

in the first Ph.D. in physics and marine science. I was at a social party one time some years ago, and President and Mrs. Paschall came. They were both in school with me -- I knew them from student days -- so we got over in the corner of the dining room. I said, "Davis, you know the next thing I expect to hear is that you're going to have a medical school down in Norfolk attached to William and Mary and that you'll --." "Sssh," he said. "Don't say that. I'm trying to prevent that from happening right now." I didn't know it. Well, of course, as it turned out they are building a medical school, but it's not attached to William and Mary; it's with Old Dominion. I don't like this any more than I like big-time football. I still like to think of it as a small, select liberal arts college, but "them days ain't no more," and I have to reconcile myself to that. It's awfully hard. They'll find it so in fundraising, particularly if they go into a capital campaign as they're talking about starting next year in connection with the Bicentennial for \$25,000,000 or so. I don't know what their chances are. Certainly they cannot get it from alumni; we don't have that many wealthy alumni. Our handicap is that it is a state institution, and the state has been very generous to the college: the magnificent campus, those new buildings -- the state, really, has been lavish with William and Mary. Now I would like us to raise money for luxury items that I think go with a liberal arts education. I'd love to see the alumni raise (through the fund I'm currently directing) money for music and art, that kind

of thing -- performing arts -- these little touches the state can't afford and will never appropriate enough money for those things. We've got to do that. It's not like Amherst or some of these fine liberal arts colleges that have no connection with the state. They can go to foundations and businesses to get money, and I fear we can't. I'm worried about that, as much as I'd like to see them get the endowment money.

Williams: Back in the late '30s it was bandied about -- how seriously I don't know -- that Rockefeller would endow William and Mary. Since this works into what we're talking about now, maybe it would be a good chance [to ask] how serious was this proposal?

McCurdy: Well, you'll get some conflicting stories on this. I'm not certain of the truth, but I'll tell you one that was current and I thought extremely fascinating. Mr. Bryan had a little element of jealousy whenever his relationship with Mr. Rockefeller came to the fore. It was true that Mr. Bryan was a pretty wealthy Virginian and a very prominent one, but he didn't have quite as much money as Mr. Rockefeller. They were always cordial. Whenever Mr. Rockefeller was in town Mr. Bryan entertained at the President's House, and Mr. Rockefeller had him down to Bassett Hall. Mr. Bryan importuned Mr. Rockefeller at some point for an endowment for the college. There was a rumor going around that if that went over it would end up that the Restoration would be running the college. Now this would never have happened, but this was in the minds of some of the

provincial Virginians -- Yankee money coming down here and it'll take over the college. So, the story (the romantic or the fantasy) is that one Sunday afternoon on a bright day, Mr. Rockefeller and Mr. Bryan got in one or the other's car and drove out -- nobody else in attendance -- and sat on a log out at Jamestown. (Have you heard this one?) And Mr. Bryan proposed to Mr. Rockefeller that the college take over the Restoration. Strangely, the story goes, Mr. Rockefeller did not turn it down. They had a long pleasant chat about this and drove back to Williamsburg. Whether it's true or not, Mr. Bryan was unsold on the idea by Charles Duke. Duke was the bursar, a nephew of J.A.C. Chandler, and wedded to the political part of the state. His whole world was machiavellian maneuvering in Richmond in the legislature. He didn't want to lose control, which he would if Mr. Rockefeller became involved in the administration of the college or if the college became involved in the administration of Williamsburg. Well, that ended it. There was no more talk of getting any money from Mr. Rockefeller. But in June 1939 we had the annual meeting of the alumni society, followed by a lunch in Trinkle Hall. We always had an alumni oration. Sometimes it took the worse form of that word; it would go on for an hour and a half, and it was usually hot in those unairconditioned days. In 1939 Vernon Geddy, executive vice-president of Colonial Williamsburg, gave the alumni oration in which he said, among other things, "the golden hour of William and Mary is at hand." This made John

Stewart Bryan livid because the implication was that Geddy, being a spokesman for Rockefeller (actually he was speaking for himself), felt that the college had missed a great many opportunities, that Duke and Bryan together had been very shortsighted. The golden hour is at hand to do something about it! There's a picture in that Alumni Gazette -- it would be in the October issue. I printed the whole speech (in those days I didn't know that you don't print speeches that no one reads anyway.) You read that one and you'll see a picture of Geddy making the speech (that's one of the shorter orations). Bryan is sitting there just biting his teeth -- it shows in his face. He never forgave Vernon for that speech. Subsequently, Vernon became president of the alumni society for three terms. One of the best ones I had.

