

BILL WALKER

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**Mame Warren,
Interviewer**

Warren: This is Mame Warren. Today is the 28th of January, 1997. I'm in Miami, Florida, with Bill Walker, class of 1968.

Where did you come from when you went to Washington and Lee?

Walker: I was born and raised in Cincinnati, Ohio.

Warren: How did an Ohio boy end up at Washington and Lee?

Walker: As I recall, I had been something less than a stellar student in high school, and switched after my ninth grade year to a small Country Day school in Cincinnati, which had something of a tradition of sending kids to Washington and Lee, and somewhat found myself academically, only somewhat, but decided, with some nudging, I think, from my parents, that what I needed was a small liberal arts men's school, and although I don't particularly remember why, I didn't have any great interest in schools in the East or the Northeast, and, as I recall, my three principal choices were Washington and Lee, Davidson, and Sewanee, all three of which I visited with my father.

Originally, I think when I was a tenth or eleventh grader, when we first looked, that Davidson was my first choice, but somewhere along the line I had changed my mind, and Washington and Lee became my first choice. We had one family friend who was there. It seems to me he graduated the year before I got there. Maybe he was there one year with me, but I think he left before I got there. I was accepted at all three, as I

remember, and I decided to go to Washington and Lee, and there were a fair number of Cincinnati boys that went to W&L.

Warren: You're my first. Can you remember your first impressions when you saw the campus?

Walker: Oh, yeah. It was love at first sight. I think my father had the good sense to — he was familiar with Washington and Lee. In fact, it had been one of the places he was interested in going, but because of World War II and whatnot, it just wouldn't work out. He ended up staying at Centre, which is where he was born and raised, which was a competing college in those days. They were in our athletic conference. But he had the good sense to park in the little lot next to Lee Chapel, as I remember, so my first view was up the Hill, and I felt then, and I've always felt, that unless somebody is blind, dumb, and stupid, they just can't see that view of the Colonnade and not fall in love. It's one of the prettiest views around.

We were there in the spring. I loved the place at first sight, and I was taken by all the things that, I think, attract people to Washington and Lee — the speaking tradition. Everybody, in those days at least, was well dressed, and the town, wherever you went downtown, people were very open and friendly and nice, and the university was to me like it is, I think, to so many people, just a comfortable old shoe from day one.

Warren: That's a nice description. You mentioned that everybody was well dressed. That's one of the things — why I wanted to talk to somebody from your time period.

Walker: Conventional dress. Conventional dress. Well, my time period, because I stayed there seven years and went on to law school, which was something of an accident, I suppose, at the time, in any event, I was there from '64 to '71, and it was an extremely interesting time in a lot of respects, but conventional dress was one of those. When I started as a freshman, everybody was conventionally dressed. You had to wear

a coat and tie. You were expected to wear a coat and tie even in town, not that everybody did, but that was sort of the expectation.

As I recall, we were the first year without freshman beanies, but we still had—I think it was called the Assimilation Committee—it was that or the Student Control Committee—that would fine you if you were seen on the Hill and, theoretically, in town without a jacket and tie. But it wasn't a big issue. People just did it because that's what you were supposed to do, and it was only occasionally that whichever committee it was was even called into action if somebody turned you in.

With Vietnam and drugs, the whole culture at the university changed over the ensuing seven years to the point that when I left as a senior law student, virtually only the senior law students were uniformly wearing—pardon the pun—uniformly wearing conventional dress. There were other law students as well, but the incoming, the freshman law school class that year, it seems to me, was probably less than 50 percent conventional dress. The faculty had all but stopped insisting on it.

In probably my junior year, undergrad, I was turned away from an exam because I didn't have a coat and tie on. I had awakened very late and literally rushed from my apartment to the Hill, and ran into class just as the books were being handed out, and I was told that I couldn't come into the room that way and I should have a jacket and tie on, so I had to race back to my car and back to my fraternity house, which is closer than my apartment, and I grabbed a coat and a tie from somebody and ran back to the Hill. I probably missed fourteen or fifteen minutes of a two-hour exam. It made lasting impression.

But it was not—it was nothing I thought of as artificial or a strain. It wasn't difficult to do. It's just what everybody did. The Country Day school I attended in Cincinnati was jackets and ties, a little less dressy in the sense that we all had one tie in high school that we left hanging on the hook in our closet, and our parents would send us with one sportcoat that was going to be destroyed, that hung on a hook in our locker

at our closet. By the end of your year, your senior year, if you wore the same tie year after year, the knot was so small from being run up and down that you could have stuck it through the head of a needle.

W&L wasn't like that. Everybody was – the word, as I remember, was "tweedy," and most men were pretty conscious of not only having a jacket and a tie on, but a decent jacket and a decent tie and a nice shirt and khakis – there were no blue jeans – or slacks. So all in all, it was a pretty well-dressed group, and, as I said, most fellows were conscious of what they wore. So it was more than just bare compliance with the whole tradition.

As it turned out, I ended up working my junior and senior year and then through all three years of law school at the College Town Shop, so I became particularly dress-conscious, I suppose. We couldn't be paid in cash. That was not available. We were paid only in clothes. So we kept a running charge account to which they would credit our hours, and most guys, including myself, by the time you graduated, you still had not made enough to pay off your bill. So leaving town was always a – I remember winning a cash prize my last year in law school of two or three hundred dollars. I don't remember what it was, it was the something award for something, and I took it straight to the store. I didn't even leave the Hill. I walked straight over to the store and gave them the money for fear I'd lose it or spend it on something else and I'd never get out of town.

So conventional dress was in effect, technically, I guess, the whole time I was there, but it had pretty much died through Kent State, the spring, and, you know, all the rebelliousness.

Warren: Did people rebel against conventional dress before May 1970, or was that the date?

Walker: I don't think it was a given date. As Washington and Lee's realization of the whole war movement elsewhere developed, there was a small group of the more

radical, if you will – it seemed like such a strange word in Lexington – the more radical students who started to show up for class without jackets and ties. I can't remember specific instances, just based on experience. I'm sure there were clashes with faculty who wouldn't let them into class.

Warren: Were you still an undergraduate when that was happening?

Walker: Yes. Well, no. The worst of the war years – I guess '68 was the big build-up, which was my senior year, but it had started. One of my fraternity brothers was the – at least we believed him to be the first drug dealer in Lexington. He was a very prominent athlete, and he'd get a shoe box from his brother in New York every month or so. Of course, we were more accustomed to having boxes from home full of cookies or something, so everybody picked them up and started to shake them immediately. I remember they'd shake this shoe box, and people would say, "Yeah, it sounds like it's just grass." This was before we had any – we knew what grass was, and that's obviously what it was.

My junior and senior year, probably more my senior than my junior year, it was beginning to happen in Lexington. My recollection is that it was not a – we were way behind the Ivy League schools and the California schools in terms of open rebellion to authority. I distinctly remember the afternoon on the front lawn – it had to be my second year of law school, right after Kent State, when Bob Huntley was literally shouted off the podium. He called the student – I guess he didn't call the student body together, the student leadership had called them together to try to close the school and shut it down so everybody could leave. One of my fraternity brothers, Fran Lawrence, was the president of the student body, and one of my classmates, Gates Shaw, at that point had graduated but come back to Lexington and was working on a – I don't know what he was working on. I don't think he was any longer technically in school, but he was still living in the county, and he was something of a leader in the student movement.

There was this meeting on the front lawn, and the student body was gathered across the Hill, and there'd been a microphone set up in the little circular sidewalk in front of the chapel, which was fairly new then. I don't think that had been there a long time. And Huntley ended up addressing the student body to try to petition for a little more peace and civility and common sense and go back to class and one thing or another, and he was literally shouted off the microphone, which, as I stood there—I had some role in that, I don't know exactly what it was, as a representative of the law school, but I distinctly remember my shock, thinking that in six years we've gone from what it was when I got here as a freshman to this. It just seemed unthinkable this all could have happened in such an incredibly short period of time.

I remember thinking in those years that when I had gotten to W&L as a freshman, a big weekend, or a typical weekend, would be two or three hundred students in a room that wouldn't begin to hold a hundred in normal circumstances, all guzzling beer or booze or both, and the idea was to be as drunk and as Lewd as you could, but it was very together, very packed in a room, Lewd, noisy, rambunctious sort of entertainment. And at least for the undergraduate students, by the time I left in '71, it was one or two couples smoking marijuana in a dark apartment somewhere. Fraternity life—it never shattered, but what had been a very sort of crowd-oriented social scene had become a very fragmented sort of individual social scene. It's just amazing. All that happened in this one little place in such a short period of time.

Warren: Quite a transition.

Walker: It really was. It really was. What were we talking about?

Warren: Lots of things.

Walker: Yes. I tend to sort of just go off. We were talking about conventional dress. What were we talking about?

Warren: You mentioned Fran Lawrence.

Walker: Francis McQuaid Lawrence.

Warren: I talked to Fran. I didn't realize you knew each other. I should have figured it out.

Walker: We were fraternity brothers, and he and my wife were great buddies. I'm a year older than Fran. She was our fraternity sweetheart and knew a number of the guys in the house, and the two of them had a great relationship. But he also stayed around campus for a while, so —

Warren: It took him a while to get through.

Walker: Yeah. So he and I were — we were probably there on campus together for five years, maybe.

Warren: One of the stories he told me was that at some point while you were there, there was somebody who made a protest about not wearing ties and that there were signs up, like "Free Bobby Seal" signs, or there was like free somebody, because the Assimilation Committee was trying to throw them out of school.

Walker: I don't remember.

Warren: Does that ring any bells with you?

Walker: No.

Warren: I can't get everybody to verify that.

Walker: I don't remember that.

Warren: I don't know whether it's Fran going off or not. I love the story.

Walker: The only sort of tie thing I remember, and it wasn't even really a protest when I was in law school, some enterprising law wife had started making ties out of sort of drapery fabric kind of things, really wild, Lilly Pulitzer kind of fabrics, and it started as a cottage industry, selling them in the law school, and then the undergraduate faculty sort of got into them, and to the extent that there was still a substantial number of students wearing jackets and ties, they kind of sold like hot cakes for about three months, and then the whole thing died. She made a fortune in a very short period of time.

But I don't remember any specific incident like that. Probably your best source on something like that would be the dean of students back in those days, which I guess would have been Lew John.

Warren: He came in with Bob Huntley.

Walker: Right. And Bob Huntley –

Warren: This would have been in Fred Cole's time, I think.

Walker: No. Cole was gone when I got there. My president was –

Warren: No. It was Fred Cole.

Walker: Okay. Was it really Fred Cole? And then Huntley took over –

Warren: From Cole.

Walker: I guess I – it's funny I don't remember. That's not who I would have said it was. Huntley took over my freshman year in the law school. I interviewed with Dr. – not McLaughlin. The then dean of the Washington and Lee Law School had been born and raised in Danville, Virginia, which was my father's home town, which is where Centre College is. [sic, in Kentucky]

Warren: Charles Laughlin?

Walker: No. Not Charley. Oh, McDowell.

Warren: Charley McDowell.

