

# NORM LORD

April 16, 1996

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Mame Warren,  
interviewer

**Warren:** This is Mame Warren. Today is the 16th of April 1996. I'm in Newark, Delaware, with Norm Lord, the "Lord" himself. That's what everybody says you are.

**Lord:** Got that right! [Laughter]

**Warren:** Now, if I may, I'd like to sort of go a little bit chronologically here. First, I'd like to concentrate on what brought you to Washington and Lee in the first place.

**Lord:** Well, Washington and Lee, I had never heard of it. I went to the University of Delaware during the Depression, and I had never heard of the school. However, during World War II, I went to Washington and Lee in 1943, in November, and took a course there to train officers and enlisted men how to conduct fun programs and fitness programs and friendship programs. That's where I stole the idea I used for eighty-six years at Washington and Lee—fun, fitness, and friendship. So I left near Thanksgiving in November to go back to the 11th Airborne Division, which was my basic unit.

**Warren:** Was it called Special Services at that time?

**Lord:** When I went, it was called Special Services School. It was a school designed to train officers and enlisted men welfare programs and athletic programs and rehabilitation programs, all kinds of things which are not combat. In other words,

we didn't learn how to fire a rifle, we didn't jump in a tank, or anything like that. It was all classroom and field work, without military equipment. We did have to dress in uniforms, though. I was a second lieutenant.

**Warren:** So what kind of people were there? Why would you have been selected, or why were other people selected to go to the School of Special Services?

**Lord:** I really don't know why I was selected, except I was directed by the battalion commander, when I arrived from Camp Davis, North Carolina, out of Officer Candidate School as a second lieutenant. He knew that I had had an athletic background, so he said, "Lord, I want you to build a football field." So I recruited soldiers, and got the engineering unit to come in with their bulldozer and stuff like that, and I built a playground for our battalion.

**Warren:** Where?

**Lord:** That was at Camp Davis, North Carolina, where I got my commission, but it was Camp McCall, North Carolina.

**Warren:** Okay, I was confused. I thought you were saying to build a field at Washington and Lee, and that would've already existed.

So, all right, you arrive in Lexington. Tell me what the town was like then in the middle of the war, with School of Special Services.

**Lord:** Well, I remember riding with a lieutenant from 11th Airborne Division, in the engineering battalion, and we didn't know where Lexington was. We came north from Camp McCall, North Carolina, which was near Pinehurst, North Carolina. We missed a turn in Buena Vista, and instead of going west on U.S. 60, we went east on U.S. 60, and we went over the mountain. I said, "Something must be wrong, because we should be there by now." So we spent the night in some home which took in boarders. The next morning, we got up, and we got to Lexington in time to not be AWOL.

**Warren:** Okay. So you arrived in town. What was it like?

**Lord:** I arrived in town, and we were processed and so forth. Since I was young and full of fire and ginger, I was put in a group which supposedly was supposed to be really fit, because the curriculum for us so-called jocks was a little different than the intelligentsia and the older people. They had people there from age twenty—I'd say twenty to sixty.

**Warren:** So you know what the campus is like today. What was the difference in wartime?

**Lord:** Well, they still had the front—they didn't have anything on the back campus, so called. Reid Hall was still there. They had the front campus. It was exactly like it is now. We went to all those classrooms. The co-op now, which is the co-op and bookstore, was a dining hall for the soldiers. They put an addition onto it and we ate there, unless you were married and living in private apartments. You ate and slept there, on the campus. I slept off campus. I lived on Taylor Street, down by the old Mayflower Hotel.

**Warren:** So was the town full of uniforms?

**Lord:** Well, yes. Of course, you had VMI, which had what they called ASTP, Army Specialized Training Program. Later on, Washington and Lee got an ASTP, Army Specialized Training Program, which were college-aged students. So you had that military atmosphere, and you had the army, navy, marines, coast guard. They didn't have an air force then. It was the air corps. When you went down the street, or down to the drugstore, or whatever, went to the movie, you had to dress in army uniform. You could not dress in civilian clothes.

**Warren:** So did you have any interaction with the faculty, the normal faculty, of Washington and Lee at that point?

**Lord:** Well, Dean Gilliam later came. He was there. We did not have any actual classes taught by faculty. The army had their own faculty there. The navy had people there. Marines. But most of them were army.

**Warren:** Was President Gaines there on campus?

**Lord:** President Gaines—I never met President Gaines. I think he was on campus, but I never met him until, I think it was about the 15th of September. I'm not sure. I came back in 1946, but I didn't meet him while I was a student for the army.

**Warren:** Did you get much of a sense of Lexington during that time, during the war?

**Lord:** Oh, yes. Everybody loved Lexington. We fell in love with it. We never heard anybody complain. Even the people with nationally known names, like Red Skelton, and some of those people—I'll think of them later—they just loved the place.

**Warren:** Were you there while those performers were there? I've heard about the entertainments that went on in Lexington.

**Lord:** Every person that went through the school had to learn a little bit about athletics and the arts—music and drama and crafts, public affairs. You got a smithering of everything related to taking care of people—morale, welfare type of thing.

**Warren:** This may be hindsight or it may be just totally off base, but the other day, in preparation for coming to see you, I got out the files on the School of Special Services, and there were these really neat programs about all these athletic things and all these games that were taught. I didn't have time to sit down and read it carefully, but the impression I got was that you were being taught how to teach games.

**Lord:** That's exactly right. We were told, and taught, how to teach and spread this game thing to the people to play. We had to use improvised games sometimes. We used all kinds of games. In fact, they wrote a manual about it. Informal games, things like dodgeball, tug-of-war, hide-and-go-seek, everything. [Laughter] If it was

fun for kids, we turned the old guys into kids. We had them learn how to play, because we knew that they had to teach soldiers to do it when they left Lexington.

**Warren:** So what was the goal out there? Who and when were these people going to have time to play games when they were going off to war?

**Lord:** Well, I'm glad you asked that question. In fact, I have a pamphlet in my doghouse, downstairs, where I have all kinds of data. The Department of Information and Psychological Warfare published a manual called, "What the Soldier Thinks." They asked all kinds of questions and they did all kinds of survey, scientific survey, from combat people, from people that were in training camps, people who were on the boat going over, and they found out that a happy soldier is a better soldier. Hence, the gentleman General Marshall, I think he brought up the idea of using Washington and Lee as a base to open this school to train supervisors of this fun, fitness, friendship concept.

I called it "Give 'em a little hunk of home." It was stereotyped, but we used that word for that, "Give 'em a little hunk of home." Of course, we had other expressions. It was an enjoyable feeling to know that you were learning how to promote this idea. Now, I was a student there, remember, so I learned there, but I had already had a background in the athletic part. I had no background in music—well, I had it in high school, in junior high school, but I never sang in the choir, if you want to know that. [Laughter]

**Warren:** They wouldn't let me in, either. Well, one of the things that seemed to be stressed was the idea of teaching games that could be used in small quarters.

**Lord:** With small quarters, sometimes without equipment, and also how to have games for the skilled player, because, as you know, many athletes in all the professional sports—basketball, football, and baseball—were drafted, or they volunteered, for the services. So those people established the so-called skilled competition all over the United States and in foreign countries. During lulls in

combat, they would actually find a space, and participate in so-called athletics—softball, basketball. They had portable basketball baskets to settle down in the ground. You've seen them in backyards, with kids, those kind of things. They just played on the ground. They'd play basketball on the ground. They'd play baseball on a diamond. We just threw the bases down. It wasn't a carved-out infield or anything like that.

**Warren:** It seems like it was really important work that was being done, to keep the soldiers happy and healthy.

**Lord:** See, that's why we even had there, as students, some professional baseball players. In my class, we had a guy by the name of Patrick Mullin, who played for Detroit. We had—I'm in a lapse. Before the interview's over, I'll give it to you. But we had several baseball players, football players, basketball players, from college, and they were experts.

**Warren:** So you graduated.

**Lord:** I graduated from the school, and we got on the bus, and my wife joined me. While a student there, she came to Lexington, and because we had a child, a baby, we had difficulty. That was the one thing—the people of Lexington, like they are today, they don't want a family with small children moving into their apartment. They'd rather have one without babies. We did end up getting a place on Taylor Avenue, with a child.

**Warren:** So you were in Lexington just a few months.

**Lord:** I was in there for one month. We got on a Greyhound bus, because I didn't have an automobile. We rode all the way back to Southern Pines, North Carolina. We rented an apartment, rented a home, really, which had a nice apartment. The landlord lived in the downstairs apartment, and we lived upstairs.

I stayed there about a week, and I got word that they were calling me back to Washington and Lee, to be on the faculty of the school. They said the reason why

they needed me was because I was always "juiced," enthusiastic about the program. Well, they had to let me go back, and I went back and was there during the first part of December, and then my commander of the 11th Airborne was so mad that they stole me, that he went to the War Department and they said, "Hell, no, you can't have him." And I had to go back to the 11th Airborne Division. They said, "Sorry, but we wanted you badly."