Williams: Did Mr. Bryan see any advantages to Rockefeller's taking over the college?

McCurdy: Well, that never really was the point. Rockefeller was never going to take it over. Nobody suggested it; Mr. Rockefeller never did. I think you might have some criticism of Mr. Rockefeller and his heirs to some extent. The only things the foundation did for the college were the restoration of the Wren Building, the President's House, and the Brafferton, plus maintaining the front campus. Mr. Rockefeller did, even before the Restoration, contribute to the building of the original Phi Beta Kappa Hall, and it was at that dedication when Dr. W.A.R. Goodwin interested Mr. Rockefeller in this restoration project.

Later, when that building burned, they built the current Phi Beta Kappa, and I think Mr. Rockefeller contributed again. But the point is: considering the money he had and his interest in Williamsburg, I felt (I talked to Vernon Geddy about this many times) he could do something great for the college in addition to these three old buildings. It was great to have those buildings put back the way they were, but something living -- whether it be in endowment specified for the use of this or that or any other thing -- I don't care. He never did, and I kept hoping even when he died there'd be something in his will because William and Mary meant a lot to Mr. Rockefeller. We used to see him strolling around the campus every time he came; he just strolled around the street. Williamsburg people had enormous respect for him, and they knew when he came there he didn't want to be treated as a landmark or a curiosity; he just wanted to walk. And he walked all over the place, up and down alleys, looking at new projects and old ones. Just a delightful, resourceful, and sweet man, as was his first wife (I didn't know his second wife very well). John III succeeded his father as chairman of the board, and then he got so interested in Japanese things, Asian things, that he gave it up, and Winthrop Rockefeller became the head of it. I talked to John III; one time I had lunch with him privately. I asked if there was not something here at the college he could focus on to make a substantial contribution for the future, for the life of the college, not for the past, but the future? I acknowledged the

restored buildings are wonderful. It's something that not only we cherish but the nation should cherish -- the Wren Building -- but I wanted something for the future, and that's what I would hope he and his family would consider. I did not specify what that could be; it could be any number of things. I thought again we were going to get something. Winthrop never did anything. I think the relationship now between the -- there was definite friction in the Bryan days, but never in the J.A.C. Chandler, in the early days.

Williams: I was going to ask that. Did J.A.C. and John D. get along together?

McCurdy: J.A.C. and John D. got along beautifully. I think probably Mr. Rockefeller respected J.A.C. Chandler's mental acuity, and he liked to deal with that. Mr. Bryan was a little too effusive -- vague isn't the word exactly, but not sufficiently business-like. Mr. Rockefeller was interested in, you know -- he gave away a lot, but he wanted to know where it was going and for what purpose. Mr. Bryan couldn't go to Mr. Rockefeller and say, "I want a million dollars." He had to explain why he wanted it. He never did it. He didn't do it with anybody. I tried to get him -- Pomfret, too -- we did have some wealthy alumni. One up in Boston, Dudley R. Cowles, born in Toano, the head of the D.C. Heath Publishing Company, which is the world's largest publisher of textbooks. The college did give

Cowles an L.L.D., but it took more than that. His wife was very vain; she needed to be flattered, too. They had no children, so this could have been a gold mine. I couldn't get Bryan or Pomfret to go see him, put it up to him. You don't get money by pussyfooting. This is what I'm telling some of them down there at the college now. I have no objection to asking people for money for William and Mary or my church, either one of them -- I don't make any apologies for it. This is what I think they're not handling properly at William and Mary even today, and I've mentioned this to President Graves. But this goes astray: Chandler had a very good relationship with the Rockefellers and the Restoration officials the whole time. He died too soon. The Restoration started -- I guess Rockefeller's interest in it started in '26. The first thing done was the Wren Building in 1928; Chandler died in 1934, so they had about six, eight years to work together. But with Bryan there was a jealousy -- and there was this machiavellian Duke, and Pomfret never exerted himself. At the head of the Restoration was Kenneth Chorley, who retired some years ago, now deceased. He was a great big, hulking man. He was sort of scarey; people would quake when he came around. He had all the employees of Colonial Williamsburg just cowering. It was a disgraceful thing. He had a lot of people at William and Mary cowered, too. I think again if Pomfret -- after all,

Pomfret was every bit Chorley's equal in status--if he'd just said, "Look Kenneth, you couldn't have any Restoration here without the College of William and Mary. Now you've got to come across." I tried to get President Pomfret to do it. The younger Chandler didn't have the rapport.

Williams: I found at one time, as you well know, Dr. Pomfret wrote a column in the Alumni Gazette. And I found in one of his columns a statement I thought strange for a college president. He said that he didn't want William and Mary heavily endowed.

