

H. Westcott Cunningham

When he enrolled at William and Mary in the fall of 1939 Scotty Cunningham was one of the "Fabulous Freshmen" of the 1939 football team. After graduation and service in World War II he returned to the admissions office at William and Mary, later becoming dean of admissions and director of scholarship aid. In 1960 Mr. Cunningham was named director of the newly opened Christopher Newport College, a branch of William and Mary (his title progressed to dean, provost, and finally president). After building it into a four-year institution he became headmaster of The Pingry School in New Jersey. During a vacation in Virginia he taped these interviews.

Mr. Cunningham read and approved the transcript as presented to him.

INDEX SHEET

Interviewee H. Westcott Cunningham

Date of interview March 19, 1975

Place Swem Library

Interviewer Emily Williams

Session number 1

Length of tape app. 100 mins.

Contents:

Approximate time:

student days, 1939-1943
choice of William and Mary
description of college life before and during World War II
dances, clubs, homecomings, athletics
effects of World War II
effects of athletic program
student government
student attitudes
rules
fraternity situation, Jordan Report, post-war

40 mins.

admissions

post-WW II : character of students 12 mins.

: special provisions for

: discipline of

: interest in academics

change to need to recruit in late '40s 4 mins.

discovery of fixed transcript 3 mins.

appeal of William and Mary, competition 10 mins.

with other Va. schools (especially in business program) for men, applications from women, pressures

introduction of College Board procedures, 2 mins.

advanced placement programs

concern over male enrollment, admissions 10 mins.

pressures (cont'd.): coming of age in admissions

law school in 1950s (admissions) 3 mins

See back of sheet for names and places mentioned in interview

INDEX SHEET

Interviewee H. Westcott Cunningham

Date of interview March 20, 1975

Place Swem Library

Interviewer Emily Williams

Session number 2

Length of tape 60 mins.

Contents:

Approximate time:

Colleges of William and Mary establishment	5 mins.
offering of job at Christopher Newport	3 mins.
operation of system	11 mins.
accreditation of components of system	}
advantages of being connected to William and Mary	
funding and equipping of Christopher Newport	5 mins.
naming of Christopher Newport	3 mins.
reaction (in Williamsburg) to branch institutions	3 mins.
dissolution of Colleges of William and Mary	10 mins.
growth of Christopher Newport	11 mins.
physical plant, admissions, programs	
support of Newport News community	
relationship with parent college	8 mins.
overview of Christopher Newport, of William and Mary	3 mins.

H. Westcott Cunningham

March 19, 1975

Emily: You were telling me how it was ^{that} a boy from New Jersey came to William and Mary.

Cunningham: I remember it very well. A William and Mary alumnus talked to me in New Jersey. I was looking at a number of New Jersey colleges, including that southern-most Ivy League institution, Princeton University, and Cornell north of us, Lehigh, Lafayette, and several others. This alumnus, whose name was Charles Stickle (who had been a great pitcher on the William and Mary baseball team) came by the house one evening and asked me if I would come to Williamsburg and take a look at William and Mary. He said that William and Mary was building athletically and was going to field a great football team "in a few years," which history proved it did. So I came down with Charlie Stickle ~~and~~ I remember driving all night to get to Williamsburg and arriving in Williamsburg in April--the dogwood was coming out, everything was gorgeous. Somebody got me a date with the girlfriend of the ^{Captain of the} football team, and I heard all about Williamsburg and William and Mary. I remember going back to New Hen~~se~~y because I had a baseball game to play a couple of days later and being put on the train by Rube McCray, who was one of the assistant coaches.

and who was one of the most ^{charming} ~~lovable~~ guys who ever blew through Williamsburg, and being told at that point that he wanted to see me in Williamsburg in the fall, and believe it or not, that next fall I was in Williamsburg.

It was interesting to arrive ^[then] because things were regearing a great deal, I think, at that point at William and Mary, not just athletically, but academically ^{and socially}. The school at that point probably had about twelve hundred students, almost equally divided male and female. We all knew one another; very quickly we got to be pretty close friends. The group I came in with, the so-called "Fabulous Freshmen," wrote some football history, not thanks to me, but thanks to a number of people they recruited and who did a great job for them ^{over the years} [in years] athletically. The school, for example, had been used to going to class at nine o'clock every morning; when football came to Williamsburg, it was imperative that the football team get out to practice by 2:30 or 3:00, so the whole school day was moved back an hour to 8:00. I remember several faculty members during my freshman year commenting on the fact that the day had been put back, and they blamed it on this monster football, which made some of the football players the object of a little resentment in class early in the game.

~~But~~ [≡] it was interesting: the whole picture of college was so different then from what it is now. It was a tight little society [≡] they used to say in those days that William and Mary was a school of poor boys and rich girls; some of this may have been true. If so I don't think any of us were ever terribly aware of it. I can remember running for president of the freshman class that year, and having one girl show up on the ballot as a candidate for president, and everyone ^{body} thought this was quite laughable. Nowadays I don't think they'd think a thing of it; they'd expect at least one to be on the ballot for every one male who was on the ballot. Things were friendly: we ate in family-style in the dining room. Those of us who were on scholarships were waiters in the dining room, and we always fought to get a table full of girls who didn't eat as much as a table full of boys ^{would}. Everything was in a tight little family style: we knew one another; we shared each other's problems. I remember the years leading up to Pearl Harbor as probably the last of the ~~real~~ carefree days that any college generation has ever had; because from that point on (from the attack at Pearl Harbor) I think that young people have been under pressure every year, day in and day out, and have never known anything but some form of pressure, whether it be social pressure or academic pressures, because [≡] in those days I don't think

we worried that much about academic pressure, either. We were competitive^{ti}, but I think we had things perhaps in a little different perspective than people who are competing today.

Speaking of the Pearl Harbor situation, I can remember having been in the dining room^{just before} serving a noon meal on Sunday, December 7th, and starting across the campus toward Monroe Hall when I heard that Pearl Harbor was being bombed. I can remember sitting down with a boy who was rooming next door to me (I believe his name was Graham) and we were talking up in the dormitory and listening to the bulletins that were coming through and hearing a report of the Oklahoma being sent to the bottom of Pearl Harbor, and this boy turning to me and saying, "I think my two brothers are on the Oklahoma." Following that, of course, two or three days later, President Roosevelt decided to make a formal declaration of war on Japan and I believe Germany at the same point. We were again in the dining room,^{and I remember} with the speech being piped into that huge old dining room over in Trinkle Hall, in which eloquent words were booming off the walls^{in stentorian Roosevelt tones.} I saw girls ~~sitting~~ crying openly in a tremendous display of emotion.

Of course that set in motion a whole new ballgame at William and Mary. It wasn't long before the United States Navy decided to put its chaplain's school at William and Mary, and I can remember standing in the parking lot outside ^{of} old Marshall-Wythe Hall right in front of Old Dominion Hall when the bosun's pipe sounded and the colors were run~~g~~ up on the flagpole in the parking lot, and Old Dominion Hall was officially commissioned for the chaplain's school. I remember the chaplains tearing around the campus, many of them having been out of college and in their ministries for a number of years, and several physical education specialists trying to whip them into shape and running them around campus. At that time I was head waiter in the dining room, and I remember making announcements every day about events on campus. We had a p. a. system over there. It always seemed that the butt of all the jokes was some Catholic chaplain or another who had been seen in Sorority Court or ^{who had left his hat} ~~had been seen~~ in some sorority house or some such thing as that. But the chaplains were a great experience, I think, for William and Mary.

Well, I'm getting a little bit ahead of the story because I think ^{during} those last carefree years we saw some very happy times at William and Mary. I can think of the Christmas yule log ceremonies, particularly the one

I remember was my freshman year, when I was one of the four people carrying the yule log, and we brought it into the Great Hall in the Wren Building ^{--with} ~~and~~ the roaring fire going and everyone in costume. This was always the occasion for a great costume ball. The ball was held over at Phi Beta Kappa Hall, which is now Ewell Hall. We went to the Great Hall to deliver the yule log ^[and] went through the ceremonial phase of it. Then everyone went over to the dining room [^] and we had a huge turkey dinner over there, and then everyone went across the street [^] and we danced until Dean Lambert and some of the rest decided it was time ^{for us} to go back to the dormitories ^{and go to bed}. They were great evenings.

Another great part of the year was always the final dances in June. The Sunken Garden would be decorated from one end to the other, trellises were put up, little stalls were made [^] and groups of people would sit enclosed in white fencing and watch the dancers on a platform that had been put out in the middle of the garden--a huge platform with a great plaster urn in the middle, with lights and flowers coming out of it. Such bands as Glenn Miller and Woody Herman ^[played in] and Tony Pastor and Harry James and others ^[and] I remember one year particularly when that great humanitarian [^] delightful person, John Stewart Bryan, was president of the college.

I had the good fortune of being one of his aides. We had Woody Herman coming for the final dances, and about three weeks before the dances we found out that Woody Herman could play for the Friday night dance, but that he could not play for the Saturday night dance. So we racked ourselves and looked around and finally found a young band that was willing to come and perform for a concert on Saturday afternoon and then perform at the dance on Saturday night. The orchestra leader's name was Tony Pastour; as you know Tony went on to become one of America's leading bandleaders. Tony had several tunes that were really his watchword^s. I remember every^{body} ~~one~~ ^[of Woody Herman] being so unhappy about the departure, and the fact that they were going to have to listen to this unknown band, ~~that~~ [#] The concert out in front of the Wren Building about four o'clock on Saturday afternoon¹ ^{began} with just a handful of people out there. We all lived, as you know, pretty close to the Wren Building, with the dorms not too far away, and all of a sudden we could hear this noise out there, and I remember the Pastour band going into something called "Paradiddle Joe," which was a great drum number, and as the drummer waxed hotter, people began pouring out of the dormitories, and by the time he finished the number¹ I think the whole front yard was full of people. Well, that night we were all going to the dance, and I remember that Pastour had one number

that we were all waiting to hear. This was something called ^{Let's Do It!} "bees do it, trees do it" and so on--you've all heard ^{the songs} ~~it~~. We were quite protective of Mr. Bryan; we didn't think a gentleman of his stature should be listening to "sly foxes deep in their lairs do it," so the president's aides agreed to wait until Tony Pastour got going on this number and then suddenly appear at Mr. Bryan's side and talk at him while the song was in progress. ^{So sure enough} Before very long the band began to warm up, and you could hear the thing was coming, so a whole group of us went tearing up to Mr. Bryan. He said, "Gentlemen, please stand back; I've been waiting to hear this song for a long time." Well, the gentleman really enjoyed it; he had a great time .

But those were terrific days. We had a boathouse down by the lake; we used to go down ^{and} go canoeing down there. There was a picnic ground down in the woods, and the fraternities and sororities had picnics down there quite frequently. All the different organizations-- the "13" Club, which was a club of no good repute ~~^~~ We had alot of fun. The old "7" Society--I can mention that a little later, probably, because I think I sat at the final death-rattle of the "7" Society, ^{if I'm not mistaken --} although it could be going on today; no one ever knows, really. They were very interesting days. Mr. Bryan was a delightful person. I remember I used to go and have breakfast ^{with}

him on Sunday morning over at the President's House. He lived there part of the time and lived there by himself. He had a student who lived up on the top floor and just sort of kept an eye on the house-- Spike Saunders, I think his name was--and he did some part-time work in public relations as well as taking ^{certain} ~~some~~ courses. Mr. Bryan used to invite me over for breakfast on Sunday morning, and frequently Carl Voyles, who was then the athletic director and football coach, would be there for breakfast, ^{and} one of Mr. Bryan's great favorites, Marvin Bass, who was captain of the football team later on, and we'd have breakfast, which normally consisted of all kinds of hot bread, yes, fried chicken, ^{and} country ham, and this was quite a sumptuous meal. After we finished we'd either walk Dr. Bryan down to Bruton Parish or occasionally Kelly would pull up in the great big, black, open touring car, and we'd all pile in, and Kelly would take us down the street, just as though we were visiting dignitaries. Kelly was always in his uniform, looking ^{straight ahead,} neither to the left nor to the right.

Dr. Bryan was just a delightful person. I remember when he finally left ^{William and Mary} and was replaced ^d by Dr. John Pomfret, whom I knew quite well because Jack Pomfret (as I knew him later on) was in his first year of his presidency at William and Mary during my last year at William and Mary,

when I had the dubious honor of being president of the student body for a year, ~~and~~ ^{and} so many of the things he was doing for the first time I was doing for the first time--speaking at Charter Day convocations, awards ~~and~~ groups and so on--so I really did get to know him quite well during that first year. ~~Of~~ ^{Of} course, this was the time that the war had gotten underway (this was the session of '42-'43), and those of us who were on campus ~~(~~ ⁽ those of us males who were on campus ~~)~~ ⁾ certainly were there simply because we were already enrolled in some one of the military programs. I was going into the navy, roommates of mine were going into the air force ~~(~~ ⁽ or Army Air Corps, as it was called then), or into the army itself, or other branches of the navy. Well, everyone was ^{sort of} under the gun to finish off that year and try to preserve something of what had been William and Mary. So we got through that year.

