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## DEAN WILLIAM TAYLOR MUSE—AN APPRECIATION

*George M. Modlin\**

WILLIAM TAYLOR MUSE was a dedicated man—dedicated to his family, his church, and his University. From the day in 1924 when he enrolled in the University of Richmond until his untimely death on October 31, 1971, except for two brief periods, he devoted his life and his loyalty to the University as a student, professor, and dean. Although his primary interest was the Law School, he was ever concerned about the general welfare of the total University and was always more than willing to serve it in any capacity. For years he was a member of the important Board of Publications and also was a long-time and faithful member of the Athletic Council, serving as faculty chairman of athletics for several years. On the Administrative Council of Deans he spoke with an influential voice in analyzing problems and determining policies affecting the entire University. Whenever clear reasoning and sound judgment were particularly needed on a special committee, Dean Muse was asked to serve. He never refused. He was dedicated to the University.

In performing his responsibilities as Dean of the Law School, Bill Muse was impelled by a strong sense of duty based on a deep loyalty and affection for the School. Having full responsibility for the operation of the Law School, and the complete confidence of the University President, he administered its affairs efficiently, exercising his authority in a judicious and effective way. Not only was he a strong administrator, but he was a forceful advocate for his faculty and students. For example, in urging higher salaries for faculty members and in seeking larger scholarships and assistance for law students, he was an insistent and persuasive exponent. In all the years we were so closely associated, I can recall only two instances in which his usual calm temperament was ruffled: once when his recommendation for a student scholarship was questioned and again when his request for more adequate faculty facilities had to be denied. For a quarter century the University of Richmond Law School unquestionably was the lengthened shadow of William T. Muse. To administer it successfully was his consuming desire and constant duty.

Throughout his life Dean Muse was a man of determination. When

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\* Chancellor and former President of the University of Richmond (1946-71).

he was appointed Dean of the Law School in 1947, he resolved to raise admission standards, to broaden the curriculum, to enlarge the library, to improve the facilities, and in general to strengthen the School. With characteristic optimism, coupled with hard work and constructive leadership, he achieved his objectives. He played a major role in planning the new building for the Law School and in moving the School from old Columbia Building downtown to the main campus in 1954. Although later afflicted with the illness that ultimately proved fatal, for eight years he continued his arduous duties without complaint. He was determined to lead the School's Centennial celebration in 1970, in connection with which the successful Centennial campaign for \$500,000 was essentially a tribute to him and his leadership. Moreover, he was resolved to plan the building addition to be constructed with the campaign funds. Happily he participated in the groundbreaking for the new addition on Law Day, April 24, 1971 and saw construction under way.

Although suffering severely, Dean Muse was determined to finish the session, teaching his last class in May, awarding the law degrees at Commencement, and leaving his office finally in June. Courageous and optimistic to the end, he wrote the President of the University ten days before his death stating that he hoped to be able to resume his teaching on a full-time basis next session.

Complete dedication, a compelling sense of duty, and courageous determination were exemplified in the life and work of William T. Muse.

One of the joys of my quarter century as President of the University of Richmond was the pleasant privilege of working so closely with Bill Muse as an able colleague and warm friend.