McCurdy: I don't remember that. I can't imagine anybody saying that about a public or private institution. None of them have too much endowment. Harvard, with the largest, doesn't have too much.

Williams: As I said, I thought it a strange statement for a college president.

McCurdy: Unless he was thinking this: that to have a heavy endowment might deter the state from coming across. There were estimates of how much endowment we really had if you equated the state appropriations with endowment income. I forget what it amounted to. It's increased, of course, over the years. That may have been what he meant, that he didn't want anything to interfere with getting help from the state. Pomfret was never for separating the college from the state and making it a private institution, as Bryan wanted. At one time--it was in J.A.C. Chandler's

time; Harry Byrd, Sr., was governor--the proposal was that if Mr. Rockefeller would endow the college and make it a private institution the state would appropriate a million dollars to add to that endowment. I believe Governor Byrd actually said he would make that proposal to the legislature.

Williams: It never got past the talk stage, I would guess. Do you think it would've changed William and Mary if it had become a private institution--other than money? Do you think it would've changed its orientation in any way?

McCurdy: Yes, because it would've changed the composition of the student body considerably. For many years in Virginia the public school system was an eleven-year system instead of twelve. I ran into this when I went there as a freshman, when I found I was repeating courses I'd had my senior year in high school. I couldn't understand that. Well, Virginia students, of course, didn't have that advantage. They only had the eleven-year system, so we had a situation that was not good: that the out-of-state students, generally speaking, were better equipped than the in-state. Now that's changed. Certainly the students we have from Virginia now rank with the best, I'm certain (with some exceptions). When you look at the records of some of the youngsters we turn down from out-of-state and at the same time we know we are admitting many less qualified students from Virginia--the college's in a terrible bind on this; always

has been and I guess it always will be.

Williams: This is something Scotty Cunningham was talking about when I talked to him last week.

What did you do with articles /in the Alumni Gazette/ that were not published?

McCurdy: I had them. I guess they went to Ganter. I think I sent to Herbert the galley of the one they would not permit. I won't swear that the draft of the third one, which was not completed-- the title of it was "The Moral Cost to the College," relating it to our honor system and how we had corrupted it and so on. That gave me the greatest difficulty because I didn't want to be in the role of sermonizing. Who am I to question other people's morals? I may still have them. (Discussion of where Ganter might have them.) I can't think of anything in there that I wouldn't want published. If I reflect on someone living, who would it be?

April 3, 1975

McCurdy: There's one story about Governor William Tuck that you'd better check with Mrs. Guy when you see her because she will deny this. When I went to the alumni office we had rather terrible files, and one of the first jobs I had to do was establish a whole new master file, and a geographic file, and a class file. I noticed we had William Munford Tuck and William McKinley Tuck, both from the class of 1917. It's an odd name, and ferreting it out in the registrar's office I found there was no such person as William Munford Tuck, and yet everyone knew him: he was then in the legislature of Virginia. Finally in checking it out it turned out they were one in the same and that he was born and baptized William McKinley Tuck, but when he was in college and already a politician he said something about running for governor, and Mrs. Bennett, Gladys Guy's mother, is reported to have said to Bill (I think he was courting Gladys at the time), "How do you ever expect to be elected to anything in Virginia with the name William McKinley?" And the story is that he changed it to William Munford. So you can check that. Gladys Guy denied that rather vehemently several times, but it had enough credence at the time. Anyway I got the records straightened out, and I think the alumni office lists him as William Munford Tuck, which is how he was known as governor. Perhaps McKinley has

disappeared altogether, I don't know.

Williams: I wanted to ask you about your student days: while you were a student there occurred something that's not totally unknown in the history of the college, though it is somewhat unusual, and that is a student strike. What were the causes of this? There were--one apparently was worse than the other--one in '32 and one in '33. Am I right on this?

McCurdy: Yes. The '32 one was the one that's the most vivid in my memory, but even of that I'm not too sure. As I recall the circumstances, it was in the spring. There was a fracas of some sort in the dining hall, the principal dining hall known as Trinkle Hall. Somebody who was employed by the college in the dining hall went after a couple of students with a butcher knife. Dr. Chandler expelled four students; he kicked them out of the college for creating a disturbance in the dining hall. The students generally took the side of the accused rather than the man (whose name I don't recall) in the dining hall and went on strike, demanding these four be returned to classes. Dr. Chandler was caught unaware; he was actually in Baltimore when the students declared a strike. We had a mass meeting in Phi Beta Kappa auditorium. The president of the student body was a fellow named Ernest DeBordenave, otherwise known as "Froggy"--the last person you'd ever think of going into the Episcopal clergy, but he did and became a very successful and very well-known cleric. He was president of the student body, and I remember the mass meeting when we voted to walk right out of classes. We did, I

