

“THE STUDENT IS CONVERTED INTO THE WARRIOR”—  
THE COLLEGE OF WILLIAM AND MARY IN VIRGINIA  
AND ITS ASSOCIATION WITH THE MILITARY  
FROM THE FRENCH AND INDIAN WAR  
TO THE PRESENT DAY

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## Abstract

In this first comprehensive study of the military history of the College of William and Mary in Virginia, it is easy to appreciate how the rich and varied military accounts have played important roles in the institution's history. Beginning with the French and Indian War (1754), when students left the College to fight, and continuing to the present warfare in Afghanistan, military encounters have woven through the tapestry of the College's history. The citizen-soldier, breaking away from life's routine to fight for liberty and for their state or nation, is vividly demonstrated here. The College was directly involved in two wars—the American Revolution and the American Civil War—with events on, near, or surrounding the campus. Other United States wars, continuing to the present day, and a number of military events and quasi-military situations are involved, some not really of the College's own making, but thrust upon the school as a matter of course. During the Revolution and Civil War the institution was forced to temporarily close. In other cases of military conflict, the school lost significant numbers of students and was pushed to near bankruptcy. Public service of students and faculty demonstrated by military involvement pervades the culture of the College throughout the centuries, along with the keen sense that military service is an individual responsibility. The actions of the William and Mary presidents at times of national military crisis demonstrate the school's ability to survive and sustain itself during times of crisis. A number of individual students, who achieved significant reputation during military conflicts and activities, are described here. They have been identified as evidence of William and Mary's ability to educate the citizen-soldier, and in doing so, promote the belief that public service—governmental and military—is a noble calling.

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## Introduction

The College of William and Mary in Virginia, chartered on 8 February 1693 by King William III and Queen Mary II of England, has a rich and varied 318-year history, which has been chronicled several times in the past century,<sup>1</sup> but the relationship between the College and the military has never heretofore been compiled. This thesis focuses on the military history of William and Mary from the French and Indian War to the present day.<sup>2</sup> It will focus on the College during wartime; its important alumni involved in those wars, the military affairs of the College related to wars, the impact of those wars on the College, and reaction to the wars and the aftermath. Three of the conflicts had a direct and profound impact on the very identity of William and Mary. The American Revolution was responsible for the shift from a royal college to a private college; the Civil War impoverished the College to the point where the only road to survival was to become a state college; and World War I was a strong—although not the only—factor in coeducation.

Within the scope of higher education in the United States, William and Mary has been a distinctive institution from its chartering. It was second only to Harvard College to begin operation.<sup>3</sup> There are a number of priorities in college/university education where William and Mary ranks first. It was granted a charter from the English crown under the seal of the Privy Council in 1693 and received a coat-of-arms from the College of Arms in 1694. The College was the first to have a full faculty of a president, six professors, usher and writing master (1729), and began conferring the first gold medals donated by Lord Botetourt in 1771. A productive year for the College was 1779 when it became a university, instituted an honor system, created schools of modern languages and municipal and constitutional law, and included the study of fine arts in a

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<sup>1</sup> Susan Godson, Ludwell H. Johnson, Richard B. Sherman, Thad W. Tate, and Helen C. Walker, *The College of William & Mary: A History* (Williamsburg, Va.: King and Queen Press, The Society of the Alumni, 1993). Wilford Kale, *Hark Upon the Gale—An Illustrated History of the College of William and Mary* (Virginia Beach, Va.: Dunning Co. Publishers, Inc., 1985). J. E. Morpurgo, *Their Majesties' Royall Colledge—William and Mary in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Williamsburg, Va.: College of William and Mary, 1976).

<sup>2</sup> Known in Europe as the Seven Years' War.

<sup>3</sup> Harvard, now a university, was established in Cambridge, Mass., in 1636.

professorship. It began teaching political economy in 1784 and in 1803 was the first college to have a school of modern history.<sup>4</sup>

Specifically, within the military history of the William and Mary, there also have been significant hallmarks that distinguish the College from other American colleges or universities. Battles of two wars—the Revolutionary War and Civil War—were fought on or around the College campus, and opposing armies occupied the campus during each conflict. The College’s academic mission was diverted when the school closed for nearly a year during the Revolution and for nearly four years during the Civil War.

Schools like Harvard, Yale, and Princeton (then the College of New Jersey) were involved militarily in the Revolution. At Harvard, Massachusetts Hall (the oldest building) and several other structures housed militiamen and Continental Army personnel in 1775<sup>5</sup> and both British and American troops occupied Princeton buildings including Nassau Hall.<sup>6</sup> But these and other Revolutionary-era schools had no Civil War involvement. Similarly, southern schools, such as the University of Virginia and University of Georgia, had Union and Confederate troops on campus during the Civil War. In Charlottesville, Virginia, buildings were turned into hospitals<sup>7</sup> and in Athens, Georgia, Union prisoners of war were briefly housed on campus.<sup>8</sup> However, neither institution was in existence during the American Revolution nor between 1861 and 1865 were any battles fought either on or around the campus.

In examining William and Mary against other comparable United States liberal arts educational institutions, no inclusive military histories have been found. There are usually some slight references in published institutional histories, but they are very brief and always cast in

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<sup>4</sup> College President Lyon G. Tyler (1888-1919) researched and first declared these priorities (with the exception of fine arts) in *Williamsburg The Old Colonial Capital* (Richmond, Va.: Whittet & Shepperson, 1907). William and Mary Professor Thomas E. Thorne and Wilford Kale, then a student at William and Mary, discovered the fine arts priority during research work in 1967.

<sup>5</sup> Samuel F. Batchelder, *Bits of Harvard History* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1924), 244-245.

<sup>6</sup> Sean Wilentz, “Nassau Hall, Princeton, New Jersey,” ed. William E. Leuchtenburg, *American Places: Encounters with History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, Inc., 2000), 315-317.

<sup>7</sup> Susan Tyler Hitchcock, *The University of Virginia: A Pictorial History* (Charlottesville and London: University Press of Virginia, 1999), 70-72.

<sup>8</sup> F. N. Boney, *A Pictorial History of the University of Georgia* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1984), 44.

minor rolls. For example, one Harvard University history discusses the American Revolution in two disparate paragraphs, while the Civil War rated only three sentences in separate chapters.<sup>9</sup> A Yale College history devotes four-pages to Civil War activities and not much more to the Revolutionary War.<sup>10</sup> Regarding published histories of southern schools, the Civil War narratives were likewise short, because many simply were not involved directly in the war and suffered only indirectly because of the loss of students. The South Carolina College (now a university) history may be the lone exception, because its student company was involved in numerous activities from 1859 until 1862 when the College closed.<sup>11</sup> As expected, military academies have published their own distinctive “military” histories.<sup>12</sup>

Service of the citizen-soldier at the College—in this case, the student turned soldier—and public service will be shown in this thesis to be military traits common to all generations of students at William and Mary, whether they were volunteers or conscripts/draftees. Beginning with its English colonial heritage and continuing through the Southern tradition of military service, students at William and Mary have participated in a variety of military activities including student-organized companies in the Revolution and Civil War through the Army’s Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC) of the last sixty years.

An over-arching term in American military history is *citizen-soldier*. Marcus Cunliffe, in his seminal study of *Soldiers and Civilians*, described the concept as an individual, not a member

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<sup>9</sup> Charles A. Wagner, *Harvard Four Centuries and Freedoms* (New York: E. P. Dutton & Company, Inc., 1950), 38, 126, 126, 130, 140.

<sup>10</sup> Brooks Mather Kelly, *Yale: A History* (New Haven, Conn., and London, Yale University Press, 1974), 95-99 and 195-199.

<sup>11</sup> Daniel Walker Hollis, *University of South Carolina* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1951), 213-220. The saga of the student company may be worthy of its own book.

<sup>12</sup> The three national military academies—Army, Navy, and Air Force, have thorough reviews of their military backgrounds: Theodore J. Crackel, *West Point A Bicentennial History* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 2002) and Stephen E. Ambrose, *Duty, Honor, Country: A History of West Point* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999); Jack Sweetman and Thomas J. Cutler, *The U.S. Naval Academy: An Illustrated History* (Annapolis, Md.: U.S. Naval Institute Press, 1995) and William Leeman, *The Long Road to Annapolis* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010); and George V. Fagan, *The Air Force Academy: An Illustrated History* (New York: Johnson Books, 1988). There are six schools recognized by the U. S. government as “military colleges.” They include two state military colleges—Virginia Military Institute, founded in 1839 in Lexington, Virginia and The Citadel in Charleston, South Carolina, established in 1842—that likewise have encompassing histories. Others include three public land-grant universities Texas A&M in College Station, Texas, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in Blacksburg, Virginia, and North George College and State University in Dahlonega, Georgia. One private school also is included Norwich University, Northfield, Vermont. An important military history from this group is John A. Adams Jr., *Keepers of the Spirit: The Corps of Cadets at Texas A&M University, 1876–2001* (College Station: Texas A&M Press, 2001).

of the regular army but with the right to bear arms, who leaves his home and family to defend his way of life, and additionally his locality, state and/or nation.<sup>13</sup> In the 1760s and early 1770s, these individuals, when grouped together, formed volunteer militia companies, supported primarily by the individual colonies.<sup>14</sup> These militias worked with and supported the regular Continental Army but often were the only military unit available. Cunliffe also cited a belief of Revolutionary patriot John Adams: “Americans must be soldiers, they must war by land and sea; they have no other security.”<sup>15</sup> Militias comprised of citizens bearing arms had “a vital function,” Cunliffe explained, especially on the nation’s frontiers and in the early years of nationhood.<sup>16</sup> At William and Mary during the Revolution, the students acted like citizen-soldiers described by Cunliffe except that they left their classrooms instead of their family homes. They also performed duties similar to those students in northern colonial colleges like Harvard, Yale, and Princeton, which formed their own militia company. At William and Mary they became an internal force that pushed the College toward Revolutionary participation. The students formed a cavalry unit since many brought their horses with them when they entered the school.<sup>17</sup>

Historian Richard H. Kohn explained that the American post-Revolution Federalists saw the citizen-soldiers and their militias as ineffective and without discipline; they wanted a strong central-government army.<sup>18</sup> On the other hand, the anti-Federalists wanted a smaller central force with militia organizations in each of the states; they were concerned that a large standing army could coerce citizens.<sup>19</sup> The result was the existence of the small standing army and the

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<sup>13</sup> Marcus Cunliffe, *Soldiers and Civilians: The Martial Spirit in America, 1775–1865* (Boston and Toronto: Little Brown and Company, 1968), 38–40.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 180–200.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 66. Page Smith, *John Adams* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1962), I: 202 and 462.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 38.

<sup>17</sup> John Selby, *Revolution in Virginia, 1775–1783* (Williamsburg, Va.: The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, 1988), 207.

<sup>18</sup> Richard H. Kohn, *Eagle and Sword: The Beginnings of the Military Establishment in America* (New York: Free Press/Macmillan, 1975), 252.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 82–83.

continuation of volunteer local militias in some form such as the one that existed in Williamsburg in the early 1800s.<sup>20</sup>

Another historian, John Clark Ridpath noted that in the American psyche the citizen-soldier “is a patriot. He loves his home, his kindred, his native land; and when occasion requires he draws the sword in their defense.” He recognizes “some wrong that must be righted by force, some injustice that must be cured with the sword, some turpitude in human society that must be washed away with blood. Such motives of action can never appeal to a professional soldiery,” Ridpath wrote.<sup>21</sup> Relating to the Civil War he said, “It was necessary that the citizen soldier should come, and come quickly, to the rescue of the nation,” Ridpath said, recognizing that there were nations—both the North and the South.<sup>22</sup>

William and Mary, like other schools such as South Carolina College in Columbia, South Carolina; Gettysburg College in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania; Washington College (now Washington and Lee University) in Lexington, Virginia; and Alleghany College in Meadville, Pennsylvania, during the Civil War, formed student-soldier (citizen-soldier) companies. Their students’ efforts again internally helped to push the institutions to get involved.

In the twentieth century, William and Mary found itself in situations similar to other schools. During the two world wars and the later Korean and Vietnam conflicts, external forces played upon the schools and forced them to become associated with the military efforts. However, in William and Mary’s case critical internal issues became involved: World War I removed more than 40 percent of its small student body and forced the consideration of admitting female students for the first time, and World War II compelled the school to secure military groups on campus to financially survive.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Michael D. Doubler and John W. Listman Jr., *The National Guard, An Illustrated History of America’s Citizen-Soldiers* (Washington, D.C.: Brassey’s Inc., 2003), 18-19.

<sup>21</sup> John Clark Ridpath, *The Citizen Soldier: His Part in War and Peace* (Cincinnati, Ohio: The Jones Brothers Publishing Co., 1892), 17. This originally was an address delivered before the Veterans of the Grand Army of the Republic at Amo, Indiana, May 30, 1890.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 49-50.

<sup>23</sup> Godson, et al., *The College of William and Mary*, 505-506 and 698-699.

In his book *Citizen Soldiers*, Stephen Ambrose, a twentieth-century military historian, uses the term in its broadest sense to describe the entire U.S. Army that landed on the beaches of Normandy in World War II. Most of the stories he wrote were of enlisted infantrymen, whose backgrounds were not unlike their citizen-soldier predecessors.<sup>24</sup> Likewise, William and Mary students of the World War II era were part of the continuing saga of students turned soldiers.

Another important element in the William and Mary military story is the role of the Southern military heritage. Cunliffe notes that this Southern mystique has been “developed by a company of scholars.”<sup>25</sup> He discussed the philosophy expressed by Robert D. Meade that “before the Civil War the Southern aristocracy considered only the learned professions, agriculture or soldiering as fit employment for their sons.”<sup>26</sup> It followed suit at William and Mary during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries that the preponderance of students came from the Virginia’s leading families, and therefore, when military situations arose, student companies were formed.<sup>27</sup>

In the colonial era, the county militia occurred where “every able-bodied man” joined and was “expected to keep ready at home a musket and ammunition,” explained literary historian Willard Thorp.<sup>28</sup> Southerners equated military discipline with moral discipline and believed that “it taught diligence, order, and restraint and was as necessary to the development of the successful gentleman as the training of the mind given by the more academic studies.”<sup>29</sup> Therefore, it was natural for students at William and Mary to join military organizations since they came from a tradition that not only approved such action, but also encouraged it. That was the case of militia both before and after the Civil War. The military also was an aspect of “Old South” society that encompassed the “Southern Chivalry” that embraced duels, courtliness of manner, courtesy, and valor. “As soon as this class had established itself on property ownership and slave labor, it

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<sup>24</sup> Stephen E. Ambrose, *Citizen Soldiers: The U.S. Army from the Normandy Beaches to the Bulge to the Surrender of Germany, June 7, 1944–May 7, 1945* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1997).

<sup>25</sup> Cunliffe, *Soldiers and Civilians*, 337.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>27</sup> Morpurgo, *Their Majesties’ Royalle College*, 220-221.

<sup>28</sup> Cunliffe, *Soldiers and Civilians*, 338

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 338

invoked the chivalric concept to set itself apart from the commonalty,” explained cultural historian Richard M. Weaver.<sup>30</sup> “The gentleman, because he lived up to a self-imposed ideal, was a character enjoying certain prerogatives. His motives could not be impugned; and above all, his world would not be questioned.”<sup>31</sup> It was Weaver’s strong contention that “the South went into the [Civil] war thinking that it was a duel, an ‘affair of honor.’”<sup>32</sup> It is difficult today in the twenty-first century to know how individuals in the nineteenth century felt about chivalry because it has now become part of legend and lore of the South. The tradition of military service, however, appears more strongly in the Southern mainstream of service—both individual and corporate.

Alumni from this small liberal arts institution have played remarkable public service roles through the nation’s history—three presidents attended the College as well as scores of members of Congress, state governments, and state legislatures—and in wars. For the last one hundred years, approximately 28 William and Mary alumni have risen to the ranks of general and admiral in military service and several others have held positions of national influence.<sup>33</sup> Most recently a College alumnus, General David McKiernan, was commander of United States and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) troops in Afghanistan, and Robert M. Gates, class of 1965, was United States Secretary of Defense.<sup>34</sup>

Sources used in the study include a variety of contemporary documents. Military information prior to 1870, however, is limited and sketchy. There are significant gaps in the records of the College, especially for the colonial period, including the faculty minutes and minutes of the board of visitors.<sup>35</sup> Likewise, there are few colonial records in Great Britain related to the College at the time of the French and Indian War that would help in telling that early story. During the Revolution, for example, there is only one account of each of two engagements by the

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<sup>30</sup> R. M. Weaver, “Southern Chivalry and Total War,” *The Sewanee Review* 2 (Spring 1945): 269.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 273.

<sup>33</sup> William and Mary Alumni Association Records

<sup>34</sup> Gates served under Presidents George W. Bush and Barack Obama (18 December 2006-1 June 2011).

<sup>35</sup> Board of Visitors minutes have gaps during the colonial and pre-Civil War years, while the faculty minutes that began in 1727 are less than complete.

College student military company in Isle of Wight County<sup>36</sup> and later with Benedict Arnold's troops in Williamsburg.<sup>37</sup>

Regarding the nineteenth century, more information is available in college records, but many of the more interesting items related to the Civil War are found in personal diaries and letters. The faculty minutes and the papers of Benjamin S. Ewell, college president were helpful and, in many cases, pointed to other areas where still more details of the events were found.<sup>38</sup> The local Williamsburg newspaper, *The Virginia Gazette*, ceased publication in the city in 1780 and did not resume until 1924. In the colonial period the paper was the single source, making the corroboration of details impossible. In the years between 1911 and 1924, the primary was the College student newspaper. Although a literary magazine was published during that period, it rarely mentioned or discussed current events. Later, two newspapers from nearby cities—Richmond and Newport News—opened bureaus in Williamsburg and covered, although not in depth, major college events. Beginning about 1970, the College published its own “house organ”—*The W&M News*—to give an “official” version of campus news, while the student newspaper and local daily papers often offered more varied viewpoints. In discussing the past decade of the college-military relationship, interviews were conducted with individuals directly involved or who had direct access to information and decision-making.

The College of William and Mary has survived the upheaval of several wars. It was a pattern that would characterize the history of the College—persistent, if not stubborn commitment to survival in the face of civil unrest, internal dissention, lack of funding, and military occupation. Herein described directly and succinctly are events that document the College's long-standing relationship with the military establishment over more than 250 years and the long-standing tradition of the citizen-soldier.

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<sup>36</sup> Selby, *Revolution in Virginia*, 207.

<sup>37</sup> “Phillips Expedition to Virginia, 1781,” *William and Mary Quarterly*, 2nd Ser. 12, no. 3 (1932): 191.

<sup>38</sup> Ewell Papers, Archives, Special Collections Research Center, Earl Gregg Swem Library, College of William and Mary (hereinafter Swem Archives, CWM).

## Chapter One

### The French and Indian War and the American Revolution

Students at the College of William and Mary in Virginia were involved as citizen-soldiers in the French and Indian War and the American Revolution. Some students, in fact, quit school to join the militia or the Continental Army. This was the first association of the military. During the Revolution the school became divided as the trustees supported the independence movement, while the faculty for a time staunchly embraced the crown. Alumni and students became involved with the military and with the war for Independence. The campus served as headquarters, for a time, for British and American colonial armies.

The initial sixty years of the College, however, did not involve military affairs. The school, the only educational institution in the Colony of Virginia, was considered simply an outpost of the Church of England.<sup>39</sup> Likewise, the number of students interested in attending was small and did not grow for many years.<sup>40</sup> Unexpectedly, a fire devastated the main building just six years after it was finished, and it took another ten years to have it repaired within its original walls and become fully operational.<sup>41</sup> A serious war or aggressive nearby military action could have added another difficulty to be overcome in the development of the school. Fortunately for the College, they did not transpire. However, in 1754 conflict did erupt between a number of the British colonies and the French and their Algonquian Indian allies over western lands. In North America the conflict was called the French and Indian War, while in Europe it was known as the Seven Years' War. The war eventually did impact the College.

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<sup>39</sup> L. Edward Bond, *Damned Souls in a Tobacco Colony: Religion in Seventeenth-Century Virginia* (Macon, Ga.: Mercer University Press, 2000).

<sup>40</sup> "Journal of the President and Masters, 1729-1785," Swem Archives, CWM.

<sup>41</sup> Louis B. Wright and Marion Tinling, *The Secret Diary of William Byrd of Westover, 1709-1712* (Richmond, Va.: The Dietz Press, 1941), 82.

## The Seven Years' War

By the 1740s, the French in Canada and the British looked for future expansion and development in available western lands of the British colonies from Virginia to Nova Scotia in Canada. For example, for more than one hundred years, Great Britain had claimed land to the west from present-day Virginia to Illinois, and by 1750, France began to assert its own territorial claims to that territory as well as western lands in other colonies like Pennsylvania and New York.

Important in the claiming of any colonial lands was surveying the territory. The granting of a surveyor's license had been under the aegis of the Surveyor General's office at the College since the 1693 royal charter. George Washington, the son of a distinguished colonial planter, received his surveying license in 1749 from the College.<sup>42</sup> It is not known, however, whether the applicant had to stand for an examination or what was specifically required to obtain the license, which was granted by the "President and Masters," with one-sixth of surveyor's fees returning to the College. Young Washington, then only seventeen years old, apparently did not come to the College to secure his license that certified him as surveyor for Culpeper County in western Virginia.<sup>43</sup> It is ironic that Washington, educated only at home, would receive his first public office—county surveyor—under the auspices of an educational institution, the College of William and Mary.

Washington's experience in the backcountry as a surveyor was vital to his later military career and success.<sup>44</sup> In 1753 Washington, a major in the Virginia militia studying tactics and maneuvers, was sent by Virginia Governor Robert Dinwiddie to Ohio to demand that the French

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<sup>42</sup> Henry Howe, *Historical Collections of Virginia* (Charleston, S.C.: W. R. Babcock, 1852), 237. Howe's account includes a notation from the book in the clerk of the court's office in Culpeper County, which cites that Washington appeared on 20 July 1749 with a surveyor's commission from the College. (*William and Mary College Quarterly Historical Magazine* 19, no. 1 [July 1910]: 49). The original license was displayed for many years in the College library and was destroyed in the fire of 1859.

<sup>43</sup> No college records or papers of George Washington exist that indicate him coming to the College to get his license. By 1749 he had been doing survey work for at least three years, but was not officially licensed until the summer of 1749.

<sup>44</sup> On 15 June 1775 Washington was named commander-in-chief of the Continental Army by the Second Continental Congress meeting in Philadelphia.

withdraw from their forts in the British-claimed territory;<sup>45</sup> the French declined to leave. Nevertheless, Washington learned of plans for French military expansion in region. Pleased with the information and his performance, Dinwiddie promoted Washington to lieutenant colonel. A year later, Washington distinguished himself when, with about 400 volunteer militiamen, he joined Virginia and British Regulars in military operations near present-day Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Although he was an aide to British General Edward Braddock at the latter's defeat in 1755, Washington eventually was promoted to colonel and assumed command of a military district established to protect the Virginia frontier, in another appointment by Dinwiddie.

Apparently worried about the state of affairs of the colony and potentially the College, the Rev. Thomas Dawson, William and Mary president (1755-1761), commissary of the bishop of London and a member of the Governor's Council,<sup>46</sup> wrote in an undated letter sometime after June 1755<sup>47</sup> that Virginia's "frontiers, ever since the Defeat of General Braddock have been dreadfully harassed by the French and Indians—shocking acts of cruel butcheries and horrid murders." He noted that "militia of the several Counties have been draughted" and believed further action by Great Britain was needed. "Without some timely aid and assistance from Eng: we have great reason to apprehend not only the loss of many lives, but also that this valuable Country may become the Property of another Nation."<sup>48</sup>

For years the Virginia General Assembly had sheltered the College's president, professors and students from any required military service. Legislation in 1723 "for settling and better Regulation of the Militia"<sup>49</sup> and a similar bill in 1738 excused the College "from either mustering or providing arms."<sup>50</sup> During the colony's danger during the French and Indian War, the College again was excused from military obligations by acts of 1755 and 1757. Although legally exempt

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<sup>45</sup> "Burnby's Travels in Virginia in 1759," *The Virginia Historical Register* (Richmond: Macfarlane & Ferguson, 1851), 5: 147. Washington returned to Virginia by 16 January 1754 to report to the governor.

<sup>46</sup> He held the triple offices like William and Mary's first president the Rev. James Blair, 1693-1743.

<sup>47</sup> Braddock was defeated on 9 June 1759 at the battle of Monongahela.

<sup>48</sup> Thomas Dawson Papers, (photo static copies of originals in Library of Congress), Swem Archives, CWM.

<sup>49</sup> William Walker Hening, ed., *The Statutes at Large; Being a Collection of all the Laws of Virginia from the First Session of the Legislature in the year 1619* (Richmond, Va.: Franklin Press, 1820), 4: 119.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, 5: 17.

from military service, several students decided to abandon their studies to join the army. William Russell, a student in 1753-1754, served as a captain in the Rangers against the Indians in 1755.<sup>51</sup> William Finnie and Charles Mynn Thruston, who attended the College in 1757, joined the Second Virginia Regiment. Another was John Page, a student in 1756 (and later in 1761), who served as a regimental commander in action to “quell the insurgents in the Western Country.”<sup>52</sup> These were the first student-soldiers/citizen-soldiers to come from William and Mary and volunteer for military service, beginning a tradition that exists to the present day. Also coming, for the most part from landed gentry stock, the students also followed an English tradition of becoming officers.

Several former William and Mary students also took active roles in the military action in Virginia’s western region. Three Mercer brothers—George, James, and John Fenton—attended the College in the early 1750s and later went to war. George, who attended the school about 1750, was commissioned a lieutenant in Washington’s First Virginia Regiment in February 1754; he later became a captain and served as Washington’s aide-de-camp.<sup>53</sup> James Francis Mercer, a student about 1752, was a captain in the war and commanded Fort Loudoun in Winchester, Virginia, in 1756.<sup>54</sup> The third brother, John Fenton, in school about 1751, participated in Colonel Joshua Fry’s Virginia Regiment as an ensign and later became a captain in Washington’s Regiment. He commanded about one hundred soldiers at Edward’s Fort on the Cacapon River at Capon’s Bridge in Hampshire County, now part of West Virginia. On 18 April 1756 at what has been called the “Battle of the Great Cacapon River” or “Mercer’s Massacre,” about seventeen soldiers from Captain Mercer’s larger group of forty soldiers patrolling the area were ambushed and killed by the Indians. Mercer was one of the fallen, becoming the first former William and Mary student to die in combat in service of Virginia.<sup>55</sup> William Cabell, also probably a student in

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<sup>51</sup> “Brigadier General William Russell, Soldier and Statesmen” *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 52, no. 4 (1944): 267-272.

<sup>52</sup> “John Page, Autobiography,” *Virginia Historical Register* (Richmond, Va.: Macfarlane & Ferguson, 1850), 3: 142-151.

<sup>53</sup> “Virginia Troops in French and Indian Wars,” *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 1 (1894): 286.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>55</sup> No earlier casualty has been found.

the early 1750s, was appointed a militia captain after 1752 and rose to the rank of colonel in 1760.<sup>56</sup> The war concluded in 1763 with a victory for Britain and her colonies.

### **The Coming Storm**

In December 1773 the Boston Tea Party and subsequent closing of the port of Boston to commerce pushed the thirteen colonies within months down a successive path of “political protests, trade embargoes, the formation of revolutionary provisional governments, and, finally armed resistance.”<sup>57</sup> The College did not escape the trauma. Led by the Rev. John Camm, college president, the faculty was loyal to the crown, while the students and the Board of Visitors became increasingly more Republican in their political attitudes.

At the time of this activity, two students—James Madison and James Innes—were studying at the College and later would play important roles in the school’s history and in the military association with the institution. Madison, an energetic scholar with goals of being a clergyman, was the second cousin of the James Madison who later served as the fourth president of the United States. Innes, a bright, ingenious student, wanted to be at the forefront of any military movements against the British. Madison graduated in 1773, and for some months prior to the conclusion of his student days also served as writing master in the College’s classical Grammar School. Innes apparently also graduated in 1773, having served as “associate usher” of the Grammar School in 1772, and like Madison studied law, probably in the office of George Wythe, who in 1779 would become America’s first collegiate professor of law.<sup>58</sup> After concluding his studies, Innes was named usher of the Grammar School on 12 July 1773.<sup>59</sup> Both men were on hand in Williamsburg as war clouds appeared on the Virginia horizon. The patriotic clamor became shrill in the spring of 1775 at the Second Virginia Convention. Heated discussions were

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<sup>56</sup> “Virginia Troops,” *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, 286

<sup>57</sup> Godson, et al., *The College of William and Mary*, 121.

<sup>58</sup> Jane Carson, *James Innes and His Brothers of the F. H. C.* (Williamsburg, Va.: The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, 1965), 12-22.

<sup>59</sup> *Journal of the Meeting of the President and Masters of William and Mary College, 1729-1784*, 12 July 1773, Swem Archives, CWM (pages unnumbered).

first broached about independence, but many believed and fervently hoped there would be concessions from the King and the British government, which would allow for compromise and the maintenance of their English connection. It was, however, Patrick Henry, in a convention speech at the Henrico Parish Church, who uttered the phrase “Give me liberty or give me death,” as part of his call for the creation of a statewide militia.<sup>60</sup>

In the Massachusetts colony, words of independence and clashes of ideology could not be ignored. In fact, colonial patriots rose to the cause and challenged the British military on the green at Lexington early on the morning of 19 April 1775 and later in the day at a bridge outside Concord, when the two forces engaged again and “the shot heard round the world” was fired.<sup>61</sup> Of the encounter the *Virginia Gazette*<sup>62</sup> proclaimed, “The Sword is now drawn, and God knows when it will be sheathed.”<sup>63</sup>

The word of the clashes in Massachusetts had not reached Virginia when on the very next day—20 April—Virginia Governor Lord Dunmore ordered that the powder and other military paraphernalia stored in the magazine in Williamsburg be removed for safekeeping. The magazine, located on Market Square, just a few blocks from both the Governor’s Palace and the government’s Capitol, had been open and available to all local militia as well as crown troops. To compound the issue, the governor’s action was taken at night as the people slept. The citizens of Williamsburg and likely students from the College, upon being awakened to the cries that the powder was being stolen, became irate and a near-mob gathered at the courthouse across the road from the magazine. Were it not for the calmer voices of such men as Peyton Randolph,<sup>64</sup> speaker of the House of Burgesses (1766-1775), an influential planter whose home was across the green

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<sup>60</sup> Jacob N. Brennan, *A History of Virginia Conventions*, (Richmond, Va.: J. L. Hill Printing Co., 1902), 19.

<sup>61</sup> Poet Ralph Waldo Emerson initially wrote the line in 1835 in his poem “Concord Hymn” about the beginning of the American Revolution.

<sup>62</sup> The *Virginia Gazette* was a weekly newspaper published in Williamsburg from 1736 until 1780. After 1766 there were two or three newspapers, using the same name, published simultaneously in the city. Therefore, in the footnotes regarding the newspaper, there will be a delineation regarding the specific edition.

<sup>63</sup> *Virginia Gazette* (Dixon and Hunter), 5 May 1775.

<sup>64</sup> Randolph attended William and Mary. He later served as chairman of the Virginia Conventions and as president of the First Continental Congress in 1774 and for the first two weeks of the Second Continental Congress in May 1775, just a few weeks following the Dunmore powder episode.

from the magazine, an attack on the Governor's Palace or on the governor himself could have propelled Virginia immediately into the forefront of anti-British hostilities.

Prior to the governor's raid on the magazine, militia activities already were under way in Williamsburg. Citizens—tradesmen and craftsmen—along with some college students, including Innes, had joined the local volunteer militia company (the Williamsburg Volunteers). Soon the students formed their own college company recognized by Virginia's first state governor, Patrick Henry.<sup>65</sup> There was also a third, little-known company of youths who formed a military corps with Henry Nicholson, age 14, their captain. Robert Greenhow Sr. recalled, nearly sixty years later, that the Boy's Company invaded the Powder Magazine on 3 June 1775 after Dunmore's departure "and armed themselves with the blue painted stock guns, kept for the purpose of distributions among the Indians—and equipped as the minutemen and volunteers were in military garb."<sup>66</sup> Later Nicholson attended William and Mary, became a cornet (the lowest grade of commissioned officer) in Nelson's Regiment of Virginia State Horse in 1778, and later quartermaster in the same regiment until 1782.

### **Innes and the Military**

With his keen military acumen, Innes was in a unique position to approach students and persuade them to enlist in the militia since he was with them on campus as an usher and was a member in the College's F. H. C. Society. Established in 1750, the F. H. C. (commonly known know as the Flat Hat Club) was the first college fraternity in an American college and counted Thomas Jefferson<sup>67</sup> among its members.<sup>68</sup> The oldest continual fraternal organization is Phi Beta

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<sup>65</sup> There were twenty-four known members of the student company and nearly all served later in regular military units.

<sup>66</sup> Tyler's *Quarterly Historical and Genealogical Magazine* 9 (1928): 46-47.

<sup>67</sup> Jefferson attended William and Mary in 1760-1762. A monograph by historian Dumas Malone, *Jefferson Goes to School in Williamsburg* (*The Virginia Quarterly Review*, 1957) is the definitive account of his time at the College. In 1772 Virginia Governor John Murray, the Earl of Dunmore, who was the College's rector, asked Jefferson to prepare architectural drawings for a proposed expansion of the main building. The foundations were begun in 1774, but discontinued when the Revolutionary War began. Those drawings are now in the Huntington Library collection in San Marino, California. At the bottom of the plan in Jefferson's own hand is "drawn at the request of Ld. Dunmore."

<sup>68</sup> Carson, *James Innes*, 2 and 6. Jefferson recalled his membership in a letter to Thomas McAuley, 14 March 1819. The real name of the organization has never been known, but Carson notes the initials may represent "*Fraternitas, Hilaritas Cognitioque*."

Kappa, also founded by William and Mary students on 5 December 1776,<sup>69</sup> and probably started because the F. H. C., by then, had become inactive.

Historian Jane Carson described the F. H. C. as first and foremost dedicated to friendship and that their meetings were often the “temple of Mirth and Hilarity” with sobriety not being one of the society’s strengths.<sup>70</sup> Sometime in early March 1775, Innes organized and began his duties as captain of the Williamsburg volunteer militia group, which later counted providing a guard for the magazine as one of its tasks after Dunmore’s actions.<sup>71</sup> On 20 June 1775, the House of Burgesses formally thanked “Captain James Innes, of the Volunteer Company of Williamsburg and the persons employed by him [primarily William and Mary students in the company] to guard the public Magazine in this City, for the Alacrity, Fidelity, and Activity with which they undertook and performed that service.”<sup>72</sup>

As talk of independence from Britain continued, the College faculty on 11 May 1775 adopted a regulation directly aimed at Innes’ military activities. Without mentioning him by name, the resolution, said “that it is the opinion of this Society that the Office of Usher of the Grammar School is entirely incompatible with every kind of Office or Employment in any military Society.”<sup>73</sup> Innes, however, was not stopped. In fact, the resolution may have propelled him forward as he remained an usher and active with the militia, continuing to recruit additional student members and local townspeople.

Soon Innes and Assistant Grammar School Usher William Yates Jr., for reasons that have never been fully explained, launched a petition, signed by a number of students, against Maria Digges, the College’s housekeeper, whom they suspected of Loyalist feelings. They contended

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<sup>69</sup> Original minute book, Phi Beta Kappa, Alpha Chapter Records (pages unnumbered), US 7.002, Box 7, Swem Archives, CWM.

<sup>70</sup> Carson, *James Innes*, 60.

