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Side A Lynn Wilkinson and Richard Walters – “Oral History Interview”

Side B Lynn Wilkinson and Richard Walters – “Oral History Interview”

[Summary]

This document is a transcript of an interview with Richard Walters by Lynn Wilkinson. Mr. Walters was born in 1931 in Wadena, Minnesota. His father was a pastor in Minnesota, first with the Christian Missionary Alliance in Wright, Minnesota, and then with the Evangelical Free Church in Annandale, which led to Mr. Walters' extensive involvement with the Free Church. Mr. Walters graduated from Wheaton College in 1952 and married his wife, Caroline, in the summer of 1955. The Walters family moved to British Columbia in 1962 in order for Mr. Walters to serve as a professor of science on the faculty of the brand new Trinity Junior College.

In this interview, Mr. Walters talks about his education and teaching experience prior to coming to Trinity. He describes some of the original Trinity campus, including Seal Kap House and the original science building. He mentions some of his initial and continued friendships with certain members of the original Trinity staff and with some of the later additions, such as Dr. R. Neil Snider. Mr. Walters discusses his views on Christianity and Science at length. He talks about certain Creationist views and his personal stance on Creationist teaching. He reflects upon the importance of developing within students a complete Christian worldview, and describes his attempt to work with his own students to broaden their understanding of the Creation story.

The interview concludes with a look at the changes Mr. Walters has noticed over the years; he gives special mention to what he thinks the future of Trinity may look like. The interview takes approximately 70 minutes.

[Side A]

Lynn Wilkinson: This is February the 18th, 1983, and my name is Lynn Wilkinson. I'm interviewing Mr. Richard R. Walters. He will be the narrator in this oral history that takes place in Dave Twiest's office in the Library of Trinity Western College.

[tape is stopped]

At the end of this tape, you can tell me whether you are satisfied with everything in it. If there is anything you want restricted, you can say so. If you want to redo it, you can say so at that time.

Before we begin hearing about the--your teaching experience, and your teaching experience especially in the Trinity Western College, could you just tell us a little bit about your family background?

Richard Walters: I was born in 1931, into an Alliance parsonage in northern Minnesota in the depression days. My father had a small congregation there and later moved to a second congregation at Wright, Minnesota.

LW: He was a preacher then?

RW: Yes, in the Christian Missionary Alliance. At--at about 7 years of age, the whole family moved back to the farm. So I spent most of my grade school and high school days in a farm environment. This was mostly spent at Annandale, Minnesota. That's where I took my high school work.

LW: And what about your mother's background?

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RW: Well, in fact, both of my parents are from Iowa. They were converted in their twenties, both of them, and they were very zealous, I would say, for an evangelistic-type ministry. Initially through the American Sunday School union, and my mother, in a very informal biography/autobiography, tells of the several weeks at a time that she stayed at home with the family while my father was in evangelistic meetings in Minnesota, the Dakotas and Eastern Montana.

LW: He was traveling quite a bit?

RW: Yes.

LW: And where were you born. Was it--

RW: Wadena, Minnesota

LW: Wadena.

RW: Yes, the hospital there. (both talking at once)

LW: What about your, any other members of your family?

RW: I have 3 brothers and one sister. My older--my older brother was killed tragically in '79, along with his wife and grandchild, in a house explosion.

LW: What a _____ (??) it must have been. Were your parents alive then?

RW: My mother was living. And I have one other, one of those three brothers is a professor of philosophy at Auburn University in Auburn, Alabama. So, two academics in the family.

LW: What is his name?

RW: Kenneth.

LW: Kenneth. And so then you have another brother?

RW: I have another living brother, yeah. He's recently retired from a Navy Air Corps career.

LW: And what was his name?

RW: Larry.

LW: Larry. And your sister is?

RW: Her name is Lou-Anne(??). That is a family name that is a combination of my father and mother's names. She is the wife of a pastor/farmer, pastor of a community church in eastern Wisconsin.

LW: So, all the families remained in the church area?

