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## Tribute to Dr. William F. Swindler

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WILLIAM F. SWINDLER

*A Tribute from the  
Dean of the Marshall-Wythe School of Law,  
College of William and Mary*

It is appropriate that an issue of the *William and Mary Law Review* be dedicated to Dr. William F. Swindler, John Marshall Professor of Law, Emeritus. Professor Swindler's contributions to the Law School, over a period of more than two decades, have been many and important. Most recently he has participated in the planning and management of a splendid year-long celebration of the bicentennial of the establishment of the first chair of law in America. This celebration of George Wythe's appointment as the first professor of law at William and Mary culminated years of effort by Professor Swindler to acquaint Americans with the circumstances of the establishment in 1779 of university-related law training in Williamsburg. Governor Thomas Jefferson's suggestion that his mentor, Wythe, be appointed to a professorship, patterned after the Vinerian chair at Oxford, marked the beginning of the movement away from the office apprentice method of legal instruction.

Professor Swindler rightly perceived that an observance of the two hundredth anniversary of Wythe's appointment would promote scholarly inquiry into the legal education of colonial Virginians, about which surprisingly little is now known. It is to be hoped that in future years we will learn more about the British legal training of members of the Randolph family as well as the American apprenticeships of Wythe, Pendleton, Henry, and Jefferson.

Professor Swindler also correctly insisted that his faculty colleagues recognize the Vinerian professorship as the model for Jefferson's idea. Professor Swindler's visits to All Souls College, Oxford, the seat of the Vinerian chair, resulted in a generous gift from the Fellows of All Souls of two handsome stained glass windows, portraying William Blackstone, the first Vinerian professor, and Christopher Wren, designer of William and Mary's first academic building. These windows will grace the foyer of our new law school.

It was also Dr. Swindler who prevailed upon the faculty to invite Sir Rupert Cross, Vinerian professor emeritus, to come to Williamsburg and deliver the annual George Wythe lecture in October of 1979. The grace, wit, and scholarship of Sir Rupert's lecture, published in this volume, may now be shared by all.

Finally, Professor Swindler is editing three books in a series entitled *Studies on the Bicentennial of American Legal Education*, which

will further enlighten us about Wythe and the Tuckers, William and Mary's early law professors, and some of their pupils, including John Marshall, Spencer Roane, and Henry Clay.

Bill Swindler—journalist, historian, author, dreamer, and scholar—has for many years used his irrepressible optimism to outlast and overcome the doubts and lethargy of less imaginative colleagues. The editors of our law review have recognized the continuing debt of the Marshall-Wythe Law School family to this warm, energetic, and imaginative man.

William B. Spong, Jr.