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CHAPTER 23 — IN MEMORIAM

By Carlyle Lewis (Unless designated otherwise)



DR. W. L. (BILL) BINGHAM

1923—1972

If you ask anyone in Lexington about Bill Bingham you will receive a hundred different answers—all good. He was a man of many fine qualities and his influence will be felt for years to come as it was while he lived.

Walt Brinkley, a Lexington attorney and one of his best friends said, "Bill was always fun to play tennis with. He was a real strong competitor and he loved to win but he could lose with grace and without excuses. 'We'll get 'em next time,' Bill would say." Usually he and his partner did just that.

Another tennis partner and attorney, Frank Holton, commented about Bill, "He was one of the finest men I have ever known both on and off the courts."

Many of the younger tennis players had Dr. Bingham for their family doctor. One told me that "Dr. Bingham always took plenty of time to listen to my problems and never seemed to be in a hurry. He was my kind of doctor."

Bill Bingham was a good tennis player—not the tournament kind outside of Lexington because his time was limited—but he played hard and well on the local courts. Dr. Bingham was one of the local leaders behind the tremendous Lexington tennis program, giving both time and money for its support.

Mary Garber, of the sports staff of *Winston-Salem Journal* had this to say about Bill Bingham regarding his interest in athletics at Wake Forest: "He was a former president of the Deacon Club and his hard work helped the organization to grow. He didn't want credit for what he did. All he asked was what job needed to be done and he did it."

Hooks, the Wake Forest athletic director, to get more aid for tennis."

Dr. Bingham died in 1972 after a long bout with cancer. When he first learned that he had cancer he knew what was ahead of him but he continued to practice medicine and kept up his interest in sports.

In his memory the new Lexington tennis center was named for him. At the dedication held in April of 1973, the Lexington High School tennis team beat Statesville 7-2 to win its 80th straight match, its 100th victory in 101 meets. Dr. Bingham's son, Arthur, played in the No. 1 spot and won his match for Lexington, 6-0, 6-0—an auspicious beginning for the Dr. W. L. Bingham Tennis Center.

Another tribute was paid to Bill Bingham when a scholarship for Wake Forest tennis was established in his memory. Dr. Hooks announced that "this scholarship will be called the Dr. William Louis Bingham Scholarship and it will be awarded annually to a scholar-athlete who best exemplified the admirable qualities of this illustrious son."

Even in death, Bill Bingham's good works are still being felt.

NEIL COLE

Deceased — 1974

Neil Cole of Sanford, long a leader in tennis in that city, the Sandhills and Eastern Carolina Tennis Association, died in 1974. Mary Lou Jones, St. Mary's athletic director, wrote the following:

"Neil Cole made a great contribution in Sanford to both young and old in the field of tennis.

Whenever I look back over my tennis career, he always comes to mind in some way.

To those who had no rackets, shoes or balls, he always saw that they were made available.

Helping the youngsters and giving his time and encouragement meant much to the tennis players of my day. He helped us all: Delmar Moser, Bobby Joe Key, Richard Makepeace, Perry Holland, Billy Simonson, and myself, and in later years Kathy Spivey and others.

To him I will always say, 'Thank you, Mr. Cole, for all your help, the many tennis trips you took me on, the encouragement you gave me when I was down in a match, and the fun and laughter we shared on the tennis

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CARLYLE LEWIS