RW: Not really, there is the brother involved with philosophy-- makes no profession at this time, as far as I understand.

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LW: And what about your mother's first--name before she was married?

RW: Lillian Emma Ranson(??)

LW: Ranson?

RW: Ranson.

LW: So what background would that be?

RW: She's English. Supposedly she can trace her ancestors to the Mayflower.

LW: Oh, that's interesting. (laughs)

RW: I'm not sure how much substantiation there is for that, but--

LW: And they were both born in Iowa? So you're--

RW: They're from Iowa. I believe my father was born in Illinois, but they came from Iowa to Minnesota in their early days.

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LW: And what school did you attend as a young boy?

RW: Well, I started school in Wright, Minnesota and then all of the remaining--well I had a short time in a country school in the Annandale area, but almost entirely grade school and high school in the Annandale public schools.

LW: And, were you in the Alliance church in Annandale?

RW: No, there was not an Alliance church locally. This is where my association with the Evangelical Free Church started. As soon as we came to that area--that began in 1939, I believe. And I've been associated with the Evangelical Free Church ever since.

LW: Was there any one person that especially influenced you then?

RW: I suppose one of the significant events was late in my high school years. We had--the Buffalo Bible camp was not far from my home, and I never attended camp for the full time, but I was able to spend an occasional day or evening there with friends and for special events. And Bill Star, graduate of Wheaton College, spoke at a certain class (background noise--door banging?) session when I was first challenged for the, in the whole field of Christian higher education. I graduated from the high school class as highest-ranking boy and was given a scholarship to a secular institution. But I turned that down in view of the chance to attend Trinity Bible College in Chicago.

LW: And how long did you attend Trinity?

RW: I graduated from their two-year program, the Bible College program at that time, from '49 to '51.

LW: So, can you tell us a little bit about days at Trinity--those years?

RW: Well at that time, Trinity had just moved to Chicago in it--well, let's say in its combined form. I cannot speak for all of the details but I believe it was the Norwegian school of the Free Church that formerly was in Minneapolis that was combined with the Swedish branch that had been operating in Chicago for a number of years. And so in a sense, we were getting in on a brand new situation there too. They built a new building that we got into in the middle of our 1949 school year. And it was the first combination of the two schools-- an interesting experience. In those days, nearly everyone worked their way through school and so classes were just in the morning. I initially worked downtown Chicago and then was able to get work on the maintenance staff on campus, and I held that then for the remainder of the time. From there I went to the University of Minnesota for a period of time. I was in the pre-medical program there, but for a number of reasons-- not

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academically, but other reasons-- I was diverted from that course of pursuit and I went back in spring of--probably spring of '51, and attended Trinity Seminary for one semester. And some more work at the University of Minnesota, in a combined package, I was able to transfer enough credits to Wheaton College to take my senior year there at Wheaton College.

LW: This is just about the days when TV was becoming popular, and coming into the homes-- some homes. Do you remember that affecting your life at all? (both talking at once)

RW: Well, I never had television in my parental home and did not have it in our own home until, I would say, mid1960's. It was sometime after we moved to Trinity Western (banging in background).

LW: What are your thoughts on that?

RW: Well, it requires personal discipline I'm sure. I still find many programs interesting and helpful. It's a broadening experience, but certainly--certainly one needs to be very careful. I think it's had a wide downgrading effect on principles and standards in the public in general and molding what people assume to be the norm.

LW: (unintelligible) Was there a point in your life this far then, when you actually, when Christ became very important to you? Was it just at your teenage years?

RW: Well, my initial commitment for salvation was at 9 years of age. I'm sure that there were repeated meaningful experiences after that. I can't say that I really fell into sin, but I'm sure that there were times of spiritual indifference.

LW: Do you remember any particular times, years, or--?

RW: Well, I was never, as I indicated, able to go to summer camps, which, on a full-time (background noise) basis, which have been very meaningful to many people, but I found times of special meetings in our own church, or opportunity to attend FCYF conferences as I got a little older, or even the National Free Church conference. In those days, the National Conference was often held at Medicine Lake, just outside of Minneapolis, so we weren't far away. And this I guess, kept up a continued contact with the Evangelical Free church and what it stood for and the possibility of getting involved in their overall effort later on.