included. I remember going with a group to Richmond--just a lark for the day. Left in charge of the college in the absence of the president was Dean Hoke, who was the second-ranking man in those days--a very sweet, loveable man, but totally incapable of coping with the kind of insurrection he had on his hands, and perhaps he didn't handle it as well as it might have been handled. Dr. Chandler hurried back with fire and brimstone. He brought every single student into his office to see if they were involved in this. I was called in. I forget now--the Flat Hat would reveal how long the strike lasted, but it was several days. Dr. Chandler had to back down a little bit, but to this day I can't recall (Lambert could certainly tell) whether the students were readmitted to the college or not.

Williams: The whole male student body just sort of--

McCurdy: Well, I think the women joined in in sympathy, too. They didn't violate the social strictures; they observed the curfew at night and that kind of thing.

The following year we had a similar one. You have to remember also that this was in the context of Dr. Chandler's latter days. He was an ill man, say from the end of my junior year, which was when this first strike occurred. The depression had started, the governor was not giving him anything the agreement with Pollard had not worked because of the state of the economy⁷, and he just saw his empire going to pieces. He was

terribly depressed, and his health was beginning to fail. He just lacked the vigor; he was an autocrat--did things in earlier days I'm sure he wouldn't have done. He couldn't delegate authority. I happened to be in his office once when a call came, and he grabbed the telephone from his secretary. It was some problem in the laundry. Things that never should have been brought into the president's office. . . . I daresay that President Graves--certainly President Bryan didn't even know where the laundry was. But Chandler had to mix into everything, and he wasted his efforts on such petty things. I can't recall the cause of the strike my senior year, but it was not as significant or did it receive as much attention as the first.

Williams: But you would cite the depression and Chandler's failing health as causes--this was just not schoolboys on a lark?

McCurdy: Plus the fact that his third son had become ill and been committed to St. Elizabeth's Hospital here. I know this depressed him terribly. Of course, as you know, he had no wife to lend a hand; he had the burden of the whole thing. You just had the impression that the President's House was almost like a mausoleum. I don't even recall now seeing lights on in the evenings; if he was there he was in his bedroom. Fortunately it was never that way again. I'm told that his son (President Alvin Chandler) moved out of the President's House and the Paschalls, too, because it was not a restful place to live, located there on Richmond Road. I believe Presidents Chandler and Paschall

both had their own homes outside of town. But I'm glad the Graveses have decided to make it the President's House again. Even with small youngsters they seem to get along pretty well--entertain beautifully.

Williams: During this period that you were a student, wasn't it then that the C.C.C. had a camp on campus?

McCurdy: No, that came under Franklin Roosevelt's administration, and Roosevelt was inaugurated on March 4, 1933, just a few months before my departure from William and Mary. That whole back part of the campus where the C.C.C. was subsequently located was just a dense woods. Most of us had no real appreciation of that lake back there. There were no paths. The C.C.C. opened up this part. The Matoaka Theatre where they showed The Common Glory for so many years was not there--that all came later.

Williams: You were president of your class senior year, so you were given some responsibility for alumni work almost immediately. Is that a correct statement?

McCurdy: Well, I am a little vague on that, too. I was the third paid full-time alumni secretary. The first was a man named George W. Guy (as distinguished from William George Guy, who was a chemistry professor), and he was succeeded by Charles A. Taylor of the class of '09. I got to know Mr. Taylor in my senior year. I think Taylor came in my senior year as secretary

to the Alumni Association, as it was known then. I helped him in the Washington area; I became president of the Washington Alumni Club. We sponsored at least one meeting each year; one year President Bryan came; one year we had Douglas Southall Freeman come to speak. I kept in touch with Taylor, sent him tidbits for the Alumni Gazette, which he had started. He started it as a newspaper, a tabloid. I think it was a monthly. In 1936 two things happened. I can't explain either one now: I was recipient of the alumni medallion, which Taylor had instituted several years before, and I was the youngest--may yet be the youngest--person to receive it, and also in '36 I was elected to the alumni board (it was then the association board). I guess I was the youngest up to that time to be elected to that--three years out of college. The following year Mr. Taylor wrote me that he was going to resign as alumni secretary. I was very fond of him, but I didn't know him well; I was surprised and rather disappointed that he was leaving. Apparently he did not get along very well with President Bryan. He was a Chandler protege; Dr. Chandler had brought him there. So some of my friends began promoting me for the job, and I thought it was preposterous. I was too young for it. I was on the board (of course I absented myself from the board meeting when I was proposed. I did not participate in the selection of Mr. Taylor's successor).

