

WALTER G. MASON

Walter Mason, a wealthy Lynchburg investor, has made William and Mary the recipient of many contributions, among them the chair of religion. Although Mr. Mason himself did not attend college, his children and grandchildren are enthusiastic William and Mary alumni. From 1962 to 1970, Mr. Mason was on the Board of Visitors, serving as rector from 1968 to 1970. It is this service on the board that is discussed in the interview.

Mr. Mason read and approved the transcript, making a few stylistic changes.

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Interviewee Walter G. Mason

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Interviewer Emily Williams

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Length of tape app. 65 mins.

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Walter G. Mason

June 11, 1976

Lynchburg, Virginia

Williams: You were saying you were appointed in '62 by Governor Harrison.

Mason: Yes, and as you probably know eight years is the maximum time you can serve. So I was appointed in '62 by Governor Harrison and then in '66, reappointed by Governor Godwin. The last two years, of course, I was rector of the board. And I may say this: I've been all over the country in investment business or at a lot of conventions (National Association of Security Dealers and what have you), but I've never been in a group that I've enjoyed as much as I did at William and Mary. I think the people we had on the Board of Visitors were just most outstanding. You get a few like ex-governor Stanley; Walter Robertson, who was undersecretary of state for the far East; Brooks George; Ed Zollinger who is heading up the campaign now.

Williams: Yes, I met him a couple of weeks ago.

Mason: He was assistant to the president of I.B.M. And Ernest Goodrich, who succeeded me as rector (he is a prominent lawyer); then Ralph James who used to be in the General Assembly; and Carrie Cole Geddy, you know, there in Williamsburg and then there's Frank Cox, who was superintendent of schools in Princess Anne County; and Blake Newton, a prominent attorney up in New

York for I think it's Fire Insurance Company (he's the head of it); Bill Savage, who is the superintendent of schools for Nansemond County; and Mr. Ernest who at one time was president of the state chamber of commerce, but his main job was -- I guess you'd call him general manager of the Allied Chemical Company there in Hopewell -- one of those plants. Mr. Gill was head of the instructional department of the schools in Petersburg; and Mrs. Duncan was quite a D.A.R., you know, and she's wonderful; and then Judge Bill Arthur of Wytheville; and then Judge Hutcheson. Of course, a lot of those unfortunately have passed on, but the thing that impressed me so very rarely was there ever a single one of them absent at a board meeting, and they all did their homework. They worked hard at it. And I used to enjoy the discussion -- when you see people who are so interested in what they are doing. For a lot of people it's considered quite an honor to be on the Board of Visitors. When Governor Harrison appointed me I thought he was talking about my son because I didn't go to William and Mary.

Williams: Right. That's why I wondered why you specifically were appointed.

Mason: Yes. Well I don't know. Of course, we had four children to go there and we'd go back and forth. We were very much interested and I did help with the athletic program -- I mean we helped give some scholarships, you know. (I had two good friends here who told me frankly they couldn't have gone to college if it

hadn't been for something like that. They played football -- they weren't all American, but they got a good education.

Oh, and then I forgot to mention here about Judge Hooker of Richmond.

Williams: That's right, Judge Hooker was still on the board.

Mason: Yes, he more or less took me under his wing when I first came on; I sat by him. He'd say, "Come on, make a motion." I really enjoyed him because he knew all the historical background and all that. So it was a real group.

How about the controversies or issues which were most important when I went on, Dr. Chandler was chancellor, you see, and his ideas were entirely different from Dr. Paschall's. Of course his daddy -- Dr. Chandler's daddy -- was a real power; he gave it a push, as you know from history. But Dr. Chandler (Alvin Chandler) just wanted to make it great big with these branch colleges and all that. I used to feel sorry for Dr. Paschall and the doctors there in Richmond --

Williams: Oliver?

Mason: Oliver, Dr. Oliver, president of R.P.I. Well, they'd come to our board meeting and have to sit outside till a certain time, which I thought was kind of ridiculous, you know, but anyway, they finally did away with that*, and R.P.I. became part of V.C.U., and then Norfolk College branch is now Old Dominion. Of course, we established Richard Bland and Christopher Newport.