LW: What about your parents at this time? Was your father still alive when you were at Wheaton and when you graduated?

RW: Yes, at that time. Then in the fall, in August of 1955, I married Caroline Lundeen(??), daughter from a family that had been very close to us for a number of years; in fact, my older brother and I married sisters. And then in the spring of 1956, my father passed away from a heart attack. That was a disappointment in the sense that our first child was expected in the fall.

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LW: He didn't get to see his first grandchild.

RW: Well, my older brother did have grandchildren at that time

LW: Well it's nice that he did see some grandchildren. And, how did you meet your wife?

RW: Well, we're both from the same church and through this long-time family contact--both of our families attended this church-- and very early contact was both of our fathers at one time raised registered spotted Poland-China hogs. And this is, for farmers, that's the nearest thing to a professional interest. (interviewer laughs)

LW: And what about your courtship? Were you still in school or just finishing Wheaton at the time? Or was it before?

RW: It started before, some considerable time before Wheaton. We went together for--it had been nearly 5 years by the time we were married. I'm older than my wife.

LW: So about 1950-1955.

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RW: ‘51-’55 (interviewer laughs)

LW: And then you were married at the church in Annandale, at the Evangelical Free--

RW: (both speaking at once) Yes, the Albion Evangelical Free Church, that’s the country church. There’s also the Free Church in the town of Annandale.

LW: And you have some family now?

RW: My own family?

LW: Yes, your own family.

RW: Yes we have four daughters. Three are married and we have one grandchild expected in May.

LW: Did your girls go to Trinity Western?

RW: Three of them did. The first two graduated from the two-year program.

LW: What are they doing now?

RW: Presently the oldest one is a housewife, although she worked in a doctor’s office for the first five or six years of marriage. And the second one is also a housewife, this is the one with the children, and the third daughter is in a real estate office, and the fourth daughter is at home. She’s working at a clothing store.

LW: At a college store?

RW: No, a clothing store.

LW: Oh, clothing store. Um-hm.

RW: My wife is, has pursued a number of things. She’s presently secretary at the Abbotsford Evangelical Free Church.

LW: So you’ve had a long association with the church, both you and your wife?

RW: Oh yes. We attended the 75th conference of the Evangelical Free Church of America in Denver, Colorado in 1959, and we’re looking forward to attending the 100th conference near Boone, Iowa next year.

LW: That’s quite an experience too. What about your teaching experience?

RW: Well, maybe I should lead off with my first post-graduate experience. I have seven years of cancer research experience at the University of Minnesota hospitals. I got this opportunity two days after my Wheaton graduation. I was in charge of the animal studies in cancer research in the department of medicine on the campus there, and this worked out very nicely so that I could set up my own schedules and take my Master’s program at the University of Minnesota at the same time. In the fall of 1958, after I had finished my master’s program, on rather short notice, I was contacted by the Dean at St. Paul Bible

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College and a part-time opening in there for their science course there. And I will always be grateful to him for taking me on with practically no teaching experience. And, uh, I-- he--

LW: What was his name?

RW: Joseph Winninger(?). I lost track of him somewhat, but I think he’s still active in educational circles. At one point he was with the Laternal(?) institute because one of the other Alliance men heads up--is president at Laternal(?)..

LW: And so you were grateful to him for giving you that teaching experience?

RW: Yes, to start, to get a chance to break into the field. I had no public school experience, and only that limited laboratory assistant’s experience at Wheaton College.

We met briefly at a noon lunch for an interview and he sounded me out on certain potential controversial subjects in science and Christianity, and apparently was satisfied and I got the opportunity that fall, and I continued to teach there four years on a part-time basis. I also taught an Educational Psychology course a couple times there.

LW: And was it right after St. Paul’s that you were contacted to come to TWC, or how did that--?