<sup>71</sup> Godson, et al., *The College of William and Mary*, 123; Henry R. McIlwaine and John Pendleton Kennedy, eds., *Journals of the House of Burgesses, 1773–1776* (Richmond: Library of Virginia), 198.

<sup>72</sup> McIlwaine and Kennedy, eds., *Journals of the House of Burgesses*, 271.

<sup>73</sup> “Journal of the Meeting of the President and Masters of William and Mary College,” *William and Mary Quarterly*, Lyon G. Tyler, ed., 1st Ser. 14 (1906): 243-244; and *Journal of the President and Masters, 1727-1784* (pages unnumbered), Swem Archives, CWM.

that she was not doing her duties. Ultimately, the petition, which was heard by the faculty, failed, and Innes and Yates were “admonish’d to confine themselves to the Duties of their respective Offices, and not to enter into Combinations with the Students for the future.”<sup>74</sup>

The College’s Board of Visitors held a different view of the Innes situation since a considerable majority of them identified themselves with the Patriot cause. They stated forcefully during their 17 June 1775 visitation that “Mr. Innis’s [sic] military Engagements were not incompatible with his Office as Head-Usher of the Grammar-School.”<sup>75</sup> Lord Dunmore, the rector of the College (chairman of the Board of Visitors), was absent from the meeting; hence the opposition was minimal. Innes’ support came from his local friends, Thomas Page, Thomas Nelson, Nathaniel Burwell, and other board patriots. Later, faculty minutes of 4 August 1775 continued, “[Camm] added, that Mr. Innis [sic] is now absent from the College without Permission, and has been almost constantly so ever since the last Visitation on Business (as is generally believed) which respects his military Engagements. Resolved hereupon, that no farther proceedings be had in relation to Mr. Innis.”<sup>76</sup>

Camm, however, had had his fill of Innes and his actions on and around the campus. At a subsequent faculty meeting, when only Camm and senior professor the Rev. Emmanuel Jones were present, a resolution was adopted ousting Innes because he had “much neglected his duty for the last three months, by repeatedly absenting himself from the College for days & weeks together, without asking permission to be absent.”<sup>77</sup> The real reason, however, was that his patriot activities with the militia and his recruitment of students were continuing, since Camm had known that Innes was still in his “Military Office.”<sup>78</sup>

At other colleges, such as King’s College (now Columbia University) Loyalist supporters like College President Myles Cooper were ousted and at Harvard a tutor, Isaac Smith, was

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<sup>74</sup> Ibid., *William and Mary Quarterly*, 1st Ser. 15 (1906): 13.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid., 134. Minutes of the Board of Visitors for this era do not exist, but this action of the board was recorded in the *Journal of the President and Masters*, 4 August 1775.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid., 14 September 1775, 135.

<sup>78</sup> Morpurgo, *Their Majesties’ Royalle Colledge*, 173.,,

removed from his post.<sup>79</sup> For years the faculties of King’s College and William and Mary were, of the nine colonial colleges, the schools most closely associated with the English crown but in the decade prior to the Revolution, their faculties were the most divided between Loyalist and patriots.<sup>80</sup> However regarding faculty and staff actions, the faculty at one dismissed the patriot, while the board at the other dismissed the Loyalist. Records indicate that elsewhere, the revolutionary sentiments among faculty and students were the strongest at the older schools—Harvard, Yale, and The College of New Jersey (now Princeton University).<sup>81</sup> As the Revolution began, William and Mary, as evidenced by its student involvement, was called a “nursery of republicanism,”<sup>82</sup> growing much stronger after the Loyalist faculty departed.

In the middle of 1775, Innes’ friend Madison had left Virginia for Great Britain to be ordained and did not return for a year, missing most of the pre-independence activities. For the remainder of 1775 Innes continued working diligently to recruit and train an artillery company, and in February 1776, the Virginia Council (then Virginia’s temporary government) named him lieutenant colonel in the Sixth Battalion under Col. David Mason.<sup>83</sup> Innes later became the only William and Mary student to achieve the rank of colonel in the Continental Line. He eventually practiced the law and was a strong Federal advocate in Virginia’s 1788 constitutional convention.

Another William and Mary student actively involved in the Revolutionary movement was George Nicholas, eldest son of Robert Carter Nicholas, treasurer of the colony. He was at the College in 1772 and in the spring of 1775, and may have been a member of Innes’ company of college students, where his activities resembled those of his friend Innes. Later, he rose to the

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<sup>79</sup> John F. Roche, *The Colonial Colleges in the War for American Independence* (Millwood, N.Y.: University Publications, Associated Faculty Press Inc., 1986), 67 and 72.

<sup>80</sup> Howard H. Peckham, *Collegia Ante Bellum: Attitudes of College Professors and Students toward the American Revolution*, *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, Vol. 95, no. 1 (1971), 70. Of the nine colonial colleges discussed, three—Dartmouth, Rhode Island College (later Brown University) and Queen’s College (now Rutgers University) were relatively new at the outbreak of the Revolution and had few students and faculty. The College of Philadelphia (now the University of Pennsylvania) was the other school discussed in this paper and the faculty was neutral for much of the *ante bellum* period.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, 54-67.

<sup>82</sup> Louis Leonard Tucker, *Centers of Sedition: Colonial Colleges and the American Revolution*, *Massachusetts Historical Society, Proceedings* 3rd Ser., 1 (1979), 18.

<sup>83</sup> Carson, *James Innes*, 87-88.

position of captain of the Second Virginia Regiment and then colonel of the Eleventh Virginia Regiment.

Some of the others involved in the war including William Yates, a student in 1774 and F. H. C. member, were probably in Innes' militia company. Yates became a colonel in the Virginia Line after he served for a brief time in 1776 as "muster master" for the South District of Virginia. St. George Tucker of Williamsburg, also friend of Innes and a student from 1771 at least through the spring of 1774, finally joined the volunteer defenders of Hampton and Williamsburg in 1779, becoming a major in 1780. He was wounded at the Battle of Guilford Courthouse in North Carolina and was promoted to the rank of colonel prior to the Yorktown campaign. Beverly Randolph was a William and Mary student in 1771-1772 and again in 1773 and became a cavalry officer in 1779. He was with Tucker at the Battle of Guilford Courthouse. Thomas Davis, a student from about 1770 to 1772 remained at the College as an usher and was succeeded by Innes in June 1773. He was ordained a minister four months later in London and joined the army as a chaplain in 1776 in the cavalry troop commanded by Virginian Theodorick Bland and participated in the battle of Brandywine. He left the army in 1778. At the end of the 1774-1775 term, a number of students left to enlist in the Continental army including Nathaniel Burwell of Carter's Grove, near Williamsburg, who served with General Robert Howe of North Carolina.

### **College Camp**

To the surprise of many, the Virginia Convention, meeting in Richmond on 5 August 1775, named Patrick Henry, the firebrand orator who lacked any prior military experience, colonel of the First Virginia Regiment and commander of "all forces" in Virginia,<sup>84</sup> operating under the direction of the colony's Committee of Safety. Specifically, the orders directed that militiamen be gathered from each county throughout the colony. Henry directed those local militia and

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<sup>84</sup> Robert Douthat Meade, *Patrick Henry—Practical Revolutionary* (Philadelphia and New York: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1969), 73.

minutemen to Williamsburg, the colonial capital, for training; afterwards they would return home. About six weeks after his appointment, the Williamsburg weekly newspaper reported, “Col. Henry arrived to make choice of a proper spot for an encampment, and to give directions for laying out the ground. The forces will begin to assemble in a very short time, and the rendezvous we hear, will be close by this city.”<sup>85</sup>

The following week’s edition of the *Virginia Gazette* reported that Henry had selected a site. “A camp is now marked out, behind the College, tents and other camp equipage, are getting ready with the utmost expedition; and the troops, from different counties, are on their march for this city. The same day came in the Chesterfield [County] company, under Capt. Markham, who are a set of hearty clever young men.”<sup>86</sup> This encampment was at the opposite end of the city from the local volunteer camp, which earlier had been established at Waller’s Grove behind the Capitol building.

The site of what has become known as “College Camp”<sup>87</sup> has been identified only as being “behind the College.”<sup>88</sup> Besides the *Virginia Gazette* article, there are no contemporary descriptions of the camp’s location. It was once believed the camp was very near the College. Accordingly in 1976 a plaque was placed at the head of the 1935-era Sunken Garden, about 100 yards behind the main building, now called the Wren Building.<sup>89</sup> More recent research suggests that the camp more likely was located about a half mile farther west.

French cartographer Jean-Nicolas Desandrouins drew maps of Williamsburg and its environs showing the French and American military positions in September 1781, just prior to the

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<sup>85</sup> *Virginia Gazette* (Purdie), 22 September 1775.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, 29 September 1775.

<sup>87</sup> The name used in Virginia regimental orderly books of the period.

<sup>88</sup> This reference is to the area of the main building and its two related buildings—the President’s House and the Brafferton, long used as the Indian School. The building is called the Sir Christopher Wren Building after the famed English architect, whose offices as Surveyor General are believed to have drawn or “modeled” the plans for the first building erected between 1695 and 1699. The current building at the College is a restoration of the building to its second form as it appeared after the 1705 fire. The second form was constructed in 1715

<sup>89</sup> The William and Mary Society of the Alumni erected a plaque after Harold Gill of The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation and Wilford Kale, conducted research on the camp.

Battle of Yorktown.<sup>90</sup> These included Patriot forces under the command of the Marquis de Lafayette and the French soldiers of Rochambeau's army. Desandrouins' map shows an important element: the location of the headquarters of Lafayette and his troops behind the College. Overlaying the 1782 map with a current college topography map, the troop encampment would have been located about a half mile west of the College's main building once the probable site of "College Camp." The New location would place the camp adjacent to clean water provided by a tributary of College Creek and a lake created in the early eighteenth century when a gristmill was built to dam the tributary; it was also adjacent to acreage necessary for latrines.

College Camp, established in 1775, was used at least through 1778 and was also active in the days prior to the Battle of Yorktown in October 1781 because the arriving French and Patriot forces would have used an already proven campsite, rather than establish a new one for the short duration. This location, large enough to accommodate hundreds of soldiers, was near enough to the College that the military—whether it was local military or troops under Lafayette—had opportunities of interaction with the College and its students. Records of College Camp are sketchy, but there are at least a dozen accounts relating to the camp in the *Virginia Gazette*, both in the Purdie and the Hunter & Dixon editions as well as additional mentions in various official state papers. By 13 October 1775, the camp had grown significantly and the "last three companies of militia regulars had arrived, commanded by Capt. Davis of Norfolk, Capt. Parker of Westmoreland, and Capt. Taliaferro of Caroline."<sup>91</sup>

Under the Virginia structure as declared by the convention, there were four types of military service: regular regiments, "minutemen," a colony wide militia, and local volunteer units. Virginia was subdivided into 15 districts, and one company of sixty-five men would be enlisted to serve for one year and formed with regiments of full-time soldiers. The local militia, comprised of

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<sup>90</sup> Jean-Nicholas Desandrouins, *Armée de Rochambeau, 1782: carte des environs de Williamsburg en Virginia où les armées française et américaine ont campés en Septembre, 1781*, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., Geography and Map Division, Call No. NG3884.W5S3 1781 D4 1975.

<sup>91</sup> *Virginia Gazette* (Purdie), 13, October 1775.

men from ages sixteen to fifty, would muster at least eleven times annually.<sup>92</sup> Then there also were “minutemen,” who would receive training for twenty days immediately upon activation and then gather for twelve days of soldiering twice a year. Each district was required to have 500 minutemen.

Former William and Mary students held nearly all of the leadership positions in the Elizabeth City District, which included six counties and the city of Williamsburg. On 15 September 1775, the district met in the capital under the chairmanship of Robert Carter Nicholas (attended William and Mary in 1745) and nominated Edward Champion Travis (1760-55 and 1762-1763) as colonel, Hugh Nelson (1759-1760) as lieutenant colonel, and Samuel Harwood (1762-1763) as major.<sup>93</sup> Colonial records also indicate that six former William and Mary students served as captains of county companies.<sup>94</sup>

With this first Virginia-wide organization and the first training camp set at the College, units from across Virginia came to the capital for training throughout 1775 and for the next three years. Purdie’s *Virginia Gazette* reported in mid-November 1775 “70 fine rifle-men arrived at the camp, under the command of Capt. Fontaine. The same day came 100 minutemen from Chesterfield, and companies have been arriving almost every day since.”<sup>95</sup> Regimental orderly books of Virginia units indicate the soldiers spent much time around Williamsburg in the early years of the war. The Virginia 6th Regiment, headed by Colonel Mordecai Buckner, was stationed periodically from 26 March 1776 to 9 November 1776 at the camp behind the College. The Orderly Book listed entries dated “college camp” from 28 June to 6 July 1776.<sup>96</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> “Methods for Raising and Embodying a sufficient force for the defense and protection of this colony,” Henning, ed., *The Statutes at Large*, 9: 9-35.

<sup>93</sup> Robert L. Scribner and Brent Tarter, eds., *Revolutionary Virginia: The Road to Independence* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1975), 1: 186, n. 20.

<sup>94</sup> Eugene Michael Sanchez-Saavedra, *A Guide to Military Organizations in the American Revolution, 1774-1787* (Richmond: Library of Virginia, 1978). Those students were John Cary (1760-1761), Elizabeth City; Richard Cary (1758), Warwick; John Walker (1754-55, 1762-63), James City; John Tyler (1760-1765), Charles City; Thomas Massie (1759-1763), New Kent; and William Sheldon Selater (1770-1773), York.

<sup>95</sup> *Virginia Gazette* (Purdie), 10 November 1775.

<sup>96</sup> “6th Virginia Regiment Orderly Book,” Americana Collection, Daughters of the American Revolution, Washington, D.C.

The *Virginia Gazette* reported in its 19 July 1776 edition that “Henry Williams of the Virginia forces” was found guilty by a general court-martial at Williamsburg on 16 July of “[behaving] in a scandalous in infamous manner, behavior ‘unbecoming the character of an officer or soldier,’ was cashiered, drummed along the line at Springfield camp through Williamsburg, and College camp.” A report a month later said that Matthew Fowler, a sergeant in the 1st Virginia Regiment, was killed “on the spot” at College Camp when a musket was accidentally discharged.<sup>97</sup>

Many units that trained at College Camp were later marched north to join Washington’s army in New Jersey and New York. Another military report in the *Virginia Gazette* in September 1776 indicated “Captain Theodorick Bland’s troop of light-horse arrived in town, from Petersburg. And yesterday arrived from Gloucester the 7th regiment of foot (late Dangerfield’s) now Crawford’s, in place of the 5th who (as well as the 4th and 6th) are under orders to proceed to New York.”<sup>98</sup> A few weeks later, two horses were reported stolen from College Camp.<sup>99</sup> Toward the end of September 1776, the 5th Virginia Regiment apparently had not yet departed for New York because the *Gazette* reported that John Pleasants was offering a reward of nine pounds for the return of three deserters “from my company of the 5th battalion, at College camp, Williamsburg.”<sup>100</sup>

The *Virginia Gazette* also reported 27 January 1777, “Since our last publication the 7th regiment, and the remainder of the 2nd, have marched in divisions from hence to join the American army in the province of New Jersey.”<sup>101</sup> Another edition of the *Gazette* on 4 April 1777 said, “the 15th Regiment, commanded by Col. David Mason, marched from this city to join His Excellency General Washington.”<sup>102</sup> It is possible that the proximity of the College to the camp offered the opportunity for the officers of these militia organizations and state regiments to be

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<sup>97</sup> *Virginia Gazette* (Purdie), 19 July 1776 and 10 August 1776.

<sup>98</sup> *Virginia Gazette* (Purdie), 7 September 1776.

<sup>99</sup> *Virginia Gazette* (Purdie), 27 September 1776.

<sup>100</sup> *Virginia Gazette* (Purdie), 20 September 1776.

<sup>101</sup> *Virginia Gazette* (Dixon & Hunter) 27 January 1777.

<sup>102</sup> *Virginia Gazette* (Dixon & Hunter) 4 April 1777.

instructed in classrooms, where lectures could more appropriately be given, rather than sitting on logs or stools around a campfire or in a tent outdoors.

### **The Revolution Comes**

The question of the future of College President Camm was drawing near. As the last Loyalist faculty member, he became isolated from state officials who were assuming authority in the city following the flight of Lord Dunmore from Williamsburg in the fall, 1775, when it became clear to him that he had lost control over the colonial government. As Patriots took over with the coming of full-fledged war (1775-1781), the College was not a major concern to them, except that the new Virginia government continued to allow the faculty members and students to be exempt from military service. The school with strong ties to the Church of England and the crown was left to its own devices. As a result of the military events, student enrollment continued the decline begun about 1774, as some students left to go home to join their local militias.

Spring, 1776, brought added problems for the College. English-born Major General Charles Lee, turned colonial planter, was considered by some to be second in command of the Continental Army behind Washington. He also headed the Patriot forces in the Virginia capital and decided there was a need in the area for a military hospital.<sup>103</sup> Congress had named Lee commander in the South, and he chose Williamsburg as his headquarters so he could more easily move either to the southern or middle colonies. He also considered much of the Committee of Safety's work in Williamsburg and elsewhere to be poor, with few defensive strategies or fortifications in place. (The Virginia Committee of Safety was the governing authority from 16 August 1775 to 5 July 1776 when a state government was established.) In a 21 April 1776 letter, Lee instructed his surgeon, Dr. Alexander Skinner in Smithfield that upon his arrival in Williamsburg Skinner was "to clear as much of the college [building] for the sick as is necessary: if a part is not sufficient, the whole must be taken." Those persons who occupy apartments at the

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<sup>103</sup> M. Lee Minnis, *The First Virginia Regiment of Foot, 1775-1783* (Westminster, Md.: Heritage Books, 1998), 367.

College, Lee said, should be as “little inconvenienced as possible” and “you are to apprise them four days before you take possession.”<sup>104</sup>

On the same day, Lee wrote John Page of Gloucester, who graduated from William and Mary in 1763 and was a classmate of Jefferson and a member of the College Board of Visitors, that he had requested the College’s main building be cleared for the hospital: “It is the most commodious place, and I think when so commodious a place is ready to our hands to purchase or rent would be a wanton expense on the Continent. I flatter myself it will be approved of.”<sup>105</sup> Lee, however, neglected to consult the civil authorities before deciding to commandeer the College. Edmund Pendleton<sup>106</sup> upon learning of General Lee’s unilateral decision, wrote him on 25 April that the civil authorities also had resolved to use the College as a hospital, and while not wanting any “jealously between the civil and military powers in this Colony, we feel it is an indispensable duty to mention that your quartering soldiers in the College & ordering it to be prepared for an Hospital without our previous consent which might have been easily obtained, was, in our opinion, an improper step.”<sup>107</sup>

With Pendleton taking a political position, Page did not mince words with the general. Writing on 28 April 1776 he said a committee established to consider hospital facilities was “pretty much divided” on the College’s use. Noting that the building was commodious, Page stressed, “as the College is the only place in the Country where our youth can be tolerably educated it seems highly improper to debar ourselves from that invaluable advantage, and indeed as it is the freehold of the President & Professors, we fear it will look like a violation of private

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<sup>104</sup> “The Papers of Major-General Charles Lee,” *New-York Historical Society Collections* 1 (1871): 436-437.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*, 437.

<sup>106</sup> Pendleton, a William and Mary alumnus, was president of Virginia Committee of Safety from 16 August 1775 to 5 July 1776.

<sup>107</sup> *Papers of Charles Lee*, 451-452.

property, and induce an apprehension of military encroachment thereon.”<sup>108</sup> Page then personally recommended that Lee consider using “the public hospital or Madhouse”<sup>109</sup> as a substitute.

Page, apparently rebuked by the committee regarding his words to Lee, offered the general an apology and blamed his heated response on “my partiality to the place of my Education.”<sup>110</sup> Ultimately the committee and Dr. William Rickman, appointed by the Continental Congress to be in charge of the continental hospital, decided the College would not be suitable because “it will not admit of that thorough passage of air so absolutely necessary for invalids,” and that the building was newly repaired and ready for the next college term. Those comments were supported a little later in the 1 June 1776 edition of the *Virginia Gazette*: “The College of WILLIAM & MARY has been lately cleaned, and will be immediately plastered and whitewashed to render it fit for the Reception of Professors, Students, Grammar Scholars, and Servants.”<sup>111</sup> It had been a close call for the College of William and Mary. James Maury Fontaine, former student and rector of the College, stressed the need for the continued operation of the College in an 11 May 1776 letter to Colonel Edmund Berkeley of Middlesex, Virginia. “While we are nobly struggling for liberty, we seem strangely to neglect the rising generation, who are to reap the fruits of the glorious contest.”<sup>112</sup> Victory over Great Britain would be meaningless if the system of public education were to be eroded in the process, he suggested. “Our children will neither know how to enjoy, nor preserve what we are laboring to attain & bestow upon them.” Concluding his letter, Fontaine hoped that a member of the board would “turn the eyes of our Convention upon the College, which now seems to require, & has long stood in need of, a thorough reformation.”<sup>113</sup>

The Virginia Convention (the successor to the colonial House of Burgesses), meeting in Williamsburg on 15 June 1776 concurred with its committee that the College was unsuitable for a

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<sup>108</sup> Ibid., 455-457.

<sup>109</sup> The Public Hospital, established in 1773 as the first public hospital for the mentally ill in the colonies, was located just a few blocks southeast of the College.

<sup>110</sup> *Papers of Charles Lee*, 451-452.

<sup>111</sup> *Virginia Gazette* (Dixon & Hunter), 1 June 1776.

<sup>112</sup> Berkeley Papers, 33-13D, Special Collections, Alderman Library, University of Virginia.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid.

military hospital, but likewise believed that the former Governor's Palace, vacant since Lord Dunmore's flight, "is adapted in all respects, without any alternations of consequence, for an hospital."<sup>114</sup>

Earlier, on 15 May 1776, the same Convention adopted two resolutions. One, to frame a declaration of rights (forerunner of the U.S. Bill of Rights) and the other instructing the Virginia delegates at the Congress meeting in Philadelphia to move for independence from Great Britain and held that the colonies should be "free and independent states."<sup>115</sup> Richard Henry Lee of Virginia made the motion for independence at the Congress on 7 June 1776. A document—the Declaration of Independence—was to be written by an appointed committee. Thomas Jefferson, a William and Mary alumnus, was its primary author.<sup>116</sup> The document was finalized on 4 July 1776, declaring independence of the colonies from Great Britain; three of Virginia's seven signers were former William and Mary students, and another, George Wythe, would become a law professor at the College three years later.<sup>117</sup> The Declaration created new and greater problems for the College. What was the school to do? The royal charter had established its foundation from the same crown that was now in total disrepute among the new governments of the thirteen states. Much of the annual funding of the institution had come from England, especially the monies from the Brafferton estate of the late eminent scientist Robert Boyle. Most of the faculty was English, and that resource now had dried up.

Meanwhile, an event on 5 December 1776 would have a lasting impact on the history of William and Mary. A group of five students meeting in the Apollo Room of the Raleigh Tavern, where Burgesses had earlier convened after Lord Dunmore had dissolved their House, established

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<sup>114</sup> *The Proceedings of the Convention of Delegates held at the Capitol, Williamsburg* (Richmond, Va.: Richie, Trueheart and DuVal Printers, 1816), 51.

<sup>115</sup> Hugh Blair Grigsby, *The Virginia Convention of 1776* (Richmond, J. W. Randolph): 18-19. Originally, "A Discourse delivered before The Virginia Alpha of Phi Beta Kappa Society in the chapel of William and Mary College in the City of Williamsburg on the afternoon of July 3rd, 1855."

<sup>116</sup> Virginius Dabney, ed., *The Patriots: The American Revolution Generation of Genius* (New York, Athenum, 1975), 172 and 79.

<sup>117</sup> George E. Ross, *Know the 56 Signers of the Declaration of Independence*, (Chicago: Rand McNally & Company, 1963), 56-62.

the Phi Beta Kappa (PBK) Society. These students, in creating this fraternity—a social club—would send from their group charters for comparable organizations to be founded at Harvard College in Massachusetts and Yale College in Connecticut. This was done before the Alpha (or William and Mary) chapter was disbanded 6 January 1781, as students left Williamsburg because of the war.<sup>118</sup> Spreading the PBK fraternity charters to other schools perpetuated the organization and was the first such action in American educational history.<sup>119</sup> A number of PBK members left William and Mary to join the American army, including one of the group who suspended the chapter—Peyton Short, “joined a company that was defending Williamsburg and remained in the ranks until the immediate danger had passed.”<sup>120</sup>

### **The College Company**

Since the Declaration, the Visitors had been looking for a way to dismiss the Loyalist President Camm. The College languished, and for it to survive the board believed the Camm presidency had to end. It did so in the spring, 1777, when the Visitors voted to remove him, not for loyalties to the English crown and the Church of England, but simply for the vague reasons of “neglect and misconduct.”<sup>121</sup> Camm’s successor was a quick choice, the Rev. James Madison, who the Visitors appointed for a one-year term.<sup>122</sup> Madison had returned to the faculty as Professor of Natural Philosophy in the fall, 1776, and would ultimately serve the next 35 years as president, the second-longest term after James Blair’s 50 years (1693-1743).

Not long after assuming the College post, Madison was appointed to a military position. Patrick Henry, Virginia’s first non-royal governor, with the advice of the council of state, “issued Commissions appointing, the Reverend Mr. James Madison Captain [of Williamsburg], [and

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<sup>118</sup> The Alpha Chapter was revived in 1851 by William Short, then 90 years old, who was a member when the chapter was suspended in 1781. Because of the Civil War, the chapter was suspended again and was revived for a second time in 1893 by Colonel Benjamin S. Ewell, who was a member in the 1850s.

<sup>119</sup> Today there are nearly 100 fraternities (male) and sororities (female) on college and university campuses across America, and alumni of those groups are active in cities and towns participating in fund-raising activities and supporting charities of all kinds in the name of their specific fraternity or sorority.

<sup>120</sup> Oscar M. Voorhees, *The History of Phi Beta Kappa* (New York: Crown Publishers, 1945), 16-17.

<sup>121</sup> Morpurgo, *Their Majesties’ Royall Colledge*, 180. This action was involved and took considerable time.

<sup>122</sup> *Virginia Gazette* (Dixon & Hunter), 4 April 1777.

students] Granville Smith first Lieutenant [of Hanover], William Nelson second Lieutenant [of York] and Daniel Fitzhugh Ensign [of King George] of a Company of Militia formed out of the Students of William and Mary College.”<sup>123</sup> The 22 August 1777 edition of the *Virginia Gazette*<sup>124</sup> reported on the new militia and its officers. No records survive detailing the activities of the company, but the 24 known members probably spent their training and drill time at the nearby College Camp. Although the extant colonial records of the College do not delineate any Loyalist students, there obviously were a few, such as the sons—George, Alexander, and John—of Lord Dunmore, who left school when the governor fled Williamsburg in June 1775.<sup>125</sup>

There are only four known instances of the College militia company participating in military actions. The first came just a few days after the company was organized when a British sea force was sighted 14 August 1777 at the mouth of the Chesapeake Bay. Word quickly came to Williamsburg,<sup>126</sup> but the Council of State had adjourned because of the summer Tidewater heat and humidity. Governor Henry also was ill and had returned to his home—Scotchtown—in Hanover, leaving Councillor Page to call together as many members as possible. The councillors called all militia from the mountains eastward to come to the capital area.<sup>127</sup>

On his return, Henry commissioned Thomas Nelson Jr. as commander of the defense of eastern Virginia. By 21 August there were 600 militia troops in the capital, “including students from the College of William and Mary.... Nelson reviewed his forces on the college green” and pronounced himself “much satisfied” with their appearance.<sup>128</sup> By the end of the month, as many as four thousand Virginia troops were camped around Williamsburg, but the British had continued up the Chesapeake Bay, and the troops ultimately offloaded in Maryland and began to move

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<sup>123</sup> H. R. McIlwaine, ed., *Journals of the Council of the State of Virginia* (Richmond: Library of Virginia), 1: 469.

<sup>124</sup> *Virginia Gazette* (Dixon & Hunter), 22 August 1777.

<sup>125</sup> Earl Gregg Swem, Robert Hunt Land, and others, *A Provisional List of Alumni, Grammar School Students, Members of the Faculty and Members of the Board of Visitors of the College of William and Mary in Virginia, 1693 to 1888* (Richmond, Va.: Division of Purchase and Printing, 1941). J. E. Morpurgo, the first British graduate of William and Mary in the twentieth century, remarked in his book, “There was almost no overt Toryism among the younger William and Mary students” (*Their Majesties Royall Colledge*, 171).

<sup>126</sup> *Virginia Gazette* (Hunter & Dixon), 22 August 1777.

<sup>127</sup> John E. Selby, *The Revolution in Virginia, 1775-1783* (Williamsburg, Va.: The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation (1988), 133.

<sup>128</sup> *Ibid.*, 134.

toward Philadelphia. As the threat waned, most militiamen were sent home until only about fifteen hundred regular troops and some militia units remained.

The College continued without major disruptions during the 1777-1778 and 1778-1779 sessions. The second military event for the student company loomed on 18-19 May 1779, when the British were threatening eastern Virginia. There had been a variety of coastal raids through the years as British ships sailed along the bay and up its tributary rivers. One such raid took place in early May 1779 when about 2,000 British troops landed at Portsmouth and occupied Norfolk, taking over its fort and scattering the 80 men who were defending it. Then a detachment of about 400 men was sent to Suffolk, which was burned and its stores destroyed and munitions seized.<sup>129</sup> Notification of the encounter was late in reaching Patriot forces, but Governor Henry called up the militia and scattered them about, not knowing what the ultimate goal of the raid was. Militia and regular troops were placed near Yorktown and Hampton and across the James River, with about 1,300 men assembled in Isle of Wight County at Smithfield, less than twenty miles west of Suffolk.

The College Company, with an element of cavalry, obtained a ferry, most likely at Burwell's landing just a few miles east of Williamsburg, and crossed the James River with their horses and rode to Smithfield to join other units assembling there.<sup>130</sup> Few details of the Smithfield episode exist because the Journal of the Council of State for this period either is missing or what survived is illegible.

One Smithfield recollection comes from North Carolinian Joseph Hewes in a letter to his Governor Richard Caswell. Hewes wrote that Virginia needed militia help from North Carolina as well as arms. "I do not think a good musket can be found for every fourth man," he said.<sup>131</sup>

Edmund Pendleton, lawyer and Patriot leader, wrote General William Woodford on 26 July 1779:

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<sup>129</sup> Letter from Joseph Hewes to Governor Richard Caswell, May 23, 1779, in Walter Clark, comp. and ed., *State Records of North Carolina* (1896 repr. Wilmington, N. C.: Broadfoot Publishing Co., 1993), 308-309.

<sup>130</sup> Selby, *Revolution in Virginia*, 207. The *Virginia Gazette* on 22 May 1779 reported that Nathaniel Burwell Jr. offered to purchase a flat boat, sufficient for six or eight horses or to pay someone to build one. He apparently had lost a boat recently, maybe from use by the student company.

<sup>131</sup> Hewes to Caswell, *State Records of North Carolina*, 308-309

“I was pleased to see the alacrity of the militia marching on this occasion. They by this time make a Respectable body and are joined by about 200 regulars.”<sup>132</sup>

The war came directly to the Williamsburg area in the spring, 1780, when the British commander-in-chief in North America, General Sir Henry Clinton, decided to move into the southern colonies. In early 1780, Clinton had personally led the siege of Charleston, South Carolina. Shortly afterwards, he returned to his base in New York, turning his command over to Charles Cornwallis, the second Earl Cornwallis and later the first Marquis Cornwallis. With the British commanding the coastal waters, there were frequent small attacks on communities in Tidewater Virginia,<sup>133</sup> and students at the College gradually began to disperse because of the uncertainty of the war. Individual classes ceased when there were insufficient students to continue. President Madison formally closed the school on 1 June 1781.

The third involvement of the student company came 18 April 1781 just before the school closed, as the British were moving into Williamsburg in an attempt to better secure the region. The troops, part of the larger force under the command of generals Benedict Arnold and William Phillips, moved into town from the west near the College. Arnold wrote in a 12 May 1781 letter to Clinton that “a piquet guard” of the 80th Regiment “was posted at a point on the high road [Duke of Gloucester Street] where two roads branched off [Jamestown and Richmond roads]”<sup>134</sup> At that intersection, there was a tavern with a piazza on one side of the road and “on the other a ditch from which the earth had been thrown out, forming a parapet and serving as a fence to the college garden.”<sup>135</sup> This area near the College was covered with trees and brush. Arnold described the encounter:

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<sup>132</sup> David John Mays, ed., *Letters and Papers of Edmund Pendleton* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1967), 1:285-286.

<sup>133</sup> Tidewater Virginia is the area of eastern Virginia where the waters of rivers and creeks are controlled by the ebb and flow of the tides. The large Chesapeake Bay, with its access to Washington and Baltimore, dominates Tidewater.

<sup>134</sup> “Phillips Expedition to Virginia, 1781,” *William and Mary Quarterly* (hereinafter *WMQ*) 2nd Ser., 12 (1932): 191. Arnold letter of 12 May was written from his headquarters in Petersburg, Virginia, to Clinton in New York.

<sup>135</sup> *Ibid.*

As usual at out-picquets, a large fire was made, round which the soldiers not on duty as sentinels were laying. It had begun to rain, and the lieutenant in command of the 80th ordered the men to stand to their arms, and had just moved them to the shelter afforded by the piazza, when a volley was fired in the direction of the blazing fire from the brushwood under the trees—a company of young men, students at the university, composing a volunteer corps, having managed to creep into the thicket unobserved. The lieutenant, with great presence of mind, moved his picquet across the road, leaping the ditch and forming them behind the parapet, he fired in the direction from whence the shots came, but whether any of the young men suffered is unknown, but not a British soldier, not even any of the sentinels, who manfully kept their posts, were hurt.<sup>136</sup>

The single record of this encounter makes no mention of Captain Madison (the College president) being with the student volunteers, and he is not cited with the company in any other encounters.

The student company was also involved in the last major battle of the American Revolution. It was reported that Landon Cabell of Albemarle, a William and Mary student, attended the last meeting of the Phi Beta Kappa Society early in January 1781 and soon thereafter “served at Yorktown in the college company attached to his Uncle Joseph Cabell’s regiment of militia.”<sup>137</sup> This was the fourth recorded student company involvement.

Several other colleges, like William and Mary, had student military companies. Prior to the battles of Lexington and Concord, Massachusetts, on 19 April 1775, a cadet company had been established at Harvard, Yale, and the College of Rhode Island with the support of school officials. In fact, Harvard’s student company was formed in 1769 or 1770 and ultimately took the name “The Martimercurian Band.”<sup>138</sup> Two Harvard students joined the minutemen and participated in the Lexington and Concord battles becoming the first students to fight for American independence. Other Harvard students remained in Cambridge to fortify the campus in case the British returned, which they did not.<sup>139</sup> Incidents of war surrounding the campus forced Harvard not only to close in August 1775, but also to move to Concord before reopening in October. Yale’s student militia was formed in late 1774 or early in 1775 and had as many as one

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<sup>136</sup> Ibid.

<sup>137</sup> “Form of a Charter Party,” *WMQ* 1<sup>st</sup> Ser., 4 (1896): 253. This part of the Original Records of the Phi Beta Kappa Society is now located in Swem Archives, CWM. Joseph Cabell was commander of the Buckingham militia. A. Howard Clark, ed., *A National Register of the Society, Sons of the American Revolution* (New York: Louis H. Cornish, 1902), 626.

<sup>138</sup> Roche, *Colonial Colleges*, 61.

