1988

When Mary Entered with Her Brother William: Women Students at the College of William and Mary, 1918-1945

Laura Frances Parrish
College of William & Mary - Arts & Sciences

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.wm.edu/etd
Part of the Other Education Commons, and the Women's Studies Commons

Recommended Citation
https://dx.doi.org/doi:10.21220/s2-wkpm-rf82

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Theses, Dissertations, & Master Projects at W&M ScholarWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in Dissertations, Theses, and Masters Projects by an authorized administrator of W&M ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact scholarworks@wm.edu.
WHEN MARY ENTERED WITH HER BROTHER WILLIAM:  
WOMEN STUDENTS AT THE 
COLLEGE OF WILLIAM AND MARY, 1918 - 1945 

------------------------ 

A Thesis 

Presented to 

The Faculty of the Department of History 

The College of William and Mary in Virginia 

In Partial Fulfillment 

Of the Requirements for the Degree of 

Master of Arts 

------------------------ 

by 
Laura Frances Parrish 

1988
APPROVAL SHEET

This thesis is submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

_______________________________
Author

Approved, June 1988

_______________________________
Cam Walker

_______________________________
James P. Whittenburg

_______________________________
Richard B. Sherman
This thesis is dedicated to all my friends who never asked, "How's the thesis going?"

to Mom and Daddy for their loving support over the years;

and to J. B., who inspired me to attempt this task.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PREFACE</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABSTRACT</td>
<td>vii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER I. THE FIRST YEAR: SETTLING IN</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER II. WILLIAM AND MARY IN THE 1920s</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER III. WILLIAM AND MARY DURING THE 1930s</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER IV. WORLD WAR II AND TOO MANY WOMEN</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX A. THE SURVEY AND ITS RESULTS</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX B. THE SURVEY</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX C. STATISTICAL SUMMARY OF THE SURVEY</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VITA</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PREFACE

Recently, the College of William and Mary has been cited in several studies as a university where undergraduates can receive a very good education at a reasonable price. It is often listed as one of the "public ivys," and commentators make much of its illustrious past. Granted a royal charter in 1693, William and Mary was the second college established in the English-speaking colonies of the New World. It educated several men who became leaders of the new nation of the United States. With alumni like Thomas Jefferson, James Monroe, and John Marshall, it had a plausible claim to the title "alma mater of a nation." But after the American Revolution, the College lost much of its former prestige; it became a small, provincial place whose chief pride was in its past, rather than its present.

During the early nineteenth century, the College was disrupted by attempts to move it to Richmond. Enrollment was declining, and it was thought the College would be able to attract more students if it were located in Virginia's capital city. Turmoil continued for much of the rest of the century. Classes were suspended three times: in 1848-1849 while disputes between the Board of Visitors and the faculty were resolved, during the Civil War, and from 1881 to 1888 because of financial difficulties. In addition, the main college building was twice badly damaged by fire, in 1859 and 1862.

Life for the College began to improve in 1888 when the Virginia General Assembly agreed to finance a teacher training curriculum at the
school. In 1906, the College was completely transferred to state control. These were important steps in stabilizing the College's finances. By 1906 William and Mary had a greater enrollment than it had had in the past, but it faced much competition from the University of Virginia, Virginia Polytechnic University, and Virginia Military Institute when it tried to attract the best students.

The final step towards a new era of excellence came in the fall of 1918 with the admission of women. The educational quality did not improve overnight but resulted from a long process of building, which included new facilities, a better educated faculty, and better prepared students. Although it is impossible to know how William and Mary would have fared without women students, it is difficult to imagine that it could have become a high-quality liberal arts college for men simply because there were too many other Virginia colleges competing for the male high school graduates. Speculation aside, it is significant that William and Mary was able to raise its standards for admission after women were admitted because more and more high school students were applying.

This study focuses on the early years of the women students' experience at William and Mary and on some of the changes in the college precipitated by the presence of women. The post-collegiate lives of the women are also briefly examined. The sources of information are many, and the author also developed her own by sending out a questionnaire to almost three thousand living alumnae who had attended the College between the years 1918 and 1945. Over thirteen hundred responses were received. The survey sought to discover why the women attended college, why they chose William and Mary, a little about their family background, and what they did after college. Many respondents also shared stories about favorite
professors, amusing incidents, visits by famous people, and other college memories. These questionnaires have been given to the College Archives for the use of other researchers.

The author wishes to acknowledge the help she has received in making this study. Professor Cam Walker struggled through rough drafts and made them smoother. Professor James P. Whittenburg helped developed the survey and assisted me with getting the computer to do the statistical analysis of it. Professor Richard B. Sherman also graciously consented to read this thesis and made several valuable comments.

James Oberly suggested the idea that grew into this study. The staff of the College Archives and Manuscripts and Rare Books Department in Swem Library patiently fulfilled my requests and listened to the stories I uncovered. Kay Domine is especially to be thanked for teaching me to use the Macintosh computer, without which this would never have been typed. Many, many other people have listened to my ideas, my complaints, my frustrations, and their patience is greatly appreciated. To one and all, a very hearty thank you, and a solemn promise to never subject you to a project like this again.
ABSTRACT

In the fall of 1918, the College of William and Mary became the first four-year state college in Virginia to admit women as regular students. William and Mary had been a small college for many years, but admission of women began a period of unprecedented growth. Many new departments, some of which were designed especially for the women, were added as the student population grew. The physical plant also expanded, and the number of faculty members increased. The Great Depression of the 1930s and World War II slowed the period of growth. However, William and Mary was receiving enough applications that it had to apply ever more stringent admission standards to keep the student population at the size for which the college had classroom and dormitory space. The 1930s and 1940s were also a time when there were more women students than men students, partly a result of a greater number of applications from women, but mainly a result of higher quality female applicants. Although solutions were suggested to solve this problem and make William and Mary more attractive to men, World War II made their implementation impossible. The women were from a homogeneous background, mainly middle class Protestant Virginians. After leaving college, most of them worked, married, and raised families. They pursued traditionally female occupations. Their husbands were, in the aggregate, better educated than their parents.
WHEN MARY ENTERED WITH HER BROTHER WILLIAM:
WOMEN STUDENTS AT THE
COLLEGE OF WILLIAM AND MARY, 1918 - 1945
INTRODUCTION

In the fall of 1918 the College of William and Mary became the first state-supported four-year college in Virginia to admit women. By then, Virginia was the only state in the union which was not providing its women residents the opportunity to obtain four years of public higher education. There were several two-year normal schools, but women desiring more than these had to offer, including graduate and professional education, had to attend either private colleges or other states’ universities, both expensive alternatives.

For some time, but intensifying after 1910, concerned Virginians, both men and women, had been waging a campaign among Virginia’s legislators to open the University of Virginia to women, or at least to establish a coordinate women’s college. William and Mary President Lyon G. Tyler was a part of this effort, called the Cooperative Education Commission of Virginia. However, the university’s politically powerful alumni who opposed coeducation, on the assumption that women would somehow defile Mr. Jefferson’s bastion of chivalry, were able to defeat any coeducation bills. Finally, in March 1918, a compromise was reached, and

---

1 J. H. Montgomery to Lyon G. Tyler, 13 April 1933. Tyler Family Papers, Group B, Box 24, folder: Cooperative Education Commission of Virginia, Manuscripts and Rare Books Department, Swem Library, College of William and Mary.
the College of William and Mary was opened to women on the same basis as men.\(^2\)

One reason the legislators agreed to the compromise was the adverse impact of the United States’ entry into World War I on college enrollments. Caught up in the patriotic war fever, male students deserted their college classes for the armed forces and war work. Most colleges suffered drops in enrollment, and the smaller, poorer colleges, such as William and Mary, were especially hard hit. World War I also coincided with the final push for women’s suffrage, which gave the Virginians a moral stance from which to call for equal access to higher education for women.

The College of William and Mary had an illustrious past and many noted alumni. Like most southern colleges, it had suffered greatly during the Civil War. After reopening in 1865, it struggled along until the doors finally had to close again in 1881, primarily due to the lack of money and the resulting inability to maintain the buildings in usable condition. However, William and Mary President Benjamin S. Ewell never gave up hope for the College, and in 1888 he convinced the state legislature to provide financial support for the College’s teacher training program.\(^3\) This arrangement was made during the administration of Governor Fitzhugh Lee (1886-1890), who was

---

\(^2\)The story of the fight for coeducation can be found in Sara S. Rogers, “The Southern Lady Versus the Old Dominion” (Honors thesis, College of William and Mary, 1975), and Walter Russell Bowie, Sunrise in the South (Richmond: William Byrd Press, Inc., 1942).

expanding the public school system in the state.\textsuperscript{4} It is reasonable to see a connection between that expansion and the provision of funds for the College since a larger school system would need more teachers. Teacher training became a major objective for William and Mary. This program was so successful that in 1906, during the administration of Governor Claude Swanson (1906-1910), the Commonwealth of Virginia agreed to take full responsibility for the support of the College. This decision was part of Governor Swanson's progressive program which also saw the opening of more normal schools for women, improved roads, and the adoption of public health measures.\textsuperscript{5}

In the 1908 college catalog, William and Mary proudly proclaimed itself "the only institution in America especially organized and supported for the training of male teachers." All other teacher training schools were either for women or were coeducational. William and Mary's training was designed to prepare men for supervisory positions, such as principals and school superintendents.\textsuperscript{6} By 1912, William and Mary was graduating more teachers than the University of Virginia, Virginia Polytechnic Institute, and Virginia Military Institute, the other four-year state schools, combined.\textsuperscript{7}

Between 1888 and 1917, William and Mary remained a fairly small college, the highest enrollment being 244, in the year 1905-06. Enrollment


\textsuperscript{5}Ibid., p. 450.


\textsuperscript{7}Rogers, "The Southern Lady Versus the Old Dominion," p. 134.
in 1916-17 was 196, plus 38 in the teacher training academy. In the fall of
1917, by which time the United States’ entry into World War I was affecting
enrollment figures, there were only 131 students, plus another 96 who were
members of a detachment of the Students’ Army Training Corps.8 The Corps’
presence helped finances immensely. However, William and Mary President
Lyon G. Tyler, who had been serving in that office since the reopening of the
college in 1888, wanted a better, more permanent way to increase
enrollment and qualify for more state funding.

Fortunately for women, Tyler favored coeducation. He had joined the
Cooperative Education Commision in 1904, the year of its founding. Tyler
also favored votes for women and was a member of the Equal Suffrage
League of Virginia; obviously he was genuinely interested in at least some
rights for women and did not view their admission to William and Mary in
purely mercenary terms.9

As the campaign to establish a women’s college at the University of
Virginia in Charlottesville floundered, Tyler offered William and Mary as an
alternative. William and Mary’s alumni and students were fewer in number
and politically weaker than those of the University, so their protests were

---

8Enrollment figures can be found in the college bulletins. Figures
sometimes included and sometimes excluded the students in the teacher’s
training academy, which was discontinued in 1918. The 1905-06 figure
includes the academy figures. Other sources may give slightly different
figures.

9Lila Meade Valentine to Lyon G. Tyler, 6 December 1909, and L. G.
Tyler to Mrs. Alice O. Taylor, 16 April 1914. Tyler Family Papers, Group B,
Box 24, folder: Equal Suffrage League of Virginia; Manuscripts and Rare
Books Department, Swem Library, College of William and Mary.
not as loud and were more easily ignored. Furthermore, as discussion about providing a four-year college education for women progressed, it clearly developed that

since the advocates of higher education had repeatedly stressed the need for well-trained female teachers as a primary reason for giving women a college education, it seemed logical to admit them to the state-supported school best known for teacher training....