I mentioned the "Secret 7" before. I had the dubious honor, again, ~~to be~~ ^{of being} president of that noble society. ^{In the spring} We used to go out and at appropriate places on the campus we would paint a crown and a sword with a "7" underneath. ^{This was} the symbol that the "7" was ever-vigilant for wrongdoers, and we would ask people to leave the campus if their behavior didn't seem to merit their staying. I remember ^m going back to the dorm ^{and going to sleep} after one of these painting sessions. Apparently some of the

members of the society decided to do some more painting after we left. They did some painting on the side of Phi Beta Kappa Hall; they also did something on the side of the old Morris House, which was the football house. I remember waking up the next ^{morning} and finding that Dean Lambert's nose was about ten inches from mine, and he said, "Get up; we're going to the president's office." So we went over to Dr. Pomfret's office and chatted at some length--I say chatted in all fear and trembling at what happened that day because I think I almost got thrown out of William and Mary ~~that day~~. I had the temerity to argue back, and I think only Dean Lambert's good judgment and leavening force kept me and the president from one another and kept me in William and Mary, for which I am eternally grateful. I remember Dr. Pomfret saying, "The '7' Society is finished; it's all over; it's going." I remember some youthful remark of my own, such as, "You can't kill it, no matter what you do; it'll keep on; it'll perpetuate itself." And he said, "No, it won't." So anyway, I ^{really} don't know if that was the end of it or not; I never heard much about it after that.

People were leaving in droves at that point. Those ~~who~~ ^{who} ~~that~~ were having academic difficulty usually tossed in the sponge and went off and joined the navy or joined the army. Some of the programs--the officer candidates programs--were stepped up to provide more and more people for the active forces. They were taking people out of school at all kinds of odd months in the year; a whole group would leave in April, for example, when they were supposed to graduate in June. I remember commencement ~~for example~~, with Admiral Ernest King, who was chief of naval operations, coming in to speak at the commencement during my junior year, just before I left finally for the senior year. Everything had ^{its} a military overtones; Williamsburg was just crawling with sailors with Camp Peary open right out ~~only~~ only a few miles out of town ~~and~~ and with Fort Eustis right down the road. The whole thing changed, and ~~really~~ after many years of association with William and Mary ^{after the war}, I don't think I ever really saw the college get back to the mood it was in prior to say 1941. ^{in Williamsburg} In those days a homecoming parade was a big event. The first block of the Duke of Gloucester Street belonged to the students; there ^{were} was the "clean Greeks" and the "dirty Greeks," ^{the two restaurants} one on each side of the street vying for student attention. The clothing stores were doing the same things. In those days if it rained the night before the homecoming parade we had a tunnel already made down at the end of the Duke of Gloucester Street ~~it~~ it didn't go anywhere; the road from Yorktown came into it,

but no road came out the other end. Now, of course, the parkway to Jamestown goes down there. But in those days when it rained everyone stored homecoming floats in the tunnel, and they stayed dry all night and could be wheeled out just before the parade on Saturday morning. All of this, I'm afraid, is gone; it changed after the war. I think we miss it. I think the people who were at William and Mary in those days knew a William and Mary that will never exist again. I say this with some regret, but I say it in full knowledge that no college which existed at that time is ever going to be the same again; no group of people, no set of standards is ever going to be the same. It's just a different ballgame nowadays.

Emily: In your senior year when the chaplains came and I think ^{the college} they started this war-work program with the mines depot down at Yorktown, did the students accept these people, ^{and} make them part of the campus, or were they off to themselves pretty much?

Cunningham: I think ^{the chaplains} they were pretty much a part of the campus. ^{they} ate in the dining room with us (they had their own section of the dining room, but they ate at the same time the rest of us did). We made their announcements of meetings just as we announced student meetings. A lot of us had a lot of fun going out and watching them take calisthenics, trying to get in shape, ^{after} having been out eating ^{the} parson's food for several years. →

We also enjoyed watching them march to the dining room and march to class because many of them didn't ^{quite} have the penchant for military life that ^{some of us} ~~they~~ had to develop very quickly later on. Of course, generally they were a little bit older than we were; most of them, I suspect, at that time were in their late twenties ^{or} early thirties, and they had been out of school for some time. But I think they became a good part of the institution. I think they were, by and large, a good influence. Interestingly enough the man who ^{had} kept us all in shape, kept us all on the straight and narrow, "Cy" Lambert, who ^{had been our} ~~was~~ dean of men when I was an undergraduate--"Cy" found himself in the navy and immediately found himself as ^{the} personnel officer for the Navy Chaplain's School. He was the great link between what had been and what was going to happen. I remember returning near the end of the war and finding that "Cy" had stayed with the chaplain's school, ~~so~~ I think this real link with the William and Mary of the past gave the chaplain's school a tremendous advantage in that he was able to interpret the college a great deal to the navy and to the efficient running of the chaplain's school, so that the chaplain's school really became a pretty vital part of the campus. ^{You have to realize that} At that time males were getting pretty scarce on campus; by June there were very few of us left. As a matter of fact I had signed out in April to go to Chicago into ~~the~~ the navy

and go to midshipman's school. It turned out that I was taking a course in spherical trigonometry, which the navy thought I ought to finish ^{before I went?} so my orders were rescinded and I stayed at William and Mary until June, then went to Chicago to midshipman's school in July. There were very few males around, so the ^{young, unmarried} chaplains were very much in demand in Sorority Court. Here were a group of young naval officers, mostly lieutenants junior grade, and some senior grade lieutenants with nice bright, shiny braid on their sleeves, so they were a very marketable social commodity at that point. I'd say the chaplains did fit in very well. About the same time the army came in with a so-called A.S.T.P. program, which was a training program. ^{It seems to me that} that came in pretty late in the year. I remember just a little of that before I left William and Mary, but this again tended to bring some balance ~~is~~ to the campus in terms of another group of males coming on the campus.

The war-work boys were group of boys who came in and got up early in the morning and went to work at the Naval Weapons Station (which was then the Naval Mines Depot) ^{and at} I think at other military installations, even at the shipyard in Newport News, and would come back and forth ^{to} they'd take them in buses, and they would go to class at William and Mary and perform these functions in the war effort at the same time. Several of those came back after the war, and a number of them actually became ^{fairly} prominent

William and Mary citizens and did a very good job on the campus ~~of~~ they were a great bunch.

Emily: When you had come you had been recruited as a football player. Many people have dated the beginning of "big-time" football with the coming of Carl Voyles in '39. At the time this wasn't seen as anything nearly as sinister as it would be in later years. *Is that right?*

Cunningham: Well, I suppose not. I remember alot of recruiting had been done, and I think some fifty-five of us came here in some form of football posture in ^{the fall of} 1939. I said before I was probably the least part of that whole group that came in, but I think that a fine football team developed out of that group, a team which, if I'm not mistaken, was ranked about sixth in the country in its last year in 1942, beating such teams as Navy, Dartmouth, Oklahoma, and losing only one game to a very great North Carolina preflight team, ^{which was} coached by the great Jim Crowley, who had years of college coaching after his own brilliant career and who had some fourteen all-Americans on the team. This, I think, was sort of incidental to the race; ^{though} I don't know that people looked on it as being sinister. I think some of the oldtime faculty people felt that it caused alot of disruption; I think they felt that the ordering of the school day to accomodate these athletes was a pretty unpalatable sort of thing; I think some of them

were concerned about standards, but I'm not convinced that academic standards prior to that time were any higher for the football players who were losing football games than they were for the group that came in and began to win football games. I think the college did pick up some very good national publicity as a consequence of having such a team. I think the board [of Visitors] just made up its mind ^{to} for a course of action and took that course. Obviously it was quite eminently successful under Carl Voyles. I don't know what would have happened if we hadn't had a World War II; I don't know what would have happened if instead of having had a World War II we had had a severe depression and no ^{body} ~~one~~ could have taken care of the cost of operating big-time football teams. These things tend to cycle in and out. After some twenty-five years in college work and now five years in secondary school work, I've seen this happen in so many institutions; it cycles [#] in and out ¹ the ^A school will bow out for awhile, then all of a sudden it's back with a big football team. By and large I don't think it did any irreparable harm to William and Mary; it certainly was not the thing that caused it to lose its accreditation for awhile in 1942. This, of course, occurred because of something that happened at one of the branch institutions. (Later on when I got involved in a branch institution this came

back to me many times, and I realized how much a branch institution could hurt the parent institution, and worked very hard to make sure that that never happened.) The football fame, I think, was exciting; I think most people in Williamsburg, I think the kids on the campus enjoyed it. Granted, it was a pretty expensive hobby. I think it took the college a few years to climb over the debt that was left by the untimely appearance of World War II, because I think ^{probably} if the war hadn't come on and the economy had held, the program would've become ^{very} a viable and smoothly operating one which probably would've netted the revenues to make it run. It had some good side effects, too, I think; it brought in a group of competitive young men, many of whom went on and distinguished themselves in combat ^{during} World War II, and just because the group came in as a football group didn't mean that there wasn't a tremendous amount of spillover into the other sports. ^{I think} William and Mary fielded a very fine sports program. I also remember a number of athletes who went on to become very fine students; some few of them went on and took advanced degrees and have made a good reputation for themselves in the academic world. Several of them made outstanding reputations in the athletic world, even coaching teams in the National Football League. There have been a number of athletic directors out of that group at major institutions across the country.

So sure, it was hard for William and Mary to swallow it. I remember our freshman year in the spring a game was held between the varsity team ~~of~~[#] the year before, which had lost to some fairly minor teams[↑] and the new freshman team, ^{during which the new freshman team} pretty much wiped the varsity team right off the field. This group was called the "Fabulous Freshmen." We were taken all over the place; we went to all the varsity games; we were marched around. We enjoyed it. We were a group of seventeen and eighteen year-old kids[↑] and it was a pretty exciting thing. Then I remember we opened, I think, the next year or played the second game maybe against North Carolina State, which had a very fine team. We played at Norfolk, and I can remember Carl Voyles taking the whole squad down to the Cavalier Hotel a day before the game and getting us all set for it and so on. Then North Carolina State whipped our socks off the next night down there at Foreman Field. I remember the Richmond paper headline the next morning, "Fabulous Freshmen Now Sorry Sophomores." The night before the game it had said something about "scintillating ³sophomores," but that all changed in one game. But really the Carl Voyles influence I think made men out of alot of boys. He was a hard taskmaster;

he had very little patience, particularly with someone who wouldn't do the job, as he put it. He kept screaming, "Do the job," ~~all~~ up and down the field all afternoon. I think that many of the things that he taught his athletes stood them in good stead, particularly in the two or three years after they left William and Mary, many of them going into combat situations where they had to make decisions, where they had to lead men, where they had to be responsible people at an age where frequently responsibility has not set in to that sophisticated^a level. So I think ^{that} the whole athletic situation (was probably) good for William and Mary. Certainly I don't think the place suffered academically; I think it became ~~it~~ better known. I think perhaps more people were attracted to it in terms of admissions simply because of the fact that more people knew ^{that} it was a pretty active, lively institution.

Emily: Another one of your activities that you mentioned was student government. You were in student government both under Mr. Bryan and Mr. Pomfret. Did you find, say, that Mr. Pomfret was willing to give the students more or less self-government than Mr. Bryan?

Cunningham: I think that you're showing your age at this point where you say, "Willing to give students more." I don't think in those days we really defined--and believe me, after ten years in a college presidency and five years in a headmastership, I know exactly what you're talking about. *He*

because students are constantly looking for privilege, for additional responsibility, and so on. ^{I think} We felt in those days that our areas were pretty clearly defined, and really they didn't seem to cross one another too much. I do remember one very interesting committee at William and Mary which was called the Student Cooperative Committee. A group of us who were students met with a group of faculty and administrators, everything was light and no heat, and we talked about all kinds of things of mutual interest, things on the campus. I remember out of that committee grew the agitation for and then later the establishment of a bookstore on the campus, which came right off the main street downtown. It had been a commercial enterprise down there. An alumnus and a fraternity brother of mine had a very lucrative business in a bookstore downtown. We felt ⁱⁿ the Student Cooperative Committee ~~that~~ -- or the Student-Faculty Cooperative Committee, I guess it was -- it should be up on the campus and took steps to put it there, and it resulted in its being there and the wigwam being around it [and [?] so on and doing a good job.] As far as student government was concerned, I think that students felt, as I hope they do now, (and I haven't been on the William and Mary campus ^{that much} lately)

I think they felt very jealous about the honor system, which had been perpetuated at William and Mary for many years; it was guarded pretty zealously, ^{by and large} and [^] people lived up to it. They felt that this was one of the magic things, like the term "doctor" was at the time or "professor," terms ^{which perhaps} ~~that~~ have been stultified and eroded by use ^{in recent years}. I doubt that there's magic in the word "doctor" anymore, unless one has saved your life recently; I doubt that there's magic in the word "professor." I think professors ^{are now} regarded by undergraduates as someone to argue with, perhaps ^{body} ~~someone~~ to disagree with, hopefully not in every case. But student government in those days was pretty much a matter of running student affairs and not college affairs. You mentioned the two presidents, Dr. Bryan and Dr. Pomfret. Dr. Bryan really sort of left it up to us. He had deans who had been in education for many years, and they worked with us a great deal. Granted, I think I was president of the freshmen class under Dr. Bryan, and that was ^{always} a pretty happy situation because really you didn't do much of anything; you just had an election. (One thing we did do when we were freshmen ^{and this was something that had never been done at William and Mary} ^{back in those days}): [^] The freshmen used to wear their duc caps up until the Richmond game. You either wore a duc cap, or if you were a boy ^{on occasion} [^] you could ~~on occasion~~ substitute a bowtie for your duc cap.

football

←If the varsity team won the Richmond game you could take off your duc caps on Thanksgiving night[~] or your bowties--the girls could take off their duc caps. Our group, being a somewhat headstrong group, and I'm afraid being lead by these same "fabulous freshmen" football players, ~~we~~ went out and had a big bonfire several weeks before the Richmond game and tossed in the duc caps and ~~burned them up~~ immediately in a torchlight procession^[we] went over to the President's House^{↑ wake Mr. Bryan up ↓} and asked for amnesty, and he granted it. Well, the upperclassmen were very unhappy with this ~~tyrannical~~^{tyrannical} group of freshmen who had gone in and done this thing on their own.) But in any event, other than things like that the student government at that point didn't get ~~too~~ involved too much in college affairs. During my last year there was so little that we did as far as the campus was concerned^{because} people were leaving; the war was on, people were preoccupied by many other thoughts. The sort of thing that we did^{↑ and} I can remember many cold winter nights sitting up in the church tower on the^{corner of the} Duke of Gloucester Street spotting airplanes. We had telephones up there, and we functioned as a part of the civil defense. I can remember not being relieved at four o'clock Sunday morning by the fellow who was supposed to relieve me because he was still asleep in his bed over in Taliferro Hall.