<sup>139</sup> Charles A. Wagner, *Harvard Four Centuries and Freedoms* (New York: E. P. Dutton & Company, Inc., 1950), 65-66.

hundred muskets at the ready in 1775. Some of the students marched for Boston in April 1775 because of the hostilities. Later, on 5 July 1779, the student military helped defend the New Haven harbor near the campus against a British attack. A group of students from King's College, formed a group in 1775, but had to drill in a nearby churchyard because their Loyalist president, Myles Cooper, would not allow them to drill on campus.

### **William and Mary and the War**

In the spring, 1780, after serving from 1776 to 1780 in the army, John Marshall attended the College for about six weeks, studying law under Professor Wythe. Marshall later became Chief Justice of the United States. Earlier, James Monroe had been a student at William and Mary, 1774 to 1776 before joining the army. He later became the fifth president of the United States.

Military and the war posed the biggest assault on the College, putting Williamsburg in a precarious situation as Virginia's capital. The war had moved into the South, and Virginia legislators felt the city's location, being just a few miles from both the York and James rivers, made easy access for a quick, large-force enemy troop invasion. Faced with this possibility, the Virginia Assembly decided to move the capital to a safer inland position. The government ceased to operate in Williamsburg on 7 April 1780 and reopened 24 April 1780 in Richmond, a growing community above the falls of the James River about fifty miles westward. The immediate and ultimately long-term result was disastrous for Williamsburg and the College. The town lost its power and prestige and so did the College.

Although the government was gone, William and Mary enjoyed a flash of recovery during the fall term of 1780. In a letter that August to President Ezra Stiles of Yale, Madison reported, "The number of Students is more considerable than heretofore and increases daily."<sup>140</sup> Jefferson had echoed similar words, writing on 26 July to James Madison Jr., in the Congress in

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<sup>140</sup> E. G. Swem, "Some Notes on the Four Forms of the Oldest Building of William and Mary College," *WMQ* 2nd Ser., 7 (1927), 293-296. Madison's 1 August 1780 response was to a letter from Stiles of 12 July 1780.

Philadelphia, “Our new institution at the college has had a success which has gained it universal applause.” He noted the popularity of the law courses offered by George Wythe, a Declaration signer and Jefferson’s law teacher, who became the first collegiate law professor when he joined the William and Mary faculty in 1779.<sup>141</sup>

The euphoria was very short lived. The war continued to hurt the College’s efforts with enrollment and finance. John Brown, a student at the College, wrote his uncle Colonel William Preston, on 27 October 1780 that “the Invasion of the English who have been expected daily in this town,” caused him poor health. “Mr. Cocke with whom I board moves away tomorrow with his family.... I am so weak that I cannot leave my Room in College which is entirely deserted by every Studt but one or two who are sick.... P.S. It is more than probable that the College will be suspended for some time.... Mr. Madison talking of resigning his Professorship, & the Studts all turned out.... Soldiers & everything in the utmost Confusion.”<sup>142</sup>

A few months later life at the College did not improve. On 18 January 1781, William and Mary President Madison wrote to his cousin James Madison Jr.: “The University is a Desart. We were in a very flourishing way before the first invasion ... but we are entirely dispersed. The Student is converted into the Warrior. Some of the professors thought it prudent to retire.”<sup>143</sup> At least two professors, Robert Andrews and James McClurg, left to join military units, with Andrews serving as private secretary to General Thomas Nelson during the Yorktown siege.<sup>144</sup> On 17 January 1781, a day earlier than Madison’s letter, Arnold and his British regiments had initiated a swift strike up the James River at Richmond, capturing the city before returning 19 January to his winter quarters in Portsmouth. Again the Patriot response was quick but late, with more than 3,700 militiamen gathering near Fredericksburg and Williamsburg, north and east,

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<sup>141</sup> Paul Leicester Ford, ed., *The Writings of Thomas Jefferson*, Vol. 2: 1776-1781 (New York and London: G. P. Putnam & Sons, Knickerbocker Press, 1893), 322.

<sup>142</sup> “Glimpses of Old College Life,” *WMQ* 1st Ser., 9 (1900), 83.

<sup>143</sup> Papers of James Madison, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962), 2: 32. Original manuscript is in the Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, James Madison Papers, 1 General Correspondence.

<sup>144</sup> Lyon Gardiner Tyler, ed., *Encyclopedia of Virginia Biography* (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Co., 1915), 1:171.

respectively, of the new capital. By mid-May 1781, Arnold and his colleague Phillips had moved into Virginia's heartland again at Petersburg, where they were joined by Major General Charles, Lord Cornwallis and his entire southern army. The British force, combined under Cornwallis' leadership, now numbered more than 7,000 troops.

The saga of Cornwallis and his British troops in eastern Virginia is a separate story, as the French fleet arrived off the Virginia Capes cutting off General Clinton's plans for Cornwallis to send reinforcements to New York. The Marquis de Lafayette and a smaller American force strategically followed the British movements in Virginia, satisfied to stay at the rear and becoming involved only when necessary. Later Lafayette was joined by troops under General Washington and French General Jean Baptiste Donatien de Vimeur, Comte de Rochambeau, who had decided the Virginia peninsula just might be the place to trap the English. Rochambeau would have the aid of the French fleet under the Comte de Grasse, which had sailed to the Virginia coast from the Bahamas.

In the months prior to the end of the war, the British operating in central Virginia conducted countless raids with Lieutenant Colonel Banastre Tarleton nearly catching the entire Virginia General Assembly at a meeting in Charlottesville. Governor Thomas Jefferson barely escaped with his life. Lord Cornwallis then decided to move again to Tidewater, where Arnold had earlier made his headquarters, and moved his army down the peninsula toward Williamsburg and the College. He arrived 25 June and placed his troops in camps throughout the city and its environs. Lafayette's forces were just 10 miles to the west at Bird's Tavern. Lawyer and Patriot St. George Tucker wrote his wife on 11 July 1781, noting that the British had occupied the city "for some days." He said that "our friend Madison [the College president] and his Lady were turned out of their House to make Room for Lord Cornwallis. Happily the College [main

building] afforded them an Asylum. They were refused the small Privilege of drawing Water from their own Well.”<sup>145</sup> William and Mary was the last of the colonial colleges to be invaded.

Within the President’s House, Cornwallis considered plans for his army’s future. Lieutenant Colonel Henry “Light Horse Harry” Lee explained in a narrative written after the war that Sir Henry Clinton wished Cornwallis to pursue operations “at the head of the Chesapeake, or in the Delaware Neck,”<sup>146</sup> to be in a position to reinforce him in New York, should it be necessary. Cornwallis had enjoyed freedom to act independently in South Carolina and North Carolina, but now found that Clinton wanted to orchestrate his every move. Lee said that Cornwallis, by his nature, desired to pursue Lafayette and other Patriots in Virginia.<sup>147</sup> Ultimately, Clinton agreed to the establishment and maintenance of a naval station in the area of the Chesapeake Bay, but he did not want major military operations to take place in eastern Virginia. Cornwallis, therefore, remained in Williamsburg only a few days, leaving 4 July to begin to manoeuvre his army across the James River to Suffolk en route to Portsmouth to establish a station.<sup>148</sup>

Madison soon regained his home (the President’s House) and in a letter to his brother William on 21 July declared, “I find I must at Length remove from this Place. The College is entirely broken up, all Business in my Way at an End & of course not a Farthing to be made. But where or how shall I move.”<sup>149</sup> Charles Bellini, the only other professor still on campus, remained to protect the library and scientific apparatus. After a series of orders and countermanded orders from Clinton, Cornwallis came back across the James River in August to take positions in the vicinity of Yorktown after the area of Old Point Comfort near the mouth of the Chesapeake Bay

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<sup>145</sup>“Diary of Captain John Davis, *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 1 (1893), 9.

<sup>146</sup> Henry Lee, *Memoirs of the War in the Southern Department of the United States* (New York: University Publishing Co., 1869), 426. This edition was edited by Robert E. Lee, then president of Washington College (later Washington and Lee University) in Lexington, Va. It was originally published in 1812.

<sup>147</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>148</sup> *Ibid.*, 432.

<sup>149</sup> William and Mary College Papers, Folder 224, Special Archives, CWM. A copy of letter in the Pierpont Morgan Library in New York City.

proved inadequate to support heavy fortifications. Old Point Comfort also lacked a deep draft harbor sufficient for larger vessels.<sup>150</sup>

On 3 September French soldier Comte de Saint Simon landed 3,500 troops on Jamestown Island. Lafayette and his American troops were situated at Green Spring about two miles away. Two days later the forces joined in Williamsburg. A diary of Captain John Davis of the Pennsylvania Line, part of General Anthony Wayne's Brigade, reports that soldiers marched at daybreak on 4 September from Jamestown to Williamsburg and "halted on the commons, at 4 o'clock P.M., was reviewed by General St. Simon. This night we took in the City Colledge."<sup>151</sup> Washington arrived in Williamsburg on 14 September and found that Lafayette had made his headquarters at the College, utilizing not only the President's House, but the main building and surrounding lands, including the old College Camp to the west. Washington then moved a few blocks east to Palace Green, where he occupied the substantial brick home of lawyer George Wythe. Rochambeau made the same house his headquarters after the Yorktown battle.

All the primary military figures moved from Williamsburg to Yorktown by the end of September in anticipation of the impending siege. In the midst of this strategic troop movement, on 15 October, just two days prior to the ultimate surrender of Cornwallis, John Blair, rector of "the governors" of William and Mary, wrote to General Washington to complain about the French forces' occupation of the College buildings and grounds. Noting that "the unhappy vacation" of the institution because of the "necessities of the war" had been "much too long," Blair said the French were in possession of the entire main building and were using it as a hospital with the exception of "the library, the Apparatus-Room & the Rooms of Mr. Bellini," who earlier had informed Blair that the French "Commissary has demanded of him the keys of an out-building

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<sup>150</sup> Selby, *Revolution in Virginia*, 291-292.

<sup>151</sup> *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, 1:9.

called the Granary & other houses near it.” Blair said if articles (including twenty barrels of corn) were removed they would be “lost to the College,” unless Washington intervened.<sup>152</sup>

### **Damages to the College**

In the midst of the battle, Washington received Blair’s letter and immediately responded, “You may be assured Sir that nothing but absolute Necessity could induce me to desire to occupy the College with its adjoining Buildings for Military Purposes.” Washington also suggested that Professor Bellini might well have to give up his rooms because of the increase in the number of sick and wounded soldiers that overwhelmed the Governor’s Palace hospital. Washington added that the people of the region “will the more readily submit to a partial & temporary Inconvenience,” realizing the opportunity to have a successful victory at Yorktown.<sup>153</sup>

Afterwards, law professor Wythe also took the occasion of patriot victory at Yorktown and the surrender of Lord Cornwallis to write Washington about the state of the College. Wythe said in a 25 October letter (the surrender was on 19 October) that before the British invasion in 1780 “the university was in a prosperous state. A respectable number of young gentlemen in it were pursuing their studies with such assiduity, and some of them had made such a progress, as I venture to say, would have given you pleasure.” With the College now in the hands of Rochambeau’s troops, Wythe begged Washington “to signify to the C. de R. that you will take it kindly if the officers, who have charge of the soldiers... be desired to prevent any injury” or damage to facilities.<sup>154</sup> Again, General Washington responded quickly:

The seat of Literature at Williamsburg has ever, in my view, been an object of veneration. As an Institution, important for its Communication of useful learning and conducive to the Diffusion of the true principles of National Library, you may be assured that it shall receive every encouragement and Benefaction in my power towards its re-establishment.<sup>155</sup>

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<sup>152</sup> Papers of George Washington, Library of Congress, Vol. 186, folder 24955. A photographic copy of the letter is at the John D. Rockefeller Jr. Library of The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, Williamsburg, Va.

<sup>153</sup> Ibid., folder 24971.

<sup>154</sup> George Wythe letter of 25 October 1781. John D. Rockefeller Jr. Library of the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation. The original is at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

<sup>155</sup> Washington Papers, Vol. 187, f. 24083.

Washington added that the sick and wounded would be removed from the College building “as soon as circumstances permit. An event which will be as pleasing to me, as agreeable to you.”<sup>156</sup>

Further damage to the College came from a fire at the President’s House, which at the time was being used as a hospital; earlier it had served as billeting for French officers. Baron Ludwig von Closen, noted in his journal, “In spite of the recommendations made to avoid fires, on the 23rd of November, one of the wings [actually a separate building] of the College...was reduced to ashes...and all the wounded officers who were in this wing were taken out of it in time.”<sup>157</sup> Like in earlier fires of the main building, the walls of the President’s House remained, while the interior was destroyed along with all of President Madison’s furniture, personal papers, and books.

Comte de Rochambeau wrote Washington on 24 December, “I have learnt by the common report that your Excellency’s seat has suffered by the fire.” The Frenchman acknowledged a fire at the College as well as one at the Governor’s Palace a day earlier. All the furniture in the President’s House was removed, and at the Palace, which burned to the ground “the greatest part of the effects” were saved.<sup>158</sup>

College President Madison, in another letter to James Madison Jr., his cousin, in March 1782 said he had “at length returned to this place for little else indeed than to be a spectator of misery and Ruin.” With the President’s House burned, Madison moved into rooms with Professor Bellini, and added that he recalled in an earlier letter of the name Chastellux (Marquis de) and that he now “had the pleasure of knowing him.”<sup>159</sup> In fact, at their first meeting after Yorktown, held on 7 March 1782, the president and masters of the College resolved that Major General François Jean de Beauvoir, Marquis de Chastellux, be conferred a Degree of Doctor of Civil Laws.

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<sup>156</sup> Ibid.

<sup>157</sup> Baron Ludwig von Closen, *The Revolutionary Journal of Baron Ludwig von Closen*, trans and ed., Evelyn M. Acomb (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press for the Institute of Early American History and Culture, 1958), 166.

<sup>158</sup> Washington Papers, Vol. 189.

<sup>159</sup> Papers of James Madison, Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, 1 General Correspondence; Madison Papers, 13:49.

Chastellux was the third ranking officer in Rochambeau's army, a man of letters and a member of the French Academy.<sup>160</sup> Chastellux was among a group of French officers who remained with the French troops in Williamsburg until July 1782. At a later meeting of the President and Masters on 12 June, the Degree of Doctor of Physics was conferred upon Doctor Jean François Coste, the chief physician in Rochambeau's army and another person who, like Chastellux, became a friend to the College.<sup>161</sup> These were two of only four honorary degrees give by William and Mary prior to 1790. The others went to Benjamin Franklin (a master of arts degree) on 2 April 1756 and Thomas Jefferson (a doctor of philosophy degree) on 31 December 1782. No honorary degrees were given at the time to any American military officials. "A very brilliant occasion" was held 15 June 1782 for the conferral of the two degrees with Coste delivering a Latin oration upon medicine in general and its application to the new thirteen states.<sup>162</sup>

The *Virginia Gazette* reported on 31 August 1782 that the College "is now open for the reception of Students. The Commencement of Public Lectures is postponed until the first Monday in October." Those students who arrive earlier would receive private instructions until the term began, the paper added.<sup>163</sup> By this time, Madison, assisted by numerous townspeople, had put the College building back into some kind of order, although the President's House, gutted by the fire had not yet been repaired.

William and Mary, as an institution, was somewhat different, but not as much as one would believe. The governing statutes of the College remained little changed and the royal charter was still in effect. Although attempts were made to supersede it, no formal changes were made.<sup>164</sup> Although there was no state church, the American Episcopal Church (successor to the Church of

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<sup>160</sup> *Journal of the President and Masters*, 289, Swem Archives, CWM.

<sup>161</sup> *Ibid.*, 293.

<sup>162</sup> Madison Papers, 13:49.

<sup>163</sup> *Virginia Gazette*, 31 August 1782. At this time, the *Virginia Gazette* was published in Richmond, Virginia's new state capital.

<sup>164</sup> In 1906 when William and Mary became a state-supported institution, the legislation provided that the royal charter still was in effect and its rules would remain except where superseded by state or federal laws.

England) remained involved with an active chapel in the main building. Pounds from Great Britain no longer enhanced the institution's finances.

The faculty minutes in June 1782 reported that Robert Andrews, the bursar, was authorized to negotiate the "Bills of Exchange" received from the French army to pay for the destruction of the President's House.<sup>165</sup> Baron von Closen recorded in his journal that King Louis XVI "got off for \$12,000 in damages" to the President's House.<sup>166</sup> He regarded the figure as low and a good deal for the French, but collecting it was difficult. By mid-1782 only \$1,500 had been collected, and by 1786 the French still owed \$6,000. King Louis XVI, apparently wanting to augment the funds needed to restore the building, sent the College, in 1784, a gift of 200 books "in beautiful editions" for the library.<sup>167</sup> Today, a large marble plaque hangs on the brick wall of the portico at the rear of the main College building. In gratitude "for the Aid of FRANCE in a time of need," the memorial lists the names of the 123 French soldiers from eleven different units, "who died within these Walls and in other Hospitals of Williamsburg of Wounds received during the Siege of YORKTOWN."<sup>168</sup>

By the end of 1782, Madison and his professors had restored the College to such a degree that eighty students were enrolled, and the renewal continued. However, the repair of President's House was not completed until the fall, 1786, and the finances of William and Mary were so depleted that repairs to the main building and other outbuildings could not be accomplished until 1788. Jefferson wrote to a friend, Ralph Izard, on 17 July 1788, "Williamsburg is a remarkably healthy situation, reasonably cheap, and affords very genteel society. I know no place in the world, while the present professors remain, where I would as soon place a son" as at William and Mary.<sup>169</sup>

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<sup>165</sup> *Journal of the President and Masters*, 3 June 1782.

<sup>166</sup> von Closen, *Revolutionary Journal*, 166

<sup>167</sup> "Library of the College of William and Mary," *WMQ* 1st Ser., 19 (1910): 49.

<sup>168</sup> John Stewart Bryan, vice rector of the College presented the plaque on the occasion of the 150th anniversary of the surrender of Lord Cornwallis. Marshal Philippe Petain of France dedicated it 18 October 1931.

<sup>169</sup> Albert E. Bergh, ed., *The Writings of Thomas Jefferson* (Washington, D.C.: Thomas Jefferson Memorial Association of the United States, 1907), 7: 71.

After the war with Great Britain, the College did not have a chancellor—a person in London who would speak on behalf of the College and be a connection between church and state. The post had been routinely been filled since the school’s chartering by either the Bishop of London or the Archbishop of Canterbury. Wishing to continue the position, but not looking to Britain for an occupant, the Visitors found a new chancellor in General Washington, the former Continental Army commander-in-chief.<sup>170</sup> He was elected, the first American to the position, on 18 January 1788. College Rector Samuel Griffin of Williamsburg, who was also a member of the Virginia House of Delegates and who in 1789 would be elected one of the first members of the U.S. House of Representatives from Virginia, wrote on 4 February 1788 to Washington at Mount Vernon extending the invitation for the chancellorship. He enclosed a copy of the board’s resolution and assured Washington that “your acceptance of the appointment will be Esteemed of the highest honor conferred on them.”<sup>171</sup>

In the *Papers of George Washington*, a note was appended to Griffin’s letter, explaining why Washington said he would have to decline the appointment if he had to make “regular and indispensable visitation” to the College.<sup>172</sup> Washington consulted a David Stuart about the Chancellor’s duties, either on Stuart’s Mount Vernon visit 10-11 February or by written message since Stuart wrote Washington from Abingdon, Virginia, that he believed the Visitors met twice a year “and that he Chancellor would be expected to attend.”<sup>173</sup>

Washington wrote Griffin on 20 February 1788 that he was “duly honored and greatly affected,” by the election but asked the Visitors to be more specific about the duties and responsibilities of the post. But should they include “visitation once or perhaps twice a year,” he

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<sup>170</sup> The Pentagon promoted George Washington to five-star general of the armies, 203 years after he became commander of the Continental Army. The order was dated 13 March 1976. United Press International, News Wire, 15 March 1978.

<sup>171</sup> *Papers of George Washington*, Confederation Series (Charlottesville and London: University Press of Virginia, 1997), 6:83-84.

<sup>172</sup> The note was probably written by Washington Papers principal editor Dr. W. W. Abbott, associate professor of history at William and Mary, 1953-1966, after which he was named professor of history at the University of Virginia, becoming editor of the *Washington Papers* in 1977, where he remained until 1992. Abbott would have wanted Stuart’s letter known in relation to the earlier Griffin letters, making the William and Mary story complete.

<sup>173</sup> Washington Papers, 6:84-85.

said he would decline the position. Washington continued, “I most sincerely and ardently wish to afford whatever little influence I may possess, in patronizing the cause of science,” but being retired cannot “persuade myself to engage in new and extensive avocations.”<sup>174</sup> This concern about added responsibilities in his retirement years came before Washington agreed to stand for election in 1788-1789 as the nation’s first president.

The William and Mary Visitors, however, were not to be dissuaded by Washington’s response. Another letter, which has not survived, was sent to Washington and provided enough new information and sufficiently reassured him that it was an honorary post. Washington agreed to accept the position, writing on 30 April 1788 from Mount Vernon, to Rector Griffin:

Influenced by a heartfelt desire to promote the cause of science in general and the prosperity of the College of William and Mary in particular, I accept the office of chancellor in the same, and request you will be pleased to give official notice thereof to the learned body, who have thought proper to honor me with the appointment.<sup>175</sup>

Washington, soldier and patriot, held the William and Mary post throughout both terms of his United States presidency and was still the College’s chancellor when he died 14 December 1799. Thus, the first and last public offices of Washington—surveyor and chancellor—were under the auspices of the College of William and Mary.

For the first but certainly not the last time, the College of William and Mary survived the upheaval of war. It was a pattern that would characterize the history of the College—persistent, if not stubborn insistence on survival in the face of civil unrest, internal dissention, lack of finances, and military occupation.

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<sup>174</sup> Worthington Chauncey Ford, ed., *The Writings of George Washington* (New York and London: G. P. Putnam’s Sons, Knickerbocker Press, 1891), 11:226-227.

<sup>175</sup> *Ibid.*, 228.

## Chapter Two

### The War of 1812 and the Years between the Wars—1815-1861

William and Mary and its students continued their military association in the years between the Revolution and the American Civil War. The College found itself without the use of its buildings when during the War of 1812 state troops were lodged at the College when the fear of nearby British troops swept over the community. The College then witnessed the growing activities of the local volunteer militia. Although many of its alumni from the Revolutionary era became involved in the patriotic political activities associated with the development of the United States, William and Mary's highest ranking military alumnus—Winfield Scott—studied there in the early nineteenth century.

Between 1798 and 1861, student protests were extremely rare for any occasion, much less against military activity, unlike today in America when student distaste for war is often expressed. The first known William and Mary political protest, a quasi-military event, occurred at the College on 4 July 1798 when students paraded an effigy of President John Adams through the streets of Williamsburg and another effigy of Adams was burned that night.<sup>176</sup> The action was in response to what the students believed was the Federalist president's actions in trying to incite a war with France. Several months earlier, Adams told Congress of the "XYZ Affair," in which French agents demanded large sums of money for the restoration of diplomatic relations with France. Adams' Federalist government felt provoked since the navy of France earlier had been attacking U.S. vessels on the high seas. The show of student sentiment—the first outcry at the College against war for war's sake—however, did not make broader news.

Like many other communities throughout Virginia and elsewhere following the Revolution, Williamsburg maintained its own volunteer militia unit, comprising townspeople and

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<sup>176</sup> *Journal of the President and Masters*, 11 July 1798, William and Mary College Papers, Folder 55, Swem Archives, CWM.

college students. It was called the Williamsburg Volunteer Troop of Cavalry, probably a carry-over from the Revolution when the student militia company was a cavalry unit. The earliest known mention of the troop was in a 10 October 1798 letter written by Littleton Waller Tazewell, a William and Mary graduate.<sup>177</sup> A year earlier Tazewell had received a commission as a first lieutenant in the Williamsburg cavalry, and his letter to William Hankins, cornet of the organization, called them to gather for a muster on 17 October, apparently to participate in a Yorktown battle commemoration. The militia, he wrote, must gather “at 9 o’clock in the morning for the purpose of being there formed and marched to York.” Tazewell stressed that the men “should appear on that day in a manner becoming Volunteer soldiers,” and cautioned the sergeants of “the necessity of making every effort that their men appear as completely equipped & mounted as their situation will permit.”<sup>178</sup>

### **General Winfield Scott**

In 1805 a young man originally from Dinwiddie County near Petersburg matriculated at the College, seeking to better himself for a professional future. The youthful Winfield Scott, then nineteen, apparently had no interest in the military or local Williamsburg militia matters, there being no references in his memoirs. Nevertheless, just two years later he began a legendary professional military career (1807-1861), rising to the rank of lieutenant general (three stars) with the title of commanding general-of-the-army of the United States. Scott had attended several academies, including one run by James Ogilvie, a native of Scotland, who taught him “ancient classics, rhetoric, Scotch metaphysics, logic, mathematics, and political economy, several of them by lectures.”<sup>179</sup> Alone following the death of his parents, Scott decided he needed to go to college,

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<sup>177</sup> Littleton Waller Tazewell to William Hankins, PH 00 file, archives, John D. Rockefeller Jr. Library, The Colonial Williamsburg, Foundation, Williamsburg, Va. Tazewell was born in Williamsburg 17 December 1774 and graduated from William and Mary in 1791. He served three different terms in the Virginia General Assembly and from 26 November 1800 to 3 March 1801 served in the U.S. House of Representatives, succeeding John Marshall. He also was in the U.S. Senate from December 1824 to July 1832 and served one term as governor of Virginia, 1834-1836. He died 6 May 1860.

<sup>178</sup> Ibid.

<sup>179</sup> Winfield Scott, *Memoirs of Lieut.-General Scott, LL.D.* (New York: Sheldon & Company, Publishers, 1864), 8.

and one with a good reputation like William and Mary. According to his memoirs, Scott studied chemistry, natural and experimental philosophy, and common law. He also took classes in civil and international law—“the bar being looked to as a profession, and, at the same time, the usual road to political advancement.”<sup>180</sup>

Scott, however, was not a very good scholar, and he regretted that he did not have the kind of educational background that his classmates enjoyed. He found it intriguing that Bishop James Madison, college president and one of his professors, “denounced to the newcomers the writings of Hume, Voltaire, Godwin [and] Helvétius... These writings the good bishop represented as sirens, made perfectly seductive by the charms of rhetoric.”<sup>181</sup> Whether Madison’s attacks were made as a warning to students, or more as a method of enticing them to read those writings, Scott does not say, but he observed the “green youths” were eager and fascinated “to taste the forbidden fruit, and, if necessary, to buy knowledge at whatever cost.”<sup>182</sup> One of his biographers gives the impression that Scott entered William and Mary “resolved to enter into the practice of law,”<sup>183</sup> but that was apparently not so, because Scott talks about his law interests only within the context of being impressed by his law professor, St. George Tucker, who edited an edition of Blackstone’s *Commentaries on the Laws of England* in 1803 and put them within an American legal context.<sup>184</sup>

Classroom studies and professorial lectures were not the kind of educational pursuit that interested Scott, although he did want to continue learning. So, after only one year at William and Mary, he looked elsewhere for his education and found it studying law with David Robinson, a Scotsman, whom Scott described as “a very learned scholar and barrister.”<sup>185</sup> His experience in law was short lived, because after a brief sojourn as a volunteer in the Virginia Militia in the

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<sup>180</sup> Ibid., 9.

<sup>181</sup> Ibid., 9

<sup>182</sup> Ibid., 10.

<sup>183</sup> John S. D. Eisenhower, *Agent of Destiny: The Life and Times of General Winfield Scott* (New York and London: The Free Press, 1997), 3.

<sup>184</sup> This volume became the first book used in the teaching of law in the United States. In the appendix, Judge Tucker, who served in various judicial levels in Virginia between 1788 and 1825, discussed slavery, the need for the gradual emancipation of the slaves, and an end to the institution. Scott wrote in his memoirs that had he been in the Virginia General Assembly in 1831-1832, “when a bill was brought forward to carry out those views [the emancipation of slaves], I should certainly have given it my hearty support.”

<sup>185</sup> Scott, *Memoirs*, 11.

summer of 1807, he realized he had found his true profession. He received accolades for his military performance in the War of 1812 and later in the Mexican War (1846-1848). While still an officer, he briefly entered politics, running for President of the United States in 1852 under the Whig Party banner. Franklin Pierce soundly defeated him.<sup>186</sup> At the outbreak of the American Civil War, Scott, 75 years of age, was commanding general-in-chief of the Union army, a title he did not take lightly and of which he was extremely proud. The old soldier faced “an overwhelming undertaking”—the task of building an army and staffing it very quickly. Within months, ill health and younger officers prompted him to resign on 31 October 1861. Scott died in 1866 at the age of seventy-nine, just ten months after the war ended. Despite all of Scott’s military accomplishments, William and Mary has done little to recognize him; there are no buildings, no awards, or no programs named for him. By the time William and Mary had “gotten over” the Civil War, Scott had been forgotten.

### War of 1812

In 1812 two events occurred that would have a dramatic effect on William and Mary’s future. First, the College suffered a major loss with the death of its long-serving president Bishop Madison and secondly, war was declared against Great Britain on 18 June 1812. It was not, however, until 7 July 1813 that the conflict caused direct physical problems for the College. A resolution by the College faculty noted “the public examinations having been interrupted by the occupancy of the College as Barracks for the Militia.”<sup>187</sup> The occupying unit was apparently the 52nd Regiment of the Virginia Militia,<sup>188</sup> which included a company commanded by John Tyler.<sup>189</sup> A highly comical event occurred during the company’s stay in Williamsburg. The company used the College building’s second floor for sleeping, and “Mr. Tyler used to tell with

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<sup>186</sup> Scott was the only William and Mary alumnus to run for the presidency and lose. Thomas Jefferson won in 1800 and 1804, and James Monroe won in 1816 and 1820. Alumnus John Tyler became president in 1841 upon the death of President William Henry Harrison and did not run in 1844.

<sup>187</sup> *Minutes of the Faculty*, 7 July 1813, William and Mary College Papers, Swem Archives, CWM.

<sup>188</sup> Lyon G. Tyler, *The Letters and Times of the Tylers* (Richmond, Va.: Whittet & Shepperson, 1884), 1: 278-279.

<sup>189</sup> Tyler graduated from William and Mary in 1807 and later became the tenth president of the United States in 1841.

great glee how, on one occasion, at night, the whole company, alarmed by a groundless rumor that the British were entering the town, made such haste to get out, that men, officers and all, not able to see their way in the dark, stumbled and rolled down the long flight of stairs leading to the ground floor.”<sup>190</sup> There were no British troops in town; the closest were probably on the York River five or ten miles away. The incident embarrassed the military, as Tyler’s story reflects, but it does show how the populace, even the military, feared the return of British soldiers and sailors. Some probably remembered or were told by their families of the British activities in Virginia in 1780 and 1781.

By 1813, students at William and Mary were armed,<sup>191</sup> and many young men of college age were called up to the militia—either in Williamsburg or their home organizations after the Virginia General Assembly in January 1813 removed the long-held student exemption from military service. The British for many months had been sending raiding parties along the coast of the Chesapeake Bay with major attacks 21 June 1813 on Norfolk, and 25 June on the village of Hampton, some 25 miles east of Williamsburg. Brigadier General Robert Barraud Taylor, a Norfolk lawyer and a 1793 William and Mary graduate, quickly rallied militia forces that earlier had been called up for duty by Governor James Barbour, and with a larger force turned back the British at the Battle of Craney Island.

The Hampton attack four days later, partially in retaliation for the Norfolk defeat, was a vile act. “Every horror was committed with impunity, rape, murder, pillage,”<sup>192</sup> explained British Lieutenant Colonel Charles James Napier. There were abuses at the hands of British sailors and some French mercenaries, but none “were done by the [English] 102nd... and they almost mutinied at my preventing them joining in the sack of that unfortunate town,” Napier said.<sup>193</sup> Virginia militia troops, including some from Williamsburg, arrived too late to help Hampton’s

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<sup>190</sup> Tyler, *Letters and Times*, 278-279.

<sup>191</sup> Blair, Banister, Braxton, Horner, Whiting Papers, Folder 2, Swem Archives, CWM

<sup>192</sup> Lt. Gen. Sir William Napier, *The Life and Opinions of Sir Charles James Napier* (London: John Murray, 1856), 221. This account of Hampton is quoted directly from Napier’s writings.

<sup>193</sup> *Ibid.*, 222.

citizens. Communications were difficult and, while knowledge of the Norfolk attack reached Williamsburg within a day or so, no one knew where the British would strike next. In March 1814, the College faculty had granted permission for a student, Jackson Morton, to withdraw because he was called up for military duty.<sup>194</sup> There are no other references to students leaving during the term, nor are there records to indicate how many failed to return to their studies later because of the war and/or fears of British attacks. Total enrollment, however, did decline to several dozen students from about fifty earlier.

The war was still a problem a year later as the British continued raids, some on the York River as close as five miles from Williamsburg. Later larger numbers of troops moved up the Chesapeake Bay and Potomac River to attack the young nation's capital of Washington on 23-24 August 1814. At this time three other William and Mary alumni played important roles in the war, but not in the Williamsburg vicinity. Lewis Warrington attended the College for several years prior to joining the navy in 1800. He rose to the rank of commodore and was awarded a Congressional Gold Medal in 1814 for gallantry and the good conduct of his officers and crew in the action with the British brig *Epervier* off the Florida coast on 29 April 1814. The ship he commanded took fourteen British ships in 1814-1815.<sup>195</sup> General John Hartwell Cocke<sup>196</sup> attended William and Mary from 1794 to 1799 and was a major plantation owner. Just prior to the war he was appointed colonel of the Fluvanna Militia and soon was named brigadier general. In 1814 and 1815 he was commander of several regiments at Camp Carter and Camp Holly, located about 15 miles south of Richmond. Cocke<sup>197</sup> was known for the care he took regarding his troops and for his strict discipline. Robert Henley of nearby James City County attended the College but decided against his family's plan to become a lawyer and obtained an appointment as a navy midshipman,

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<sup>194</sup> "Proceedings of the Faculty," 9 March 1814, *WMQ* 1st Ser., 27 (April 1917): 233.

<sup>195</sup> Warrington later served for seven months as Secretary of the Navy before returning to his active duty responsibilities. He served a total of fifty-one years in the Navy; he was Chief of Naval Ordnance when he died.

<sup>196</sup> John Hartwell Cocke was a close friend of Thomas Jefferson and worked with him on the building committee of the University of Virginia, where he was a member of the board of visitors for thirty-three years.

<sup>197</sup> William Cabell More, "Gen. John Hartwell Cocke of Breemo, 1780-1866, A Brief Biography and Genealogical Review with a Short History of Old Breemo," *WMQ* 2nd Ser., 13, no. 3 (1905): 147. After the war, the Virginia General Assembly appointed Cocke major general in the state militia.

later serving briefly as commandant of the Norfolk Navy Shipyard. With the War of 1812 upon the nation, he initially was appointed “Master Commandant” and assigned to a ship on Lake Champlain in the Hudson River area. Later he commanded the schooner *Carolina*, which guarded General Andrew Jackson’s right flank on the Mississippi River in the Battle of New Orleans. For that action and his prior service he was promoted to captain in 1817.<sup>198</sup>

When Dr. John Augustine Smith assumed the College presidency (1814-1824), he found financial and building problems. “Not a single Lecture-room properly fitted up & the whole establishment tending rapidly to ruin,” Smith said.<sup>199</sup> He also faced, however, an external problem created by the Virginia General Assembly passed a law removing the student military service exemption that allowed students to remain, if they wished, in the classroom rather than take up arms. He alleged the law was inequitable.