Tyler had informally polled the William and Mary faculty on their reaction to the coeducation plan, and they had given their support to the idea. The possibility of admitting women to William and Mary was not formally discussed at faculty meetings, or at least no record of any such discussion appeared in the minutes of the faculty meetings. On 17 February 1918, the William and Mary Board of Visitors adopted a resolution of support for the Strode Bill, the legislation which would open William and

\[10\] Rogers, “The Southern Lady Versus the Old Dominion,” pp. 130–31, 133.  

\[11\] College of William and Mary Board of Visitors Minutes, meeting of 17 February 1918, p. 359. College Archives, Swem Library, College of William and Mary.  

\[12\] L. G. Tyler to Mr. Taliaferro, 18 January 1918, Lyon G. Tyler Papers, Archives Acc. 1984.19, folder: Coeducation. College Archives, Swem Library, College of William and Mary.
Mary to women. The bill was approved on 15 March 1918. William and Mary, proud of its long list of firsts, had another: the first state-supported four-year college in Virginia to admit women on an equal basis with men.

The admission of women contributed greatly to the growth of William and Mary. Enrollment increased; new buildings were built to accommodate this influx; and more faculty members were hired. William and Mary became known for its present as well as its past. This thesis will examine the social life of the women students, the role of women students' government in their lives, and the impact the admission of women had on academic offerings and admission standards, from 1918 through the end of World War II in 1945.

13 Board of Visitors Minutes, 17 February 1918, p. 359; College Archives, Swem Library, College of William and Mary.

14 For text of the bill, see Virginia, Acts (1918), p. 424.
CHAPTER 1
The First Year: Settling In

Women were not admitted to William and Mary without protest. The Board of Visitors' resolution of 12 February 1918 which supported the Strode Bill that would make William and Mary coeducational passed with three dissenting votes.¹ One diehard Visitor, Major James New Stubbs, was not present at the February 12 meeting, but within the week he wrote President Tyler a letter protesting the action.² At the next Board meeting which Stubbs attended, on 25 June 1918, he offered a resolution to the effect that the Strode bill was in direct opposition to the 1906 contract by which the Commonwealth of Virginia had taken full responsibility for William and Mary and that therefore the College should refuse to accept women. The 1906 act had specifically stated that William and Mary was to educate men, and admitting women was a violation of that contract. Stubbs

¹Board of Visitors Minutes, 17 February 1918, p. 359. The three dissenters were Samuel Walker Williams, Herbert Farrar Hutcheson, and Robert Morton Hughes.

²James New Stubbs to Lyon G. Tyler, 25 February 1918, in Lyon G. Tyler Papers, Archives Acc. 1984.19, folder: James N. Stubbs; College Archives, Swem Library, College of William and Mary.
argued that the contract would have to be renegotiated before women could be admitted. The Visitors voted six to one against Stubbs' resolution.3

Newspaper editorials also expressed opposition to coeducation. On 21 February 1918 the *Virginia Gazette* damned the Strode Bill with faint praise, noting that coeducation would probably turn out well—after all, other states had survived the ordeal. The editorial also noted that women sought coeducation "at the price of the womanhood Virginia had cherished as a sacred thing,"4 thus expressing the age-old belief that higher education was somehow beyond the capabilities of women and would lead to the destruction of their physical, as well as their mental, health.

The *Flat Hat*, the student newspaper and chief forum of student opinion, did not comment on the Strode Bill until after it had passed the Senate. On February 27, the paper discussed the effects of coeducation in negative terms. It saw the necessary enlargement of the physical plant and of the faculty as being of questionable value and as a step that would not "help our tradition in the least." The article, or editorial as it may have been, suggested making another college coeducational or upgrading one of the women's normal schools. It concluded with the hopes that if coeducation became a reality, the students would "make the best of it," and "that our environment--socially and in every other way [would] be benefited by coeducation."5

---

3Board of Visitors Minutes, 25 June 1918, pp. 381-82. None of the three dissenters at the February meeting attended this one.


The next Flat Hat article about coeducation, which appeared after the House of Delegates had voted in favor of the Strode Bill, was much more optimistic. The article stressed how the college would benefit from coeducation, with larger appropriations from the General Assembly for more buildings, including "new dormitories, another dining hall, and a new and more commodious gym." The author was excited about the improved social life that the presence of women was sure to bring and predicted that coeducation would free the students from the shackles of tradition. No longer would things have to be done merely because "that's the way it's always been done," and activities (of unspecified nature) were sure to be "rejuvenated" and of "better standards" with women participating in them.6

The college yearbook Colonial Echo also commented on the coming of the women. One page was "affectionately dedicate[d] . . . to the future coeds." The senior class, however, proudly noted its status as "the last class to graduate from the old college before it is defiled by coeducation." The students seemed not to be able to make up their minds whether they wanted the women to come.7

While the debates continued over whether or not the admission of women would really be good for the College, President Tyler made preparations to receive them. He and Professor James Southall Wilson made a fact-finding trip to women's colleges, inquiring particularly about "student government and organizations and the duties and qualities of a Dean

---


7Colonial Echo, 1918, pp. 57 and 36.
of Women."\(^8\) Tyler decided that the dean must be both someone the women would want to emulate and a scholar because she would also be a member of the faculty. The candidate's "personality, tact, and manner" had to be taken into account, as well.\(^9\) Caroline F. Tupper, a Charleston, South Carolina, native and recipient of B.A., M.A., and Ph.D. degrees from Radcliffe College, was hired as the first Dean of Women and as a professor of English. Tupper had previously taught high school and college English. She was in Virginia in 1918 working as a housing and employment secretary, helping wives of servicemen find homes and jobs near their husbands' military camps.\(^10\) There is no indication as to how she and Tyler found each other, but she had the proper scholarly credentials, and her war work was a useful background for helping young women adjust to a new environment.

The College organized two new departments for the women. One was a separate physical education program, headed by Bertha Wilder, whose background was never listed in the college catalogs. The other was a home economics department. This was organized mainly because federal funds were available from the Smith-Lever Act of 1914 to help defray the cost. This act provided money for college departments to train high school home economics teachers, rather than home economists or nutritionists, and this provision dovetailed with William and Mary's tradition of teacher training.

\(^8\)Board of Visitors Minutes, 19 April 1918, p. 363, and President's Report, in Board of Visitors Minutes, 25 June 1918, p. 377.

\(^9\)Lyon G. Tyler to Dr. Walter A. Montgomery, 4 June 1918, in Lyon G. Tyler Papers, Archives Acc. 1984.19, folder: Coeducation.

\(^10\)Information supplied by Dr. Tupper to her 25th year reunion book, in Radcliffe College Archives, Cambridge, Mass.
Edith Baer, a graduate of Drexel Institute and Teacher's College of Columbia University, was hired to run this department. She had previously taught at both Drexel and Teacher's College. When she came to William and Mary, she also became State Supervisor of Home Economics for Virginia.\textsuperscript{11}

The housing solution caused some disgruntlement among the men. The administration decided to put the women in the newest dormitory, Tyler Hall, thus forcing the men back into their older, more dismal dormitories. In June 1918 the Board of Visitors made plans to hire a housemother for Tyler Hall, "to see that the young women students are properly cared for." They also decided to hire a male supervisor for the men's dormitories "to see that proper care is taken of the rooms and property" and to handle discipline.\textsuperscript{12}

Nothing in the extant records indicates whether either of these people was actually hired.\textsuperscript{13} Thus the College prepared for the arrival of its first women students, twenty-four of whom arrived in September 1918, and vowed to integrate them fully into college life and activities so coeducation could succeed.\textsuperscript{14}

\textsuperscript{11}Catalog, April 1920, p. 10.

\textsuperscript{12}Board of Visitors Minutes, 10 June 1918, p. 367.

\textsuperscript{13}The April 1920 catalog lists a manager of the boarding department and other administrative assistants, but no dormitory supervisors.

\textsuperscript{14}"Welcome to Williamsburg, Men and Women," \textit{Virginia Gazette}, 19 September 1918, p. 8.
The first women were all from Virginia, except for one special student from Wisconsin. More than half were from Williamsburg and the Hampton Roads area. One student came from as far away as Roanoke, two from Charlottesville, and the others from eastern and southern Virginia. Although few of these early women were well enough to respond to the author's questionnaire, those who did indicated two important reasons for their choice of William and Mary: their parents wanted them to go there, and it was close to home. At least one-fourth of them were daughters of alumni, two had brothers who were also attending William and Mary, and two were daughters of faculty or staff members of the college.

Naturally, the academic program did not matter much since William and Mary was the only state-supported four-year college open to them. The primary reason for wanting to attend college was simply a desire to be well-educated, although a few wanted to prepare for a career. These women were from middle-class backgrounds, their fathers being small businessmen, ministers, government employees, or farmers, and their mothers homemakers. Many of the fathers and quite a few of the mothers had attended college, although almost none had college degrees. Some parents, however, had not even attended high school.

Surprisingly, after all the clamor in the press and the legislature about higher education for women, the College of William and Mary found that "going coed" was not an especially traumatic event. Janet Coleman

---

15 She was Ruth Taylor Conkey, who had already received a B.A. from Lake Forest College in Illinois. The Colonial Echo listed her with the senior class. The available sources give no clue as to why she came to William and Mary.

16 Incomplete records makes it impossible to determine precisely how many were daughters of alumni.
Kimbrough, a Williamsburg resident and one of the first women to attend William and Mary, remembered that "the war was on, and everyone was thinking of the war so much more than they were of women's rights and coeducation." She described the many changes that were occurring both in Williamsburg and at the College at that time: the disruptions of war, the presence on campus of the Students' Army Training Corps, the switch to daylight savings time, increasing automobile and truck traffic, water and sewer lines coming to town, jazz music, and women taking jobs in order to free men for war service. With all this, the novelty of women on campus was just one more in a series of events to which the college folk and townspeople had to adjust.17 Furthermore, as John C. Pollard, Jr., of the class of 1923, pointed out, most of the students were from coeducational high schools, so college men and women were used to attending classes together.18

Unfortunately, little evidence exists to tell just how smoothly the transition went. The Flat Hat was not published in the fall of 1918. The Virginia Gazette ran only one editorial on the subject. It noted that "it is no half-hearted effort that is being made to simply carry out the letter of the law, but the best that is in the faculty is being put into the new system as a fixed policy and principle. For that reason we may expect success [with

17Janet Coleman Kimbrough, interview in the Oral History Collection, College Archives, Swem Library, College of William and Mary.

18John C. Pollard, Jr., interview in the Oral History Collection, College Archives, Swem Library, College of William and Mary.
coeducation]. 19 The Senior Class history that appeared in the 1919 Colonial Echo yearbook only "venture[d] to hope that [coeducation would be] a forward stride to the realization of larger things and of greater usefulness."20 There was a report that the men had insulted the women at a literary society debate in January 1919. This prompted an irate alumnus, J. E. Wilkins of Newport News, who had both a son and a daughter at William and Mary at the time, to write to President Tyler and scold the men for behaving in an ungentlemanly manner. Wilkins pointed out that however the men felt about the presence of the women, the state had admitted women to William and Mary, and the men had the duty to treat them decently. Wilkins did conclude that if the women had "been acting indiscreetly so as to cause criticism from the male students...," then the administration should "promptly correct the trouble."21

Martha Barksdale, one of the twenty-four pioneer women and later a physical education professor at William and Mary, left a very brief diary that covers part of the 1918-1919 school year. She makes no reference to any distasteful situations between the sexes. Instead she records many pleasant times shared by the men and women students, although she does mention that she found the almost nightly dances held in Tyler Hall to be a bore because she did not dance well. She also notes that the women quickly

19 "Welcome to Williamsburg, Men and Women," Virginia Gazette, 19 September 1918, p. 8.