RW: I was still at St. Paul, and I was still at the University of Minnesota. It must have been in the summer of 1961, during the planning stages for Trinity Junior College at that time, that I was contacted by brother Calvin Hanson, the first founding president. He was attending the same Free Church that we were at that time, in Minneapolis. He had recently come back from the mission field in Japan and he knew what I was doing. They arranged an evening get-together to just discuss how the plans for the founding of Trinity were coming, and I was very careful about not playing up my own interests, because it happens at St. Paul Bible College where I was teaching, that you don’t apply for a job there, they don’t believe in that. You don’t take the initiative at all. And as we were parting that evening, the get-together with the Hansons, I finally did get so brazen. He was suggesting that if I knew of any possible teachers who might be interested in this effort, to let him know. I said, “Are you making this personal at all?” And in Cal’s own way, and well-intentioned, he said, “Well, you’ve got your position there, and we don’t want to give the impression of taking faculty away from the institution,” or something like that. But it boiled down to the fact that we were very definitely interested and we began the exchange of documents and so I knew approximately a year ahead of time that I would be coming out here. Which was very nice.

LW: That is nice. Then you have time to plan.

RW: We were able to buy some new things for the house and to have them some time so we wouldn’t have to pay customs on them when we brought them in—you have to own them six months ahead of time and things like that. We had plenty of time to plan the move and to terminate things there.

LW: In a nice fashion. (unintelligible) Very good. And where did you live when you first came to the Langley area?

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You weren’t on campus were you?

RW: Well, our first night was spent on campus. Our goods, along with those of President Hanson and the first librarian, were sent in a large rented semi-trailer truck, (sound of steps) up here and they got here ahead of us and they were just unloaded in the barn, so the birds made a few deposits on them, (interviewer laughs) and then we arrived several days later to begin looking for a place. Well at that time, what is Seal Kap House now, had recently been vacated, so we spent our first night in Canada in what is now Dr. Ken Davis’ office. (interviewer laughs) It was a bedroom at that time.

LW: That’s interesting.

RW: Then we began our search for housing. Housing was very short in the Langley area at that time. We heard from some of the locals that maybe the weather and the fog situation wouldn’t be quite as desirable here so we also started looking in Abbotsford. And we looked for several days without deciding on anything, but we came on a very

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nice all-brick, three-bedroom rambler, whose owner was desperate to sell. Of course, we couldn't buy, but he was moving out and was willing to rent to us under the conditions. We were very anxious to have it, so we were quite anxious to convince him that we kept our kids in tow and that he could expect it to be in good condition. He was going to eastern Canada and a year later when he came back, he was very thankful and appreciative. He said he had visions of coming back and having to redecorate the house and everything before he would be able to sell, and that wasn't necessary.

LW: You had the four girls at that time?

RW: No we had three at that time. Our last girl was born in fall of 1964. So it was during our first year up here then that we began negotiations on our present property. Lot prices at that time were really good. We were able to get our lot for eleven hundred dollars, and we engaged the same contractor who had built the chapel on campus here to build a house for us. And we got into that house in the fall of 1963, and we are still living in it.

LW: Who was the contractor? Was that Peter--?

RW: Henry Hiebert from Hub Construction.

LW: I'll just make a note of that under chapel.

Can you reveal your salary in those days?

RW: I started--I came with the understanding that it may be as low as three hundred dollars a month, but my initial promise was three thousand six hundred dollars a year. Then by the time we got here, they were able to raise it fifty dollars a month, so I started at three hundred fifty dollars a month.

LW: In those days, could a family of three live on that? (laughs)

RW: Well, it was very tight. We always finished out the last of the month on the Family Allowance cheque, I assure you that.

LW: Really living payday to payday.

RW: Uh huh. But before too long, the college was able to gradually improve salaries, but it took the same kind of commitment that some have had to have had since then too. It's been a struggle for people to come in at any point along the line because it just seems

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like living costs were somewhat out of line with what the college could hope to pay. But that was always the intention of the founders, I think, that they expected that the whole situation would require a high degree of commitment and that you took some of your rewards in other kinds of satisfactions that you couldn't put a dollar sign on.