Walker: Charley McDowell. And Charley McDowell, Sr., and my granddaddy had been – I'm not sure they were great friends, but they were acquaintances and had great respect for one another, and my dad had known Dr. McDowell when he was growing up as a kid, and the McDowell family. So I interviewed with Dr. McDowell, and it was all – I just remember it's all tied together with Huntley being made president. Then when I came back to law school, by the time I got back there, Dean Steinheimer had been brought in as the dean, and we were his first class to go all the way through together. How did I get to that? But I don't remember a tie revolution.

Oh, I was talking about Lew John, yeah. Ed Atwood was the dean during my undergraduate years, and then Lew John stepped in, "Eddie the Axe."

Warren: Maybe he would now about –

Walker: Yeah. I would think that one of the two of them would be the most likely, if there was such a thing, to remember it. And I'm sure you can find stuff in the *Ring-tum Phi*.

Warren: Well, I like the story, but I've got to find some verification.

Walker: Oh, it's got to be in the *Phi* if it happened. I spent some time, two years ago, I guess, when I was on the alumni board, I spent a half a day in the library looking for an article I'd written in the *Ring-tum Phi*, which I finally found, not where I thought I was going to find it. It was not in the time period I thought I'd find it. But I had more fun going back through old newspapers, and it was sort of like the Petite Madeleines, seeing these pictures and recalling events that were all gone.

A friend of mine, Rob Hartmann, who was a classmate in law school, we met – it seems to me we may have met the night before classes finally started. I'd been an undergraduate there, so it was like an Old Home Week to me. He was coming in from Proctor and Gamble, was a war vet, had a baby, which was pretty radical in those days. In any event, we became fast friends before school even started, and we ended up, to my complete surprise, because I'd flunked out of Washington and Lee my freshman year and had to be reinstated, we ended up at the end of the first semester of law school, I think he was number one in the class and I was number two or three, which in my entire academic career, this was a totally new circumstance, one with which I wasn't terribly sure I was comfortable. And then over the next five semesters, we see-sawed back and forth between one and two, and I think at the end, when we graduated, I finished number one in the class and he finished number two. I think we were divided by three-one-thousandths of a point, but we were great buddies.

In any event, what made me think of it, I guess our senior year, a second-year law student was convicted of an honor violation, and we ended up representing him in a public honor trial, which, as I remember, was the first in a number of years that had been requested – actually it's Lew John that made me think of this story. We defended him, and our very dear friend Phil Thompson prosecuted. He was a classmate of ours. It was a jury of law students, and he was acquitted. I take no great pride in it. I don't think there was much of a – with a jury of law students I always thought it was going to be a slam dunk, but our approach to the thing was that what this kid had done was something that people did all the time and that it was an accepted practice, and therefore the ultimate penalty of expulsion was inappropriate. In effect, we sort of attacked the system.

Lew John, to this day, has not forgiven me for that. He says he has, but I know he hasn't deep in his heart. [Laughter] In the four years I was on the alumni board, I'd see him twice a year at these meetings. I always sort of shied away from Lew, who I've always greatly admired, but he was awestruck that we would do such a thing, I think more myself than Rob, because, you know, Rob had not been there as an undergraduate, and I think people just expected more of seven-year men, who were supposed to be inculcated with this tradition.

Warren: And what had the person done?

Walker: He had come into class at the end of class – and the law school in those days, when the professor would walk in at the beginning of the class, he would walk to one corner of the room and hand out a roster, and you would scratch off your name and initial it as the roster went around the room, to indicate you were in attendance. You could come into class in the first thirty seconds, scratch your name off, and leave. You could come into class and scratch your name off and wait five minutes and leave and never come back. He came in right at the end of class, as I remember. I mean, he was

there for no part of the class. He came in as the classes were changing and scratched his name off.

It was a professor who professedly did not keep attendance records, and we all knew that, as opposed to a Charlie Laughlin, who did keep attendance records and very pointedly told you that if you missed more than so many classes it was going to affect your grade. So this was a professor – I think it was Bill Ritz – who did not pay any attention to cuts. In fact, we had unlimited cuts, and he only kept it because it was a policy of the school to keep it, and we all knew that. And although clearly this guy's intention was to indicate that he'd been there when he hadn't, because there was no other reason to come in and sign it, he'd made a point of coming up the steps, walking in, and signing it then walking back out. It just seemed to us at the time somewhat horrific that his potential law career would be ruined. At that point we were applying for bar exams, and we knew what that meant on his bar application. It just seemed totally unfair that he could be kicked out of school forever for doing what people in the law school didn't feel was really wrong, even though, clearly, it was a lie.

So there was no question he did it, and the defense of it was based on getting a number of other students to admit that they thought nothing of coming into the class and, if they didn't intend to attend the class, coming in and scratching their name off and then leaving, although I suppose the prosecution argued that there was a difference in that because the professor would at least see you get up and leave and he could react to the fact, which really wasn't true, because if you did it when classes were changing, unless he had started the class before he sent the sheet around, you could accomplish the same thing at the beginning of the class that you could at the end.

But I think at the end it was just a matter of – we weren't going to get twelve law students on the jury who weren't going to say, "You just can't kick a guy out of school for that." So in any event, he got off, and it wasn't so much, I think, the fact that he got off as what we said, what I said. And in retrospect, I went back and told Lew John,

about ten years ago, I said, "You know, I was wrong." And I really believe I was. But in any event, I don't think he's ever forgiven me for it.

Warren: What did the Honor System mean to you while you were at Washington and Lee, and what's it meant to you in your life?

Walker: Well, I think it probably meant more after than it did there, because I don't know that most eighteen- to twenty-one-year-old kids are able fully to appreciate what it means while you're there. I think it meant a lot while we were there, but in a sort of a non-emotional sense. It was just the openness of student life. I can't remember anybody ever locking a door, either in the fraternity house or in the dorms, and all these kids came with what at the time, at least, seemed like fancy stereo systems and electric typewriters and – electric typewriters, remember those?

Warren: Quaint little things.

Walker: Yeah. Weren't they quaint? Though everybody had a lot of nice things, and W&L was a reasonably affluent place so, I mean, kids had nicer things than you might have seen in a state school, but they were never locked up. Kids never locked their cars, either in town or on the campus. I do remember I lost a coat one time, had my wallet in it. It was my first or second year, and I got it back about a week later, and my wallet was still in it, and all the money was in it, and I don't even think I was astounded at the time because by then it wasn't surprising when things like that happened.

I was called in front of the English faculty after my first semester exams of my – I guess it must have been my junior year because I'd already declared my major, and I was called in, and Sev Duvall laid my three exams, as I remember, on the table, and the faculty was gathered around this conference table. It was a regular faculty meeting. They just had brought me in. And they said, "Mr. Walker, those are the last pieces of written work this department will ever receive from you. You may take them back to your room and type them, and have them back here by noon Friday." I had like forty-eight hours to get them typed and resubmit them, which I did. But in retrospect, that

was a pretty amazing thing. I now had all the questions. They couldn't read a thing I'd written, and I could have taken them back to my room and fixed them right mightily, had I chosen to do so.

Warren: What was the issue?

Walker: They couldn't read them, my handwriting was so bad. But what made me think of that is, from that point on, literally they said, "We're not going to take any more written work from you," and as an English major, that's basically all we did was write. So I'd taken typing in high school, although I'd never learned how. So I had very quickly to get my typing to the point where I could keep up. It turned out to be a huge advantage, particularly in law school, but it was just an advantage because even a reasonably decent typist can type a lot faster than most people can write, and even if you're a good writer, if you're writing in a hurry on an exam, it's a slight edge with the professor, subconsciously, if he can easily read what's in front of him.

In law school it was a great advantage, because we went on a numbered grading system, I think, starting my freshman year or my sophomore year, second year, theoretically designed to achieve more equality to avoid the old reality, really, that the rich got richer and the poor got poorer, that professors admittedly would pick up a top third of the class students' paper and expect more than the bottom third and whether or not it was there, his expectation was often realized in his just assuming it was a better paper. When we went to blind grading, there were about three of us in my class, maybe four, who typed, and it was always clear – they knew it was one of the four. I, to this day, believe that one of the reasons I did as well as I did in law school, I don't know how big a reason it was, but it helped.

So in any event, the Honor System, starting with when I started typing all my exams, I couldn't take them in a room with everybody else. So I would either be in a room by myself somewhere or I'd just take them back to my apartment and take my

exams in my apartment. And that's an amazing thing when you think about it, particularly in the Vietnam years when kids were reacting, rebelling against everything.

In my law school years, it was not uncommon – we didn't have self-scheduled exams. They were sort of coming in in the law school. I think they came in the law school before the college. Some professors would just, the beginning of exam week, they would lay the questions on a chair outside their office, and you could come pick up the questions, take them somewhere – you had three hours, I think, for most exams – and bring them back and pledge the exam that you didn't give or receive help and you only took three hours, and put it back on his chair, where it might sit for two or three days before he picked it up. So not only could you get the questions ahead of time, but you could get somebody else's answers ahead of time. And it just didn't really occur to anybody that there was anything crazy about the system or to abuse it.

People cheated. I was aware, generally aware, throughout college and law school that some people cheated. I never felt compelled, and I don't think I ever would have felt compelled, to turn somebody in that I knew was cheating if they were a good friend or a fraternity brother, even. I just can't imagine having done that, much as I respected the system and understood that was part of making it work. I don't think many people would have turned in a good friend or a fraternity brother. I never had cause to turn in anybody else. I don't know, therefore, if I would have or not. I suppose I think I would have, particularly if it had been – particularly if it had been really egregious. I might have turned somebody in, even a fraternity brother, for stealing something major, but for lying, you know, unless it was a real significant lie of some sort or really blatantly cheating, I don't think I would have turned somebody in, again not somebody I knew well. A stranger, I don't know.

But I think what made the system really work is that fact that that wasn't a big issue. It didn't come up a lot. It wasn't like there was rampant cheating and a lot of people turning a lot of people in, but it went on. The system, I think, sufficiently

minimized its occurrence so that it wasn't a huge issue. I think we all respected it while we were there, and it made life there a lot more pleasant. I'm sure that it enhanced relationships among students and between students and faculty in ways that, even now, I don't understand or perceive, but I think, really, more after we left there, I think people really realize what a wonderful thing it was, because when you get out in the real world, if you will, you can't help but realize what an unreal experience that was to be with people that you automatically respected enough to deal with them in that kind of an honest relationship, particularly, I think, people in my generation.

I'm increasingly frustrated by sort of the general quality of young people today. The young lawyers that we hire here are – there is a great concern in the legal profession about the kind of young lawyers that are coming in, in terms of their integrity, their civility. The profession has become much less a profession, much more of a business. Young lawyers tend to be far more combative than they used to be, which breeds all kinds of other undesirable things, and it's my personal view that it's not lawyers, it's young people. I think people are growing up in a different world – the nuclear family is disappearing, and all of the things that have changed society so drastically, television. So as I look back, particularly from this vantage point, and I think back to those years and that little microcosm, it just seems like a miracle that we were able to live together under that system and that it pretty much worked.

Warren: You've mentioned your fraternity a number of times. Which fraternity did you belong to?