**Warren:** So you did go back to Lexington for a short period of time?

**Lord:** For a short period of time. I can't remember whether it was fifteen days or what, but I went back on orders. Additional TDY, they call it, temporary duty training. I was all happy and everything, but then all of a sudden, General Swing, the commanding general, had a lot of pull in Washington, and he said, "I want that man back."

**Warren:** Boy, you were a popular fellow, weren't you? [Laughter]

**Lord:** Well, yeah, I came back.

**Warren:** Okay. So you left Lexington for X number of years. What brought you back to Lexington?

**Lord:** I didn't go back for X number of years. I was only back—

**Warren:** No, no. You left for X number of years.

**Lord:** I went back from Lexington—

**Warren:** In '44.

**Lord:** —to Camp McCall. Southern Pines is where I was staying. Then I came back to the school again and taught in the school. And then the general stole me back, and I went back to Camp McCall. I stayed there until 1944. It was March of 1944, and the division had to go overseas, to the South Pacific. And then somebody in Washington said, "That man is coming back." So I no sooner got there than I had to come back. I was put on an assignment in Camp—I don't even know the name of

it, now—it was some camp with a—it was depot, personnel depot, down in Louisiana.

Then all of a sudden, I got word that I was being put on permanent change of station, PCS, permanent change of station, from Louisiana to Washington and Lee University, Lexington, Virginia. So I came back a third time. I went there as a student; I came back as faculty. I left, and went back to the 11th Airborne. I then am called back to Lexington again. So I stayed in Lexington from March 1944 to January 1946.

**Warren:** Tell me about that period, coming back as faculty.

**Lord:** Coming back on the faculty, I worked wide open from—classes started at eight o'clock, but I had to be on duty by 7:30 and be ready to go. So I was at the gymnasium at 0730 every day except Sunday. Monday through Saturday. We had classes from eight o'clock until 1630, which is 4:30.

**Warren:** What was the gym like? What was going on in the gym at that time?

**Lord:** We taught them how to give exercises. We made sure that they knew how to do the exercise properly, because when they went back, they had to become an instructor for their unit. So we are actually training teachers now. Just like they trained me to become a teacher, now we're training them to become a teacher, or a coach, when they go back to their unit. So we taught them calisthenics, and in the pictures, you'll see some of the stuff that we did.

**Warren:** Who's "we"? Who else was doing this?

**Lord:** We had a staff that was such a wonderfully trained staff, and already qualified people. Just the cream of the crop was there.

**Warren:** Were these military people who were coming from elsewhere?

**Lord:** They were military. Every one of them were military.

**Warren:** Nobody from Washington and Lee?

**Lord:** No. None of them were from Washington and Lee. Later on, say the last six months of 1945, they did open up another school, which was taught at VMI and Washington and Lee. They had part of them at VMI and part of them at Washington and Lee. Because now Washington and Lee has specialized training program students, ASTP, and VMI only had a handful of regular college students, just like Washington and Lee had a handful of regular college students, who either had what they called 4F—they were physically unable to go and fight in the army, or navy, air force, marines. So they had a few regular students, and VMI did, too.

**Warren:** What about those students and their athletic requirements? Were they able to use the gym?

**Lord:** We did not teach them.

**Warren:** But were they able to use the gymnasium?

**Lord:** Very seldom.

**Warren:** You really had control of the whole facility.

**Lord:** Yeah, they did. I saw a few of them, and I remember two or three of them, but I never saw them participate in a class. But they did have classes. Like, we'd be out on the field teaching the soldiers show class, how to act out in the field, in a ravine, and you had to improvise stage. All the students would be out there, so on that day, they would be using the swimming pool and the gymnasium, and so forth, and bowling alleys.

**Warren:** You mentioned these performers. From what I understand, they gave shows.

**Lord:** Yes, they gave beautiful shows.

**Warren:** Did you used to go to them?

**Lord:** We not only went to them, we had to act in them.

**Warren:** Oh, tell me about that.

**Lord:** I was an actor. I was a tree. I was a tree. I stood up on the stage. I didn't have to say anything. I was a tree. I was a prop. [Laughter] But, yes, we had Red Skelton. He's the one that comes to mind. He was there. He was quite an actor. At the end of each month, they had the soldiers' show, and they had it in the Doremus Gymnasium. The townspeople would try to get tickets to come. But the students either had to be in the play, or they had to be watching the play so they could critique it. But some town folks did come to that.

As a sideline, my wife, when she was pregnant with twins, Red Skelton was there and he gave that crazy bubbling gin act. I don't know whether you ever heard of it or not. A bottle of gin, where he starts out sober, and he takes a drink of the gin, and then he gets a little more inebriated, and then he takes another drink. And before the end he's all—but each time, he adds more to his act.

We had beautiful actors, and actresses, because remember, every branch of the service had women in it. We had WACs and marine women and navy women.

**Warren:** So were they really plays?

**Lord:** Yeah, oh yeah. Well, some of them, they had to write the script. Some of them were plays that were copyrighted, because they had people with that talent. They had the artists.

**Warren:** I guess I've always assumed they were variety shows, but they weren't. They were real plays.

**Lord:** They had variety shows and they had other shows, but they had people who could write the script.

**Warren:** That's great.

**Lord:** And they had people who taught the students how to make the props. Is that what you call it? Decorations.

**Warren:** The sets.

**Lord:** And curtains. How to put the curtains up, and how to pull the curtains. I wasn't into that, because I didn't have that kind of talent, but I was in a play as a student. Everybody had to—they had the thing, mass participation. Everybody participated. I even used [unclear] when I was on the faculty. We had a class in improvised musical instruments. So the students had glass bottles of water in glass hanging up, and you'd play a tune on the bottles, and they had all kinds of improvised music. I had to teach a course in that. I took the equipment that was made by the experts, and when the students came around in, say, groups of eight or six or ten, I would let them beat on the—play "doe, re, mi, fa, so, la, tee, doe."

Also, we had to teach singing. I had to get out in front of a group of—I learned to do this when I was a student, but then when I came on the faculty, I had to have so much—so I'd get out and lead them in singing. I didn't know how, but I just got out and just—[singing].

**Warren:** Waved your arms around, huh?

**Lord:** Believe it or not, did it.

**Warren:** That's great. All right. So the war comes to an end. Were you there when the Special Services School closed down?

**Lord:** The Special Services School, when the war was closing down, the emphasis was on rehabilitation, psychological rehabilitation and physical rehabilitation, and how to return to civilian life. So we put in different courses then. They called them educational rehabilitation and physical rehabilitation. Then they had public affairs, and then they had the information and education.

All the sections except one moved to Carlisle, Pennsylvania. The one section which did not went to Fort Lee, and that was called the Physical Training and Athletic Directors School. And the ones that went up there were called the Public Information School and the Public Affairs School. Then the two rehabilitation schools went to a hospital. I think one of them was in Colorado and one of them

was in Washington. They learned how to treat bedridden soldiers and soldiers with psychological problems.

But our section—and I had to go with it, because I didn't have enough points to get out. In 1946, they started letting people out, but not a lot. Only until after the bomb was dropped, did they have mass—what do you call it?—return home. But the reason why they went to Fort Lee was because they were going to bring them back to Norfolk and New York City, the soldiers. They were going to put them through another training program for fighting the Japanese, and then they were going to go. Of course, when all this started, it was all over because of the bomb.

**Warren:** So you got sent to Fort Lee?

**Lord:** I got sent to Fort Lee, because I didn't have enough points to get out. Now, there were a few who did get out, because they were older than I was, and who had been in the army longer than I was.

**Warren:** Okay. But you didn't stay in Fort Lee. At some point, you made the decision to come back.

**Lord:** Now you're beginning to get to the point to where I just couldn't believe it when I got a telephone call from my old coach at University of Delaware, and he said, "Norm, I want to come down and talk to you." He was a graduate of Duke University and played football at Duke, Coach Murray. He said, "Well, where can I meet you?"

I told him, "Meet me at Fort Lee, such and such a building."

So he came down. He said, "I want you to come back and be on my staff at University of Delaware."

I said, "Oh, that's great." Because that's where I met my wife, see, and she liked Newark. I said, "Well, send me the details."

He said, "There are no details. I just want you to come back and be on my staff. I can't pay you much money, but how does \$2,500 a year sound?" Of course,

that was a lot of money, pre- World War II. I'll relate it to the story a little more when I say that I had thirty days of leave, starting in August, and I was going to go on my leave, but they offered me a job. I got discharged on August the 6th, I believe. August the 6th, I was discharged at Fort Meade.