*The colleges of William and Mary

Now since I've been off the board, Christopher Newport (of course they were working on it in my later years) has become a four-year institution in Newport News. Richard Bland has not yet, but I expect they will work toward that because in the meantime they came along and established the community colleges. They put one down in Hampton, I believe, (Thomas Nelson), and then there's one over in Petersburg. With those things we were very fortunate in having good leaders. (I started to say good management, because the success of almost any institution or business -- ninety-nine percent of it is the management.) Now we had a wonderful boy in Cunningham at Newport News (Christopher Newport), and Richard Bland had Colonel Carson, and both were extremely dedicated and worked at their job. They did an excellent job, I think. Dr. Chandler I think finally got over it all, but he didn't like it. He was very rough on them there for awhile, but time heals a lot of things.

Dr. Paschall, to my way of thinking, is one of the outstanding educators we had, I think, not only in Virginia, but most anywhere. William and Mary was very fortunate in this transition here, I think, because you couldn't have had anyone that was more dedicated. Actually it almost killed him, he was so wrapped up in it. When those students got to acting up -- well, it was just like beating on him, you know. And we tried to get him to get somebody to help him. I remember one time there those students were carrying on, and some of them on the

board were just going to dismiss them. But he wrestled that thing until four o'clock in the morning, and you can't stand much of that you know. He had something, I don't know what it was: I believe it was high blood pressure, but he was in bad shape. I'll tell you this story: (Dr. Paschall always remembered it.) I went to the General Assembly once just to hear Bob Whitehead from over here in Nelson County, who would go over that budget like everything; he was a good representative. I went up there one day -- most of the state employees would go up to hear him when he was going to talk about their budgets because he would go right down that list. He knew everything about it, like Senator Byrd with our national government. But this day he impressed me so much. He went on down the budget, and he came to this school for the blind in Newport News. And he said, "What have we here gentlemen? A gooseegg, a gooseegg -- nothing!" And he pulled his sleeves up like this, you know and he said, "When those little sightless children lift up their eyes into Heaven, they'll say 'Father forgive them for they know not what they do.' "Rise up O men of God. Have done with lesser things'". Well, I told Dr. Paschall that when he was sick, and he said, "That sure did help me!" And I think it did. (That's a little besides the point but I thought you'd like that story.)

We've had dedicated men like that. This is why Virginia has had such good government because it's been clean and honest and loyal and dedicated. We've celebrated our two hundredth an-

niversary and that's why -- because of dedication of men like Jefferson and Patrick Henry and Adams and all those other people on whom so much depended.

On the subject of students, I felt that if you know more than the one who's teaching you, what are you wasting your time and money down there for? And that's what they thought, a lot of them. I think personally that everyone, not only young people, but grown people need discipline. You just go along and it's not good for you. But Dr. Paschall wrestled with that problem and he did a magnificent job. I remember one boy I was thinking about the other day: his father was a lawyer and came in with him. Of course, we let each one of them state their case, but his father didn't say a word. The boy went around and made amends himself, you see, because he wanted to get back in. He wanted to finish his education. His dad didn't open his mouth; he just sat there with him.

But Dr. Paschall resolved the issues. He had a high sense of values for the college. Now, the students have this dorm-free dom and all. I think that's carrying it a little too far. I've had people say they wonder, "I wouldn't want my daughter to go to schools like that -- or my son for that matter." But you don't know; others argue that they're eighteen now. They can vote, and they ought to have sense enough to take care of themselves. Well, they ought to, but so should us grown people, but we don't.

But I think as many roadblocks as we put there to help them to keep them from making too many the better off they are.

Williams: Do you think that was a general view on the board in this time you're talking about?

Mason: Yes, yes, they were very strong for keeping it like it was. Actually we were right proud of the fact back there then that we didn't have over two or three with beards and long hair. We debated one time if they should have a jacket because you take a million people coming to see Williamsburg during the year, you can make a very wonderful impression or you can make a very poor one, you know, merely by the way you look and especially from the way you act. I remember so well I used to travel up the valley, and you'd pass the boys at Augusta Military Academy on the road and they'd salute you. They were all neat, always, never sloppy -- always neat and had their uniforms on. It just made you feel good. Like now with this controversy at West Point. The point is they want to change: "Well, let me do what I want, just so I get by." Well, that's not the way to build character. I was ^{with} a colonel once, and we went to the football game, and he said, "Well, one thing they teach, Walter, is if you can't handle liquor, don't drink it. In other words, always be a gentlemen and be in control of yourself. If you don't, battles can be won and lost," you see -- especially lost if you show those weaknesses.