20 Colonial Echo, 1919, p. 35.

21 J. E. Wilkins to Lyon G. Tyler, 28 January 1919, Lyon G. Tyler Papers, Archives Acc. 1984.19, Folder: Coeducation, College Archives, Swem Library, College of William and Mary.
became close friends because soon after their arrival, the College was quarantined as a result of an outbreak of influenza.  

The women were left out of some of the men’s organizations. A woman became a member of the yearbook staff, but the men’s literary societies did not allow the women to join. In response, the women started their own club, the Alpha Club, to which all the women belonged. It served as a literary, music, and dramatic society for the women and was also a focus for social activities. In later years, as more women enrolled, many of Alpha Club’s activities were taken over by specialized groups, leaving Alpha as an honorary society which eventually became Mortar Board, a national organization that recognizes college women for service, scholarship, and leadership.

The first women at William and Mary had, in addition to their regular gym classes, the opportunity to play intramural basketball and to perform folk dances. They also did a little army drilling until the armistice was signed. It took three years for William and Mary to organize any intercollegiate teams for women, so for this first year they concentrated on getting everyone involved in intramurals. Ms. Barksdale, a member of the Orange team, mentioned having to let the Black team occasionally win a basketball game in order to keep its members interested in playing. The women did take an interest in men’s sports and participated in the bonfires held to celebrate important basketball victories.

---

22 Diary, Martha Barksdale Papers, Archives Acc. 1985.54.

23 In the 1975-1976 academic year, Mortar Board began admitting men as members.

24 Diary, Martha Barksdale Papers, Archives Acc. 1985.54.
In addition to Alpha Club, the other important women's activity was their Women's Student Government. All women were automatically members of this organization and elected their own officers: president, vice president, secretary-treasurer, and two at-large members. The government was formed "to represent and to further the best interests of the woman student body, to regulate the conduct of the women under authority of the college and to promote responsibility, loyalty, and self-control." Unfortunately, no record has survived of the government's first year of work.

These first women students did not have the luxury of a wide variety of courses from which to choose their schedules simply because the College was too small to offer much variety. An examination of their permanent record cards shows that they studied basic courses, such as English, mathematics, chemistry, foreign languages (French and Latin were the most popular), and history. Many also took education courses as well as classes in other departments definitely meant for teachers, such as "Grammar for High School Teachers" in the English Department and the fine arts class that taught one how to write on a blackboard. Several women enrolled in home economics classes, but physics, economics, and government had little appeal. In their later years of college study, the pattern held true to this first year. English, history, foreign languages, education, and chemistry continued to be in demand. Home economics became more popular, partly as

25Colonial Echo, 1919, p. 57.
a result of a greater number of classes being offered. Biology, government, and economics were more widely studied, also.26

The first twenty-four women laid the groundwork for what was to come. Although few in number, they started a women's student government, built the foundation of an athletic program, organized a club to sponsor debates and social events, and began participating in campus events. They also managed to achieve a higher grade average than the men.27 The next ten years would see an incredible growth in William and Mary, with a rapidly expanding student body, faculty, and physical plant.

26Registrar's Office—Student Permanent Record Cards, Archives Acc. 1981.112.

27Dean Tupper's Report to the Board of Visitors, 11 February 1919, in Julian A. C. Chandler Papers, Archives Acc. 1982.45, folder: Caroline F. Tupper, College Archives, Swem Library, College of William and Mary. In 1921, three members of this first group of women were elected to membership in Phi Beta Kappa. Catalogue of the Alumni and Alumnae, p. 177.
CHAPTER II
William and Mary in the 1920s

In the 1920s most colleges in the United States increased their enrollment, although few grew as rapidly as William and Mary. Movies and fiction glamorized collegiate life and made it seem very desirable for both men and women. Even if one could not attend college, clothes manufacturers marketed "the collegiate look," so non-college students could at least dress the part. The decade of the "Roaring Twenties" emphasized youth, especially college students. All this contributed to the growth in colleges.

Women had an additional reason for attending college. During World War I, women were applauded for taking over traditionally male jobs so the men could go to war. Although the women were expected to give up their jobs and return to their homes when the war was over, many found that they liked working and stayed in the work force. Society became more accepting of women working outside the home (as long as they did not have young children). Many of the jobs held by women, such as sales clerks and domestic help, certainly did not require college degrees. However, more women were going into positions where, if a college degree were not absolutely required, it was at least a great asset. Most professional women were teachers.¹

¹Paula Fass, The Damned and the Beautiful. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977), passim. She discusses the 1920s emphasis on youth and the changing roles of women.
At William and Mary, the decade of the 1920s was noted for the rapid expansion of the college. Student enrollment in the 1919-1920 school year was 333. By 1929 enrollment was almost five times as great, totalling 1503 students. Of the 333, 32% were women, double the percentage of their first year. In 1929, women comprised 45% of the student body.

More students meant that more faculty members had to be hired, more courses offered, and more buildings constructed, both for classroom space and living quarters. There were twenty-three faculty members in the fall of 1919; by 1929 there were seventy-four. The number of professors did not increase in proportion to the number of students, which meant larger classes, but the ratio of students to professors was still under twenty to one. The proportion of the faculty who were women more than doubled over the decade, from 13% to 32% in 1928-1929. Several women left at the end of that year, so the decade ended with only 22% of the faculty being women. Most of the women faculty members taught “female” subjects, such as women’s physical education, home economics, and typing, or in “female” majors, such as English, fine arts, music, and education. Only a few taught mathematics and biology. The women faculty members were not as well-educated as the men, either. At the end of the 1919-1920 academic year, eight out of the twenty-three faculty members held earned doctorates. None of the eight was a woman. (Dr. Tupper, the first Dean of Women, had resigned during the year.) It was not until 1926 that another woman Ph.D. was hired. This was Kathleen Bruce, a graduate of Radcliffe College and a professor of history. In 1927, there were two women Ph.D.s, the second holder being Grace Warren Landrum, the third Dean of Women and a professor of English. However, Bruce left at the end of that year, so Dr. Landrum was the only woman holding a Ph.D. for the rest of the twenties. Over the
decade, the percentage of faculty members holding doctorates had increased from 35% to 40%, but the women professors did not contribute to this increase. After 1925, about half of the women professors, sometimes a little more and sometimes a little less, had their master's degrees, but the rest held only bachelor's degrees, and a few had no degrees at all. The non-degree holders taught a variety of courses, such as physical education, typing, religion, foreign languages, and music.\(^2\)

Although not a faculty member, one of the most important administrators, at least as far as the women students were concerned, was the social director who was hired instead of a dean when Dr. Tupper resigned in 1919. There is no extant correspondence between Caroline Tupper and Lyon G. Tyler, the president who hired her as the first Dean of Women at William and Mary, so there is no way to know how well he thought she did her job. Tyler retired in 1919; the new president was Julian Alvin Carroll Chandler. He remained president until his death in 1934 and presided over this decade of rapid growth. However, he and Dean Tupper had very different views on the proper deportment of women. Tupper was very liberal in giving her women permission to go out on dates or walks with men, in general letting the male and female students get to know each other and become friends. Chandler, however, wanted the women to devote their free time to their studies or to their own activities, such as the clubs they had formed, and did not want to promote dating. He insisted on having chaperones at dances and parties and kept up with who had permission to

\(^2\)This information was taken from the college catalogs and from the application of the College of William and Mary to the Association of American Universities, Appendix A: Growth of the Faculty. In President John E. Pomfret Office Papers, Archives Acc. 1982.55, folder: Association of American Universities.
go out and with whom they went. In a short time, Tupper found the President's interference in her domain intolerable, and on 10 December 1919, she submitted her letter of resignation. Chandler wasted no time in replacing her, not with another well-educated woman who would have her own ideas about how modern women should comport themselves, but with a Social Director. On 20 December 1919, Chandler outlined the director's duties in a letter to Bessie Porter Taylor, the woman he had hired for the position:

In general, they [the duties] are to organize and look after the social work among the girls with due consideration to their health and to matters of hygiene, this work to be done under the immediate direction of the President. Specifically, Miss Taylor's duties included scheduling parties, dances, lectures, and other activities sponsored by any of the women's clubs or organizations, with the approval of Chandler; making room assignments; keeping up with women who were sick, on social probation, or out-of-town, and making sure that the proper permissions for absences were obtained; escorting women to out-of-town physician appointments; furnishing the reception rooms in the dormitories; and assigning chaperones to dances, parties, picnics, and to accompany groups of women attending William and Mary football or basketball games which were played out-of-town. In general, she knew who was going out with whom, where they were going,

---


and for how long. One alumna recalled that Taylor had asked her to spy on other students and to report any wrongdoing. This student refused, but gave no indication whether she knew of any students who were less scrupulous. Colleges, whether coeducational or for women only, had long deemed it necessary to keep a special watch over their women students, partly to prove to critics of education for women that the experience would not corrupt them morally or physically. After World War I, some of this strictness lessened, perhaps the best example being the granting of permission for women to smoke on campus, but at many colleges, including William and Mary, it would be decades before most of the old rules were finally abolished. The office of Social Director at William and Mary continued until 1934. Miss Taylor was not a college graduate herself, although she had studied at Richmond College, Teacher's College of Columbia University, and the University of Virginia, and had taught English and Latin in high school.

More faculty teaching more students meant that a greater variety and number of classes could be offered. Although all students were required to take certain courses, such as English, mathematics, and United States history, the College was able to offer a greater range of courses in every department and to offer a greater number of subjects. In 1919 only six history courses were offered. In 1929 eighteen different history courses were listed in the catalog. The chemistry department added eight new courses; the English department more than doubled its offerings, from ten to

5Questionnaire 25-9, in Alumnae Questionnaires, Archives Acc. 1988.67. The questionnaires are explained more fully in Appendix A. The numbers are composed of the respondent’s year of graduation and a sequential number within each class year.

6Catalog, April 1920, p. 12.
twenty-two. New subject areas added in the 1920s were Biblical literature, library science, public speaking and dramatics, journalism, jurisprudence (Law School), music, physical education (for preparing teachers of physical education), sociology, and shorthand and typing (no credit was given for these two, however). Thus, students were being offered a greater variety of subjects to study. This meant that after they had satisfied their distribution requirements, they took fewer of the broad-survey courses that were so familiar to them from high school. They spent more time studying narrower subjects in greater detail, a process which would equip them with the tools to analyze the world around them. A 1928 graduate wrote that the first two years of college courses were not intellectually stimulating and were very much a repeat of her high school curriculum. During her last two years, her courses “encouraged independence of thought.” She said she was adequately prepared to do graduate work at the University of Chicago.7

Aside from home economics, which had been added during the first year of coeducation, most of the new courses were not designed specifically for women, although some, such as music or sociology, may have been of more interest to women than to men. Two exceptions were library science, a predominately woman’s field, especially in school libraries, and shorthand and typing, for which no college credit was given but which would be very useful to students, especially women, planning office careers. Some of the courses, such as business administration and jurisprudence appealed more to the men than to the women. These new courses exemplified William and Mary’s changing educational mission. Although teacher-training was still

7Questionnaire 28-4.
very important, it was now primarily the women who were being trained to be teachers, not the men. The men were being prepared for a variety of careers. One could take the preliminary courses for engineering or forestry degrees, transferring to other colleges, usually after the sophomore year, to get the specialized training required. The college catalogs also listed suggested courses for students planning to study medicine, dentistry, pharmacy, or public health. Women, in addition to being teachers, could also prepare for a career in home economics or take courses that would enable them to enter schools of nursing or social work. Although the women were not entirely excluded from the male-dominated medical and law schools, not many women entered those fields in the 1920s.

