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Dean Dudley Woodbridge Celebration Brunch

William & Mary Law School

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**Dean Dudley Woodbridge
Celebration Brunch**

**Sir Christopher Wren Building
Great Hall**

April 8, 2017

Dudley Warner Woodbridge

(1896–1969)

Dean of Marshall-Wythe School of Law (1950–1962)

Chancellor Professor of Law

Dudley Warner Woodbridge was born in Ohio on February 24, 1896. He received his B.A. and J.D. from the University of Illinois, and was a member of the Order of the Coif, Phi Beta Kappa and Omicron Delta Kappa.

Dean Woodbridge joined the faculty of Marshall-Wythe in 1927, which at that time was known as the Department of Jurisprudence at the College of William and Mary. The department had only two professors and 2,000 law volumes, and was unaccredited.

Woodbridge rose quickly to the rank of associate professor in 1928, then to full professor in 1933. He was named Dean of the Department of Jurisprudence in 1950, and Dean of the newly named Marshall-Wythe Law School in 1953. An authority on the law of property, contracts, torts and negotiable instruments, Woodbridge was editor of the *Virginia Bar Notes* for more than 30 years.

Woodbridge earned a reputation as an exemplary teacher, believing that “law schools are as much a part of our administration of justice as the judges and attorneys. ... law schools should not merely teach technical rules of law, but should encourage the students to evaluate them on their own after research and analysis.”

Dean Woodbridge served as Dean from 1950 to 1962, and retired in 1968. He was an extraordinary teacher, a brilliant legal mind, but also a kind and very generous man. He was awarded the Thomas Jefferson Award from the College in 1963 for his influence and leadership. He personally touched the lives of many law students. In 1950, the international edition of *Life* magazine recognized Dean Woodbridge as one of America’s eight “Great Teachers.” The magazine citation read in part: “In the coldest weather he never wears a coat or hat. One student contends that he doesn’t need them; almost reverentially, he insists Professor Woodbridge is cloaked with a special warmth that springs from his humility and greatness.”

Dean Woodbridge Celebration Program

Saturday, April 8, 2017

Welcome Howard Busbee B.A. '65, J.D. '67, M.L.T. '68

Invocation Winston Haythe J.D. '67

Brunch

Dean's Remarks Dean Davison M. Douglas

Dean Woodbridge Reflections Howard Busbee

Class of 1967—Dean Dudley W. Woodbridge

Scholarship Ralph Barclay J.D. '67

The Order of Marshall-Wythe Group Photo

Optional tour of Wren & bell ringing



Dean Dudley Woodbridge

A special thanks to our Class of 1967 Reunion Committee for their hard work, dedication and vision to honor Dean Dudley Warner Woodbridge with this Celebration Brunch and the launch of The Class of 1967–Dean Dudley Woodbridge Scholarship.

Chair:

Howard Busbee

Committee Members:

Ralph Barclay

Winston Haythe

Skip Francis

Forrest Morgan

Jerry Franklin

Wayne O'Bryan

The Class of 1967–Dean Dudley Woodbridge Scholarship Overview

The Class of 1967 has generously committed funds to establish an endowed scholarship for a student studying law at William & Mary. This endowment will provide need-based financial assistance to an entering student and will support the selected student for each of his/her three years at William & Mary Law School, as long as the student remains in good standing.

The scholarship endowment is established to celebrate the life of the late Dudley W. Woodbridge, Dean of the Marshall-Wythe School of Law from 1950 to 1962 and Chancellor Professor of Law, and to leave a lasting tribute in his memory. For more information or to contribute to The Class of 1967–Dean Dudley Woodbridge Scholarship, please contact Laura Beach at lwbeac@wm.edu or 757-221-3798. Thank you for your consideration and continued support of Marshall-Wythe Law School and our students.

Reflections

Scholarly

“I remember his pop quizzes, and how he could lead you astray with his class questions. Hard lessons, but ones you remember. His often-stated maxim, which I use often; ‘hard cases make bad law.’”

— *A. Earle Garrett III J.D. '63*

“The first way he caught my attention was his grading system. He had pop quizzes; remember that? And remember what the grades were? — Minus five all the way to plus five... Those pop quizzes came up at the most unexpected times. ‘Okay, class, what’s the answer to this one?’ Just like that, no advance notice, no nothing. He kept us on our toes. You know we passed the bar exam on those questions, because no one came unprepared to his classes.”