**Warren:** 1946.

**Lord:** 1946.

**Warren:** A year after the war ended.

**Lord:** Right. 1946. This was August, and I had this leave, and they're going to pay me for the leave. So I've got almost a month's salary. I was a first lieutenant. But they also needed a person to work at Fort Lee, because some of the staff that they had were leaving. So they hired me as a civilian, and I never knew there was that much money in the world, and I hadn't been offered this job at the University of Delaware. They offered me \$5,999.95, and I could not believe that amount of money was being offered me. My ranking, civilian ranking, was a GS-16, which is big bucks, for me, being a poor boy. I was all excited. I was working. I was now a civilian, not wearing a uniform, but doing the same work I would have been doing had I stayed in the army.

And then I get this call from Coach Murray, and he came down to Fort Lee. I told him how much I was making, and he said, "We can't pay that much. We'll give you \$2,500. But remember, your job will be eliminated as soon as the army goes down, and has a big discharge rate."

I said, "You're right there. Let me think about it." So I thought about it. He calls again, and I said, "You know, I haven't talked it over with my wife. Could you give me about three or four more days?"

He said, "I can't give you three or four more days. I'll give you one more day."

On that day, I got a call from Washington and Lee University, and it was Cy Twombly, who was the director of physical education at Washington and Lee, and who knew me while I was an officer and a member of the faculty in that Special Services School. He said, "Norm, I need you badly. Can you come?"

I said, "Well, how much can you pay me? I've got a job here. I'm making almost \$6,000. I got a job offered to me at University of Delaware."

He said, "I'll tell you what. I'll make a special exception. I'll go to the Board of Trustees. I'll get a special salary for you, and I'll give you \$3,000 for nine months' work."

I said, "Well, that's not \$6,000."

He said, "But you'll have three months off in the summertime, and you get all this vacation. We're going to give you a rank of assistant professor. That's unusual, because you don't have your doctorate."

I said, "No, I don't have my doctorate." So I got to thinking about it. I talked it over with Gel, my wife, and, lo and behold, we decided that we'd go to Lexington.

Now, this was about the 29th or 30th of August, and I told him that I could not go over and break up until the first of September. He said, "That's all right. If you can leave there on the first of September (this is Cy Twombly talking to me), we can still let you. You'll still meet the contract." Because my contract went from September the first, for one year.

So sure enough, I said, "Okay. I'll check the bus schedules. I'll get on a bus, but I don't have a place to stay."

He said, "Norm, there's no way to get a room. You're either going to have to live in a hotel—"

I said, "I don't want the job. I can't afford to live in a hotel."

He said, "Tell you what. We'll make sure you have a place to sleep. Will living in the gymnasium be okay?"

I said, "Is there a room in there?"

He said, "No, but you can sleep in the gymnasium."

I said, "Cy, I want to come back so badly, I'll sleep anyplace in that gym you want me to sleep. Just have a mattress on the floor, and I'll come and sleep."

**Warren:** What about Gel?

**Lord:** Gel would have to go home with the baby. So Gel leaves and goes back to her family. I get on a bus, and I get to Lexington on the first day of September. I don't have a contract. All I had was, Cy Twombly said, "You don't have to worry about a contract. That'll come later. I know you can do the work. I know you can handle it. Just put up with living in the gym." So the whole first year, I lived in the gymnasium.

**Warren:** Oh, my gosh. That's devotion.

**Lord:** Yeah. But it was a godsend, really, because I had no place to eat, so I had to eat all my meals at—they called it the Beanery, which is right behind Washington Hall now. I think it's been torn down. Yeah, it's been torn down.

**Warren:** Tell me about the Beanery. I haven't talked to anybody else. I've heard about the Beanery.

**Lord:** The Beanery was run by the university for the students who were there, who were the ASTP, Army Specialized Training Program students, and by the few Washington and Lee students. They also used that during the war to feed their own students. But then as the war wound down, faculty were coming back from all over the world for their job, and their wives had to stay where they were, because they didn't have anyplace for their wives and family to live. So practically all the faculty were eating in the Beanery. That's where I learned all the faculty members. They learned my name; I learned theirs. I ate three meals a day there, they ate three meals a day. Students waited on tables. It was a cafeteria, no table service, but the food was good.

**Warren:** You mentioned that you got to know the faculty. Who was the faculty at that time? What kind of people were you meeting?

**Lord:** Dr. Hinton was there. Mr. Mattingly, he ate there. The new faculty, I can't remember their names. A lot of the new faculty, Winter Royston, who is still living, and now retired, he ate there. Dr. Flick, who was psychology and social studies, he ate there. If you give me a few minutes, or maybe later, I'll remember so many of them. Even the campus crew would eat there. They were allowed to eat there. They ate on shifts. It was a continuum flowing in and going out.

**Warren:** Really? So were other people sleeping on mattresses in other buildings?

**Lord:** No, no. I was the only. I don't know why, because I didn't have to pay anything for my room.

**Warren:** I should hope not. [Laughter] That would have been high rent if you had to rent the whole gymnasium.

**Lord:** Then I got promoted. They found a bed, because as September rolled around, later in the month, they had teams coming in from West Virginia, Maryland, North Carolina. Athletic teams would be coming in. In those days, you didn't stay in a hotel. They slept in our gymnasium. The football players slept there, the basketball players slept there, the first few years. But then later on, after the war actually settled down, people were getting out. More people had access to the apartments in Lexington, and some of them owned homes there in Lexington, so their home was available. Then the people eating in the Beanery, then, of course, ate, because their wife has moved back to Lexington. Things begin to settle down like it was before the war.

**Warren:** So at this point you had a one-year appointment.

**Lord:** I had one year, right.

**Warren:** When did it settle down, and you begin to—

**Lord:** Dr. Desha was the dean. I did not have a contract. He said, "I know you and I know Cy. I think he'll renew your contract. Don't worry about it."

**Warren:** And?

**Lord:** So when June came, of next year, graduation, I think they had a few people to graduate, but not like now. Oh, they had summer school then, too. So they had summer school, students are coming back from World War II, they're going to summer school, law students. The university just bloomed. Boom! And it's got a tremendous student body. And the faculty are all coming back. Practically every one of them are back.

Now Washington and Lee is Washington and Lee. Because, remember, on January the 15th, 1946, I believe everybody left except what they called the rear detachment. The rear detachment is what stays to make sure that all the files are moved, and any chairs that are broken are assessed, so they can be replaced. So I think by the first of February, 1947, the school is a school is a school, university.

**Warren:** It's back to being its old self.

**Lord:** Yeah, being its old self. And the old order is still there.

**Warren:** All right, hold on. It's a good time to turn the tape over.

[Begin Tape 1, Side 2]

**Warren:** So the school was back to being Washington and Lee. Let's face it, Norm. You settled down for virtually the rest of your life there. How did that come to be?

**Lord:** Well, I didn't even ask for a contract. I guess they just assumed I was going to come back, and I kept coming back. [Laughter]

**Warren:** It really is a very casual place once you get your foot in the door, isn't it?

**Lord:** Yeah. Well, I worked there for forty-three years, and I never missed a day. I always looked forward to going to school, going to work. I was never late.

**Warren:** I find that, as I'm going to work, I often say, "Well, I'm going to school. Oops—that's right, it's going to work." It gets confusing, in my brain. It's so much

fun to work there. I shouldn't say that. Maybe they'll stop paying me if they know how much fun I'm having.

Well, okay. So you are now a member of the faculty. You were witness to some very interesting events that I don't know much about, I've just heard innuendoes about. That's not the right word to use. I'm just now learning about them, is what I'm trying to say. One of them, I think, obviously had very much to do with the athletic department: the build-up and then the demise of the football program. Tell me about that.

**Lord:** Well, they hired a football coach who was a tremendous recruiter.

**Warren:** And who was that?

**Lord:** Coach Art Lewis. He came from West Virginia. I guess he came from the coal mines of Ohio. His wife came from Ohio. Well, anyhow, he came from either Ohio or West Virginia. He was a navy officer, and they asked him would he coach football, and he said yes. He needed a staff, so they authorized a staff for him, and he recruited people. He had tremendous success there as a coach, and they were beating teams that they hadn't normally beat. Then it was time for him—because he always got better offers at other schools—so he went to Mississippi State and coached down there.

Then they hired George Barclay [phonetic] from North Carolina to come up there, and George Barkley took over from Art Lewis. And, of course, he brought in his own staff, so it meant upheaval. That's the difficult part of being in the coaching business, because you appear, and next year you're gone, or next three years, you're gone. But George Barclay turned the team into a very good team, and then they had a cheating scandal.

Unfortunately, the blame of this terrible thing was put upon the football team. Now, you're going to hear some people say, "That's not true, Norm." But there were other people involved other than football players. Of course, being on

the honor system, every student that was involved had to leave. Many of them were football players, but there were some basketball, there were some plain students that had to leave, and it was a sad place.