The admission of women students also led to the appointment of women to the Board of Visitors. Four women Visitors were appointed in the 1920s. Mary Cooke Branch Munford was the first woman Visitor, serving from 1920 to 1925. She was from a prominent Richmond family. Her husband Beverly Bland Munford had been a student at William and Mary and had served on the Board from 1888 to 1909. Mrs. Munford worked hard to provide better educational opportunities for all children. In addition to being William and Mary's first female Visitor, she was also the first woman to serve on the Richmond School Board. Later, she was a trustee at the University of Virginia. Mrs. Munford had also worked for the Cooperative Education Commission, which had sought to establish a coordinate women's college at the University of Virginia. Kate Waller Barrett, a physician active in many organizations, served from 1921 until her death in 1925. Dr. Barrett was from an old Virginia family. Her most important work was with the National Florence Crittenton Mission, of which she served as president after the death of the mission's founder. She was a member of the Virginia
Equal Suffrage League, the National Council of Women, served as Virginia regent of the Daughters of the American Revolution, and was involved with other women's organizations. Barrett Hall, the second dormitory built for women students, was named in her honor. Lulu D. Metz, later Mrs. Norman T. McManaway, served on the Board longer than these other women, from 1925 until 1952. Little information was found about her, but she was involved with schools in her hometown of Manassas, Virginia, although it was unclear whether she was a teacher, a supervisor, or held some other position. Gabriella Page of Richmond also served a long term, from 1925 until 1940. She was from an old Virginia family, and some of her ancestors had attended the College. Nothing else was uncovered about her life. These women were faithful Board members, attending meetings regularly and serving on committees. The minutes of the Board meetings do not record whether they made a particular point to represent women's causes.

With more women coming to William and Mary every year, they were able to form more clubs and athletic teams. The 1920 *Colonial Echo* lists clubs with such interesting names as the Man-haters and the Vamps, but these were of little consequence and quickly died out. The yearbook gives no hint of the nature of these clubs. More substantial organizations were also begun. Some, such as the Dramatic Club, were for both male and female

---

members. In the early 1920s, the most important of the new women's organizations was the Whitehall Literary Society. In nineteenth century American colleges, literary societies, which sponsored debates, public speakings, readings, and sometimes dramatic events, were very popular. On many campuses, all students belonged to literary societies. Although they had begun to die out before the twentieth century began, most William and Mary men still belonged to one of the two societies on campus. When the women came, neither society would admit them, so the women established their own in response to this snub. In 1921, a second society for women, the J. Lesslie Hall, was begun because there were too many members in Whitehall for effective work to take place. Almost as soon as they were launched, however, they began to die. At the end of this decade, the college catalog states that membership in a literary society was mandatory for all sophomores. This edict helped to perpetuate this dying institution, but the literary societies had a hard time competing with the more purely social groups.

Each year saw the beginning of new organizations and clubs. Some, such as the German (dance) Club, the social sororities, and the ribbon societies, were primarily for social activities. Others, such as the Edith Baer Club and the H2E Club, promoted interests in particular academic pursuits, home economics and physical education respectively with these two examples. The YWCA was a service organization. Its primary duties

---

9Althea Hunt came to William and Mary in 1926 as assistant professor of English. She also served as the director for theatre productions. The formal beginning of the William and Mary Theatre dates from her arrival. Althea Hunt, The William and Mary Theatre (Richmond: Dietz Press, 1968), p. xiii.
were to provide orientation for new women and to hold religious services. It also sponsored some social activities, the most interesting being the annual "Manless Dance." At this dance, half the women dressed as men, and half came as themselves; real men could attend as spectators only. A more important activity was the Y's "service bureau," which sought to provide part-time employment for women doing typing, babysitting, sewing, and tutoring.

Musical women banded together to form a glee club and an orchestra. "Jilted lovers" started a Muffet Club, whose motto was "Give them up before they throw you down." Discussion groups were formed in two women's dormitories, Brown and Tyler, to discuss "modern problems." Almost all students participated in at least one of these activities. Joining in was part of the collegiate tradition. In order to be accepted, one had to join clubs. In a small college town like Williamsburg, where few students had cars, clubs were almost essential simply because there was little else to do in town and few opportunities to go elsewhere. As one alumna expressed it, "Our whole life and interests were there [at William and Mary]." Indeed, residents of Williamsburg tended to look to the College to provide entertainment in the form of concerts, plays, and lectures.

---

10Two of the many articles about this event are found in the Flat Hat, 17 February 1922, p. 2; 1 February 1927, p. 2.

11Flat Hat, 10 March 1922, pp. 1 and 7.

12Flat Hat, 23 November 1927, p. 11; 2 November 1928, p. 2; and 9 November 1928, p. 8.

13Questionnaire 28-6.
Athletic opportunities for women also increased during the 1920s. Field hockey quickly joined basketball as an intramural sport, followed by golf, tennis, baseball, hiking, swimming, and track. The first intercollegiate basketball games were held in the winter of 1921, against Hampton High School, the Richmond YWCA, and Fredericksburg Normal School. In 1923 the William and Mary women won all five of their intercollegiate games and made their first northern trip, to Washington, D.C., where they played teams from George Washington University and Swarthmore. In the fall of 1925, the hockey team began intercollegiate competition. A varsity tennis team was also formed, but basketball continued to be the major sport for women. The bulk of the athletic activity, however, stayed on the intramural level, and consisted mostly of competition between teams formed by the different classes.14

Women's athletics were overseen by the Women's Athletic Association, whose purpose was "the promotion of healthful and recreational physical activities for all women students of this college." All regularly matriculated women paid an athletic fee and were members of the association. It was run by a committee composed of three officers elected by the women and three faculty members appointed by the college president. The committee named team managers, approved schedules, set academic eligibility requirements for playing varsity sports, purchased equipment, and at one meeting decided to ask members of the Edith Baer Home Economics Club to remodel the previous year's basketball uniforms to fit the new team in order to spare the expense of new uniforms. They also set up a

14The Colonial Echo and the Flat Hat provide much information about sports.
point system that awarded monograms for participation in intramural sports. Basically, the association wanted athletics to be open to all who were interested and not just to the most talented.\textsuperscript{15}

Women's lives at William and Mary were well-regulated by all sorts of rules. The men did not have as many, although some of the restrictions placed on women affected them, also. The rules were deemed essential to protect the students and to assure parents that their daughters were being well cared for.

The first class of women did not have their rules printed for them, but Dr. Janet Kimbrough, a member of the class, recalled that the women had a nightly study hall from 8:00 until 10:00 p.m., when they had to be either in their rooms or in the library. At 10, they had to leave the library because "lights out" was at 10:30, unless they had permission to stay up until midnight. Lights in the stairways, however, made the breaking of this rule fairly easy, and women would sometimes go there to study or to talk.

Men were permitted to visit in the reception rooms of the women's dormitories from after supper until 8:00 p.m. Dancing was a popular activity, until Dr. Chandler ordered a curtailment because he thought too much dancing would give the college a reputation for frivolity. Dr. Kimbrough also recalled that Social Director Bessie Porter Taylor would warn women she thought were wearing unsuitable clothes, such as dresses that were too short, or too much makeup, or who were dancing too closely

\textsuperscript{15}Women's Athletic Association Minutebook, Archives Acc. 1980.1. The purpose is stated in the constitution, found on p.412 of the minutebook.
with their partners. Another alumna recalled that she had to send all her dresses home to have the hems let out because Miss Taylor thought they were too short. She also had to learn to dress her hair in a more grown-up fashion because of Miss Taylor’s disapproval of her long style.

The first rulebook for women was printed in the fall of 1923. It detailed very stringent rules, but also differentiated between classes so that seniors had more privileges than freshwomen. Quiet hours extended for most of the day, except for mealtimes and a final burst of energy between 10 and 10:30 at night. Lights out was still at 10:30, except on Saturdays, when it was midnight, but late hours were allowed three nights every week. Seniors and student council members were allowed late hours every night. Dates could only be held during certain social hours, the times depending on one's class, freshwomen having the fewest hours. Seniors were permitted to attend church with a date and could have two dates a week without another couple along. Freshwomen always had to double date, even to church, and could not take walks with men. Women had to receive permission to spend the night out of their dorms or to go on dates. If leaving campus after supper, they had to sign their names in a book in the

---

16 Janet Coleman Kimbrough, interview in the Oral History Collection, College Archives, Swem Library.

17 Questionnaire 21-6.

18 Rules are found in the Women Students’ Cooperative Government Association handbooks, which were published annually.

19 Many of the women who returned their questionnaires wrote that attending church was a popular activity because they could have a date there. Many also recounted the no-hand-holding rule.
dormitory. Freshwomen could not leave campus by themselves. No smoking was allowed. Men and women were not permitted to hold hands, much less walk arm-in-arm.

The women could laugh at these rules. The Flat Hat published a new list of rules in 1924: women were limited to purchasing one pack of gum a week; they were to wear blinders at all times except during social hours so they could not see the men; they were limited to wearing seventeen hairpins at a time; and they were discouraged from having dates, but if they insisted, they should only date men who had passed the test set by the Society of Pure Minds.20

As each year passed, the rules were slightly loosened, primarily to allow more dates. The no smoking rule was quickly dropped, although smoking was allowed only in certain places. Women were not to smoke in academic buildings, reception rooms, or dormitory hallways. Dancing was allowed in certain places at specified times every day. In 1926, lights out was moved to midnight, but a woman had to maintain an eighty average in order to keep her dating privileges. This last rule called for the formation of another silly club, the Psi chapter of Nu Sigma Phi (No Social Privileges), composed of women who had an average of less than eighty. They were not supposed even to talk to men, and this prohibition prompted an anonymous poet to send to the Flat Hat a verse about a poor NSP member, one of whose galoshes was stuck in the mud, who could not call upon the lone passerby to assist her because he was a man.21 However, this rule does underscore

20Flat Hat, 8 February 1924, p. 2.

21"New Fraternity Formed by Girls," Flat Hat, 5 November 1926, p. 1; and "When a Friend Needs a Feller...," Flat Hat, 3 December 1926, p. 2.
that the college administration considered education, not amusement, as the primary function of the college. The liberalization of the rules was actually quite modest, though it was part of a national trend.\footnote{Mabel Newcomer discussed the 1920s as a decade marked by increased freedom for teenagers in \textit{A Century of Higher Education for American Women} (Washington: Zenger Publishing Co., 1976), p. 106. The loosening of rules was a reflection of this change.}

There were rules for men, as well, such as restrictions on automobile use, gambling, drinking, and keeping of firearms, but they generally applied to the entire student body. Yelverton O. Kent, a male student in the 1920s, recalled that because the women had such strict rules about when they could go out and where they could go, the men often dated non-college women who were not bound by the same restrictions. Elizabeth Cleveland Kent, who graduated in 1932, recalled that although most of the women obeyed the rules most of the time, everyone managed to break them at least a couple of times without getting caught.\footnote{Yelverton O. Kent and Elizabeth Cleveland Kent, interview in the Oral History Collection, College Archives, Swem Library.}

The rules were enforced by both the Social Director and the Women Students' Government Association. All women were automatically members of the WSGA, which had several functions. It supervised dormitory life, judged honor code violations, provided some social functions, made recommendations for rule changes, and dealt with infractions of the rules. In the 1920s, these functions were divided among several committees. The Discipline Committee (later the Judicial Council) punished women for infringements of the social rules. The Student Council, or Executive Committee, punished honor code violations and made rule change recommendations. Less important committees included the Social
Committee, which arranged social events, and the House Committee, which regulated order in the dormitories. All the women met together once a month to hear about proposed and enacted rule changes, and hear inspiring talks from faculty members and administrators, such as Miss Taylor speaking on “Growth” and “Personality.”

