



Dr. Raymond W. Knight



Scholarships were established (for Outstanding Female and Outstanding Male at Will Rogers High School) to honor the memory and life's work of Dr. R. W. Knight. From 1950 until his retirement in 1969, Dr. Raymond W. Knight (1903-1978) served as principal of Will Rogers High School. Under his guidance, the school achieved a nationally recognized reputation for academic excellence and reached its peak enrollment of nearly 3,000. Students at Will Rogers during the nineteen years of Dr. Knight's service saw in Dr. Knight the embodiment of the strong school spirit and deep pride which made Will Rogers High School outstanding.

When Dr. Knight began as principal of the school in 1950 very little in the building besides the name over the front doors called to mind the man for whom the school was named. Through Dr. Knight's efforts, the school acquired one of only two portraits of Will Rogers for which the great humorist sat. This portrait by Tambourini is on permanent loan to Gilcrease Museum and a replica hangs in the east entrance hallway of the school.

Lining the walls of the second-floor corridors are large photographic murals that trace the life of Will Rogers. These murals, too, are the result of Dr. Knight's efforts and encouragement. The Shaw Memorial Organ in the school auditorium was a gift from Judge and Mrs. Oras Shaw in the early 1950's - a gift suggested by and acquired through the efforts of Dr. Knight.

In all his endeavors it was always Dr. Knight's primary goal to provide the greatest educational opportunity possible for students at Will Rogers High School. Under his leadership, the Advanced Placement Program and the Special Education Program

were added to the Rogers curriculum. The city-wide Memorial Trust Fund Foundation which has provided millions of dollars in scholarships for Tulsa's high school graduates began with a small scholarship fund Dr. Knight helped to establish in the 1950's.

- Adapted from *The Lariat* (Will Rogers High School yearbook), 1979