But this is the sort of thing that students were doing at that time. They were involved: I think any student who was on campus that spring of 1943 (any male student) was so overpowered by the great plethora of uniforms in Williamsburg that he had a very queasy feeling under his belt; he wasn't quite sure of himself, and he was willing to get out and do anything he could for the war effort. Even though he was all set to go into a military program perhaps a month or two later. No, I don't think student government was a big function. Now the girls had a separate judicial council and a women's cooperative government association, which really tended to regulate women's affairs on campus. They had their own judicial system--we probably ought to talk a little bit about social rules because the modern-day advocate of women's liberation living in this part of the century I suspect that what we did at William and Mary in the late ^{'30s} thirties and early ^{'40s} forties would sound like something out of an old book written under the lilac bush in the hot days of August. But before I get back to that, the women's group met every Monday night, usually ^{just} before all the sororities met on Monday night (and I'll tell you why everybody met on Monday night in a minute).

All of these things were done more or less to regulate the conduct of the girls. They were not legislative groups, but all ~~of~~ the women had to go to the meeting, and if the dean of women or ^{the} assistant dean of women had anything that had to be said, that was where it was said. The reason for that--we had a custom at William and Mary which we, as brash undergraduates, called "sexless Monday," which simply meant that at William and Mary on Monday no freshman girl could even say "hello" to a male on campus; an upperclass girl ^{I believe} could say "hello" and that was all. No dating, no sitting down to dinner together or any such thing as that, even to the point that ~~really~~ if you had a girl and you had anything you wanted to say to her during the day, you really just passed her a note as you came out of class, and if she didn't get caught she read the note. If she did it was possible for her to be campused for a week, ^{which simply meant that} her dating privileges would be taken away. There were varying degrees of dating privileges: I think on nights other than Monday, with the exception of Saturdays and Sundays ^{(when} I think ten o'clock was the curfew time), Freshman girls, I think, could date until seven o'clock at night. As you progressed from sophomore to junior to senior you ^{begon} progressed ^{ing} toward ten o'clock. I think finally when they put in an eleven o'clock hour for senior girls during their final semester this was a

A great concession. Things were markedly different in those days in terms of the social situation.

Emily: Did you ever question why seven o'clock and ten o'clock?

Cunningham: We were pretty unhappy about it, but here again the whole approach was so drastically different. I think ~~maybe~~ some of the relaxing of the dating hours (if you can call it that) grew out of the Student Cooperative Committee, where faculty and students and administrators sat down together. No, students didn't question it very much in those days. That's why it was so interesting for me later on to see students not only questioning, but in many cases defying and fist-waving and so on--parading, marching, and occupying--to see ^{just} how far all of these things had come in a relatively short span of years. No, I think ~~that~~ the students by and large didn't like it, but they accepted it; it was the way of life, and the firebrand liberals weren't up on the soapbox leading them on to anarchy. I think probably the most revolutionary thing we did was burning those freshman caps. ^{I know} That probably makes us sound like a group of spineless kids at that point, but we really had no fight with the world. We weren't a group of angry young people. Certainly for years and years since then I've seen a group of angry young people at that age and younger than college freshmen and sophomores. We were a pretty happy ^{group,} we took it the way it was dished out. We were in a whole different frame of mind. Of course, a lot of us, too, had no real financial

strength; many of us for that reason did what we were told to do by coaches, by deans, by teachers, and so on because our very being in college could be threatened by this sort of thing. I don't think any atmosphere of fear pervaded the William and Mary campus, but I think those of us who were on scholarships, ^{quite naturally} watched what we did and what we said. ^{I think it} ~~This~~ was sort of a self-preservation instinct, if nothing else. But the world went on: every Friday night, for example, ^(something which would be hard to believe today) there were dances over in the gym. ^{You went in;} if you were confronted at the door you paid a quarter, and you took your girl in, and there was a pickup band with a number of students in it, and they played until ten minutes to ten-- ten of ten became quite a crucial hour at William and Mary [#] because the bell rang at ten of, and it rang and rang and rang. And you knew that you had until that ten o'clock bell to get a girl back to the dormitory. So wherever you were on campus you had to take off and fly for that dormitory at that point because the housemothers at ten o'clock turned the locks on those doors and that was it ^{until the next morning.} Occasionally Henry Keyser, who was the night watchman, ^{have to} would get a girl into the dormitory after ten o'clock ^{if she got} there at thirty seconds after ten, and she and her date

were standing there trembling at the door, the house-mother wouldn't open the door. This sort of thing, I think, was a sign of the times; I don't think it was any more than that, and I don't think ^{that} the students missed a whole lot. I think they got a great deal of pleasure out of life; I think many of them went on to become pretty stable adults, despite ~~of~~ all this lack of individual freedom as they went along.

Emily: When I was reading the Flat Hat, ^[in the period] I kept running into statements in the editorials about fraternity snobbery; about fraternity control, machine politics. I wonder if, as a fraternity member at that time, you'd comment on that.

Cunningham: Oh, I remember that--I remember the fraternity situation. Yes, I'd be glad to comment on it. I think that at that time there were eleven fraternities, ~~I believe,~~ on the William and Mary campus, and fraternities would frequently get together and put together a slate of officers to run for student government office. At the same time the independents, who were ~~not~~ fraternity people--and this didn't mean the rich kids and the poor kids, so I think the snobbery thing didn't hold because many of us poor kids were in fraternities. Somehow or another we found the money to join fraternities, ~~not that~~ we lived in the houses; we lived in dorms, and those of us who were on scholarships had to live in the dorms

(we couldn't live in the houses). But I think there was a substantial bloc in eleven fraternities of the men who were on campus. Many of those in those days who were not in fraternities were not people who themselves had chosen not to be in fraternities, but in many cases were people whom the fraternities had ^{simply} overlooked, had not invited to join. This in itself, I think, was very ⁺unfortunate. I think that it created a division in the student body which led to some brickbat throwing back and forth. I don't know that elections were ever controlled by one side or the other; I think whoever had the majority voted for his candidate, and if there were more fraternity people, ^{for} ~~these~~ ^{their} candidate might get elected, ^{or} ~~and~~ if there were more independents their candidate might get elected. Basically, though, I think there was a lot of crossing of lines; I think people voted for the man, ~~the man~~ they had lived with in the dorm or the girl for class office whom they had dated or whom someone else they knew had dated. I think what you saw was a lot of journalistic excitement. I can remember the night that I had been elected president of the student body or maybe the next night the Flat Hat came out, and the editor, who never was a great friend of mine (as a matter of fact he and I had had words on a number of occasions) accused me on the front page of the Flat Hat of having counted some of the votes that I ~~had~~

received as president of the student body. I think Dean Lambert caught me on the way to his room that night, and we walked across the campus while I was permitted to cool down in Dean Lambert's company. And to clear the record I might say that the president of the honor council had asked me to count some votes for the honor council and not anything that ^{had} to do with a class office.

The whole picture of fraternity in those days is a difficult one to define, so difficult, in fact, that word all over the country at that point was that ~~these~~ fraternities were pretty undemocratic institutions. This even got into the hands of the governor of Virginia, who ^{at that time} was Colgate Darden. I remember Governor Darden coming to the campus and sitting in the President's House with a group of us (representatives of the student body ^{and the women's student government association}). At that time, as you may know, the fraternities owned their ^{own} houses; the sororities' houses were owned by the college, so there was no concern about the ownership of the sorority houses. But Governor Darden definitely-- he was a fraternity man himself ^{too}--felt that fraternities at William and Mary should not own their ~~own~~ homes, that they were not to own the houses. Subsequently things worked out that the William and Mary fraternities were forced to sell those houses, which they had occupied ^{for} many years. All of us were interested when Colgate

← Darden became president of the University of Virginia ~~not too long~~
~~afterward~~ to see whether or not fraternities would go from the
 Charlottesville campus. As you know, they never did go.
 In some ways I guess it was probably a good idea econom-
 ically that the fraternities did sell their houses. I say
 that for one reason, or two reasons, perhaps: first of all
 it bailed a lot of them out of some pretty severe financial
 difficulties, ^{that they were in, as} and secondly, ^{as} the war set in it would have ~~been~~
 pretty difficult for any fraternity to have maintained
 a house through those war years because everybody was
 gone. There was no resident manager who was there;
 there was nobody there who could rent the house out
 during those years. Other than for huge boarding houses, ^{as}
 several of them would have been quite impractical for a
 family or two families to occupy, ^{because} they were just too
 big for that. So really the whole fraternity thing at
 that point sort of came to a halt of its own weight ~~and the weight of the war.~~
 The fact that Mr. Darden stepped in and said "The
 houses must go, then the fact that all the males went
 right after that got the whole thing fairly well bailed
 out. ~~¶~~ After the war when we returned to the campus, fra-
 ternities were for the first few years placed in dormi-
 tory sections so that people in a fraternity group would
 be quartered near one another and not spread all over the

campus. But that got to be something of a tempest in a teapot just before the war when the Darden Report was made. Here again we were arguing in all of our juvenile enthusiasm and reminding the governor that he, too, was a fraternity man, and he was agreeing that yes, he was, but that he felt that for William and Mary this was not the way things should operate. The college, I don't think, really took much of a position on the thing. I don't remember the president arguing ^{or} any other official of the college; it may have happened ^{and} here again we were undergraduates, and we didn't know what went on after we had our audience with the governor. As far as we knew the college was not making great moans over the thing; they weren't arguing too much about it. The thing just sort of came to an end at the beginning of the war or say in the summer of 1943, that was probably when the last bulk of males really left the campus. It didn't take long to get it going again after the war any more than it took ^{any time} long to get O.D.K. going again or some of the other outfits. It took a long time to get F.H.C. going again, but it got going. Of course the fraternities, I think, prospered in the years after the war, and others can tell you the history of them since ^{because} they've had their days in and out of popularity and in and out of acceptability in many cases.

Emily: When this great tidal wave of veterans ^{was} ~~were~~ ready to come back to college under the G. I. Bill, ^{after World War II} what changes did this cause in admissions? ^{you} were now into admissions at William and Mary?

Cunningham: ^{This} ~~is~~ cause ^d a lot of interesting changes. I think we've gone into some of the ideas of the fact that the college had seen the last of its carefree "joe college" days, and things had settled into a ^{whole} ~~whole~~ different era. Right after the war, of course, the tremendous number of veterans hit the campus. Many of them ^{were} ~~had~~ been ~~been~~ students who had been here before the war; others were students who were trying to come to William and Mary for the first time. At that time William and Mary and several other institutions, ^{in Virginia} with William and Mary as the operator, ran a college in Norfolk down in the old navy St. Helena berthing area, and Colonel Fitzroy, who later headed up the Virginia University Center in Richmond, headed that noble institution, known as the St. Helena extension of William and Mary. Several colleges, public and private, were involved there; the recordkeeping was left to us here in Williamsburg. Large numbers of students went through St. Helena, then went on to colleges all over the state of Virginia. This obviously was to accommodate the great bulge of people who hit the area right after the war.