I was elected, reported to duty September 1, 1937, four years out of college. At that time the alumni office was located in the Brafferton Kitchen, where I think Jim Kelly has his office now. We stayed there many years. Alyse Tyler, who had been in the registrar's office, became Charles Taylor's secretary. I had known Miss Tyler when I was a student. She knew many students; she was a very helpful person because of her knowledge of people -- knew far more graduates and non-graduates of the college than I did. She stayed on. As I said, the files were incredible. The furnishings in the office were equally incredible: we had orange crates to keep things in. One beat-up file case -- things that other people had discarded as junk [were used for] furniture. (I remember Miss Tyler constantly having a problem snagging her hose on the desk every time she would get up to go to the file cabinet.) Well, we started on the files first. Finally we got some appropriations to get this office redecorated and properly furnished. Also, I continued the Gazette one year in the newspaper format and decided I wanted to switch. We had exchanges, of course, with colleges, particularly in the South, but all over the country, and I saw that most of them had magazines, and I proposed to our alumni board that we go to a magazine format as a quarterly. They agreed. It was more successful at that time.

I left in May of '42 to go in the navy. Miss Tyler was the acting alumni secretary during my absence, kept things together. I went back January 1, '46, with some reservation

whether I should go back or not. I had been gone three years or more. Vernon Geddy was my confidant. I corresponded with him; should I or should I not? Pomfret had come in; I didn't know him. Vernon thought I should come, that I'd enjoy working with Mr. Pomfret and that he thought there was a great future in development there. He more or less convinced me to come back. And I'm not sorry I did. I thought maybe that was the time I should start something else, but I went back. In the summer of '48 Miss Tyler and I came to a parting of the ways and she left. I struggled through the summer of '48, still in the Brafferton Kitchen, and finally convinced Mr. Pomfret that we couldn't go on in that cubbyhole and prevailed on him to give me the Brafferton proper. We used the two rooms on the east. The alumni society put up several thousand dollars to decorate the big room as a reception room; it was very well done and quite expensive. I don't think the college put any money in it. Well, there was some furniture in there, and we had it upholstered, and we had draperies put in. It was a handsome room. The faculty would use it for committee meetings and that kind of thing, and we used it, too. I think that was a great move when we got into the Brafferton. Of course, I'm delighted they have this new place up on the hill in the old Bright House -- much better.

In addition to Miss Tyler, I had following her Cecil Cary Waddell Cunningham (Scotty Cunningham's wife) as my secretary, and she was magnificent -- a vivacious ball of fire, and everyone

loved her. She was a great assistant to me. Scotty was recalled in the navy, I guess in the Korean War, and lo and behold, Virginia Roseberg, wife of Carl Roseberg, sculptor at the college, was looking for a spot. I think she was working for the Common Glory staff. She came to work and was another remarkable woman -- inexhaustible, never tired. She was there when I resigned. So I had those three secretaries -- Alyse Tyler, Cecy Cunningham, and Virginia Roseberg. Each of them contributed enormously to the effectiveness, such as it was, of the alumni office.

Also during those years of my term the alumni board was in many ways far superior in both intellect and interest quality to the Board of Visitors, which ran the college. We had some excellent people on our board. We were, of course, able to have alumni from all over the country. Actually, I think, the furthest we got during my time was Chicago -- this was Malcolm Sullivan. I was particularly pleased when the first Jewish member of the board came on -- Milton Greenblatt of Waterbury, Connecticut. The college has no finer alumnus anywhere today. I really thought many times that the college would be better off if the alumni board ran it instead of the Board of Visitors. From all I hear now the Board of Visitors is a far better group of people than it was in those days.

Williams: You talked about that somewhat yesterday. Do you know what it was that prompted the beginning of the Alumni Gazette? It doesn't seem from what you've just described that it was

symptomatic of a new era of organization in the alumni association.

McCurdy: I really don't know the specific answer to that. There had been no publication coming out during the administration of Mr. Guy, and I suppose Mr. Taylor thought there had to be something to go out to alumni other than solicitations for money. In those days you paid dues to become a member of the alumni association, and in 1949 I recommended to the board that we abandon dues as the basis for membership and swing over to the alumni fund. We took in much more money than we ever took in in dues. I think this is not typical, just of William and Mary but many schools faced with this problem: that the only time you ever hear from a college is when they want money. I've run into it this year as chairman of the William and Mary Fund. I've talked to Leonard Meyer about this: This is a reaction some alumni have: that they are getting too much mail and it's too expensive. They don't want to put their money in this; they want to have some feeling of helping the college.