Williams: In this period of student unrest at William and Mary, I got the feeling from reading the board minutes that the board was afraid that for them to do too much in regard to students was undermining Dr. Paschall. Now was that a correct impression? I don't think that it was ever stated: "I think that we are undermining Dr. Paschall if we hear too many student complaints". Do you have any recollection of anything of that nature?

Mason: No, I didn't think that. The board heard students and faculty too, but they didn't want to interfere with administering the college. The only thing that worried me about it was that Dr. Paschall was trying to do too much alone, without sufficient help. But as far as the board was concerned, we were behind him 100 percent. The only thing we were fussing with him about was to get someone to help him more. You can see now that Dr. Graves has several people, which is right. He should, and I think he is doing an excellent job. I think he's a wonderful administrator because he's delegating some authority, which Dr. Paschall couldn't do, and he knew that. He admitted it, but there was a reason. He did not have the organization to help him until the last two years, and he felt he had to hold down the cost of administration. By the time he retired, he had an organization established that was inherited by his successor. No, I don't think they were undermining him: they were upsetting to his administration and all that, but it wasn't as bad at William and Mary as it was at Columbia, Harvard and Berkeley and other places.

Williams: The students?

Mason: Yes. The worse thing was the strain and stress. As I say, I don't know whether Dr. Paschall had a heart attack or not. I had one in '69. Blake Newton had one. Ed Zollinger had one. You see, these fellows were so dedicated. I'm not saying that did it, you know. There are other things: you just push a little too hard, carry it a little too far; you go to the extra mile, and that's the one you shouldn't go. But the hard thing to do is to learn to relax. Some people do it in different forms. That's why a lot of people take a highball to get relaxed. For example, we worked every way we could to get that student government thing formed; we worked on it and worked on it.

Williams: The statement of Rights and Responsibilities?

Mason: Yes, yes. It took us two years on that, and we tried every kind of way to be fair. We didn't want to suppress the students -- nothing like that. We wanted them to have a free mind and learn what they could, but put principles first, you know. I don't think you're taking anything away from a student if you say, "Well now, you can't stay in that dorm there because that's the girls' dorm" -- if it's a boy. I don't think you've taken anything away from him there. You didn't come to school to play around. There are schools you can go and play. Well go if you want to, but if you want an education -- don't.

(Discussion of Mr. Mason's grandson.)

What I'm saying is lots of them are capable if they would apply themselves. Of course, I'm old-fashioned now. I didn't go to

college, so I'm trying not to be biased; I do try to be objective. I think sometimes you give them so much liberty that they get in this whirl that's like society: you've got to entertain, and the first thing you know you're on a merry-go-round. You don't have time to apply yourself and to study and to do the things you should do that are worthwhile. I think you need these other things too, but you need them in reason and restraint. I think instead of saying you can stay all night if you want to in the dorm-- you've got to get out of there at 11:00 or 12:00 or whatever it is, but give them time to get a decent night's sleep so they can be at 8:00 classes the next morning. I didn't mean to go to lecturing; you go ahead.

Williams: Were you pointing out that the student issues were the most controversial when you were on the board?

Mason: I think so.

Williams: Yes, I thought that's what you were on.

Mason: Yes. No, generally speaking we didn't have much controversy. We worked together beautifully there, and it just made you feel good. The one thing we didn't like (and Walter Robertson in particular) was that Yates Dorm. At that time the state was just clamping down, trying to hold down expenses. They built that, then planted a lot of trees to try to hide it, but Walter Robertson never did get over that. He didn't like that at all. It is a beautiful campus --

Williams: Yes it is.

Mason: He didn't want to destroy it. And that new campus -- I used to enjoy it when Dr. Paschall and the board would get on a bus and ride around; he would explain different things to us, and then we would walk around. Some would get down there early. They just worked at their job. It was real good.

Williams: In the expansion of the campus, which came primarily while you were on the board, was there a fear that in building all these new buildings that they might make William and Mary too big?

Mason: No, because we have an optimum there. We said that all along we didn't ever want it to get over 5000 students, as proposed by Dr. Paschall. Now that was the way the board thought when I was there. Of course, Dr. Chandler just wanted to make it big. But I think to keep the quality of education that they have and that they want, they never have lowered their standards to accept these people whether they're good students or not. (Discussion of academic progress of boy Mr. Mason knows) It had been more than twenty-six years since they had built a classroom building.