LW: And I suppose that's how a lot of people are attracted to Trinity, the ones that stay?

RW: Certainly.

LW: You stayed many years. Can you tell us why, or is that part of the reason?

RW: Well, it's been a very rewarding experience. I suppose as a principle-- even growing up-- that was instilled from home, is not to jump around too much and be too flighty. There are some values in sticking to something, and I know that the short experience I had at Wheaton College-- I always felt that the long term service of the presidents there and the long term service of the faculty were a big contributing factor in the stability of the school, and so it's been rewarding to stay with something long enough

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to see the measure of success that’s been enjoyed by the institution. And as a family, we put our roots down, and of course now our children’s families are established in the area and it would be difficult to situate elsewhere; friends and our contacts and our family are here. That may sound a little ulterior for continuing service of this kind but I think honestly, everyone would recognize that those kinds of considerations enter in. But on the other hand, we could be a very mobile family too if we had to. We’ve returned to our parental homes practically every year or more than once a year, occasionally. We are able to travel widely in the summer times.

LW: What about your friendships over the years? (unintelligible)

RW: Yes, these are probably a primary memory that I have of some of the early years at the college, some very close associations and people that I learned to appreciate. I think this is one thing that has necessarily been sacrificed as the college has grown. It seems we’re too big and too busy to have the time and opportunity to share things on quite the same level that we used to be able to. The more immediate contacts now are within the division, rather than the whole college-wide as they used to be. Although we are small enough that the contacts are there for the person who wants to pursue them. I guess there will always be a kind of camaraderie with those who start something in the sense that we did here.

LW: And you are still friends with a lot of those people, like the Asas--

RW: Yes, the Asas and the Hansons. We’ve lost contact with some of the other originals from the first year, but we could pick them up if the opportunity arose. And there were

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other good contacts; I remember close associations with Dick Goodsell(??) who was here, and others.

LW: You mentioned that you came together with the first librarian. Who was that?

RW: Her name was Miss Modig: m-o-d-i-g. I can’t remember her first name. She was a single lady. She was a very interesting individual. Other than a few things that she sent in the truck with us, she came with her car completely packed to the window levels. I don’t know if there was room for herself to sit, and she came with the impression that she was going to be on the edge of civilization. She didn’t want to trust her goods too far, so many of her things came with her in the car. And she had some librarian background and she helped us out that first year. But she had her ways-- she had some concerns about old dusty books which was a little bit surprising for a librarian, so temporarily the contributed books and the new books were, in a sense, organized into two separate libraries, but that isn’t saying much for those days, because each library just consisted of a few shelves. (interviewer laughs) But she wanted to keep the old dusty books separate from the new ones and that got us some troubles on the side.

LW: And then Mr. Trotter came into the library.

RW: Yes, I believe he followed. He was here a number of years.

LW: Probably 1964. (both speaking at once)

RW: When he came?

LW: Uh huh.

RW: I wouldn’t have the actual date there.

LW: Well, did she leave after one year? Mrs.--Miss--

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RW: I wouldn't be able to say at this point, whether it was one or two years.

LW: And what was life like in the spacious dining room of Seal Kap? (laughs)

RW: Well, Seal Kap has had very many evolutionary stages and in the latter years, it became to be a joke as to what remodeling would be done in Seal Kap at that time. The (steps in background) one end of the building housed all of the administrative offices--- the president, the dean and the business manager's office, and then in the fireplace area initially was the dining room. Then the kitchen and the cafeteria line was in the other end. Some special events during the first year, I wouldn't mention exactly which ones now but probably the Christmas dinner, there was room for the whole student body and faculty and their families in that one area. So then it went through several stages of growth within that building before the new complex was completed. Maybe you'd be interested in a thing or two about our initial science facilities?

LW: Oh, yes.