Elections of new officers took place at one of the spring meetings. Although the women could recommend changes in the rules, the ultimate decision rested with the college administration. Also, the administration reserved the right to review all punishments for honor code violations and for infractions of the rules.

Another set of rules common to many colleges was established just for freshmen students, often with different rules for men and women. At William and Mary these were called "due" rules, the word due being short for introductory classes. The general intent of these rules was to remind the freshmen that however important they had been in high school, they were now lowly college frosh; high school records did not count, and they had to start building a new career for themselves. Dr. Kimbrough said that the first class of women was not subjected to the due rules. In the fall of 1919, these first women tried to impose rules on the second class but were unsuccessful because there were more new women than old ones.

After the older women began to outnumber the new ones, due rules were imposed. The rules made the freshwomen stand out from the other women but were rarely in effect for more than a week. The rules frequently instructed the

---

24 Women Students' Government Association Minutebook, Archives Acc. 1983.95; these talks were given on 8 April 1929 and 20 May 1929.

25 Board of Visitors Minutes, 16 March 1924, p. 74.

26 Janet Coleman Kimbrough interview.
freshwomen to wear ribbons or caps, stay on the sidewalks, address older students as "miss" or "mister," wear their dresses backwards for a day or wear mismatched shoes. Sometimes they were forbidden to date the older men.\textsuperscript{27} The culmination of the special week of rules was the Supreme Court, where the freshwomen were tried by a judge and jury of upperclasswomen. The charges were not always related to the rules; all the freshwomen were found guilty of something and were appropriately punished. In 1923, the \textit{Flat Hat} article listed such charges as showing disrespect to the Confederate flag (the guilty party had to sing "Dixie" as punishment) and being shocked by nothing except electricity (punishment not listed).\textsuperscript{28}

The women who came to William and Mary in the 1920s were mostly from Virginia, although each year saw more out-of-state women. They were, for the most part, from middle class families who could afford to send their daughters to college, although a fair number earned money to help pay for their own education. Scholarships were available to those who pledged to teach in the public schools after graduation. One woman drove a school bus to earn money. Some had to drop out of school, work full-time, and save their money in order to continue their education. Several recalled that Dr. Chandler found scholarship money to help normal school graduates finance the final two years of a college education.\textsuperscript{29}

\textsuperscript{27}The rules were often printed in the \textit{Flat Hat}; for examples see 5 October 1923, p. 8; 3 October 1924, p. 8; 9 October 1925, p. 2.

\textsuperscript{28}\textit{Flat Hat}, 12 October 1923, pp. 1 and 8.

\textsuperscript{29}Questionnaires 27-11, 28-2, and 26-4 are examples of these.
For the most part, the women enjoyed their college years. Many 1920s graduates wrote of life-long friendships that began in college. Since the college and town were so small, the students were also close to the faculty members. Professors entertained students in their homes, and the students invited professors to their parties. The wife of one professor always invited several of the students to go with her whenever she went to Richmond, certainly a treat on a campus where few students had cars. 

Not all the memories were good ones, however. One woman called the social rules "childish," and found the food in the dining hall of very poor quality. A Jewish student found herself excluded from many of the college's social activities, although accepted as an equal in student government and on the debate team.

The women students at William and Mary contributed their share to the growth of the college. As they increased their numbers from a paltry two dozen to almost seven hundred, they added activities to amuse themselves, to further their education, to keep physically fit, and to govern themselves. They participated in school activities and helped make William and Mary a more interesting and exciting place to be. The interest of John D. Rockefeller, Jr., in restoring Williamsburg to its colonial appearance would soon bring the nation's attention to this small Virginia town, but hundreds of women had discovered it before he had. The great New York stock market

---

30Questionnaire 29-4.

31Questionnaire 28-4.

32Questionnaire 26-1.
crash of October 1929 would certainly affect William and Mary, but not as severely as it would have if the women and Rockefeller had not been there.
CHAPTER III
William and Mary During the 1930s

Life for students at William and Mary in the 1930s was not much different from what it had been in the 1920s. The Great Depression afflicting the whole country also affected William and Mary, leading to a smaller enrollment because fewer families could afford to send their children to college. Professors at William and Mary had to take paycuts when the state reduced appropriations for the college. Several building projects were able to proceed only because the College received assistance from federal sources, such as the Public Works Administration and the Civilian Conservation Corps. At the same time, however, the number of faculty members continued to increase slowly throughout the decade. The impact of the depression in Williamsburg was mitigated by the restoration of Colonial Williamsburg which brought new jobs to town. The restoration project was quite unusual at the time and received much publicity. The College itself was featured in some of the publicity because of the restoration of its three oldest buildings. The news brought William and Mary to the attention of more people around the country and helped recruitment efforts. Alumnae who responded to the question about what factors had influenced their decision to attend William and Mary often cited the history and attractiveness of the area in which the College was located as important. Several specifically mentioned that they had read about the
college in articles about the restoration. For those who could afford it, "to be in college [during the depression] was a sort of insulation from the outside world; it was a safe feeling to be sure of three meals a day, work to do, and friends..."\(^1\)

Most women who attended William and Mary could afford to be there. Almost all of them came from middle class or upper middle class homes. Seventy percent of the fathers held jobs that could be classified as white collar, although that designation does cover a wide range of salaries and responsibilities. They were doctors, lawyers, businessmen, military officers, salesmen, merchants, and accountants. The largest single occupational group was that of farmers, not at all surprising in a largely rural state. Less than 1% of the women came from homes where the father held a blue collar job. The occupations of 12% of the fathers were not given, and another 9% could not be ranked as either white or blue collar because of lack of information about the position held.\(^2\)

The fathers were fairly well educated. Fifty-one percent had had at least some college education. By comparison, in 1940, only 10% of the male population as a whole had attained this level of education. Almost 19% had done some graduate work. Less than one percent had had no formal education at all; 12% had quit by the end of the eighth grade; and another 12% had not finished high school. A few of the women indicated that their fathers had grown up during the difficult Reconstruction years when schools

---

\(^1\) Questionnaire 35-7.

\(^2\) Stephan Thernstrom's *The Other Bostonians* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1973) was used for classifying jobs as white or blue collar.
were not always available, however much they may have wanted an education.³

Most of the mothers, 88%, were listed as housewives or as having no occupation at the time their daughters attended college. Several women indicated that their mothers had worked prior to marriage. Of the mothers who did work, many were widowed, divorced, or married to men who were unable to work. Most of the working mothers held white collar jobs, with over half of them being teachers.

The mothers were also better educated than the female population as a whole, with 45% having had some college education, compared with less than 10% of women in 1940. Only 2.5% had attended graduate school. Less than 1% had had no formal education; 7% had stopped by eighth grade; and another 10% quit before graduating from high school.

Clearly, most of the alumnae were from households which placed a value on education as evidenced by either the parents' educational background or by the occupations they held. Of course, parents with poor schooling or low status jobs could also encourage their daughters to attend college in order to improve their status. Although money was tighter during the Depression, most of the women students came from families which valued college education enough to make the necessary sacrifices for it.

Ninety-two percent of the women students received financial help from their parents in order to pay for their education. Some proudly noted that their parents, however hard they had had to struggle, had paid all of their daughter's expenses. Still, a large number did receive outside help or

---

³Questionnaires 25-10, 27-10, 28-6. The same situation held true for some of the mothers, also.
earned some of their own money. Twenty-three percent received full or partial scholarships, 16% held part-time jobs, and 9% received help from family members other than parents. Seven percent listed other sources of money, primarily loans from the College, but also loans from banks, friends, and family. Inheritances, trust funds, savings, and gifts provided money for some women. A few worked during the regular school year and attended college only in the summer or on a part-time basis.

Despite pay cuts, money worries, and a slightly smaller enrollment, the college administrators were able to take pleasure in the realization that they could be more particular about whom they admitted. One of the results of admitting women was that William and Mary received ever-increasing numbers of applications throughout the 1920s. The college was quickly deluged with more applicants than it had room to house. Initially, the problem was solved by accepting students on a first-applied, first-admitted basis, provided the applicant met the minimal admission standards. It quickly became evident that this method would exclude better qualified students who applied later in the year. A better screening process was needed, and the best process was the simple expedient of raising admission standards.

In 1918 the qualifications for admission were three in number: a student had to be at least sixteen years old, had to "present a certificate of honorable discharge from the last school attended," and had to demonstrate "adequate preparation" by submitting a high school transcript or by taking entrance examinations.4 Throughout the 1920s, the entrance requirements were made only a little more stringent and were probably as much a

---

4William and Mary Catalog, June 1918, p. 32.
reflection of higher standards in high schools as a changing standard in admissions at William and Mary. The April 1921 catalog stated that an applicant had to have completed a four-year high school course, earning fifteen units. The next year, graduation from an accredited high school, with sixteen units, was specified. Two years later, an applicant also had to provide a recommendation from his or her high school principal. Despite these more stringent requirements, applications and enrollment at William and Mary continued to increase throughout the 1920s.

When the depression came, the number of applicants dropped and enrollment also declined. However, the College decided not to lower its admissions standards in order to admit more students. Indeed, the College continued to increase its standards for admission. The imposition of stricter admission standards during the Great Depression is perhaps the surest sign that William and Mary was well on its way to becoming a good quality small liberal arts college. The April 1933 catalog announced that applicants had to rank academically in the top half of their high school classes. This was the last new standard imposed until a total revamping of the admissions requirements were published in March 1940. Applications had to be submitted on special forms and were still considered in order of receipt, so it was necessary to apply early. Women were urged to apply by

---

5Catalog, April 1921, p. 43. A full year of one high school subject earned one unit of credit.

6Catalog, April 1922, p. 50.

7Catalog, January 1925, p. 57.

8Catalog, April 1933, p. 73.
March 1, because of the stiffer competition for spaces. Men were advised to apply by May 1. The essential requirement for admission was graduation in the upper half of one's high school class. However,

[s]ince the number of applicants who meet the essential requirements is considerably in excess of the number that can be admitted, the College selects those who present the strongest qualifications in scholarship, character, personality, performance in extra-curricular activities, and breadth of interests.9

In February 1936, President Bryan reported to the Board of Visitors that William and Mary, despite its declining enrollment, had rejected one hundred applicants for the 1935-1936 school year because they were deemed academically deficient.10 This is probably the best proof that the College could give of its commitment to higher standards. The years of merely filling classrooms with warm bodies were over. Now William and Mary would try to attract the more academically capable students.

The College of William and Mary did not find it necessary add any other new academic departments during the 1930s. One department, journalism, was dropped and its creative writing courses were incorporated into the English and theatre departments. The college was still in the business of producing teachers, although one could not major in education. The students had to major in some other subject area and take at least seven education courses if they wanted to prepare to teach. Pre-

---

9Catalog, March 1940, p. 75.

10Board of Visitors Minutes, February 11, 1936, p. 195.
professional studies were also emphasized for students interested in engineering, medicine, pharmacy, or dentistry.11

The women generally chose to major and minor in one of the subjects that make up the humanities and social sciences. The single most popular major was English, with almost 20% of the women choosing that subject. The next most favored majors, in decreasing order, were history, home economics, library science, mathematics, French, and sociology, with between five and ten percent of the women majoring in one of those fields. The most popular minor was education, followed by English, French, history, biology, and chemistry.12

Campus organizations continued on as during the 1920s. The students still had to provide most of their own entertainment because there was little to do in Williamsburg. Travel out-of-town was difficult, and women had to have permission to leave town. There were a great number of concerts and lectures on campus. Many famous people visited the College. Some, such as Franklin D. and Eleanor Roosevelt, came to see the restoration project as well as the College. But most, including Amelia Earhart, Gertrude Stein, and Frank Lloyd Wright, were invited by groups at the College. In 1934, President Julian A. C. Chandler died, and John Stewart Bryan was elected to replace him. Bryan loved parties and everyone on campus got involved in the elaborate Christmas parties he sponsored. Final dances before graduation were held in the newly-built Sunken Gardens and brought some of the well-known big bands to town. Bryan was also instrumental in enlarging and improving the Fine Arts Department. The William and Mary

11Catalogs, 1930-1939.