Williams: It had been a long time.

Mason: In other words, now we had Dr. Pomfret down there, who was a wonderful educator. But it was all right for things just to be like they were, you know -- just keep them like they are and don't bother. But that whole section of Virginia has grown

considerably, and Dr. Paschall's idea and I think the General Assembly's also was that that institution was supposed to serve that section of the state, you see, primarily. Now we go up here and we fuss real hard sometimes to get some of our boys and girls up here in William and Mary and we're in central Virginia.

(Discussion of a specific case)

I think the board now feels the same way. They don't want to make a huge university out of it. Quality education is what we need. We didn't worry about that. We tried to do it right -- like the duPont dorm. Have you been in that?

Williams: Yes, I have.

Mason: How do you like that lobby?

Williams: I think it's beautiful.

Mason: The pit there -- well now, that was a question of having that or not. Dr. Paschall calls that my pit. I said, "Well, it wouldn't cost too much to fix it like they had it in the original plan." But they wanted to cut that out; they said it would save \$50,000, which is a debatable question. But my argument was that, "Well, why not fix it like the students could enjoy it? In twenty years you wouldn't know the difference from the cost angle. They were just tickled to death, and I think it just makes it.

Williams: It is pretty.

Mason: Yes, because we don't have any like it. And I think it's a real asset myself. No, the college has taken on these different graduate courses and things like that and strengthened, like that VARC in research. It looks like they have every little detail to give you the very finest kind of an education. You can get it if you want it. Of course, like one of the deans told that son of mine when we went down there, : "At William and Mary, you don't have to study. But of course, if you don't make the grades, you don't stay here, and we don't think it's fair to your parents to waste their money for you to come down here and not apply yourself." He just challenged him. No, I'm very proud of him, myself. Every one of my children went down and just fell in love with it. I have two granddaughters who just graduated from there, and I have two grandsons down there now. I have some more. I have one grandson that graduated three years ago, I think - or four, I don't know. I can't keep up with them.

Williams: So many of them. In the expansion program you were talking about just a minute ago, you know critics of the expansion said that to add all these graduate programs and new courses offerings and school of business and things like this was changing the orientation of William and Mary. Was there any of that feeling on the board?

Mason: No, no. Now the faculty of arts and sciences dominated the whole thing. The board wanted and felt the need of the business school and some graduate programs and the General Assembly supported this view. We did have a discussion of it in the liberal

arts department. They wanted to keep things like they were. But, no, I think now we have one of the top business schools. Dr. Quittmeyer, the dean recommended the top-flight men all over the country, and he just did a good job. The last president, Dr. Paschall appointed them sponsors of the business school. Mr. Jones, over in Gloucester -- he's a crackerjack. He's a Harvard graduate, but he just loved it. And there was Brooks George. He's got the head of the Newport News Shipyard. The head of Reynolds Metal Company is president now of the business school board. And there again is dedication. August Busch and Mr. Watkins -- Mr. Watkins is head of the C&O Railroad group. They employed them for research, which helps the school and helps them, too. They've done a wonderful job. We never did have any real serious controveries that I know of. Of course, the deans all argue and what not because the business school doesn't get as many professors as the others, you know. He feels like he is entitled to more. Well, that's natural. He's trying to build his department. And they have done a wonderful job -- excellent. I think having in these presidents of different corporations -- this is fantastic and gives the students a marvelous opportunity and contacts that they probably couldn't get any other way. Then too, when they finish, they'll remember Tom, Dick, or Harry who came there to talk -- "Well, I believe I'd like to work for that company." Then when he goes, yes sir, it makes it easier for him to go in and talk to

the people. The student knows more about what the company can do and what his possibilities are. Because as I used to tell boys in our business, "The opportunity is here. Now what you do with it is up to you. The sky is the limit." Of course, some say, "How much do I get?" and "What's the retirement?" and all those things. Well then you wonder whether they really want to apply themselves and achieve things, attain certain heights. But I think it's a well-rounded school and I think it does them good. I like a coeducational school, too. I think that's good for both the boys and the girls. But I do think it's better if you have a little more discipline. Maybe it'll work out.