— *Emeric Fischer B.C.L. '63, M.L.T. '64**

“I loved seeing the Dean riding to class on his old ladies bike. I remember reviewing his written bar exam notes on Saturday mornings. Fee for notes and oral review was \$2500! His pop quizzes and brutal grading there of.”

— *Fred B. Devitt Jr. B.A. '58, B.C.L. '60*

* Originally published in the 1997 Annual Report



“One memory that I am sure I share with all who had the good fortune to know and study under Dean Woodbridge was his infamous stack of index cards used to decide which students would be called upon in class that day, and the efforts made by many to extract their card from the stack.”

— *Bob Lent B.A. '64, J.D. '66*

“We were close friends from '33 until he died. The things I remember most about him: he was a man of great intelligence and a fantastic memory, and a great humanitarian. I remember in 1941, when I was practicing law in Surry, I was sitting in my office one night at about 10 PM working on a case involving a railroad right-of-way that had reverted to the subservient landowner. At 10 PM — that's how well I knew Dr. Woodbridge — I called him. He said, 'Ernest, look in 115 Virginia Reports 292 — there's a case right there that says that any building, equipment or railway right-of-way is personal property and doesn't go with the land.' And he cited the case right out of the clear blue sky.”

— *Ernest Goodrich B.A. '35, Hon. LL.D. '02**



“I had a job while at William & Mary and had a conflict with the exam schedule. I asked Dean Woodbridge if I could take the exam another time. We set a time and he advised me to go to his office. The exam would be on his desk, allow myself an hour to take it, and leave it on his desk. He was not there when I took it, but all of the exam booklets from the rest of the class were on the desk.”

— *Rosser J. Pettit B.A. '63, B.C.L. '65*

“A man of great compassion who allowed a less than stellar student to enter law school in the winter of 1958 after discharge from the U.S. Navy. Dean Woodbridge was always willing to assist his students with matters both personal and academic. His Virginia Bar notes allowed many students to pass the bar exam and move on into the world of the legal profession.”

— *R. Arthur Jett Jr. B.C.L. '60*



“I started law school the summer of 1962. One of my courses was Contracts with Dean Woodbridge. There were only five students in the course and we met in the Dean’s office. Dean Woodbridge would make out index cards with the name of each student on an index card. He’d then shuffle the deck at the beginning of class and use the cards to call on students.

Of the five of us in the class, one was working the midnight shift at what was then the Holiday Inn on Richmond Road, just up the street from Bryan Dorm. He’d come in for class, sit down and almost immediately fall asleep. That left four of us to bear the burden of the index card system.... It was not a question of being called upon, but how many times.

I learned a lot of contract law that summer.

I remember in that contract class stumbling by accident on some contract case opinion from an appellate court out in the mid-west. I hadn’t been in law school long enough to even recognize that the law in other states may have no applicability to Virginia law. I thought the holding in this foreign state court conflicted with what Dean Woodbridge had said in class. (This shows my naiveté in thinking I was going to catch Dean Woodbridge in an error.)

As soon as I started asking about the case, the Dean interrupted (politely of course — it was Dean Woodbridge) and explained how that case was distinguished from Virginia position. One of the great talents of Dean Woodbridge was his skill in doing this without belittling the student.”

— *J.R. Zepkin B.A. '63, J.D. '65*

“By intellect and work, he could express in a short sentence or question, or two, a principle or issue in law in a manner that a C student could grasp and memorize, to gain an A student’s understanding. Repetition — get 5 or 6 issues for homework that define issue and give location of answer. Repeated in class by lecture, pop quizzes in law school and fear of being called on at random. Besides it was fun to watch a genius. Listening to him review the last bar exam questions to determine whether or not you passed the bar was flat awesome.”

— *James White B.C.L. '66*



“I was with him in his last year of teaching. I got to read those pop quizzes to him, because his eyesight had declined, and I got to read the final exams and the reporter and the casebook. It was a wonderful opportunity for someone who’s going to be a teacher.... I think I am probably unique among this audience in that my contact was shorter. But the impact he has had on my life!

I taught the rule against perpetuities to a group of students — mostly seniors, a few second year students, and I used the perpetuities material that the Dean used in Property I for beginning freshman — which again shows the worth of those materials, his wisdom in putting them together, and how hard he made us work. But that’s how we learned what we were capable of, wasn’t it?”

