the law faculty? Were there any particular people who stood out for you?

Haynes: You know, I was there maybe the last year of the truly old law school. It had not moved to its new building. It had not had a new dean. The dean and the faculty had all been there for thirty or forty years. Dr. Ritz was somebody that particularly impressed me. The man who taught me bills and notes – I can't even recall his name; it's terrible – impressed me. Dean Williams was the dean then. I mean, there may have been thirty people in the law school, students. It was a very small and self-contained unit, and it really was not in very good shape.

One of the untold stories of Washington and Lee is the great renaissance that has occurred in our law school. It's something that everybody can be very proud of now. John Wilson, again, was very instrumental in this when he promised a dean candidate that he would move the teacher-student ratio to match the undergraduate school, which I think was one to eleven. Of course, that just wasn't traditionally so in law school.

You'd have a thirty-to-one ratio or something. He made that change. He made the big change of promising lots of funds for a library. John Wilson was not a lawyer. He had not been to law school, but he knew a lot about law schools, and he just made profound changes in the law school at Washington and Lee.

Warren: So you were there in old Tucker Hall.

Haynes: Yes.

Warren: Was there a special feeling in old Tucker Hall?

Haynes: [Chuckles] Old Tucker Hall was a relatively new building, and it was the newest building on campus. There was a feeling that this was the way it always had been, but I never had the feeling that I did in Washington Hall, for instance. In Washington Hall, I had a sense of the year is 1802. I didn't feel that way in Tucker Hall. Tucker, I think, was built in 1931. You did think a lot about the people that had gone to law school there and had trained or gone to undergraduate school there, or had gone off to the Civil War from Lexington. You did think about those people. But you also were preparing yourself for life, for something big, and there was a lot of hard work. Not a great deal of time was thought about how the college used to be. You were thinking more about how you hoped the college would be and how your life would be.

Warren: Tell me what you mean by "how the college would be."

Haynes: Well, I remember when I left W&L as a law student, I wrote Dean Gilliam a letter, and I said, "Dean Gilliam, these are the things that I think ought to happen at W&L." I wish I had that letter, which I don't. There were a lot of things on there. I remember one of them is that the entrance to the university should be rebuilt because it was crumbling away. That is the portion that's down near Red Square. I just felt that some attention needed to be paid to it. Under John Wilson, of course, all of that has been done and a great deal more.

Other things I talked about were about the fact I thought we should make a strong effort to recruit African-American students and, indeed, foreign students.

Things like that were things I was interested in. It's funny to try and remember a letter you wrote forty years ago, '58, say forty years ago.

Warren: You were well ahead of your time if you were concerned about recruiting African Americans at that time.

Haynes: I've always been concerned about that and interested in that. Indeed we've had some fine, fine African-American students.

Warren: We sure have.

Haynes: John Wilson and I still talk about that subject. It's not at all easy for the college to climb that hill, mainly because African-American students of quality are so wooed by so many places – of quality, I mean of educational quality, are so wooed by other great institutions that it's hard to get in the game with them. We've just got to keep working at it.

Warren: I consider it one of the highest priorities, and it's been very, very important to me to be sure to interview people and include them and make sure that their images appear.

Haynes: We've got one in Dallas.

Warren: Walter Blake?

Haynes: Yes.

Warren: He's actually in the process of moving.

Haynes: Is he?

Warren: When I set up these appointments, I called him, and he's moving back to North Carolina. He wants to be back closer to family. He called me just last week, and we're going to be getting together very soon.

Haynes: He is a fine young man, and I hope you'll tell him hello for me.

Warren: I surely will.

Haynes: I'm saddened to hear that he's moving back to North Carolina, but I'm not surprised. He has lots of ability and lots of talent. He is the chief executive officer or

the chairman of the board of what we call the Sixth Floor in Dallas, which is the floor from which President Kennedy was shot.

Warren: I was there yesterday.

Haynes: Were you? Well, Walter Blake is the head of that.

Warren: Really? Oh, my gosh. It is very well done.

Haynes: It is well done.

Warren: When I couldn't get into the art museum, I said, well, that's the other high priority I have. I was very impressed with it. Well thank you for telling me that. I will certainly let him know how impressed I am with it.

Haynes: We're going to miss him a lot in Dallas.

Warren: Well, you know, he was in the very first class. He was one of the first two black graduates of Washington and Lee. I figure he's got some interesting stories to tell.

Haynes: I'm sure he does. I'm sure he does.

Warren: I've talked to Bill Hill from Atlanta, who was in the second group, and then somebody from the third group. Apparently it got more and more interesting as it went along. They are very impressive people, the ones I've talked to so far.

Haynes: Willard Dumas. Did you know him?

Warren: We've been e-mailing each other, and I plan to go out to Chicago to see him.

Haynes: Good. Good.

Warren: Tell me what you know about Willard.

Haynes: He came to work for this firm for a year and then decided he wanted to go back and teach history, which is what he's doing.

Warren: John Wilson had a lot to do with that.

Haynes: He certainly did. And John Elrod.

Warren: And John Elrod.

Haynes: We have another guy here named William Toles, an African-American graduate of the undergraduate school and the law school.

Warren: I don't know that name.

Haynes: He is a fine guy. His father was an assistant superintendent of the Dallas Independent School District. So he had grown up in a family of scholars. I mention him because he is a native, and neither Willard nor Walter are natives. This city needs to produce some native great African-American leaders. Atlanta has had those people. That's an interesting story. Why Atlanta and not Dallas? I don't know the answer to that.

Warren: Well, let's talk a little bit about the period when you were on the board.

Haynes: All right.

Warren: You were there during a really critical period during the Fraternity Renaissance Program.