Williams: In expanding these course offerings, did you work closely with the faculty on this?

Mason: Oh, yes. We'd have different ones to come in, you know. I might say too, the faculty -- some of the faculty -- was extremely helpful when we were having all this student unrest. They were really good because they were dealing with them every day. They would come in. This Carson Barnes was a crackerjack, and his assistant -- Elliott, I believe his name was. Then different ones, like Dean Lambert were a tremendous help because on the board we didn't have any young men, so it had been years since we had had any experience. The ones who went to school down there didn't have anything like that, you know. They were just thankful that they could get an education, and they went to school

to get an education. Sometimes they go to school because they have to (till they're eighteen, you know). But no, we had a lot of help that way. I don't think we could have made the proper decisions if we hadn't had.

Williams: Would it have been a help -- I'm sure this was never seriously proposed -- but would it have been a help to have had a regular student representative to the board? I know you had students in, but I mean a student member.

Mason: All the time?

Williams: All the time, as a channel of communication. In looking back, what do you think?

Mason: Well, I don't know. I don't know because if you got the right kind of a student, I would say yes, but if you got one going to give his opinion regardless... Now we did later have some coming in there -- well, we had them sitting in there real often. If you could have had the right one, I expect it might have helped. But board members are appointed for four years, and the student member, unless a freshman, would be graduated before his term was ended. Also we had there the president and various deans, and others if we wanted them in there. There was Dr. Paschall; there was Dean Jones (Mel Jones, who was just outstanding). Then anytime we wanted to we called in Dr. Quittmeyer or Dr. Fowler and Dean Lambert, but Mel Jones had his finger on the whole thing. It's like I discussed with him the chair

of religion. Mel said, "Oh, Walt, don't give us any more to do."

I said, "But William and Mary was started to train preachers."

Williams: That's right.

Mason: And to educate the Indians.

Williams: That's right.

Mason: But now Thomas Jefferson, of course wanted law. They didn't have but six professors, so they couldn't carry everything, so they dropped religion. And I wanted to put it back. Well, anyway I talked to him and to Dr. Paschall. Finally we established a chair of religion, which to me is one of the greatest things because you never know how much good that can do, not only to whoever is taking it, but on the campus. It could have, to me, a settling effect -- because that's what you go to college for: to make you think. Now if you have something like that to make you think -- well, you never know how much good it does. I'm one of the trustees at Lynchburg College also, so I have a little endowment fund there to educate preachers -- boys or girls -- anything related to church work, youth work or anything. A preacher gets a little priority. (Mr. Mason here described his experiences with the fund)

I always tell my children, and when I taught a Sunday school class, I told them, too, you can't possibly help someone else without helping yourself. Like Billy Sunday said years ago, "What you give away, you keep; what you keep, you lose." I think

all in all they have a well-rounded program down there now -- a wonderful school of education for teachers and a wonderful business school, and then the chair of the religion department. I understand they have right good men in there, so my grandson tells me. The school of law instruction I think is most outstanding. That tax form they have to me is just outstanding. And then in your field -- history and American history -- now with Colonial Williamsburg, you've selected the right place to get your master's.

Williams: Let me ask you something I should have asked you a few minutes ago when we were talking about the branch colleges. From reading the minutes, it seemed it was something of a problem coordinating the colleges, even though they did have this good leadership you spoke of. Did you find this to be true?

Mason: Yes, we had trouble at first.

Williams: Especially at first?

Mason: Yes, it was something new, you see, but when we got Dr. Herrmann in there -- he was a kind of liason and he was just a crackerjack. Do you know him?

Williams: I have met him, but I have not interviewed him.

Mason: Well, when you get a chance you should have a little conversation with him because he just bubbles with enthusiasm and smiles with the least provocation and could make anybody get along with him. He just wades right in there. He could come to the board-- and he was a big help to us, too, in this student unrest. I told him he must be a good psychiatrist, also, because he knew the

students real well, and that was a big help to us. The only place we had any controversy to speak of, I think, was when Christopher Newport wanted to become a four-year college before they were ready, we thought. They didn't get it until we thought the time was right, which I think is right and proper because sometimes you're building something and you just want to go ahead and you can go too fast.

Williams: The board thought they were going too fast?

Mason: That's right.

Williams: And I know the Newport News Community was very much behind Christopher Newport. Do you think this was the cause for wanting to see it escalating so fast?