At convocation on 12 November 1814, Smith publically challenged the legislature. The war may have been expedient in the beginning, he said, and was “waged for rights that can be yielded only with our political existence.”<sup>200</sup> Maybe the student call-up was a necessity with the enemy nearby on land and on sea, having already overrun Washington. Wealthy families could afford to send their sons to other states “where juster laws encourage learning,” Smith charged, while “it is completely fatal to the hopes of the poor man who may wish to give his son the benefit of a collegiate education.”<sup>201</sup>

### **Local Williamsburg Militia**

The local Williamsburg militia continued to serve the area with a notice in the 28 July 1820 edition of *The Richmond Enquirer* reporting that Captain William McCandlish and his troop led a procession of “visitors, the President, Professors and Students of William and Mary” from

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<sup>198</sup> K. Jack Bauer, *The American State Papers, Naval Affairs* (Wilmington, Del.: Scholarly Resources, Inc., 1891), 361.

<sup>199</sup> *Richmond (Va.) Enquirer*, 24 November 1814.

<sup>200</sup> *Richmond (Va.) Enquirer*, 12 November 1814.

<sup>201</sup> *Ibid.*

the College to Bruton Parish Church for graduation ceremonies.<sup>202</sup> Whatever relationship the troop had with the College and its officials is not known, but they did participate—gown and military—in public functions. The Williamsburg Troop of Cavalry was also on the public scene later in October 1824, when Lafayette returned to Williamsburg and Yorktown to celebrate the forty-third anniversary of the Battle of Yorktown as part of a wide-ranging tour of the America (1824-1825) during which he addressed the Congress and visited with two presidents—outgoing James Monroe and newly inaugurated John Quincy Adams. During the two days (October 18 and 19) of celebrations at Yorktown, the Williamsburg Troop of Cavalry still commanded by Captain McCandlish participated in various activities along with numerous other militia units from throughout Virginia.

Lafayette, recalling his earlier military activities in the city, arrived in Williamsburg late in the afternoon of October 19 and was entertained at a banquet at the Raleigh Tavern, where guests included some men who had participated in the Virginia battles of 1781 with the general. On the morning of 20 October, the French military hero made a brief visit to the College where his troops had made an encampment forty-three years earlier. The faculty and students greeted him warmly; President Smith gave a brief address, and the faculty conferred upon him an honorary doctor of laws degree.<sup>203</sup>

Earlier in 1824, the College confronted its continuing enrollment dilemma as state politicians suggested relocation of the school to Richmond. Later in 1825, support for removal to Richmond died, even though Thomas Jefferson offered a plan to dissolve the school and use the proceeds to establish local “pre-colleges” or academies throughout the commonwealth. Dr. Smith, because he supported the move, resigned. Two succeeding presidents, the Reverend Dr. William Holland Wilmer (1826-1827) and the Reverend Adam Empie (1827-1836) struggled to hold the school on an even keel. It was not until the presidency of Professor Thomas Roderick Dew (1836-

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<sup>202</sup> *New England Palladium & Commercial Advertiser*, Boston, 28 July 1820, 2

<sup>203</sup> *Proceedings of the Society*, 20 October 1824, 1: 163, Swem Archives, CWM.

1846), however, that the school was reinvigorated. Student admissions rebounded, and a full complement of faculty was hired. Enrollment rose dramatically from a low of several dozen in 1833 to a high of 140 in 1839. Dew continued to enhance the faculty. While these years were the College's best of the nineteenth century in terms of finance, academics, and graduates, many of whom went on to careers in law, politics, and the military, it was the worst in terms of slavery. Dew was a strong advocate for slavery. The College owned and sold slaves through the years, and some students even brought slaves with them.<sup>204</sup>

### **Pre-Civil War Years**

The next ten years (1846-1856) saw four men serve as president. At the outset they faced the same problems as their predecessors: unstable enrollment, large-scale debates between the Visitors and the faculty over the school's administration, and poor finances. Amid all the turmoil, students taking law grew to 11 in the 1853-54 term. The new College president Benjamin Stoddert Ewell (1854-1888) spent much of his early years enhancing the institution. The first catalog was published in 1855 and expanded in 1859. The main building was extensively remodeled with the entire third floor transformed when walls and chimneys were pulled down to accommodate more convenient student dormitory space. With more students and faculty, the town prospered, and students continued to join townspeople in the still active Williamsburg militia; this tended to strengthen the town-gown relationship. In 1855 the militia's officers wrote Charles Dimmock, Commandant of the State Armory & Superintendent of Public Edifices, asking that additional muskets be provided because interest in the militia had increased.<sup>205</sup>

However, as it has been for much of William and Mary's history, good fortune was only a few years away from another disaster when on 8 February 1859, the 166th anniversary of the granting of the royal charter, fire gutted the main building. The interior and chimneys were

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<sup>204</sup> Terry Meyers, "A First Look at the Worst: Slavery and Race Relations at the College of William and Mary," *William and Mary Bill of Rights Journal* 16 (2008), 1-28.

<sup>205</sup> Executive Papers of Governor Joseph Johnson, 1852-1855, Library of Virginia, Richmond, Accession No. 44076

destroyed including the entire library with its collection of about 8,000 library books, including gifts from “Kings, Archbishops, Bishops, Nobles, Colonial Governors and Gentlemen.”<sup>206</sup> Also lost was George Washington’s letter accepting the chancellorship and the scientific apparatus, some of which was nearly one hundred years old and had been selected by Professor Small, Jefferson’s favorite professor.<sup>207</sup> As happened after the first fire in 1705, the old walls remained strong, and the interior was quickly rebuilt within them. Classes were not suspended, and friends and townspeople contributed to the quick recovery. A national calamity, however, was on the horizon that would soon transform the campus into a military staging ground, the city into a battle zone, and the students gone to be warriors again.

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<sup>206</sup> *Proceedings of the Society*, 22 November, 1859 (not paged), Swem Archives, CWM. These words were from a paper by Professor Morrison, read before the faculty and placed in the minutes with his permission.

<sup>207</sup> *Ibid.*

## Chapter Three

### The Civil War and Its Aftermath

The military association with William and Mary became pervasive between 1861 and 1865 with troops from both the Confederate and Union armies occupying the campus. Student-soldiers of the war's first weeks suddenly left school and rushed home to volunteer for the army. During and after the Battle of Williamsburg in May 1862, the College was nearly destroyed. All of its buildings suffered major damage and the campus became littered with military apparatus. It took the College nearly a decade to recover from the effects of the war.

Like much of the United States, Williamsburg and the College of William and Mary began to be swept up in the socio-political embranglement that by 1861 would lead to the American Civil War. As with similar institutions in Virginia and the South, the College owned dozens of slaves and used them to work on the Williamsburg campus and, in colonial days, on its far-flung acreage in nearby counties.<sup>208</sup> The College had slowly built up some financial reserves, but they were never large and frequently were used to rehabilitate the three old, colonial buildings, the primary structures at the school. Once the Confederate States of America was established and Virginia left the Union, College officials like those in other southern institutions invested much of their endowments in Confederate bonds, which ultimately became worthless. Just prior to the war Williamsburg was still the same small town that existed after the capital of the commonwealth had moved to Richmond eighty years earlier. Its population was about 1,600; the College had between sixty and seventy students; and the Lunatic Asylum had several hundred patients. John S. Charles, born in James City County in 1851, recalled what the College looked like before the war:<sup>209</sup> the campus lay between the “V” made by two roads—Mill Road (now Jamestown Road) ran down to the mill at Lake Matoaka and on toward Jamestown, and Stage Road (now Richmond Road) ran

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<sup>208</sup> Meyers, *Slavery and Race Relations*, 1-28.

<sup>209</sup> John S. Charles, *Recollections of Williamsburg, Virginia—as It Appeared at the Beginning of the Civil War* (1928), John D. Rockefeller Jr. Library, archives, The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation. His description of the town is important because of the destruction soon caused by the four years of war.

westward to Ewell Station and on toward Richmond. Its three principal buildings—Main, the President’s House, and the Brafferton—were from the colonial era. A two-and-one-half-story frame building with dormer windows and a basement called the Steward’s House was the only other building inside the campus between the two roadways. The house was used by the faculty and was destroyed during the war, like so many other vacant wooden structures in the town, becoming kindling to feed the fires to warm encamped troops. The grounds were enclosed “with a neat picket fence with gates facing Main Street (now Duke of Gloucester Street),”<sup>210</sup> before the war, and the only other significant College property was the College Hotel built across Mill Road near the corner where the two roads met Main Street. The building served multiple purposes such as a dormitory accommodating more than twenty-five students, faculty housing, and even briefly as a hotel.

### **College Militia Formed**

Then the war came. Although many of the war’s major battles occurred on Virginia soil—from the first major conflict at Bull Run on 21 July 1861 until the surrender of the Army of Northern Virginia at Appomattox in April 1865, Virginia was one of the last states to join the Confederacy in May 1861. By early January 1861 two Southern states had seceded from the Union, and five more were to follow by the end of February. A petition was placed before the faculty on 8 January 1861 stating that the 35 undersigned persons had agreed “to form a Military Company to be composed of those connected with the College,” and asked the faculty “to consent to the organization of such a corps.”<sup>211</sup> The next day a student, Richard A. Wise, wrote to his father Henry A. Wise, former governor of Virginia, reporting that the students had organized a military company “and elected ‘Old Buck’ [President Ewell’s nickname] captain, their uniform is

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<sup>210</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

<sup>211</sup> “Proceedings of the Society,” 8 January 1861. Swem Archives, CWM.

to be home spun pantaloons and a red flannel shirt and fatigue cap.”<sup>212</sup> Young Wise said he had joined the company, “but do not intend to get a uniform, for if there is any fighting I am going home and go along with you.”<sup>213</sup> The company was to be armed with Bowie knives and double-barreled shotguns or rifles, if available. They would be loaded with buckshot in case of action. “The object of the Co: is merely to train the Students while here,”<sup>214</sup> Wise wrote his father, and not to be a permanent organization.

William Reynolds of Baltimore, the only known William and Mary student to publicly decry and challenge secession, reported that the student company never was an organized unit, except for its first meeting. Regarding Ewell becoming its captain, Reynolds said “it was the general impression among the students that [he] had himself appointed captain for the express purpose of preventing the company from ever being organized.”<sup>215</sup> This may have been an accurate assessment since Ewell was opposed to secession and fervently hoped that the union could be saved and war averted. In late April, Reynolds returned to his Maryland home when his classmates left the College as war approached.

### **The Civil War Comes**

The Confederate States of America was formally established on 9 February 1861. Just four weeks afterwards, the faculty voted, on 5 March, to ask the governor of Virginia for “the loan of two Brass Field guns, with suitable carriages, caissons, accoutrements & ammunition for the College company to use in drills.”<sup>216</sup> In late March Professor Edward Taliaferro reported to the *Richmond Daily Dispatch*, that students erected a flag pole in front of the main building, “which will soon float the Flag of the New Confederacy.”<sup>217</sup> Taliaferro, a modern language professor,

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<sup>212</sup> Letter from Richard A. Wise, William and Mary College Papers, Folder 17, Swem Archives, CWM.

<sup>213</sup> Ibid. The family lived in Richmond. His father was governor from 1 January 1856 to 1 January 1860 and was a lawyer by profession.

<sup>214</sup> Ibid.

<sup>215</sup> William Reynolds Deposition, 27 February 1872 or President’s Papers—Benjamin S. Ewell, “Proceedings of the Society,” 5 March 1861.

<sup>216</sup> “Proceedings of the Society,” 5 March 1861.

<sup>217</sup> “Secession Flag on William and Mary,” *Richmond (Va.) Daily Dispatch*, 1 April 1861, 3.

proclaimed, “I wish we had a better right to claim [the banner] as our own than the mere effervescence of boyish Patriotism,” since Virginia had yet to declare for the Confederate States. Still he was proud, “that as in days of old the Students of Wm & Mary are willing to express themselves so decidedly in favor of resistance of oppression & so clearly in favor of States Rights.”<sup>218</sup>

Confederate troops on 12 April bombarded Fort Sumter in the Charleston, South Carolina, harbor, and the war began. Virginia’s Convention on Secession voted a week later to join the Confederacy, this coming shortly after United States President Abraham Lincoln’s call for troops to move against the Southern states. Virginia’s secession thrust a dilemma on most Virginians in the U.S. Army, such as Robert E. Lee, who ultimately chose to resign and go with his native state. Ewell, like another educator, Thomas J. Jackson, graduated from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point and also soon joined the Confederate military ranks.

Ironically, while all the actions of war were upon the College, the faculty voted in March to petition<sup>219</sup> Queen Victoria “to present to the Library of William and Mary a certified copy of the Charter, which was originally granted” along with the Transfer document of 1729, transferring the school from the governors to the faculty and board of visitors. A copy of the original charter had been lost, most probably in the 1705 fire, or was carried away later.<sup>220</sup> At any rate, the College desired another “certified” copy. The appropriate resolutions and correspondence were sent to College Chancellor John Tyler, former President of the United States who transmitted them directly to Lord Richard Lyons, British Minister in Washington, for transmittal to the queen. The message arrived in London and the foreign office found the charter, but not the transfer document. Tyler had requested that Queen Victoria sign the documents to authenticate them. This

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<sup>218</sup> Ibid.

<sup>219</sup> “Proceedings of the Society,” 9 April 1861.

<sup>220</sup> Frank B. Evans, *The Story of The Royal Charter of The College of William and Mary* (Williamsburg, Va.: The Botetourt Bibliographical Society, 1978), 1-7. Lord Lyons’ dispatch to the foreign office was found with notations. Evans suggested that Fedor Vasil’evich Karzhavin, a Russian traveler and visitor to Williamsburg in 1779-1780 and 1785-1787 may have stolen the original charter, possibly with the assistance of Carlo Bellini, professor of modern languages at the College, 1779-1799.

could not be done, Evans wrote in his story of the royal charter, and he suggested the autograph problem might have been the reason that the matter was dropped.<sup>221</sup>

At this point in William and Mary history, the student body was comprised of about sixty boys, with nineteen locals from Williamsburg and nearby areas, while the remaining students, about forty, were from out of town.<sup>222</sup> With Sumter fired on and calls for soldiers from both governments, the College faculty, during a meeting called on 10 May 1861, voted to suspend classes for the remainder of the session with the hope that “the state of the country” would allow the school to reopen for the October session.<sup>223</sup> A week earlier, on 2 May, President Ewell had been appointed a major in the “active volunteer forces of Virginia”<sup>224</sup> and General Lee, recently appointed commander of Virginia’s forces, directed him to establish a defensive line in the Williamsburg area. With Virginia being threatened by armed invasion, the faculty minutes reported, “a large majority of the Students have already left College, and those who still remain—most of whom also propose to leave—are unable, from the excited state of the public mind, to pursue their Collegiate duties with profit.”<sup>225</sup> Steps were taken by the faculty to secure the College’s property, including its meager library, scientific apparatus, and principal papers, bonds, and other financial documents. By 28 May the Fifteenth Virginia Regiment had taken over the campus, using the buildings as a hospital and barracks. J. Staunton Moore, a soldier, recalled the troops “rubbed our heads against its honored walls and slept upon its carpeted floors...Our company was quartered in the library of the College...[and] selected some of my favorite authors for a pillow.”<sup>226</sup>

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<sup>221</sup> Ibid., 9-10.

<sup>222</sup> Sean M. Heuval, *The Old College Goes to War: The Civil War Experiences of William and Mary Students, Faculty and Alumni* (MA thesis, University of Richmond, 2006). The author loaned his personal annotated copy for use.

<sup>223</sup> “Proceedings of the Society,” 10 May 1861.

<sup>224</sup> Benjamin S. Ewell Papers, Series Two, Folder 20, Appointment certificate signed by Virginia Governor John Letcher, Swem Archives, CWM

<sup>225</sup> “Proceedings of the Society,” 10 May 1861.

<sup>226</sup> J. Staunton Moore, address 24 May 1911 at fiftieth Reunion of the 15th Virginia Regiment at Williamsburg, pamphlet, William and Mary College Papers, Folder 18, Swem Archives, CWM.

## President Ewell and Faculty in War

With Fort Monroe about 40 miles east of Williamsburg on the shore of the Chesapeake Bay and under the control of Union troops, the Virginia state government took immediate steps to defend against troops stationed there. President Ewell, who had left the College and taken up military duties with Virginia state forces, was quickly promoted to colonel and given the responsibility to erect a line about six miles in length across the Peninsula from Queen's Creek to College Creek through parts of the town.<sup>227</sup> Thomas T. L. Snead, college mathematics professor, was asked by Ewell to survey the area, and once a location was determined Lee made an inspection and approved the plan.<sup>228</sup> As he was putting together his troops, Ewell depended upon the Williamsburg Junior Guard as his core unit. The Junior Guard originally had been created on 8 November 1859 under the guise of the old 68th Virginia Regiment (which had been inactive for many years) in response to the raid of white abolitionist John Brown on Harper's Ferry, Virginia. Students and faculty were among the initial eighty-six<sup>229</sup> who joined this volunteer unit, which was then under the command of Captain Robert H. Armistead, a local attorney.<sup>230</sup> President Ewell permitted most of its drills on the College grounds.<sup>231</sup> Many William and Mary students from Williamsburg and other nearby areas, initially in the student company, which had no connection with the Junior Guard, joined the Junior Guard when the College closed. In mid-May the guard was the only part of the battalion being put together by Ewell that was in a condition to go directly into the field. Other units being gathered from nearby communities needed some training before

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<sup>227</sup> Benjamin S. Ewell Papers, Appointment certificate signed by Virginia Governor John Letcher

<sup>228</sup> Earl J. Hess, *Field Armies and Fortifications in the Civil War: The Eastern Campaign, 1861-1864* (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 93.

<sup>229</sup> *Williamsburg Weekly Gazette*, 16 November 1859. The paper was printed from March 1859 to November 1860. Editor Edward Henley Lively became one of the unit's sergeants.

<sup>230</sup> Les Jensen, *32nd Virginia Infantry* (Lynchburg, Va.: H. E. Howard, Inc., 1990), 6. The other officers were: John A. Henley and Hugh Mercer Waller, lieutenants; Leonard Henley, Parke Jones, James F. Bowery, and E. H. Lively, sergeants; and C. Adams, Robert A. Bowery, William Lee and A. I. Hofheimer, corporals. On 11 July 1860 Henley, who was clerk of the circuit court, replaced Armistead as captain of the Junior Guards.

<sup>231</sup> *Ibid.*

taking part in any action.<sup>232</sup> Ewell urged the Virginia Adjutant General to send several dozen cadets from the Virginia Military Institute in Lexington to Williamsburg to help drill the new recruits. He also received approval to name his own adjutant and appointed Professor Edwin Taliaferro of William and Mary to the post. Ewell described Taliaferro as lacking “military experience, but has great intelligence, is firm and cool, has industry and activity, and is to be depended on.”<sup>233</sup> The battalion also lacked weapons. With about 850 volunteers, only about 300 were armed and half of those with only flintlock muskets. The Williamsburg Junior Guard only had between 600 and 700 rounds of ammunition.<sup>234</sup>

In early June Union officers from Fort Monroe began to send out reconnaissance teams to determine the strength Confederate opposition nearby. There were forays to Yorktown and Newport News via the York River as well as companies to survey the farmland directly west of the fort. On 10 June the first ground skirmish of the war took place at Big Bethel Church<sup>235</sup> about eight miles from Fort Monroe; only about 5,000 troops were involved. The Confederate forces from nearby Yorktown, led by Colonel Daniel Harvey Hill of North Carolina, defended the church with about 1,400 soldiers and turned back 3,500 Union troops in a brief encounter that prevented the federals from securing ground in western Elizabeth City County. Ewell had moved portions of his battalion into place west of Big Bethel to be in reserve if needed. They were not and later returned to their defensive preparations near Williamsburg.

During this period Ewell, a former U.S. Army engineer, had designed the defensive line as a series of redoubts across the Peninsula from the York to James Rivers; rifle pits would link these detached fortifications. This scheme was similar in concept to the wooden palisade built in 1633-1634 across this same Peninsula at nearly the same location, ostensibly to keep the native Indians

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<sup>232</sup> These included the Nelson Guards, the Lee Artillery, the James City Artillery, the Wythe Rifles, the Warwick Beauregards, York Rangers, and Peninsula Artillery.

<sup>233</sup> Jensen, *32nd Virginia Infantry*, 15.

<sup>234</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>235</sup> The first “proclaimed” land battle of the war took place at Manassas (called Bull Run by the Union forces) on 21 July involving nearly 40,000 Confederate and Union soldiers.

away from the colonists.<sup>236</sup> Ewell asked the nearby localities to send their slaves to begin work on the line. Lieutenant Colonel Alfred L. Rives,<sup>237</sup> an engineer like Ewell, was sent by Lee from Richmond to make an inspection and he decided to alter the line's location and move it eastward of Williamsburg to keep the town from the midst of the defensive fortifications.<sup>238</sup> At this point Ewell was working under Major General John Bankhead "Prince John"<sup>239</sup>Magruder, who was in charge of the Peninsula operations and had been Hill's commander at Big Bethel. Magruder felt Ewell had not made sufficient progress on constructing the line and replaced him with Brigadier General Lafayette McLaws. After much discussion, however, Ewell's redoubt designs were retained, and the fortifications subsequently completed over the next 10 months.

In a thorough reorganization, the 32nd Virginia Infantry Regiment was established on 1 July 1861 and ordered to defend Hampton, just outside Fort Monroe. The regiment's recruits basically comprised the battalion put together by Ewell, who reported on 6 July that he had raised six companies of volunteers from James City County and other nearby counties.<sup>240</sup> At this point, the Williamsburg Junior Guard (Company C of the new regiment) was issued uniforms from the Confederate Quartermaster's Department; the company was composed of 93 men with four officers and eight noncommissioned officers.<sup>241</sup> It included at least nine students and three faculty members, including Ewell, from the College as well as merchants, farmers, mechanics, carpenters, lawyers, clerks, and others with the average age of about twenty-five. Ewell was named commanding colonel of the 32nd Infantry.

Even though the College was closed, Ewell, who was operating nearby with his troops, was able to call a faculty meeting on 28 September 1861 attended by Charles Morris, professor of

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<sup>236</sup> "Letters from Capt. Thomas Yonge," *WMQ* 1st Ser., 16 (1907), 3. A letter by Capt. Thomas Yonge, written from Jamestown in 1634.

<sup>237</sup> Six years later Ewell selected Rives, then a Richmond engineer and architect, to rebuild the College's main building severely damaged during the war.

<sup>238</sup> Hess, *Field Armies and Fortifications*, 93.

<sup>239</sup> His friends called him "Prince John" for his lavish living, his elaborate military uniforms, and his courtly behavior toward women.

<sup>240</sup> Ewell Papers, Series Two, Folder 20.

<sup>241</sup> Jensen, *Field Armies and Fortifications*, 160-161. The four officers were: John A. Henley, captain; William H. E. Morecock, first lieutenant; Leonard Henley, second lieutenant; and Hugh Mercer Waller, junior second lieutenant. All the commissions were in effect 28 April 1861. James F. Bowery became a second lieutenant on 15 July 1861.

law, Robert J. Morrison,<sup>242</sup> professor of history and professor of moral philosophy and belles-lettres, and Edwin Taliaferro, professor of Latin and romance languages. Professor Morris was the only one of the group not in uniform at the time. Morrison, a captain, joined Ewell in the 32nd along with Taliaferro who became Ewell's adjutant. Morris later moved back to his Hanover County home and joined the local Hanover Troops, attached to the Virginia 4th Infantry.

Other faculty members of 1861 had departed earlier: Thomas P. McCandlish, professor of mathematics and ancient languages, initially joined the Peninsula Artillery, which became a part of the 32nd Virginia Infantry, where he was commissioned a captain and served much of the war as regimental quartermaster.<sup>243</sup> Thomas T. L. Snead, adjunct professor of mathematics, served as an engineer on the staff of General Thomas Jackson and later adjunct to the Chief Confederate Engineer in Richmond. Edward Joynes, professor of modern languages, did not join the military but served throughout the war as "chief" civilian administrator in the Confederate War Department in Richmond.<sup>244</sup> The departure of faculty from Williamsburg was typical of other colleges in Virginia. At the University of Virginia, which remained open throughout the war, at least five professors left to join the Confederate Army with one of them dying.<sup>245</sup> Washington College and Emory and Henry College faculty left for the war and by the end of April 1861 most of the students and "some of the faculty" at Lynchburg College had departed and the school closed. Male faculty members also departed from female institutions, such as Union Female College in Roanoke.<sup>246</sup>

The faculty at the called meeting in late September named William S. Peachy, a Williamsburg attorney, to act as "Agent of the Faculty with full power, on their behalf,"<sup>247</sup> to

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<sup>242</sup> Professor Morrison died on 31 October 1861 near Yorktown of typhoid fever while he served as captain of ordinance

<sup>243</sup> Heuvel, *Old College Goes to War*, 38.

<sup>244</sup> Carol Kattenburg Dubbs, *Defend This Old Town, Williamsburg During the Civil War* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2002), 49. Following the war, Joynes taught at three other colleges, and in 1878 the William and Mary faculty recognized him with an honorary doctor of laws degree.

<sup>245</sup> Peter Wallenstein, *The Struggle to Learn—Higher Education in Civil War Virginia*, in William C. Davis and James I. Robertson Jr., eds., *Virginia at War, 1864* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 2009), 105-106.

<sup>246</sup> *Ibid.*, 105-109.

<sup>247</sup> "Proceedings of the Society, 1846-1879." (pages unnumbered) Swem Archives, CWM.

handle any business that might be required in absence of the faculty. They set 1 January 1862 as a possible reopening date for the College, providing the military moved from the main building. Even if the building was ready and opened, it is doubtful students would have enrolled because most were volunteering to fight. Ewell reported to the board of visitors on 9 October at a meeting in Richmond on the status of the closed facility and said “a fair compensation for the use of the Buildings and Grounds [for barracks and hospital] will be paid by the Government [either the Commonwealth of Virginia or the Confederate States] without question.”<sup>248</sup> The board authorized that the President and professors who might now occupy any of the College buildings be released from any payment of rent. The bursar was instructed to insure any college buildings that lacked insurance on them.<sup>249</sup>

### **The Battle of Williamsburg**

There was little military activity in the fall or winter of 1861-1862. The Confederate government paid the College \$928 in rent for the College buildings used from May 1861 through February 1862.<sup>250</sup> Work continued on the Confederate line of redoubts and earthworks, located several miles east of Williamsburg. Townspeople reacted frequently to rumors that federal troops stationed at Fort Monroe (30 miles east) would be marching on Williamsburg “immediately,” but “immediately” did not happen until the spring, 1862 when Major General George B. McClellan’s Army of the Potomac, having moved from Washington, D.C., began its Peninsula Campaign. Nevertheless, the citizenry reacted with nervousness and anxiety to any negative reports from battlefields elsewhere.

When President Lincoln appointed McClellan to replace old “fuss and feathers” Winfield Scott as general in chief, he expected McClellan to organize his army and proceed directly against the Confederacy’s capital at Richmond, about one hundred miles to the south. McClellan,

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<sup>248</sup> “William and Mary College Record,” *4 July 1860 to 26 June 1902*, 19-21, Swem Archives, CWM.

<sup>249</sup> *Ibid.*, 22-23.

<sup>250</sup> “Proceedings of the Society, 1848-1879,” 28 February 1862.

however, did not agree with Lincoln's scheme; he wanted to organize his base at Fort Monroe and then move up the Virginia Peninsula to Richmond. That route would take him right through the College campus. With Confederate General Joseph E. Johnston now in command of the Peninsula, rebel troops began to mass along the line of redoubts and trenches, stretching from Yorktown across the peninsula. The federal troops left the confines of Fort Monroe in early April and began a deliberate march toward Yorktown and Johnston's main troops. After several delaying manoeuvres Johnston began to pull back his forces toward Richmond in a strategic withdrawal designed to allow for other Confederate forces elsewhere to move to the defense of the capital. By 1 May, some Confederate troops, including the 5th North Carolina Regiment, already had moved back to Williamsburg and were stationed on the College grounds.

The Battle of Williamsburg took place on two dreary, rainy days, 4 and 5 May. Although many more troops comprised the two armies, an estimated 41,000 Union troops were against 32,000 Confederates, with Union artillery far surpassing Johnston's cannon numbers. A number of books have been written about the unplanned battle.<sup>251</sup> Johnson's scheme was a slow withdrawal westward up the Peninsula with no major action because he was wary of any enemy engagement before his troops reached Richmond's eastern defense line. The federals pursuing Johnston's army caught up with the rear Confederate guard and initiated the action in an effort to derail the organized retreat. Magruder's Army of the Peninsula had been incorporated into Johnston's army along with Ewell's 800-man defense force, then part of the 32nd Infantry. Ewell and most of his men were at Fort Magruder in the middle of the Williamsburg defensive line until the night of 4-5 May, when he was ordered to withdraw during the night. The battle became intense about 1:00 p.m. on 5 May, and Johnston, out of necessity, sent some of the evacuating troops back to Williamsburg to deflect the Union attack that threatened to cut off a portion of his army. Ewell and his men, however, did not join in the battle, but were again held in reserve. On

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<sup>251</sup> Best recent accounts are Dubbs, *Defend This Old Town* (2002) and Earl C. Hastings Jr. and David Hastings, *A Pitiless Rain: The Battle of Williamsburg, 1862* (Shippensburg, Pa.: White Mane Publishing Co., Inc., 1997).

the night of 5 May, in the waning hours of the battle, Johnston ordered the remainder of the Confederate force westward through the streets of Williamsburg and finally out of the William and Mary campus toward Richmond, leaving the city the next morning to McClellan's army.

There are very few surviving accounts of soldiers' experiences in the Battle of Williamsburg. However, Randolph Abbott Shotwell, a Confederate soldier, recalled his plight after the fighting on May 5. Beginning at 10:00 p.m. there was "an all night march over roads literally knee-deep in soft mud and slush" with the army's material—wagons, ambulances, artillery, and foot soldiers—moving down narrow roads toward Richmond. He wrote it "was almost appalling!"<sup>252</sup> As he came into Williamsburg, Shotwell and his fellow soldiers found "no signs of inhabitants, no lights in the houses and everything as quiet and desolate as a country village at midnight."<sup>253</sup> Even though a battle had raged within sound and sight of many homes, the citizens had apparently gone to bed. On the western side of town, however, he found the "lights flashing at nearly every window" of the College building. Shotwell decided to seek shelter at the College because of the "pitiless rain." The main building had served as a Confederate hospital for a year prior to the battle and now "the venerable edifice already had a full complement of occupants... Wounded, dying and dead—here, there, everywhere—halls, recitation rooms, dormitories—all were crowded with bloody bodies."<sup>254</sup> He lamented

I shuttered as I thought of these devoted surgeons spending the whole night, hacking, sawing, probing, tying up arteries, bandaging, setting fractures, etc., while all the time the smell of human blood arose in their nostrils, and the heart-rending cries of the wounded and dying ever in their ears.<sup>255</sup>

Shotwell thought the College scene a paradox, where this "peaceful abode of science and learning" had been turned into "a veritable chamber of horrors," with sights and sounds of misery and destruction all around.<sup>256</sup> Not being able to cope with the scene any longer, Shotwell ran out

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<sup>252</sup> J. G. de Roulheac, ed., *Randolph Abbott Shotwell Papers* (Raleigh: North Carolina Historical Commission, 1929), 1:199-202.

<sup>253</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>254</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>255</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>256</sup> *Ibid.*

of the college building to Stage Road joining a group of soldiers marching out of town. Later, he got some sleep at a campfire farther up the road.

In addition to the College building, other public buildings, churches, and private homes contained the most seriously wounded of Johnston's fleeing Confederates. Citizens worked diligently trying to care for the suffering men.<sup>257</sup> McClellan took over the Vest House (near the site of the colonial Capitol) for his headquarters and placed the town under martial law, deploying a line of cavalry west of the College to protect against possible Confederate raids. The Union wounded were brought into town to the makeshift hospitals. As the federals began to organize their authority, Gen. Charles E. Jameson moved his headquarters into the Brafferton, one of two other colonial buildings situated in front of the College's main building. Rebecca Ewell, sister of Colonel Benjamin Ewell, who had remained in town after his quick departure a few days earlier, decided to invite Union Brigadier General Philip Kearny to stay with her, since he was a long-time friend of her other brother, Confederate General Richard S. Ewell, also the brother of the College's president Ewell.<sup>258</sup>

A report in the New York *Evening Post* described the College's main building, which served as a hospital for Confederates and then Union troops. "The floors, the walls, and even the windows were covered with filth," explained "Mach," signer of the newspaper narrative. "Medical stores and implements, fragments of furniture and clothing, broken crockery, cooking utensils, and kindred rubbish, were strewn all over the building, while the grounds, heretofore so picturesque and well-protected... were a complete waste" with gateposts overturned, and "the sod and trees destroyed."<sup>259</sup> The white picket fence that surrounded the campus also was destroyed and used for firewood, partially by the retreating Confederates, and then by the Union soldiers as they commanded the College yard. In a report from a Union surgeon later in the month, more than

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<sup>257</sup> Hastings and Hastings, *Pitiless Rain*, 118.

<sup>258</sup> Letter from Philip Kearny to Agnes Kearny, 7 and 8 May 1862, Williamsburg City Papers, Swem Archives, CWM.

<sup>259</sup> Frank Moore, ed., *The Rebellion Record: A Diary of American Events* (New York: G. P. Putnam (1866), 5: 19-27 and *New York Evening Post*, May 8, 1862.

400 soldiers from the North and South were treated at the College hospital in the week immediately following the battle.<sup>260</sup>

After staying four days in Williamsburg, the Army of the Potomac, then an estimated 100,000 strong, left for Richmond on 10 May. The community would see portions of the same army march back through the area in August and continuing for several days as McClellan withdrew from the outskirts of Richmond following a series of unsuccessful battles<sup>261</sup> in June and July. For the remainder of the war Williamsburg remained under federal occupation, but a large Union army would never return. In fact, after August 1862 the western boundary of Williamsburg, just behind the College near the old Revolutionary War “College Camp,” would become the demarcation line between the Confederate- and Union-occupied territories.

### **College and town occupied by Federals**

The saga of the federal occupation of Williamsburg is a story in itself. Numerous incidents involved townspeople whose property was destroyed and life menaced by several companies of the 5th Pennsylvania Cavalry, who were stationed in the city until 9 September 1863. It was, however, exactly a year earlier that the war brought the most devastation to the College; it was fire. During the early evening of 8 September 1862, residents suddenly realized the College building was on fire. Townspeople formed a bucket brigade and soon extinguished the flames. Miss Mary T. Southall, who was among those helping douse the fire, encountered three Union soldiers and one told her “if the College was not burned that day, it would be the next, or words to that effect.”<sup>262</sup> Before the fire, the rooms of the main building “contained hay and other stores,

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<sup>260</sup> Letter from Dr. J. R. Bronson, “Surgeon, Seminary & College Hospital,” Williamsburg to Dr. William J. Dale, United States Surgeon General, Boston, Mass., William and Mary College Papers, Folder 18, Swem Archives, CWM.

<sup>261</sup> The battle of Seven Pines (31 May-1 June 1862) and the Seven Days’ battles (25 June-1 July 1862) including Gaines’ Mill, Savage’s Station, and Malvern Hill, were indecisive but claimed as victories by the Confederates because Union General McClellan stopped his offensive and withdrew to a base camp on the James River below the Confederate capital.