The whole ball of wax changed here ⁱⁿ ~~around~~ Williamsburg: first of all we opened the doors to students who had been at the college prior to the war; they were really brought back no matter what their records had been prior to World War II. They were even later on given an option of having their degrees reading ~~ing~~ that they were graduated with the class with which they had started ^{or} they could if they wanted to ~~to~~ adopt the class with which they finished. Things were quite different: the grading system changed at this time. ^{us} there was always the question of did you fulfill graduation requirements of the catalog under which you entered or the one which was in force at the time. The fact remains that we had this tremendous tide of students with which we had to deal for three[#] or four years after the war--G.I. Bill students, who had their own built-in set of problems. Frequently they were running two or three months behind with the government on their checks; people like Vernon Nunn, who was then running the business office~~s~~, certainly became the great saviour of these people because he had patience with them; he had faith in them. I'm sure he staked a few of them to dinners until their checks arrived. A whole new breed of students was created out of the old breed, and in many cases they were the same people. I had the opportunity to see a number of people ~~here~~

who had been here prior to the war who really hadn't paid much attention to anything academic ^Λ hadn't really shown ~~any~~ ^{much of} ~~much~~ interest in learning ^Λ anything ^Λ come back after World War II and become tremendous students. Phi Beta Kappa has a few of them enrolled at this point. (I should tell you one night ^Λ ~~all~~ ^{lot} of us almost made Phi Beta Kappa when Phi Beta Kappa Hall burned down on the campus of William and Mary, but the records were preserved, so those of us who almost made it didn't make it ^Λ ^{that night}) But in any event these people who came back had a purpose; by and large they were men who had been in the service for three or four years, who had seen the value of educational opportunity, and who came back to get a degree as soon as possible. They were older; they wanted to get out on the job market. I remember (loud ~~a~~ long) wails of the coeds who frequently on Friday and Saturday nights were sitting over in the girls' dorms while their male counterparts were over in the men's dorms studying. ^Λ ^{this} ~~It~~ was something we hadn't seen prior to World War II. These boys knew what they wanted to do ^Λ [≡] they were an older group; they did not concern themselves very vitally with affairs of state on the campus. College was being used as a vehicle to get them through to a degree. They were good citizens ^Λ I don't mean to imply that

^{their}
~~they were~~ ignoring what was going on was in any way a sign that they weren't good people. They were ~~they~~ ~~were~~ tremendous people, and they came in, and they did a great job, they worked hard, they got their degrees, and they went on. Many of them went ~~on~~ to graduate school; the G.I. Bill was paying for it. They had learned certain disciplines in the military, which I think stood them in well when they came to the campus. We found that when there were certain disciplinary infractions the old army and navy techniques of "it was all right until I got caught, and when I got caught I'd take my punishment" was sort of the way they responded. Fortunately I wasn't involved in discipline at that point, but ^{I think} it made the disciplinarian's job a lot easier in those days, simply because he knew ^[that] when confronted and convicted ~~that~~ a student expected to have something happen to him. He didn't dissolve in a ^{veil} ~~pail~~ of tears, which many of them had done earlier in the game, because they were younger; ^{they were} more immature.

The veteran crush lasted for awhile. The campus itself took on some interesting aspects: we had a dormitory down on Jamestown Road which became known as the "chicken coop" ^{because it looked just like a chicken coop.} Somebody I think even painted a rooster up on the chimney of the thing. It was all

of prefabricated material. We had other dormitories ~~of the same kind~~ out on Richmond Road where the shopping center is now-- there were several of them out there[^] as well as a group of (I think) twenty[#] small prefabricated houses up on Matoaka Court[#], up off Richmond Road. I think the lasting impression I had of these places (and I did live in one of the little prefab houses for a year or so) was the fact that they kept catching fire. ^{They had} water heaters that were run by kerosene; they were all heated by oil furnaces, but these were sort of space heater-type furnaces. We kept having fires all the time. The fire department in Williamsburg was kept very busy by the prefab construction.

The students took to this whole mode of living pretty easily--there was no problem. Today we find that many college students want the finest room in a dormitory^{at} that point they were really much more interested in what they were learning in the classroom and what they were going to be able to take out[^] ^{and convert into a living} than they were in the conditions ^{under} ~~in~~ which they were living while they were doing it. ~~Extracurricular~~ activities did suffer, sure, these people were not interested in going out for some club or singing or playing in a band or something of that sort. We had an unusual situation because at that point in time many of the boys who were finishing high schools were fulfilling some kind of military obligation. So we had sort of a lopsided student body, by and large, with older

males than females. The females were coming tight from high[#]school into college, but the boys in many cases were not--or at least the older boys outnumbered the younger ones pretty dramatically. So this sort of knocked the school's social life for awhile. Of course, another thing we had a large number of veterans who came back who were married ~~and they came back~~ and I can still remember veterans in those early homecoming parades wheeling twins right down the middle of the Duke of Gloucester Street, being a part of the parade. So the place took on a whole different atmosphere for several years after the war.

I think along about 1949, perhaps, things began to look as they once had. The general age character of the student body began to resume its prewar posture. Most of the people coming on to the college were people who were finishing high school. We had gotten over the big crush ~~we had gotten~~ to the point in admissions that we were not admitting very many transfers. The real influx of transfers that we were getting at that time was a group that was being shown preference, really, coming from the old Norfolk division of William and Mary and R.P.I. in Richmond, which at that time was also a two-year division. This is where we were getting our students--the whole thing changed.

By the same token numbers of eligible students began to drop off. The birth rate figures were catching up; we were far ahead of any impact from World War II[#] and the baby boom of that time. So really we ~~started~~^{began to find ourselves where} going from a market in which we were just sort of processing a few out of many^{many} applications to a situation in which we sort of had to take to the road and go out and do a selling job for the college because other colleges were doing[#] it. Many colleges were overbuilt because they had done alot of very hasty building after the war to try to keep up with the tide, and they had facilities ~~that~~^{which needed} ~~had~~ to be kept up and needed to be supported. Really they didn't have the students to support them, and they weren't getting the ^{tuitions} to accomodate this. We were having something of an economic recession, and many of the people who were not eligible for G.I. benefits were finding it difficult to come to college. The scholarship picture began to come into play again.

At this point I think admissions, which really prior to World War II had been sort of an adjunct to the office of the dean, ~~admissions~~ began to emerge as ^{a real} part of the entire college picture. I think colleges all over the country began to find people who they thought could represent the institution, named them as

directors and deans of admissions, ^a give them their own offices with the professional stature of faculty rank, as well as a title of "dean" or "director," and charged them with not only standards ~~of~~ the institution in terms of admission (what students were admitted and which weren't), but also with the real obligation of going out and finding students. There was a lot of recruiting that had to be done. I remember as early as 1946 when you could see this coming, once you knew the tide of the veterans was going to be over. I can remember going out on the road and going to the first college day ^{Program} so-called. These came on as a rather nefarious, overpowering experience for most admissions people as the years went by. I think they served a function in many ways; the high schools had not heard of college counselling at that point ^(in most instances) and the one day that fifteen admissions counselors hit the campus was the one day of counselling that the senior class in that high school had. Of course, you had to remember that most of the admissions people were new to ^{the game of} admissions, too. We were a group of World War II types who came back to the institutions and wound up in admissions. There was a lot of recruiting that had to be done at that time, ~~particularly~~ particularly on toward '49, '50, '51, ^{when} we really found the numbers were flagging, that we had to fill spaces, but at the same time we ~~would not~~

sacrifice the quality that the institution itself knew. The admissions people began being caught on the horns of a or various dilemmas, and we tried very hard to bring professionalism into a field that had sort of grown up out of chaos. I think ^{by and large} they did a pretty good job all over the country. At William and Mary we were doing the same thing: we were trying on one hand to provide services to the secondary schools by sending people out who knew the college, who could talk about it, who could talk about its programs, about its financial aid potential--whether it be through some kind of scholarship grant-in-aid or some type of employment. Of course, in Williamsburg we were very fortunate with Colonial Williamsburg in being able to provide a lot of employment that many college towns could not. So the whole admissions syndrome began to evolve, but first I think it grew out of the business of recruiting ^{because} what we did ^{right} after World War II I don't think we could call ~~admissions~~ admissions; I think we were sort of like an admitting office in a hospital ^{if} they showed up ^{and} they had the credentials from pre-World War II we brought them on in ^{and} some few others were admitted, and of course a class of girls was admitted each year.

Really up until '49 things were in a fairly chaotic state. From that point on admissions began to settle down into a series of cycles which went from hard times to extremely good times, when the selection~~d~~ ratio got unbelievable and back to hard times in many cases. Up until 1951, when I left the college for two years on a navy callback, things were fairly tight in admissions, and by tight I mean the selection was pretty good. William and Mary was receiving many more applications than it could possibly accomodate; therefore we were getting a good selection of students. Obviously I think this is the sort of thing that perpetuates the strength of a college, keeps the faculty happy in that they do have challenge~~d~~ in the classroom, and certainly makes everyone else's life easier~~d~~ you don't have to spend all^{of} your time recruiting. Of course, I left in '51^{and} was gone^{for} two years, but I do remember one real heartbreaking experience that happened just about the time I was leaving. I remember that we admitted a boy--I think^{he} ~~it~~ was^{from} somewhere up in New Jersey--and when we reviewed his application, ~~I think~~ it showed three and a half years work~~d~~ up through February of his senior year, and as I remember the story and the application, the boy, I think, ranked 39th in a class of 110 (something of that sort) ~~that we got~~ ^{that we got} on the transcript, showing three and a half years work. ^{The} grades didn't look~~to~~ so bad, so the boy was admitted. (I remember getting my callback

from the navy the first of May^g to report the first of July, so I was going to be at William and Mary for awhile) and we ^{always} sent out a final transcript form on which the school entered the boy's final grades and final class rank and sent it back to us. Well, I remember early in June getting that particular boy's form back and seeing that instead of a rank of 39th, it was a rank of 93rd in the same class, and the grades were rather precipitously lower than those that we had examined in February and March. I think the principal said something about not being too sure ^{why} ~~about~~ we had admitted the boy. Well, letters went back and forth, and in the meantime I had gone back ^{on} ~~into~~ naval duty and read most of this in the Washington Post.

It turned out that the original transcript had been tampered with in the athletic office. This led to all kinds of problems at William and Mary, which resulted in the departure of an athletic director, several coaches, and even the president of the institution.

Emily: When you were talking about recruitment, [#] were you talking about recruitment of male students?

Cunningham: I was talking primarily of recruitment of male students. I think the interesting syndrome of admissions to a coeducational institution ~~is~~ during the late ^{'40s} and perhaps

during the '50s was the fact that always you found yourself operating on ² ~~the~~ duality of numbers of applications. This held true at William and Mary. We received large, large numbers of applications from out-of-state, ^{women} ~~I think~~ for a lot of reasons: at that point ~~we~~ I think women and their families were looking for coeducation perhaps more than young men and their families. Our proximity to Washington and ~~that~~ metropolitan area made William and Mary a most attractive place for the daughters of military people, state department people, and so on. ~~We~~ got into some interesting political arguments in which people like Harry Truman and Richard Nixon figured on occasion. I think that William and Mary was a tremendously attractive spot for girls at that point. The ratio of males to female ~~was~~ I guess, 55[#] (percent) male at that point ~~was~~ a good one; it had appeal. The town itself had appeal. The way the college was run, the social structure of it ~~was~~ very appealing. I don't mean to say we didn't have enough applications from men, but we did have to go out and do some recruiting ~~of~~ of men. I ^{think of} ~~remember~~ talking with people like Dick Fletcher, who ran the admissions shop at the University of Virginia ~~for a number of years,~~ and Paul Farrier, who did the same at V.P.I. ~~the~~ ^{the} three of us would sit in a hotel room and talk about the "good Virginia man."

This was the Virginia ^{man whom} each of us wanted and each of us would pursue avidly with scholarship funds, with all kinds of enticements to come to our own campus. It was open competition; there just weren't that many to go around ^{at that time.} Pretty soon we began attracting more and more out-of-state men, which put the whole thing in a very interesting kind of position--and when I say the whole thing I mean the whole admissions picture. We really were, for a number of years, operating on four different admissions standards, or at least there were four different sets of criteria, which put us into ^{quite} a muddle most of the time. In addition to those ^{, of course,} we had such things as alumni children, double alumni children, and a few things of that sort. But the four zones were basically these: we were admitting Virginia women; we were admitting out-of-state women; we were admitting Virginia men; and we were admitting out-of-state men. Each of those categories in itself is a story, but basically what it meant was simply this: we would get probably fifteen to twenty applications from out-of-state women for every single one ^{that} we could accommodate. We might get three or four Virginia women's applications for every one that we planned to accommodate. ~~As far as out-of-state men were concerned we might get three or four~~