Mason: Yes, they were pushing because they naturally wanted a college of their own. Of course, they had a good two-year college, but they wanted a four-year one, which is alright, but it takes time. You have to be qualified for it. First you need a decent library and you need good professors, which it takes time to get, and you want to be sure that you have the right ones. (Discussion of students he has encountered). I think the board was right in delaying it or working toward that end. We didn't ever say, "You can't." Furthermore the accreditation of Christopher Newport was carried by William and Mary, and William and Mary's accreditation would have been threatened had it made mistakes in handling Christopher Newport.

- Williams: Was it hard, though, to convince people at Christopher Newport that they should wait?
- Mason: Oh sure. Cunningham -- he's a good friend of ours -- wonderful. He used to work for the college as dean of admissions and was very capable.
- Williams: Yes, I've met him.
- Mason: Well, he left to head up another school, a prep school. Of course, he naturally wanted to get it while he was there, quick. But I think it was better for him and better for the school that it worked out like it did -- and better for the community. If you get something so easy and so quick you don't appreciate it. Then too you make an awful lot of mistakes -- and costly mistakes. So as it is I think they have a wonderful foundation.
- Williams: I assume that in making this decision the board had to rely principally on the opinion of the educators at William and Mary who knew about a situation like this?
- Mason: Yes, there again Dr. Paschall and Dean Jones were a tremendous help. Well, we almost had to rely on them because we didn't know the details, but they did. But let me say that they did not want us to rely on them blindly. They kept fully informed. You can tell this in part from the "information" Dr. Paschall put in agendas.
- Williams: That has struck me about this period -- the need to rely on the officials at the college.
- Mason: That's right. And we were very fortunate in having such capable

men. And, as I said, Dr. Paschall kept us fully informed. You didn't have anybody that I know of who was seeking self-esteem and all that. They just wanted to do their jobs and be sure it was done right. And the agendas were so complete and informative that board members understood what it was all about before they came to the meetings. As you know we have some professors we're very fortunate to have. I don't know whether it's the setting or whatnot (it's a wonderful place to live), but we get some very able men that way. And I think we're just very fortunate. Looking back, I don't see any mistakes being made by being too slow or being too fast. As I say, these men were very able men on the board and they did their homework. They didn't just come down there for a good time. They'd go down the night before; invariably you'd have dinner with them the night before, and then the next morning you were in a meeting, and you'd go all day. But in the meantime you'd gotten a lot of information. So it was a good working board and very dedicated. That's the thing that impressed me all the way through. And also your leaders like Dr. Paschall and Bob English, who was the bursar -- he was very capable. Mel Jones and Dean Lambert-- men like that -- Dr. Quittmeyer, Dr. Fowler -- you just couldn't get better men, I don't think, and men that were more dedicated to the school. Well, all were outstanding in their particular field -- just like you'll be some day.

Williams: Thank you. Still on the subject of the branch colleges: from the point of view of a board member, why is it, do you feel,

that Richard Bland didn't grow at the rate that Christopher Newport did?

Mason: Well, you don't have as large a city to draw from, and too they couldn't get as much money as Newport News.

Williams: From the General Assembly?

Mason: Yes. Newport News helped them too as a city, more so than Petersburg. Petersburg is a very old city -- a very fine city, but they don't have the industries and all like Newport News. (Description of a Newport News firm Mr. Mason has dealt with.) They have tobacco and several industries, but not any big ones like Newport News. Of course too another reason was that you had Cunningham, who was aggressive and young. In Petersburg you had Colonel Carson, who was retired -- an army colonel -- and he did a marvelous job. But you didn't have that push from Petersburg like you had from Newport News.

I think we should have kept them both as two-year schools if they hadn't started those community colleges. Now these take the place of them. I think it's good because it helps students to go to a school for a couple of years to get accustomed to a college before they go into a four-year institution. (At that time there were so many applications. We had 5000 applications and couldn't accept but several hundred.) That way you can take the pressure off the institutions. That was one of the reasons for the status of these two-year colleges. Then at the end of the two-years students from the two-year colleges could come into the four-year institutions, and if

you'd built a good two-year college they'd get full credit. That was one of the purposes to take the pressure off of the four-year colleges. Sometimes we would have ten applications for every one we could take. Well, that's discouraging to young people, and you just don't want to do that if you can help it. (My son sent his boy over to Ferrum for two years just to let him get accustomed to college life, then he went to William and Mary and did alright. He said, "Granddad, William and Mary was a little tougher than Ferrum." I said, "Yes, I know it is.") But they were things that were needed at that time. There's usually a time and a place for all things, and all through life you'll find that a lot of things depend on the timing. Sometimes some fellows are way ahead of the time, and some of them pass on before time catches up with them, but then looking back, you can see their ideas were right; it's just that they were ahead. I think William Jennings Bryan was one of them. Men like that -- far-reaching. Well, now what we're doing is leaving it to the young ones like you to carry on.