Dr. Gaines was right on the verge of eliminating football, but then he had second thoughts not to eliminate it, because we had contracts with all these other universities to play. So they decided to abandon scholarship football, and there was a lot of dissent from the alumni. They had seen Washington and Lee be successful pre-World War II, and they had that whole General spirit. *The Washington and Lee Swing* was in their bones.

**Warren:** Tell me what you mean by that.

**Lord:** They were Washington and Lee all the way, and they just couldn't believe that Washington and Lee would not have a football team. "We're not going to give up football, but we'll have a team." But they wouldn't win any, so they decided—we had contracts with University of Pennsylvania, University of Tennessee, university of all these schools. So now the athletic director, who was Cap'n Dick Smith, he had to write those people and tell them what happened. They said, "It would be criminal for us to play you, but we will play you if you want us to. If you can't get a game, we will play you." Well, they had no trouble at all, because they had common opponents, like we had Penn and Tennessee and all these, so each of the schools that were on our schedule would write Penn or Tennessee, or wherever—I don't know what the schedule was—but each one of those schools that had a contract with us said, "Yeah, we'll be glad to let you out of the contract. We won't come down there. If we're coming, you won't have to come up here." So what they did, they matched up the teams, so they played.

**Warren:** So did W&L still have a football team?

**Lord:** W&L did have a football team. Fortunately—and he's written up in history, but I'll repeat it once more—they had no coach, because all the coaches quit. The

coaches didn't want to coach. They sort of were upset, too. So they said, "Well, we'll get a job." And every one of them got jobs. One of them went to the professional league in Canada. I don't know where they all went, but every one of them did get a job.

So now we've got a football team, amateurs who haven't played football very much, and we've got freshmen coming in who don't know whether they want to play on a team that's not going to win. So they recruited freshmen, and they had some old diehards.

Dr. Gaines told the ones that were not involved in the cheating scandal, "Your scholarship is in effect, and you will be honored with that financial help until you graduate." So that was a good promise.

Now we've got the remnants of a good team, and we've got inflow of freshmen, and then we've got volunteers who didn't play before, who came out and played, and we now don't have a coach. We had a coach, a friend from VMI, who was an insurance salesman, but also coached at VMI. He said to Cy Twombly, "You know, I'll be glad to help you out if you want me to." So he volunteered. They paid him, and he was the fill-in coach.

**Warren:** Who was that?

**Lord:** Williams. Coach Williams. Boyd Williams. Coach Boyd Williams. He's still living and he's still in Lexington, and he's one hundred percent Washington and Lee. He's probably the most loyal fan in the city of Lexington.

**Warren:** Oh, that's interesting. I'll have to talk to him. Well, take me back to that cheating scandal. What happened?

**Lord:** Well, here's what happened. The guy that did it—and, I'm not going to mention his name—

**Warren:** That's fine.

**Lord:** But see, they should have blamed him for the whole thing. He convinced the night watchman to let him in the building where the exams were mimeographed. In those days, they said "mimeographed." He goes in, and the night watchman—the night watchman was sort of—he didn't understand what he was doing when he let him in. He didn't know that the guy that was going to go in there was going to steal the exams. So he got the exams and then he sold them. He sold the exams to other students.

Of course, in the end, it all came out. They found out who, because you know how word gets around. I never felt so sorry in my life for this one guy. I won't mention his name, but he had graduated. He was going to get his degree in May of 1947. Somebody turned him in for not turning in somebody. He not only didn't get his degree from Washington and Lee—I think maybe he may have gotten it later—he lost his commission from the navy, because he was a navy ROTC person. I don't know whether he's ever come back to Washington and Lee or not, but he was a fine kid. You always get some innocent people, but he was guilty from the standpoint of the code, the honor code.

**Warren:** The honor system is real serious at Washington and Lee.

**Lord:** Oh, they are. Oh, yes.

**Warren:** Did the athletes think that they didn't have to be part of that system, or did they think because they were on scholarships, they were exempt from the honor system?

**Lord:** There are a lot of smart football players, and then there are a lot of players, I'm not saying they're dumb, they're not educated. They didn't get the background to be able to come to W&L, but they came. They may have come from schools which gave them high grades, and they got in. In those days, remember, they didn't have the college boards. You came on what your high school report card said. So they came in with this stuff. And many of them—I don't know one, and some of those

that throughout, ended up being doctors and lawyers. So what I'm saying is, it was just an unfortunate thing which they got sucked into. In other words, if they had gone ahead and flunked some subjects, they would still have graduated from Washington and Lee. Some people say, "They wouldn't have graduated from Washington and Lee. They were too dumb." Well, that's not true. If you want me to, sometime, I'll go down the list, and we'll get a list of those guys, and we'll see Doctor So-and-so, and Attorney So-and-so, and Judge So-and-so.

**Warren:** How many people were involved, do you think?

**Lord:** I tell you, I don't know the number. I don't know, but everybody was so down. But Dr. Gaines was there, and he gave a wonderful speech to the student body, and said, "We're going to have a football team. We're going to have *The Washington and Lee Swing*, and we're going to continue athletics. We're going to emphasize this," and so on. Everybody applauded him, and we went on and had the season.

The next year, we hired a coach from northern Virginia by the name of—no, we've got to go back one. We hired a coach who was a great football player there, Coach Bill Chipley.

**Warren:** Chipley?

**Lord:** Chipley. C-H-I-P-L-E-Y. He was one of the great players we had there. He would have made it had they let him stay on one more year, but the other people were complaining so much. I don't know what kind of contract he had, whether he had a two-year contract, but poor Bill Chipley was asked to resign. He resigned, and then they hired a gentleman by the name of Lee McLaughlin, whom you've heard about, and who was a wonderful person, and a great "person" person. He knew how to coach persons, not coach football. He got them motivated, and he got a good staff, one of whom was Coach Leslie, and Coach Harrington, who played at W&L. Coach Leslie played baseball. He surrounded himself with some motivators and he

didn't win many the first year. I don't think he won but one, or two. But then he started winning, and then in three or four years, he was the coach of the year for Division Three athletics, football.

**Warren:** He certainly was well thought of.

**Lord:** Yes, he was.

**Warren:** He was dead by the time I moved to Lexington, but people still talk about Coach McLaughlin, and sort of bow their heads.

**Lord:** Yes, yes. Unfortunately, he met an untimely death. He had a great camp. You knew that he was electrocuted?

**Warren:** Yes, yes. I actually live right around the corner from the camp.

A couple of other things. You've made mention of *The Swing*. Tell me what the *W&L Swing* means in the athletic program.

**Lord:** Well, I don't know the motive, but I can hum the tune. "When Washington and Lee men fall in line, We're going to win again another time" [Laughter] Go ahead.

**Warren:** No, you go ahead. It's great! You're great. [Laughter] I haven't been to a football game yet, so I haven't heard them sing it. So did people sing it with great vigor?

**Lord:** Oh, yeah, yeah. We all stand up.

**Warren:** Tell me about it.

**Lord:** They stand up. They know they're supposed to stand up. Now, some of these young guys don't, but ordinarily you stand up. [Laughter]

**Warren:** So it's sort of like the national anthem?

**Lord:** Right, right. It was our anthem, our fight song. [Laughter]

**Warren:** Tell me about it.

**Lord:** Well, there's been so much written on it.

**Warren:** There's a lot of emotion caught up with the fight anthem.

**Lord:** Oh, yeah.

**Warren:** Tell me about that.

**Lord:** Well, I don't know who generated it. All I know is, that tune is played more than any other fight song in the United States, because so many high schools have stolen it.

**Warren:** When Frank first started talking about it, I said, "Frank, I have no idea what you're talking about." He said, "As soon as you hear it, you'll know. You'll know exactly." As soon as I heard it, I said, "That's *The W&L Swing*? I've heard that all my life." He said, "Yeah, exactly."

**Lord:** On March the 4th, you get up at seven o'clock and be down on the field, I'll be there. We're going to have the Washington and Lee recording and then I'm going to send them on a run.

**Warren:** I saw that. [Laughter] Everybody's waiting for you, too. They're expecting you.

**Lord:** Excuse me for being so emotional.

**Warren:** I love that you're being so emotional. I've just got to share this with you. I have the cassette that they put together of it, and I get all choked up now when I hear it. I've only been there since November, and I get all choked up. I mean, this is crazy, but it's that kind of song.

**Lord:** Yeah, yeah. That's right.

**Warren:** Why is that, do you think?

**Lord:** I don't know. It really is. Whenever I go, I sing it. When I go to a game, and they don't have the band there, I recruit the crowd, and we sing it. I can't believe it! [Laughter] And I'm a blue hen! I'm a blue hen from Delaware.