As far as out-of-state men ^{were} ~~was~~ concerned, we might get three or four out-of-state men for every one ^{that} we could admit, and we might get two Virginia men for every one we could admit. I think you can see that this is going to breed some real problems if you're going to get balance into the student body in a tax-supported institution where you do have an obligation to the tax ^{payers} of the state. So this led into some very interesting admission days. But I can say this: In all the years that I saw the William and Mary admission programs work ~~and~~ I can remember a high school principal introducing me one night, talking about William and Mary admissions when he said, "I have never known William and Mary to breach its integrity in admissions." This was one of the nicest things I ever heard somebody say because this went back to well before I had anything to do with admissions, and I hope it continued as long as I did have something to do with admissions because really we never consciously breached our situation. We never ^{led} cross wires, as we used to call it in admissions, when you admit somebody from way down in the class just because he has a connection with the institution and turn somebody down right ^{up} at the top of the class because he doesn't have a connection with the institution. So in all of this, I think admissions was becoming quite professional. But we did have to keep on recruiting that "good Virginia man." Frankly, we were competing with the University of Virginia; we were competing with V.P.I. in certain cases. We were competing with V.M.I. and other schools. One thing that William and Mary had that most of the schools did not have was something called a Distribution Program in the first two years, freshman and sophomore year courses which really were ^a pretty thorough-going regiment of work in the liberal arts. No student could come to William and Mary, for example, and escape language ^[requirements]; He could not escape English, ^[requirements] He could

not escape a natural science, which meant laboratories and which was a ten-hour course in those days, a ~~ten-hour semester~~ course, which really was a third of the whole freshman year. In addition, he could not escape either a mathematics or a philosophy elective during those same first two years. This is the sort of thing that makes it difficult to build big-time football, to compete with institutions which are offering less demanding degrees in business and in other fields. This made our job pretty difficult. I can remember time after time walking in to secondary schools, many of them out in the western part of the state, and a bright-eyed young man would come up and say, "I want to come to William and Mary and major in business." I would say, "great, let's sit down and talk about it," and I would have a preliminary application out of my pocket in front of him immediately. And he'd say, "how much language do I need?" And I'd say, "well, you must take at least two years of a language." And he'd just get up and walk away. He'd say, "I'm going somewhere where I don't have to do that." William and Mary was also offering the A.B. degree in business, not the B.S. degree that many people know. This didn't help us, either, academically, sure, it was great, and it was presupposing that the boy who finished the degree program was going onto the ^{Wharton} Wharton School or the Harvard graduate school, ^{many} or which many of them did and which ^{its} bespoke the integrity of the college and the strength of ~~the~~ ^{its} undergraduate programs. ~~But~~ still, it did not help in recruiting. We still had to go out and find the men who wanted that kind of program, who could survive it, and who would go on into the graduate program. So admissions was really finding a lot of common denominators at William and Mary. 1955 was probably the year of the lowest production of high school graduates after World War II because it began to surge up after that. I remember that one

year when President Chandler was very much on the scene, having brought me back in 1953 after the two years of Navy duty. I remember talking ^{with} to him and suggesting to him, and I think this took a lot of courage on his part because I suggested this in the face of all he had to deal with in the way of appropriations from the state, how dependent the College was on these appropriations for its very survival. I suggested to him that in that one year we would have to reduce enrollment slightly or reduce admissions for the freshman class, certainly, if we were to hold the quality that we had maintained all along because there just weren't that many horses out there with that kind of qualifications. He agreed, and we did ^{to}. I think we closed some gaps with some good transfer students, whom we hadn't been admitting prior to that, ~~even to the point~~. I can remember several years when the only women transfer students were ones ~~ones~~ who came from Richmond and Norfolk, the two divisions, or occasionally a married woman who ^{wandered} wanted into town with her husband who had two years of college ^{to do} ~~to do~~ and was not going to be a dormitory ^{student,} ~~situation~~ and so we would admit her, and she would work ^{find her} ~~her~~ way ~~through~~. But at that point, I think William and Mary established itself for the long pull because it was willing to cut ^b ~~back~~ a little bit on freshman admissions and not just take people to fill dormitory spaces. But the real problems as I saw them, and I spent quite a few years in admissions at William and Mary, were the ^{melding} ~~melting~~ of these various groups: the state women, the out-of-state women, the state men, and the out-of-state men, into a group which could survive academically in the same atmosphere after they had been admitted. Obviously, for the out-of-state women, where there were several thousand applying for maybe one hundred spaces--this is not an overstatement, that's about what usually happened. The ones we admitted were extremely powerful girls. Academically

they could do it all. I can remember sitting in a College Board meeting in New York with two old friends, Bill Edwards, who was Admissions Dean at Princeton at the time, and Mary Chase, who was Vice-President and Admissions Dean at ^{Wellesley} Wellesley, and having Bill suggest to Mary that she was getting some of her freshman class from our^r waiting list down at William and Mary. ~~New~~ ^{Wellesley} at ~~Wesley~~ that was sort of the red flag, but after her initial blow^u up she agreed that she probably was because this ^{was} ~~is~~ just the sort of girl we were having to turn away, [^] either put on the waiting list or turned^e away. We also had the very difficult task in many cases of explaining to tax^s payers of Virginia why we were turning their children down when their children were graduates of high schools in Virginia, fully ^c accredited, when really we were turning them down for their own good. We were doing it because we felt they couldn't survive in the kind of competition that existed at William and Mary at the time. This was not always easy to do. Frequently we got into heated words with people. It had to happen^o There was no other way. I think we tried to understand that an admission^s's application wasn't just a piece of paper but that it represented a potential investment on the part of a parent in the item in his life which was of the utmost importance to him, [^] probably the most important item in his life. So really, philosophically, William and Mary was emerging at that point into its pattern of extremely high selectivity in admissions. This has continued on ^{bill} ~~to~~ today. We had a [#] lot of funny things happen in those days. There were all kinds of offers of season tickets to professional football games and places at the beach for you and your family for the weekend and things of this sort. I remember one very attractive ⁱ little old lady, [^] I guess she was in her late seventies, ^o and she walked in my office one afternoon, ^d and her granddaughter was on the waiting list.

She was from somewhere in the midwest, ~~and~~ she sat there and chatted most amiably for quite a while, and we were sort of tossing around the idea of whether her grand^ddaughter was going to get in or not. I didn't think she was, frankly, because the waiting list was too long, and girls who had been admitted were hanging on. They just weren't withdrawing to go somewhere else. So this lady, I think took it about as long as she could. She was being so charming to me and calling me "young man" and all this business. All of a sudden I noticed ~~when~~ she reached in her purse, and she got out a checkbook, and she said, "Okay, buster, how much?" Well, obviously the girl didn't get in. Another sidelight. I remember early in the game sitting down one time talking to John Gunther and his son, who died shortly thereafter--the boy who had been up to Deerfield and who had all the brain difficulty. We had lots of funny interviews-- people coming in and falling apart in the admissions office. The pressure of the thing, I think, got way out of focus. The pressure of College Boards got way out of focus. People began to look at those six ^{stark} ~~starred~~ digits as though they were the six things that were going to make them successes or ruin them for the rest of their lives. I remember sitting with a group of thoroughly experienced admissions people on the College Board's first entrance procedure committee (~~and~~ we used to call it the "Hot Potato Committee" because when the College Board ran into problems they'd call us, and we'd run all over the East Coast and try to settle some of those problems). One of the things we did on that committee, with the full support of the College Board, was to tell admissions officers all over the country not to admit their classes simply on the basis of College Board scores. Then we turned around and told the public that we thought they should not subscribe to the large number of College Board coaching classes that had grown up

~~to the large number of College Board coaching classes that had grown up~~
 all of a sudden, where people were attending cram sessions and were being
 made much more nervous about College Boards than they would have been
 otherwise. [But this was a whole period of settling down] at one point,
 for example, a college would receive a set of College Board scores on
 a student, and up in the corner of the scoresheet there would be a number
 one, two, three, or an asterisk. That number simply indicated to you
 what choice you were for that student. A group of us went to a College
 Board meeting one time and turned heaven and earth, and finally they
 obliterated that number so the college really didn't know what choice ^{it was for}
 the student ~~was~~. I think that knowing that you are at least the
 student's third choice or something below ~~(which was indicated by the~~
 asterisk) was going to prejudice you against a fair reading of the
 application of that student. So admissions really grew at that time,
 and I think that William and Mary was right in the ^{forefront} ~~forefront~~ of it.
 We were very early experimenters in the advanced placement program. I
 remember sitting with the group that put the program together. Dr.
 Charlie Keller, who was a history professor at Williams, who was on a
 Ford Foundation grant with the College Board, and we met up at Arden
 House up on top of the mountain up in ~~the~~ New York state,
~~and~~ they put the advanced placement program together, and William and Mary
 got into it very early in the game and tried it out. ^{of course} Now it has become
 a major program across the country. So I think William and Mary was very
 much in the forefront of admissions. It was an early member of the
 College Board. I can remember going to early College Board meetings ~~and~~ and I know
^{"Cy" Lambert}
~~I also~~ can remember these, too, when the College Board group would get in

a very small corner of the ~~Grand~~ Ballroom at the Hotel Biltmore in New York and look like a bunch of lost souls over there because there weren't any more of us than that. Nowadays you go to a College Board meeting and there are quite a few thousand people there ~~secondary~~ school and college people alike. ~~Maybe I'm wandering too much about admissions here.~~

~~Emily: Well, let me ask you a few quick questions.~~

Emily: You mentioned this obligation to the tax payers of Virginia, was this the reason for a concern about ratio, male/female, ^{and} in-state/out-of-state?

Cunningham: I think this was a basic reason for it. I think that the college was trying to do several things: first and foremost, it was trying to admit the best and strongest student body it could, academically, in terms of extra-curricular participation, people who would contribute something to the institution and who would benefit ^{from} by being here. At the same time, the institution, certainly as we felt in the admissions office, was under pretty strong pressure to try to fulfill its role as a tax-supported institution. This, of course, bred the problem of well, do you go ahead as many of the large midwestern universities, ^{did} the state universities, and admit everybody from the state who applies? Obviously you know that your attrition is going to be horrendous if you do that all at once. So I think our decision was always rather resoundingly ^{no}, we're not going to approach it that way. We're going to admit those Virginia students whom we feel can profit by being here, whom we feel can survive the rigors of this kind of curriculum (this distribution program that we talked about). And the mere fact that a Virginia student may rank near the top of a class without regard to what course work he or she has had is not going to dictate to us that we admit that student. We approached it on that basis. And really with all the thousands of applications, I remember virtually seven thousand ~~applications coming~~ ^{coming} preliminary applications, in every year, year in and year out. With all of those, very, very seldom did we find that a parent would willfully expose a child to a situation in which we felt the

child shouldn't be. Really ~~we~~ we didn't have that much ^{of a} problem; ~~the~~ people understood ~~it~~. There's nothing like the word going back home ~~to~~ ^{is} A kid who comes to William and Mary who finds it ^{is} tough sledding the first semester and goes home at Christmas and tells people about it. This, I think, spared us in something we call self-selection. People were selecting themselves out, ~~people~~ people who were not good, strong, competent students. So we did feel the obligation, ~~yes~~ yes, we felt it. ~~And~~ I think your examination of the Board of Visitors' ~~records~~ records and minutes of meetings will show ^{that} from time to time the ~~board~~ board took stands on admission. I remember once or twice sitting down and actually writing an admission ^s policy which went into the ~~board~~ board, ~~and~~ which was adopted by the ~~board~~ board, ~~and~~ having the ~~board~~ board at that time say ~~in~~ in essence, "we will strive to have a certain percentage of Virginians and a certain percentage of out-of-state students. We will also try to keep a configuration of the student body so that ~~it~~ ^{there} will be a certain percent male and a certain percent female." ⁾ This changed some from time to time. This was sort of the set of parameters in which we had to work, ~~and~~ and so we worked that way. ~~As time went on~~ ^{between} between 1953 and 1960 ^{which} ~~this~~ was my last full year in admissions) I saw the numbers of applications growing, the numbers of serious applications growing. This was evidenced in some part to us ^{and} I think very clearly) by the fact that we began charging application fees, and we began ^{ed} still receiving large numbers of applications, virtually as many as we had before we started charging ~~any~~ application fees. So William and Mary hit the big-time in admissions. It was really on the scene as one of the most highly selective institutions in the country. This was brought to national attention →

in magazines ^f - it got into a number of magazines. I remember being shot at by a New York Times writer who wrote an article in Woman's Day Magazine in which he was working on several of us, who had either put his daughter on a waiting list or turned her down. Vassar had admitted her, and the article was ^[on] how Kathy got to Vassar. He was pretty direct in his criticism of the methods ^{of} in a number of ^{the} colleges. Well, when the magazine got word of the article and saw its contents, they commissioned Fred Heckenger, who was also a pretty well-known educational writer and whom I have seen since and thanked many times. ~~But~~ Heckenger wrote an article which appeared on the bottom half of the page on which this other article was written and page by page throughout the article (which ran ^{to} maybe fifteen pages) Heckenger refuted everything the man said at the top of the page. This was all a part of what was going on. It was going on all over the country. The World War II babies were catching up with the scene. People were getting just ridiculous odds on admissions. People used to say, "you've become a committee of rejection rather than a committee of admission. We also found ^{the matter of} this handling people, whether they be state or out-of-state, ~~was~~ a very tricky kind of business. If you were going to admit a student, you could have taken the back of a matchbox and ^{just} written, "You're admitted on it" and put it in the mail, and they'd be delighted. But if you turn somebody down, ^d you better write an individual letter, ~~and~~ have a good reason for doing it, [#] and try to explain it just as clearly as possible. Of course, it was always the alumnus who had his checkbook poised and was going to write that check for \$5000 when he hadn't given a thing in ^{twenty} ~~20~~ years until your letter of rejection to his child came. Then he wasn't going to give you a thing. This went on quite often. Jim Kelly used to get

a few of those back in the days when I was doing admissions.

William and Mary ^{really} did burst on the scene on admissions. I used to do a lot of interviewing in New York and other cities, and I would find that the competitive company we were keeping in student's ²⁾ choices of colleges to which they wanted to apply represented the best and the strongest in the country -- New England colleges, midwestern colleges, and a few out on the western ~~end~~ coast. But William and Mary had come of age at that point. Now being in the secondary school business I still see William and Mary ^{as being} of age and still competing with the high prestige institutions around the country.

Emily: Was the purpose in letting the athletic program become the big-time program that it did become after the war ¹⁾ was that to attract men students? OR
Was it a by-product?

Cunningham: I don't know. I think it was probably a by-product. The coaches were still on the payroll ²⁾ by ^{and} in large ³⁾ Many of the same boys who had been brought in ^{and} recruited prior to the war returned to the College after the war. And I think as a consequence there was a pretty good spillover of ~~pretty~~ strong athletic teams. I, at the time, certainly as dean of Admissions and later on, was not privy to the kind of discussion that made policy about whether athletics would be big-time or small-time or whether there would be ^{many} lots of scholarships or very few scholarships. I was sort of like the man with the newspaper; I was reading them as I saw them ^{was} and admitting the students whom I felt were qualified for admission and turning down those who weren't, whether they be football players or not. Of course, I saw quite a few jersey numbers with names attached that I recognized as people we had turned down, people who came ^{out here} and beat our socks off ~~out here~~ time and time again for other schools. No, I don't think that following the war there was any conscious effort to use athletics as a big ^{attractor} ~~retractor~~ or

recruiting gimmick. If there ~~were~~^{was} I was totally unaware of it at the time. I just don't think it was true.