Williams: Let me ask you about the leadership of those of you on the board then. I've written down something that may have been a little bit difficult for you to figure out what I had in mind -- I have "role of committees." In the eight years (1962 to 1970), that you were on the board -- I know there had been committees of the board years before -- would you say that the committee

system was beginning to function better, more often -- or had it been this way all along?

Mason: Well, I don't know. As far as I was concerned, the committees really did their job well when I was on the board. Like the nominating committee: I don't recall them ever changing from the people that the nominating committee recommended. The nominating committee came and talked to me when they were going to nominate me for rector of the board. Well, they talked to Dr. Paschall, too. Dr. Paschall I remember so well at the governor's mansion that Rockefeller built.

Williams: The Palace?

Mason: Yes, they had a celebration every year before the 4th of July -- I forget now what you call it. Anyway, Dr. Paschall said, "Now Walter, don't you refuse that" (rector of the board). I felt there were men better qualified than I was, but anyway ^{the} chairman of the nominating committee, Bill Arthur, said, "We're going to nominate you." I said, "Well, I appreciate the honor. If you do, of course, I'll do the best I can." Now that's just an illustration: That's the way they worked before they presented it to the board. The committees invariably put so much time and all on their recommendations that there is really no particular reason to disagree. I don't remember any controversial reports from the committee because they could iron things out. The hardest job we had was that student thing. They worked

hard there. Of course, I think they finally did a good job on it. No, all in all -- now I don't know about the committees in the past, but the ones that were functioning when I was on there were exceptionally good.

Williams: As rector what did you see your role as being? Did you see yourself as moderator of the board, or the leader of the board, or could you put a term on it that way?

Mason: I looked upon myself as rector there as more or less chairman of the board. You keep things going along smoothly (Harvey Chappell told me one time after a meeting, "Well Walter, you ran a tight ship today"). You just try to keep things in line and don't let somebody get off over yonder. Just keep on the subject, like a chairman of the board. Just like you if you're teaching, you've got to keep the students in the line of thinking you want (the subject you're discussing). So I really enjoyed it. We didn't have any controversy and stuff like that.

Williams: How important is it for the rector and the president to work together?

Mason: Oh, most important. You couldn't get to first base if you didn't. It just wouldn't work; I can't conceive of it working. Now Brooks George was rector, and I was secretary of the board and I succeeded Brooks. We only let a rector serve two years. That's a new policy: they used to have one for years and years. But I don't recall anything ever where there would be any controversy at all. Well, you just couldn't get anywhere. Even when they would report to the newspaper after the meeting (the rector and Dr. Paschall and whatnot) about whatever you would

want to tell them -- sometimes you can't tell them too much because it interferes with some of your plans of what you're doing, especially personnel and things like that. But no, I couldn't conceive of a rector and a president not working together. It would just be bad. Like I used to feel sorry for the presidents of these branch colleges who would have to sit out there and not come in. To me they were a part of the whole organization, but Dr. Chandler didn't want it that way. Of course, that was his business, not mine. But now with Dr. Paschall we never did have that. Colonel Carson and Cunningham could come in if they wanted to. If they didn't they could stay out, and at a certain time we'd call for them. They knew the agenda. But we were always open and they were welcome. We didn't have any secrets or anything like that, which I think is good. I always tell them, "You tell the truth and then you don't have to remember what you say."

Williams: Similarly, let me ask you this: Is it important that the rector be able to get along, say with the governor or the General Assembly? Is that part of his role at all?