**Warren:** Well, does everybody know the words?

**Lord:** Well, yeah. If they're W&L guys, they do.

**Warren:** And do I understand that the words aren't always quite the same, that sometimes they get modified?

**Lord:** Yeah, I guess so. But not as a rule.

**Warren:** Because Frank says the "Sweet Briar" line is not always the same.

**Lord:** Yeah, yeah, I know. I know what you're talking about.

**Warren:** Well, I don't.

**Lord:** They ham it up.

**Warren:** Okay. Let's go off on another tangent, and this may be a total tangent that doesn't go anywhere. Were you aware, when Dean Leyburn arrived, of what he was trying to do with the school?

**Lord:** Well, there was some objection to him, because they knew that he was going to make it tougher to get in, tougher entrance standards. But don't ever say that he was not for athletics. He was interested. He would go to games. He's the one that instituted college boards.

**Warren:** Really?

**Lord:** It was going to make it tougher to get in, and it is tougher. Of course, the other thing that there was some discussion and dissent about was when we went co-ed. They thought that that was going to reduce the chances of getting athletes in, because instead of getting all men in, they had the women coming in, yet the school didn't increase in size. If it had doubled in size, gone from 1,250 to 2,500, just like that, then the transition wouldn't have been as abrupt. But when you're getting this many men, and from that many men, you've got a better chance of getting three good people than just one good person. So then when the circle of bodies goes to this size, then it makes it tougher, see. And then the percentage now, I guess, is going to be what, two-thirds, or—

**Warren:** It's sixty-forty, now.

**Lord:** Sixty-forty. They've adapted themselves to that.

**Warren:** Well, a few champion women have come in.

**Lord:** Oh, yeah.

**Warren:** Tell me about that.

**Lord:** I was one of the few in the whole athletic department who said, "Don't bring that stuff up to me, because I am not against women entering Washington and Lee." I said, "I have six sisters, I have two daughters, I have grandchildren, and I'm not against women." And they have done real well. I'm just proud of them.

**Warren:** Were you still there when it went co-ed?

**Lord:** I had two classes. Now, when did it start?

**Warren:** '85.

**Lord:** '85. Yeah, I had two years, two years of women.

**Warren:** And what was that like when they first arrived on campus?

**Lord:** I treated them exactly like I treated my students. I mean, men students. I had a lot of people join my class.

**Warren:** What did you have to do to modify, for having women there?

**Lord:** Well, the contact sports, of course, would be a little different. I had a granddaughter who wanted to come to W&L, but her grades weren't good enough. Her college boards were good enough, but she participated in so many different things in high school that her ranking in class was down. They play soccer. They can't play football, but there are some girls in the United States that play football. And there are even wrestlers.

But to get to the question, the sports that the girls play, I'm one hundred percent for them. Like volleyball, that's a wonderful thing for girls. Swimming, look how good they're doing. Track, they rank people. Basketball—it's going to be a little while before they get up in basketball, doing as well as they are in the other sports. And softball.

**Warren:** What had to happen in the gymnasium?

**Lord:** They had to build that new gymnasium, that was one of the things. They built the new gymnasium with the intent of having women.

**Warren:** Really? The Warner Center was related to the coming of women?

**Lord:** Yes. Well, when they first built it, there weren't any women there, when they first started to build it. But then they knew they had to have locker rooms, shower facilities for the women.

President Cole, when he was here, had an idea—I don't know the politics, so I don't know the decision of why it was—but he wanted to build another school, and he put it up on Liberty Hall, and that would be the women, and the men would be down here.

**Warren:** Really?

**Lord:** Yes. Of course, he's dead now, he can't verify it, but I was a buddy of President Cole. We used to play handball all the time, and he would talk about that. He'd say, "What do you think about that, Norm?"

I'd say, "I think that's a great idea," and things like that. But there were some board of trustees that didn't even want women, period, and they were influential. So he saw that he was going to have a very difficult fight. So he got an opportunity to get a big job in a library—do we have some organization in Washington? It's a library, it's not a government-run thing, it's some big philanthropy-type something that's run—

**Warren:** And that's where he went?

**Lord:** Yeah, he went there, and he stayed there until he died.

**Warren:** I'm sure Frank would know.

**Lord:** Oh, yeah. Frank would know. Oh, yeah, he'll know. Frank used to play handball, too, with him, and with me.

**Warren:** Okay, now. We've talked about the coming of women. Another thing that I suspect that you probably were witness to was the arrival of black students at Washington and Lee.

**Lord:** No problem. Well, I think when they first came, there was no problem. It's only after more of them came, and they were tainted with an attitude that they weren't getting enough, quick enough. And I had to grab two of them by the neck—and I'd be fired today if I did it—when they dedicated the Washington and Lee gymnasium. University of Virginia versus Washington and Lee, in basketball. I can't remember the year. They played the national anthem, and everybody stood up except these three black guys. And I was so mad, I almost went down immediately, and was going to snatch 'em up, but I didn't. [Laughter] And as soon as the last note was sounded, I ran down to the people, to those guys, and I grabbed them by the neck, and I said, "What in the heck is going on here?"

And they turned around. They knew me. They didn't offer any resistance at all. They said, "Well, we have our rights."

I said, "Yes, you do have your rights, but you don't have the right of not being courteous. You have to have courtesy, no matter where you go. You should have stood up. It's too late now to stand up, but I want to see you in my office tomorrow." There were three of them, and two of them came. They never held it against me.

Well, there are a lot of people that don't really know. And I hate to say this about Washington and Lee students, but I remember on my track team, when we had ROTC. The ROTC would march; they'd have a parade once a week. It was on Thursdays. I had practice out there, and they had a band. We had a band, a little band. The flag went by, and they played the national anthem. I had students who didn't know enough to get up. And, boy, I would get over and just tell them, I'd say,

"Hey, you're either going to have to stand up on Thursdays, or you won't be on my track and field team."

They'd say, "Oh, we didn't think it made any difference. It was just so informal." It wasn't a big ROTC detachment. It wasn't like VMI having a whole football field full. It was just, say, thirty of them, marching. And they weren't that too good of marchers, either. So I can understand why they felt that way, but I [unclear]. They respected me.

**Warren:** They do respect you. Everyone—when your name comes up—I don't know anybody who gets the respect that you do. Except maybe Dean Leyburn. You two were both—

**Lord:** Oh, man, he was great.

**Warren:** That's good company to be keeping.

**Lord:** Oh, he was great. But he came to every athletic contest.

**Warren:** Okay, wait a minute. I want to hear more about the arrival of black students. Were they good athletes?

**Lord:** Oh, those three, I don't know.

**Warren:** I don't necessarily mean those three. I'm talking about in general. Why would a black student choose to come to Washington and Lee? Let's face it, it's not a particularly liberal or open-minded place.

**Lord:** Right. And it's not a muscle factory.

**Warren:** Right. So why would a black student choose to come to Washington and Lee?

**Lord:** Well, first of all, the notoriety of a degree, the importance. To answer your question, I had a black student on my track and field team, and I've seen other black students participate, and they were respected. The coach was completely unbiased. In fact, the *Washington Post* came down when we had black students, and he was interviewing every coach that had a black student in the whole Southeast, all over

the South. There was some kind of a survey. And he asked me, he said, "How do you feel about it?"

I said, "No problem. I've been dealing with them for years and years in high school. I was an official at a track meet. I'd start them, and I'd treat them just like everybody else." I told him that I was strict with them, and everything. And then I had this athlete, and he was a long-jumper.

This interviewer said, "Coach, do you mean to tell me that you're not a little bit biased?"

I said, "Let me tell you something. A coach is the most unbiased person alive. He will not let someone better than what he's got sit on the bench. He's going to take the person who is the most qualified, and have him participate, play."

He said, "What do you mean?"

I said, "All right. I've got a long-jumper. He jumps a quarter of an inch further than somebody else. He's going to get a chance to participate more." You're allowed to enter three, you see. "So if he's in the top three, and his distances—"

He said, "Well, you sold me there. I wonder if the rest of them are going to be like that?"

I said, "Absolutely. If he can shoot a basket and it goes through more than the guy who's white, he's going to be playing." Well, look at the leagues now.

[Laughter]

**Warren:** I'm very intrigued. I'm looking forward to interviewing some of those early black students, because I think they must have been real pioneers, just like the young women who were the first women to come there.

**Lord:** Well, I think so.

**Warren:** Let's face it, the place has a lot of tradition, and they were bucking tradition.

**Lord:** Yeah, I think so. I hope it works that way. Well, I don't have an ounce of—what do you call it?—what's the word—against them. I'm not—

**Warren:** Prejudice.

**Lord:** —prejudiced. I don't have an ounce of being prejudiced, against anybody, if they were doing right. Now, if they start doing something that is offbeat, then I'm going to step into it.

**Warren:** You'll give everybody a hard time, is what you're trying to say.

**Lord:** No, I really do. When we get to talking about physical education and some of that stuff, I'll get into it more.