Emily: One more question about the curriculum, which you referred to a little bit ago. You ^{said} ~~talked about~~ that William and Mary did not have a business school, as U. Va. and V.P.I. could offer, and also I know that the law school ^{was} ~~is~~ thought of as something that could be an attractor for men. The quality of the law school in the early '50s, was this in keeping with the high standards that you've spoken of for the undergraduate curriculum?

Cunningham: Well, first let me say that we had a business program. We had a concentration in business which was part of the A.B. degree, but it was not a separate school of business, which you mentioned. The law school, and I remember it well because I was involved in admitting each ^{student} ~~law school~~. Under President Chandler we had a very interesting arrangement. Dean Woodbridge was Dean of the law school, and I was Dean of admissions. We had an arrangement whereby Dean Woodbridge and I would vote on applicants. And if we agreed ^{to} ~~and~~ accept or reject, that's what we did. When he and I disagreed the president got in and cast ^{the} ~~a~~ deciding vote. So this was the way that many law students were either admitted or turned down at William and Mary. ~~Now~~ ⁱⁿ those days, ~~undergraduate admissions~~^{were} were stronger than law school and graduate admissions because here again, it was the old birth rate curve that was catching up. In the early '60s as we began moving toward more and more undergraduate applications every year we were still short because of this 1955 ^{'56, and '57} group of high school graduates, ~~and '56 and '57~~. We were still short of graduate students and law students. We were not attracting that many law applicants at William and Mary, so the admissions situation there was difficult. It was very difficult. We were ⁱⁿ ~~a~~ land of great plenty

in undergraduate admissions, and we were outforaging for law school candidates. Now of course, all this passed pretty quickly, and the law applicants began to roll in, And then pretty soon the law school became one of the nation's more selective ones. But again, I don't look on the law school as any kind of ~~plan~~^{planned} recruiting instrument; It was something that had been here for ages and was established and was a part of the college. It just had some very difficult years when there weren't candidates for admissions, just as the total college did years ago when there weren't candidates for admission. ~~Now~~ I think that the law school, while it had some difficult days, ^{early} ~~earlier~~ in the '60s, again never compromised its standards. It remained small; It remained viable; It remained a good teaching function of the total institution. ~~And~~ as a consequence, as it began to emerge it didn't find it had to raise standards all over the place. It just was able to select candidates and admit more than it had in the past, so it grew to where it is now. Some of this I guess was true of graduate work, too, in ~~and~~ education and other fields. ~~But~~ this was done, ^{with} the exception of the education programs, ^{on} a very ^a minimal scale in the other fields at that time, right up ~~really~~ until about 1960, probably, when graduate programs really began to emerge.

Emily: Perhaps ^{this} ~~it~~ would be a good place to stop for today.

March 20, 1975

Emily: Let me ask you ~~when~~ when was it first proposed that the College of William and Mary would become administratively reorganized into the colleges and why?

Cunningham: Well, I believe it was first proposed at the time ^{the} 1960 General Assembly ^{of Virginia} was meeting, principally ^{at} because of the fact that ~~there~~ ^{it} had become apparent because of population growth and industrial development ~~for~~ that ~~first of all,~~ there needed to be some sort of institution of higher learning on the ~~peninsula~~ ^{of} Virginia, the lower peninsula down in the Newport News-Hampton area, ~~and~~ ^{at} the same time ~~it~~ it was apparent that there needed to be some sort of post-high school, perhaps junior college ^{-type} education over in the Petersburg ^{and} Colonial Heights Area. At the same time William and Mary had its two branches, the Norfolk Division in Norfolk which later ^{of course,} as you know, became Old Dominion University, and the Richmond Professional Institute in Richmond. So it was felt that administratively it would be far more productive and certainly cheaper to put William and Mary and the two existing branches and the two proposed branches under the same ~~board~~ ^{of} visitors and under a central administrative system which would govern such things as purchasing and so on, even though the institutions were to keep their own separate budgets. It would give them a combined fund. So actually ~~the~~ the Legislature passed ~~the~~ legislation which created the system, authorizing the position of a chief executive officer for the system, and I believe in addition to that a certain amount of staff for him, probably a comptroller, who was later appointed, and some secretarial help. In the same legislation there was reference to the creation of a college at Newport News (which did actually say Newport News, because I remember at the eleventh hour when Newport News had a piece of ~~property~~ ^{property} ~~property~~ ^{property})

all set for us a loud howl went up from Hampton, and they made a counterproposal of another piece of property ~~and the legislation~~ and the wording of the legislation was interpreted, and we did ~~vote on go to~~ Newport News) and a college at Petersburg. So this ~~really~~ really was the legislation which prompted the Board several months later--I think at its ^{May} ~~main~~ meeting in 1960--to appoint Admiral Chandler, who at that point was President of William and Mary, to the job of ^cchancellor of the Colleges of William and Mary. The system as set up ~~placed~~ placed the responsibility for overall administration of the institutions with Dr. Chandler and with his office, but the individual institutions could operate with a fair degree of autonomy within the system of the Colleges. The Norfolk Division already had its president. The Richmond Professional Institute already had its president. On Admiral Chandler's recommendation I was proposed for the Newport News job. That was at a meeting, I believe in August, and ^[] was approved by the Board, with the job becoming effective the ^{first} ~~1st~~ of September. If I can digress for just a second: I can remember being very unhappy that a good day of fishing was interrupted on the ^{fourth} ~~4th~~ of July when Admiral Chandler decided we'd better keep the admissions office open for the day because there might be people in town who wanted to talk about admissions. Bob Hunt, who is currently Dean of Admissions at the college, was ~~currently~~ in the office at the time working. I had Bob take the office hours for the morning while I went fishing, and I came in at noon and took the office myself in the afternoon. A little later in the afternoon ~~the~~ the Admiral, who himself was working (I can't find too much fault with having to work; He was down working in the President's office), ~~he~~ asked me to come down and at that point proposed to me that I consider the possibility of either the College at Newport News (it wasn't named at that time) or the College

at Petersburg. The things that followed obviously indicated that I went to Newport News. A number of things had to be done. Catalogs had to be written for the new colleges. They didn't really ~~really~~ own a paper clip. At Petersburg they owned a campus, ^{that} but had seen other usage and needed extensive renovation. Architects had to be employed. ~~And~~ in Newport News we didn't own a blade of grass. All we had was the promise from the city down there that they would provide us with a building in which we could operate until we had time to get some buildings built. (I'll get back to that business of going to Newport News and what happened.) I do remember going down there, though, while I was in the period, ^{of} trying to make up my mind about the job. I found ^{out} that the old Daniel School down on 32nd Street, which at one time, ^{seventy} ~~70~~ years before, had been Newport News High School, was the building which we were to use. I remember going down on a Saturday morning to the central school office and getting the keys to the old Daniel Building and driving up there and walking into the building. It was absolutely unbelievable: The plaster was hanging from the walls; The place was absolutely filthy. I walked into the first classroom, and there was an old green blackboard over in the corner, peeling, ~~and~~ ^{and} scaling, ^{and} Written across the blackboard in great big letters, "This Building Should Be Torn Down." Now if that isn't an interesting way to move into a new ^o ~~ip~~, I don't know of one!

The system of the Colleges at first seemed to ride along as a pretty efficient instrument for handling the Colleges. And I think, frankly, if personalities and geography had not got ^{ten} ⁱⁿ the way, the system of the

of the Colleges might have survived. I think basically the original purpose of one Board and one central administration probably was a good thing. I think unfortunately individuals felt that their prerogatives were being impinged on by the nature of the system and that certain freedom to operate as they felt they should for the good of their own institutions was being impeded by having the central system.

Interestingly though, despite these feelings the system did operate and I think very efficiently for two years. We pled for our own budgets individually. The budgets were worked out together. Many of the things that we needed to do as a unit (named the Colleges of William and Mary) were much more easily accomplished by having the kind of

arrangement that we did have under the Colleges. I suspect that two of the real contributing factors, and perhaps more real than the others that I've suggested, to all the ^{dissolution} ~~disillusionment~~ of the system were the growth patterns that developed in Norfolk and in Richmond. Those two institutions began to increase very rapidly in enrollment. They had both been made four-year institutions. They were developing upper-division programs in one or two cases there were certain graduate programs being developed. The chief administrative officers, who had been either deans or provosts, had been named presidents. There was a lot of local sentiment, particularly in the Norfolk area, to have the College be Norfolk's own college and not a part of William and Mary and to be set up with a board of visitors, probably with a number of Norfolk people on the board. So I think all of this and this came at a time, too, during which there were plenty of students to go to college. People weren't out hanging together to survive. In addition to

You each submitted your own budgets to the central system -- is this what you mean?

Yes -- we each submitted them to the President and the Board of Visitors of the Board of Trustees

Could you give an example? Faculty of course must remain separate with their own budgets, deans, etc.

that the economy was such that the legislature was able to appropriate money for building buildings. The colleges were expanding rapidly, physically, and they were expanding their educational offerings a great deal. I think that the Norfolk Division, which actually under the Colleges I believe was called the Norfolk College of William and Mary, had grown to the point and the sentiment had grown to the point that everyone in Norfolk, certainly and obviously later on in the legislature felt that the college was ready to fly on its own, to have its own board, to operate as a separate entity, not as a part of William and Mary. In the meantime, the two institutions had earned accreditation on their own with the Southern Association, so there was no question either in the case of the Norfolk school or the one at Richmond of any loss of accreditation or any interruption of accreditation. So this, I think, probably had as much to do with the ^{dissolution} ~~disillusion~~ of the system as anything that really happened. Now in addition to that, of course, the two colleges at Newport News and at Petersburg were in a junior college stage. They had reasonably low enrollments during those first couple of years. I think both schools opened with a little over two hundred ~~the~~ the first year. Christopher Newport, of course, began to rocket immediately. ^{we} ~~They~~ were doubling enrollment every year for a number of years and starting evening programs and summer programs and so on. But those two schools could not, by the nature of the regulations of the Southern Association, ~~Association to be~~ be accredited immediately. They had to go through a period of at least two years and the graduation of a class of junior college students before they could even seek accreditation

as junior colleges. At that point, there was no general thought that either of them would become a four-year college. Events that transpired later show that at maybe in some minds there was some thought at that point that at least one of them would become a four-year college, and it subsequently did. But I think these are the real reasons that the system of the colleges probably just couldn't make it in the climate in which it found itself ~~in that point~~. I think it could have been a good system. I think that the associations we had during its life were good ones. I think a tremendous amount was done for the two new institutions because they were able to draw on the experience of the three established older institutions and certainly particularly on the drawing power of the accreditation of William and Mary. I found, for example, at Newport News that from the first day we enrolled students, if a student wanted to transfer to another institution, not in the system, that that student could transfer very easily because of the fact that William and Mary's accreditation extended to the branch college ^{at} ~~in~~ Newport News. So as far as the system itself is concerned, that to my knowledge is pretty much the history of it. It worked very smoothly on a number of things. We had worked out a credit arrangement so that students could move from campus to campus taking actual credit with them and not having grades scaled down to a C average or not having D's unacceptable from campus to campus. I think we all gave it a good try, but these external factors were the things that put it out of business two years later.

Emily: Had the idea of the Colleges been initiated here with the administration or was it a purely legislative thing, the way the ^{dissolution} ~~disillusion~~ was?

Cunningham? You mean the idea of new colleges or the system of the colleges?

Emily: The idea of the system.

Cunningham: I don't know really where it started. I doubt that it came out of William and Mary as such. I think it was an idea which was ^{felt} ~~thought~~ to be legislatively expedient and academically sound at the same time. The ideas for the new colleges really came out of members of the General Assembly. ~~And~~ [≡] despite the difference and the growth patterns of the two satellite institutions, the one at Petersburg was the first one that was envisioned politically, and many people said that Christopher Newport came along sort of as a political compromise down on the Peninsula of Virginia, where population was booming and growing every year, much more so ^{than} ~~than~~ really over in the Petersburg area.

Emily: Could these have been set up separately from ^{the} William and Mary tie?

Cunningham: Remember ~~that~~ this occurred before there was a community college system in Virginia. These were not really being set up in the mold of community colleges anyhow; These were being set up as colleges of arts and sciences ~~basically~~. There was a ^{precedent} ~~president~~ for this kind of set up in that William and Mary already had its two branches, ^{the} one at Richmond and one at Norfolk. The University of Virginia had a couple of branches at that time which were operating in this pattern. So I think it was just logical to assume that as new colleges were to be set up, they would be appended to already-established institutions. Newport News ^{is} obviously was a natural appendage for Williamsburg. Petersburg, I don't know. That raised some hackles and some questions as time went on.

~~That raised some hackles and questions as time went on~~ because really, when Richard Bland was established, two tax-supported colleges offering freshman and sophomore work were located in the same city in Virginia. But I feel that the setting up of the new colleges and the attachment to senior, established institutions really wasn't questioned by anyone because it seemed to be the logical way to do it. It was the way it had been done before and obviously seemed to be the way to do it.