Walker: Phi Kappa Psi.

Warren: And what did that mean for you?

Walker: Oh, it was, I think, a very seminal event. I've just been through this with my daughter, who's a freshman at Duke, who did not get into the sorority she wanted. So I was recalling very vividly – this happened Sunday – I didn't get into – I went to

Washington and Lee, never heard of Phi Psi. My dad was a Beta, and I knew a lot of SAEs and I quickly learned that Phi Delt, along with SAE and Beta, those were the "in" houses. Those were where all the BMOCs were, the big men on campus, and I wanted desperately to be a Beta, because my father – or an SAE or a Phi Delt, and I don't think I got past the first day of Rush at any of the three of them. I don't remember how I ended up at Phi Psi, but it's not because at least in the first forty-eight hours of Rush I wanted to be there, but I ended up joining. I was happy about it when it happened, although I still, I think, if I could go back to that day, I still would have said I'd really rather be a Phi Delt, a Beta, or an SAE.

We were the smallest pledge class on campus that year. There were eight of us in my pledge class, and I will say in retrospect, although the class grew to maybe eleven or twelve with some guys we had later, there are only a couple out of that group with whom I'm still in fairly regular contact, and some of them, I have no idea where in the world they are. I have other close contacts still with guys that were a year ahead or a year behind, but my closest friends for the next four years were in the house.

I have a son that graduated from Washington and Lee two years ago now, and he was a Phi Psi, so I'm sort of attuned to the way things are today, too, and I don't think things have changed a great deal in terms of where friendships lie in the intervening thirty years. His closest friends were clearly in his fraternity house. He took all his meals at the house the way we did. He had to live there a year the way we did. The fraternity was absolutely the center of all life at Washington and Lee in those days. Everything revolved around your fraternity. We had to live there our sophomore year, could our junior and senior year. Most people didn't want to, but it wasn't an issue for us. We always had enough guys to fill the house the next two years.

I ended up living in a magnificent home with three other guys my junior year, and they were all seniors. They were a year ahead of me my junior year, and then four other guys my senior year. We lived at 901 Thorn Hill Road, which in those days –

they've done something behind it that changed the configuration, but it was three acres, a very long lot that backed up to the Lexington Country Club Golf Course, which, in those days, was only nine holes. We had an apple orchard in the back acre of it. It was a beautiful old two-story red brick Southern home that belonged to a woman in Roanoke who had to be crazy to rent it to us, and we didn't treat it terribly well. We didn't treat it like a fraternity house, but we still didn't treat it terribly well for the two years that we lived there.

But these other three guys, particularly in my junior year, became bosom buddies. One of them was dating a girl that I had known and dated a little bit in high school, who was a freshman at Sweet Briar. Two of them married women who were my wife's roommates, so we had three roommates marry three roommates. That's how my wife and I met, a Sweet Briar blind date. All of those things, in retrospect, never would have happened had I not joined Phi Psi and fallen in with these three guys, and we moved into this apartment together, this house. So the fraternity was everything. Other than the fact that you were at Washington and Lee, most things about most people were defined in terms of their day-to-day life by their fraternity.

Warren: Were Big Clique and Little Clique still in existence when you were there?

Walker: Big Clique and Little Clique.

Warren: You'd know exactly what I mean if they were. It must have died just before you got there.

Walker: I don't think so.

Warren: All politics revolved around Big Clique and Little Clique.

Walker: I was not politically astute. I was not involved in student politics at all. I had no interest in student politics any more than I have in political politics today.

Warren: You mentioned that your wife was a Sweet Briar girl.

Walker: Yes.

Warren: Did you go on road trips of anything like that?

Walker: Oh, did we go on road trips, yeah. Tuesday night, of course, was Sem night, and there was always a trip to Southern Sem. On Tuesday night there was a party somewhere. But it was terrible, and we were awful about Sem girls, and nobody – I shouldn't say nobody – very few people seriously dated girls from Sem. I had one fraternity brother that married a girl from Sem and another who was madly in love with a girl from Sem, but it was sort of looked down on. My fraternity dated, I guess principally Sweet Briar, followed closely by Hollins and Mary Baldwin, and each fraternity tended, as I recall, to date a little more at one place than another. Some fraternities were principally Hollins, and it just depended on where the brothers at any given time were dating.

Because I flunked out my freshman year, I didn't have a car in my sophomore year until second semester. So when I was going down the road, it was going with friends. Once I had a car, I don't remember that I went down a great deal during the week until I met my wife, but on Friday and Saturdays, that was just what you did. You went down, and if you were dating the girl regularly, as I was my wife beginning the early in my junior year, we'd generally go down and pick them up Friday after classes and take them home Sunday afternoon after classes, and they'd spend the weekend. Of course, they had to be in hostess housing.

Her little group stayed with a woman named Bea Copper, who was one of the nicest ladies that ever lived. Bea's house was – if you go out Route 11 South, as you clear the long straight strip of the big old homes and Main Street curves, a big slow curve up to the left, and there's now a little 7-Eleven kind of thing on the left-hand side, there was a fork in the road. Main Street actually went on out toward Thorn Hill Road, and I think still does. Her house was a huge old home right in the "V," and she must have had two or three acres of land in there. She lived there with an old maiden aunt who was then in her nineties, I guess.

Bea must have been in her seventies, and she took in girls, mostly Sweet Briar girls, because the girls knew her and loved her, and her house was always full so there wasn't much room for anybody else. Most of the hostess housing, again they'd tend to be a Sweet Briar house or a Hollins house or whatever. The girls had to be in at one o'clock on Friday night and two o'clock maybe on Saturday night, and they had to turn themselves in under the Sweet Briar Honor System. They got late minutes if they were two or three or four minutes late. But they'd spend the weekend there, and we'd just sort of hang out for the weekend. That was pretty typical if you had a regular girl. If you didn't, you might go back and forth all weekend, have one date Friday night, a different date Saturday night.

Warren: That was convenient with the location of your house, wasn't it, to where her house was?

Walker: Oh, yes. We were only about a forty-second drive, and we had it down to a science between the two, to race back in and drop her off.

Warren: I need to turn the tape over.

[Begin Tape 1, Side 2]

Warren: Okay. Let's see. You've mentioned about eighteen things I want to pursue here, but I'll go for the one dear to my heart. I'm an English major, too.

Walker: Ah, yes.

Warren: Tell me about being an English major.

Walker: Well, I was known as the phantom English major, which was not good. I don't remember how I picked English, and, in retrospect, there were only three or four disciplines that had comps in those days, and English was one of them, and I don't know how many times toward the end of my four years I thought back what an idiot I had been to get myself into this terrible mess.

It was a fascinating department. I think Sev Duvall, in many respects, is my most memorable character. I was just awestruck by him. George Ray was there. I studied

Shakespeare under Ray. He was pretty young when I started, and so I think the people in my class had kind of an affinity to him just based on age, and it turned out, when I joined White & Case in 1987, his daughter Jenny was the recruitment director in New York for White & Case, and that was also about the time that I became involved, seriously involved, again in alumni matters, and my son went off a few years thereafter, so we struck up quite a renewal relationship around Jenny.

Of course – oh, for God's sake. I can't think of his name, the English professor of all English professors.

Warren: Sid Coulling.

Walker: Sid Coulling. Sid Coulling was there, and I have my own Coulling story.

Warren: Please.

Walker: Well, it's sort of a personal thing. As I said, I flunked out my freshman year of undergraduate and had to apply for reinstatement, which, fortunately, Eddie Atwood was nice enough to let me back in. There was a tradition in those days, at least we thought there was a tradition, that the number-one graduate in the law class, if they had an A average, was admitted to Phi Beta Kappa, and I think, at least I thought for a long time, that that was really the only place in the United States where a graduate student could get into Phi Beta Kappa, which is basically an undergraduate thing. I did finish number one in my law class. I mentioned earlier that Rob and I finished like three-one-thousandths of a point apart, I think, and mine was like 4.001, and his was 3.99-whatever-8. So I was just over an A average.

The story got back to me sometime thereafter, not long after all this happened – I was not invited to join Phi Beta Kappa – that when my name came up, and Sid Coulling was then the president or whatever of the Phi Beta, he ran the chapter, that he asked somebody if that was the same Walker that had been an English major several years earlier, and they confirmed that it was, and he said, "Not on my life." For all the right reasons. Certainly during my undergraduate years, I was the antithesis of a Phi

Beta Kappa student. At the time I was very angry about that, but I got over it pretty quickly. I realized about three years later that all that stuff only helped get you your first job, and then nobody really cared about it anymore unless you went back into academia.

But he was there. Jim Boatwright, who some years later died in Key West, was on the faculty.

Warren: Tell me about them as teachers. Who was really memorable as a teacher?

Walker: My most memorable, and I don't really remember why, was Sev Duvall. I took a course from him, I think, my first semester – well, it doesn't matter what semester, I guess, my junior year, on Southern novels. He's almost a caricature, to me, of a Southern professor – the accent, his look. He clearly, as much as any professor I ever remember having, was in love with his subject. He loved everything about what he was doing, and it glowed through him, how happy he was doing what he was doing, and it was kind of enchanting. Actually, that course might have been my sophomore year, because he was one of the reasons I decided to major in English. He made a huge impression on me.

Sid Coulling was always just sort of a mystery to all of us. He was so smart, and I think we were, in a different way, not as warm a way as with Sev Duvall, but I think all of us were in awe of Coulling. He obviously was so incredibly intelligent, and so much that he said we didn't really understand, not that he wasn't a great professor, it's just when he'd get off on some of the things on which he'd get off, you'd kind of wonder where he was.

They were just a very, very impressive group of people, perhaps more so, at least to me, than any other discipline I met there. I was never very good at science, so I never got too into the science group, other than Jim Starling, who was just a favorite of everybody's. "Well, Mr. Walker, consult your friend in the corner." He kept a dictionary in the room, and that was "your friend in the corner," if you didn't know a

word. The English professors were all very conventionally dressed. They were just – they were a great group. And other than comps, it was a great experience.

Warren: Did Sev Duvall bring his dog to class?

Walker: I don't remember. He was known for his dog in more recent years, I know from my son and from the alumni magazine. I don't remember that he had a dog then. If he did, it's gone to me now.

Warren: I just think that's so charming. I see him going off into his office.

Walker: And it's such a beautiful dog. Yeah. He and his dog have become, I think, joined at the hip somehow in everybody's mind, as well as in fact.

Warren: I think it's very funny that the head of security now has a puppy and is taking the puppy with him everywhere.

Walker: There were a lot of kids that had dogs at W&L, and I have a son who's a sophomore – a junior at Sewanee now, and it's sort of the norm at Sewanee. There are hundreds of dogs running around the Sewanee campus during class time while their masters are in class. There are dogs everywhere. That can only happen in places like W&L and Sewanee.

Warren: Were there any particular places you hung out?

Walker: Oh, yeah. Doc's Corner Grill, which is cater-cornered from the post office. I guess that's still the main post office. The College Inn, I guess, was the biggest sort of official hang-out, which is now the bakery, I guess. It's in that little stretch. I'm not sure what's – it used to be the CI. The Central Lunch, which was – oh, what was the guy's name that used to run the Central Lunch? He had a glass eye, and he was a real strange character. And there was another place right across – next to the CI and across from the Central – I can't remember what it was called – which had the best pool table and pinball machines in town. For the people that liked to do that, that was a hang-out.