12Alumnae Questionnaires, Archives Acc. 1988.67. See Appendix C.
Theatre, part of this department, staged many productions which were very popular. The department also sponsored art exhibits and asked noted artists, such as Georgia O'Keeffe, to speak to its students.\textsuperscript{13}

The most important women's organization continued to be the Women's Student Cooperative Government Association. In 1930, increased numbers of women students made it necessary for the Executive Committee to divide its duties between two committees. The new Executive Committee recommended the social rules, edited the women's handbook, and in general governed the students. The rules had to be approved by the college president before going into effect. The newly-formed Honor Council was to judge code violations and to instruct the students in the workings of the honor system. Although the Honor Council judged honor code violations, the college administration reviewed all cases. The Judicial Council continued to be in charge of judging rule violations. Its chairwoman gave permission to visit in town during the evening, to have dates with men who were not William and Mary students, or to have dates outside of normal social hours, which previously only the WSCGA president could grant.

According to its constitution of 1936, the purpose of the WSCGA was to enforce the college rules, "to legislate in all matters that do not fall under the direct jurisdiction of the [college] authorities," and to "further the best interests of the women students." It also tried to get more rights for women, although this was difficult to achieve. It was considered a victory when senior women won the right to visit the College Shop on Sunday.

\textsuperscript{13}The \textit{Flat Hat} gave extensive coverage to lectures, plays, concerts, and other events on campus.
evenings. 14 But the administration flatly rejected a major petition in 1937 requesting more liberal rules for women. Billie Newberry, who had circulated the petition, wrote an editorial for the Flat Hat in which she quoted another, unnamed, publication as stating that "William and Mary [had] the most archaic social rules for women of any co-educational institution in America." 15 It would be a long time before the situation changed. William and Mary was very concerned about maintaining its upright image and preferred to put severe restraints on the women students in order to do this.

Surviving records of the WSCGA Judicial Council give an indication of what rules were being broken and the punishment for the breaking of those rules. A sampling shows that the most commonly broken rules were dating out of social hours, leaving town without permission, and coming back into the dorms late after having been out. These three categories comprised 75% of the broken rules. Other violations included going somewhere other than the place for which the woman was signed out, smoking in unauthorized places, going to the park around Lake Matoaka with fewer than the required number of couples, shooting a gun on campus, being intoxicated, breaking punishment, riding in a car without permission, "improper" conduct with a date, and talking out of dormitory windows. The punishments ranged from a simple warning, usually given for a first offense, to being put on social probation or being "campused." The latter punishment meant that a woman was not to leave campus. Social probation meant a woman could not have dates. Being campused was the most common punishment, usually lasting from three to seven days. Two women who were drunk were campused for

14 Flat Hat, 31 October 1933, p. 6.

15 Flat Hat, 18 May 1937, p. 4.
three and four weeks respectively. The gun shooters were campused for two weeks apiece (it was a b-b gun and apparently no harm was done). Three women were punished for smoking in unauthorized places. One was campused for two days, to be served when she returned in the fall since the offense took place after spring exams were over; one was campused for one week; and the third was put on one week's social probation. The woman found guilty of unspecified “improper conduct with a date” was campused for four weeks and put on social probation for a week.16

The women's rules and the work of the Judicial Council point out a major difference between the male and female students. Other than the rules that applied to all students, there were no social rules for the men as there were for the women. Men did not have to sign out of their dorms or get permission to leave campus. If a man returned his date to her dormitory late, she was punished but he was not. Men who broke college rules were brought to the attention of the Dean of Men and sometimes even the President. Men could be expelled or suspended for breaking rules. However, the women were given more control over their erring sisters. Infractions of all rules, social as well as college, were brought before the Judicial Council. It seems inconsistent that the administration would have protected the women so much by keeping them hedged in with all sorts of rules and dormitory mothers, while at the same time trusting them to judge their own when infractions occurred. The men were treated the opposite way: they were allowed great freedom in what they could do, but not trusted to judge their own when rules were broken. Perhaps other studies will show the same situation true of other coeducational schools. The situation may

16 WSCGA Judicial Council Sample, Archives Acc. 1982.58.
have arisen because after the Strode Bill was passed in 1918, President Tyler visited women's colleges, not coeducational colleges, in looking for models on which to base the plans for the new women students. The administration may well have adopted rules for women from women's colleges, rather than studying whether coeducational institutions discriminated between their male and female students.

Many of the alumnae expressed the belief that the social rules were oppressive and silly and recalled that they disliked them while they were in college. At the same time, however, they generally accepted them as being a normal part of college life in the 1920s and 1930s. One alumna, who had been at a girls' school, said she was attracted to William and Mary because its rules were so much less restrictive than the ones to which she was accustomed. At the other extreme was the woman who found the rules too suffocating and transferred after being put on six months probation for leaving town without permission. One California woman noted that the rules made William and Mary more acceptable to her parents. Since they were too far away to make sure she was all right, they relied on the security of the rules to assure themselves that their daughter would not get into any trouble. Despite the rules, the general consensus was that the women students had great fun. As one woman said, "We accepted the rules cheerfully and then looked for ways to break them." She recalled wearing raincoats over rolled-up pants in order to go out for cokes, since the women were not permitted to wear pants outside the dorms or off the athletic fields. She also recounted how a fire drill saved her from getting into trouble one night when she returned late from a date. With everyone outside, it was easy for her to mingle with the crowd and pretend she had been there all the time. Another woman recalled that she was always
breaking the rules, especially about signing out and the prohibition on talking out of windows, and had to go before the Judicial Council many times. But she ended by saying "It was a great life, and I loved my W&M days." Obviously, the women students could and did have fun despite the restrictive rules. Daring students saw them as a challenge: how often can I break the rules and not get caught? Quieter students just went along with them, even if they did find them rigid and demeaning. For some, who had been in girls' schools, the rules were less restrictive than what they had been used to following. Few found them so intolerable that they transferred to other schools where the rules were less strict. For many women, transfer was out of the question, anyway. Virginia residents who could not afford private college or out-of-state tuition had only one other option, Virginia Polytechnic Institute, which began admitting women in 1921, but Tech did not welcome women students with as much warmth as William and Mary did.17

17Questionnaires 30-6, 34-9, 32-9, 42-7, 42-31, 44-13, and 44-16.
CHAPTER IV:
World War II and Too Many Women

Life at William and Mary in the 1940s was overwhelmingly dominated by the changes brought about by World War II. The Great Depression ended as the United States swung into war production. Because of the proximity of a major naval base and other military installations, William and Mary was closer to the fact of war than were many colleges. World War II also exacerbated one of William and Mary's problems, while at the same time making it more endurable: the problem was that of too many women students, or rather what the administration perceived as too many women.

Beginning in the 1932-33 school year and continuing until the end of the period under study, women outnumbered men almost every year. During the 1930s, women made up about 53% of the student body. Although Virginia Polytechnic Institute also accepted women into its undergraduate programs, William and Mary was the state college most women wanted to attend because it specialized in teacher training, the major occupation of college-educated women, and because it offered a more well-rounded education than did Virginia Tech, the Richmond Professional Institute, or the normal colleges. For men, William and Mary was a second choice college, with the University of Virginia being the more prestigious choice. Furthermore, not only were more women applying than men, but the high school records of the women who applied were better than those of the men. It was difficult for
the admissions office to turn away the better qualified women, so each passing year during the 1920s and 1930s saw a higher percentage of women in the student body, until the number of women students surpassed that of the men in the fall of 1932.

Many different groups of people were alarmed over the increasing number of women. As early as November 1930, the Flat Hat sent out its "Inquiring Reporter" to ask men what they thought about the number of women at William and Mary. At the time, women comprised 46% of the student body. All the men agreed that there were too many women, that they felt men should be in the majority, and they feared that William and Mary would become a "women's" college.¹ In December 1933, the District of Columbia Alumni Chapter wrote the Board of Visitors expressing their concern over the increasing number of women. The Board agreed to study the problem, although nothing seems to have been done at this time.²

President John Stewart Bryan's report to the Board in June 1936 expressed the administration's frustration over the situation. He liked the prestige of being able to accept better qualified students, but he also wanted more male students, even though they tended to be of poorer quality than the women. He said that because there was more room for men than for women at the other state-supported colleges in Virginia, there was more intense competition for male high school graduates. Fewer colleges for women meant that it was easier to chose the best qualified women from among the many applicants. Despite the fact that both the Board of Visitors and the college administration wanted to admit more men, Bryan wrote, "I

¹Flat Hat, 7 November 1930, p. 5.

²Board of Visitors Minutes, 29 December 1933, p. 458.
have no doubt that the Board will agree it is a choice between superior women students or far less satisfactory men students. Quality has to be recognized.\(^3\) Clearly, there was concern on the campus about what to do under these circumstances. Accepting more men and fewer women would mean getting male students who were less qualified than the women who were rejected.

In 1937, the Alumni Association Board presented its proposal for curtailing the number of enrolled women to the Board of Visitors. It asked that the Board establish an official ratio of 60% men to 40% women, and that the admissions office abandon its policy of admitting only those students who graduated in the top half of their high school class. Since more women than men did so, this meant that more women were eligible for admission. Instead, the Alumni Board recommended that men and women be judged separately, accepting the men who graduated in the top half among male students at their high schools and accepting the women who graduated in the top half among female students. The Alumni Board also asked that preference be given to children of alumni and that the percentage of Virginia students be increased. The Board of Visitors promised to consider these proposals.\(^4\)

Finally, in the early winter of 1940, President Bryan announced that a committee had been established to study the problem of the large female enrollment. The committee members were Bursar Charles J. Duke, Dean of

\(^3\)Board of Visitors Minutes, 6 June 1936, p. 252. The same concerns are also expressed in the President's Report to the Board, 9 February 1937, p. 279.

\(^4\)Board of Visitors Minutes, 5 June 1937, pp. 287-288. Virginia students comprised 61% of enrollment in 1931-32, but only 50% in 1936-37.
Men J. Wilfred Lambert, Professor of Chemistry John E. Hocutt, Executive Secretary of the Alumni Society Charles P. McCurdy, Dean of the Faculty James W. Miller (also a professor of philosophy), Professor of History Harold L. Fowler, Professor of Jurisprudence Theodore S. Cox, and one other person surnamed Harrison who was probably Professor of English Charles Traywick Harrison.

The committee's report confirmed what everyone had known all along, that the women students were more successful than the men. In one letter, Dean Miller wrote that "roughly, the percentage of men who fail is three times as great as that of women who fail." He also gave percentages for the failure rate for a variety of courses. The committee was concerned not just about attracting more men to William and Mary, although that was their major interest, but also with attracting a better quality of male student. They did realize the futility of accepting men who would just flunk out of college. President Bryan's report to the Board of Visitors in May 1940 shows the atmosphere under which this Committee on Enrollment was operating: "it is thoroughly understood that the restoration of a preponderance of men students is a most important objective for this college...."6

The Committee made its final report at the Board Meeting on 13 December 1941. The Board adopted all of the committee's proposals, which included setting the ratio of male/female students at 60/40, reserving

---


6Board of Visitors Minutes, 31 May 1940, p. 34.
more dormitory space for men and undertaking a special campaign to recruit men by offering more scholarship aid to men, and adding courses that would attract them. The Board was also decided to give preference to Virginia women over out-of-state women in the admissions process.\footnote{Board of Visitors Minutes, 13 December 1941, p. 171. The only woman on the Board at this time seconded the resolution adopting these proposals.} The entrance of the United States as a combatant into World War II jeopardized these plans. Just two months later, at the February 1942 Board meeting, President Bryan told the Board that because of the war, William and Mary would have to accept more women in order to maintain its enrollment level. He specified, however, that after the war, efforts to increase male enrollment would be resumed.\footnote{Board of Visitors Minutes, 13 February 1942, p. 176.}

Initially, the plan to recruit more men was successful. Fifty-three percent of the students enrolled in the fall of 1942 were men. They had been attracted to William and Mary by the presence of Army and Navy reserve units and by a special new war-work program. The latter, later renamed the work-study program, offered poor men the chance to work and attend college at the same time. Most of the participants worked at Colonial Williamsburg. The College also gave scholarship aid to these men to ensure that they had enough money for college.

