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## WILLIAM TAYLOR MUSE—"THE DEAN"

*John W. Edmonds, III\**

IT is hard to discuss William Taylor Muse, or *The Dean* as he was known to most of us, without using superlatives in what would appear to the uninitiated a super abundance. William T. Muse was many things—a devoted husband and father, an ardent Baptist, an enthusiastic and constant fan of athletics at the University of Richmond, a recognized scholar and legal author, a teacher of law for forty years, secretary and president of the Virginia State Bar Association, and a Sunday School teacher for most of his adult life. To most of us, he was primarily two things, The Dean and our friend. In these two capacities, his personality meshed. He was the Law School to most of us. That is not to say that the Law School, or our affections for it, disappeared with him. He visualized and epitomized the T. C. Williams School of Law as a vital and continuing institution. It does and will continue, as does our affection for him.

All too often we say of a man: "He will never be forgotten," and then proceed to act as if we had forgotten. It is appropriate that we record for ourselves and others the reasons he stood tall in our lives and in our admiration and affection.

It was as The Dean that most of us made his acquaintance, and early we found that if we asked for help, it was forthcoming. A demand for supposed rights might be met with adverse precedent, or University rule, or a rule of the American Association of Law Schools, all three of which appeared inflexible, unapproachable and distant. A request for help or advice brought an informal, direct and sincere discussion and approach to the problem, looking to and usually resulting in a solution, many times due to the personal involvement of The Dean. On such occasions he never appeared to feel above the level of the person whom he was helping.

In the fashion of a real friend, when The Dean did someone a favor, he remained silent about it, never bragging or implying to anyone that it created any counter-obligation. On numerous occasions in chatting about days past with other graduates, there comes up in the conversation a favor by The Dean, with the problem and the favor being so completely kept within the four walls of The Dean's office that the con-

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\* Member of the Virginia Bar.

temporaries of the student or person favored had no inkling of even the problem.

No tribute to The Dean would be complete to one of his students without mention of the *Palsgraf* case and the doctrine of "reasonable foreseeability." It was and is foreseeable with a certainty that the T. C. Williams School of Law and the practice of law will be of prime benefit to many law students, past and future, and to the community as a whole, because of Bill Muse having been a vital part of the Law School, the legal profession and his community for over forty years.

He was The Dean; and he was our friend.