Warren: Is that Jabbo's?

Walker: No.

Warren: I think Jabbo's was gone by the time you got there.

Walker: Yeah. That was gone. And then, in a sense, I guess, the Lyric Theater and the State Theater were kind of hangouts. There wasn't a whole lot to do in Lexington in those days, other than the fraternity house. Some movies were – they were usually eighth-run movies, but they were pretty popular.

Warren: They're still eighth-run movies. [Laughter]

Walker: One of the things to do in those days was called the double flick. I think the movies were at seven and nine, so you'd go to the seven at one, and then you'd get out and run to the nine at the another.

But the most popular spot, I guess, all in all, was the restaurant-bar kind of thing, was the CI, which was upstairs. They served pizzas and spaghetti, I guess, sort of a typical Italian kind of place, college Italian kind of place. Downstairs wasn't opened my freshman year. By the time I left law school, there was a big downstairs. It was a bar, kind of fancy bar, with more eating, and then upstairs was the VMI room. Every place had a VMI room. At Doc's, the VMI room was a back room. At the Quid, the Liquid Lunch, I can't remember where it was. I guess it must have been up upstairs somewhere. But every place had a separate VMI room.

Warren: What do you mean, a VMI room?

Walker: Well, they couldn't take off their bLewse, and they couldn't drink beer in public. I don't think they could drink beer anywhere, but they did, and the schools all knew they did, and they all knew they did, but they just didn't do it where you could see them through a window. So they would have a room at each of these places where they would go with their dates or just together, and they'd take off, or at least unzip or take off their tunic, whatever it is, get comfortable, and they would drink beer and whatever, party, but because they couldn't do it out in polite company, they always had to have a back room or an upstairs or downstairs room where they could do it, which always seemed kind of crazy because everybody – I mean, as I say, the schools all knew

they were there. You'd have members of the faculty out in the main room while the cadets were back wherever they were doing their thing. But it's just the way life was.

Warren: I grew up in Annapolis. I know the scene very well.

Walker: Ugly. I was saying to somebody, as matter of fact, coming in the office this morning – I've got that W&L bumper sticker on my car – D-U-B-Y.

Warren: Me, too.

Walker: And people stop me constantly, "What in the world is that?" In fact, I was at church six or eight months ago, and a lady in our parish – we were in the parking lot leaving at the same time – came over to me, and she said, "I've been meaning to ask you this. I see that thing every week. It's driving me nuts. What in the world does it mean?" Of course people sort of struggle to pronounce it.

And I said, "It's my alma mater."

And she said, "What?"

I said, "W&L, Washington and Lee."

And she turned beet red, and she said, "Oh, my God. I'm so embarrassed."

I said "Why?"

She said, "I went to Mary Baldwin. It never occurred to me." [Laughter]

Warren: Well, she was a good Mary Baldwin girl if she blushed.

Walker: Yeah. Right. So in any event, it's –

Warren: One of my favorite interviews that I did was with Charley McDowell, Jr.

Walker: I can imagine.

Warren: And we had a big discussion about how you spell W&L, because he never said "Washington and Lee." He always just said "W&L." So when I saw that bumper sticker, I bought one for me and for him, and sent it.

Walker: Oh, I think it's great. I think it's absolutely great. Whoever thought it up was a genius.

Warren: I think so, too. I took it home, and my husband and I started trying to figure out how you do UVA, and all the others, trying to figure out.

Walker: I think schools are jealous that they can't do it.

Warren: It's probably an industry coming up here. Fancy Dress.

Walker: Ah, yes, Fancy Dress. I think a bigger deal in those days than it is today.

Warren: Was this in the dining hall when you were there?

Walker: Yeah, I think all seven years. I don't think it was ever in the gym. I don't remember that it was ever in the gym. Usually there'd be a big concert for Fancy Dress weekend, and that was usually in the gym, although one time, for some reason, we had it in the VMI field house. I don't remember what that was. Maybe the dance was in the gym. But all the recollections I have of Fancy Dress are that they were in Evans, which was much nicer than the gym, but those are the only two places in town it could have been, that would have held it.

It was a big deal. It was after exams. We weren't on the trimester system then, so we went home for Christmas, and we had to go back and take exams, and then the big blowout was Fancy Dress, and it was famous, like Dartmouth Winter Carnival or a handful of others. It was a famous weekend, and we were probably as much caught up in its fame as in the reality of it in those days. The women came from all over. That was one of the weekends that—the four big weekends were openings, Fancy Dress, springs, and finals, and those were the weekends, if you had a home-town honey or a girl hundreds of miles away, that was one of the weekends she would come down, and it sort of started Thursday and went through Sunday.

It was always a big orchestra, at least a big orchestra, and once or twice we had two bands, although I think that was more popular after I'd left than before. Particularly when I was an undergraduate, although rock-and-roll was the thing, people still knew how to dance enough when they got to college that you could have just a big swing orchestra and nothing more, and people could still dance to it, where,

today, if you have a big swing orchestra and nothing else, half the kids can't dance because they don't know how.

The dance itself was a big deal, but it was more the weekend than the dance itself. The dance itself was, at that point, no longer a costume ball. That was already pretty much gone. The stories I've heard, which I'm sure you've heard more than I, were that ten years before I got there, maybe even five years before I got there, you would go be sized somewhere, but you never knew what you were going to be until you went to pick up your costume, you and your date's costume. I never wore a costume to Fancy Dress. I went every year – I know I went every year as an undergraduate. I probably went every year as a law student, and I just wore white tie and tails. I think that committee members, at least, probably came in some kind of thematic costume, Old South or whatever it might have been. I don't recall that there was ever a theme ball, and I don't recall many people wearing costumes. I think of it as just a black-tie, a big fancy black-tie dinner dance, a dance.

Then there'd be – the fraternity houses had parties every night of Fancy Dress, usually with a big band, or not necessarily big, but a well-known band. The Thornton Sisters or the Hot Nuts were popular around then. There was a group around the South called the Thirteen Screaming Niggers, which was, I guess, because of the name it was funnier than the band itself, but they were popular then.

Warren: Who were the Hot Nuts?

Walker: You don't know the Hot Nuts?

Warren: I do, but I want you to tell me about them.

Walker: Oh, Mame, they still play at Washington and Lee.

Warren: I know, but you tell me.

Walker: They were a group – Doug Clark and the Hot Nuts – out of Chapel Hill, and they still drive that – I'd swear it's still the same van they show up in, who, in an era of, I suppose, still relative propriety, popularized what then seemed terribly dirty, off-color

lyrics. By today's standards, what we see on television every night, it was really pretty stupid, but they were very popular, and they were almost impossible to get back in those days, because it was the height of their – their records were selling nationally, and they were sort of sweeping the nation. So they were very difficult to get, but they played once in a while back then. I think they play more at W&L today than they did then, and Doug Clark, by God, is still leading the group.

Warren: Who else? What other big entertainers came?

Walker: Well, Ian and Sylvia, because my era included that one or two years of folk music. I remember Ian and Sylvia's concert. Probably to this day the best concert I ever heard was the Lettermen, who did a concert either my junior or senior year – no, my freshman or sophomore year, because I was not there with my wife, and I didn't date anybody else after we met my junior year. A phenomenal concert. Dionne Warwick did one of the concerts when I was there, and she was very popular.

Ian and Sylvia are memorable because it was Fancy Dress. There had been a terrible snowstorm, and this had to be my sophomore year, and they couldn't get over the mountain. They were coming from the Roanoke Airport, Roanoke or D.C., I don't know which, and everybody was in their seats. Somebody did something for an hour, and they kept coming to the microphone and announcing that they just got a phone call and they were making their way there, and they ended up walking into this with their band and setting up while everybody sat there, and they started sort of singing one at a time. Somebody would just – while they got tuned up, they'd play something while everybody else got ready. It was just a neat – kind of a neat experience, neat concert because of the way it all came about.

And that was the weekend that Central Virginia got absolutely snowed in. It was the heaviest snowfall to that date in recorded history, supposedly, and the entire Eastern part of the state was just absolutely shut down. This started, I think, Friday, and it sort of went straight through Sunday. By Sunday, all the roads were closed. You

couldn't get – well, you couldn't get out of Rockbridge County, much less anywhere else. And I had a date with my hometown honey, who had to be back at Jackson, which was then the women's section of Tufts, for registration Monday morning, or Monday sometime, and we ended up, along with one of my fraternity brothers, later one of my roommates, who had a date with a girl from Dickinson College, I think, who had to get back. We ended up getting in my Volkswagen and driving to D.C., which in those days was about a three-and-a-half hour drive. It took seven hours to get there.

When we got there, National [Airport] was still closed, and we ended up staying in a hotel, which was impossible to find because everything was full, in Alexandria, I guess, that night, and they finally got out sometime the next day. Incredible snowstorm. Some of the girls from Sweet Briar and Hollins were still at Washington and Lee on Wednesday, the following Wednesday, because they couldn't get back, or used it as an excuse not to go back.

But Fancy Dress was – I have very warm memories of Fancy Dress, as I said earlier, I think as much probably because of what it was as the particular weekend, but we always had a good time.

Warren: One of the other uniquely Washington and Lee things is the Mock Convention. Did you get involved with that?

Walker: No. In fact, I didn't go to the convention, which was 1968, my senior year. I never got involved in it, and I didn't go. I might have been out of town the weekend of the convention itself, and I don't really remember why. Nobody in my fraternity was involved with it, which is probably a big part of it.

Warren: One of the things that I was intrigued by as I've been looking for photographs in the book was that [Richard M.] Nixon was on campus that year for the ODK Founders Day talk. Did you go to that?

Walker: No. I was tapped for ODK in law school, but I was nowhere near ODK as an undergraduate. I remember that Claude Kirk [phonetic], who was then the governor of

Florida, was the keynote speaker at that '68 convention. I don't remember Nixon being there.

Warren: He didn't come for Mock Convention.

Walker: No. I understand. But I don't remember that.

Warren: At first I thought I was looking at Mock Convention, then I said, "Wait a minute. I thought the candidates weren't allowed to come to Mock Convention," then I later figured out from *Calyx* that he was there for Founders Day.

Walker: Which would have been before.

Warren: Yes.

Walker: Yeah, because Founders Day was normally in like February, I think.

Warren: January 19th.

Walker: Yeah.

Warren: Robert E. Lee's birthday.

Walker: That would make sense, yes.

Warren: We just had it. Were there any other speakers that you remember from your time? I know Barry Goldwater was there when you were there.

Walker: Yeah. Who was the fellow that wrote *All the King's Men* – Robert Penn Warren. I remember hearing him speak, and I remember being very impressed by him. He read his poetry and spoke, and I loved *All the King's Men*. I loved that book.

Other speakers while I was there. I remember some speakers from law school. I don't remember any other, in particular, speakers that were there when I was an undergraduate.

Warren: Let's go on to law school. You were in Tucker Hall, right?