<sup>262</sup> Benjamin S. Ewell, *The History of the College of William and Mary from Its Foundation, 1693 to 1870* (1870), 52 (a fund-raising pamphlet), Swem Archives, CWM. Extract from a deposition of Miss Mary T. Southall of Williamsburg taken before Dr. R. M. Garrett, Magistrate of Williamsburg after the war as part of eyewitness accounts of the federal damage at the College, regarding efforts to gain payments from the U.S. government for war damage.

and cavalry equipment. A court-martial trial held there had not been concluded at the time of the fire.”<sup>263</sup>

Perhaps to avenge the burning, several hundred Confederate cavalymen, led by Colonel William P. Shingler of South Carolina, swarmed into Williamsburg about dawn on 9 September, overrunning the Union troops and capturing about one hundred of them along with Colonel David Campbell at their headquarters. After about three hours, the Southerners were gone. Remnants of the 5th Pennsylvania were brought back to Williamsburg with some 6th New York Cavalry sent as reinforcements from Yorktown. The soldiers, out of anger or frustration, gathered in the College yard, “many of them drunk and boisterous.”<sup>264</sup> Miss Southall said her family was told to leave the President’s House where they were staying. Not long afterwards the College building was on fire again.

This time the citizenry could not put out the blaze. There was no doubt, Miss Southall said, that the drunken soldiers started the fire. Another eyewitness, Mrs. Maria T. Peyton said Lt. Colonel S. E. Smith, the Union officer in charge replacing Campbell, told her the building could not be saved. Miss Southall replied, “Do, sir, try and save William and Mary College, for it will be a stigma on the pages of history if you suffer it to be lost.” His response was, “I have no means of putting out the fire; it cannot now be saved.”<sup>265</sup> He contended that no one gave any orders to burn the building, yet other eyewitnesses reported that as the College burned members of the 5th Pennsylvania surrounded the building and with swords drawn prevented townspeople from saving the building again. David Edward Cronin, Federal Provost Marshal of Williamsburg who came to Williamsburg in September 1863 offered a second-hand account of the College’s destruction:

The flames rapidly destroyed the interior and by evening nothing remained but the bare and tottering walls. Viewed from the main street, the smoking ruins stood out

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<sup>263</sup> 51st Congress, 1st Session, House of Representatives, Report No. 3018: *College of William and Mary, Virginia* (1890), 1.

<sup>264</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>265</sup> *Ibid.*

massively against the western twilight—a most impressive picture of the barbarism of war.<sup>266</sup>

He wrote that many men of the 5th Pennsylvania claimed that the building was an enemy outpost.

Cronin suggested that Confederate sharpshooters frequently used the building “firing from the upper windows and roof, and killing and wounding a number of [Union] comrades”<sup>267</sup> in the College’s front yard. Apparently several days after the fire had subsided and the smoldering walls cooled, soldiers broke into the vaults beneath the chapel wing of the main building and stole the silver coffin plates and other valuables.<sup>268</sup>

About three weeks later, Ewell appeared at Major Wilson’s Union outpost on Stage Road at the outskirts of the city after learning that the College building had nearly been destroyed by fire. Ewell’s enlistment had ended earlier in the summer and he relinquished command of the 32nd Virginia Regiment to Colonel Edgar Burwell Montague, a William and Mary law school graduate (1856). After the Battle of Williamsburg, the 32nd with some of its student complement, fought in the following battles: Seven Days’, Second Bull Run, Antietam, Fredericksburg, Cold Harbor, Petersburg, Saylor’s Creek, and Appomattox.<sup>269</sup>

With Ewell was John W. Curtis, a member of the Virginia House of Delegates and a member of the board of “Eastern Lunatic Asylum.” They tried to enter Williamsburg under a flag of truce, to see the College and to ascertain the treatment of the inmates at the asylum. Even though Ewell carried with him a message from Virginia Governor John Letcher asking for passage, Union officers refused entrance so they returned to Richmond. It would be many days before Ewell received a thorough report on the fire and the status of the College.

Meanwhile, a Confederate raid on 29 March 1863 with three companies tried to attack Fort Magruder and seize ammunition and stores. Finding their attack no longer a surprise, the troops

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<sup>266</sup> David Edward Cronin, “The Vest Mansion: Its Historical and Romantic Associations as Confederate and Union Headquarters (1862-1865)” (typed copy, 1908-1910), John D. Rockefeller Jr. Library, The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, 26. The original is in the collection of the New-York Historical Society.

<sup>267</sup> Ibid.

<sup>268</sup> *Catalogue of the College of William and Mary, Session 1865-1866* (Richmond, Va.: Gary & Clemmit, 1866), 18-19 in William and Mary College Papers, Folder 64, Swem Archives, CWM.

<sup>269</sup> Jensen, *32nd Virginia Infantry*, 67-143.

did not try to skirt the city, but rather formed at the College at the head of Main Street. The Union troops, seeing Confederate forces under Colonel William B. Tabb “planted at the College ready for action,”<sup>270</sup> decided not to engage. The rebels loaded wagons and horses with Union provisions and within several hours departed.

Routinely Confederate scouts sneaked in and out of Williamsburg for the remainder of the war, and Union troops, under the authority of Provost Marshal David E Cronin, from September 1863 to September 1864, tried to handle the sharpshooters as well as the townspeople, most still loyal to the Confederacy. Mail also was transported in and out of town by various means, usually in old seed or salt bags wrapped with paper to hide the real contents. On one occasion Cronin reported that “an inquisitive Yankee youth ignoring orders to stay away from the [College] ruins...fell through a thin crust of brick and mortar and landed in the midst of a number of colonial coffins” under the chapel.<sup>271</sup> As he was pulled out, his colleagues noticed a hole in the wall with a cord dangling from it. After pulling the string, they found a mailbag at the end with addresses destined for Williamsburg residents. Cronin’s last mention of the College came just a few weeks before his own departure. “The presence of a regiment of colored cavalry [1st New York Mounted Rifles] camped in the hallowed precincts of the College”<sup>272</sup> in early September 1864 possibly caused a group of nearby Confederate raiders to attack the small-scale Union occupying force around the College. Several soldiers were killed and wounded, but the incident reminded both the Union troops and Confederate townspeople that the war was still very close at hand.

### **War Comes to an End**

The war was winding down in the winter of 1864-65. The Army of the Potomac, commanded by General Ulysses S. Grant, gradually put pressure on the Confederate capital of

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<sup>270</sup> U.S. War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1880-1881), 18: 205-209.

<sup>271</sup> Cronin, “The Vest Mansion,” 212.

<sup>272</sup> *Ibid.*, 250.

Richmond and its nearby supply center of Petersburg. Increasingly the options for General Lee and his army became fewer. Union Brevet Brigadier General Benjamin C. Ludlow was commander of troops in the Jamestown, Williamsburg, and Yorktown area and as part of increased defenses, ordered the construction of a new fortified line at the College. Local resident Lucy Tucker wrote on 6 March that “gentlemen are now made to work on fortifications”<sup>273</sup> that were dug across the College yard.” They encompassed the old main building’s ruins, the President’s House, the Brafferton and adjacent kitchens. “Deep ditches were dug from North, East, and the South corners of the College, extending some distance beyond”<sup>274</sup> the roads at the sides of the grounds. “In these ditches were placed vertically big logs ten feet long, and three feet in the ground. These logs were fitted with port holes so as to guard against Cavalry raids down the two roads.”<sup>275</sup> Townspeople, apparently, began to fear for the marble statue in front of the College, even though it had survived nearly four years of the war.<sup>276</sup> Gabriella Galt wrote to her cousin Mary Jeffrey Galt that “Lord Botetourt was carried to the Asylum yesterday, though not indicated for lunacy.”<sup>277</sup> The move of the statue was unnecessary because the death of the Confederacy came three weeks later on 9 April when General Lee surrendered to General Grant at Appomattox Court House, Virginia.

Among those surrendering was the 32nd Virginia Infantry with some of the College students and townspeople still attached. Former William and Mary students who enlisted in 1861 and survived to Appomattox included Thomas J. Barlow, Henry S. Dix, Henley Jones Jr., Ludwell P. Slater, and Lt. Thomas Mercer. Also coming home was Colonel Ewell, who had decided to rejoin the army on 24 November 1862<sup>278</sup> and was assigned as adjutant to General Johnston,

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<sup>273</sup> Tucker-Coleman Papers, 1865 (not sorted), 5 April 1865, Cynthia B. Tucker to her husband, citing an earlier letter of 6 March to Cynthia from her mother Julia Tucker. Swem Archives, CWM.

<sup>274</sup> Charles, “Recollections of Williamsburg,” 2-3.

<sup>275</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

<sup>276</sup> Today, one of the oldest pieces of colonial statuary in the United States, the marble image of Lord Botetourt was erected at the colonial Capitol building in 1773 because of the affection the citizens had for Norborne Berkeley, baron de Botetourt, royal governor, 1768-1770. At his death, he was described as “the best of governors and the best of men.” Botetourt was buried in a crypt under the College chapel. The College faculty purchased the statue in 1801 and moved it to the front yard.

<sup>277</sup> Galt Family Papers, Swem Archives, CWM

<sup>278</sup> Ewell Papers, Series Two, Folder 20.

commander at the Battle of Williamsburg. Twice Johnston made requests<sup>279</sup> to Confederate President Jefferson Davis for Ewell to be promoted to brigadier general. Davis declined, however, saying that a staff officer could not hold a general's rank. Johnston was transferred from Richmond to Chattanooga, Tennessee, in early December 1862, and Ewell went with him and remained with Johnston's army until the spring of 1864. Ewell returned to Richmond because of ill health; he recuperated and was back with Johnston by early May and remained with the army even after Johnston was relieved of his duties. Ewell and Johnston made a good team and had a common background since they had been at West Point at the same time. Poor health again brought Ewell back to Richmond late in 1864 where he served as adjutant to his brother General Richard S. Ewell. On March 1865, just twenty days before the Appomattox surrender Benjamin Ewell resigned from the army.

### **The College in the Aftermath**

Shortly after the war ended, Ewell and the College's Board of Visitors met in Richmond in early July to discuss the school's fate. Some visitors talked about moving the school to either Richmond to be more centrally located or, perhaps, to Virginia's Eastern Shore where war damage was minimal. Others suggested closing it. Ewell's strong desire to continue was evident: If the College did not reopen very soon, he emphasized, it would give the impression that it would never reopen. He told the board that the "walls of the main building were 'strong and sound,' the President's house was 'habitable,' and the Brafferton 'in good condition.'"<sup>280</sup> Later, when trying to plead to potential donors, Ewell's report was more accurate:

The material condition was as bad as it well could be: the main building a ruin, the Brafferton gutted...the President's House much pulled to pieces and all outhouses destroyed or carried off, the grounds defaced by defensive works, enclosures gone & it might be said as far as Williamsburg was concerned that the

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<sup>279</sup> Earlier, after the Battle of Williamsburg, Generals Magruder and Johnston urged the promotion of Ewell, but President Davis declined.

<sup>280</sup> Anne W. Chapman, *Benjamin Stoddert Ewell: A Biography* (Ph.D. diss., College of William and Mary, 1984).

College had lost all save its reputation and memory of its services to Virginia as educator of its youth.<sup>281</sup>

The board finally agreed on 2 August 1865 to let Ewell try to continue, but only \$1,000 was appropriated for repairs, and faculty salaries would be at the prewar level, coming from investment money of only \$53,000. The College had lost about \$26,000 in Confederate bonds.<sup>282</sup> The school reopened late in October with the Brafferton fitted for classrooms and the President's House for the library and chemistry laboratory. Reconstruction of the main building had to wait.

Union troops did not immediately give up possession of the College grounds, finally departing 20 September and leaving a campus in disarray. Many windows in the burned out main building had been bricked up, but much of the woodwork in the other buildings had been torn out and used as firewood. The "window frames and sash" from the Brafferton were removed, probably in late 1862 or early 1863 to furnish quarters for the federal officers at Fort Magruder.<sup>283</sup> In order for the school to reopen, a massive four-week, cleanup effort on campus was undertaken, including replacing the floors, doors, and windows in the Brafferton. Only one of the prewar professors—Thomas Snead—agreed to return to join Ewell with William R. Garrett being added as Grammar School master. During the quickly arranged 1865-1866 session, students from the ages of eleven to twenty-two attended with twenty-three in the collegiate program and thirty-nine in the Grammar School.<sup>284</sup> A few veterans from the war returned to conclude studies begun prior to 1861, but the College was faltering, and soon there were primarily grammar students attending. Ewell and the faculty felt it was imperative that the main building be reconstructed, so the College closed for the 1868-1869 term while the work was undertaken. Again the main building was rebuilt within its old walls, and outfitted appropriately. It is possible the statue of Lord Botetourt, removed earlier to the asylum grounds, was returned to its rightful place in front of the main building shortly after it reopened because a photograph, taken sometime prior to the summer of

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<sup>281</sup> Ewell Papers, Biographical Folder, Box 1, Swem Archives, CWM.

<sup>282</sup> Report by President Ewell on 5 July 1865, *Board of Visitors Records, 1757-ongoing*, Swem Archives, CWM.

<sup>283</sup> Lyon G. Tyler, *The William and Mary Bulletin* (July 1909), Swem Archives, CWM.

<sup>284</sup> Matriculation Book, 1827-81, Swem Archives, CWM.

1871, shows it there. In Ewell's mind Botetourt's return would symbolize the return of the College from the ravages of war.

When contrasted with the Revolutionary War, the Civil War was much more damaging to the College, its campus, and its faculty. Although closed for only about six months during the Revolution, William and Mary was closed for more than four years during the Civil War. Finances were restored to some degree following the loss of English revenue after the Revolution, but after the Civil War finances at the College, as well as in Williamsburg, in Virginia, and throughout much of the South were in a shambles. Bonds were defaulted. Cash was scarce, and what Northern investments came were to larger communities whose revival could be aided quickly. Regrettably, the College would not recover for nearly thirty years from the war's devastation. Ewell made numerous vain attempts during the 1870s to secure reparation money (\$69,000) from the federal government for damages incurred from Union armies.

There are little signs today of the Civil War on campus. In recent years, however, two groups of indentations were discovered in the walls of the main building, one to the right of the main door and the second on the (chapel) south side.<sup>285</sup> These were probably made either by 58-caliber minié-ball or 69-caliber smooth-ball bullets sometime during the Civil War. Archaeologists have noted that Southern soldiers used the 69-caliber bullets, often called "flying pumpkins" because of their inaccuracy, while both the North and South armies used the minié-balls. Archaeologists working in 2006 in the parking lot of the President's House found a feature that they believe "represents a trench and associated posthole, which resemble the distinctive footprint of a Civil War-era Sibley tent."<sup>286</sup> Through letters, diaries, and drawings, soldiers were known to have camped in the College yard. Such a discovery of a tent location is in keeping with those accounts. The tent looked like an oversized tepee, about twelve feet high and measuring

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<sup>285</sup> Ray Cannetti, brick mason, called attention to the possible bullet holes, and archaeologist Alain Outlaw of Williamsburg made some preliminary investigations.

<sup>286</sup> William H. Moore, "Archaeological Survey and Evaluation of the Proposed Manhole Structure Project Area, President's House Parking Lot, College of William and Mary" (unpublished manuscript, William and Mary Center for Archaeological Research, 2006), 37.

about eighteen feet in diameter. There was a one-foot opening at the top for ventilation in the summer and for a stovepipe in the winter.<sup>287</sup> Portions of the front yard of the main building also were investigated in 2006 by another team of archaeologists looking for remnants of a colonial garden. During the work ten cannonballs weighing twelve pounds each were found in the same stratum several feet below the surface.<sup>288</sup> The cannonballs were probably used with an 1857 Napoleon cannon, a favorite weapon of General George B. McClellan, whose troops occupied Williamsburg and the College after the May 1862 battle.<sup>289</sup>

### **The Wise Light Infantry**

On 24 July 1871 Virginia Governor Gilbert C. Walker appointed Colonel Ewell, Randolph Harrison, and Captain Richard Wise, professor of chemistry at the College (1869-1881), as examiners for the reorganization of the volunteer militia for Williamsburg and James City County.<sup>290</sup> Called the Wise Light Infantry, it was commanded by Wise, who had been one of the founders of the College's student company before the war and during the war attained his rank in service under General J.E.B. Stuart. Wise's Infantry became part of a congressional debate in February 1872 when College President Ewell was seeking reparation payments for Civil War damages by Union troops. A number of congressmen strongly opposed the bill, and they learned about two events, which questioned the College's loyalty to the Union. Wise's infantry was accused of disturbing "a racially-mixed Republican [Party] meeting in Williamsburg and, at a state fair in Richmond, had made a public display of disloyalty to the government by tearing the initials 'U.S.' from their uniforms."<sup>291</sup> Ewell and Wise strongly denied the charges. Ewell explained the Williamsburg incident, stating that Wise's group appeared after hearing there was a

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<sup>287</sup> Ibid. The tent, devised in 1857, was named for its inventor, Henry H. Sibley. It was in popular use by federal troops in the first two years—1861 and 1862—of the war.

<sup>288</sup> Josh Eftekhari-Asl, "Special Topics in Garden Archaeology: The Landscape of the Sir Christopher Wren Building" (unpublished collection of student papers from the class of Instructor Steve Archer, College of William and Mary, 2006), 9.

<sup>289</sup> Ibid.

<sup>290</sup> Ewell Papers, Series Two, Folder 20, Swem Archives, CWM.

<sup>291</sup> Chapman, "Ewell," 214.

problem. Affidavits from two members of the unit, both former Union soldiers, indicate that there was no exhibition of disloyalty at the fair. Wise also offered to resign his faculty position if he jeopardized the College's chances of the federal payment.<sup>292</sup> Later in December 1872, the Congress voted to deny William and Mary's claim. However, three more claims were filed over the next decade before attaining Congressional approval in 1893.

An 1875 photograph shows the Wise volunteer unit, whose membership "originally [was] composed to a considerable extent of students of the College"<sup>293</sup> in front of the College's main building, which served as its headquarters with a lecture room used as its armory. Later in 1883, concerned about insurance on the building, the board of visitors requested that the company move its armory from the main building to the nearby Brafferton. It is said that Dr. Richard Wise's son, Alexander Wise, born in the William and Mary President's House in 1873, during his childhood "served as a marker in the military company," which his father organized and commanded.<sup>294</sup> There is scarce information on the Wise Light Infantry, which apparently was in existence at least for ten years, through 1885. There are several newspaper accounts noting its participation in a celebration on 23 October 1879, marking the ninety-eighth anniversary of the Battle of Yorktown when the unit assembled with a number of other volunteer military units, including the Richmond Light Artillery Blues, the Old Dominion Guard of Portsmouth, the Norfolk Light Artillery Blues, and the Peninsular Guards of Hampton.<sup>295</sup>

In the spring of 1881 the Wise Light Infantry was in need of new uniforms so the unit could look its best in October for the centennial of the Yorktown Battle, which the U.S. president was expected to attend with a host of other Washington dignitaries. Williamsburg merchants, wanting to help the volunteers secure new uniforms, distributed a circular to other merchants throughout the country asking for donations—money or items to be converted to money—to pay

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<sup>292</sup> Ibid., 215-216.

<sup>293</sup> "Minutes of the Board of Visitors," 13 December 1883, William and Mary College Record from 4 July 1860 to 26 June 1902, 231. Swem Archives, CWM.

<sup>294</sup> Jennings Cropper Wise, *Col. John Wise of England and Virginia, His Ancestors and Descendants* (Richmond, Va.: The Bell Book and Stationery Co., Inc. 1918), 229.

<sup>295</sup> "Preparing to Celebrate," *New York Sun*, 24 October 1879, 3.

for their new apparel. The circular said the unit “only lacks a little means to make it the peer of any.” *The New York Times*, in a 21 April 1881 editorial, made light of the request, but after several laughs suggested, “among the members of our City regiments there must be many who have partially worn-out uniforms which they can spare,” the editorial said. “Let them send these without delay, and without any expectation of reward other than that of an approving conscience.”<sup>296</sup> It is not known whether enough money was raised for the new uniforms.

Nevertheless, the unit appeared with Wise as its commanding captain at the Yorktown festivities.

An anonymous account in the *Virginia Gazette* some thirty-one years later recalled the Wise Light Infantry traveled by train some twelve miles from Williamsburg to Yorktown: “The track was being finished just ahead of us,” the writer said.<sup>297</sup> The rails from Richmond to Newport News were completed and a spur track was laid from Lee Hall to Yorktown so the dignitaries from Washington could arrive in a quick, safe manner. The last known account of the unit’s activities came on 4 March 1885 at the inauguration of President Grover Cleveland. The *National Republican*, a Washington, D.C., newspaper, reported that among the Virginia units participating in the inaugural parade was the Wise Light Infantry with Captain Wise.<sup>298</sup>

By 1881 William and Mary’s enrollment had dropped to three students. Throughout most of its history, William and Mary was never self-supporting and always relied on tuition and fees to help finance the operation. Now with virtually no students enrolled, there was insufficient money to pay professors to teach enough courses to attract students. It was the same old triangle problem—not enough students to provide sufficient funds to hire enough faculty to attract enough students—that had plagued the College for a century or more. In June 1882, the board decided there was no way the school could operate in the fall, but it never formally closed. The board continued to meet and Ewell, at a salary of \$400 annually, spent four to six hours a day on campus, working from the President’s House, taking care of the buildings and grounds and

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<sup>296</sup> *The New York Times*, 21 April 1881, 4

<sup>297</sup> *Virginia Gazette*, June 23, 1910, 3.

<sup>298</sup> *National Republican*, 4 March 1885, 3.

keeping alive the corporation—“the president and masters”—as decreed in the royal charter. He also made sure that the bell was rung annually in October to open the school year. Just prior to the dormant years, Ewell tried to interest the Virginia legislature in making William and Mary a state school and appropriating funds for its operation. When that proposal failed he sought money again from the General Assembly for the operation of a “normal school,” to educate male teachers. That effort gained traction, but the board of visitors rejected it because the school might be forced to become coeducational. At that time the only coeducational school in Virginia was Hampton Institute, a private school for the education of black students. Ewell renewed pleas again in 1882, but few people listened.

Finally in 1884, the General Assembly established the State Female Normal School in Farmville, but there was no male “normal school.” After two failed attempts in 1886 and 1887 to appropriate \$10,000 for William and Mary to become the male “normal school,” a bill was adopted on 14 February 1888, and the College was back in business.<sup>299</sup> At age 78, Ewell, however, was tired and worn out and decided to resign to allow a younger man to lead the institution. Lyon Gardiner Tyler, son of United States President John Tyler, was selected as president. Tyler, who had taught one year at the College, was a Richmond lawyer, who also operated a private night school there.

Given the fact that Tyler had only \$10,000 from which to pay the salaries of William and Mary faculty, he was able to hire only six, seven counting himself, and provide some funds for Ewell, impoverished when he retired. Nevertheless, Tyler found highly capable professors—“The Seven Wise Men” as they have been called.<sup>300</sup> Most of these men remained at the school for many years, though some professorships occasionally changed. By 1890 there were 104 students

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<sup>299</sup> *New York Times*, 15 February 1888.

<sup>300</sup> In addition to Tyler who also served as professor of moral science, political economy, and civil government, other professors were Dr. J. Lesslie Hall, professor of English language; Thomas Jefferson Stubbs, professor of mathematics; the Reverend Lyman B. Wharton, professor of ancient languages; Charles E. Bishop, professor of modern languages; Dr. Van F. Garrett, professor of natural science; and Hugh S. Bird, professor of methods and pedagogics.

registered at the College and literary societies that flourished from the 1830s to 1860 had been revived. The first student-run publication, the *William and Mary Monthly* appeared in 1890.

In 1890 William and Mary still sought reparations of Civil War damages from the federal government. The House of Representatives Committee on Education and Labor issued report number 3018 to accompany “H. R. 11853” on 26 August 1890 saying that damages should be paid because the destruction took place “in friendly territory” and should be treated as though it happened in Washington and Philadelphia. The U.S. Government “took possession of the property for its own purposes, excluding the owners, and preventing them from taking any measures to secure its protection.”<sup>301</sup> Major Henry Churchill Semple of Alabama, an attorney, who had been hired by the College to help get a reparations bill passed, wanted Ewell to come to Washington to talk with congressmen again. But the President Emeritus demurred. He told Tyler that he did not have the appropriate clothes to wear. Some believed that Ewell honestly did not have the money to buy new clothes. Semple agreed to pay for Ewell’s trip and stay in Washington, and Tyler notified General William B. Taliaferro, president of the board of visitors that “the President Emeritus had to be costumed in fact he had to be dressed.”<sup>302</sup> Tyler arranged for Ewell to get \$70 for a suit and other appropriate accessories and gave him a letter to take to McAdams and Berry, clothiers in Richmond “to rig the colonel out.”<sup>303</sup> In the letter to Taliaferro, Tyler also asked him to support the action since Tyler felt he had “exceeded the limits of my authority. It was important to act at once as every day is precious in Washington.”<sup>304</sup>

Ewell made the visit to Washington in the late winter or spring of 1891. Nevertheless, it took the House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate two more years before it passed the legislation in January and February 1893, respectively. On 3 March 1893, the day before he left office, President Benjamin Harrison signed the bill into law and conveyed \$64,000 to the school

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<sup>301</sup> House of Representatives Report, No. 3018, 2.

<sup>302</sup> William B. Taliaferro Papers, 65 T15, Group I, Box 13, folder 6, Swem Archives, CWM.

<sup>303</sup> Ibid.

<sup>304</sup> Ibid.

for war damages.<sup>305</sup> Two years later Ewell was dead, but his legacy still lives as the person who saved the College during the war and postwar years when threats of its demise arose almost monthly. Today a building on campus is named for him, and a mathematics award is given annually in his name. He is best remembered for his stubborn loyalty to the College—symbolically represented by his bell-ringing prowess.

By the time students returned to the College in 1888, their attitude toward the Civil War had been greatly muted. Those men who came to campus primarily wanted to obtain their college education so they could teach in the local Virginia public school systems. While there were literary treatises on the “Lost Cause,” what postwar Southerners called the Civil War, the students’ attitude was to move forward and help create a better life in the aftermath of a destructive conflict that had significantly altered their future lives.

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<sup>305</sup> *Richmond (Va.) Dispatch*, 4 March 1893.

## Chapter Four

### The College in World Wars I and II

The student-soldier in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries became the citizen-soldiers of the twentieth century during both World Wars as they left campus when called to active duty, returning, for the most part, only after the conflicts ended. During both wars, the College suffered from a lack of male students and was forced to take dramatic action to keep the institution in business. Some William and Mary alumni, continuing the heritage of the previous two centuries, rose to prominence in military service in the army, navy and coast guard.

Through the first decade of the twentieth century, Williamsburg was a quiet, sleepy community of about a thousand people, including college students. So tranquil was the town that in 1912 it did not hold an election. The *Richmond Times-Dispatch* reported 26 June: “Yesterday was Election Day in Williamsburg, Virginia, but officials forgot all about it and failed to open the polls. Some of the candidates were probably glad.”<sup>306</sup> A year later, City Council declined to pay the town clockmaker \$50 annually to wind the clock in the Bruton Church tower.<sup>307</sup>

The College was in the same sleepy mode. Uneventful commencement activities concluded in late June and few people realized that, across the Atlantic, twilight was falling on the great royal empires of Europe as their politics were interwoven into a labyrinth of military alliances. On the afternoon of 28 July 1914, a Serbian nationalist killed Archduke Francis Ferdinand, heir to the Habsburg throne, and his wife, Princess Sophie, in Sarajevo. Their assassinations lit the fuse that exploded Europe into warring madness with Germany soon attacking to the west, Russia attacking Germany, and Austro-Hungarian forces moving into Serbia. Within two months, a conflict of worldwide proportions engulfed Europe.

President Woodrow Wilson pledged the neutrality of the United States, but on the William and Mary campus, little attention was given the European war during the 1914-1915 academic

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<sup>306</sup> *Richmond (Va.) Times-Dispatch*, 26 June 1912, microfilm, Swem Lib., CWM.

<sup>307</sup> *Ibid.* 25 April 1913.

year. *The William and Mary Literary Magazine* produced by students, had one lone mention of the conflict in a fictional story about the fall of Berlin and the end of the war.<sup>308</sup> *The Flat Hat*, the student-run campus newspaper, also had but one editorial comment. The editors expressed great concern that “the college is not the place to institute military training... [and what] will be the tragic results of furthering the militaristic spirit at this time?”<sup>309</sup> While the student newspaper’s stance was opposite to the long-standing tradition of previous William and Mary students bearing arms, it was in line with the majority feeling of the American public and students—isolationists who wanted to stay clear of the European conflict. The student paper also called upon college men across the country to rally to the support of a national Collegiate Anti-Militarism League.<sup>310</sup> It probably, then, was not his military rank, but rather his position as President Woodrow Wilson’s personal physician that resulted in Rear Admiral Cary Travers Grayson<sup>311</sup> being invited as the alumni speaker during the multiday commencement program in June 1915.

During the 1915-1916-school term, *The William and Mary Literary Magazine* had two unusual articles. One was a verse titled “A Dream of the Trenches” by senior John Waller Smith Jr., who wrote: “Once when the Bursting booms thundering around me, struck down a comrade—a faint cry in the awful din, a sob-broken prayer rose from the trenches—turning around I saw, O God.”<sup>312</sup> The second was an essay on “Diplomatic Negotiations Leading up to the Present European War” by assistant student editor R. L. Combs.<sup>313</sup>

### **DuPont Powder Company established**

*The Flat Hat* had no student editorial comments on the European fighting during the 1915-1916 academic year. There were, however, two war-related news stories on the paper’s front page.

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<sup>308</sup> *William and Mary Literary Magazine* 22, no. 3 (February 1915): 115. The magazine was published by the Phoenix and Philomathean Literary societies.

<sup>309</sup> *The Flat Hat*, 20 April 1915, 2.

<sup>310</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>311</sup> Grayson was a Phi Beta Kappa graduate in 1898 and gained his medical degree from the University of the South.

<sup>312</sup> *William and Mary Literary Magazine* 23, no. 2 (December 1915): 49.

<sup>313</sup> *Ibid.*, 23, no. 3 (February 1916): 78.

One was about a speech by novelist Henry Sydnor Harrison relating his experience covering the early stage of the war and the need for Americans to help with “War Relief.”<sup>314</sup> The other was a story about the purchase of more than 3,000 acres about five miles northeast of campus to construct a plant to manufacture “munitions of war.”<sup>315</sup> The duPont Powder Co., a branch of E. I. duPont Nemours of Wilmington, Delaware, bought the land and later built, and operated the plant. The site along the York River, where Cheatham Annex, a U.S. Navy facility, is now located, began to employ hundreds then thousands of workers. In early March 1918, *The Flat Hat* reported a continued boom at the community of Penniman, a “company town” with housing and other necessities for nearly 10,000 workers. With more workers, there was endless construction at the plant and on nearby property. At one time a permit was obtained “to construct 600 single-family residences for employees,” the student paper reported.<sup>316</sup>

Williamsburg “sidewalks were formerly almost empty, now are crowded with busy comers and goers.”<sup>317</sup> The College rented Ewell Hall (the old College hotel) to duPont for dormitory space since a new male housing unit (Tyler Hall) had just been built. “Just what value and effect this increased population will have upon Williamsburg [and the College] is somewhat difficult to predict,” *The Flat Hat* said, but merchants will profit, and hotels and restaurants will enjoy “ever flowing clientele.”<sup>318</sup> Initially producing only black powder, the plant later began “to fill shells with high explosives.” Every train brought families from throughout the East Coast looking for jobs at the plant which was paying “attractive wages,” much higher than nearby areas like businesses in Williamsburg that could not keep pace.<sup>319</sup> Land along the York River, about six miles from campus, was transformed into a port to transport munitions.<sup>320</sup>

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<sup>314</sup> *The Flat Hat*, 18 January 1916, 1.

<sup>315</sup> *Ibid.*, 7 March 1916, 1.

<sup>316</sup> *Ibid.*, 6 March 1918, 1.

<sup>317</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>318</sup> *Ibid.*, 27 March 1918, 1.

<sup>319</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>320</sup> *Ibid.*, 6 March 1918, 1.

## The Campus “in War”

An October 1916 edition of *The Flat Hat* reported that a number of William and Mary students and a few recent alumni had attended military camps during the summer. Several were able to get discharged in time to return to the College while others were hoping to return later in the year.<sup>321</sup> In November 1916, Wilson won reelection to the presidency with the campaign slogan, "He kept us out of war!" In the late winter, the debate topic among the several schools within the William and Mary League was: Resolved that the Congress should enact a law establishing universal compulsory military training.<sup>322</sup> In the thirty months since the beginning of the European War through early 1917, there were no known campus debates over whether the United States should enter the conflict.

However, by early 1917, Germany announced a decision to embark on total submarine warfare against all shipping, even that of neutral nations, like the United States. That action changed attitudes. College President Lyon G. Tyler, in a speech during a mass campus meeting held on 29 March to discuss the conflict in Europe, decried Germany's use of unrestricted submarine warfare. "To slaughter unarmed men is bad enough," he said, "but it is calculated to make any person's blood boil to hear of women and children being murdered on the high seas in this practice of wholesale piracy."<sup>323</sup> *The Flat Hat*, reporting on the meeting, "Faculty & Students Declare for the Rights of Humanity," said students and faculty members adopted a strong anti-German resolution, which was sent to President Wilson, who had visited campus earlier in May 1916.

Some students a month before the mass meeting had begun agitating for military instruction on campus. In fact, *The Flat Hat* editorially on 6 March urged some form of student

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<sup>321</sup> *Ibid.*, 17 October 1916, 1.

<sup>322</sup> *Ibid.*, 6 March 1917, 1.

<sup>323</sup> *Ibid.*, 3 April 1917, 1

military training,<sup>324</sup> quite a change from its stance three years earlier when it stood against any form of military activity on college campuses. Just a month before the declaration of war, *The Flat Hat* reported on meeting between Samuel H. Hubbard Jr., athletic director, and W. W. Sale, Virginia adjutant general, who explained “rifles and ammunition would be furnished to a school having a uniformed corps of cadets exceeding 40 in number, having military instruction and a suitable firing range.”<sup>325</sup> The Board of Visitors also would have to post a bond to cover the value of the granted property. General Sale said the instructional courses could be developed, and the school could hire a military instructor. A rifle range was already on campus having been established a year earlier by the new rifle club.

On 6 April 1917 at 1:18 p.m., the United States declared war against Germany and the “Central Powers,” with President Wilson declaring, “The world must be made safe for democracy.”<sup>326</sup> Dr. James Southall Wilson, professor of history, reported it “was a memorable day” as some of the older students in Williamsburg rushed “to leave immediately and many alumni rushed to the training camps as soon as they were opened.” He said the campus “at some hours looked like a military barracks. The lecture rooms rang with patriotic outbursts. No such scenes had been known in the college since the spring of 1861.”<sup>327</sup>

A few days after war was declared, William and Mary students organized a voluntary campus battalion under the command of freshman Walter Finnall Cross Ferguson, and daily drills were held from 2:30 to 4:30 p.m. on campus.<sup>328</sup> The student newspaper reported that several faculty members also were drilling with the student company. College President Tyler hired a “Captain Puller” of the Richmond Blues (a famed Virginia militia unit from Civil War days) to command the W&M Battalion. By late April 1917, *The Flat Hat* editors began to publish notices

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<sup>324</sup> Ibid., 6 March 1917, 1.

<sup>325</sup> Ibid.

<sup>326</sup> Woodrow Wilson’s speech was before a joint session of Congress on 2 April 1917.

<sup>327</sup> Dr. James Southall Wilson in Arthur Kyle David, ed., *Virginia Communities in War Time* (Richmond, Va.: The Executive Committee, 1926), 6: 604.