Emily: I may have gotten a wrong impression, but in reading the newspapers and also some of the official minutes of that period, I ^{got} have the feeling that it was sort of set up quickly, that adequate funds were not appropriated immediately, that there was not a great deal of planning that had gone ⁱⁿ before.

Cunningham: Well, I think it had to be done in a hurry, ~~and~~ I know a little bit about what you're talking about on the funding, and I think I can fill you in on that. The General Assembly, I remember this happened in 1960, January and February. The two new colleges were due to open in September of '61, which really was not too far away. The legislature appropriated money for the Petersburg college for both years of the biennium ^{biannual}. ~~Now~~ remember the year of the biennium began in July of '60-1, '61-2. Well, the ^{monies} ~~monies~~ that were appropriated during the first year of the biennium for Petersburg were ^{monies} ~~monies~~ that were to be used to refurbish the plant and get it ready to open as a new college. The funds that were appropriated for the second year of ^{that} ~~the~~ biennium were some general funds which came out of the tax dollars. This was to operate the plant, but also special revenues or tuitions ^{revenues} were funded in the budget so that the school would earn part of its own operating revenue. This was the way the thing was done at Petersburg.

I think it was done to the best of anyone's knowledge as to what it was going to cost to refurbish the plant, put it in working order, and get the necessary supplies to get the place going. Then on the basis of what was estimated as an enrollment for the first year of the college's existence, ^a certain amount of funding to accommodate the needs of the students was to come from the tax dollars and a certain amount from tuition. The Board of Visitors had fixed tuition for the school, [^]for the ~~the~~ school, ^[amount] so they knew pretty well what, [^]per student the school would produce in the way of revenue. Now Christopher Newport did not get started in quite the same way. The General Assembly had heard from the city of Newport News, [^]and this showed me something when I was looking at two colleges and trying to make a choice between the two, [^]the city of Newport News had said, "we will fund the college for the ~~setup~~ ^{year}, then you go ahead and fund it for its first year of operation." The General Assembly agreed to this very quickly, [^]and the city of Newport News put aside a fund which we used to completely rework the John Daniel Building in downtown Newport News, to buy supplies, and get the ~~college~~ ^{college} ready for opening in September, 1961. So no state funds were spent in Newport News until the college actually was in operation. ~~The~~ [^]first time, I say no state funds. I'm going a little beyond myself because during that year while the setting up was taking place, I was in Williamsburg and I had a secretary in Williamsburg, or a person who was an administrative assistant, who really were on the William and Mary payroll in Williamsburg. I retained my title as Dean of Admissions and Student Aid and sort of advised in the admission process at William and Mary, but I spent most of the year and Miss ^{Ramsey,} ~~Ramsire~~ who was the other person involved, spent most of the year writing the catalogs for the new schools. I was dealing with the architects some. Also, the

the chancellor's office was doing a good bit of the architectural work on both campuses. ~~So~~ we were really being paid out of state funds that year, the two people who were here at William and Mary. But other than that, all the work that was done, the supplies that were ordered, and I remember the Newport News city Council passing some sort of enabling legislation which said "reconstruction and equipping" and I can remember getting down to the point at the end of the reconstruction ^{and equipping} ~~of the building phase and the equipping of it~~ that I had some \$17,000 or \$18,000 still in that budget that could be spent. I thought, "well, here is a good chance to put a good lick in at the library and buy \$17,000 or \$18,000 worth of books." I remember calling the City Manager, who had a tight reign on ^{all} the city funds, quite naturally, and asking him if I could buy books with that money. He said, "if you call it equipment you can buy books with that money." So we called our first books equipment, other than the books we borrowed from William and Mary. ~~But~~ this was the way the funding went. The city of Newport News took care of all the preparatory-to-opening funding, and then the state took over from that point. We operated with general fund revenues, tax dollars, and also with special revenues that we earned ourselves. So that was the way the two were funded.

Emily: Yes, that does explain that better. How did Christopher Newport come to acquire that name?

Cunningham: Christopher Newport came to acquire that name because Newport News derived its name ^{presumably} from Captain Christopher Newport, who was the British captain, later Admiral, who brought the three ships to Jamestown. There are many great legends about the name. One which we published in the catalog ~~and this was how~~ ^{that} Captain Newport had gone back to England and left the first permanent settlement at Jamestown ~~and~~ hard

Move this line
up here ok?

times set in; ~~People~~ people were starving, Indians were becoming less friendly. At about the eleventh hour ~~the~~ the colonists decided they were going to leave Jamestown and had boarded boats and were starting down the James River toward what is now Hampton Roads. ~~And~~ as they got down to a point off the present city of Newport News, they looked over the horizon, ^{and} ~~that~~ Captain Newport came with supplies, ships, additional personnel. So people ^{are} ~~now~~ want to say down there that this represented Newport's news to the colonists. You can take that as yarn-spinning, or maybe there is some truth to it. But really the way the college got its name, Newport had a great deal of meaning in the ~~Newport News~~ Peninsula area. There were parks named for Christopher Newport. I remember sitting down ~~with~~ Admiral Chandler and I think ^{perhaps} one or two ~~for~~ ^{perhaps} of the city fathers down in the Newport News area and just plumbing the idea of using the name of Christopher Newport College of the College of William and Mary. After some further thought ~~we~~ we went ahead and decided to do it. It was done. Although I don't remember ^{it} exactly ~~for~~ I'm sure at the next ~~board~~ board meeting, the ~~board~~ board officially adopted the name for the school. Then of course, we had to sit down and design a seal for the school, and we designed the same seal with different names on it for Petersburg and Newport News. Catalogs were done in the same way ^o

Emily: There was no controversy about the naming, though, the way there was with the Norfolk college?

Cunningham: No, no, we didn't run into any controversy at all. As a matter of fact, ~~as~~ as soon as we named it ~~for~~ such things at the Christopher Newport apartments ["] began growing up just a couple of blocks from the proposed ~~site~~ ^{site} for the new college plant, ["] College apartments ^{" would build} grew up on the other side, ["] The Campus Shop ^{" opposed} grew up on the corner and so on. No, it was very generally

accepted~~d~~ and very happily accepted right away.

Emily: You spoke of ~~the~~ working within the system of the Colleges of William and Mary and that being part of William and Mary really was an advantage for Christopher Newport. Now I got the feeling from some of the critics of this system ^{that} they felt that the College in Williamsburg was ^{losing} ~~wounding~~ -- I don't know if they were talking about Newport News in particular -- its prestige (these words were used) to other schools.

Cunningham: I think that was a very legitimate claim. Yes, they were.

The College of William and Mary was putting its name on the line. I remember about two hours ago saying to you that at one point when I was a student~~d~~ the parent institution lost its accreditation for a while because of something that was done at a branch institution. I know many people in Williamsburg were ~~in Williamsburg at the time that happened.~~ ^{at the time that happened,} They were at William and Mary, and they could think back and remember what had happened that had led to the loss of accreditation. So~~d~~ yes, obviously, I think the people here on campus, perhaps had I stayed and not gone~~d~~ I might have been among them, ^{-- felt that} ~~So~~ the good name of the College was being stretched. And some, I think, even felt it was being stultified a little by being attached to these two upstart institutions which had done nothing to prove themselves and which had very little except holes in their socks at that point and just weren't ready to operate in much of any fashion, much less the kind of fashion ~~that~~ the venerable institution in Williamsburg was operating on. Yes, it was understandable. I think that any time an institution anywhere in the country has opened a branch institution this has been a very logical reaction to the opening of a branch, particularly if its accreditation is

~~is~~ involved in it. I know I have gone on committees for the Southern Association to judge the accreditation of state universities and their branches, and I know the feeling at the university home office about the jeopardy that the branches may put them in ~~in~~ simply by not adhering to the academic standards they do at the home institution. It was a perfectly understandable thing. It hurt a little bit when I had been here all those years and ~~found that~~ ^{was down at} Newport News trying to make an institution go, ~~but~~ I felt that rather than take it personally I'd simply react to the fact that it was a pretty natural kind of reaction for people up here to have. I felt they had it, and I don't think it was something that could be swept away. I don't think that it will ever be swept away until Christopher Newport goes off on its ~~own~~ ^{own} as a separate institution with its own ~~board~~ ^{board}. And again, I think that the reaction is logical. I think that any time there are two institutions under one ~~board~~ ^{board}, obviously if the name of the senior and honored institution is attached to the second one, the second one does benefit from it, ~~obviously~~ in many ways, although I could tell you some thoughts about ^{some} ways that it doesn't benefit from it. There can be a good bit of bullying going on in a situation like that. But I do think that the parent institution is the one that stands to lose, certainly. There is no question about it.

Emily: How was it, then, and when was it that you first found out that the Colleges were going to be dissolved? I know this didn't affect Christopher Newport directly.

Cunningham: I found out about it sometime in the early fall, I guess, or late summer of 1962, I guess it was. Yes. We had opened in September of '61 in Newport News and ~~in the yes, I guess it was~~ in the late spring of '62 or early summer, I believe we attended a meeting in Admiral Chandler's office. This was the group of the five institution

heads, at which time he told us ^{that} apparently the system was not to continue. Things were not ^{obviously} of course this had to be done by amending the acts of the legislature (to amend the ~~college~~ system of the Colleges out of the acts) and to replace it with something else. So this is when I first heard about it. And as time went on, of course, the legislature cranked up and got into session and the whole thing was accomplished. I believe that the system of the Colleges was kept in effect, at least as an entity, until July of '62. And of course, at that point the whole thing dissolved, and Christopher Newport and Richard Bland were retained by William and Mary with a coordinator who was on the William and Mary campus and who saw to the affairs of the two institutions from a distance generally. He visited the schools occasionally, but the running of the institutions was left pretty much on the campuses. Of course, at the same time the college at Norfolk and the college at Richmond were separated from the William and Mary system and were set up with their own Boards of Visitors. So this was pretty much the way the thing happened.

Emily: When it happened there in '62, did you think it was a good idea at the time?

Cunningham: I was very much concerned about it from a personal point of view because I had worked very closely with Admiral Chandler from the time I came out of the Navy at the end of the Korean War. I worked with him for, I guess nearly ten years in Williamsburg on admissions, which I mentioned before. ~~Certainly~~ he was the man who offered me the opportunity to go to Newport News, and he was my friend and counselor through the early days of setting up the college. He stuck with me when we reached difficult situations.

I hated from a personal point of view to see that kind of relationship ^{of} come to an end. It meant really that he was severing all his ties with

William and Mary, which I think he had served very marvelously ~~at~~ as president ~~present~~ for a number of years. It just meant that the whole set of signals was being changed. I think from the ^[standpoint of the] efficiency of the system, we at Newport News even in that early stage after one year of operation were beginning to feel the pressures which had built up so in Norfolk and Richmond and which ultimately led to the spinning off of the two institutions in those cities to become autonomous with their own boards. People in the Newport News area had embraced Christopher Newport with great enthusiasm, had continued to support it, and the legislature, ~~incidentally~~ when it met had appropriated enough money to build the first building at Christopher Newport, ~~and~~ we were hard at work employing architects and getting ready to get a building started. This generated tremendous enthusiasm in the city. The city in the meantime had also come up with a ^{seventy-five-} ~~75~~ acre tract of land which the city of Newport News paid for. This differed from the Petersburg situation in which a piece of state land was just simply deeded over and occupied by the college over there. ~~So~~ Newport News began to feel a tremendous stake in this whole thing. As time went on ~~of course and~~ we built the first building, ^{and} Newport News came to our rescue and put in storm drainage; they put in parking lots for us, roadways. I frequently felt that I was on a rocking horse between the general Assembly ⁱⁿ ~~and~~ Richmond when it was meeting and the City Council in Newport News, ~~and~~ the purpose was the same in both instances. I was out begging for money. Three governors of Virginia and the City Council of Newport News were very kind to us at Christopher Newport. In a very short space of time, ~~all~~ this ~~all~~ enabled us to build quite a number of buildings and attendant facilities of parking lots and roadways, which we needed very definitely.

Emily: During the time that Christopher Newport had been under the Colleges System, ^{now I'm talking about,} you indicated at least that you were certainly able to work within the system. But this couldn't have been universally true or the Colleges wouldn't have been dissolved. Is this not right?

Cunningham: I think you're right. I said earlier I think that personalities got involved, ~~but~~ I think even more than that probably the fact that the colleges at Norfolk and at Richmond had grown so ~~and~~ that this huge groundswell had come up to the point that people were really looking for autonomy. The newspapers in both communities, particularly in Norfolk, [^] Norfolk was a very progressive, forward-looking community which was doing a lot of work with its center city, ~~and~~ putting up large modern buildings and so on. There was a great, great civic pride there which made the community want its own institution, ~~which~~ it could call its own and have it identified with people who were business leaders and so on in the community who could be its visitors, ^{or} ~~and~~ its trustees, rather than sharing a board with an already-established institution. I think that individually probably any one of the men heading any one of the institutions could have worked with the system. Certainly there were disagreements. There were feelings of big brotherism ^{probably} ~~probably~~ in the whole thing. But I think that all the factors combined ~~just~~ just sort of made the thing impossible to the point that it got into legislative hands. Obviously it had to if the legislature was going to knock it out, ^{it} ~~which they~~ did ~~it~~ two years later.