The sudden decline in numbers of male students began in January 1943. In the late fall of 1942, the United States Congress had passed a bill lowering the draft age from twenty to eighteen, thus making most college men eligible for the draft. The Army and Navy reserve units were also
called up, and student deferments were suspended. When classes began in September 1943, only 27% of the student body was male. The proportion of men climbed slightly higher in subsequent years when discharged veterans returned to class.

The college administration knew that the financial well-being of William and Mary depended on keeping dormitories and classrooms filled. The College could have accepted more women, but those concerned about having too many women were reluctant to do this because it meant that there would be no place to put the veterans after the war. Furthermore, there was the danger of having to lower admission standards in order to admit more women. Fortunately, the College was able to secure two military training units which moved into several college dormitories and other buildings. The Army Specialized Training Unit was on campus less than a year, but the Naval Chaplains Training School was at the College for the duration of the war. By giving dormitory space to military units, the College was in essence reserving that space for men after the war, thus putting itself in a good position to enroll more equal numbers of men and women students.

The make-up of the faculty changed slightly during the war years. Many of the men, and a few of the women, went into war work of some sort. In his annual report on the 1943-1944 school year, President John E. Pomfret reported that twenty-six faculty members had been granted leaves of absence: eighteen for military service, six for other government service, and two for regular leaves of absence. Because enrollment had declined, not all of these professors were replaced, but the College did hire twenty-two new faculty members for the year. Seventeen of them were designated as "acting" professors or instructors, indicating that they were hired as
temporary replacements for faculty on leave. Of the twenty-two, seven were women. In the fall of 1942, women comprised only twenty percent of the faculty, so they were being hired in slightly higher numbers during the war than they had been before it. Five of the women were temporary appointments, however. In the period examined by this thesis, the greatest number of female faculty members was twenty-nine, reached in the 1943-1944 year. Many of these were acting professors. The women professors continued to hold doctorates in a far smaller proportion than their male counterparts.

In another response to the war, the college added many new courses to the curriculum and made other changes as well. Physical education courses, formerly required only for freshmen and sophomores, were now also required of juniors and seniors in order to provide stronger and more physically fit workers and soldiers. The summer school was expanded into a full semester's equivalent so students could graduate sooner and get into war work and so that men could complete more credits before being drafted. The new courses which were added provided a useful background for graduates, male or female, who were going into war-related jobs. They included camouflage techniques, home nursing, the maintenance of internal combustion engines, map reading, including interpretation of aerial photographs, military chemistry, telegraphy, law of the sea, military and naval strategy, health education, plane and spherical trigonometry, and safety and emergency education. Most of these courses carried only two hours of credit, rather than the three hours awarded for regular academic courses.9

The College responded to the war in other ways, as well. Several alumnae remembered that sandbags were placed around Lord Botetourt's statue in the Wren yard. One also recalled that the regular window shades in the dormitories were replaced with black-out shades, a precaution taken in many homes near the Atlantic Ocean. Air raid drills were added to the regular round of fire drills.¹⁰

The students who remained on campus participated in the war effort, too. A War Council was formed to coordinate campus-wide war efforts. The WAM Corps (War Activity Members) was composed of those who did at least five hours of volunteer work per month. The jobs available included Red Cross work, especially knitting and rolling bandages, selling war stamps, collecting scrap metal, performing USO work, serving as nurses' aids in the student infirmary, babysitting, clerical work, serving at a soldiers' snack bar, or assembling Christmas boxes for hospitalized soldiers.¹¹ The recruitment was so successful, with over five hundred women signing up, that the organizers had a hard time finding enough work for everyone to do.¹² Students also served at the aircraft warning observation post which was in the Methodist Church steeple. Women were permitted to serve only on daytime shifts.¹³ Women who were not going to attend summer school

¹⁰Questionnaire 44-23.


¹²Questionnaire 44-2.

¹³Flat Hat, "Aircraft Warning," 18 February 1942, p. 5.
were urged to consider working on farms to help produce more food and to free up farm laborers for military service. 14

The war forced students into other new tasks, as well. Some of the housekeeping and groundskeeping staff quit their jobs in order to take higher paying jobs in industries or other war-related fields. Because of the existence of those jobs, the people who quit were almost impossible to replace. Some men were excused from physical education classes to perform groundskeeping duties. Men students had to start making their own beds because of the maid shortage; women had always made their own beds. The college laundry suffered cutbacks in personnel, so students were requested to wash their own socks and handkerchiefs in order to cut down on the laundry's work load. The dining hall switched from serving at tables to cafeteria-style in order to make up for lost waiters, traditionally male athletes and scholarship students earning college expenses. One alumna remembered that her sorority had to stop serving meals at the house because of the difficulty of obtaining rationed foodstuffs. The sorority members returned to the college dining hall for their meals. 15 Some of the women found part-time jobs as telephone operators. Full-time operators had been preferred, but overcrowded living conditions in town meant that there was nowhere for any newly-arrived operators to live, so part-time workers were employed instead. After February 1943, women athletes gave up their out-of-town schedule because of difficulties in travel, especially overcrowding on trains. Several alumnae commented on the difficulty of train travel. One recalled sneaking onto a troop train because all the regular


15Questionnaire 44-11.
trains were too full. What was normally an eight hour trip took twenty-two
hours instead. Another recalled having to sit on suitcases because all the
seats were taken.\textsuperscript{16}

The war took over many social activities on campus. Dating on campus
was difficult because of the overabundance of women. Even the chaplains'
training program did not help much because of the shortness of the time the
chaplains were on campus, because they were older, and because some were
married. Occasionally, the women were allowed to ask soldiers to dances,
but only if they were properly chaperoned.\textsuperscript{17} The Williamsburg Inn had been
taken over by military officers and an Officers' Club was established there.
The women students were permitted to go there, but the permission was
granted only after they had petitioned President Pomfret for the right.\textsuperscript{18}

With so many new people in town, places of entertainment were usually
crowded at night. The College helped relieve the situation a little by
opening Blow Gymnasium on Sunday evenings. Here students could swim,
play ping pong, badminton, or bridge, listen to the radio, or read magazines.
Snacks were also available.\textsuperscript{19} One alumna described Williamsburg on
weekends as "a sea of greenish brown and white—hundreds of Navy Seabees

\begin{itemize}
\item\textsuperscript{16}Questionnaires 44-11 and 43-13.
\item\textsuperscript{17}\textit{Flat Hat}, "Dances for Soldiers Given by College...," 22 April 1942, p.2.
\item\textsuperscript{18}\textit{Flat Hat}, "Women May Now Attend Officers' Club," 23 March 1943, p. 1.
\item\textsuperscript{19}\textit{Flat Hat}, "Sunday Night Boredom Has Been Lifted...," 23 March 1943, p. 1.
\end{itemize}
and khaki-clad soldiers from Ft. Eustis. 20 Another alumna recalled that the Wesley Foundation group at the Methodist Church was frequently visited by servicemen, and the church provided many social activities for them. The girls and women who attended the church joined in games, square dancing, and just chatting with the military men. 21

Although the dearth of men made social life difficult for women, it made life easier for the male students who remained. Fred L. Frechette, a student during the war, recalled that he was asked to do things, such as write for the Flat Hat or act in plays, simply because he was one of the few men on campus. If there had been normal numbers of men, his talents may well have been outshone by the superior talents of others. 22

During the war women had more opportunities to assume leadership roles. They became editors of the student publications, the Flat Hat, the Colonial Echo, and the literary magazine. They were elected presidents of the classes and of interest groups and honor societies, even when such organizations included men. Other than all-male organizations, many of which were inactive during the war, the one group which women did not lead was the student government association. In the 1920s and 1930s, the women and men had had separate governing bodies, with no one representing the entire student population. This changed in October 1940 with the establishment of the General Cooperative Committee which was composed of representatives from the Men's Student Body, the Women Students' 23

20Questionnaire 43-13.  
21Questionnaire 44-23.  
22Oral History Interview with Fred L. Frechette, pp. 19-20.
Cooperative Government Association (WSCGA), and the college administration. Thereafter, the term "Student Body" referred not just to the governing body of the male students, but to that of all students. The WSCGA continued as a separate organization, still judging honor code and social rule infractions. The Student Body constitution specifically stated that the president had to be a senior man. This proviso created a major problem during the war because several of the presidents were drafted or otherwise chose to leave college, thus necessitating numerous elections. In 1944, the constitution was amended to permit women to run for Student Body President, but none was elected during the war. Despite the fact that the school's highest elective office remained out of female hands, the women were responsible for running most of the rest of campus. They gained more power more quickly during the war than would have been possible in peacetime.

The alumnae who responded to the questionnaire made several comments that sum up the atmosphere of the wartime college. One recalled it as a very romantic time, made so because many of the women were dating servicemen who were on their way to a battlefront. Many commented on the "unreality" of the atmosphere, where they were safely pursuing their studies while millions of people around the world were suffering in war. They could not shut out the images of the conflict because of the presence

---


24 The Student Body constitution was printed in the Indian Handbook, which was published each fall.

25 Questionnaire 43-6.
of so many servicemen in town, who were going to join the sufferers. As one woman phrased it, talking to the men at USO functions "made [her] wonder at how very far removed [her] studies were from the sad realities of the times." For the most part, however, the comments of the alumnae indicated that they enjoyed their college days, despite the fears for friends in battle, black-outs, rationing, travel difficulties, and a shortage of men on campus. They still had parties, plays, newspapers, and enough activities to keep themselves busy.

In 1944, the United States Congress passed the legislation known as the G.I. Bill, which provided money for veterans seeking college educations. After the war, many men took advantage of this bill, and colleges welcomed them with open arms. William and Mary joined others in accepting these more mature male students, many of whom brought wives and children with them. But that it the beginning of another era in higher education, one beyond the scope of this study.

The women who attended William and Mary during the time under study did put their college educations to use in the worlds of business and education. Only 17% of them did not hold a job immediately after leaving college, and this included a number who were unable to secure jobs during the Depression years. Over one-fifth of the women earned advanced degrees after leaving William and Mary, but only 10% of those degrees were earned at the college.

---

26Questionnaire 45-10.
27Most American women college students of the 1920s and 1930s worked after graduation. Barbara Miller Solomon discusses this in In the Company of Educated Women (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985), chapter 11.
Since 90% of the women did get married, and 80% had children, undoubtedly many of them chose to be unemployed for part of their lives (the questionnaire was not designed to obtain this information). However, most of the women indicated that they had been working for many years, and quite a number held several different positions. Most of the jobs the women chose were traditionally female jobs, so William and Mary graduates were definitely not taking the initiative and moving into male fields, such as law, medicine, or engineering. The single most popular career choice was that of teaching, with 35% entering that profession. The next most popular career was secretarial work, with almost 10% choosing that. The women held a great variety of white collar jobs. Other positions employing more than 2% of the women were librarianship, salesperson, social worker, and administration posts.