RW: The first lab and lecture rooms were in one wing of the old dorms; the pre-fabricated housing that was moved here from that construction site project. This is the materials and building project that really got the college off the ground. This one wing was not partitioned for dormitory rooms: it was left open. My initial equipment in the laboratory consisted of brand new sheets of plywood on sawhorses.

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That was my tables--with extension cords running all over, into which we could plug in our microscopes.

LW: How many microscopes did you have?

RW: Well, we had 9 the first year, I think. We had, I had 9 students the first year and then we brought this up to 24 probably the fall of our second year. It was the fall of 1964 when we got into the Arts and Sciences building, and even there, the equipment didn't arrive at the start of the school year. It was installed during the school year.

LW: And your basement was left?

RW: Yes, the basement of the Arts and Sciences building was left unfinished. I served on the building committee for that building and it was an interesting time there as we handled the design of the building. The architect didn't like the profile of the building--- if we raised it enough to provide for the front windows. It was my understanding at the time that basement space is essentially one of the cheapest ways to build. Over the years, the decision proved the right one, I think, as they were gradually expanded into all phases, utilized that whole, that whole basement, yes.

LW: So you're glad they had the windows then?

RW: Uh huh. Many summer vacations I painted on campus, I've always enjoyed this. It was necessary for the faculty to have some outside employment during the summer time. And so everything from major outside buildings or painting dorm rooms. Most recently, I've had the contracts on the last job on the chapel and the Arts and Science building for the last 3 or 4 years.

LW: Oh I see. So you actually contract over the summer?

RW: That's been the policy recently yes.

LW: That's a very good idea. Do you have other people working with you?

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RW: No, I've done them all.

LW: Oh, you have—goodness--you must really like painting. What are some other hobbies you are interested in?

RW: Well, I enjoy the field of geology very much, as well as my biology teaching area. I don't do quite as much rock-hounding as I used to but I was particularly interested in collecting adequate demonstration materials for my course work here. So I've done a considerable amount of that. I have an interest in western, North American history, I would say. It kind of goes along with my interest in geology and the outdoors and photographic potential of the west. I've been able to draw on those quite heavily in the classroom area, both in geology and biology. My wife and I both enjoy early American interior decorating interests. So we've done quite a bit of our own work and ultimately finishing all of our home in Abbotsford. So then those abilities and interests get transferred over to helping your kids then as the next generation.

LW: That's right. So you go through it all again. (laughs)

RW: Yup. Well, its kind of rewarding and they appreciate it.

LW: I'm sure. And it's a great help to them. What about any memorable students over the years? Have there been any outstanding?

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RW: Well, I don't know as it would be well to mention any particular names. I have had two or three girls who ultimately became wives of teachers who came back to teach here-- join me on the faculty. Quite early, it worked out already that I had some second generation students. Their parents possibly attended here when they were a little older. But before long of course, true second generation students will be quite common, I think. It's been rewarding to see our students go out, especially into the professional areas. We've got great professional training here and occasionally we get those letters back, expressing real appreciation for what they learned here, especially the standards of study, and learning and expectations that were put on them--find that they have stood them in good stead.

[46:30]

[End Side A]

[Side B]

LW: Is President Neil Snider a difficult person to work with? Or--what kind of a boss is he? (laughs--both speaking at once)

RW: No, I certainly wouldn't say that. Probably one of the main differences that I'm aware of is that he, in training and perspective, he is more the administrator, but the whole college and our respective responsibilities have developed in such a way that I have far fewer contacts than, say I did, in the days with Calvin Hanson. But our contacts are always congenial, and I appreciate Neil's approach to his responsibilities here, the tough decisions that he has had to make, and I've found that I've been able to generally support him in his work here.

LW; Do you know his family very well? He has--

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RW: Not very well, no. It happens that we are remotely related through marriage now, but it's-- hasn't had any--had any bearing, I guess.

LW: Okay, and how about Ken Davis?

RW: I think that Ken is an outstanding Dean. I think that I as one have merely added to this general evaluation that the whole faculty has given him recently. He's very much appreciated, and I think that he's been one of the best things that's happened to Trinity Western.