<sup>328</sup> *The Flat Hat*, 17 April 1917, 1. Students Richard Watson Copeland, junior; L. H. Maynard, sophomore; M. Ellis, freshman; M. M. Lewis, sophomore, and a student named Weikert took charge of the drills.

of student enlistments in the army. Before the end of the school year, the paper reported that “with few exceptions,”<sup>329</sup> the entire student body signed the pledge to support the [military] system and to drill regularly. Due to the mounting crisis, College officials decided to close school two weeks early and cancelled all final ceremonies.<sup>330</sup> Students requested an early end to the session so they could participate in a military summer camp under way at Fort Myer, Virginia.

### **Balfour War Mission**

In May 1917, the College took central stage during a major national event—the Balfour War Mission. Arthur James Balfour, former prime minister (1902-1905) of Great Britain and British Foreign Secretary (1916-1919), headed a commission of British governmental and military officials who came to the United States within a month of Wilson’s declaration of war. Their purpose was to secure immediate help from America in the war effort. Balfour succeeded in getting rapid deployment of United States’ destroyers as merchant marine convoy-escorts against German U-Boats, which were a constant threat to British food supplies and munitions traveling across the Atlantic Ocean.<sup>331</sup> As part of diplomatic strategy involving Balfour, it was suggested that Commission members, who were graduates of Cambridge or Oxford, should be invited to accept membership in Phi Beta Kappa (PBK), the highest-ranking American academic honorary. The William and Mary chapter immediately decided to elect the commissioners into their ranks.

On 17 May, College President Tyler and Robert Morton Hughes, rector of the college and president of the College’s PBK chapter, traveled to Washington, D.C. Garbed in academic regalia, PBK national officials and Tyler and Hughes presented a membership certificate and gold key, “the highest honor of a literary character that can be conferred in this country,”<sup>332</sup> to thirteen members of the Commission, including Balfour. In his acceptance remarks Balfour spoke of the

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<sup>329</sup> Ibid., 24 April 1917, 1.

<sup>330</sup> Ibid.

<sup>331</sup> “Phi Beta Kappa and the British Commission,” *Phi Beta Kappa Key* (October, 1917): 198-214. These remarks were from Robert M. Hughes during the presentations.

<sup>332</sup> Ibid.

on-going meetings between the United States and Great Britain, noting they were of an international and political nature rather than in the “strictest and narrowest sense academic.” This attests, he said to “a great truth, that learning and study, if they be divorced from the realities of life and social life, lose more than half their worth.”<sup>333</sup>

Balfour further explained that the world crisis “of today... touches the whole world, not only America alone, not in Europe only, but wherever the ideals of Christian civilization have come to flourish.” The war, he ventured, is a threat to “the future freedom of the world and success in our efforts means the future civilization of the world.”<sup>334</sup> Once again, the College found itself in a quasi-military situation not really of its own making. The PBK presentation was in response to a government effort to recognize the Commission in a way different from military or political honors.

### **The College Supports the War**

Before the war, William and Mary had enjoyed its biggest enrollment boom, peaking with 244 students in 1906 and maintaining the level with 235 men attending classes in 1915; a year later 224 students were on the rolls.<sup>335</sup> By the fall of 1917, however, President Tyler reported that enrollment was down—the “chief reason...was the war”<sup>336</sup> and Registrar Herbert L. Bridges reported enrollment had dropped by half, to less than 115 students.<sup>337</sup> Furthermore, Tyler explained, “After [enrolling], however, quite a number of our men quit study because of the opportunities afforded for work in the duPont plant” near Williamsburg. “Still in spite of interruptions created by the war, which assumed the character of visiting troops and drives for

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<sup>333</sup> Charles Hanson Towne, *The Balfour Visit: How America Received Her Distinguished Guest; and the Significance of the Conferences in the United States in 1917* (New York: George H. Doran Company, 1917), 61-62.

<sup>334</sup> Ibid.

<sup>335</sup> Board of Visitors Minutes, 1906-1919, President’s Report, Swem Archives, CWM.

<sup>336</sup> Ibid.

<sup>337</sup> Tyler Papers, Box 9, Registrar’s Report, 1916-1917, Swem Archives, CWM.

Liberty Bonds and Red Cross, there was a pretty fair amount of work done and there was little, if any cause of concern as to the behavior of the student body.”<sup>338</sup>

When the 1917 fall term began, those male students remaining in school focused on the war. They held meetings and raised money to support the Red Cross nationwide drive to solicit \$500,000 for the work among the American soldiers at the front. Substitutes were appointed for those professors who volunteered, and major curriculum changes were made to meet War Department educational suggestions. For example, European history was taught “to show both the remote and the nearer causes of the war and to prove to young men that their country had risen in her strength ‘to make the world safe for Democracy.’”<sup>339</sup> French language classes were taught to help potential soldiers in France, while mathematics, physics, and chemistry were explained from a military perspective. Patriotic poetry was even read in literature classes. Bridges said the courses “aroused emotions of patriotism among both students and professors to an exaggerated degree.”<sup>340</sup> There is no record of student opposition once the Congress made the declaration of war.

With full support of the administration and faculty, the voluntary unit in the spring evolved into a full-fledged military training unit by the fall of 1917, with a khaki uniform adopted for the student battalion. Captain Samuel M. Taylor of the Virginia Polytechnic Institute was hired to teach military tactics and chemistry. In an effort to retain students, the faculty voted to grant two credits for military training. Taylor became commandant of the College’s volunteer battalion with students P. M. Frye, first lieutenant-adjutant, and E. A. Stephens, second lieutenant-quartermaster.<sup>341</sup> Although the College remained an all-male school, local women participated frequently in activities such as dances and dramatic presentations. Two local women also were named sponsors of the two military companies and their photographs appeared in the school’s 1917 yearbook.

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<sup>338</sup> Board of Visitors Minutes, 1906-1919.

<sup>339</sup> Arthur Kyle Davis, ed., *Virginia Communities in War Time*, 604.

<sup>340</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>341</sup> The battalion was formed into two companies with student leaders J. D. Carneal Jr., W.F.C. Ferguson, Van Franklin Garrett, Herbert G. Chandler, L. Brittingham, and J. T. Graham.

By November 1917 *The Flat Hat*<sup>342</sup> was reporting “W&M in the field,” listing those graduates and former students who were in the military. Faculty members also began to leave for service. Dr. Donald W. Davis, professor of biology, enlisted as an army first lieutenant and served in Europe at the frontlines, and Earnest J. Ogelsby, professor of mathematics, left in mid-term for an army assignment. By January 1918, Dr. Harry Eastman Bennett, professor of education, had left to take up Y.M.C.A. work in Europe with U.S. troops, and Coach Hubbard, assistant instructor and athletic director, enlisted and became a lieutenant. He lost his life shortly after arriving in France—the lone faculty war casualty. Registrar Bridges reported that 354 students and alumni of the College entered the army. Of that total, two were infantry colonels—C. Maury Cralle and John Womack Wright—and two colonels in the medical corps—William E. Vose and W. D. Webb. Additionally, there were three lieutenant colonels, seven majors, thirty-five captains, forty-eight first lieutenants, thirty-nine second lieutenants, and fifty-six non-commissioned officers. There were eighty-five additional William and Mary students in the navy, with three lieutenant commanders, one captain, four senior lieutenants, and eight junior lieutenants. A total of twenty-five alumni and students died during the war. *The Flat Hat* reported in its 9 January 1918<sup>343</sup> edition that alumnus Lt. E. W. Younge was one of the first American officers to be wounded in the fighting in France and another former student, Lt. Frank M. Mitchell, commanded the battery that fired the first U.S. shell against the Germans. Registrar Bridges, in his wartime narrative, also recorded that Colonel Wright served on the staff of General John J. Pershing in France, and alumnus John N. Greene was the first U.S. soldier to receive a Distinguished Service Medal for his brave conduct in March 1918. He also received the French Croix de Guerre.<sup>344</sup>

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<sup>342</sup> The weekly student newspaper, first published in 1911, was the most regular publication on campus and for the Williamsburg community from 1911 until 1925. The *Virginia Gazette* was resurrected in Williamsburg in 1925. It had moved to Richmond in 1780. No daily papers from nearby cities operated bureaus in Williamsburg until after World War II.

<sup>343</sup> *The Flat Hat*, 9 January 1918, 2.

<sup>344</sup> Arthur Kyle Davis, ed., *Virginia Communities in War Time*, 605-606.

In February 1918, the student newspaper reported that students, like citizens across the country, were beginning to feel the war pinch. Conservation was practiced everywhere although rationing was not invoked, as it was during World War II. At the College cafeteria, there was one wheatless and one meatless meal a day, and four porkless, two wheatless and one meatless day a week. The College library closed at night to conserve the coal supply for the power plant that provided the campus with electricity.<sup>345</sup>

Everything associated with the military, no matter how large or how small, caught the attention of the William and Mary students. A thirty-one “motor truck” convoy, making its way from Baltimore to Newport News, attracted much notice from the students when the caravan passed through Williamsburg and stopped overnight at the College.<sup>346</sup> Handled by a detachment of soldiers, the large Packard trucks were destined for embarkation at Newport News for Europe and the war. Once parked at the College, the soldier-drivers “enjoyed supper with the students in the dining hall” and later were given sleeping quarters. After breakfast, again with the students, the drivers “oiled up and formed a line down Duke of Gloucester Street,” *The Flat Hat* reported. Their commander, a “Captain Barclay” told the students he “wouldn’t hesitate to tackle any job in the army if I could pick my men from the motor truck boys. They are loyal, hard hitting, fitting men—the kind that go over the top.”<sup>347</sup>

### **Women Enter William and Mary**

As the war continued students left the College at an alarming rate, and College President Tyler faced another financial dilemma. With the reduction of enrollment, the all-male William and Mary also was losing the needed financial support—tuition and fees—to sustain the institution. Tyler feared that by the fall 1918 term the student numbers might be just a handful, forcing the

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<sup>345</sup> *The Flat Hat*, 12 February 1918, 2.

<sup>346</sup> *The Flat Hat*, 27 March 1918, 1.

<sup>347</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

possible closing of the College, but an opportunity loomed that would bring female students to campus and with them the much needed revenue.

In the spring of 1918 legislation was introduced in the General Assembly by State Senator Aubrey E. Strode of Amherst County, permitting the College to “embark upon an experiment” to include women in the student body. Strode's legislation<sup>348</sup> was the latest in a series which he began to introduce biannually in 1910, trying to establish a women's college at the University of Virginia. Probably at the urging of Tyler, his 1918 legislation included William and Mary; it was to be completely a coeducational institution. Unlike the university, no women's college was proposed.<sup>349</sup> The Senate Committee on Public Institutions and Education favorably reported the bill without amendment, and the W&M Board of Visitors offered its endorsement on 12 February. By a vote of 19-13, the legislation passed the State Senate on 19 February 1918, but opponents began stronger attacks when the bill reached the House of Delegates. After the Senate vote, *The Flat Hat* questioned the reasoning behind the bill and suggested that if it was merely the activation of the principle of coeducation in Virginia then it could probably better be introduced elsewhere and not at William and Mary, where “the noblest tradition [all male] would be sacrificed.”<sup>350</sup>

College Rector Hughes, who voted against the board's support of the bill, challenged that the legislation would “absolutely destroy the historic atmosphere of the College.”<sup>351</sup> James N. Stubbs, vice-rector of the College and a delegate from Gloucester County, led the opposition. Stubbs charged that Strode's bill was in violation of earlier state statutes, which created the “State Normal School” for males at William and Mary in 1888, and the bill in 1906, which made the College a state institution of higher education. Stubbs' argument, however, was not sustained in the House. Several other delegates tried unsuccessfully to attach amendments either to gut or severely diminish the impact of the bill. They, too, failed. Finally, the bill to admit women to

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<sup>348</sup> Virginia State Senate Bill No. 63.

<sup>349</sup> Tyler had earlier supported the Women's Equal Suffrage League of Virginia and Strode's previous bills.

<sup>350</sup> *The Flat Hat*, 27 February 1918, 1.

<sup>351</sup> Robert Morton Hughes Papers, Lyon G. Tyler Correspondence, 1916-1918, Box, 2, Swem Archives, CWM.

William and Mary was adopted on 8 March 1918 by a 57 to 33 vote, and was signed into law three days later by Governor Westmoreland Davis, a staunch supporter.

After the bill's adoption, *The Flat Hat* changed its tune and suggested that the College "would profit" from the bill by the construction of new dormitories, a dining hall, and new gymnasium. "College life here will without doubt be altered when MARY is allowed to enter with her brother WILLIAM."<sup>352</sup> More than a month after the legislation, letters continued to be printed in the student newspaper against coeducation at the College. One unidentified student acknowledged that the war had hit the College hard, "but William and Mary has passed through greater calamities and is still alive. Why must co-education be brought here in the guise of keeping her alive [with the loss of male students because of the war]?"<sup>353</sup> The College became the first school in Virginia to go coeducational.<sup>354</sup> Most of the William and Mary students who had gone off to war knew nothing about the major social change until they returned home sometime after the November 1918 armistice.

### **Student Military Training**

Student military training had continued throughout the 1917-1918 school year under the direction of Captain Taylor, and in April 1918, in an effort to give "the two companies a much more dignified appearance," all students without uniforms were excluded from drill ranks. *The Flat Hat* said Taylor was reluctant to take the action because, first, it was a hardship on some students to purchase the uniforms; second, students received one credit for the drills; and third, he did not want to discriminate against anyone. Nevertheless, he finally initiated the rule. Regardless of Taylor's action, "military at William and Mary has been a decided success... [and] is to be encouraged at the college for various reasons," including patriotism, being a valuable mode of

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<sup>352</sup> *The Flat Hat*, 13 March 1918, 1.

<sup>353</sup> *The Flat Hat*, 24 April 1918, 1.

<sup>354</sup> Virginia Tech admitted women in 1921, but the University of Virginia did not admit undergraduate females until 1970, although females were admitted to graduate and professional programs in 1920.

exercise and development and the value of its discipline, the student newspaper editorialized.<sup>355</sup>

The student battalion was asked in mid-May by army personnel to secure and guard a downed military airplane from nearby Langley Field. The plane had crashed near Williamsburg's C & O depot, on the Bozarth Farm about six blocks from campus. Student-Captain J. D. Carneal detailed men to the site where they remained throughout the night until personnel from Langley arrived and took charge of the accident scene.<sup>356</sup>

With women scheduled to enroll in the fall, President Tyler had achieved a way to keep his college open despite the absence of scores of male students. His opportunity to retain at least some males also was enhanced in June 1918 when the War Department created the Students' Army Training Corps (SATC), which would allow certain colleges, William and Mary among them, to provide instruction on the campus so the men could more quickly go into officers' training and obtain their commissions. Tyler promptly applied for a program, and the College was selected in early August.

Registrar Herbert L. Bridges dispatched letters to various enrolled students who had inquired about the military training. Rising senior James T. "Jimmie" Jones of Blackstone, Virginia, like other students, received the 10 August 1918 letter that said, "We expect to have an officer to train all students in accordance with the plans of the [war] department.... You should not hesitate to make your plans to be at William and Mary next session. We are preparing to look after your intentions in every way."<sup>357</sup> A War Department communication to students was clearer, "Enter college if you are fitted to do so, or return to college if you are already enrolled, and enlist in the Students' Army Training Corps."<sup>358</sup> A number of students returned to William and Mary in the fall of 1918 as evidenced by the SATC numbers.

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<sup>355</sup> *The Flat Hat*, 17, April 1918, 2.

<sup>356</sup> *Ibid.*, 15 May 1918, 1.

<sup>357</sup> Letter of 10 August 1918 from Bridges to J. T. Jones, SATC papers, Swem Archives, CWM.

<sup>358</sup> Letter of 6 August 1918 from the U.S. War Department for dissemination to students, SATC papers, Swem Archives, CWM.

As a member of SATC, the student became a member of the United States Army and received a military uniform and drill instructions by War Department personnel.<sup>359</sup> Initially, the SATC course included 10 hours of military instruction weekly. Six hours were drill, rifle practice, and outdoor training, and four hours were academic work, such as mathematics, English, foreign languages, history, and science for which military credit was given. The War Department said male students should “remain in college until your call is reached under the Selective Service Law.”<sup>360</sup> The SATC program began at William and Mary 1 October 1918. Major William P. Stone, formerly professor of military science and tactics at Virginia Polytechnic Institute, served briefly as brigade commander and was replaced by Lieutenant, soon to be Captain, D. B. Van Dusen.<sup>361</sup> The Brafferton served as headquarters and barracks with a few rooms also in Old Taliaferro Hall and the old College hotel. The gymnasium served as the armory and post exchange, according to *TAPS*.<sup>362</sup> Early in the fall term, the SATC unit fielded its own football team before the regular W&M students returned to campus.<sup>363</sup> The student editors of *TAPS* wrote

Could there be a more fitting place to train men to serve the Stars and Stripes than at William and Mary—a spot so rich in tradition, so hallowed by noble deeds, the birthplace of liberty and truly the ‘Cradle of the Republic’? Have we not noble deeds of the past to spur us on as the champions of Humanity and Liberty? Surely, no S.A.T.C. unit can boast of a more glorious past. With our noble past, can we help but enter the work of becoming soldiers with our whole soul, mind and body? Surely no! We, as an S.A.T.C unit, must add to their glorious deeds and never let it be said that we allowed this glorious past to be sullied while entrusted to our care.<sup>364</sup>

Armistice came on 11 November and the SATC unit folded quickly after only six weeks of duty.

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<sup>359</sup> Ibid.

<sup>360</sup> Ibid.

<sup>361</sup> Van Dusen’s staff included Lieutenants S. R. Hetzer, drill master; Donnel Van Noppen, supply officer; and Wesley Taylor, personnel officer.

<sup>362</sup> A. J. Mapp, ed., *TAPS: Students’ Army Training Corps* 6 (December 1919): 9, Swem Archives, CWM. Student participants of the brief SATC program produced the commemorative newspaper.

<sup>363</sup> Ibid., 17-18.

<sup>364</sup> Ibid., 19.

## Department of Aeronautics

With the end of the war also came the end of Tyler's presidency and the beginning of the fifteen-year tenure of Dr. Julian Alvin Carroll Chandler,<sup>365</sup> who was known for his expansion projects, which nearly tripled the campus facilities. State funds began to pour into the support of William and Mary's construction of five dormitories, four administrative and classroom buildings, a new gymnasium, and the expansion of the library, all built within a twelve-year period. Enrollment also flourished with the return of men to campus, and the successful coeducational "experiment" became permanent. The military presence on campus with the SATC disappeared completely after the war. Because of its size, the College did not have a reserve officer training corps, which began elsewhere nationally in the 1920s. There were only about 1,200 students in the mid-1920s, with nearly half of them women.

One of Chandler's most ambitious ideas—a department of aeronautics—could be described as a pseudo-military organization that would develop on several other college campuses across the nation as an outgrowth of the highly successful army flight program of World War I. Therefore, the aeronautical initiative could have been intended to prepare students for future military service. Although the academic program lasted only three years (1931-1934) and was discontinued after Chandler's death, the program and its allied Flight Club attracted much national attention, including a visit on 13 March 1933 by internationally known aviatrix Amelia Earhart.

William and Mary's aeronautics effort, offering flight training and aviation theory, was second to Purdue University when it was incorporated into a college curriculum. Lieutenant-Colonel Earl Charles Popp was appointed director of the school that, during its existence, trained more than fifty students, with twenty-three earning a pilot's license. Assisting Popp as instructors were Julian Chandler, the president's son, and Yelverton O. Kent, a former student. A \$16,000 brick and steel building that served as offices, hangar, and maintenance shop was constructed in

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<sup>365</sup> A William and Mary alumnus, Chandler came to the College after serving ten years as superintendent of schools in Richmond, Virginia.

1931 at the College's airport about two miles northwest of the campus.<sup>366</sup> In 1933 the Flight Club won first place<sup>367</sup> in the Loening Inter-Collegiate Flight Competition, after placing third in the same event in 1932.

### **Isolationism and Prewar on Campus**

Outside of the aviation program, the College was devoid of any military involvement during the remainder of the decade. Under the presidency of John Stewart Bryan (1934-1942), owner of the Richmond newspapers, the campus enjoyed a quiet time where, like the national at large, isolationism was the *matr e* of the day. For example, on 11 November 1936 historian Douglas Southall Freeman told students that "radicalism" in Europe and America's isolationism was brought about because of the Treaty of Versailles, which "won" World War I, but "lost peace" because it tried to limit the military and naval forces of the nations. He also praised the "Peace Action Movement" at William and Mary and on college campuses nationwide. In joining, the students signed a pledge to aid "in the prevention of war, which I regard as the wrong means for the solution of international controversies."<sup>368</sup>

Like other colleges and universities in the United States, the World War II fighting that began in Europe in September 1939 when Germany invaded Poland became fodder for student newspaper comments in a nation that wanted to stay out of another European war. *The Flat Hat* columnist Carl Muecke, an apparent isolationist, cautioned that in "today's war news" you must read between the lines because of the censorship already in play.<sup>369</sup> Muecke's columns for the remainder of the fall semester focused weekly on the war, but then reverted to local campus topics beginning in early 1940. Occasionally, other war-related stories appeared, such as the report that Samuel Jaffe, a 1939 graduate, was fleeing Europe where he had been studying in Geneva. The paper said Secretary of State Cordell Hull had notified Jaffe's parents in Suffolk, Virginia, that he

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<sup>366</sup> *The Colonial Echo*, William and Mary yearbook, 1934 (pages unnumbered).

<sup>367</sup> Harvard University was second and the University of Minnesota was third.

<sup>368</sup> *The Flat Hat*, 17 November 1936, 1 & 6.

<sup>369</sup> *Ibid.*, 19 September 1939, 4

had left Geneva—“destination unknown.”<sup>370</sup> Over the next twenty-three months between January 1940 and December 1941, campus activity gradually included more and more discussions about the war events in Europe, such as lectures on international relations.

The June 1941 commencement speaker was General George Catlett Marshall, army chief of staff.<sup>371</sup> Speaking just six months before Pearl Harbor, Marshall told the seniors, “we find ourselves in a great catastrophe [referring to the ongoing European war] in which all our ideals are in dispute, the relationships... between citizens and the government—all are questioned, all are attacked. The things of the spirit, which have enabled this college to endure, which guided the great men of its early days, these seem to be trembling on the verge of the discard. The times demand courageous men with unselfish purpose and truly great ideals.”<sup>372</sup> In retrospect, Marshall’s challenge to the students seems prescient.

When fall term began in September 1941, a planned civil pilot training course was not offered as intended at the nearby college airport, but military engineers spent time surveying it for possible enlargement to assist nearby military installations, *The Flat Hat* said in late September edition.<sup>373</sup> Antiwar sentiments pervaded the Williamsburg campus as they did at schools throughout Virginia and much of the United States. Those views were the primary subject of a student editorial, which lamented that there were “soldiers again in Williamsburg and it looks like war for the navy,” because the administration of President Franklin D. Roosevelt took steps during the summer “which irrevocably commit us to helping England and Russia finish a dirty job.” The editorial continued:

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<sup>370</sup> Ibid., 26 September 1939, 1

<sup>371</sup> Marshall arranged for the British High Command (seven generals and admirals) visiting the U.S. in May 1943 to spend twenty-four “peaceful” hours of rest and relaxation (R&R) in Williamsburg. Marshall became enamored with the Williamsburg community when he visited the city to receive his honorary degree. Frank McCarthy Papers, Box 27, Folder 29, George C. Marshall Research Library, Lexington, Va.

<sup>372</sup> Larry I. Bland, ed., *The Papers of George Catlett Marshall* (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003), 2: 530-531.

<sup>373</sup> *The Flat Hat*, 23 September 1941, 1.

It is the end of a summer that ends our sincere belief in the hope of a neutral America. There is no hope for it; we must go down into the sewer and help sweep out the filthy mess. There will be nothing glorious or noble about this war.<sup>374</sup>

Those editorial views were emphasized several months later when a campus poll in late November showed that an overwhelming number of students not only were opposed to the United States entering the war, but also were opposed to sending U.S. planes and pilots to Great Britain. In the poll, 80.2 percent of the students responding said a resounding no to sending planes and pilots, while only 19.2 percent agreed.<sup>375</sup> There were no known college alumni who volunteered to join any Great Britain or British Commonwealth military forces between 1939 and 1941.

### **Pearl Harbor Attack**

Just five days after *The Flat Hat* published the antiwar poll, the world, the United States, Virginia, and William and Mary changed forever. The news of the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor in Hawaii broke across the campus during Sunday lunch on 7 December 1941. “I could show you a spot on the pavement between Barrett and Chandler [halls] where I was walking, returning from the cafeteria when someone called out the Pearl Harbor news!” Jeanne Schoenwolf Preston recalled.<sup>376</sup> In her diary, Annette Warren (Sirmon), wrote, “Something terrible happened today. War came. [The College boys] will all be going now, going to be killed. No one has been able to study today—not since 1:30 p.m. when we found out.”<sup>377</sup> Thomas Winfield Athey heard about it when he returned to his dormitory after lunch at Trinkle Hall. “Guys were running up and down the hall, yelling, ‘War!’ and ‘The Japs have bombed Pearl Harbor!’ while several were packing their bags to leave and join the army. I remember asking one of them, ‘Who’s at war and where the heck is Pearl Harbor?’”<sup>378</sup> H. Westcott Cunningham said he was “up in the dormitory and listening to [radio] bulletins that were coming through and hearing a report of the *Oklahoma*

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<sup>374</sup> Ibid., 4.

<sup>375</sup> Ibid. 2 December 1941, 1.

<sup>376</sup> War-time Memory Collection, 1941-1946, Jeanne Schoenwolf Preston, UA 66, Box 1, Swem Archives, CWM.

<sup>377</sup> Ibid., Annette Warren Sirmon, Box 1, Folder 83.

<sup>378</sup> Ibid., Thomas Winfield Athey, Box 1, Folder

being sent to the bottom of Pearl Harbor,” then another student turned and said, “I think my two brothers are on the *Oklahoma*.”<sup>379</sup>

The next day President Roosevelt addressed Congress and called for a declaration of war against the “Empire of Japan.” Congress took the action almost immediately against both Japan and Germany. The loudspeaker was turned on in the dining hall. Elizabeth Lyons Lascara recalled, “We were waiting for the President to tell us what we expected to hear... When the president had finished, they announced the National Anthem and we all stood up. There were tears falling down the faces of a few girls.”<sup>380</sup> Annette Warren’s diary for 8 December continued, “This miserable terrifying day. Classes this morning. It must all be a dream. Lunch today—the radio, the President’s speech, ‘The Star Spangled Banner,’ the kids I have known so long—serious, terrified around the table... I couldn’t help it; I started to cry. It was all just the same but then it wasn’t. They are being killed in Hawaii.”<sup>381</sup>

A notice in *The Flat Hat* of 9 December called for all men who had registered for Selective Service to report to Washington Hall, room 100 at 7:15 p.m. “to fill out the forms requested by National Headquarters of Selective Service.”<sup>382</sup> It was the paper’s only notice of war in that edition. A week later the paper devoted much of its front page to varied faculty opinions “on the war crisis.” Some like Dr. Warner W. Moss, professor of government, were supportive, saying “the longer it takes the more costly it will be, but it’s worth it;” others such as Edwin C. Rust, associate professor of fine arts, did not want to be quoted. Grace Warren Landrum, professor of English and dean of women, said, “We must be as resolute as our British cousins and I think the time has come for us to make personal sacrifices.”<sup>383</sup>

Many male students immediately went to Norfolk to enlist in the navy or to Richmond to enlist in the army. In many cases, in those first war days, neither military branch was able to

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<sup>379</sup> H. Westcott Cunningham, Oral History, 4, Swem Archives, CWM.

<sup>380</sup> “War and Remembrance,” *William and Mary* (Fall 1995): 14.

<sup>381</sup> Wartime Memory Collection, Annette Warren Sirmon, Box 1, Folder 83, Swem Archives, CWM.

<sup>382</sup> *The Flat Hat*, 9 December 1941, 1.

<sup>383</sup> *Ibid.*, 16 December 1941, 1.

accommodate all who wanted to enlist. Students were sent back to campus and asked to return after the semester ended, while others joined, but were told not to report until classes ended the following June. When second semester classes began in February 1942, there were fears of attacks on the East Coast of the United States, especially in areas of heavy military concentration such as the port of Hampton Roads, about twenty-five miles east of campus. *The Flat Hat* reported that the first daylight air raid practice was held on campus on 12 February, sandbags had been placed around the eighteenth-century statue of Lord Botetourt in the College yard, and about 1,200 sandbags had been prepared for use at various designated air raid shelters. J. Wilfred Lambert,<sup>384</sup> dean of men, was made the chief air raid warden for the College, which was divided into four sections for air raid responses.<sup>385</sup>

College President John Stewart Bryan, in the first edition of *The Alumni Gazette* after the war began, wrote that the College was operating “under the stress of a war of unparalleled scale and intensity.” In words similar to those he issued to the campus on 15 December 1941, Bryan explained how important it was to the nation for male students to stay in school. Later his words were modified to include graduating as soon as possible in order to help fill the army’s officer ranks. Responding to a recommendation from the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education of the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools, William and Mary changed its academic schedule, with the summer school curriculum becoming a full-semester program. Thus, with three semesters yearly, a student could graduate in three years including two summer semesters. A number of courses would be added to the curriculum, such as home nursing, map reading, and interpreting aerial photography, military and government strategy (Government 306), the law of the sea (Government 314), and plane and spherical trigonometry (Mathematics

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<sup>384</sup> Lambert joined the faculty/staff in 1932 and remained until his retirement in June 1974 as vice president for student affairs.

<sup>385</sup> *The Flat Hat*, 13 February 1942, 1.

105R).<sup>386</sup> If juniors and seniors could not pass an athletic fitness test, they also were required to take physical education.

Just a few months into the war, the campus learned that a William and Mary alumnus had died earlier in 1941 becoming the first casualty related to the war. In a letter to President Bryan, Mrs. T. J. Banjousky wrote to notify school officials that her son, Lieutenant Ted Banjousky of the Army Air Corps, had died on a reconnaissance flight from Wheeler Field in Oahu, Hawaii, several months before the Pearl Harbor attack. He had left the College in 1940 to join the air corps and had risen rapidly in rank.<sup>387</sup> The student newspaper, in an editorial that accompanied the story of Banjousky's death, said, "A man has died serving his country. There will be more of us following [him]. It should be apparent by now that this is not an era of college-as-usual."<sup>388</sup>

Amid all the war-related campus activities, President Bryan announced his resignation as president on 11 April 1942.<sup>389</sup> He was seventy-four years old and the pressures of the job were mounting. Waiting to depart, Bryan told the Board of Visitors that men were leaving the College in significant numbers or not registering to attend at all. Similar to the World War I situation in 1917, Bryan also compared it to the low enrollments prior to 1888. "Any number of faculty left to join the armed forces, some became army officers and some navy officers," explained James W. Miller, dean of the faculty. This certainly decimated the faculty."<sup>390</sup> By 1945 about twenty of the sixty faculty members had left for the war; there was one fatality, M. Eugene Borish.<sup>391</sup>

### **College Copes with War**

The administration began working diligently to recruit students or to get various military groups assigned to campus. Unlike other schools, William and Mary did not have either an army

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<sup>386</sup> *The Alumni Gazette*, 9, no. 3 (March 1942): 5.

<sup>387</sup> *The Flat Hat*, 1 April 1942, 1.

<sup>388</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

<sup>389</sup> He said he would leave no later than 1 January 1943.

<sup>390</sup> James W. Miller, Oral History, 16, Swem Archives, CWM.

<sup>391</sup> Borish, associate professor of English, entered the army in the fall of 1942 as an intelligence officer. He died in January 1943 onboard a transport ship that sank en route to Great Britain.

or navy ROTC (Reserve Officer Training Corps) program because the school's male enrollment of about 650 was considered too small to qualify. Therefore, some type of military program was needed to bring in male students and much-needed revenue, which was dropping as students departed. Sharvey G. Umbeck, assistant professor of sociology, developed what was called the War Work Plan (later changed to work-study program). Hibbert D. Corey, assistant professor of economics and business administration, was his assistant. The plan allowed male students to enroll and take college classes three days a week and work three days a week, mostly at the Naval Mine Depot on the York River near campus. Recruitment began in late May with students coming from throughout Virginia and along the East Coast. "Many of them would never have been able to come to college at all except for this opportunity to earn part of their way," explained Dean Lambert.<sup>392</sup>

Many students selected to enter the college in September 1942 arrived in the summer and got their mine depot job early. "They would hire anybody they could get," explained Fred L. Frechette, a War Work student from Massachusetts. "They were absolutely desperate for help." The students worked 10-hour days at the depot and they "stashed away [their] money" for school. "We were making about \$27.50 a week," for about 60 hours of work.<sup>393</sup> The addition of nearly 250 new War Work students enabled the College to open in September 1942 with more male students than Bryan had expected. Initially, the draft age was twenty-one, but on 13 November 1942 Congress passed legislation dropping the age to eighteen. Suddenly even more students would be leaving, including many in the Work Study program. However, for the year it operated, it brought money to the College and education to many who would not otherwise have had the chance. Enrollment had dropped to less than 1,000 by June 1943, about 200 less than the number the Board of Visitors was told would be required "to maintain the college."<sup>394</sup>

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<sup>392</sup> J. Wilfred Lambert, Oral History, 63, Swem Archives, CWM.

<sup>393</sup> Fred L. Frechette, Oral History, 4, Swem Archives, CWM. The rate was about 45 cents an hour.

<sup>394</sup> "President's Report," Board of Visitors Minutes, 6 March 1943, Swem Archives, CWM.

Students and townspeople volunteered for a variety of war-related projects in town, including working at the United Service Organizations (USO)<sup>395</sup> canteen that was set up just a block from campus in the city's business district to provide refreshments and activities for nearby military personnel when they visited. With the attack of American installations at Pearl Harbor and a lack of communications and knowledge of where enemy forces could be, the government urged the creation of aircraft spotting stations near the coast. One was set up in early 1942 in the tower of the Methodist Church at the edge of campus. From there, students, faculty members and spouses, and hundreds of citizens provided around-the-clock air surveillance for several years. "After studying hard," student Anna Zephy Stone said of her March 1943 effort, "I could identify friendly and enemy aircraft."<sup>396</sup> Other female students organized the William and Mary War Council, which recruited volunteers to help establish a campus Red Cross chapter and the WAM (William and Mary) Corps, which conducted various war fund drives; made surgical dressings; put together sewing, knitting and health kits; and organized scrap and old clothing drives.<sup>397</sup> Some of these activities continued until the war ended in the Pacific in late August 1945.

### **Navy Chaplains' School Arrives**

Dr. John E. Pomfret, who had become president on 15 September 1942, worked tirelessly with the war department and finally arranged for the Naval Training School (Chaplains) to be moved from Norfolk to campus. A contract with the navy was signed, calling for the payment of \$3,400 monthly for the use of college facilities and \$8 per week per individual for food at the College cafeteria.<sup>398</sup> Navy personnel arrived on 17 March 1943, and the school was commissioned on 24 March, quickly becoming an important presence on the campus. Administrative offices for the "ship's company" and classrooms were located on the second "deck" (floor) of Marshall-

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<sup>395</sup> USO was established in 1942 to centralize efforts to provide emotional and recreational support for the troops.

<sup>396</sup> "War and Remembrance," *William and Mary*, 14.

<sup>397</sup> *The Flat Hat*, 9 May 1945, 2.

<sup>398</sup> Letter 16 January 1943 from Pomfret to Captain C. A. Neyman, officer in charge, Chaplains' School, Norfolk, Virginia, Pomfret Papers, 1982.55, Navy Chaplains' School, Swem Archives, CWM.

Wythe Hall (now Blair Hall), while other administrative offices of the College surrounded it on the first and third floors. Meals were taken in the College dining room, just prior to regular student meals. The chapel in the Wren Building was used one hour per day for services and on Sunday for “divine worship” and was available for students at all other times. Lambert, dean of men, entered the navy and was assigned to the school, serving as personnel officer, and also in the important role of liaison officer with the College.