**Warren:** Well, let's get into it. Let's talk about that.

**Lord:** Well, I have been very tough on people who thought they'd get by by doing less because of attitude, or because of inability to do it, or because of wrong philosophy. They don't think it's important that you should have to pay to come and work out and take physical activity. I got a letter—would you like me to send you some of those letters?

**Warren:** Absolutely.

**Lord:** You would?

**Warren:** Yes, yes.

**Lord:** Okay. I got some letters.

**Warren:** Well, tell me about the letter. You were starting to tell me.

**Lord:** I have gone up to a person, and I'll put my hand on his shoulders—which, I guess, now, I don't think they'd say anything to me about it—but I put my hand on his shoulders, and I get real close to him, and I'm going to say, "You're never going to make it. Just because you are in a great fraternity and just because you're taking a wonderful course, and all that, you won't make it unless you change your attitude." Everything is attitude, and discipline, and struggle, and staying up late, and getting

this book report in, instead of saying, "I'll do it tomorrow." You've got to discipline yourself. I've done this a lot.

I had this black girl in my class, and she was cutting class all the time. She always cut on a day when we had something tough, a test or something, a physical test. So I saw her one day, and I called her aside, and talked father-to-daughter to her, and I said, "You know, if you miss another class, there's no way I can pass you. I'll have to fail you." Do you know, the very next class, she missed it. It was mid-semester, and she had already missed as many as she was supposed to miss. We had a rule that if you miss six classes, you can't pass—I think seven. Six you can miss, if you make up the work. Seven, no matter what you do, you can't miss. She missed seven classes, after I told her that she couldn't miss any more.

So I immediately called, I guess it was Dean John, dean of students. I said, "You've got some great people here in the school. Boy, you deserve a medal."

He said, "What do you mean, Norm?"

I was being facetious. I said, "Well, you recruited a black girl who's hopeless. After I told her that if she cuts one more class, I'm going to flunk her, now I'm going to have to flunk her." I can't remember her name now, but I told Lew John—do you know him?

**Warren:** Yes.

**Lord:** I told him, and he said, "Well, let me talk to her, or I'll have her counselor talk to her, and have her come talk to you."

I said, "Okay. If she had an excuse, a real good excuse, and this and that. I don't want to be a guy who is absolute. I want to help her if I can."

So she came, and she said, "I overslept."

I said, "Well, don't you have an alarm clock?" [Laughter]

She said, "Yes, but I didn't set it."

I said, "Well, let me tell you something. You've got to set the clock, or you've got to have somebody—especially in a case as badly as the situation in which you put yourself was, you've got to have somebody wake you up, if you know you've got to be there."

So she said, "Well, you're right there."

I said, "I'll tell you what. I am going to give you a chance to make that seventh one up, so you pass. You've got to also agree to also make the other six up. Will you agree to that?"

She said, "That's good. Thank you, Coach."

I said, "You tell me when you want to make them up." We sat down and she made them up. I said, "We're going to come. I'm going to be here at such and such a time." And there were always things to make up, see. And it was physical. It was a proficiency test. It was physical stuff, it wasn't written stuff. So she would be doing the stuff.

And then right in the middle of it, she says, "Is this necessary?" [Laughter]

I said, "You bet it is. It is necessary." And she passed.

**Warren:** That's great. She's very lucky. She's very lucky. Well, you sure have a lot of respect from your former students.

One thing else I wanted to ask you about. One of the things that I see a lot of at Washington and Lee is some heavy-duty partying. Now, doesn't that make life difficult for an athletic teacher? I mean, a body can only take so much.

**Lord:** It's a sign of immaturity, that's all it is. That, plus purposely ignoring the bad effects. Why would anybody want to take pot or smoke drugs, or why would they want to drink just to get drunk? I used to tell them—but I was tough on my students. I didn't let them drink or smoke. If they did, they were off the team. They said, "Hey, you're living in the wrong era." Hey, go tell me. Some of my own

colleagues, they say, "Guy, you're living in a dream world, now. Times aren't like that."

I said, "They are to me." Maybe that's wrong, but—

**Warren:** They drink a lot at Washington and Lee. There's a lot of alcohol consumed. How can you maintain the team?

**Lord:** First of all, you'd better get the dean to have a seminar with the coaches. See, one of the things about sports is that it's a leak-down from—look at Nebraska versus Florida in football. This guy was a criminal, and they let him play on the team, and because he played on the team, they won. That coach must be a wonderful person. He is a wonderful person, I can tell by looking at him. He's a devout Christian. But either an alumni got to him, or somebody else said, "Why don't you give him a break and let him play?" So the guy played. I can't even think of his name now. He played, and now I hear he's in more trouble.

It's discipline, that's what it is. But you can't go back on it, even though I went back on that seventh inning thing, seven-absence thing. Of course, it depends on the situation. Rape or drugs or some of that stuff, I don't think it should be a part of athletics. But maybe the answer is to have an Alcoholics Anonymous or something like that. I don't mean Alcoholics Anonymous, but Athletes Anonymous or something.

**Warren:** There's a good idea.

**Lord:** Just to get in and say, "Now, look," and prove to them physiologically what happens to a drop of alcohol when it goes in. You can prove that it's not good for you, although now it's good to drink red wine. But you don't even know there, because research isn't honest anymore. You get people who cheat on it. How in the heck can you look at yourself in the mirror, being a doctor of whatever it is, and he did research, and then skewed it, so that, you know—boy, that's terrible.

**Warren:** We're coming up to the end of this tape, and we can certainly pop in another one, if we want.

**Lord:** I thought you were going to ask me more on the other stuff.

**Warren:** Well, let's talk about the other stuff. What do you want to talk about?

**Lord:** Some of the things that were very popular that now are going by the wayside.

**Warren:** I would love to. All right, let's pop in another tape, and get those.

**Lord:** We'll call it, "Going By the Wayside."

[Begin Tape 2, Side 1]

**Warren:** This is Mame Warren. This is tape two, with Norm Lord, on the 16th of April 1996, in Newark, Delaware.

**Lord:** Okay, let's go. Rah rah.

**Warren:** You're in charge, Norm.

**Lord:** Okay. Well, I didn't tell you enough about my job when I was stolen away from University of Delaware and the United States Army to work without a contract at Washington and Lee University for forty-three years, without missing a day or being late once.

I had the best boss in the world—Cy Twombly. He never once told me what to do and he never once told me what not to do. He and I were the whole staff of the Department of Health and Physical Education. The athletic department, intercollegiate athletics, was a separate department. Now, a part of the Department of Health and Physical Education was an adjunct department called Department of Intramurals, and that was play among the students. Not in class, but between fraternities and between teams, at a scheduled time and place, outside of class.

So having a wonderful experience in the armed forces of body-building and games and body skills and fun and fitness and friendship, which I stole and used for forty-three years, I was never told what to do. So my boss, Cy Twombly, knowing that I couldn't handle seventy-five people—and that's when the classes were

large—we had four classes a day, at 9:20, 10:15, 11:10, and 12:05, and we had them Monday, Wednesday, Friday, at those times, and then we had them at 9:20, 10:15, 11:10, and 12:05, on Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday.

We had a rule that you could only miss, in those days, the early days of my career, you could only miss three classes. And if you missed three classes, you had to make the fourth class up. So I had that rule, and we went by it. I had a program of instruction, which was written out and which was given to every student in my class. Now, when I say "my" class, it was really "our" class—Cy Twombly and Norm Lord. Cy Twombly had section A, group A, and Norm Lord had group B. I was only concerned with group B, until I got group A. Once I gave group A to Coach Twombly and I took Coach Twombly's class, they had become Lord's, and I gave them a program of instruction, listing what they did on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, for every date in the semester.

My objective was simple: you must sweat during the period, during the class, which lasted only forty minutes, because we had to give them a chance to take a shower. We had to give them a chance to get dressed to come out to class, a chance to take a shower when they left the class, then go to their academic class. So my thirty-five minutes was not much time, but I took every second of it, and I gave them fun, fitness, and friendship. When they left me, I had them run by me. If I couldn't see them visibly sweating, I had them go by, and I would give them my thumb sweat test. I would streak my thumb across their forehead, and if it wasn't wet, they had to stay, and be late to their academic class. So they knew dag-gone well that they better work.

They thought I was a marine. I never told them any different. I told them, "Don't worry about who I was, just worry about who I am. And you better believe we're going to do it." [Laughter] I had a rule that they must run across the bridge, going to the athletic field. If they don't run, they turn around and go back and run.

I said, "It's not very polite to the people who had that bridge built, to think they did it as a convenience. They did it for you to run on, to the field of friendly strife, and so you can have fun. So run down to me, and run back from me." So they got in their mind right away that I meant business.