— *Rodney Johnson B.A. '65, J.D. '67**



“I have two recollections about those pop quizzes. One is that I wore a Phi Beta Kappa key to class the first day. I took it off after that. And I didn’t wear it again for a long time, because I got one of those minus three scores.

The other observation I have about those pop quizzes is that he would justify them in various ways, but the justification that I liked best was that he wanted all of his students to have an opportunity to make all of their mistakes in law school, so they wouldn’t make any when they got out. He gave us every opportunity to do that.”

— *Professor Emeritus John Donaldson J.D. '63**

* Originally published in the 1997 Annual Report



“Dean Woodbridge was obviously a devotee of syndicated advice columnist Ann Landers!

When I entered Marshall-Wythe in the fall of 1964, I continued my practice from undergraduate days of faithfully reading social advice from Miss Landers while having my lunch and before settling down to study all afternoon.

Dean Woodbridge taught us Contracts in that first year. So when I sat for his Contracts exam in the spring, I immediately recognized one of his questions as having appeared verbatim some weeks before in Miss Landers’ syndicated column. Oddly enough, that letter from a reader seeking her advice and her response thereto set forth 10 distinct contract law issues that Dean Woodbridge had readily spotted. Unfortunately for me, I had not!

As soon as I arrived back home from that exam, I immediately sat down and wrote a letter to Miss Landers explaining that I had just taken my Contracts exam and made reference to her particular column in which one of our exam questions had appeared. I further explained that as a faithful reader of her daily column from Chicago, I nevertheless savored her advice with mixed emotions: While I did enjoy her perspectives, I felt

more than a tinge of guilt for having taken the time to peruse her newspaper column when I could have been studying.

I went on to note that I was confident I was not alone among first year law students who enjoyed her words. In my tongue-in-cheek letter, I suggested that she could perform an invaluable service to all law students across the nation if only she would include a full and complete identification and discussion of all the legal issues and their ramifications whenever she offered her pearls of wisdom. In this way, I contended, her devoted law students would be learning The Law at the same time that they were enjoying her column.

Although I was not seeking her advice and therefore did not enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope, to my utter surprise a letter from the Chicago Tribune arrived in my mailbox a couple of weeks thereafter. In her reply, Miss Landers stated that of all the letters from readers she had received on a particular day, mine had interested her the most.

So I can thank Dean Woodbridge for the fact that, because of his Contracts exam, I was able to write to a popular, nationally-syndicated columnist who chose to send me a personal reply, and her newspaper paid for the postage!”

— *Winston McDonald Haythe J.D. '67*



Generous

“The Dean was indeed a great teacher, so much so that passing when he called on you was a most painful response, for him as well as you. A senior student passed on to me this story.

‘One cold and harsh winter, as the Dean was walking to class without a top coat, a collection was taken and a good warm coat was purchased and given to him. In a very short time he was again seen walking to class without a top coat. He had given it to a poor cold man whom he met on the way.’ The story resounds with all that I experienced with him.”

— *Cabell Tennis B.A. '54, J.D. '56*

“Another memory is of Dean Woodbridge providing ice skates for local children to skate on Landrum Pond (now Crim Dell) when the weather turned cold enough.”

— *Bob Lent B.A. '64, J.D. '66*

“When I was hired in 1958 to come here, the first thing I was told when I arrived on campus was what a great teacher Dr. Woodbridge was. And I said to myself, ‘Nobody can really be that good.’ Then I remembered that one of the worst courses I ever went through was Negotiable Instruments, so I said to him, ‘May I audit your class?’ I wanted to find out how to teach from this man.

He said, ‘No, I don’t think that is a good idea, but I will give you my class notes and you can look them over.’ This was in Negotiable Instruments — a horrible course! I went through them, and I discovered that the man was a genius. He could translate legal gobbledygook into plain English, and he got it over. That is something that is a mark of genius in my estimation.”

— *Dean Emeritus Jim Whyte**

* Originally published in the 1997 Annual Report



“Dean Woodbridge was one of the greatest guys I have ever known in the law. To me, when he opened his mouth, he didn’t talk — the law fell out of his mouth. I’m serious, that’s how I felt when he was teaching class. And he was such a gentleman.

I don’t mean to say there wasn’t any humor in him, because there was humor in Woodbridge. I remember a specific experience. I read law to a guy named Louis Rives in law school. Louis lost his eyes when he was 2 years old. So we took all of our classes together, and I would read to him each night the cases that we were supposed to study.