Emily: After '62, then, when Christopher Newport was ~~under~~ continued to be under the Board of Visitors of William and Mary it continued to grow, as you have said, and finally reached the stage where it, too, wanted to be a four-year college, just as Norfolk had done some years before.

As ~~part of~~ [≡] do you see this as a pattern for William and Mary, this ^{of which} having gone on in Norfolk, in Richmond, ~~which~~ ^{both} began under the first Dr. Chandler as two-year schools?

Cunningham: Well, it certainly became the pattern. Obviously it was the pattern in Norfolk. I can remember working with the old Norfolk Division when it was a pretty small school down there ~~and~~ (I used to work with their admissions people, ^{when} I was in admissions at Williamsburg). I think the pattern probably has sort of come to an end simply because of another external force ~~and~~ this is the beginning of the community college system. I think when that started there was no question but that here was a system of two-year colleges which were being placed strategically around the state to serve the needs of people all over the state, ~~perhaps~~ within Mr. Jefferson's philosophy of a day's horseback ride from your home to an institution of higher learning. But I think with that sort of system operating and in force ~~that~~ the day of the branch college for the big parent institution is gone. I don't see it returning at all. Christopher Newport was in an interesting situation in that its enthusiastic support by the community was matched by enthusiastic applying for admission by the young people of the community. The numbers of students just began to grow. ~~They grew~~ After one year we decided that we'd better start a summer school because there was ~~great~~ ^{Then} great demand for it. ~~And~~ ^{And} we decided after that that we'd better get going on an evening college. ~~And~~ [≡] that had produced great demand. ~~In~~ ^{we} in the meantime ~~we~~ ^{we}'d gone back to the General Assembly and pointed to the fact that with the completion of the first building on the new campus, which was some, ^{eight} ~~8~~ miles away from downtown, where the old building was, that we were threatened with ~~extension~~ ^{extinction}

if we didn't go ahead and build some more buildings up on the new campus because our students were moving up and down[#]town nine or ten miles to go from class to class. So the General Assembly again came through with funding for additional buildings. And the building program began to mushroom. We were very fortunate in that through good architectural help and I think some careful planning, all of a sudden Christopher Newport~~4~~ in a way~~4~~ became a model for building because we were building at a lower price per square foot than any other institution in the state of Virginia. I can remember Governor Mills Godwin, who certainly along with Governors Harrison and Almond, had been tremendously understanding^{of} ~~that~~ Christopher Newport's early development. I remember Governor Godwin coming in with his whole legislative entourage, the budget group which tours the state every two years, and just sitting down ⁱⁿ ~~at~~ one of the labs in the science building[#] and asking me to recite book and verse on ~~4~~ square foot and cubic foot figures for the cost of construction and the kinds of materials we used and so on. So I'm sure that next time I went to Richmond to try to elicit funds to build another building~~4~~, this helped a great deal. ~~But~~ ^{the} demand was there; ~~the~~ people were there. They had embraced the college. It was being used for community-type meetings and so on. We attempted very much to involve the community and make them feel that it was their college. I think that this succeeded ~~and~~ ^{we} got terrific support from the newspapers; ~~we~~ got terrific support from the radio and TV people in the area. We were constantly being interviewed either by reporters or ~~in~~ front of a television camera or over the radio. So Christopher Newport tended to become a great possession in the minds of the people ⁱⁿ the Peninsula. But of course, this always tends to lead to other things. As our students at Christopher Newport were getting toward the end of their

second year of work--and the college in the meantime had been accredited as a two-year college by the Southern Association--^{they began} ~~and~~ thinking,

"Well, ~~gosh I'd rather stay here~~ // if the school could provide me with a degree I'd rather stay here and then go on out and pursue my career. "

So the long process of demand and supply of courses began to assert itself. The building of ^[the] faculty, of course, was taking place at that

time. We were very fortunate, I think, in Newport News to attract an outstanding faculty ^[with] a high percentage of Ph.D.'s ~~on the faculty~~

As the college grew in numbers and then began to offer third-year courses, again the Governor and the State Personnel Office permitted us to ~~increase the scope of the~~ salary scale so that it ran ahead of the

normal ~~two-year salary scale~~ two-year college salary scale. So as

the old joke goes // one thing led to another. The next thing we knew

we seemed to have everything in line for a four-year college. This

was not in any way ~~impeded~~ by the fact that Mills Godwin (at the time

he was ~~Lieutenant-Governor~~) came down, ^{Lieutenant -} Albert's Harrison was unable to

attend the dedication of the building, and Governor Godwin agreed to

dedicate the building for us. Remind me, I want to tell you a story

about that building. It was a science facility which we had built, I

think, at a cost of in ~~the~~ ^{ex} access of a million dollars, ~~and~~ as Lieutenant -

Governor Godwin was talking to perhaps four or five hundred people out-

side the building, he indicated that obviously Christopher Newport had grown so rapidly and that the demand was really running ^{rampant} ~~rampid~~ on

the Peninsula and surely Christopher Newport at some point in time would

have to become a four-year college. I can remember an editorial writer

down there commenting in the next morning's paper that he detected ~~at~~

in me a great desire to get up and run back to the drawing board and

start getting ready for another building and additional work. But the funny thing about that building ~~that~~ I'll never forget ~~because~~ ^{ew} Louis Webb ^{who} was ^{old} President of Old Dominion for a long time and had been with the ¹ Norfolk College and the Norfolk ¹ Division and was a great personal friend, came to the dedication, and after the dedication of the building, which took place out on the lawn, we all went over to another building and had punch and cookies, and ~~so on~~ then people went on ~~(we'd had had a luncheon beforehand)~~ ^{ew} Louis saw me about a week later, and he said, "Why in the world did you not let us go in the building you were dedicating?" (It was a science building) ~~and~~ [≡] we were due to open school two days later, and at the time the dedication was going on ^{there} were about ~~thirty-five~~ ³⁵ convicts, who were actually specialists and artisans who worked for the Division of Prison Industries, in that building hooking up the labs, hooking up the gas jets and the water pipes and everything else. So obviously we did not parade through the building and inspect it that day.

¶ But the whole Christopher Newport story, I think, is one of great excitement in the community, a great reward for those of us who were working on it because of the receptivity of the community. They practically ran us to death. They had us on every ¹ board that the city had. But here it was the feeling that the college was really ^s insinuating itself into the life of the community. When the various [≡] united [≡] fund organizations on mental health and other areas of community interests wanted to put on seminars or have meetings, it became the watch ¹ word that they wanted to come to Christopher Newport. They wanted to have their meetings there. At the same time we worked hard to bring cultural

events to the campus. We got the local chapter of the Virginia Museum to headquarter itself at the college, so we had art exhibits on hand at the institution all the time. Film series were started. -- ~~All the~~ manner of things that would tie the community into the college. We did work with the police and fire people in the city of Newport News. The city manager was very lavish in his praise ^{of} ~~for~~ the college for its work with the city. So the whole thing grew that way. It was an interesting life. It was a vast change from the stability, let me say, of William and Mary and Williamsburg, from the tradition. ~~Because~~ every time we did something at Christopher Newport it became a new tradition. The building phase of it was very exciting. I think we had excellent architects (^{sp. Coile} Forrest ~~Coile~~ and Associates); They did a great job for us. I remember taking plans for building after building up to the Art Commission in Richmond, once we got them approved there, coming back to the State Engineers, and then finally getting word to break the ground and ~~and~~ go ahead and start building the buildings. I still have a pair of shoes around that I called my "Building shoes." I think we built five buildings with those shoes ~~on~~ I used to go out late in the afternoon and walk all over the construction that had taken place that day just to make sure nothing had gone wrong. ~~And~~ (if it had ~~it~~ I probably wouldn't have known. But fortunately, ~~the~~ architects had an inspector who did that professionally, anyhow.)

Emily: You had great support, then, from the Newport News community.

Cunningham: We had great support, and it continued. We went back two or three times for appropriations from them for certain things. They were good about it. They gave us money several times for different things--extensions of parking lots and so on.

Emily: Had you had an equal amount of support from the parent college?

Cunningham: The relationship with the parent college, I think, was a very interesting relationship. We've talked about the fact that the child is suspect of being something less than the genuine article, for which I have a great understanding. I ^{can} see no reason ^{why} it wouldn't be. After all I was at William and Mary when we had the Norfolk Division, and I saw their students being admitted and so on. I think to put the whole thing in proper perspective from my own personal point of view ~~the~~ the greatest support that I felt I wanted from William and Mary in Williamsburg was its accreditation, which we were receiving. Beyond that ~~my~~ my own personal feeling was that to a great extent ~~I~~ I wanted to be left alone. I wanted ^{to get} the college doing the things it should do, without certainly in any way jeopardizing that precious accreditation that we had. I also felt that I wanted a free hand to do many of the things that we did. I can say in all honesty that the college in Williamsburg gave us that free hand even to the point, frankly, on some occasions I felt that they weren't quite sure we were down there. Occasionally, though, there would be great signs of interest, and a coordinator would be appointed and come down the road two or three times and visit and drink coffee with me and ask me how things were going and then return to Williamsburg. But really ~~I~~ I give the college a vote of thanks because, by ^{and} ~~in~~ large, they--I say the college, I mean William and Mary in Williamsburg--~~they~~ ^{vs} let ~~it~~ run on our own show. Hopefully we did nothing to discredit them in any way. We didn't damage their accreditation. Our triumphs ^{if} ~~there~~ were triumphs ~~to~~ bore the name of Christopher Newport College of the College of William and Mary. I think the relationship was pretty good. The parent college ~~I~~ I think quite obviously ~~did~~ did not want Christopher Newport to become a four-year

college. I think the parent college ran headlong into a community that was all fired up about this and definitely did want it to become one.

Emily: Why would this not have been desirable ^{from the William and Mary standpoint?}

Cunningham: Well, I'm not sure of it being a case of not being desirable ^{because} certainly at that time there were plenty of students to go around.

The students being admitted on the two campuses were by ^{and} ~~in~~ large ~~much~~ different in caliber and ^{scope} ~~stroke~~. In Williamsburg ~~for~~ certainly out-of-state students were being admitted, ^{there were no} and in Newport News ~~more~~ residential facilities, so no out-of-state students were being admitted. Perhaps one of the concerns was the fact that if Christopher Newport became a four-year college, William and Mary would have to extend its accreditation to cover another four-year college. Of course it had been through this, remember, with Norfolk and with Richmond. The key of the whole thing, I think, was ~~was~~ pressure built, ~~maybe~~ some of the people on the Board felt, "here we go again. We've been through this with Norfolk and Richmond, and here we go again in Newport News, and we're not quite ready to do it yet." But I think history proved out the fact that there was room there for a four-year college. It could be a viable, very healthy institution, ^{operating} at a level which was ^{commensurate} ~~commenced~~ with the ability of its students. I was there just two days ago, and I saw the level of mean and median scores on the College Boards that Christopher Newport students had this fall. I don't have the William and Mary figures in front of me, ^{but} having been here for many years ~~for~~ I suspect I can pretty well ^{interpolate} ~~interpret~~ what they might be, ~~And~~ I doubt that the general scoring

between the two institutions is any closer than ^{a hundred} 100 points on each side of the fence. So obviously they are two student groups. I don't mean that one can't cross to the other. There are groups of different interests, too, different types of program^s, say in the same discipline -- business of that sort. So I think that from what I've seen and of course now I'm talking about Christopher Newport as I really knew it five years ago because I have not been actively associated with it in these past five years. I think there was a place for it, and I think now it has grown to a very healthy proportion. I know when I left it at the end of ten years and handed in a resignation, I pointed to the fact that ^{I felt} it had come of age, that it now had grown to be a four-year college, that it had its accreditation, that its future seemed well-assured, and then I felt that probably in other hands it would move along with unimpeded progress and take its place among the fine institutions in Virginia.

~~Emily: questions should I give you a chance~~

Cunningham: I think generally the thing that probably ought to be said here, first of all from a Christopher Newport point of view, is that that institution really owes everything it is to a tremendous community which took it to its heart, which fought for it on occasion when fighting was necessary, unfortunately. And also a great load of thanks for its success is due to William and Mary, which provided it with a lot of know-how, with some help in the form of early duplications out of the library, good advice from many friends who were still on the Williamsburg campus. I think putting that to bed, as it should be put by me at this point (because other people have been involved with it for five years), I think the other thing is that the idea of an ^{oral} ~~aural~~ history of this period is a pretty exciting one because I think so many things really happened during this period. As I said earlier, William and Mary itself, the ancient

college in Williamsburg, became a top-flight academic power during the years of the '50s. It took its place in the spectrum of admission competition with the best institutions in the country. I think beyond that the growth and development of two new satellite institutions as well as the spin-off of two, for which the College had had ~~stewardship~~ ^{stewardship} for many years, ~~I think~~ is another great credit to the College. And I think frankly, from what I have read of the earlier history of the College, you may very well be dealing with William and Mary's finest hour. I think you may be dealing with the years that we were all sitting where the action was, and I think there was plenty of it. And where there ^{is} action, there ^{is} going to be friction; occasionally there are going to be sparks that fly. Some flew. Cool heads usually prevail. Everyone, I think, finally realized that we were all working in the same direction. Once we cut through a lot of the froth and the furor, people suddenly realized that what we were really trying to do was not build monuments to individuals, but provide facilities for kids who needed an education. I think this is where William and Mary can pause and be proud of what has been done. With that I suspect I will head back to my traditional, conservative, and very excellent preparatory school life.