So I took thirty-three, Cy Twombly took thirty-two. At mid-semester, I would trade, and they got oriented to what I'm going to give. So they knew what they were going to do today, they knew what they were going to do three weeks from now, they knew what they were going to do every day. If it was a test, they had to make it up. If it was a cut date, that's their business. You could never cut the day before a holiday, because that was a university rule.

I tried to make it competitive, and I tried to make it fun. But when I had a program of seventy-two or seventy-three people, and only one person teaching it, I had to use all kinds of tricks. I had a baseball game here, and a softball game over here. That takes care of all thirty-six. Nine and nine are eighteen, nine and nine are eighteen, equals thirty-six. But I had to have a student in charge up here. So he would be Coach Lord, the second. Coach Lord, the first, would be up here. So no matter what we did, I had to use students to help me. When I had handball, I had handball up in the handball courts. We only had five courts. Five fours are twenty, so I'd be okay there. I'd have to take eighteen or sixteen up on the wrestling mat, and we'd be wrestling.

So I had to have organization personified. I was very efficient, and I knew the guys by name. I made them put their name on their shirt, so that I would know their name. And to this day, even though I may not know the face, the minute I see the name, I know the name. I'll show you a letter from a student I hadn't seen in several years. He couldn't believe that I remembered his name. But you do forget faces and names to hook them up.

The first year, as freshmen, they had tough stuff, like running and jumping and throwing, wrestling. We didn't give them anything that was too much fun. The second year, the sophomore year—in those days, they only had to take two years of physical education—they got more things like golf, tennis, racquetball, handball.

We had a required test for the freshmen, too. I forgot to tell you that. The freshman year, everybody had to swim. Had I only known how enterprising it would have been, I would have done something that would have been worth its weight in gold. We used to have them jump off the balcony into the old pool. Have you ever seen the old pool? Okay. They had their choice of wearing a bathing suit or you could jump in nude. That's before we had women. And some of them, to this day, always get mad at me when they find out—and they shouldn't be mad at me, they should be mad at the hierarchy, the directors, not me. I was a teacher. I didn't make the rule. The rule was made that they do jump off the balcony. It was a requirement that they jump off the balcony, into the swimming pool, and tread water for five minutes.

They also had to do a surface dive, which means they take a stroke, a breast stroke, stick their feet in the air, go to the bottom of the pool, pick up an object. If they couldn't do it, they wouldn't pass swimming. They also had to demonstrate the four strokes and then they also had to tread water. So it was a pretty tough test.

Unfortunately—and I want to make this point clear for the record, and this is going to be a record—they don't do that anymore. They have become a little bit refined. Why have to do that? You don't have to do that. Very seldom would you have to make a surface dive. Very seldom would you have to jump off of a balcony into the water. Maybe one out of a hundred will have to do that. So let's just make it fun and refining, so it won't be distasteful or—and we'll talk about that. We don't have to talk about something that's tough. So they don't do it now. And there's all the alumni that talk to me when they come back, they get mad because, if I'd have

been enterprising, I would have had a secret camera and had a picture taken of those guys jumping in, and the actions after they got in the water. I didn't do that.

[Laughter]

**Warren:** Wait a minute. What were the actions after they got in the water?

**Lord:** Oh, after they got in the water? They had to tread water.

**Warren:** Okay. I wish you had had a camera. That would have been great.

**Lord:** They had to tread water for five minutes. And then the other thing, they had to do it when we called their name. "Jones, surface dive." And they had to go, and go down, bring up the object.

**Warren:** This was freshmen who were doing this?

**Lord:** Yeah, yeah. They don't do that anymore.

**Warren:** That's not normal at schools. Why did Washington and Lee require this?

**Lord:** Because they have a guy like me that believes it's worthwhile.

**Warren:** So you instituted this?

**Lord:** And because professionals believe in what we did. We had the best physical education program in the state of Virginia, maybe second, or tied, with VMI. Those two were the only two schools in the whole state of Virginia that required physical education, today. So anyhow, I could talk on and on and on, but you're getting the gist of my philosophy.

**Warren:** It's great.

**Lord:** They were going to do away with physical education.

**Warren:** When?

**Lord:** About fifteen years ago. The Executive Committee had sent out everything to all the faculty, what was going to be brought up at the faculty meeting, and that was going to be brought up, to do away with maybe not all of the physical education, but do away with just all but an orientation-type thing. So I sensed that I'd better be ready to get up and talk if my boss didn't. My boss, as much as I loved him, he did

not want to be giving the impression that he wasn't with the faculty in their opinions.

Now, the faculty would have voted this down—would have voted—so they weren't going to do away with the physical education. We hadn't come from votes yet. Dr. Cole was the president. It had to be in '55, or '56, or '57 [sic]. You can look it up in the faculty minutes if you want to, because my boss was not going to get up. And we now have combined departments. Athletic department and physical education department, intramural department, all of it is in one head, like now, like it is now. Like Coach Walsh, he's the athletic director. Well, Cy Twombly was the athletic director. and Cy wasn't going to get up. I could see that. But I didn't get up, for fear that I would offend my boss.

So Lee McLaughlin, he punched me, like that, and said, "Norm, maybe you ought to get up." Well, I was all ready for it. So I got up, and I had a prop with me. I had a picture frame, without a picture in it, just a plain frame. And I had a toothbrush. I got up, and I said, "I won't take too much of your time, but listen to me. This is a picture frame, without a picture, but all you guys know what it is for. Wouldn't you like to see a picture of a man in there, when he graduates from the university, or do you want a picture of a pipsqueak, a guy who doesn't have enough strength to stand up and talk, maybe? Now, if you want to vote for doing away with physical education, vote for the toothbrush. The toothbrush is an electric toothbrush. He might have enough strength to brush his teeth, without physical education, with an electric toothbrush." And I'm demonstrating. I said, "But if you vote for the picture frame, you will vote to retain physical education. If you vote for the toothbrush, we're going to get rid of physical education. For God's sake, have enough courage to vote for something that has been working, and is worthwhile." And I sat down. And Dr. Flournoy—have you ever heard of him?

**Warren:** Tell me.

**Lord:** He got up, and he said, "Lord is right." And he talked of Greeks and Romans, and all this beautiful stuff. He said, "I think we would be wise to vote to retain physical education." And everybody except two people—and I won't mention their names, one of them is dead, well, both of them are dead; I don't want to mention their names—all but two people voted it down.

**Warren:** So this was the faculty that was voting?

**Lord:** This was the faculty. So today, you wouldn't have physical education. It would have been very reduced, like one semester, something like that. I forget what the thing was.

**Warren:** That was very a powerful argument you made.

**Lord:** Oh, yeah, yeah.

**Warren:** So Dr. Flournoy stood up. I understand that he was a very powerful person.

**Lord:** Oh, man. He was a wonderful guy.

**Warren:** Tell me about him.

**Lord:** Well, I know he liked to drink beer. [Laughter]

**Warren:** I hadn't heard that.

**Lord:** Well, he was so colorful. He was a Rhodes Scholar and Oxfordian. He was a great teacher. I never had him, but I was invited in to have a beer with him at a corner store, on the corner of Washington and Jefferson. There used to be a little beer hall there. And we chatted. This was after the picture frame and toothbrush thing. [Laughter]

But I did all kinds of things. I used to have what they called a Potluck Day. A Potluck Day was a day which they had off. They didn't have to come to class. And they got excited, you know. So I had them in the class. And usually it would be the day after I had given a written exam and I had given them their papers back, corrected, and had given them their score. I said, "Now, there won't be a class on

Friday." Well, they liked that, see. There won't be a class on Friday. I said, "You don't have to come to class on Friday, but you're going to do this potluck."

So I had one hundred different things. One would be, dribble a basketball around the Doremus gym track twenty-five times; throw a baseball twenty-five times, then run a mile; dig a hole in the ground one yard by one yard by one yard; help your mother in the kitchen at Thanksgiving, do the dishes, or help her cook, and then wash the dishes. All kinds of things. Help your sister clean the house this week, or Christmas vacation, whatever. I had domestic stuff in there. I had, saw a cord of wood for your fireplace this winter. All kinds of stuff. Play nine holes of golf; play eighteen holes of golf; ride a horse; go skiing. I've got the whole one hundred list, if you want them sometime. [Laughter]

**Warren:** Great.

**Lord:** So they had to come up. When they came up to pick the paper up, their exam, they'd draw out of this pack. And they had a number and what they'd do. On a three-by-five card, like this, just like this, see.

**Warren:** So did they get to choose, or they pulled?

**Lord:** No, no, no. They'd draw, they'd draw. Like this. They'd draw. Some of them would pull a top one, some of them—and I'd say, "You can't talk to anybody, you can't show anybody what you got. You just talk about what you're going to do, and the instructions on there." And I had instructions exactly what to do. Climb House Mountain; swim a thousand yards; all this stuff. Play a game of marbles; shoot billiards. I had everything, everything. Go to VMI and challenge a cadet to something. I used all the ingenuity I had. But anyhow. So they'd draw it out.