We went to one class, and Dr. Woodbridge asked me a question about a case, and I couldn’t remember the answer. And, of course, he knew I read the case to Louis, so he asked Louis the question and he answered it. And Dr. Woodbridge’s response was, ‘Now gentleman, here is an example of water rising higher than its source.’”

— *Herb Kelly B.A. '41, B.C.L. '43**



“I remember Dr. Woodbridge coming to me one day and saying, ‘Mr. Spainhour, would you like a scholarship?’ I said, ‘Of course.’ ‘Well, it isn’t very large,’ he said. I said, ‘If there is someone who really needs it, I don’t really have to have it. But it would be nice if I did.’ He said, ‘Well, you may have it.’

The next year, or maybe the next semester, he came to me again and said, ‘Mr. Spainhour, if you want a scholarship this year, you have to apply for it.’ That was the condition — I had to ask for it. That indicated to me how much interest he had in his students in the school.”

— *Howard Spainhour B.A. '54, B.C.L. '56**

* Originally published in the 1997 Annual Report



Caring

“My first, and fondest, memory of Dean Woodbridge occurred before I was even admitted to the Law School. During early spring of my senior undergraduate year, I was asked to come to his personal residence. I had taken a few law classes during my senior year in order to pursue a law degree requiring only two additional years in attendance at the college beyond my four undergraduate years, with the law classes counting towards both the required hours for an undergraduate degree and a B.C.L. degree (later converted to a J.D. degree).

Naturally, I approached this meeting with some degree of trepidation, but was overwhelmed when he told me that I had been awarded the Dean Dudley Woodbridge Scholarship. Until that moment, I had no idea where I was going to get the money for law school because my parents certainly were not financially able to foot the bills for any graduate school education.

This wonderful man’s scholarship paid the entire two years’ cost for out-of-state tuition and books. I will be eternally grateful to him and the Law School for this financial aid.”

— *Bob Lent B.A. '64, J.D. '66*

“He was so gentle that he really would go out of his way to avoid anything that smacked of a conflict, unless it was a matter of principle. F. E. Clark had tried to start the *Law Review* — he graduated midyear and we had to do something with all the materials that had accumulated. So Woody (all of us called him Woody, but not to his face) asked me if I would pick it up and try to get the first edition out. Well, we didn’t have any money, and so the first issue of the *Law Review* was mimeographed. It bugged me that it was mimeographed, so I went to Woody and said that we have to print, literally print, the next one.

He said to me, ‘Harvey, the College just doesn’t have money for things like that.’ And I said, ‘Dr. Woodbridge, can’t we at least go and talk to President Pomfret?’

‘I know he’ll turn us down.’

‘What would we lose? Would you walk with me?’ And he said, ‘Yes.’

So we walked down to Dr. Pomfret’s office, which was on the ground floor of what we used to call Marshall-Wythe. We walked in there, I made the pitch, and Dr. Pomfret said, ‘Well, I can let you have \$250.’

That was the first printing of the *William & Mary Law Review*. He really had to screw up his courage to impose on Dr. Pomfret; he would never impose on anyone. Great man.”

— *Harvey Chappell B.A. '48, B.C.L. '50**

* Originally published in the 1997 Annual Report



“We knew that he was a very important beloved person in Williamsburg. I know he rode his bicycle to work. I don’t believe he ever owned a car. My mom, Laura, loved him. She always shared what a nice person he was. I guess she was older than he was because she was thrilled when he was born. She had a little chair she would dress up because she wanted a sister or brother so badly.

...I knew he was very knowledgeable and dedicated and loved the law. My son-in-law Billy Brown said he was looking for another job once. His search firm called him and said there was an opening at William & Mary so he went there to apply for the job. And his wife (my daughter), Haven, said ‘just mention Uncle Dudley and that you are married to someone related to him.’ So Billy said he did and everyone went wild! They talked more about Uncle Dudley than about Billy. He said it was so funny because they were just thrilled!

...I just think that it is spectacular... To invite over 100 people (to the Celebration Brunch) and to have so many come back for Uncle Dudley.

...My son, Hal Emerson, is a lawyer. He lives in Japan. He works for a University. He used to teach law, but the last one he taught was Legal Writing. Tons of essays to grade. Took him

forever because he wanted to correct them and not fly through it. One of the other teachers said he takes too much time correcting and shouldn't — but he's not able to do that because he feels he's not doing his job correctly if he doesn't. He loves teaching. One friend said to him, 'I understand you worked in Hollywood and you're a lawyer — so what are you doing teaching in Japan?' He said. 'Because I love teaching.' It must run in the family! He knew of Dudley Woodbridge, definitely."