Walker: We were in Tucker Hall. Roy was sort of designing the law school while we were there. We were not the last class in Tucker Hall, but we were one of the last. There were probably three more after we left, and to this day it seems a tragedy to me that they moved the law school off of the Hill. It's clear to me, although I'm assured by

people like Lash LaRue and Joe Ulrich, who were friends of mine, Uncus McThenia, they say I'm romanticizing, that it really wasn't the way I remember it. And part of my romanticism, probably, is again the fact that I was a seven-year man, so I had ties to the undergraduate school that most law students didn't. But with all of that, it seems to me that the law school was much more a part of the university then than it is today. It's very clear to me today, talking to both college students and law students, that you can go to three years of law school there and never have any thought that you're a part of that thing up on the Hill. You're just a part of the law school.

Warren: It's perceived that way.

Walker: And that's sort of sad. We had the white lawn chairs in those days, which were lined up against the front wall of Tucker Hall, and then, in the spring, they'd just sort of be carried out on the lawn, and only law students could sit in them. Law students were very much—they weren't a role model, I don't think that'd be a fair way to put it, but all the undergraduate students—you were aware that they were there. You were conscious that these older men, more responsible, more mature people, were around, and I think that it—I don't suppose I could define it, but I think to this day it had a measurably positive impact on life at the university. Certainly was a better experience for the law students that experienced the university than what they get today. I still think if they could find a way to move at least half of the classes or something on the Hill so that the law students would have a meaningful presence on the Hill, that it would be much better for the law students and probably better for the college. It's a shame.

Warren: It's very clear to me that there's a big difference, whether people realize it or not.

Walker: I was there—as I said, '68 was—I think My Lai was in '68. I think that's right. I had deferred—I had taken ROTC largely because we had a guaranteed deferment for law school, and I didn't want to go to Vietnam. I would have if I'd had to, obviously,

but I didn't want to. So by going to law school, we were guaranteed three years, and it worked for me. The war ended, basically, the beginning of my senior year in law school, and I ended up going in for eighty-nine days of active duty and was then discharged from active duty, anyway.

So we had a huge number of vets that were coming back. I had in my class probably as many as ten VMI grads, which was very unusual, very unusual in those days. But these were guys that were coming back, had the G.I. Bill, although it wasn't that big a deal in those days by then, but they knew Washington and Lee because they had spent four years in Lexington.

We had a great time in law school. I was married. I got married at the end of June graduating from the college. I had a job lined up. I told you earlier I was working at the College Town Shop, and Red Patton [phonetic], who was then running the College Town Shop, one of my dear, dear friends, had agreed to let me work that summer. So we got married, took our honeymoon, raced back to Lexington. We had an apartment in Bean's Bottom, which was a great coup. Bill Bean was a good friend of Red's, and when we told Red we were going to get married and come back, he set me up with Bill Bean, who just happened to have – the day we went to see him, had received word from whoever was living in what became our apartment that they were leaving, and he gave us the apartment. Those were the most sought-after places, literally the most sought-after places out there, unattainable, for the most part, by undergrads. He only rented to law students and faculty. But we had a magnificent apartment out there. We had three bedrooms, one bath, on the second floor of the second building from the bridge. We were unfortunately there for the great flood of 1969.

Warren: I was about to say, I think – but you were on second floor?

Walker: Yeah. We had five feet of water on the second floor.

Warren: Oh, my God, worse than last year.

Walker: We had moved into the apartment. All of our wedding presents were – most of our wedding presents that we weren't using, and we didn't use a lot, were in barrels, still packed, professionally packed. We must have had ten barrels of china and silver and crap that were stored in the extra bedroom and in the closets and whatnot in there, all of which ended up just dissolving in the water.

That night Bill came down. Mickey Philipps lived underneath us. No, Mickey was in the building next to us, on the ground floor. He was the university photographer forever. I'm sure you must have come across his name.

Warren: No. Mickey Philipps?

Walker: Mickey Philipps. He was single. He was emotionally more student than non-student. I don't think he had an official faculty role in terms of teaching anything, although he might have taught photography, but he was the official – what's the guy's name now, Hinely?

Warren: Pat Hinely.

Walker: He was the Pat Hinely of his day.

Warren: I've never heard his name.

Walker: And he was there for ten or twelve years.

Warren: Well, I must have lots of his photographs, and I've never seen his name.

Walker: You must have hundreds of them.

Warren: He didn't use a rubber stamp on the back.

Walker: Mickey lived downstairs next to us.

Warren: Do you know where he is today?

Walker: No. I have no idea, although I would –

Warren: Had he graduated? Did he graduate?

Walker: I think he was a W&L grad. He must have been. I don't know that for a fact. Fran and Mickey were buddies. If you get back to Fran, he'll probably know where Mickey is.

Immediately below us was actually a lawyer who works right across the street, who was not a W&L grad. How he and I ended up in the same town, I'll never understand. The other name I remember in our building was Bill – he was the swimming coach there for years, Bill Sterns, who I understand is still in Lexington and owns half the town.

My wife and I were counselors at a girls' camp in northern Michigan the summer between my freshman and sophomore year. We had just gotten back into town that day. We came back early for moot court, which was sort of an honor and an activity in the law school, and Rob and Lanay Hartmann, I mentioned earlier, my best friend, I don't remember where they'd spent the summer, but they'd been back for four or five days, and they were living in town, actually right near Bea Copper, Bea Copper's house, in an apartment, a garage apartment, and with their son, they drove out that night because we'd just gotten in, and we had dinner.

We later concluded that Rob and Lanay were probably the last car to get back in – I forget what the official name of the road was, but we always called it the Goshen Road, that got back in that night, and Rob said that when he got down by the old mill there, the water was about up to his door, but he'd gotten down to that last flat part, and he'd gotten far enough into it that he couldn't go back and just had to keep going forward. The water was literally rising. You could see it that the point. But they got through, and we still weren't taking this very seriously. We had not been there for the four or five days of rain that led up to it, but it was just unthinkable that what ultimately happened could happen.

Bill came down about, I don't know, one o'clock in the morning, maybe, and knocked on our door and woke us up. We had gotten to sleep, so we weren't too worried about it. The house next to us, which was the first one, the most downstream house, was starting to shake real badly, and they were worried the houses were going to go, and there were big trees, trucks, cars, we had a two-story house float by us

ultimately that night. I mean, big debris was starting to come down. At that point, he wasn't so worried about our safety as just saying, "Wake up, be aware, sort of keep an eye on it."

An hour or so later, when it first became clear that – by that time the ones downstairs were totally under water, and they weren't even back. The guys that lived downstairs, Mickey was there, because he lived there full time, but the students down below us, who were classmates of mine, weren't even back in town. They didn't have anything, so it didn't really matter.

So sometime in the night, when it became clear that we might get some water in the apartment, the first thing we did is we took drawers, we took the stereo and whatnot and put it up on the beds, never thinking it could be more than, you know, a foot or six inches, because the top story of those apartments were all like two and a half feet above the driveway. I don't remember why. That's just the way they were built.

Eventually water came in front of the house as well as behind it, and when we finally stopped going in to bring stuff out, it was because enough water and debris was rushing past the front of the house and about two and a half feet deep. It wasn't safe to walk into the front to bring stuff out. But I put most stuff up on beds. We finally got most of the clothes out and tossed in the trunk of our car, and we ended up going up and spending the night at Al and Jan Orgain's house, who were also law students, and they were up higher on the Hill and they never got wet. They were actually a little higher than Bill's house, Bill's own house, which was out there.

It turned out we had about five feet one inch inside, because there was a mud line ultimately. Amazing things happened. Our refrigerator was in a cove in the kitchen. The refrigerator had moved out of that cove, and there wasn't room on each side to put your hands to pull it out. It had moved partway across the kitchen. All the beds, of course, ended up floating, so they dumped everything that was on the beds.

And virtually everything we owned was wet. There was nothing higher than five feet in that apartment. It was a pretty devastating experience at the time.

We had befriended a couple in Buena Vista, who had been operating a restaurant for a couple of years in an old Southern mansion over there. I don't remember the name of it. It was a great restaurant. The guy had sort of a secret recipe for steak. It was one of these places you'd take a bottle, you'd go and sit in the living room, and they'd come in and take your bottle and mix your drinks on a silver tray, then take you in the dining room. Very popular place.

Warren: Doesn't sound like Buena Vista.

Walker: No, it didn't. We somehow had become – these people had befriended us, and they ended up, they had bought – by the time this all happened, they had bought the old – it's now a retirement home. It was then called the – it wasn't Southern Inn.

Warren: The Mayflower?

Walker: Yeah, the Mayflower, up there on Main Street, and they gave us a room in the Mayflower, and we were in that room probably for ten days. When they first went into our apartment, the first thing was they wanted to get the snakes out, because there were snakes everywhere. And then they literally went in with hoses just to get the mud out, hoses and shovels. But we ended saving virtually everything, the beds. We slept on that bed until four years ago. We still have a couple of lamps that were in it. That's about all we still have left. We kept the lamps because they still had a little mud on them. We never wanted to forget the experience. We took the TV and the stereo over to someplace in Buena Vista that worked on them. And the clothes, what we hadn't gotten out, we took to a cleaner. A little bit at a time, it all came back together.

This all happened three or four weeks before I went back to school, because we had to be back early for this moot court thing. We had a lot of research to do. Laura was teaching at Rockbridge County High School. In fact, that was the year, or the year after, she was Rockbridge Teacher of the Year. So she had a couple of weeks before she

had to get back to work, and we managed to get cleaned up and get back in. I think we were back in before classes actually started. That's something I would not want to do again. It was literally the hundred-year flood. That was 1969, and I think it was either 1868 or 1870 had been the last time that there was any record of water being that high out there. And it's happened since is the amazing thing.

Warren: Do you know it's happened three times?

Walker: Yeah.

Warren: Not last year, but the year before.

Walker: Christopher, my son who graduated two years ago, lived in a road that I don't even remember knowing was there when I was in school, on the opposite side of the river from Bean's Bottom. As you go across the viaduct, if you go out to east Lexington, before you go across the bridge, there's a little road that runs down. There's now – not a Pantry Pride. There's some kind of a little 7-Eleven kind of place there, and a little road that goes down behind it on that side of the river.

Warren: Yes. There's a little park there.

Walker: And he lived in an apartment on that road, about two years when he was there, second and third year, I guess, and he lived there one of the years of the flood, one of the floods, and they had about four feet of water in their place. So it's just amazing. We would never live on a river again.

Warren: That happened twice in one week. I guess it must have been when your son was there. No, that was in the summertime. Was he there in the summertime?

Walker: No.

Warren: He must have been there when – well, that was a year ago January.

Walker: His flood would have been at least five years ago.

Warren: Oh, I don't know about that one. But this last Founders Day, a year ago Founders Day, it took me four hours to get into work, and when I arrived, I said I'd

never been through hell and high water before, but we had to go round and round and round to find a road that we could get through.

Walker: It was ugly. Brought out the best in people. I will say that we had no shortage of help. People drove out along the river and stopped, got out of their cars, rolled up their sleeves and helped people clean up. But it was very traumatic at the time.