Williams: Would you say then that your principle^{al} duty as alumni secretary was in money-raising?

McCurdy: No.

Williams: What would you say it was?

McCurdy: I think the principal duty, the principal obligation of the alumni director of any school is to keep the alumni informed of what the college is doing, in addition to football -- not to the exclu-

sion of football, but in addition -- and to try and maintain their interest in the college for the rest of their lives. One of the ways, of course, is to bring them back for class reunions. I must say this was a great chore for me; I didn't enjoy reunions when I had to run them, and I don't enjoy them now to go back to, one of the reasons being it seemed to me when I was running them was that people you most wanted to see for some reason didn't come back, and those who did you didn't know or didn't like! Also, it seems a fiction to try and re-create something you couldn't do. So many people came back and made perfect fools of themselves. Now I'm told by people just this past fall 1974 who went back for the homecoming that it absolutely was the best they'd ever had. It was enjoyable throughout. Well, I'm sure this serves a purpose, regardless of how I feel about class reunions. It's one way to capture the interest of the alumni and encourage their financial support. Mr. Bryan used to tell the story that some elderly relative he was talking to -- I forget her name -- "Aunt Lucy, they tell me that the tourists are going to bring in to Virginia so many millions of dollars this year," and she said, "Must they bring it?" And I've often thought of that. Must they come, you know, couldn't they just send the money? But that, of course, is a silly notion of mine. Apparently, that homecoming last year (I got it from all sides -- I wouldn't have heard so much about it if I hadn't been chairman of the fund) -- everything clicked. I think Gordon Vliet has developed --

and Jim Kelly before him started this -- doing things with classes that we never did when I was there. It pays off. But the main thing for the alumni director whatever his title may be is to keep communications open between the alumni of all ages, and in so doing it'll almost follow that the alumni will do what they can for the college. Incidentally, [as alumni secretary I did] three things: the organization of reunions [and] administration of the office, my favorite was the magazine, and then the fund. I loved the magazine, and of course I was inclined to devote more attention to that than to the other two phases of my job. It paid off. The quality was recognized, but perhaps the fund and reunions suffered in consequence.

Williams: Of the presidents you have known going back to J.A.C. Chandler --

McCurdy: Well, I knew Lyon Tyler only because he came back on the campus when I was a student. Remarkable man.

Williams: Well, you might not be able to answer this question in relation to Tyler, but perhaps you could. How would you characterize each man's conception of and involvement in alumni work?

McCurdy: My impression at the moment is that Mr. Graves is more conscious of the need for alumni cultivation than any of his predecessors in my time. Dr. J.A.C. Chandler, I think, was conscious of it and established the alumni office during his administration. He simply, with everything else he had on him, couldn't devote the time to it that he want to. Mr. Bryan was only interested in it in a selective sense. He didn't suffer fools gladly, to

use an old phrase, and if could handpick the alumni he wanted to associate with he would be delighted. But otherwise to take him on a tour, as I did occasionally, to speak at alumni meetings he did not like much. Nor did Mr. Pomfret. Pomfret did it as a chore. Now as for Alvin Chandler and Paschall, I really don't know. I had the feeling Mr. Paschall was really quite provincial in his thinking -- that he never got out of Lunenburg County. He didn't like to cross the Potomac River. He was up there once, and I went to the alumni meeting and as a matter of fact introduced him. I think it was a cocktail party here at the Washington Hotel. The poor man was ill, went from here to the hospital in Richmond to have surgery of some sort. But I don't think he ever came again. If Alvin Chandler came I never knew it. But I think that wouldn't hold in Virginia. I'm sure that Chandler and Paschall went to Richmond and Norfolk alumni groups. They knew where the money was: the politicians. They were willing to cultivate them, but as far as Milton Greenblatt in Connecticut or so-and-so in Boston -- no. Now Graves apparently has been all over the country and some place several times. I think he's very conscious of the importance of these contacts, and I think it will pay off in the long run. I think he's held in high esteem by most alumni. As we discussed yesterday, I'm sure some of the people resent the fact that he's a Yankee, but that's nonsense. Despite the fact that it's a state college, William and Mary is no longer a state institution or a provincial teacher's college; it's not even a national --

it's an internationally known institution now. I found out that when I was working here at the Association of American Universities, working with universities in Germany and Great Britain, principally. William and Mary is well-known.