— Laurel "Lollie" Peebles Hisey
(Dean Woodbridge's niece)

"I remember the twinkle in Dean Woodbridge's eye. He seemed always happy. I also remember that it appeared he'd not run into the availability of collar stays. The artist of the portrait of the Dean that hangs in the new Hixon Center wing captured both of these characteristics perfectly. The twinkle is there and there's just enough of a little raising of the shirt collar to let the viewer know the artist knew...."

— J.R. Zepkin B.A. '63, J.D. '65



“I do not recall applying to Marshall-Wythe, I had finished most of the requirements for my major at William & Mary and had hours available to take elective courses. I went to Dean Woodbridge’s office and told him I thought I would like to go to law school and would like to take some classes. He told me that I could as long as I took his classes. Torts and Contracts with the additional requirement that I take the LSAT. I started the classes before taking the LSAT the following year. I became a full time student at Marshall-Wythe and was able to finish in two.

I needed money to complete my last year. I knew he made loans to students so I asked him for a loan. He agreed to lend me the money without asking any specifics as to how I was going to use it. He did have me sign a promissory note, which as I recall carried no interest for three years.

His sense of humor made a lasting impression on me, as did his dedication to his students and the law. Without his influence, I doubt I would have supported William & Mary Law School as I have for years.”

— *Rosser J. Pettit B.A. '63, B.C.L. '65*

“Entered Marshall-Wythe Fall of 1962. Son of parents who captured America by withering the storm of the Depression. With a small scholarship, and extended family help, I entered and was not taught, but was admonished by this great man to become absorbed in the law. Dean Woodbridge was a master at his calling but for me, his humanity was on full stage when I asked him if there was an emergency student loan fund. My grandmother had passed away and my annual budget was \$100.00 short to enable a flight to her service. His reply was to hand me \$100.00; to wish me a safe trip, and to always remember how important family was. No, he would never accept my repayment offer.”

— *Jon Larry Palmer J.D. '69*



“I first met Dr. Woodbridge when our family purchased a house on Griffin Avenue. Dr. Woodbridge lived one block from our house. His son, Hensly, was my father’s special French student. When I was a child, he would invite all of the children in the neighborhood to meet him at the lily pond, near the old fraternity lodges located at the end of the W&M football field. Dr. Woodbridge would give out ice skates, and teach us to ice skate. He would serve us hot tea from the fire he would build.

Dr. Woodbridge and his wife did not know how to drive a car. They would bicycle into Williamsburg. When I was older and driving my father’s car, Dr. Woodbridge would ask me to drive him into town. He delivered the Sunday New York Times on a small, four-wheel wagon to people living in Colonial Williamsburg. He asked me to deliver the Times on Sunday for him when he had a conflict.

I majored in business at William & Mary. I completed all of my business classes on a Saturday morning. I knocked on Dr. Woodbridge’s door and said I would like to go to law school. He said, ‘Okay, be in my office Monday morning at 8 AM and I will sign you up for law school.’ I was there on time and started class at 9 AM. Harper Anderson was the professor. He seated the class in alphabetical order. I had to sit in the front row. The



student on my left was John Dalton, who became the Governor of Virginia. I graduated from law school in 1954.

During the Cuban missile crisis in 1952, Dr. Woodbridge evacuated his basement for a bomb shelter. He completed this in his sub-basement. He spent many hours hauling dirt in a large wash bucket in a small metal wagon to carry it down the hill to a vacant lot. All the children in the neighborhood could use the shelter if required, but no adults. When the crisis was over, he used the space to complete bar notes for his legal class. Mrs. Woodbridge would type all of the bar notes and sell them to the law students. Dr. Woodbridge would conduct a Law Review class in a W&M classroom, reading the notes for 8 hours a day for two weeks and answering any law questions.

I talked with Mr. Ernest Goodrich, an excellent lawyer who lived in Surry County. He said to me one day that he had a law case and couldn't find the answer. He called Dr. Woodbridge at his house and Dr. Woodbridge told him to go to book so & so, section so & so, page so & so, and citation so & so and he would find the answer. Mr. Goodrich found the answer."

— *James D. Carter B.A. '52, J.D. '54*



Dr. Woodbridge and his dog.

