2 Negro Students Accepted by W&L

By Ralph Fuller
Times-Dispatch News Bureau

LEXINGTON — Two Negro students have been accepted for admission to Washington and Lee University here in September. They would be the first of their race to attend the 217-year-old college in modern times.

A university spokesman confirmed the acceptance of the students' application Thursday in response to a Times-Dispatch reporter's inquiry. He added that the two have confirmed their acceptances.

The students are Leslie D. Smith Jr., 21, of Chuckatuck and Dennis Alan Haston, 18, of Lexington. Smith, a June graduate of Saint Paul's College in Lawrenceville, will enter as a freshman law student.

Haston plans to enter as a freshman in the university's liberal arts college. He is a June graduate of Lexington High School.

Smith will reside during the year in a law school dormitory.

Haston will live at home, the spokesman said.

The pair will be the first Negroes to be enrolled in the school since a free-born Negro, John Chavis, attended what was then Washington College in 1802. His attendance is reported in a 1930 issue of the North Carolina Historical Review. University enrollment records themselves do not go back that far.

The spokesman added that the university had accepted a Negro law school applicant a year ago but that the applicant did not confirm his acceptance and did not enroll in the school.

Smith will be receiving financial aid through the law school's normal financial aid program, based on need and merit.

Haston will receive the customary fee differential granted all students who are normally residents of Rockbridge County.

The university's student government had gone on record last spring as advocating recruitment of Negro students.