Williams: After you left the alumni office, was there any sort of change in philosophy? I read I'm sure it was a speech somewhere by A.D. Chandler saying that the alumni office should be an information bureau; information should flow into it from alumni and out of it to alumni, which doesn't sound any different from your conception of it when you were there.

McCurdy: Well, there were some changes. First, I was succeeded by Jimmy Barnes, who was not successful, but I don't know why he wasn't successful. He only stayed a short time. The story was that he had friction with President Chandler, but I don't know that. Barnes is still living, so perhaps you should see him to get his experiences. Jim Kelly came in (he was president of his class); I worked with him closely and was devoted to him. There was some friction when Chandler asked for and received a veto over everything that would go in the Gazette in the form of commentary on the college (meaning editorials). This was to prevent another Charlie McCurdy taking off on his own. This came up at a meeting in the summer of 1955 as I recall. Chandler was not present. Bob Calkins (Calkins was then a member of the alumni board of directors) and I drove down together, went to this meeting in Washington Hall, and I protested again censorship in the college of Jefferson. This

didn't serve any purpose. But the point is that it never has come up again; as far as I know there has been no issue that censorship has even been involved. I have no knowledge that Kelly or Gordon Vliet or Ross Weeks have in any way been controlled in what they printed in the Alumni Gazette. If they have, I don't know it. (Poor Jim Kelly simply couldn't get the Gazette out on schedule once during his long tenure [and it was longer than mine incidentally]. I would chide him about it all the time. I think I can take credit for not looking over my shoulder at my successors because I think that's bad, but I'd jokingly say to Jim, "Well, the October Gazette came the day before Christmas." Now Ross Weeks is getting it out on schedule.) Some people have said they prefer the old magazine; I don't. I think what we want is news; it's probably less expensive to do it in newspaper format, and to get it more often, I think it's a plus. I think that that censorship issue probably has been resolved. It wouldn't occur to me, for example, that Mr. Graves would forbid Ross Weeks to print anything. Now, if Ross jumped over the traces and printed libelous things, well then, Ross would be in trouble. I don't think the president would interfere.

Williams: You mentioned how Mr. Graves has seemed very interested in alumni work. I understand when he became president one of the early actions he took was to make the alumni office report to the president. The alumni office traditionally had semi-independent status.

McCurdy: Well, yes, and it still does. He did make a proposal endorsed by some members of the alumni board. The then president of the alumni society, the first woman president, Pam Pauly Chinnis, who lives here in Alexandria, could give you the background on this. Johnny Hocutt, now the vice-president at Delaware, was my source of information. They did propose to make some changes, not to destroy the independence, but to make it more accountable to the president. This is at the time that they created the office of development. Now Gordon Vliet objected to this; the fund was taken out of his jurisdiction and that, you know, was taking a couple of blocks out of his empire, and he didn't like it. The system that the college has now with a separate development office is pretty general/ly followed/ throughout colleges and universities in the country now. Alumni secretaries nowadays do not go into fund raising. It's a separate entity. This is what I think President Graves wanted and in effect got, but it alienated some of the people. It's such a silly argument to talk about having an independent alumni office. Independent of what? An old friend of mine who was alumni director for many years (and a great one) at Ohio State University, named John Fullen, was the greatest advocate, preaching to all the rest of his colleagues around the country the virtue of having an independent alumni association, completely divorced from the president and the governing board and the faculty and everybody. I used to say, "Jack, the last thing I want is to be divorced from

the president of William and Mary. I want to be in his confidence, and I want him in mine all the time. I don't think I could exist being entirely separated from the president."

Now I think this is the problem with William and Mary today as I look at it from a distance. There is some friction apparently between the alumni office staff (Gordon Vliet and his colleagues), perhaps Ross Weeks, and the president. I am concerned about it in this way: that if the college proposes to go into this capital campaign next year or any time, this friction better be resolved beforehand. You cannot have people going off with cross-purposes. Frankly, I don't know if Vliet is disloyal to the president or not; if he is he ought to resign. I could not remain at William and Mary with Alvin Chandler, but he was the president, and I thought the best thing for me to do was to leave.

Williams: So the alumni board and the articles were not all of the problem?

McCurdy: That's right. That brought it to a head. But I could not envision continuing my work with Alvin Chandler though actually we had a pleasant enough relationship during our five months together. I had very pleasant relations. I was not disloyal to him.

Williams: What was it that Chandler wanted to do that you didn't like?