About 350 persons arrived initially, including chaplains, chaplains’ assistants, enlisted personnel who assisted the chaplains, and officers and enlisted men who operated the school. The total number of personnel at the school averaged between 300 and 350. The largest enrollment came on 4 July 1943 when 347 student chaplains, 12 faculty members, and 36 enlisted personnel, of which 20 were “ship’s company” and 16 were taking instructions to be chaplains’ assistants. The largest graduating class of 101 was on 26 September 1943 when 64 chaplains and 37 chaplains’ assistants received certificates. In March 1944 enlisted women entered the Chaplains’ School also training as specialists and as WAVES (Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service) in the ship’s company. The women were housed in the Brafferton and later in the old Theta Delta Chi fraternity house. The chaplains’ school was well accepted by the students on campus, although few student activities involved the chaplains. The students, understanding the school’s needs and its various activities, seemed to enjoy watching as the navy men marched to and from the dining hall and chapel services as well as their drill work. Navy Day on 27 October 1943 attracted the attention of students, faculty, and townspeople to the yard in front of the Wren Building. Virginia Governor Colgate W. Darden reviewed the corps of navy chaplains during the program. There was a parade formed by the “Sea-Bee’s” from nearby Camp Peary with a float, marching units and official guests riding in Jeeps.<sup>399</sup>

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<sup>399</sup> *The Alumni Gazette*, 11, no. 1 (December 1943): 1.

The College received significant national publicity for having the Chaplains' School on campus. For example, the Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS) broadcast *The Navy Sings* on Sunday, 24 October 1943. This 15-minute program of music originated from Phi Beta Kappa Memorial Hall on the William and Mary campus.<sup>400</sup> The *Catholic Hour* on 20 June 1943 broadcast an address by Chaplain Lieutenant Commander John F. Robinson about the school and its William and Mary location.<sup>401</sup> The Associated Press carried a story to countless newspapers across the nation on 14 June 1944 regarding the awarding of the College's annual Algernon Sydney Sullivan medallion to Chaplains' School commander Captain C. A. Neyland.<sup>402</sup>

Toward the end of the war, school activity slowed and enrollment was reduced to less than 300.<sup>403</sup> During its forty-four months of existence (thirty-two months on campus), the chaplain's school graduated 2,699 navy chaplains, 2,227 of whom had previous pastoral experience and 495 were newly ordained servicemen. Additionally 415 enlisted (specialists) were trained as chaplains' assistants.<sup>404</sup> The school became an integral part of the community with chaplains as welcomed guests in the pulpits of area churches and participants in all wartime ceremonies.<sup>405</sup> President Pomfret received a 27 August 1945 letter from Rear Admiral William M. Fechteler, assistant chief of Navy personnel notifying the College that the school would close about 3 November. "Your institution may be justly proud of the part it has played in the victory which has been won," Fechteler wrote.<sup>406</sup> With its closing on 15 November 1945, Pomfret said: "So excellent has been the relationship between the chaplains' school and the College in every respect that one contemplates its severance with a sincere regret."<sup>407</sup>

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<sup>400</sup> CBS broadcast script, Pomfret Papers, 1982.55, Navy Chaplains' School, Swem Archives, CWM.

<sup>401</sup> Pomfret Papers, copy of address.

<sup>402</sup> Pomfret Papers, loose newspaper clipping.

<sup>403</sup> Lambert, Oral History, 65-67.

<sup>404</sup> Clifford Merrill Drury, *History of the Chaplain Corps*, Vol. 2: 1939-1949 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Printing Office, 1951), 67.

<sup>405</sup> *The Alumni Gazette* 8 no. 2 (December 1945): 15

<sup>406</sup> Pomfret Papers, Fechteler letter, Swem Archives, CWM.

<sup>407</sup> *The Alumni Gazette* (December 1945): 15.

## Army Specialized Training Program Assigned

Once the Chaplains' School was established at the College, Pomfret still needed more financial support from the war department to sustain William and Mary. After more months of effort, an Army Specialized Training Program (ASTP) unit was finally secured for the College, one of 190 units hosted by academic institutions. On 9 August 1943 the 3321st unit began classes. "The ASTP has been devised to provide trained men for specific Army needs... Selection of the trainees is made by field selection boards" from highly qualified candidates who could excel in a pre-engineering curriculum including courses in mathematics, physics, chemistry, geography, mechanical drawing, English, and history.<sup>408</sup> With a number of key faculty members in those disciplines already in the war, Dr. James Miller, dean of the faculty, had to work hard to secure quality replacements, Lambert recalled. "How Miller ever got them, I never knew. One was a son of Sigmund Freud [renowned psychologist]; another one was the son of [Sir] Oliver Lodge [the talented English physicist]."<sup>409</sup> Carefully planned, the curriculum "was advanced by ripe scholars and outstanding faculty... The curriculum is not designed to be easy, if it were, its educational value would be negligible," Miller said.<sup>410</sup>

The ASTP unit "ranged in age, roughly from 18 to 44—all enlisted men, many of whom had had one or maybe two years of college," explained Richard B. Brooks,<sup>411</sup> a staff lieutenant. "It was the most talented group of men—there were 500 of them—that I think I've ever been associated with. It made little or no difference what activity one wished to promote; there were people there able to do it."<sup>412</sup> More than 100 men were housed in Tyler Hall, which was designed to accommodate only about 50, and another 200 were in Brown Hall, with the remaining 200 housed in the new gymnasium in bunk beds lined up and down the main floor. With

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<sup>408</sup> *The Alumni Gazette* 11, no. 1 (October 1943): 12.

<sup>409</sup> Lambert. Oral History, 67.

<sup>410</sup> Miller. Oral History, 16.

<sup>411</sup> Brooks returned to William and Mary twice, first as head of counseling (1947-1957) and later as dean of the School of Education (1968-1974). His doctoral degree was in psychology.

<sup>412</sup> Richard B. Brooks, Oral History, Swem Archives, CWM.

approximately 1,200 students then on campus, plus 500 ASTP soldiers and the Chaplains' School under contract for space, William and Mary had no financial woes for the 1943-1944 academic year. In one three-day period—28-30 January 1944—three graduation exercises were held. Forty-seven ASTP students received basic engineering certificates, 32 William and Mary students graduated with baccalaureate degrees, and 26 graduated from the navy Chaplains' School.<sup>413</sup>

Although “on the alert” for about a month, the orders for ASTP to “break camp” on 17 March 1944 arrived on campus the morning of 16 March. A farewell evening program was put together in several hours. The next morning, regular William and Mary students gathered at the railroad station a few blocks from campus to see the hundreds of ASTP cadets off.<sup>414</sup> The training units across the country were dissolved quickly because troops were needed and keeping about 140,000 men in the ASTP could no longer be justified. The College's ASTP troops were transferred to the 95th Infantry Division. Ultimately about 150 soldiers remained with the division, which saw heavy action and took heavy casualties at the Battle of Metz in October 1944.<sup>415</sup> Recalling those events, Dr. Brooks lamented that many of the soldiers also “fought in the Battle of the Bulge during the winter of 1944 and 1945 in the European Theater, a number of them being lost in that battle.”<sup>416</sup>

As they departed, two ASTP soldiers wrote about their stay at William and Mary. Private Vernon M. Smith, a St. John's College student before the war, said, “There is a certain pride acquired by the soldier assigned... at William and Mary. The purpose and principles of the institution are felt in varying degrees by even the most cynical of the pseudo case-hardened soldiers.” Private Herman J. Obermayer, a previous Dartmouth College student, observed, “Under the stress of war the liberal arts college as well as the Army has been forced to do many things which are incongruous with their spirit and aims. Certainly no two things stand further apart than

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<sup>413</sup> *The Alumni Gazette* 11, no. 3 (March 1944): 5.

<sup>414</sup> *Ibid.*, 11, no. 4 (May 1944): 11.

<sup>415</sup> Herman J. Obermayer, *Soldiering for Freedom—A GI's Account of World War II* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2005), 17.

<sup>416</sup> Brooks. Oral History, 3.

war and the humanities.” Yet both soldiers agreed that William and Mary did its best with the accelerated instructions that were required.<sup>417</sup>

### College Honors Dill

During the war, Great Britain sent a military staff to Washington to mirror its general staff in London. With the existing American general staff it was called the Combined General Staff. The head of the British Joint Staff Mission and senior British representative on the Combined Staff in Washington was Field Marshal Sir John Greer Dill.<sup>418</sup> U.S. General George Marshall had become Dill’s best American friend.<sup>419</sup> In fact, Marshall and Dill “became firm friends—Dill came in time to be closer to Marshall than any American officer—and a magnificent team.”<sup>420</sup> Fearful that British Prime Minister Winston Churchill would recall Dill, for whom he had little regard and “was antagonistic towards” at the Cairo Conference,<sup>421</sup> Marshall worked diligently to secure major recognition for Dill in the United States. “I undertook to have Dill honored... and a regular campaign was mapped out.”<sup>422</sup> Among the honors arranged was an honorary doctor of laws degree at William and Mary.<sup>423</sup> No communication between President Pomfret and Marshall regarding the honor survive, probably because Marshall “did not want to be too closely associated with Dill in these affairs lest there be some suspicion of the procedure.”<sup>424</sup> The only notice was a 24 March invitation to Marshall asking him to attend a special convocation on campus for Dill on 3 April 1944. Using a military term, Pomfret offered the President’s House as Marshall’s

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<sup>417</sup> *The Alumni Gazette* 11, no. 4 (May 1944): 12 and 28.

<sup>418</sup> Dill had been Chief of the British Imperial Staff in 1940 and 1941. He was not a favorite of British Prime Minister Winston Churchill, who sent him off to Washington to get him out of the way.

<sup>419</sup> Alex Danchev, “Very Special Relationship: Field Marshal Sir John Dill and General George Marshall,” Marshall Papers, George C. Marshall Research Library, Lexington, Va. This essay was originally presented at a meeting of the Society of Historians of Foreign Relations at George Washington University 2-4 August 1984.

<sup>420</sup> William Fry, *Marshall—Citizen Soldier* (New York, The Bobbs Merrill Co., 1947), 305.

<sup>421</sup> Marshall confidential letter to John G. Winant, U.S. Ambassador to Great Britain, 5 January 1944, in Larry I. Bland, ed., *The Papers of George Catlett Marshall* (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003), 5:11-12.

<sup>422</sup> *Ibid.*, 12.

<sup>423</sup> Other honors included the Howland Memorial Prize from Yale University and an honorary degree from Princeton University.

<sup>424</sup> Marshall letter to Winant, in Bland, ed., *Papers of George Catlett Marshall*, 12.

“headquarters” while in Williamsburg.<sup>425</sup> Among those members of the Combined General staff joining in the College program were General H. H. “Hap” Arnold, commanding general U.S. Army Air Corps; Admiral William D. Leahy, chief of staff to President Roosevelt; and British officers, Admiral Sir Percy Noble, Royal Navy; Air Marshal Sir William L. Welsh, Royal Air Force; and Lieutenant General G. N. Macready, British Army.<sup>426</sup>

### **W&M Alumni in Key Positions**

About eight weeks later, during the D-Day assault, William and Mary alumnus John Lesslie Hall Jr., distinguished himself as rear admiral and commander of Task Force “O,” which landed elements of the 5th Army, including the 1st and 29th Infantry divisions and the 2nd and 5th Ranger battalions on “Bloody Omaha,”<sup>427</sup> one of the four landing beaches on the French coast.<sup>428</sup> Earlier in the summer of 1942, after rehearsing amphibious landings along the Chesapeake Bay shoreline with troops under the command of General George C. Patton, Hall was named, probably at Patton’s behest, as acting chief of staff to the commander of the Western Naval Task Force for the North Africa Campaign, including the amphibious landings near Casablanca in November 1942.<sup>429</sup> He was promoted to rear admiral and subsequently directed the amphibious landings in Sicily and on the mainland of Italy. General Dwight D. Eisenhower called Hall the “Viking,” and Eisenhower’s staff nicknamed him the “Viking of Assault.”<sup>430</sup>

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<sup>425</sup> Pomfret Papers, 1982.55, Sir John Dill Convocation, Pomfret letter to Marshall, 24 March 1944, Swem Archives, CWM.

<sup>426</sup> Pomfret Papers, 1982.55 (loose papers), Sir John Dill Convocation. Marshall arranged to fly members of the American and British General Staffs to Langley Field in Hampton, Virginia, and they were driven to Williamsburg. Several persons declined the invitation but changed their plans when Marshall made the planes available.

<sup>427</sup> Historian Cornelius Ryan used the term in his work, *The Longest Day: June 6, 1944* (Simon & Schuster, New York, 1959) to describe the beach where 2,200 American troops died on D-Day. It was also the title of German historian Helmut K. Von Keusgen’s 2007 account of the landing.

<sup>428</sup> Hall attended William and Mary three years before being appointed in 1909 to the U.S. Naval Academy. He ultimately rose to the rank of admiral. Hall received a number of decorations for valor, and the king of England made him a Companion in the Order of the Bath. In 1981 a guided missile frigate was named for him.

<sup>429</sup> Susan Hall Godson, *Viking of Assault, Admiral John Lesslie Hall, Jr., and Amphibious Warfare* (Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, 1982).

<sup>430</sup> James C. Hagerty (President Eisenhower’s press secretary), letter to Hall, 9 June 1955, J. L. Hall Jr., Papers, Box V, Folder 5, Swem Archives, CWM.

Shortly after the beginning of the war, two William and Mary alumni received major military promotions: Edward Darlington Jones, class of 1904, and Robert Meredith Perkins, class of 1909.<sup>431</sup> Jones was promoted to rear admiral in the U.S. Coast Guard and eventually became Pacific Coast Coordinator for three naval districts,<sup>432</sup> and Perkins was promoted to brigadier general in the army coastal artillery and sent to command two antiaircraft brigades in Hawaii.<sup>433</sup> There were a number of other William and Mary alumni who rose to hold high-ranking positions during the conflict, including Naval Commanders Alvin Duke Chandler and Herbert G. Chandler, sons of former College President J. A. C. Chandler (1919-1934). Both men made their marks in the Pacific Theater of War, and Herbert Chandler's son Robert participated in the ASTP at the College in 1943-1944.

By the end of the war, approximately 120 William and Mary women also had left school to join the Women's Army Corps, the WAVES, the Women's Marines, or the Coast Guard.<sup>434</sup>

### **College-related Victory Ships**

By the spring of 1945 war-related activities were ebbing just as the conflict in Europe began to come to a close. However, one event attracted much attention: the launching of the *S. S. William and Mary Victory* at the Bethlehem Fairfield Shipyard in Baltimore. One of several hundred victory ships constructed late in the war, the vessel was named for the College and launched on 20 April 1945, a mere forty-five days after its keel was laid. Designed for postwar operation, it was 455 feet in length, had three decks and three masts, could reach 15.5 knots with its turbine engines, and had a deadweight capacity of 10,700 tons.<sup>435</sup> Another special program was

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<sup>431</sup> *The Alumni Gazette* 9, no. 4 (May 1942): 7.

<sup>432</sup> Biography from Chris Havern, Staff Historian, U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office, Washington, D.C. Jones, born in Williamsburg, had a thirty-five-year career, including serving as superintendent (July 1935-June 1940) of the U.S. Coast Guard Academy.

<sup>433</sup> Biography from Dena Everett, Archive Specialist, U.S. Army Center of Military History, Washington, D. C. Perkins, from Norfolk, spent two sessions at the College before his appointment to the U.S. Military Academy.

<sup>434</sup> Susan H. Godson, "Coeds Go to War," *William and Mary Magazine* (Fall 1995): 16-17.

<sup>435</sup> *The Alumni Gazette*, 12, no. 4 (May 1945): 2; Gladys Bennett Guy, Oral History, 37, Swem Archives, CWM. Eleanor Harvey, newly elected student body president, was the ship's sponsor and Edith Harwood, the outgoing student body president, served as maid of honor.

held later in Portsmouth, Virginia, where the ship came to be outfitted as a troop carrier to accommodate 2,000 men. In response, the ship's officers, headed by Captain James Hassell were invited to campus for dinner with college officials. Shipyard officials said, "no college ever had made that much fuss over [a ship]" as did William and Mary, Gladys Bennett Guy, a former student, explained,<sup>436</sup> "but they enjoyed it.... It really was lots of fun." The maiden voyage was from the Brooklyn (New York) Naval Yard to Le Havre, France, 26 July to 5 August 1945. Picking up 1,952 troops and officers of the Army's 515th Parachute Infantry Regiment, the ship returned to New York on 22 August. This was the first of many scheduled crossings for the victory ship, like other such ships, designed to bring troops home from Europe.<sup>437</sup>

In all seven ships associated with the College were built during the war. Others included the S.S. *Lyon G. Tyler* and *James Blair*, victory ships named after former William and Mary presidents; the S.S. *F. Southall Farrar* (class of 1892), U.S.S. *Russell M. Cox* (class of 1940) and the U.S.S. *John Eldridge*, all alumni of the College, and the U.S.S. *Botetourt*.<sup>438</sup>

### **The End of the War**

The campus was quiet early in the morning on 7 May until radios in dormitory rooms and campus offices just before 10:00 a.m. announced the news of the German surrender. "We couldn't believe it. We've waited so long for it, and now that it's here, it hardly seems possible!" recalled senior student Margetta Hirsh Doyle. "At 11:45 a.m. we all gathered around the back of [the] Wren for a short service of prayers and organ music from the chapel." She said the Wren bell was rung fifty-five times for the fifty-five alumni killed during the war.<sup>439</sup> Later it was learned that a total of eighty-eight William and Mary men had died out of the nearly 2,100 college students and alumni who served.

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<sup>436</sup> Guy. Oral History, 39.

<sup>437</sup> *The Flat Hat* 3 October 1945, 4.

<sup>438</sup> *The Alumni Gazette* 13, no. 3 (December 1945): 21.

<sup>439</sup> "War and Remembrance," *William and Mary*, 20.

Two days later on 9 May, *The Flat Hat* published a special two-page “Victory in Europe” section in its regular edition. The headline said it all, “W-M Heralds V-E Day,”<sup>440</sup> and stories told of the special convocation. Members of the Chaplains’ School attended along with hundreds of students. Pomfret spoke of the “tremendous changes” caused by the war, not only at the College, but also across the nation and the world. “Japan lies ahead,” he said, “and we all know what a very difficult task it will be” to conclude the war in the Pacific.<sup>441</sup> Another story outlined Pomfret’s plans for the College after the war. He expected enrollment to return to the 1941-42 level of seven hundred men and six hundred women, but also said there would be hundreds of veterans returning, many having earlier left William and Mary for the war. William and Mary was not in session on 15 August when the Japanese surrendered. Leon Rosen, class of 1949, recalled the day, because he was bombardier in the nose of a B-29 aircraft heading toward Iwo Jima to land. “I had the headset on and heard the most memorable words of my life: ‘Gentlemen, prepare for your first peace-time landing. The war is over.’”<sup>442</sup>

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<sup>440</sup> *The Flat Hat*, 9 May 1945, 1.

<sup>441</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>442</sup> “War and Remembrance,” *William and Mary*, 20.

## Chapter Five

### Reserve Officer Training Corps and more Wars

Following World War II, the U.S. War Department (later Department of Defense) approved William and Mary for its Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) program, and an army unit was brought to campus to provide class instruction in military science and tactics and related drill instruction. This was a much broader involvement than the activities of earlier years because it brought academics and military involvement together. Students in uniform were visible on campus, especially on drill days and on ceremonial occasions, and a special unit—the Queen’s Guard—formed from the ROTC detachment became a visible presence at parades and festivals throughout Virginia. William and Mary alumni continued to excel in post-college military activity as ranking flag officers.

By February 1946, William and Mary’s enrollment had recovered from its war years’ lows with veterans accounting for nearly three-quarters of the male students. The quickly returning soldiers and sailors found challenges fitting back into the civilian, academic world.<sup>443</sup> For many of them it meant returning to classrooms they had left two, three, or four years earlier. Single men often returned to dormitory-style living, while married veterans posed another problem. To accommodate couples, the College leased federal housing units that were originally built during the war for civilian war-work personnel needed at nearby military bases. These units—a combined recreation hall and cafeteria and two dormitories—were about a half-mile from campus.<sup>444</sup>

Returning veterans had other concerns about their homecoming. “These men resented any changes in the College which they left” and seemed very eager “to see the prewar restored to just

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<sup>443</sup> Gladys E. Bennett Guy, “The Veterans Return,” *The Alumni Gazette* 13, no. 4 (May 1946): 4.

<sup>444</sup> Each couple had two rooms, a bedroom and sitting room. The college operated the cafeteria, and there was free bus service between the “Richmond Road Dorms” and main campus.

the way they have been remembering it.”<sup>445</sup> Initially, there were no organizations specifically for a veteran, who frequently found getting back into old student clubs and groups a difficult task. Many opted to join the new Williamsburg chapter of the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW). Academically, they also had a difficult time getting back into the “swing” of the classroom. One student admitted, “it’s hard to organize my work. The technical instruction we got in the Air Corps training was different—they weren’t interested in theories, they taught us now.”<sup>446</sup> The College tried to help with academics, too. President Pomfret strongly urged that college policies be restructured in various ways to enable the veterans not only to attend William and Mary, but also to graduate. The faculty took action in March 1944 to give the returnees academic credit for military service—their basic training and additional specialized training.

The veterans and regular students received an emotional boost on 8 March 1946 when the campus warmly welcomed former British Prime Minister Winston Churchill and General Eisenhower. The trip to Williamsburg came just three days following Churchill’s now famous “Iron Curtain” speech.<sup>447</sup> The pair arrived after Churchill had addressed the Virginia General Assembly in nearby Richmond. After traveling by train, the two men were met with “great applause” from the gathered students when they arrived on campus, where the event took on shades of a quasi-military affair. Recent military veterans, many also William and Mary students who had joined the local VFW chapter, were asked to serve as an honor guard.<sup>448</sup> While on campus, Eisenhower took every occasion, no matter how brief, to talk with those veterans. *The Flat Hat* said his stock question was “What outfit did you serve with?” The vet would respond, then after some more small talk they would shake hands. “Gen. ‘Ike’ stepped out of the line

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<sup>445</sup> Guy, “The Veterans Return,” 4.

<sup>446</sup> Ibid.

<sup>447</sup> Presented at Westminster College in Fulton, Mo., on 5 March 1946, Churchill said, “an iron curtain has descended across [the European] Continent” with the nations of Central and Eastern Europe now being within the Soviet Union sphere and control.

<sup>448</sup> *The Flat Hat*, 13 March 1946, 8.

several times along the College walk on the front campus to speak with the VFWs,”<sup>449</sup> the paper said.

### **St. Helena Extension Program**

Virginia Governor William Tuck, elected in November 1945, made a campaign promise that every Virginia veteran returning from the war would have an opportunity to go to college regardless of his or her high school record. By the spring, 1946, it became obvious that there was not enough room in the existing colleges; the dormitories were full. What could be done? President Pomfret and Bursar Charles J. Duke met with Governor Tuck and came up with a William and Mary solution: create a new school to cope with the flood of veterans. The result was a unique institution. The Saint Helena Extension of the College of William and Mary was established on property originally built for the U.S. Navy as a berthing facility in Norfolk. The project was put together in six weeks and lasted two years—31 July 1946 to 30 June 1948.

“I consider myself fortunate to be one of an exclusive group of 1,600 men who attended [Saint Helena]... It was an intellectual haven for veterans,” explained James Baker.<sup>450</sup> Dr. Marvin W. Schlegel, chairman of the department of history and government, described Saint Helena as an “experiment in democracy,” and “marked a milestone in the progress of American education.”<sup>451</sup> He said, “It demonstrated the soundness of the new concept, first formulated in the G. I. Bill of Rights, that every American should have the opportunity for a college education—that a college education should be, not the privilege of the aristocratic few, but the right of the democratic many.”<sup>452</sup>

For the venture to be successful, Pomfret quickly needed a first-class administrator. He found one in an old friend, Herbert W. K. Fitzroy, former assistant dean at Princeton University,

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<sup>449</sup> Ibid.

<sup>450</sup> James Baker, “The Saint Helena Extension: An Intellectual Haven for Veterans,” *The Alumni Gazette* 5, no. 3 (October 1988): 12. After service in the navy, Baker graduated from William and Mary in 1951 and became a Foreign Service officer.

<sup>451</sup> *The Saint* (Saint Helena yearbook, Norfolk, Va.: College of William and Mary, 1948), 66.

<sup>452</sup> Ibid.

who had been a lieutenant colonel during the war. Of Fitzroy, Dr. Schlegal said, “a lesser man would have shrugged off the task as impossible.” In six weeks Fitzroy collected “a student body, assembled a faculty, organized an administration, and acquired laboratory equipment and a library,” Dr. Schlegal added. “The drab Navy barracks were transformed into a campus with fresh paint doing its best to atone for the lack of ivy.”<sup>453</sup> Barracks not used for dormitories were remodeled into classrooms and laboratories: one wing of an old mess hall was converted into a snack bar, and the other wing became a new library. After cajoling some navy officials, Fitzroy was able to add adjacent buildings for classrooms and a gymnasium to the original site.<sup>454</sup>

At the ceremony transferring the navy barracks to the College, Vice Admiral Louis E. Denfield said William and Mary “provided much needed space for the Navy (Chaplains’ School) during wartime. The Navy is privileged to offer its facilities to the college” during peacetime.<sup>455</sup> William and Mary was the only state college in eastern Virginia and already had a branch elsewhere in Norfolk; the Navy wanted to maintain a good relationship with the College should there be other joint educational/military requirements in the future.

Editorially, the *Richmond Times-Dispatch* praised Pomfret’s efforts and the College on its “assumption of a heavy [educational] responsibility.”<sup>456</sup> Saint Helena opened for classes on 20 September 1946 with about 625 students; the second semester began in February 1947 with 403 new students. Later that spring the administration announced that a full sophomore year would be offered in September because there was a continued need to accommodate veterans. In September 1947, 461 freshmen enrolled, joining 187 who survived from first semester and 249 from second semester. Thus, the fall enrollment was 897 students, or about 55 more than in June, at the end of

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<sup>453</sup> Ibid.

<sup>454</sup> Ibid., 67.

<sup>455</sup> *The Richmond (Va.) News-Leader*, 25 September 1946.

<sup>456</sup> *Richmond (Va.) Times-Dispatch*, 24 July 1946.

the first year. It was estimated that as many as 90 percent of the veterans at Saint Helena were combat veterans.<sup>457</sup>

There were successes and problems. “The men of Saint Helena appreciated their school. They knew the value of its low living-costs, which made it possible for them to get by on their G. I. [government] checks. They liked its democratic attitude, without class or social distinctions. They especially appreciated their hard-working faculty,” Dr. Schlegal recalled.<sup>458</sup> The major inadequacies included a lack of recreational facilities and the barracks-style dormitories that reminded the veterans of their past military life. Saint Helena, however, would not last. The early 1948 announcement that the Saint Helena campus would close shocked the students. President Pomfret had been trying to sort out his dilemma for more than three months. On 18 December 1947 in a confidential letter to G. Tyler Miller, Virginia superintendent of public instruction, Pomfret said only fifty veterans had applied for the February 1948 term, down from about 300 a year earlier. Also, “because of the high standards imposed there,” February’s total enrollment was expected to be about 700 students, down from 900 when it opened and 800 at the time of the letter. “I think the need for St. Helena is fast disappearing,” Pomfret wrote. During the first fifteen months of the project, William and Mary had broken even financially, but he expected a significant loss for the February-June 1948 session.<sup>459</sup> As part of his decision-making process, Pomfret wrote Walter S. Newman, president of Virginia Polytechnic Institute in Blacksburg, Virginia, asking if Virginia Tech could accommodate some Saint Helena students in September 1948. Newman agreed to take one hundred students. Pomfret then decided the other St. Helena veterans could be accommodated at William and Mary’s existing Norfolk and Richmond divisions or at the main campus.<sup>460</sup>

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<sup>457</sup> Waldemar M. Riley described the number in an interview for *The Alumni Gazette*, October 1988. He said he believed a majority of the faculty also were combat veterans.

<sup>458</sup> *The Saint*, 68

<sup>459</sup> Pomfret to G. Tyler Miller State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Richmond, 18 December 1947, Pomfret Papers, 1982.55, St. Helena Extension, 1947-1948 (loose papers), Swem Archives, CWM.

<sup>460</sup> Pomfret to President Walter S. Newman, Virginia Polytechnic Institute, 18 December 1947 and President Newman to President Pomfret, 31 December 1947, Pomfret Papers, St. Helena Extension, 1947-1948.

Disappointed students mounted an unsuccessful effort to keep the extension school open, but Governor Tuck and the William and Mary Board of Visitors agreed with Pomfret, especially since the students could be handled at consolidated operations elsewhere within the College. There was also the fact that several “tar-paper” buildings on the Saint Helena campus were no longer serviceable, and an operating deficit of \$250,000 was projected for the 1948-1949 year.<sup>461</sup> With St. Helena gone, William and Mary attracted its highest enrollment to date in September 1948 with 2,047 students up from a prewar high of 1,300.

### **ROTC Comes to the College**

The loss of St. Helena did not dilute the College’s military involvement since an agreement was in the works for an Army Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC) to come to the Williamsburg campus. At the beginning of the war, the College suffered from a lack of an army or navy ROTC unit enjoyed on many other campuses.<sup>462</sup> Prior to the war, the College had tried to get a navy ROTC program, but was turned down because there were too few (less than 800) male students on campus.<sup>463</sup> On 29 December 1945, just four months after the war’s end, and recalling military activity on campus during the war, U.S. Army personnel visited the College to conduct a survey “relative to the interest and availability” for an ROTC unit. The two sides, however, decided the timing was wrong.<sup>464</sup> Fourteen months later, in February 1947, Pomfret received a letter from Major General M. S. Eddy of Second Army Headquarters, recalling that in late 1945 William and Mary “was deep in the problem created by the rush of veterans to the campus” and was reluctant “to commit itself in any way” to ROTC. Eddy now was “hopeful that time [had]

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<sup>461</sup> Charles J. Duke Jr., bursar, to Governor William M. Tuck, 29 March 1948 (copy), Pomfret Papers, St. Helena Extension, 1947-1948.

<sup>462</sup> The program of academic/military training began nationally in 1916 with 46 schools participating. Between World War I and II, the ROTC program had expanded, and by 1940 there were 220 colleges and universities involved.

<sup>463</sup> Women were not admitted to ROTC until the fall of 1973.

<sup>464</sup> Major Arthur D. Hamilton, Quartermaster Corps, Director, School Division to Pomfret, 19 December 1945, Pomfret Papers, 1982.55, Reserve Officers Training Corps, Box 2, Swem Archives, CWM.

erased these uncertainties.”<sup>465</sup> The next day Pomfret responded that the College was interested in an ROTC unit.

After submitting an application, the College was notified on 28 April 1947 that ROTC had been approved effective 1 July with Colonel Giles R. Carpenter, a regular army officer, as commander and the first professor of military science and tactics.<sup>466</sup> Responding to the approval, Pomfret wrote, “may I reciprocate your thought that the relationship between the College and the Second Army may be as fine in the future as it has been in the past when the 332st ASTP was on the campus [during the war].”<sup>467</sup> Designated the department of military science and tactics, the four-year program specialized in field artillery, and graduates were commissioned as second lieutenants in the Artillery Reserve. No active duty was required except “in a time of national emergency.”<sup>468</sup> The first local ROTC member was Arthur B. Thompson Jr., a World War II combat veteran, who had come to campus to finish his studies.<sup>469</sup> Forty-three students (3.5 percent of the male enrollment) were in that first ROTC group. About eight months later, the new U.S. Air Force’s Air Defense Command in New York contacted Pomfret about establishing an Air Force ROTC unit at the College.<sup>470</sup> On the advice of Dean Lambert and John E. Hocutt, dean of men, Pomfret responded that since the required target enrollment of one hundred army ROTC students had not yet been reached, “it would seem wise, therefore, not to install an Air Force ROTC at this time.”<sup>471</sup>

### **The Korean War**

The Korean War broke out during the summer months of 1950, but little attention was given the conflict in the campus newspaper when classes resumed in the fall. A late September

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<sup>465</sup> Major General M. S. Eddy, United States Army Commanding, Second Army, Baltimore, Md., to Pomfret, 12 February 1947, Pomfret Papers, ROTC, Box 2.

<sup>466</sup> Lieutenant General A. C. Wedemeyer, U.S. Army Commanding, Second Army, Baltimore, Md., to Pomfret, 25 April 1947, Pomfret Papers, ROTC, Box 2.

<sup>467</sup> Pomfret to Wedemeyer, 29 April 1947, Pomfret Papers, ROTC, Box 2.

<sup>468</sup> Arthur Coumbe and Lee S. Harford, *U.S. Army Cadet Command, the 10-year History* (Fort Monroe, Va.: Office of the Command Historian, 1996), 21.

<sup>469</sup> *Richmond (Va.) Times-Dispatch*, 30 September 1947. Thompson, a Williamsburg native, was with the 101st Engineer Combat Battalion, which saw service in England, France, Germany, Luxembourg, Austria, and Czechoslovakia.

<sup>470</sup> Lieutenant General George E. Stratemeyer to Pomfret, 21 April 1948, Pomfret Papers, ROTC, Box 1.

<sup>471</sup> Pomfret to Stratemeyer, 29 April 1948, Pomfret Papers, ROTC, Box 1.

edition reminded students—either enlisted or officers in the Naval Reserve—to affiliate with the U.S. Naval Reserve volunteer Unit 5-5 at the College. This extra training would help enlisted men qualify for a commission in the Naval Reserves following graduation and help officers qualify more easily for promotions. A large advertisement in the same paper carried the headline “Command! Be a Leader,” and promoted the ROTC program on campus.<sup>472</sup> By May 1951, the ROTC program at the College had grown to 300 students, more than one-third of the male enrollment. Of the remaining men on campus, 200 were veterans and 50 were members of reserve components of other branches of the service. No one passing academic and physical qualifications for freshman and sophomore ROTC classes was denied entrance, but there was still competition for advanced status (juniors and seniors).<sup>473</sup>

The College turned to the ranks of the U.S. Navy in October 1951 with the selection of Rear Admiral Alvin Duke Chandler as the College’s new president.<sup>474</sup> Getting Chandler, however, was not an easy task. A World War II veteran on active duty in the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, he served as director of the logistics plans division, which earlier had helped prepared plans for General Douglas MacArthur’s Inchon (South Korea) landing.<sup>475</sup> After discussions at the White House, President Truman finally allowed Chandler to resign.<sup>476</sup>

The Korean War kept enrollment in ROTC at high levels, since many male students wished to enter the service as officers rather than enlisted men because the draft made military service a foregone conclusion. Just over a year after the military-minded Chandler took office, the blackest mark on ROTC training at William and Mary occurred during final exams in January 1953. Colonel Polk Anderson, professor of military science, discovered that ROTC students had violated the College’s honor code during a military science class. The College never officially said anything directly about the scandal, but *The Richmond News Leader* reported, “a copy of a

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<sup>472</sup> *The Flat Hat*, 26 September 1950, 11 and 12.

<sup>473</sup> *Richmond (Va.) Times-Dispatch*, 4 May 1951.

<sup>474</sup> Chandler retired as vice admiral on 1 November 1951. He was the son of an earlier William and Mary President Dr. J. A. C. Chandler and attended school for one year prior to appointment to the U.S. Naval Academy.

<sup>475</sup> The landing took place on 15 September 1951.

<sup>476</sup> Truman Papers, Harry S. Truman Presidential Library, Independence Mo., copies sent via mail.