Warren: It's quite something to see. Our area where we live was the area that was most devastated a year and a half ago.

Walker: Where are you?

Warren: Up in Walker's Creek, north of Goshen. Our area was the most devastated in that flood.

Walker: The power of— we were here for Andrew. We were in our house for Andrew, but I was not as impressed by Andrew as I was by that river. Part of it, I guess, is in a thing like Hurricane Andrew, ultimately in the worst of the storm, you're in the middle of the house. We were under mattresses and thought the roof was coming off. So we weren't out experiencing it. You can stand next to that river in the middle of that flood and stand there two feet away from the water, perfectly safe, and watch it happen. After we finished getting stuff out that night, we sat there and watched it, until a point where there was two or three feet of water inside. I was exhausted. I went to bed. I distinctly remember standing there and watching that. I remember this two-story house going by. It was sort of breaking up as it went by. There weren't any two-story houses within—I'd been pretty far upriver from there. There weren't any close by, so it had come from a distance. And they found a couple of cars down there under the bridge in east Lexington that had come from miles away.

Warren: We had one family that lost four cars.

Walker: The one interesting—in those days, there was no federal flood insurance. The only thing that anybody owned that was insured was their car, and this was back before the roads were rebuilt at Bean's Bottom. It used to be the main road you came off the—

in fact, the old bridge was there. You came off the bridge, had a hard right, and went right by the front door of the houses at Bean's Bottom. Since then, the road goes more up the Hill and you swing back into Bean's Bottom, but back then, when it became clear the water was going get that high, we must have had fifteen farmers from a couple miles up road from us, all bring their trucks down and park them by the bridge, these older trucks, and, sure enough, a lot of them had insurance claims.

Warren: Bizarre.

Walker: Yeah, it was pretty bizarre, because it was sort of blocking our ability to get stuff in and out at the time.

Warren: I've got a couple more questions. Can I pop in another tape?

Walker: Sure.

[Begin Tape 2, Side 1]

Warren: This is Mame Warren. This is tape two of Bill Walker, January 28th, 1997, in Miami, Florida.

Do you have any pleasant memories of the Maury River? Did you used to go there?

Walker: Oh, yeah. Sure. We went out in the spring, and we'd go tubing. And actually, where we were in law school, at Bean's Bottom, both before and after the flood, it was a very popular place to have a party on Saturdays and Sundays, particularly Sundays in the spring and in the fall when the weather was decent. All the people that lived there would sort of pour out the back of their houses and party out there. It was very common to have fraternity parties or law school parties or whatever in the back, and we used the river that was right behind us for entertainment, to tube and to swim.

The Maury was the center of social life, particularly in my undergraduate years, in Goshen itself. If you didn't have a date at Goshen on Saturday or Sunday, you just weren't with it. That was the thing to do, buy a couple of cases of beer and drop them in the river, and one person would drive a group up river, and as far as you wanted to

float, you could float for two or three hours or half a day, whatever, float back down and do it over again. So, yeah, I have very pleasant memories of the Maury.

Warren: You don't happen to have any pictures of that, do you?

Walker: I know that in some drawer at home, we have a half a dozen, but they're not really pictures of Goshen. They're really pictures of the people at Goshen, fraternity brothers and whatnot, sitting out in the rocks. I could probably find a couple.

Warren: Oh, I sure wish you'd try.

Walker: One of them might cause some stir. I mentioned two of my roommates had married two of my wife's roommates, and one of them is one of those couples, and they're the only one of the three that are not still married. [Laughter] In fact, I just went to their daughter's wedding in Chicago last November. The daughter was the reason they were married, actually, and we were talking about – a lot of old W&L talk. The husband was from an old W&L family. His oldest brother is on the board of trustees, and he went there, and then his younger brother followed him, the Staniar family. Bert Staniar's a board member. Lee was my roommate. He was a year ahead of me in school. Then Andy Staniar, probably class of '72 or '73, '74, something like that.

Warren: W&L does seem to be a family kind of place. What was it like for you when your son decided to go there?

Walker: Oh, it was great. I don't know what it is about Washington and Lee that produces such deep emotional ties, but it seems to in generation after generation of students. It always struck me as something of an anomaly that W&L has not ranked through the years more highly in terms of its alumni giving and its endowment and whatnot, because of the incredibly strong feelings its alumni feel. And I'm sure if I went to similar gatherings at Davidson or Sewanee or Dartmouth or whatever, I'd get the – it's probably not as uncommon as I think it is, as I think most W&L people think it is, but it is incredible, the loyalty that the place generates. So it's not surprising to me that families go back generation after generation.

All three of my kids went to the summer program. They call it Summer Scholars. My oldest ended up going there. My second son, he's a junior at Sewanee now and absolutely happy as a pig in slop, wasn't interested in going, and I think a large part of it might have been that his older brother was there. They would not have overlapped. He would have started the year after his older brother graduated, but I think he wanted to go do his own thing.

And my daughter, who's a freshman at Duke now, applied early. My oldest son had gotten in early. She applied early and was convinced she'd get in, and we sort of subconsciously were as well. She was a much better student than he was and had a better record, but didn't get in early. She applied early with her two or three best high school friends, who all applied early wherever they applied. She was the only one of the group that didn't get in early and had probably been most convinced of the group that she would get in early. She was devastated. She cried for three days, and she wouldn't come out of her room, and she was absolutely devastated. I knew she'd get in the regular pool, which she did, but she wasn't about to go. In fact, she told me she was going to show them. I said, "Linley, I don't think they care enough for you to show them."

And she said, "I don't care. I'm going to show them anyway." So she went to Duke. But she'd wanted to go there very badly when she applied early, and we always assumed that she would.

It's great to go back. I'm sure this would be true of any campus, but when you go back, it's like you never left.

Warren: What do you mean by that?

Walker: Well, I mean, like I walked down the same sidewalks, Washington and Lee having changed as little as it has, and through my eyes, if I see a good-looking coed, you know, I'm sort of thinking the way I always thought. And everything you see and

do there, there's been this thirty years since I've been there, but subconsciously nothing's changed. It's still me. It's still my campus.

Particularly with my son joining the same fraternity, every time I went back, which I did fairly regularly, the experience was like I'd never left. It's an incredible emotional experience. All the years just sort of melt away. The only bad part about it is the reality that it's not the same you and you're not part of it anymore, you're not part of what's really happening. But when he was a student there, I'd stay out 'til three or four in the morning, go to the fraternity parties. I was a real popular fellow around the fraternity house. They loved me, and I loved being a part of it.

I didn't want to take my wife home to the hotel. She'd act like a rational person and go to bed at eleven or twelve, and I'd go back and party with the gang. And for her, it was very much the same thing, because for her undergraduate years, although she also dated before we met at UVA, probably more at UVA than W&L, after we met, she was very much a part of Washington and Lee and the fraternity house, and she was the sweetheart her senior year and very much a part of it during law school. So it's kind of the same thing for her. It's like going home.

It is surprising to me in one way and not surprising at all another way to find that there is a huge influx of retiring or pre-retiring W&L grads who are either buying or planning to move into retirement homes in and around Lexington. It makes a tremendous amount of sense to me. You've got great medical care, or very good medical care, something always going on, and you're sort of going home. My twenty-fifth reunion two or three years ago, there were a pretty substantial number of students— [Tape recorder turned off.]

Warren: You were talking about people buying property.

Walker: Oh, yeah, this gentrification. In fact, I'm told that it's a pretty significant problem for the university that the cost of housing has already gone, and is increasingly

going, beyond the means of incoming faculty and that they're really starting to feel the pinch from people coming in and buying up property.

We thought about it. We thought about Lexington. But I think that also bespeaks this sort of mystical tie that W&L – and probably, in fairness, universities of W&L's type – develops in people. It's just a great warm feeling to go back, and the university is so welcoming of its alumni. There's so much about it that's kind of stereotypical. The people who are involved in alumni affairs and the people on the faculty or the administration that had the most direct contacts with alumni are all just so W&L – they dress W&L, and they talk W&L, and they think W&L, and the years just all peel away when you walk back.

Most people, I guess, love to see the years peel away if you have fond memories of all of that. It really is like stepping back into a bit of history when you go back there. And I can imagine it'd be a wonderful place to go back and sort of have that permanently.

Warren: It's a real nice place to live.

Walker: We came reasonably close to staying. I had never been to Florida until I met Laura and visited her family down here, and her uncle, who was a semi-prominent businessman in town, had me convinced that it was essential to go to the University of Florida if you're going to practice law in Florida, and I learned in later years what he meant. In many respects, if you wanted to be in politics in Florida, it wasn't essential, but it sure helped, and there's quite a network of Florida lawyers in Florida, as there are Virginia lawyers in Virginia and Tennessee lawyers in Tennessee.

So I had applied to Florida, because by that time we had decided we were going to come back here. She wasn't willing to live anyplace else. Spring had come. I'd applied to W&L, too, and we had this meeting with Bill Bean, or found out we could get a meeting with Bill Bean to find out about the apartment. It was on a Friday, and Red called me and said, "Gosh, I've got this thing set up. Bill says he might have an

apartment." And I called the admissions office at Florida and asked if I could find out about the status of my application. I tried to explain that I had this opportunity, and they were a little snippy and said that decisions would not be made for ten days or something and then I'd find out by mail; there's nothing they could do for me earlier than that.

So I called Laura. I met with Bean. The apartment was available. We just talked about it and decided this was a perfect place to live. We like it here, let's just do it, because I'd been accepted at W&L by then, and we did.

Monday I got my acceptance at Florida. It had to have been in the mail or I couldn't have gotten it, so but for that, I would have – and then I called her when I got it Monday and said, "What do you think?" We talked about it for about half an hour and finally said, "We suffered enough on Friday making the decision. We've decided. Let's just leave well enough alone."

And then largely because of my work at the College Town Shop, I'd gotten to know "Happy" Swank. I don't know if you know the Swanks, old, old-time Lexington family. His wife ran the bookstore at VMI forever. Red Patton, who I worked with at the College Town Shop, had been the alumni director of VMI before he bought into the shop. Don Huffman owned the shop in those days. We met the Swanks and – oh, the Rabys [phonetic]. He was a local business guy. And I'd gotten into Kiwanis somehow, through some of these older guys that Red introduced me to, and I really got involved in the town a little bit.

Kiwanis was two nights a month or whatever, and it was pretty unusual for law students to do that. It would only have happened to somebody who had been there as an undergrad and probably only somebody who had made contacts through – maybe church would have been a way, through my case the shop in town. So I knew a fair number of people, at least casually, when we graduated.

Eric Sisler was two years ahead of me in law school, and he had hung out a shingle. He was in Kiwanis. In fact, if I recall correctly, he had something to do with my getting into Kiwanis, and I kind of admired that. We talked about it semi-seriously for part of my senior year, and in many respects, I, through the years, from time to time, I won't say I've regretted it, but I've wondered what it would have been like. Clearly a different life, economically totally different, but then I'm sure you don't need to make a whole lot of money to be very happy in Lexington and to be very successful in Lexington.

Warren: The cost of living is real different there.