McCurdy: He didn't do anything. I can't answer if in the frame of reference you asked the question. Number one, of course, I was just repelled by the manner of his election. I think I would have thought more highly of him had he declined it under

those circumstances, but he didn't. I did not think he was qualified to be president of William and Mary. I don't like politicians and military people going into academia at top levels. Sure, if one of them wants to teach a course in naval history, that would be all right, but I think in terms of a Graves or a Pomfret or even a J.A.C. Chandler as having the background, the qualifications for a president of the college. I've only known one politician who became a college president and was successful and that's Colgate W. Darden, who was governor of Virginia and then became president of the University of Virginia. When he was elected, I didn't like that, but he did a fine job for the university. He was the right man at the right time, but he was succeeded by Edgar Shannon, whom I thought was better.

Williams: Your connection with William and Mary then since the '50s has been with development work?

McCurdy: No. First I went for a stint at Harvard in fund raising, a special campaign for the Harvard Divinity School. I was out of a job and my friends at Harvard prevailed upon me to take the job. They were after \$7,500,000; I'll have to admit I was not overly successful in it. But I made a speech (at the time I was president of the American Alumni Council) at the annual meeting of the council that year at Sun Valley, Idaho. At that meeting we had two university presidents on the program: then President Stearns of the University of Colorado and President Olpin, the then president at Utah. These two presidents heard

me speak, and one day after I'd made the speech President Olpin sidled up to me in the swimming pool on a float and said, "I understand you have a temporary job at Harvard. What are you going to do when you finish?" He referred to something I'd never heard of called the State Universities Association, which was going to open an office in Washington. They were looking for an executive. So I came to that job in December of 1952 and then from there went on to become executive secretary of the Association of American Universities. Both associations were made up exclusively of university presidents. The A.A.U., my last affiliation, was the prestigious association of universities. Not every university is a member -- in the South, for example, we only have six: Virginia, North Carolina, Duke, Vanderbilt, Tulane, and Texas -- all the Ivy League except Dartmouth because Dartmouth's not a university. At the last count, I think, there were only fifty-one members of the association. They meet twice a year, presidents only, and I did their leg work here -- a little lobbying and doing research for them in various fields. It was a great association.

Williams: Your job now is -- retired -- chairman of the William and Mary Fund.

McCurdy: Which ends June 30th.

Williams: You've been a student; you've been alumni secretary; you've been in Williamsburg; and you've been away. From all these different perspectives, what would you say is the role of the William and Mary alumnus in helping William and Mary to accom-

plish its goals? This could be a double-barrelled question; you might want to talk about its goals first.

McCurdy: That's what I'm trying to pin down now in connection with the capital campaign in which they want me to become involved. I have some reservations about it, and the goal thing is the question. I would like the president and the board to spell out exactly what they have in mind. You cannot go out and ask people for \$25, much less \$25,000,000, without explaining why you need it. And I haven't gotten that information yet from the college. Perhaps I will. But that doesn't answer your question, and I don't know that I can.

Williams: What is the greatest service a William and Mary alumnus can do for its school?

McCurdy: Of course the easy answer is to keep piling money into it. But that is not the total answer -- should not be. It's to maintain an interest in and support it in numerous ways. I think the College of William and Mary has failed to utilize its alumni to the greatest possible advantage. For example, you may have heard at Harvard where they have three structures of government: the corporation, which is the board, the final board, equivalent to the Board of Visitors; the Board of Overseers, which is an elected group of alumni and nonalumni which has certain powers; and finally, the visiting committees. Every facet of Harvard's existence has a visiting committee -- every department, buildings and grounds, maintenance -- and the visiting committees meet at Cambridge every year, and they

report to the overseers, and they report to the corporation. William and Mary has alumni now all over the world; it's no longer limited to teachers, you know, and I think we should bring in people [who] have been successful in business, visiting committees to advise our business department and the economics department. We could utilize them in many ways. We could also help to get students, but the trouble now is that the college feels inundated with applications; they don't need any more help on that. They want to weed them out rather than get any more. Many colleges use alumni to interview prospective students; William and Mary hasn't done that. It doesn't even matter whether you have on your application that you know an alumnus or cite one as a reference. I don't think the college pays any attention to it. But they say they will pay attention now to whether you're a son or a daughter of an alumnus. I think doing what Ross Weeks is doing with that paper is helpful, and I must say, I guess, what Gordon Vliet is doing in the way of the alumni reunion in the fall, homecoming, certainly is creating interest and bringing people back to that beautiful campus and serving to keep the college in the affections of these people who come back. Certainly this is a plus. I must say I don't know what Gordon Vliet does between homecomings, but I don't want to sound too facetious -- obviously he does something. I just don't know, because he doesn't do the fund and he doesn't do the newspaper. When I was there with one assistant, we did all three.