Now, class has all gone accordingly. Now, these classes aren't thirty-six people. This was in the new era. I couldn't do that too much when we first started. But this was within the last fifteen years, after they changed to three semesters. This was after we changed to three semesters. I did a lot of this during the mini-semester.

Anyhow, I'm at the point now where the class has picked up their test, and they've got their card. I said, "Now, if you've got something you want to do, you can keep it. I don't care whether you keep it, because you might want to sell it. And if you sell it, you can sell it for money. Or you can trade, if you want to, but you trade even. Let's say, you drew, 'Play nine holes of golf' and you don't like golf. And you know that I love golf, or another student. 'Hey, I got something you want. I'll trade you, sight unseen. Or if you want it, I'll let you have it for five dollars, for one dollar.' Of course, I can get in trouble if I did do that, but I did. [Laughter]

Anyhow, it really worked beautifully. I had one, he had to cut a cord of wood. He said, "Coach, I can't find anybody to do it with."

I said, "Well, you don't have to find anybody. I'll tell you a guy." One of the guys at the equipment room window, he had a fireplace, and he knew where to go out in the state forest to cut the wood, and he did it every Saturday. That's how he kept warm. The guys went out in the state forest and cut wood, free wood. So he went. And this guy, he came back and told me, he said, "Coach, I had the greatest time. I can't remember when I had a better one. It was so exhilarating, so rewarding, feeling accomplished." And I said, "There you go."

And then I had that other one about digging a hole. So then the next time they come back, at the class, they had to tell me what they did, and they'd tell me the result. And it's pledged, you see, it's pledged.

So the one about that hole, he says, "Coach, why in the world would you make anybody dig a hole one yard by one yard by one yard?"

I said, "Well, you're pretty dumb if you don't understand why you would have to do that sometime." And he and I had a discussion, and we had guys in there that were real—see, sometimes you may have to look for something. Sometimes you may have to dig into a sewer.

**Warren:** You might have an outhouse. You need to put a new outhouse in.

[Laughter]

**Lord:** Well anyhow, that's one thing. No other teacher at Washington, physical education staff, I don't want to call the others—I don't want to call them a—although, I've got a lot of friends in the academic department, a lot of friends.

I had what they called coed day. That was before we had coed. When I was there for two years, I still had it. I had girls in my class, and they had to get a date by asking a man at W&L, and vice versa. So I had coed day, and some of them could not get dates, believe it or not, they were so bashful. I couldn't believe it, that they couldn't get a date. Now, they could've been joshing me and saying, well, they couldn't get a date.

**Warren:** So what happened on coed day?

**Lord:** If they were in, for instance, bowling—we used to teach bowling. That's something else gone by the wayside. But people that don't understand, who have never bowled, were never on a league, or don't understand, bowling is a great sport. Anyhow, we had all these different classes. I had bowling, I had billiards, I had table tennis, I had racquetball, I had handball, I had swimming. I had anything. I had it all. The only thing I didn't have was riding.

**Warren:** So that was what would happen when you had coed day?

**Lord:** You would have to get a date. So you'd get me for your date, and you had bowling. So you got to go bowling. It might be hiking, so you got to take me on a hike. Whatever it was.

**Warren:** I'd love to go on a hike with you. That sounds like a lot of fun to me.

**Lord:** Oh, yeah. Well, anyhow, so then I got in trouble. Oh, so, what I would do, because when I found out they were either [unclear], I had to get a list of girls who would work with me to be his date. I don't think any girl would not be able to get a man, but anyhow. So I would get a list, and when he'd come up to me and say, "I'm

sorry, Coach. I can't get a date," I said, "No problem. I've got one right here. Here's her telephone number, and where she lives, and everything. You go pick her up." So I'm getting this list.

One day, I'm up on the balcony of the new gym, and there's fencing practice going on. This was before we have coeds, before females. There was a law student who was a female, and she was on the fencing club. And I realized it was a lady, because I saw her hair coming down out of her mask. I said, "Well, that's a girl." So I go up to her. She's just warming up without anybody there. I said, 'Ma'am, could I speak to you a minute?"

She said, "What do you want?" She was very snippy. I had my jacket on. I have to show you that, too. I had my name on, Coach Lord, and Washington and Lee emblem.

I said, "Would you help me out? I'm having coed weekend, and I need a date, I need a female, to date one of my students who hasn't been able to get a date."

She said, "I'm not interested."

I said, "Could you help me? I'm really genuinely sincere. Could you help me? I'm Coach Lord. We're doing this, and we do it all the time."

And she said, "I don't want anything to do with it."

I said, "Okay, I'm sorry." Do you know, she turned me in? I had to go—dean—I love her, she was a nice lady, she was dean of students. What's the lady's name?

**Warren:** Pam Simpson?

**Lord:** Yes. Pam Simpson. Oh, no. She turned it in to her. So Pam came to me. Yeah, that's what it was. Well, first she called the athletic director, and said, "What's going on?" And she called me—what do you call it, soliciting? Not soliciting, what's the other word? Pandering?

**Warren:** Pimp? Or something like that? Pandering, I don't know.

**Lord:** Pimping.

**Warren:** For heaven's sakes. Isn't that ridiculous?

**Lord:** So I told the athletic director, I said, "You don't want to be burdened with that. You want me to write a letter? Why don't you just let me go talk to her?"

She said, "That's what I was going to have you do anyhow."

So I go talk to her. She said, "Well, I understand, Norm. She just doesn't understand." She knew me. We were very good friends. She said, "Don't worry about it. Just be a little more careful who you talk to on that thing."

I said, "Okay."

So then Dr. Worth, the psychiatrist [sic], I go to him. And he said, "Well, that's really funny. I'm really getting a kick out of it. But Norm, she can be serious. If I were you, I'd get it settled, right now."

I said, "How am I going to settle it?"

He said, "Well, first, you can ignore it, and apologize. Second, you can sue her. And the third thing is, don't ever have coed day again." [Laughter] So I never said a word to anybody, and it died, just like that. But that's a tradition that the kids miss now.

All right, what else was there I wanted to—oh, we had what was known—and I get so mad, I won't mention the name of the guy who was instrumental in having it done away with, wasn't on the academic faculty—called Sigma Delta Psi. That is an athletic fraternity. You had to do all these different things, like throw a baseball so far, do a handstand, vault over a bar, these different things. Kick a football so far, throw a baseball so far. I had so much interest in this thing, and students were just coming—"I want to try for it, Coach. I'm going to try for it." It was really a notable thing. They got membership, they got a medal and everything. Do you know that they did away with it?

**Warren:** Why?

**Lord:** I have no idea. It didn't cost any money I don't know.

Then another thing that we had that they did away with—and you know, they've been doing this ever since Aristotle's time. It happens in every civilization that the young people, or new people, will come in and make a change. They change the office. Take that thing, put it over here. Isn't this true? [Laughter] It's God's truth. Change, it's supposed to be good. Change. We want a change, we've got to have change. That's what we're interested in. There's a political philosophy, and all this.

Well, I had this thing where you take this physical fitness test. Every person had to take a physical fitness test every year. Freshmen had to do it; sophomores had to do it. If you took the test and you were in the top twenty on the score, you became a member of the Top Twenty Club. Now, I want to get a picture of that Top Twenty Club, and show you, so you can put it in your—now we don't have it. It makes people so mad they did away with it. They've been doing this since Aristotle. They change, and the thing goes, and it's never heard from again. I'm leaving, you know, eventually leaving this Earth, and unless it's put down, and made a matter of record, like in the history—

**Warren:** That's what we're doing right here.

**Lord:** I'll give you something. You want photographs and stuff?

**Warren:** I think we should do that. Let's go and look at that now. This has been a wonderful interview. Honestly, I just love it. I got everything I wanted. This is just great. Let's go look at pictures, all right?

**Lord:** Okay. But anyhow, that Top Twenty thing. They were so proud of that, to be in the top twenty. And I'd be standing up there on the end, with them.

**Warren:** And you were the proudest one of all.

**Lord:** Oh, yeah.

**Warren:** Do you have a picture of it?

**Lord:** No, that's the point. I've got to find a picture. I've got them, but I gave it to—

**Warren:** Well, there's a challenge. Let's see if I can find one before you do.

**Lord:** By going through the—

**Warren:** I don't know. I'll keep asking. Maybe I'll find one, and get one for you.

**Lord:** We used to take them. They even had a shirt: Top Twenty.

**Warren:** We'll find them. Now I'll know what it is when I find it. Thank you,  
Norm.

**Lord:** Didn't you want to see a picture?

**Warren:** Yes, but I'm going to turn the tape recorder off.

[End of Interview]