Walker: The schools, I think, are probably better here than they are there in many respects. The public schools here are terrible, but the private schools are very good. But it would be a great place, notwithstanding, to raise kids, I think, maybe a realer world than this one is.

Warren: Probably more like the world we grew up in.

Walker: Well, it's like the world we'd like to be the real world.

Warren: I was interested a few minutes ago when you said you go back like that and you don't feel any real changes. There's been a real big change on campus.

Walker: Oh, you mean women? [Laughter]

Warren: Yeah, I mean women. Where did you come down on coeducation?

Walker: Dead-set against it. Radically against it.

Warren: Where are you now?

Walker: I was hurt, dismayed, like just the traditional male alumnus. "Male alumnus" — there's a redundancy. I thought it was a terrible idea. I was a traditionalist, I suppose. I have to say that history has proven it to have been a great thing. Again, when I got back involved in alumni matters and started concerning myself with the reality of what happened, if you look at all the numbers, it's astounding what happened. It's just incredible. There's no other way to explain it. There's nothing else

to which you can attribute it. Starting with the decision to admit women, the application pool changed dramatically in terms of the quality of students, and everything just goes like this, including ratings in *U.S. News*. Whatever measure you use, it is a very measurably better university today, in the great scheme of things, than it was when I went there. There's just no other way to explain it.

So it was a wonderful experience, but like so many things in the world, those experiences—I think it's a shame that there aren't men's schools around anymore. I loved the four years there. We played real hard on the weekends and worked real hard during the week, and there was some overlap, but not a lot. The kinds of relationships that developed with guys, I think, were unique because of the fact that you didn't have the sexual tension of women there at all times, and I wouldn't have traded the experience for anything, but I think it's a better university, and the fact is, apparently, there's just no market for that today. People just don't want it. There are only, what, two left, I guess, Wabash and Hampden-Sydney. We've had several young men—my wife's the principal of the Episcopal school from which our kids graduated, and they've had two or three students the last four or five years go to Hampden-Sidney, and nobody's lasted longer than a year. They just say it's—when I did it, heck, most of the best schools in the United States were either men's or women's schools. In fact, I can't remember there were any highly regarded universities—Stanford and Duke, maybe—that were coed. All the best schools were single-sex. And today, I don't think any of the single-sex schools are highly regarded, including the Sweet Briars and the—I guess Wellesley is still all women and still highly regarded. Smith, I suppose, is still all women.

Warren: Go back to 1983 and '84. Tell me more about what your opposition was and what kind of conversations you had with people.

Walker: My opposition, it was purely emotional. It had nothing to do—I didn't even—I don't think I bothered to read whatever economic and, whatever the word is,

whatever scientific evidence the university had that that was something they needed to do. They were changing the most elementary thing about the university, and it was two hundred and thirty, I suppose, whatever it was then, years of history, and everything about the experience of Washington and Lee was male. All the fraternities, everything. It was a wholly male place, and we had all gone there because it was a wholly male place – W-H-O-L-L-Y – but I guess it was sort of both, and it was like changing the name. I mean, you were changing the most defining thing about the experience.

And so it was very emotional, the same kinds of emotions that caused it, and still cause it, to occupy such a deep part of people's emotional psyche were all there and they were going to take it away. It was a terrible thing. And I know guys today that – what's it been, now, ten, fifteen years, thirteen, twelve, whatever it's been, and with all the evidence that's there and nobody can dispute it, nobody in their right mind can dispute it, we have several alumni here in Miami who still – they'll never change. They'll never forgive the place. One of them gave a million dollars to the capital campaign last year after two years of wining them and dining them, and he's still not happy about it. He's male all the way, through and through. He's a chauvinist from the word go, and came around to seeing on the intellectual level that the demographic change was the best thing that ever happened to the place, but he doesn't really believe that. I mean, deep down inside, he doesn't really believe that, and recognizes, in talking to him, that there is no market anymore. Regardless of how much we liked it and how much we'd like the world to like it, the world doesn't like it. They just don't want it. But it was a dark day. It really was.

Warren: Tell me about it.

Walker: Well, just when they finally announced it – of course, we knew they were talking about it. It was like a terrible betrayal. We had this wonderful brief period in our lives that, I think, for most people – that's a terrible generalization. For lots of

people, it was the greatest four years of your life. With respect to my kids, I've always looked at it like this is going to be the greatest four years of your life: you're away for the first time, you're going to make friends in a way you've never made friends, you're going to have experiences you never had before and you'll never have again, because they'll never again be the first time you've had the experience, you're going to grow up more. It's really a defining point in your life. And it was that way for all of us, and it was that thing that they were messing with. It was just a terrible blow.

I'm far enough away and have been all these years in Miami, we have a relatively inactive chapter here, and my experience generally is, although there are pockets where it just depends on the people at any given time, but my experience generally has been that the further away you get from campus, the harder it is to have an active chapter and get people to show up and do things, because they don't get back very often. So here it wasn't something I dealt with every day, whereas if I'd been in Richmond or Roanoke, I suspect it would have hurt me even more and for a lot longer. I could get over it here by just kind of not thinking about it for a while.

Warren: You've actually been through this before. Did it upset you when the law school went coed?

Walker: No. The law school was the year after I left. No. It didn't seem like – to me, even today, and certainly then, the law school and the college, as much as I talked about and believed that it was good to have them all be one, the law school was different, but the law school was always different. There was the Vietnam years, when all the craziness happened in the college, the law school was still pretty sane. Part of that was we had these ten classmates who were Vietnam vets who weren't too into this radical crazy stuff. One of them was Bev Read . Bev was a law school classmate. He was as crazy then as he is now, I think. We didn't realize how crazy. When the law school went coed, it didn't seem to me like Washington and Lee had gone coed. I could distinguish the two. I don't remember even being the least bit upset about that. And

that happened – we knew it was happening my senior year in law school, while I was there. It just didn't – that wasn't a big deal.

Warren: In a way, that wasn't the choice of the university, if they wanted to continue as a law school. It had to be coed.

Walker: Is that right? Accreditation? I don't think I ever knew that.

Warren: The ABA.

Walker: I never even thought about that until you asked me right now, but it was totally different. It didn't bother me in the least. I'm sure at the time we would have preferred that it not happen, but by the time it happened, I had very different attitudes. I was married. I don't think we knew that my wife was pregnant at that point. We found out she was pregnant at graduation, a couple weeks before graduation my senior year, but we were very different people, a lot older and a lot more – not a lot older, but a lot more mature.

Warren: The last couple of questions, we haven't really talked much about the law school experience as your school experience. Were there faculty members there that made a difference to you?

Walker: Oh, yeah. Joe Ulrich, who's still there, was a great buddy. We were his first class. He came in '68 as well, so we were his first class to go all the way through. Roy Steinheimer, we were fairly awestruck by him. Interestingly enough, as I think back on it, there were no professors in law school that struck me with the awe that some of the professors in college did. There was no Sev Duvall, to me, in the law school. Roy Steinheimer would come as close to that as anybody.

Warren: Did you realize that he was going to change the school as much as he did?

Walker: Steinheimer? No. No. Because I didn't know what it had been.

Warren: So you didn't have any sense that there was a real shift happening?

Walker: No. Again, because I never had any sense of what it had been, other than Charley McDowell was a friend of Granddaddy's and he was a great old Southern gentleman.

Warren: How about Mrs. Mac? Did you know her?

Walker: Oh, I knew her very well.

Warren: Tell me about her.

Walker: She was a doll. She was everybody's mother, but particularly mine, because even after Charley died, which must have been – I don't know when he died, but I think he probably died before Steinheimer got here, didn't he? Is that why he left? Did he die in office? In any event, Mrs. Mack was the – she was Roy's secretary for the three years and thereafter, and she and my dad were on a first-name basis, so I was always very close to her.

One of the things I discovered in law school which I'd never known in my undergraduate years is that if you're in the top of your class, you're a different person to everybody than if you're not, to faculty, administration. You take on a certain level of credibility and importance, which is probably totally out of measure with reality, but anyway, it's kind of a neat feeling, and wealth begets wealth.

I became editor-in-chief of the law review, not the way it is today where you have to earn it. In those days, the top two guys in the class were the editors-in-chief, one of the first edition, one of the second edition. It was totally unfair, made no sense, and the system they have today is much better, but in any event, I benefited by it. So I had great relationships with people throughout the law school, and, in part, having been there as an undergraduate, too, that was a tremendous advantage, I think, to me, particularly freshman year, just getting to know the place and getting acculturated. But throughout the time, you were just sort of more a part of things.

She was not so much a mother, I guess, as a grandmother to everybody. She really cared about every kid there, and she knew something about everybody there, and

I don't know that many of us ever felt we needed a grandmother there, but to the extent you did, she was it, and she was different than the faculty, obviously. So you had kind of a relationship with her that was – you never had to sit in front of her in the class or give her an exam or whatever. It was more a personal thing, I think. But she was a very, very sweet woman.

Warren: How about Uncus? Did you take class from him?

Walker: I did, and Uncus was – we weren't his first class, but we were pretty close. We were all in awe of Uncus at the time because he had been – I'm sure you've heard this before – he'd been president of the student body in his era and had led a movement to deny tenure – I think he was president of the student body as a law student and had led a movement to deny tenure to – he was then the only tax professor in the law school – Jim – the name escapes me, and it failed, but the two of them were then on the same faculty, and it was a – needless to say, a very tense relationship, and Uncus was – he may have been more a character then than he is today, I don't know, but he was a character. He used to chew tobacco in class, and he'd carry around a paper coffee cup, and he'd spit his tobacco juice in it, but he'd carry the damned thing all day. So by mid-afternoon it was getting pretty full of tobacco spit.

He and Lash, who, I guess to the extent there was anybody on the faculty that served sort of a Sev Duvall role for us, it was Lash LaRue, because he was very much the academic. Roy was striking and awesome in that he had been one of the principal drafters of the code, which just had been adopted, was being adopted around the United States, Roy and Soya Menkoff [phonetic] and a couple of others, and he was the only guy there on the faculty, other than maybe Bob Gray, who was a retired general counsel at Bethlehem Steel, I guess. They had been out and done it.

The rest of the faculty at W&L were academics who had no practice background that we knew of. But Lash was at the other end of the scale. He was the ultimate academic, very – he spoke in riddles, and he was very much the Socratic teacher and

was very deep, we thought, and he was probably – he was young. He was probably pretty caught up in all that himself. Susie LaRue was, particularly with the married law wives, she was very active and kind of a hand-holder and somebody you could go to if you had an issue or a problem, whatever, but Lash was kind of out there. None of us were quite sure we understood him or really had a handle on him.

Joe was very down to earth and, although in his way very shy, as I think he still is today, he was very close to us. We felt a real affinity to him. Bill Ritz was well liked and very well respected, but he was kind of quiet and not – he wasn't real open to students. There was definitely a line between where he was and where we were, and although we knew, with Uncus and Joe, for example, we knew they were professors and we were students, but there wasn't a very deep line. We thought of them as friends, and they acted like friends. They came and went to parties and had us into their homes.