LW: Is there one or two incidences [sic] that you can give me to really illustrate that?

RW: Well certainly, he has the academic perspective, the expertise, the background that - to bring that particular component to Trinity Western. He's had the courage of convictions, also, in the difficult decisions that he has had to make. He's a deeply spiritual person and very human and I just appreciate the job that he's done. (sound of pencil scratching?)

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LW: I would be really interested to hear just a few words about your views of Science versus Christianity and how can--I haven't read your paper; I know we have it in the archives; I haven't got to that yet.

RW: Which one is that now? Which paper?

LW: Its one that you prepared, oh, I think, about 1964.

RW: Is this the one I gave at the Inter-Varsity meeting at Victoria?

LW: I believe it was, yes.

RW: Well, of course, that's 'way back. I'm sure that that reflects perspectives that I developed from-- while at Wheaton College. We believe that the two main areas of God's revelation are Scripture and the physical world (beeping noise) and we expect them to be in agreement, since they are revelations from a single truthful God. We expect complete agreement there. In attempting to understand both these areas of revelation, we find that there are facts which maybe I can define as just conditions of actuality. We find complete agreement between the facts in the two areas of revelation, but when we find apparent contradictions, then immediately we have a little test of truth here, in that it tells us in one side or the other of our sources of knowledge, we're getting into the theoretical and not the factual and in truth we may be dealing in the speculative, theoretical area, either as far as what we understand about Scripture or what we understand about the physical world. Now, I'm not saying that the whole of Scripture is open to interpretation--not at all. We feel that (door slamming) there is a basic body of knowledge, a basic message there, which is adequate for revealing the purposes of God and the way of salvation and the basic tenets upon which Christianity is built. However, especially in regards to issues of creation and origins, and possibly the role of the biblical flood, there are areas where we have to do the best we can as far as understanding what that message is and how specific it's intended to be. I feel that it is, it's an entirely different matter to talk about creation initially, that may allow for certain mechanisms of change to be a part of the ongoing nature of life, but that's quite different from saying that pure chance led to the origin of life, or that pure chance accounts for the ongoing of life and all the interrelationships that we know. I enjoy dealing with the complexities and

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the evidence for design and the relationships in the physical world that reveal a master plan behind it, and to bring out the sheer logic that didn't come out by itself.

LW: Do your students have arguments for you or do they really get into this?

RW: Occasionally some come from backgrounds or even really recent exposure, where

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they feel bound to take a more literal, narrow interpretation of Scripture and their understanding of the-- say the geologic record. The thing that hurts me sometimes is that occasionally a student will even be approaching the end of his education here and he still does not integrate all the possible sources of his information into formulating a Christian world and life view. Now this, I wouldn't say that this happens to very many students, thankfully, but uh--occasionally we see this, this happen. And of course these are things that we want to work on and--with that student. We feel that we would like to have them develop the appreciation of the knowledge-guided decision in their own lives and if they're leaving out or disregarding whole areas of information, then we can't really feel that they're doing that yet, by adapting, sometimes, what I see as a too-limited perspective, is in essence what they are doing.

LW: Is that maybe tradition or do you think that's why they stay narrow, or--

RW: Well, there is a very active group. The current expression of this is the revival of a very literalist, creationist viewpoint. Now we are creationists at Trinity in every sense of the word, but we also can love and accept people who have some breadth to the meaning of that word, whereas there are people-- groups active in the creationist/evolution conflict now, who want you to only see eye to eye with them or otherwise they put you in the other camp and fail to recognize that there are more than two alternatives in some of these controversies.

LW: That's interesting. Have you--are there any books written on this?

RW: Oh yes,

LW: Is there one that you could recommend right now that explains the creationist's point of view and what you could go along with? What you teach?