Haynes: You know, there again, it's John Wilson. John Wilson is so farsighted. I don't think the board realized what was happening in the Fraternity Renaissance Program. Looking at it now, it seems like one step led directly to the next step, and so on. But at the time it just seemed like these were good ideas, and one didn't realize there was a lot of continuity, that there was a master plan. John was aided enormously by a young— young. [Chuckles] A middle-aged alumnus whose name was— what?

Warren: Tom Touchton?

Haynes: No.

Warren: Ed Bishop?

Haynes: No.

Warren: Who is the third fellow?

Haynes: This guy had some connection with the Marine Corps.

Warren: There is a third person, and I'm drawing a blank.

Haynes: He is the important one.

Warren: Yes. I talked to Tom Touchton. This third person is on my list, and I'm just drawing a blank.

Haynes: At any rate, he came up with the idea, I think, of the Fraternity Renaissance, of most of them, because we were all so distressed with the condition of the fraternity houses, the condition of the chapters, the great liabilities that they had, and that perhaps the university had, for hazing and for all sorts of student activities that were just, we didn't think, very healthful. But this guy came up with a written plan to do this. John Wilson then overlay that with his judicious eye and his thoughtful consideration of what the university could and should do.

It's interesting that W&L probably was the first, if not one of the first, colleges of our size to pay serious attention in this last half of the twentieth century to college fraternities. They had been so important earlier, a hundred years earlier, and then they had kind of become irrelevant, except maybe at Washington and Lee and some others. They had gone off the campus at Yale and Dartmouth and some of those Northeastern schools. But they still had a relevance, which John Wilson saw on the campus at Washington and Lee, a relevance in just providing housing, for one thing, but the further thing of providing a social adhesive to which these young kids from all across the country could come and adhere to and grow up in.

Warren: It's quite remarkable what happened on the campus, the turnaround.

Haynes: Well, it is quite remarkable, but I've got to tell you that that's more John Wilson than the board. The board was supportive, but John Wilson was the leader.

Warren: I was interested in your point of view as a witness to it.

I'm going to flip the tape over.

[Begin Tape 1, Side 2]

Warren: So what are your memories of serving on the board? What were the highlights for you?

Haynes: I don't know highlights. Certainly the board is a very dedicated group of extremely intelligent, hardworking, dedicated people. The board is one of those places where you gain so much because of this accumulated wisdom. I think people on the

board think so much, care so much about Washington and Lee, that they vote as they think things ought to be, not as they want things to be or they think things should be. They are very selfless, I think. That's the reason that coeducation was about more than coeducation. Coeducation was about the Washington and Lee that people remembered. And it was John Wilson's idea that it should be about the way the university would be in the future. It was a prospective rather than a retrospective exercise.

Coeducation passed, I believe, by one vote. If the vote had been said, "What do you want to have happen?" instead of "What should happen?" I think coeducation would have failed, because people would have thought that they really wanted W&L to be as they remembered it, not as they could see it in some future idyllic situation. Does that make sense?

Warren: It sure does. It's a very fine distinction to make. That is a very good way of putting it.

Haynes: I was actually against coeducation. Most people in Texas were. I can't explain that. It was the last bastion down here. But when I was invited to go onto the board after that, I said to myself, "Now coeducation has passed, and you must be enthusiastic, Dick Haynes, about its future." I think that was good I had that discussion with myself and came to the conclusion I did, and I certainly supported coeducation after that. It was hard not to support it. It had such a wonderful career, again thanks to John. We were very blessed because we were just about the last male educational institution that became coeducational. John tapped, as resources, the presidents of all these other colleges, and asked, "How did you do it?" So we had all that wealth of background on coeducation.

I must say, I think coeducation at W&L was almost a casebook study, it went so well. We just didn't have any problems, and the reason we didn't have any problems was because John and the staff foresaw those problems and had taken pains to offer plans which would correct the problems. The building of the sorority houses for the

women is probably the last step in coeducation at W&L, and that will take place in the next ten years, I'm sure.

Warren: Within the next fifteen minutes, if the sorority sisters have anything to do with it. They're getting anxious.

Haynes: They are getting anxious.

Warren: Well, I know we only have a few more minutes. I would like you to, off the top of your head, dictate a letter to the future. You did it for Dean Gilliam. What would you like to see for the future now for Washington and Lee?

Haynes: I would like to see Washington and Lee continue to be a place of great honor. I'd like to see it also become a place of great intellectual fervor, and I hope we continue to have strong scholarship. A look at the catalog of Washington and Lee reveals amazing things when compared with the catalogue of fifty years ago. At that time we may have had a hundred course offerings. Today we probably have three or four hundred in very erudite and interesting areas, but areas that one would think only a very large university could offer. It's really incredible that W&L, this small, tiny institution, is providing the kind of academic challenge that it is. I hope that continues, as I hope the traditions of honor and civility continue.

Warren: Well, I don't think we have any plans to change any of that. You know we're staring this anniversary in the face, this 250th anniversary. Is there anything in particular you think we should be doing to make sure we do it right and celebrate it right?

Haynes: Gosh, that's very hard for me to suggest. I applaud this emphasis on Washington, because I think General Washington still has a lot to teach us that we don't know. I think that is good. We can turn back to General Lee at another point, but I think right now in our history and in the times we presently live in, it's nice to honor General Washington because he was a man of great vision and great thoughtfulness. I think his gift to Washington and Lee, or what was then called Liberty Hall Academy,

was an extremely prescient gift, and I think we have to work hard to become aware of that and worthy of that every year as his gift contributes to the education of all of these young students.

Warren: What a marvelous way to end, to take us right back to the beginning. Thank you so much. This has been a wonderful hour. I really appreciate it.

[End of Interview]