ROTC final examination for the first semester had been stolen prior to the test.” As a result, a completely new examination was prepared and administered.<sup>477</sup> The matter became subject to the school’s Honor Council.<sup>478</sup> *The Flat Hat* later reported honor trials for twenty-one students. As a result of the cheating, they were suspended for one year. Three other students left school without appearing before the Honor Council and were ineligible to return to William and Mary.<sup>479</sup>

The next year the program underwent a transition from field artillery to more general military training, producing more versatile officers. It also allowed students to work into army jobs that corresponded to their college training.<sup>480</sup> The Korean War ended in July 1953. During the three years of war, William and Mary commissioned sixty-four ROTC cadets.<sup>481</sup> College records indicate that six alumni died during the war, including Otis Lee Garrison Jr., one of William and Mary’s first distinguished military graduates.<sup>482</sup> A number of Korean veterans enrolled at the College. The number was large enough for William and Mary to continue operating its “office of veterans’ affairs,” which had begun in late 1945-early 1946.<sup>483</sup>

### **The Queen’s Guard**

By May 1960, there were more cadets in the College’s ROTC program than during the Korean War years. More than 400 male students were taking military science classes, and the program’s staff had increased to twelve for the department’s twelfth year of operation. Between 1959 and 1962, records show that 229 cadets graduated with commissions.<sup>484</sup> In addition to the regular classroom work, the cadets also drilled in the Sunken Garden on the main campus for two

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<sup>477</sup> *The Richmond (Va.) News Leader*, 14 February 1953.

<sup>478</sup> Under the rules of the College and its Honor Council, no names of those involved are ever made public, nor are the incidents publicly identified. Local daily newspapers, however, published the ROTC incident, but without names.

<sup>479</sup> *The Flat Hat*, 3 March 1953, 1.

<sup>480</sup> *Richmond (Va.) Times-Dispatch*, 13 October 1954.

<sup>481</sup> Data came from computer program at the College department of military science.

<sup>482</sup> Pomfret Papers, ROTC folder, Swem Archives, CWM. Under Army regulations, the College’s ROTC department could name distinguished military graduates based upon the cadet’s military and overall college credentials.

<sup>483</sup> Interview with E. Leon Looney, the last director of the veterans’ affairs office, 11 November 2010. The office operated on a reduced scale through 1978, accommodating Vietnam veterans in later years.

<sup>484</sup> Data came from computer program at the College department of military science.

hours every Wednesday afternoon.<sup>485</sup> At commencement in June 1960, William and Mary graduated 365 students, 36 ROTC students (or about 20 percent of the male graduates) also received army commissions.<sup>486</sup> With ROTC *esprit de corps* riding a high wave, the new college president, Dr. Davis Y. Paschall, on 8 February 1961 approved the formation of “The Queen’s Guard,” a ceremonial unit of ROTC. This group was a successor to the ROTC honor guard that was organized and served during the 16 October 1957 visit by Queen Elizabeth II to campus that was part of her trip to commemorate the 350th anniversary of the English settlement at Jamestown. Initially, the unit comprised about sixty men, including the cadet drum and bugle corps. It was outfitted with distinctive uniforms that included a black sealskin grenadier’s cap, a single-breasted scarlet tunic faced with black and piped with gold, and black trousers with a narrow scarlet stripe. The insignia of the Queen’s Guard was a phoenix<sup>487</sup> on a field of ermine, and its motto was *Corona Veniet Delectis*, “Victory shall come to the worthy.” The name was selected to specifically honor three queens of England—Mary II, one of the college founders; Anne, who provided funds for the rebuilding of the College following the 1705 fire; and Elizabeth II, the first monarch to visit campus.<sup>488</sup>

### **Students Protest War and ROTC**

Through the 1960s—the era of the Vietnam War—annual commissions of ROTC cadets ranged between forty and fifty-four. The program’s ceremonial Queen’s Guard unit participated in many parades and festivities around Virginia, winning numerous drill unit competitions and enhancing the William and Mary ROTC image within the Commonwealth. By 1968 there were 330 students in the program or about 17.5 percent of the undergraduate male student body of

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<sup>485</sup> *The Richmond (Va.) News-Leader*, 22 March 1960.

<sup>486</sup> *Ibid.*, 5 June 1960.

<sup>487</sup> The phoenix, a mythical bird that rose from its own ashes, symbolized the College, which had several rebirths following wars and fires.

<sup>488</sup> *The Queen’s Guard* (Williamsburg, Va.: College of William and Mary, 1961) pages unnumbered.

1,870.<sup>489</sup> Again, with the country at war and the draft still in place, male students realized that an ROTC commission was preferable to a private's single stripe. But the already unpopular war turned messy in 1969 when students on campuses throughout the nation began to protest against the war. William and Mary students marched down Williamsburg's main street in the spring of 1970 to protest the Cambodian invasion by U.S. troops.

Major antiwar demonstrations took place at William and Mary on 7 and 8 May 1970 with a campus wide strike and boycott of classes in reaction to the firestorm on 4 May 1970. Ohio National Guard troops called to the Kent State University campus to quell a demonstration and had fired into a student crowd, killing four and wounding nine. Four white coffins were carried through the Williamsburg campus and four white crosses erected in the Sunken Garden in memory of the fallen Ohio students. Another antiwar rally occurred in late October 1970 after only a few grand jury indictments were handed down regarding the Kent State shootings.<sup>490</sup>

William and Mary, unlike many other colleges, did not remove ROTC from its academic curriculum. In 1969-1971, administrators, many of whom were veterans of World War II and had served on active duty, led the College. President Paschall was in the navy, and Dean Lambert, dean of students, also saw navy service along with Dr. Harold Lees Fowler, dean of the faculty. These men had a natural inclination toward some form of military service. The forces on campus pushing for an "end of the war" and the end of ROTC were primarily professorial "young turks," namely Leonard Schifrin of economics, David Jones and James Leach of philosophy, and Edward Crapol and Joseph Brent of history. The old guard veterans feared success by these younger professors would dramatically change the administrative policies of the past. This could not happen. Even if administrators like Paschall and Fowler philosophically supported the "end of the war," they could not openly support it because it would have been viewed as a victory for the

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<sup>489</sup> *Richmond (Va.) Times-Dispatch*, 13 December 1969.

<sup>490</sup> *The Flat Hat*, 23 October 1970, 1.

young “turks”—albeit minimal in the broad scope of academic life. Nevertheless, it would have put the proverbial “camel’s nose” under the tent.<sup>491</sup>

The majority of the “Ivy League” schools, considered the most elite academic institutions in the United States, did force ROTC off their campuses. At Dartmouth College, the program was gone by the spring of 1972. Columbia University’s trustees voted in the spring of 1969 to make ROTC an extracurricular activity, effectively ending the program. In June 1972 Brown University’s military program ended when class credit was removed and the ROTC faculty was reduced to nonvoting status. At Yale University course credit for ROTC classes ended in 1966 in the early Vietnam years, and the program left campus in 1968 when students were allowed to drop military classes regardless of contractual arrangements with the army. Princeton University faced many student antiwar referendums and demonstrations. In reaction to the Cambodian “invasion” by U.S. troops, the faculty voted to abolish ROTC after a general university strike. Harvard University’s trustees ended ROTC in the spring of 1969 after student demonstrations and faculty votes.<sup>492</sup> It remained on the “Ivy” campuses of Cornell University, because it was a land-grant university that required the program to continue receiving federal funding, and the University of Pennsylvania, where anti-ROTC demonstrations failed.<sup>493</sup>

In the fall of 1969 William and Mary students began small protests against the war. Unlike other campuses where buildings were burned and large gatherings shut down campus activities, the student demonstrations at the College involved only hundreds and lasted just a few hours, rather than days. The first major anti-ROTC confrontation occurred on 15 October 1969 when about 200 students held a “picnic” where the cadets were drilling on the practice football field. The incident became disruptive when a small group of students on the “picnic” refused to permit

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<sup>491</sup> Dr. Leonard Schiffrin confirmed the professors who were involved and Dr. David Holmes, professor of religion, who came to the College in 1965, agreed with these points during a 26 August 2010 interview.

<sup>492</sup> *The Harvard Crimson* (student newspaper), 28 September 1973. Harvard University announced on 3 March 2011 that the Naval ROTC program would formally return to campus in the summer of 2011.

<sup>493</sup> Today, ROTC has been restored at Dartmouth and Princeton. Students at Harvard, Yale, Columbia, and Brown have the option to take ROTC instruction at neighboring universities but still without any graduation credit for classes taken. In the spring of 2010 there was talk at Harvard about restoring ROTC on campus with class credit.

the cadets to drill.<sup>494</sup> At the time, several campus organizations were created—the Williamsburg Moratorium Committee and the Student Action Movement—to address a variety of campus social issues including the Vietnam War.<sup>495</sup> The moratorium organization, which called for immediate withdrawal of U.S. forces from Vietnam, also included a number of area citizens in its membership. The student newspaper said the faculty’s curriculum committee recommended a change in ROTC status “commensurate with academic endeavor. It does not question the legitimacy of ROTC presence at the College, as do those who advocate immediate and total withdrawal of any military operations in the academic community.”<sup>496</sup> The paper posed numerous questions, including whether ROTC classes should retain academic credit.

In a special supplement to *The Flat Hat* on 7 November 1969, Lieutenant Colonel Glen Shivel, assistant professor of military science, and Dr. David Jones, associate professor of philosophy, were interviewed regarding their conflicting views of ROTC on campus. Shivel stressed that he was disappointed that some students and faculty looked at the ROTC problem in the context of the political situation: the mandatory draft of males for military service. He said he knew one cannot escape the other, but at William and Mary students now seemed to “dismiss the academic value of the military science courses without investigation as to the kind of instruction offered.” At that time, students could receive a maximum of fourteen academic credits toward graduation from their military science courses. He added that not all persons who apply for the William and Mary ROTC program were accepted.<sup>497</sup> Jones said he was not against ROTC “as long as it is not an integral part of the academic community.” However, he continued saying the program as situated in 1969 had three major problem areas: 1) the academic status of the military science faculty; 2) academic credit for the military courses; and 3) the ties between the

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<sup>494</sup> *The Flat Hat*, 16 October 1969, 1.

<sup>495</sup> *Ibid.*, November 1969, 1.

<sup>496</sup> *Ibid.*, 8.

<sup>497</sup> “Weathervane” (supplement to *The Flat Hat*), 7 November 1969, 2 and 8.

government and the school.<sup>498</sup> He suggested that the military presence through teaching was comparable to General Motors executives teaching in the School of Business Administration. The military instructors, he said, were working for an organization outside the William and Mary academic community. The ROTC question was discussed during a curriculum review in 1968-1970. Finally, the faculty voted to reduce the ROTC credits from fourteen to six hours academic credit beginning in the fall of 1973, but the members of the military science department retained their faculty rank. The nation's military draft program also ended that year, and the services were converted to all-volunteer forces. While the numbers of ROTC cadets shrank during the 1970s, the ranks across the nation still provided the vast number of the new officers needed. The service academies were not large enough to graduate sufficient officers, and schools like William and Mary were still vital to providing "quality" officers.

### **Vietnam War's Stark Reality**

The stark reality of the Vietnam War began to hit the college as alumni died in combat, with eight lost between 1962 and 1973. In the fall of 1968, one of its 1967 graduates, Marine Corps First Lieutenant Lewis B. Puller Jr.,<sup>499</sup> was severely injured, losing both legs and parts of his hands in a booby-trap explosion in Vietnam. Although his active-duty time was short, he nevertheless, earned the Silver Star, two Purple Hearts, the Navy Commendation Medal, and the Vietnam Cross of Gallantry. Puller had not been an ROTC cadet at the college, deciding instead to drift through four years "drinking beer and chasing girls."<sup>500</sup> After graduation, putting "frivolity aside," he followed his father's course and joined the Marines and in a year was in Vietnam in the middle of a war. After his lengthy recovery and discharge, Puller returned to William and Mary and obtained his law degree in 1974. Always in his wheelchair, he then worked in the Pentagon as an attorney and also became a staunch veterans' advocate. It was not until 1984 that Puller first

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<sup>498</sup> Ibid., 2 and 6.

<sup>499</sup> His father was Lewis B. "Chesty" Puller, the most decorated Marine in history and a graduate of Virginia Military Institute.

<sup>500</sup> Lewis B. Puller Jr., *Forgotten Son—The Healing of a Vietnam Veteran* (New York: Grove Press, 1991), 30.

wrote in the *William and Mary Magazine* about his war experiences, a subject that he ultimately expanded into a book, *Fortunate Son—The Healing of a Vietnam Veteran*, in 1991. A year later he won the Pulitzer Prize for Biography or Autobiography. Unfortunately, Puller never fully recovered from the injuries that he suffered in Vietnam. He was plagued with severe bouts of depression and alcoholism. On 11 May 1994, “despondent beyond consolation, he picked up a gun and extinguished a life that had given so many others hope.”<sup>501</sup>

Another phase of the war became increasingly more difficult as the numbers of soldiers and airmen missing in action or confirmed as prisoners of war increased. William and Mary alumna Phyllis Galanti, class of 1963, grew impatient to learn about her husband Paul Galanti, an air force pilot lieutenant who was shot down by the North Vietnamese on 17 June 1966, three years after the Galantis married. Phyllis Galanti was just like other POW wives until 1969 when she began waging her personal war to awaken public sentiment to seek release or at least humane treatment of prisoners. In 1972 she became national chairman of the National League of Families of American Prisoners and Missing in Southeast Asia. On 15 May 1972 she and other board members met at the White House to discuss the POW and missing-in-action issues with President Richard Nixon and Secretary of State Henry Kissinger.<sup>502</sup> Phyllis was outspoken about the administration’s handling of the POW issue and admitted she was often bitter.<sup>503</sup> After the Vietnam War’s end (1964-1973), William and Mary would record the loss of seven alumni during the 1964-1973 conflict. A plaque with their names and those of the Korean War dead now hangs in the Wren Building with memorials of other wars.

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<sup>501</sup> Paul Wittman and Daniel S. Levy, “Lewis B. Puller Jr.: The Wound That Would Not Heal,” *Time* (23 May 1994), 75.

<sup>502</sup> In 2000 Kissinger became chancellor of William and Mary, succeeding Margaret, the Lady Thatcher, former prime minister of the United Kingdom.

<sup>503</sup> Wilford Kale, “From Efficiency Chairman to National Chairman—Phyllis Galanti,” *The Alumni Gazette*, 40, no. 7 (April 1973): 4. Galanti was released on 12 February 1973. On 17 September 2010, the Paul and Phyllis Galanti Educational Center at the Virginia War Memorial in Richmond, Va., was dedicated.

## ROTC Evolves

In the early 1980s there were major concerns in the army about the health of ROTC nationally, and a general's visit to William and Mary ultimately led to the creation of the "Cadet Command," the organization that exists throughout the United States today. In March 1983 Brigadier General Robert E. Wagner, known today as the father of the modern Army Cadet Command,<sup>504</sup> visited his son, a William and Mary student. "The visit dismayed him, at least from a professional point of view," wrote Cadet Command historian Arthur T. Coumbe:

The student leaders and fraternity members with whom he talked manifested little interest in and slight regard for the ROTC. Indeed, several were offended when he suggested that they enroll in the ROTC. The program, it appeared to him, was the province of students on the margins of the college, not of student opinion makers—a perception that...was largely correct. He left William and Mary more concerned than before about the overall health of ROTC.<sup>505</sup>

Over the next several years, the nationwide army ROTC organization was restructured into the command structure of today, and Wagner became the first general of the new command. Later, a William and Mary alumnus, class of 1962, Major General James M. Lyle became the third commander of the Cadet Command, now located at nearby Fort Monroe, Virginia. Locally, William and Mary's unit grew significantly smaller in size in the late 1970s and 1980s. With the inception of the "modern volunteer army," only about a dozen officers were commissioned annually, and the total cadet corps on campus averaged about seventy-five. Yet, at least three general officers came from those smaller graduating numbers.

David Brown, a William and Mary gymnast and biology major; in graduated in 1978 and later received a doctor of medicine degree from the Eastern Virginia Medical School. Shortly after graduating, he joined the navy, being more interested in academics than ROTC when at the College. Brown ultimately became a flight surgeon, and in 1996 he was selected for astronaut training. After qualifying as a mission specialist, he took his first trip into space aboard the

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<sup>504</sup> Coumbe and Hartford, *U.S. Cadet Command*, 55.

<sup>505</sup> *Ibid.*

*Columbia* on 16 January 2003. After fifteen days and twenty-two hours in space, Captain Brown's journey ended in a catastrophe when the space shuttle disintegrated and its seven-person crew died during reentry on 1 February, just fifteen minutes before the scheduled landing. Four months before his mission, Brown was the principal speaker during the opening convocation at William and Mary, in which he said that at some point a shuttle flight would end with the loss of crew and the aircraft. Nevertheless, he challenged the William and Mary students to have "a big vision, accept the risks, and be persistent in [your] goals."<sup>506</sup>

### **The Gulf and Afghanistan Conflicts**

When the first Gulf War (Operation Desert Storm) erupted in March 1991, the only protests on campus were those directly against the concept of war itself, not against ROTC or the invasion of Iran by U.S. troops. The highest ranking William and Mary alumnus during the first Gulf War was Lieutenant General Charles A. Horner,<sup>507</sup> who was commander of the U.S. Central Air Forces, coordinating about 1,800 U.S. warplanes and about 435 planes from Great Britain, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Italy, and France.<sup>508</sup> Another alumnus, Lieutenant Colonel David D. McKiernan, an ROTC graduate of 1972 with a major in history, served in a staff position for VII Corps in the sands of Saudi Arabia for Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm in the ultimate liberation. It was his performance in that assignment that was important to his future army success.<sup>509</sup>

Twelve years later a second gulf war, Operation Iraqi Freedom, began in November 2002 with air bombardments of Iraq and subsequently with major ground assaults. McKiernan, then a lieutenant general, was in charge<sup>510</sup> of those "ground components," including the two land drives

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<sup>506</sup> Remarks by Virginia Senator George Allen, *Congressional Record*, U.S. Senate, 4 February 2003 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Printing Office), 2318.

<sup>507</sup> He received a master of business administration degree in 1972.

<sup>508</sup> *The Alumni Gazette* 59, no. 6 (May 1991): 15.

<sup>509</sup> William Murray and Major General Robert H. Scales Jr., *The Iraq War—A Military History* (Cambridge, Mass., and London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2003), 60.

<sup>510</sup> Unlike General Norman Schwarzkopf, who handled the ground operations himself during the 1991 Kuwait war, General Tommy Franks, who also was in charge of operations in Afghanistan, named McKiernan ground commander.

through the western desert and through the Iraqi heartland between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers toward Bagdad.<sup>511</sup> McKiernan “proved to be an inspired choice.” He possessed “an instinct for operational issues,” and had earlier served as chief of staff for NATO’s U.S.-British rapid reaction corps, a valued asset since the British forces were involved in the ground operations.<sup>512</sup> In recognition of his military successes, the William and Mary Board of Visitors honored McKiernan in May 2004 with an honorary doctor of public service degree presented during commencement ceremonies. During an interview at that time, he said of his William and Mary education: “If you come away with an understanding of some intellectual discipline and understanding of what doors are open to you for the rest of your life to learn things from, I’m not sure it gets any better than that. I was like most college students. I really never knew what I should major in, and I didn’t know what I would do when I graduated from college. But the most valuable benefits were transitioning to become an adult and learning some intellectual discipline.”<sup>513</sup> The next year he was named a four-star general, and in June 2008 assumed command of the U.S. and NATO forces in Afghanistan.

On December 18, 2006, President George W. Bush named Dr. Robert M. Gates secretary of defense. Gates graduated from the college in 1965 with a bachelor’s degree in history. He was active in Alpha Phi Omega, a national service fraternity, and with the *William and Mary Review*, a literary and arts magazine. At his graduation, he received one of two Algernon Sydney Sullivan awards given to the graduate who “has made the greatest contribution to his fellow man.”<sup>514</sup> Prior to being named defense secretary, Gates had been president of Texas A&M University, but his primary career was in the Central Intelligence Agency.<sup>515</sup> The professional careers of those two William and Mary alumni—Gates and McKiernan—collided on 11 May 2009. Secretary Gates, after consulting with President Barack Obama, fired McKiernan, the Afghan commander. It was

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<sup>511</sup> Murray and Scales, *Iraq War*, 60.

<sup>512</sup> Ibid.

<sup>513</sup> *W&M News*, 23 February 2006.

<sup>514</sup> *Daily Press* (Newport News, Va.), 15 May 2006.

<sup>515</sup> Gates, the only officer to rise from an entry-level position to director, was with the agency, 1966-1967, 1969-1974, and 1979-1993.

the first firing of a wartime commander since Douglas MacArthur was removed as United Nations Korean War commander in April 1951. In relieving McKiernan of duty, Gates said the general had done “nothing” wrong; it was just time for a change. He also praised McKiernan for his decades of “distinguished service.”<sup>516</sup> McKiernan’s removal was more political than militarily strategic as Gates implied in a June 2009 interview for the *William and Mary Alumni Magazine*. He spoke of bringing a “new commander in to take charge at the beginning” of new strategy just as was done in Iraq. “So the decision did not involve any dissatisfaction at all with Gen. McKiernan,” Gates said.<sup>517</sup>

Currently, two William and Mary ROTC graduates are serving as major generals in the army; two other alumni retired in 2010 as lieutenant generals. Walter L. Davis, class of 1979, currently serves as deputy director, Army Capabilities Integration Center, Training and Doctrine Command, Fort Monroe, Virginia, after serving most of his career in army aviation.<sup>518</sup> Thomas W. Spoehr, class of 1980, is an army chemical expert and currently serves as director of Force Department at the Pentagon in Washington, responsible for building the Army’s equipment investment program.<sup>519</sup>

Keith W. Dayton, class of 1970, spent forty years in the Army primarily as an international relations expert, serving as defense attaché at the U.S. Embassy in Moscow. From 2005 to 2010, he was U.S. Security Coordinator, Israel-Palestinian Authority in Tel Aviv, Israel. After retiring on 1 December 2010, Dayton became the director of the George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies in Garmisch, Germany.<sup>520</sup> N. Ross Thompson III, class of 1974, completed thirty-six years of army service on 1 April 2010, serving primarily as a logistics expert. Prior to his retirement, he was a military deputy for the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Acquisitions,

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<sup>516</sup> Ann Scott Tyson, “Top U.S. Commander in Afghanistan is Fired,” *The Washington Post* (12 May 2009), 1.

<sup>517</sup> Melissa V. Pinard, “Man of Action,” *William and Mary Alumni Magazine* 74. no. 4, 39.

<sup>518</sup> Biographical Information, U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, Fort Monroe.

<sup>519</sup> United States Army, public affairs office, Pentagon, Washington, D.C.

<sup>520</sup> News release from George C. Marshall Center for European Studies, 19 November 2010.

Logistics and Technology). On 12 April 2010, he became Senior Vice President of Operations, The Linc Group of Irvine, California.<sup>521</sup>

### **Iraq and Afghanistan Deaths**

Only two of the scores of William and Mary alumni who have served in the Gulf Wars have been killed. Since both of the men were military volunteers and ROTC graduates, their deaths stunned the campus. Donald Ryan McGlothlin of Grundy, Virginia, a 2001 Phi Beta Kappa, honors graduate in chemistry won a full fellowship at Stanford University to pursue doctoral studies in polymer physics. McGlothlin was briefly an ROTC student at the College, but left because of medical problems. In 2003, he told his father, “I want to do something else... I want to feel like I’m serving my country...Dad, I’ve joined the Marines.”<sup>522</sup> He graduated first in his officer candidate school class and as a second lieutenant went to Iraq. He died on 16 November 2005, hit by small arms fire in Ubaydi when several wounded comrades were being rescued. McGlothlin was posthumously awarded the Silver Star for valor.

Todd W. Weaver of Hampton, Virginia, a 2008 William and Mary graduate, was the commander of the College’s ROTC cadet corps and ranked 36 out of about 4,000 cadets nationwide.<sup>523</sup> He was killed on 9 September 2010 during a night patrol in Kandahar, Afghanistan while a member of the 101st Airborne Division. He was the 1,299th U.S. serviceman to die in the war in Afghanistan.<sup>524</sup> His death brought immediate reactions of sadness and patriotism across the campus and the broader community since his hometown was just twenty miles away. Weaver had earlier joined the National Guard after high school and spent a year in Iraq when his unit was called up in 2004. A service was held on campus, and flowers were placed at a small ROTC memorial in front of the department’s offices.

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<sup>521</sup> News release from The Linc Group, 12 April 2010.

<sup>522</sup> “Five Camp Pendleton Marines killed in Iraq,” *North County Times*, San Diego, Calif., 18 November 2005.

<sup>523</sup> “Joint Chiefs Chairman among 250 to attend,” *Daily Press*, Newport News, Va., 15 October 2010, 4.

<sup>524</sup> *Ibid.*

## Military Future at William and Mary

William and Mary's ROTC program took a national stage in early December 1997 when it served as host for senior Chinese military officers from the People's Liberation Army who were visiting the United States. The college was chosen to show the Visitors how the U.S. Army "educates its citizen-soldiers." The Chinese officers met with students and faculty and then observed a field training exercise in the college woods, not far from the site of the eighteenth-century "college camp."<sup>525</sup>

Support for ROTC grew on campus during the Iraq and Afghanistan wars. While many students, again, did not like the war, they had great respect, admiration, and appreciation for those men and women who volunteered for military service. Nearly 300 William and Mary students on 21 March 2003 marched back-and-forth across campus reacting to the beginning of the war in Iraq one day earlier. "Although the majority of voices denounced the U.S. war policy...All participants voiced support for U.S. troops deployed in Iraq,"<sup>526</sup> the *W&M News* reported. About the same time, efforts began on campus to increase the ROTC academic credits. Students not associated with ROTC voiced the belief that ROTC students should receive more than six credits for their classroom work.<sup>527</sup> Elsewhere, for example, University of Virginia students received a dozen credits from classes within the military science department. In the spring of 2007 the college's military science department requested an increase in academic credits. Perhaps one of the reasons for the request was the effort by the military faculty to increase the quality of instruction. In 2000 Captain Daniel R. Roose, assistant professor of military science at the college, was named the Army's Instructor of the Year. His selection was from about 10,000 army wide instructors. It was only the second time an ROTC instructor had been named.<sup>528</sup>

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<sup>525</sup> *W&M News*, 11 December 1997, 1. The *News* is an official publication of the College, not a student product.

<sup>526</sup> *W&M News*, 27 March 2003, 1.

<sup>527</sup> ROTC academic credits were reduced from fifteen to six in September 1973.

<sup>528</sup> *W&M News*, 22 June 2000, 1.

In 2008 during an academic review, the faculty agreed to increase ROTC credits from six to eight in the department with an additional three credits available from a mandatory military history course through the history department. Lieutenant Colonel Barbara A. Streater, current professor of military science and head of the department, said there are currently no plans to push for additional credit.<sup>529</sup> William and Mary President W. Taylor Reveley III feels the eight credits recently approved “was the appropriate number considering the faculty’s position at this time”<sup>530</sup> and the faculty is not likely to increase the number even if a request were made. He also reminded everyone that ROTC is looked upon partially as an activity like athletics or the student newspaper. The drill efforts probably would never be granted academic credit. Reveley hoped, in the future, some consideration would be given to the establishment of navy and/or air force ROTC on campus. “There’s probably an opportunity for them now,” he said.<sup>531</sup>

Within the last sixteen months, however, there have been additional concerns from college military alumni that more credits are deserved, as demonstrated by communications from a former alumni association president.<sup>532</sup> Responding for Reveley, Dr. P. Geoffrey Feiss, college provost, wrote in April 2009 that the basic issue “is how to assure that all students can fully partake of the rich [William and Mary] curriculum” and “it is our best judgment that, with respect to credit for ROTC courses, we have this about right.”<sup>533</sup> Feiss related that through the years the issue of ROTC class academic credit has been “an interesting and complex one.” The Cadet Command approves the ROTC class structure, not officials on campus; the army appoints the military science faculty and not the College following “a national search;” and the appointments do not require a Ph.D. or terminal degree, a requirement of other faculty.<sup>534</sup> Additionally, Feiss stressed that the Cadet Command “does not recommend, nor advise,” on how much credit colleges should give. “Their rationale is clear. They wish future officials to come from all kinds of instructions:

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<sup>529</sup> Streater gave a personal interview on 1 September 2010.

<sup>530</sup> Reveley gave a personal interview on 15 September 2010.

<sup>531</sup> Ibid.

<sup>532</sup> Denys Grant, class of 1958 and former president of the Alumni Association, to Reveley, 20 February 2009.

<sup>533</sup> Feiss to Grant, 22 April 2009, made available by Reveley.

<sup>534</sup> Ibid.

land-grant colleges and universities, liberal arts colleges, comprehensive universities, and research universities like [William and Mary]... they see this as essential to build a diverse and talented pool of future officers,” Feiss wrote.

Streater is very pleased “and grateful” for the support Reveley has given ROTC students by recognizing them at graduation exercises. “It is an important tone he has set for us,” she said.<sup>535</sup> Reveley is an acknowledged “strong supporter” of the military, like several of his presidential predecessors—Ewell and Pomfret. Although never in the military himself, Reveley said his father, a Presbyterian minister, “volunteered for the Army in World War II, though the great majority of ministers didn’t. He was in the force set to invade Japan when the atomic bombs ended the war. I grew up very aware and proud of his service.” His considers his own lack of military service to be a “dual loss: first in terms of duty to country and the need for everyone to pull his oar, and second in terms of my growth as a person. I am very grateful to people who did and do serve, especially these days when there is no draft.”<sup>536</sup>

A group of nontraditional William and Mary students, all of them military veterans, formed the Veterans Society of William and Mary in 2007, designed not only to help those veterans enrolled at the school, but also to attract veterans who would not otherwise think William and Mary was an opportunity for them, according to Lance Zaal, class of 2009 and former president of the group. “There are many... who felt intimidated [by W&M]. What we like to do is help the other students who are thinking about applying to William and Mary and let them know that it’s not impossible to come here,” he explained.<sup>537</sup> Earlier, a group of military graduates at the College formed the Society of 1775, which, from 1991 to 2004, was an active group within the College’s alumni association. Currently efforts are under way to reactivate this group with recent Iraq and Afghanistan war veterans participating.

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<sup>535</sup> 1 September 2010 interview.

<sup>536</sup> An electronic communication from Reveley, 20 October 2010

<sup>537</sup> “Bridging the Gap,” *William and Mary Alumni Magazine* 75, no. 1 (Fall 2009): 42.

The College's relationship with its military veterans continued on 11 November 2010 when William and Mary's Law School dedicated its existing veterans' legal clinic to the memory of Marine Lt. Lewis B. Puller Jr. who died in 1994. Patricia Roberts, director of clinical programs at the school, said the naming of the clinic "is to both honor his service and sacrifice and create a legacy befitting the Puller family's dedication to our country."<sup>538</sup>

In the past sixty-five years, William and Mary has directly strengthened its on-going relationship with the military, especially through the U.S. Army ROTC program and as individual alumni continued to move upward in rank and in number of command participants including Robert Gates, the current secretary of defense. Gates said that his William and Mary experience "imbued me with a special sense about this country. [It] prepared the ground in terms of a career in public service—a noble calling."<sup>539</sup>

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<sup>538</sup> Zinie Chen Sampson, "W&M to dedicate veterans legal clinic," *Richmond (Va.) Times-Dispatch*, 9 November 2010, B2.

<sup>539</sup> *The Alumni Gazette* 66, no. 1 (August 2000): 7.

## Conclusion

Pivotal events in an institution's history define its character and excellence. For the College of William and Mary in Virginia those events were the Revolutionary War, Civil War, World War I, and World War II. Likewise, in the association of the military with the College, those same events have characterized the traits of the citizen-soldier, i.e., student-soldiers, whose efforts have contributed to the lasting success of the school and the nation. During those periods, the institution's presidential leadership, combined with the student-soldiers, overcame hardships and plotted the future direction of the institution.

The citizen-soldiers, a distinctively America's concept that began with the French and Indian War and progressed from militia to the current National Guard, were mirrored at the College by its student-soldiers, who distinguished themselves in the American Revolution by efforts within the framework of a student company. Similarly, during the pre-Civil War months, William and Mary students again formed a student company, whose local members help defend the Williamsburg area in the war's early weeks, and later many of its members joined the 32nd Virginia Infantry Regiment. A number of those students fought from the Second Bull Run battle (28-30 August 1862) through the surrender of the Army of Northern Virginia (9 April 1865), about thirty-two months later at Appomattox, Virginia.

Characteristic of many military campaigns, financial hardships paralleled military encounters. Such was the case in the four delineated events related to William and Mary. The Revolution ended William and Mary's access to significant funds from Great Britain—vital to the success of the institution—and forced it to find other means of support. The same was true during the American Civil War when the school's finances were depleted in the support of the government of the Confederate States of America. Afterwards, survival was a constant effort for the College. Financial difficulties also were real during World War I when college students went off to war and the enrollment dropped to levels that threatened to close the school. As a result, the

time was ripe for the school to become coeducational—the first institution of higher education in Virginia to do so. Male students again went off to war in early 1942 during World War II, and the College was forced to become a training facility for soldiers and navy chaplains to secure income needed to continue operation.

While several other small liberal arts institutions in the United States experienced similar events during these four wars, no college suffered the destruction and the disabilities that plagued William and Mary in the 18th- and 19th-century military encounters. Some Northern schools suffered during the Revolution and some other Southern schools suffered during the Civil War, but none were faced with the dual difficulties that the College encountered. It singularly underwent major destruction on the campus, and the school closed for about eight months during the Revolution and more than four years during the Civil War.

William and Mary, however, overcame obstacles during its seminal events. Classical education was its initial trademark, but the Enlightenment—Locke and Hume and ultimately Jefferson—thrust the school into the liberal arts mode. As its students and alumni provided leadership during these periods, the incumbent college president also rose to the occasion—understanding the necessities of working with the military—and provided the personal governance essential for the College to succeed. College President James Madison remained at the school during the Revolution and, immediately upon the war's conclusion, was working to make the campus ready for classes to resume and returning students to learn.

President Benjamin S. Ewell maintained contact with the school throughout the Civil War even though he was a Confederate military officer and away from campus for months at a time. Ewell's determination to rebuild William and Mary coupled with the public service of the student-soldiers ultimately saved the school when funds were scarce and buildings in ruins. During World War I, the male students, after a determined and lengthy effort, finally achieved certification in the Army Student Training Program (ASTP) as drills and military tactics classes became part of their

academic routine. During World War II, College President Dr. John Pomfret's support of the military and postwar veterans carved an indelible mark of success in the school

Today, William and Mary President W. Taylor Reveley III strongly supports a military presence on campus through the Army Reserve Officer Training (ROTC) program and the role the student-soldier plays within the William and Mary community. He takes the opportunity annually during the May commencement ceremony to recognize the graduating ROTC members. Since its activation on campus in 1947, the ROTC has forged a vital link as one of the College of William and Mary's modern-day success stories.

Thus, the William and Mary military story has come full circle. From Revolutionary days, when the College initially provided a military staging area and student-soldiers at the battle of Yorktown, William and Mary today has produced military leaders at the top echelons of the several branches of military service as well as civil leaders, including the current United States secretary of defense. Always a small institution, with an enrollment today of about 5,800 undergraduates, the College has an exemplary record of military and public service, exceeded only by the country's military academies and larger land-grant universities, where ROTC cadets number in the hundreds and thousands, rather than the dozens. During the past century, some twenty-six William and Mary alumni were raised to the rank of general or admiral in the United States armed services and thousands of others have served as officers and enlisted personnel. The hallmark of public service and military service remains at the heart of William and Mary's charter.

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