RW: Well I don't know that we would find it all in one volume. The Creation Research Society is putting out many publications of their own. This is the narrower point of view. Bernard Wrong(??) wrote in the fifties or early sixties, I don't have the exact title of his book. Some early writings that influenced me, Dr. Russell Mixtur(??) at Wheaton was president of the American Scientific Affiliation. He was my advisor while I was at Wheaton. His writings were influential.

LW: What about a comment or two on the change in twenty years and also what you see in the future of Trinity?

RW: Well when people come on campus, I meet them, I talk to people, I think the first thing that comes to other people's minds

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is the very obvious changes in the physical plant. Now, this is clearing away in my own mind as well, but our presidents from the beginning have said that a college isn't just a physical plant. It's an important part of it but the people aspect of it is what makes the difference.

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LW: When you first came in 1962, did you have the vision then, or were you just, could you actually see it being as it is today or was that just too much to expect? (laughs) (unintelligible)

RW: I don't think that I ever perceived it in total, but I do know that in an early faculty meeting I asked the question. I was concerned with how you get a strong academic reputation, academic tradition established on a new campus, because I knew that I had come from one, at least, where that was an important part of their tradition, and on-going and I was concerned that this be a part of our future here. We had hopes, but I don't know that anyone could have foreseen exactly what shape it would take. I think around in closets and storage yet, are probably many different models of proposed campus development that took many directions and plans on paper as they were put down and different directions were sampled. I think the college had a very logical development, and logical for the Christian is also providential.

You're probably aware that we got the jump on the whole community college movement in British Columbia. We are older than any of the community colleges. And that from our early years, as-- aiming at being primarily a transfer institution. In those days I think it was President Hanson who probably best articulated that an important part of our spiritual mission was to send students on, who could have the right kind of influence on a secular campus, to be good students academically, but to carry the kind of witness and to have their own personal stability in faith that would carry them as they moved on to that secular environment. And then when these students, with this world and life view, went on, and the Christian perspective-- I think it makes them better students, and hopefully along with a measure of what we were able to do for them here, these students began to have rather outstanding success at the universities and this was again providentially building our status and reputation for the time when we would become a four year college ourselves. And I (door slamming) think that this reputation and this success rate that our transfer students had was one of **65:00**

the biggest elements in achieving for us ultimate acceptance, and this was the evidence that some of the right things, at least, were happening out here.

LW: And, what do you see then in the future? Do you see increased enrollment, or--?

RW: Oh, I think we're going to continue to grow. I'm glad that we've got the space that we have. I remember in the early struggling years, local people asked what we were going to do with all of the room, and when we needed money, they encouraged us to sell off part of it and so on, but this has proven to be the right thing to do as well. There ultimately has to be some limits somewhere: plateaus in enrollment where we can hope to maintain that same kind of relationships in the classroom and in the student services area--that other whole area of their campus experience. The possibility of adding various theological programs I think is going to be important. Especially in the science area, we want to continue to take an active role in these issues that we've just talked about, the science and scriptural issues. Hopefully a satisfying Christian world and life view will be a part of the educational background inventory of each of our students. I'm looking forward very much to a proposed new science building. My own particular teaching areas may not have a lot of space in the new building since chemistry is the primary need, but we plan, we hope to coordinate that building with the existing facilities and space and

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possibly involve some modernizing and remodeling and updating that would give us a very modern facility for the sciences.

LW: Uhm-hm, that is needed. Well thank you very much, is there anything else you feel you'd like to say in closing?

RW: I look back myself on my own college days and recognize the very good times and enjoyment that I had in it. There were faculty that helped me over the rough spots then, Dr. Will Martin, Dr. Stanley Lindquist, who played vital parts in my life at very difficult times and I hope that I can pass on some of this concern and positive influence into the lives of my students as they did in my own life.

LW: Dr. Will Martin: I know he's in the States, I've heard his name.

RW: He's been very active in the States. I think he was, he recently retired as Dean of the Wheaton graduate school but the last I know of, he is heading up some seminary back in Africa. He spent a number of years on the mission field in Africa himself, and he's back there in his retirement days.

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Well thank you very much for the interview

[End Side B]

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