

INTERVIEWED IN JUNE, 1968

ELWOOD DISQUE

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WHO WERE SOME OF YOUR ASSOCIATES:

A person who might give you a lot of information -- because he has time -- is Mr. Hall. He's in the hospital now. He has some very valuable information. He's the only one around now. There was Mr. Hall in physics, and Dr. Tasker in biology and Professor Schuyler in chemistry, Miss Brooks in French. And then there was Mr. Miller in mathematics and Keller in economics and Dr. Crook in sociology. There were about a dozen. And Mr. Faint, of course, the registrar. Eisenhower was here the first year I was here: I came in September of '35, and Dr. Farley came in the spring of '36. The next year we moved to Conyngham. And we got Chase - we moved over into these two buildings.

WAS THERE A REAL ACADEMIC ATMOSPHERE HERE AT THAT TIME?

Well, what I always liked about it here was the fact that you could experiment; you could try out new things. It wasn't like being at a school where they would say: well now we've done it this way twenty-five years, why should we change? That's been the nice part about being at Wilkes; we've always been encouraged to try it, to see how much we could do with it. That way we've been able to experiment, to try many new

methods, new ideas. And we've had much freedom in that respect. And that's what I always liked about it: it wasn't tradition-bound. The students we had, I would say, had been a backlog of good young people who had not been able to afford to go to college. It was during the Depression period, and there were many young people who had the ability, but did not have the money to afford to go to schools out of town. So as a result we had some very high caliber students here: I remember one class I had (there were ~~x~~ about a dozen in it) and ten of them were on the honor roll. Some of them were of very high quality. We had very fine young people at that time -- we do have now --- at the very beginning, and we were very concerned about that, and also about standards, so that these people would be accepted at other schools. We tried to maintain good standards so that they would be acceptable when they did transfer.

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That was liked immediately, and the fact that he was as young as he was -- he was very popular with the students. There was a very nice rapport with the faculty because of that. In fact, some time ago, when I happened to be up at the community

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HAS THE COLLEGE BEEN ABLE TO KEEP UP WITH THE TIMES, EDUCATIONALLY, WHILE IT ~~H~~AD TO BE SO PREOCCUPIED WITH DEVELOPMENT?

Yest, I think it has. In fact, that's one thing that many of our students find out when they leave here. For one reason or another I've never been quite able to understand, our students develop an inferiority complex: they don't feel they're as good as other students perhaps until they go away to graduate schools or transfer. And any that have ever come back have said that they have been better prepared -- they are equal to or better pre-

pared -- than many of the students they came in contact with at other colleges. In other words they were perfectly competitive. The proof of that, I think, are the many awards that some of our students have got elsewhere. In fact, that again was a source of annoyance to many people down at Bucknell: so many of our students came down there later on and did carry off some of the awards -- which showed that they type of students we sent out were of high quality. And over the years because the faculty of that time were conscious of and sensitive to the fact that we had to prepare the students so they would stand up well at other schools -- I think that has continued along through the years. Many of our students still come back and say how much they have learned here. It gives them a shot in the arm when they realize that Wilkes is pretty good after all. And I think the fact that so many of our students who are doing professional work now recommend other young people to come here now and tell them how good it was -- is proof of the fact that we were able to keep up our standards.

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HAS THE COLLEGE BEEN ABLE TO KEEP UP WITH THE TIMES, EDUCATIONALLY, WHILE IT HAD TO BE SO PREOCCUPIED WITH DEVELOPMENT?

Yes, I think it has. In fact, that's one thing that many of our students find out when they leave here. For one reason or another I've never been quite able to understand, our students develop an inferiority complex: they don't feel they're as good as other students perhaps until they go away to graduate schools or transfer. And any that have ever come back have said that they have been better prepared -- they are equal to or better pre-

pared -- than many of the students they came in contact with at other colleges. In other words they were perfectly competitive. The proof of that, I think, are the many awards that some of our students have got elsewhere. In fact, that again was a source of annoyance to many people down at Bucknell: so many of our students came down there later on and did carry off some of the awards -- which showed that they type of students we sent out were of high quality. And over the years because the faculty of that time were conscious of and sensitive to the fact that we had to prepare the students so they would stand up well at other schools -- I think that has continued along through the years. Many of our students still come back and say how much they have learned here. It gives them a shot in the arm when they realize that Wilkes is pretty good after all. And I think the fact that so many of our students who are doing professional work now recommend other young people to come here now and tell them how good it was -- is proof of the fact that we were able to keep up our standards.