Charlie Laughlin was active then and was a bit awesome, but he was such a character. In retrospect, he was more like Lash. He was a very academic, esoteric kind of fellow, but he was kind of a character, which, to some extent, we were probably wont to sort of laugh at him behind his back as much as to respect – that's not fair. We did respect him deeply, but we thought it was kind of funny, so that detracted a little bit from what otherwise would have been, I think, a bit of worship.

And Charlie Light was still there, and even then, he was the grand old man. I don't think we all thought he was that good a professor. We thought at the time he was sort of reading his notes for classes, that he'd been giving the same lectures for years and years on torts and whatnot, but he'd been doing it a long time. He was obviously well respected in the academic world, and we had great respect for him because he was who he was.

Then, as I said, I think it was Bob Gray, Bill Gray, who always wore three-piece suits with a Phi Beta Kappa key hanging out, had retired from Bethlehem or – I think

Bethlehem Steel, and bought a big old plantation home out in the country somewhere, beautiful old place, that he was restoring. Obviously had a lot of money. He was far and away on the faculty – he had the money, but we all had great respect for him because he had done it, you know. And this was the era, I think, in law schools where practitioners were being sort of brought back in to try to bring a greater sense of the practicalities of law practice.

We had the first trial practice course – I think our class was the first one for whom it was developed. Bill Ritz started the Alderson program to counsel women at the women's penitentiary in West Virginia. These kind of hands-on, practical experiences, I think, were just coming into vogue in the legal teaching field. But, for the most part, Washington and Lee was – they were non-practicing. We did have a couple – we had one lawyer from Lynchburg, whose name escapes me, and it shouldn't because his sister-in-law was one of my mother's best friends in Cincinnati. He was a tax lawyer, a tax and business lawyer in Roanoke, and he came up a couple days a week and taught classes. The faculty was very small. I think I've probably just named the whole faculty, other than the one guy I can't think of who was the on-site tax professor, who, supposedly, incidentally, was the drunken husband, I guess, in Edward Albee's play, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*

Albee had been on campus at W&L a couple of years before I got there, I think, in '62, '63, and it was widely reported then that although the thing was set somewhere in the Northeast, that it had been about Washington and Lee, that Boatwright, Jim Boatwright, was the Richard Burton role. And this guy who was in the law faculty was supposed to have been the cuckolded husband. God, I can't think of his name. I didn't like him. In fact, I avoided tax like the plague because of him.

Warren: You know, I've heard that legend, too, but it turns out that Albee was only on campus for two weeks. A lot of people think he was there for a whole year.

Walker: Yeah. I, to this day, thought he was there for a semester as a playwright-in-residence or something.

Warren: Well, from what I've done in my research, he was only there for two weeks. So I find it kind of hard to believe that got to him.

Walker: It's amazing how those rumors get started.

Warren: You're not the first to tell me.

Walker: Yeah. Through the years, I've heard stories about people's – reportedly say that he either confirmed or denied, but this thing about Jim Boatwright was so widely told, I really came to believe it. I'll never know if it's true or not, I guess.

Warren: Boatwright was supposed to be the younger husband?

Walker: Yeah. He was the – I only remember the play very well anymore.

Warren: Well, Richard Burton was the older one. Richard Burton was George, and Elizabeth Taylor was Martha.

Walker: I think he was supposed to be the older one then. I'm not sure. Boatwright was quite a character, quite a character.

Warren: Tell me about that.

Walker: Well, he published the *Aerial* – I think it was called the *Aerial*. There were a few professors in those days like Chuck Phillips, who was not only teaching, but he was doing things. He was a consultant. We'd hear periodically – you'd read somewhere in the paper that Chuck Phillips had testified in Washington or was quoted in some *Business Week* article or whatever. Jim Boatwright was a working poet, and we'd read his poetry in – I don't think it was the *New Yorker* but things like that. We realized from things we'd heard and things we'd read that he was really respected in the English world as a working writer, as opposed to just – see, that was just kind of – that was impressive.

Anything, in those days, when you realized these professors had national reputations or were being recognized outside of just showing up in class every day, it

was always impressive, and there weren't that many on campus that fit that role. Roy Steinheimer, again, as – I don't think we knew it because we didn't know what the Uniform Commercial Code was when he first came, but during the years that we were there, and certainly the five or six years after all of us left, and we suddenly realized that this was the biggest change in commercial law, God, in our lifetimes probably, even now, and that we had studied it under one of the five or six principal writers of it, that was pretty awesome.

And Boatwright was, as I say, was a working poet, and we realized while we were there he had quite a reputation outside, plus he just – he cut quite a figure. He was a pretty flamboyant fellow. I think he died of AIDS, and I assume, therefore, that, as one always does, particularly back eight or nine years ago when it happened, that he was probably gay, but had no thought of that then. It's funny, as I think back on it, of all the things you'd think of at a men's school, you would have assumed – I don't remember that there were more than one person I knew at W&L the whole time I was there that anybody openly thought of as gay, and I'm sure he was, and he suffered mightily for it, but I was pretty shocked when I was here in Miami and I read this news in the *Miami Herald* that James K. Boatwright had died in Key West of AIDS, and I thought, "God, that's strange." We had no thought of that at the time. Maybe he wasn't at the time, I don't know. Or maybe he wasn't at all. I don't even know that. I just assumed that he was.

Warren: So you had no awareness of any gay community at Washington and Lee?

Walker: No. None. None. I don't believe it was there. I mean, if it was there, it would have been sublimated to the nth degree, because it was a very macho male place. I think it still is. When I go back there, I think it's still a very macho male image that is the W&L man. It certainly was then, and any gay students would have been very uncomfortable. Gay eighteen-year-old men in 1964, '65, '66, would have been damned uncomfortable anywhere, but of all places, in Lexington, Virginia. They would have

been scorned by the students, by the town, by the state, by the whole culture of central Virginia.

Warren: Yeah. I expect you're absolutely right. There's an ongoing dialogue in one of the student newspapers defending the gay and lesbian community.

Walker: There was a thing when I was on the law board, alumni board, a couple of years ago. How'd this issue come up? Is it Bill Flowers, the Flowers Bakery? There's a very, very wealthy W&L alumnus – I think it's Bill Flowers, who's the founder, chairman of Flowers Baking, which is one of the biggest baking concerns in the Southeast, and he's in Alabama or Mississippi or somewhere, constantly writes letters to the president of the university. He was ultra, ultra conservative and still has not, and never will, forgive the university for going coed or anything that's changed. And I remember him being involved in it. There was some issue – it's probably the same issue's still being debated about the male and female gay group – it's wrapped around some event, some letter that was written or something. I can't remember what it was, but it was a huge issue. And I was kind of surprised at the time it was such a huge issue because I don't think of those things as being that big an issue anymore, but it just underscored for me the fact that W&L among men and women is still perceived, I think, as a pretty macho male kind of place, and the women that are there kind of worship the macho male thing. It's still a pretty traditional Southern school, I think, in most respects, which I think is one of its great qualities.

Warren: Well, we're at the end of this side. I have one last question.

Walker: Okay.

[Begin Tape 2, Side 2]

Warren: Last question. What about the future? What would you like to see? How shall we celebrate the 250th anniversary in a way that looks towards the future?

Walker: Well, I really haven't thought about that, but I suppose, to me, it would be some combination of Bob Dole's bridge to the past and Bill Clinton's bridge to the

future. Much of what makes Washington and Lee great is what it's been. I think still the finest qualities of the university are embedded in its past, and its success, I think, will be how well it's able to marry the things that made it great in the past with the future.

The Honor System, you could do away with the Honor System with the stroke of a pen, and like coeducation, literally, it would only take four years, at most seven years, for it to be forgotten among the students. The faculty would still remember it, but you can bring the most radical change in the world to a university and, however awful it will be for the four years – between the time it takes the freshmen to get through, and the first day of the fifth year – it's gone for all practical purposes.

My wife and I were very active in founding an Episcopal high school here twelve or fourteen years ago, which we merged about seven years ago – this is the school of which she's now the head – we merged with a non-parochial independent school which was largely Jewish, but the Jewish-Episcopal thing was not a problem. The problem was the culture of the two schools. The one we had started was very concerned with character development and high standards of academics, which is pretty typical of Episcopal schools nationally. It was designed to be a pretty Episcopal school. And this other school was heavily characterized or was really run by the families of kids with learning disabilities of one degree or another, whose attitude pretty much was – the most important thing was to make the kids feel good about themselves, and discipline and character-building wasn't particularly important, and academics weren't important at all. And we merged because we weren't growing fast enough and needed more space, and they were on the verge of bankruptcy and had a huge campus, and it saved both schools, but as all the experts with whom we counseled before we merged told us we were going to, we had an enormous culture clash, ended up in a big lawsuit and very ugly for a few years.

But what led me to this is that, as ugly as it was, and this was a six-year high school, when the last kid who was there the year we merged graduated, it was palpable, the change. Now, there were still families who were very involved on both sides of the issue that had second or third kids either coming along or whatever, and those families were still in the school, but when the last of the kids left, it's like the institution itself breathed a huge sigh of relief and said, "Now I can go on where I'm going."

And the same thing, I think, is true at W&L. You could change anything you wanted to tomorrow, including the name, and four years later, leaving aside the effect of alumni and whatnot, the school would go on without a hiccup, assuming people kept coming, but it wouldn't be the same. It wouldn't have W&L's strengths anymore. It seems to me, in retrospect, that the university gave up little when it took women. The place today, the traditions, even the things that were most male about it, the heavy drinking, hard partying, that hasn't changed. It hasn't changed a lick. In fact, if anything, it may be more so than it was then, because the girls don't go home now at two o'clock in the morning. They stay and party all night.

But I think that W&L, in coeducating, has maintained most of its most loved traditions, and the ones, I think, that most shape student life, certainly, the Honor System being prime among those, but the gentle air of civility, of caring, of a gentility, to the extent it's any different from civility, and what I would hope for the future is that however the world changes, which it undoubtedly will, and the university is going to have to grow with it, that it will always keep looking over its shoulder and redefine for each generation in a way relevant to that generation those qualities that have made it what it was for so long.

Nothing lasts 250 years without having some essential goodness or some essential strength to it, and however you define those strengths, if they were abandoned, then the place could die as easily tomorrow as some place that was only started a year ago. And I think the university's been pretty successful through the years

at redefining itself to change with the times. And I think there are tough times ahead. I said earlier, to the extent I have pessimism in my life, I'm saddened and feel that society is somewhat threatened by the general breakdown in civility, that people in general just aren't as nice as people used to be. I think there are probably a lot of good reasons for that, and it will be a great strength of W&L if it can preserve that and keep turning out people who are reasonably civil, even if they're just slightly more civil than the average members of their generation, because the world needs civil people, desperately, I think, more than we needed them thirty years ago because there are fewer of them.

Warren: There's no question that it's one of the most civil places I've ever been, Washington and Lee.

Walker: And the world doesn't like that, and the world isn't like that. Go to Duke. The world is not like Washington and Lee. And thank God for the Washington and Lees.

Warren: That's real true. Well, I've taken up enough of your day. I really have enjoyed myself. Thank you so much.

Walker: Well, it's my pleasure.

[End of interview]