Mason: No. No, as a matter of fact I never did approach the General Assembly. Brooks George worked closely with them in some regards because he lived in Richmond. I did as a member of the board's finance committee and as rector go to the governor. We never did go to the General Assembly. Dr. Paschall would go

before different committees of the General Assembly to ask for his budget. But now I went with others to the governor (and I got a nice letter from the governor) to get Dr. Paschall a raise. And I worked hard too to get us up in that peer group. That came in our administration, which I am very happy for, but I used to fuss about that. As I said, I went to see the governor with several others to get Dr. Paschall a raise in line with these others. Of course these others, like V.P.I. and University of Virginia, are much larger than William and Mary. But on the other hand, with their responsibility, their education and quality and all, I felt and I knew that they didn't have anybody more dedicated than Dr. Paschall. Anyway, we got a small raise for him. But now that's the only thing we did. Of course, he would ask us all kinds of questions (the governor would) about the budget and all those things, too. But as a member of the board or a rector I never approached the General Assembly; that was Dr. Paschall's job or the president's job. He would always take the dean or someone with him -- or the bursar -- primarily the bursar, who in that case was Bob English, who worked up the budget.

Williams: Did you ever feel in any way handicapped as rector because you weren't an alumnus?

Mason: No, I told my son one day that I felt a little embarrassed at Charter Day (or some of those things) and commencement when I got up there and I was the only one without a collar on. He

siad, "well, Daddy, you ought to be proud of it!" I said, "Well I hadn't looked at it that way." But these fellows -- I knew some of them real well in working with them. You feel like you know how smart they really are, which I admire, I love to see people go right on up in their particular field, regardless. I've always been happy with myself that I didn't have any jealousy. I love to see people succeed in whatever they do. No, I never was embarrassed. The only time that I felt that I didn't do my job well was when I gave Judge Hutcheson an honorary degree and I got mixed up on that Latin. Anyway, I finally got it out and he got his degree, but I didn't do a good job at that. (after that I studied that and printed it on a little card.) That was my only concern; otherwise, I enjoyed it. I presented the Thomas Jefferson Award; I enjoyed presenting it to Dean Fowler because I felt like he'd earned it. I was on the selection committee for that when I secretary -- very secretive. Mr. Nunn and Dean Fowler and Dean Jones -- people like that -- it makes you feel good because some of them were getting a little old and you hoped you could get around to them. They hadn't been giving it too long; they didn't have the money. But as I say, the whole thing -- I enjoyed it thoroughly. I've never done anything I enjoyed more. And my wife is the same way: they were so good to her too. It's just a fine group.

Williams: I've been asking you basically about when you were on the board, so in closing let me say this: I know that you've been associated

and an active supporter of the college for longer than 1962 to 1970. What, including that period or coming over either side of it, are you proudest of? What development are you proudest of that you had any part in -- either a decision of the board or something that you personally did?

Mason: Well, I think maybe I'm proudest of that chair of religion because we started out to build it up to \$50,000, and now we're pushing for \$100,000. And of course, I'm right proud of that new campus, too. I think that's real nice. And yet I love the old one because that's where my children went. But I guess I'm just proud of the association and the continuing associations. I hear from Dr. Paschall and Brooks George and different ones. Well, I'm still on the alumni board and on the business school board. And it's just refreshing, I guess is a good word, to just go back down there. We never tire of it. We just enjoy it thoroughly. I hope a lot will come of that. religion department, along with the business school. I look for great things there, because in getting these heads of industries down there, it will make them want to come to look for the boy or the girl. Incidentally, we have some girls in there now too.

Williams: That's right.

Mason: I think it's wonderful. So I don't know -- in summation, it's just been a wonderful experience, and I look forward to even

much greater things. I think Dr. Graves is doing a good job in his financial campaign they have now. It will mean a lot to them too.

(Description of television interview Mr. Mason had heard)

So we have a great future. We've learned by mistakes of the past, and if we just use them for stepping stones of the future It makes me feel good the way the young people have settled down and they don't feel like they know everything like they did in the '60s. I think lots of them now are more serious. They want an education because when they go out into that job world, they've found it's not so easy to get one. They didn't know everything like they thought they did. So I hope that everything will work out for the best. You have a wonderful institution there; I don't know of one better. I guess maybe I'm a little prejudiced. I know in everything that I worked with down there, they just had a feeling, a different attitude than you find in most places. It's a dedication or a love or something that they just want the best, and I hope through young people like you and others they'll get it and keep it.

Williams: Well, thank you for taking the time today to talk about it.