Although 90% of the women married, most of them did not marry fellow students. Less than 15% of the alumnae married men whom they had met while both were students in Williamsburg. Until World War II, women students were prohibited from marrying, so only 6% married before graduation. Most of these dropped out of college in order to get married. One woman admitted to a secret marriage, while another disclosed that she was forced to withdraw after her secret marriage was uncovered.

The women married well-educated men. About 40% of the husbands had attended graduate school, almost 30% had graduated from college, and about 17% had completed at least some college studies. Fewer than 5% had less than a high school education. Again, these figures can be compared to the 1940 statistics for the United States as a whole, where only 10% of the adult male population had attended college. Whereas 60% of the alumnae’s fathers had completed at least some college work, 85% of the husbands had
done so. As one would expect, the husbands held mainly white collar jobs. In decreasing order, some of the most popular careers were engineer, lawyer, military service, physician, business executive, and college professor.

Most of the alumnae indicated that they had led contented, fulfilled lives after college, whether those lives were primarily devoted to child-rearing, volunteer work, or paid work outside the home. Although radical ideas rarely had much of an impact on students at William and Mary, the women recalled that they were exposed to new ideas and different kinds of people while at college, and this exposure helped to broaden their perspectives.

The admission of women had a positive impact on William and Mary, helping to transform it into a much better quality liberal arts college than it had been. The predictions of the anonymous 1918 Flat Hat writer certainly came true, with the college indeed receiving larger state appropriations, new buildings, a new social life, and more and better activities of all sorts. But the major changes which coeducation brought to William and Mary have more to do with the quality of the academic life than with the quantity or quality of buildings or parties. Clearly, the admission of women was the major factor in attracting more applicants. Because the number of applicants outstripped the number of students the College could educate, it was able to impose more stringent admission requirements. Having more students also made it possible for the College to offer a greater variety of courses. Better students and more courses are two signs of the academic improvements which followed the admission of women. Many date Williamsburg's rebirth from the beginning of the

Rockefeller restoration in the late 1920s. William and Mary did not wait for any such fairy godfather. Almost a full decade before John D. Rockefeller, Jr., came to town, William and Mary had admitted women and that began a new period of growth for the College.
APPENDIX A

The Survey and Its Results

Because the author was interested in obtaining some information about the women who had attended William and Mary between 1918 and 1945 which was not available from the resources at her disposal, she designed a survey to gather that information. Her chief interest was to learn something about the family background of the women, specifically what kinds of jobs their parents held and what the parents' educational background was. Other information, such as majors and minors, religion, jobs held by the alumnae after leaving college, and reasons for attending college, was also sought. The survey was sent to almost three thousand alumnae, and over 1300 were returned. A copy of the cover letter and the survey can be found in Appendix B, and a partial statistical summary of the results in Appendix C. The completed survey forms and a more complete statistical summary can be found in the College Archives.1 Some of the results have been discussed in the body of the thesis; this appendix will go into more detail with the answers to the other questions.

The question asking for factors which influenced the individual's decision for attending college was not on all surveys forms because it was

---

1 Alumnae Questionnaires, Archives Acc. 1988.67.
added after a number of the forms had already mimeographed. Although only
one answer was requested, many respondents marked more than one. Half of
the respondents indicated that they wanted to prepare for a career, and
almost half indicated a desire to be better educated. One-fifth applied to
college because their parents expected them to go. Only 5% admitted they
came for the social life and to meet people. One percent chose college
because they could not think of anything better to do. A variety of other
reasons were also given. Some said they had been raised to believe that
going to college was just something one did or because good high school
students always continued on to college. A love of learning and a desire to
experience a new and interesting environment, to get away from home, and
to prepare for life were other reasons.

As to why they chose William and Mary, the majority indicated that
they or their parents were attracted by the academic program. The fact that
friends or relatives had attended or that William and Mary was close to
home were not very important reasons for most women. However, the
location of the college in an historic area and the restoration of Colonial
Williamsburg brought William and Mary to the attention of many potential
students all over the country. Some women, mainly Northerners, were
attracted to William and Mary because it was in a different part of the
country from where they lived. A combination of location, small size, and
its coeducational status was probably the most important factor in the
decision making process. The physical attractiveness of the campus also
figured in many decisions.

Money was another major consideration. For Virginians, the tuition
was reasonable, much more so than tuition at the private colleges in the
state. Scholarships and assurances of part-time jobs brought William and Mary within reach for others.

Principals, teachers, alumni, and family friends encouraged many of the women to attend William and Mary. One woman was told that a William and Mary degree “stood high in securing a teaching position.” The fact that family or friends were in or near Williamsburg influenced some women, especially when the friends or family were working for the college or stationed at nearby military bases.

There were many other reasons for attending William and Mary. Some women wanted to return to their Virginia roots, others wanted to go somewhere different from the rest of their family and friends. Some were looking for a real college degree, not just a finishing school degree. Some considered it an easy school at which to get accepted. Two women were attracted by the conservativeness of the school, while one woman was looking for a less restrictive social life than that of a girl’s school. Some were attracted by certain classes; one came because there was a chapter of a particular sorority on campus. Another woman thought Williamsburg would be exciting after her small town life. An admirer of Thomas Jefferson wanted to attend the same college he had. The list of reasons could continue.

The question seeking information about relatives who had attended William and Mary was poorly worded. Also, two stencils were made, and a typographical error occurred. Some alumnae were asked about relatives who had attended William and Mary, meaning before they came. Other alumnae were asked about relatives who have attended, whether before or after their college years. The author was trying to find out if the presence of alumni relatives was significant. Because the question was poorly worded
and because there were two versions, the statistics are not very useful, other than in inquiring about relatives, such as parents, aunts, uncles, and grandparents, who are almost always older and would have attended before the alumnae. Although a number of the women had relatives who had attended the college, apparently this was not an influential factor in the decision to attend. Only 3.4% of the women had fathers who were alumni; less than 1% of the mothers had attended (most in this group had been summer school students). They were more likely to have had an uncle (6.5%) or an aunt (1.8%) attend than a parent. Ten percent had brothers and 20% had sisters who attended William and Mary. Twenty-six percent had cousins who had attended the college. Several women mentioned that several generations of their families had been educated at William and Mary, and one woman counted eight ancestors among the alumni of the college.

The women who came to William and Mary formed a fairly homogeneous group. Most came from middle class or upper middle class homes; most were Protestant; more than half were from Virginia; and all were white.

William and Mary became a state school in 1906 and since then has sought to educate first the citizens of Virginia. Thus, 58% of the alumnae were from Virginia. Most of the rest were from New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, the District of Columbia, Maryland, West Virginia, and Massachusetts. With fifteen or more students from each of those areas, they account for 414 of the 548 non-Virginia residents who responded to the survey. Other Southerners comprised 12.5% of the total of non-Virginians; Midwesterners 11.5%, New Englanders 6%; and 4% came from the Great Plains and Western States. There were seven respondents who were living abroad at the time of their matriculation at William and Mary: four
from the Philippines, and one each from the Panama Canal Zone, Haiti, and Japan. These were not natives of those areas, but were Americans living abroad.

Most of the Virginia women were from the Peninsula (18.7%), the Tidewater area, including Norfolk and surrounding cities (20.2%), the Southside region (17.5%), and the central and northern Piedmont regions, including Henrico County and Richmond (17.8%). Three-fourths of the Virginia women came from the areas closest to William and Mary. These numbers can be deceiving because the regions into which Virginia is divided are not equal in size or population. Although only 2% of the women came from the Eastern Shore, it is the smallest region and contributed almost twice as many students as the much larger Central Shenandoah area. The regions which contributed the most women are those that are either largest in size or most populous, with only two exceptions. The area just outside the District of Columbia, although small, was populous, but the women there had easy access to many other colleges, so William and Mary was not a popular choice among the women there. Second, Southwest Virginia is large in area, but far away from William and Mary. There were many women's colleges in the western part of the state which would attract the women there because of their proximity, even though they might be more expensive. Also, Virginia Polytechnic Institute was nearby; it began admitting women in 1921, although it was not very successful in attracting many female students.

Thus, the women at William and Mary represented a fairly small part of the country. Most of the Virginians were from the central or southeastern parts of the state. Most of the non-Virgians were from the mid-Atlantic area. Of course, considering the length of time it took to
travel by train or automobile during the period under study, William and Mary probably had a fairly good mix of students.

Another indication of the homogeneity of the female student body is the religious background of the women. They were overwhelmingly Protestant, making up 92.5% of the women, with 2.5% Catholic, 1.8% Jewish, and 3% with no religion or no preference given. Half of the women were Episcopalian, Methodist, Presbyterian, or Baptist.

Almost 25% of the women had transferred to William and Mary. Although the survey did not ask from where they had originally come, many volunteered the information that they had transferred from William and Mary's branches in Richmond and Norfolk.

After leaving William and Mary, most of the women worked, married, and had children. Over half of the women had two or three children; about 15% had four or more. Almost 20% had none, and 13% had one child.

Over one-fifth of the women earned advanced degrees after leaving William and Mary, but only 10% of those degrees were earned at the College. Less than 3% of the mothers had attended graduate school, so clearly these women were advancing beyond the standards set by their mothers.

Five percent of the women had held a full-time job before attending William and Mary. A third of these had been school teachers. The others held a small variety of jobs, including saleswoman, secretary, and office clerk.

In retrospect, some of the survey questions could have been better worded, and the arrangement of questions could have been improved. More details about the women's lives after college should have been sought, not for the purpose of this study but for the benefit of other researchers interested in the post-collegiate careers of these women. Now that this
information had been gathered about the alumnae, it would be interesting to
gather the same information about the men and compare the two groups.
APPENDIX B

Cover Letter and Survey

Dear Alumna,

I am a graduate student in the History Department at the College of William and Mary and am working on a master's thesis on women students at the College from 1918 to 1945. Professor Helen Cam Walker is directing my work. Using the resources in the College Archives, I have found a great deal of information about the various campus activities during that time. However, I would also like to know something about the background of the women students and also about what they did after they left the College. Hence this letter. By filling out the enclosed questionnaire, you will give me the answers I am seeking. I am interested only in the overall statistical picture; your name will not be used in any analysis based on this questionnaire. I do hope that the Alumni Gazette will accept an article based on my findings.

A return envelope is enclosed for your convenience. I wish I could afford to pay the return postage, but as I am sending out approximately 3000 questionnaires, the cost would be prohibitive. Please return the questionnaires to: Laura Parrish

   History Department
   College of William and Mary
   Williamsburg, Virginia 23185

I appreciate the help you are giving me in this study. Thank you so much for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.

I hate to bother you with a deadline, but in order to utilize the material in my thesis, I will need the questionnaire back in four weeks. Once again, thank you.

Laura Frances Parrish
1. How important were the following in affecting your decision to attend William and Mary?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>very important</th>
<th>somewhat important</th>
<th>not very important</th>
<th>not at all important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. parents wanted me to attend</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. friends were attending</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. close to home</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. academic program attracted me</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. relative had attended</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. other (please specify)</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. How was your education financed? (check as many as apply)
   ____ by parents
   ____ scholarship
   ____ part-time employment and summer work
   ____ by other family member
   ____ other (please specify)

3. In what year did you graduate? ____________

4. Where were you living when you entered William and Mary?
   state: ________________________________
   if Virginia, what city or county? __________

5. What was your major? ____________

6. What was your minor? ____________

7. Do you have an advanced degree (master's or doctorate)?
   ____ no
   ____ yes
   if yes, was it earned at William and Mary? ____ no
   ____ yes

8. What job did you hold immediately after graduation?

9. What other positions have you held since graduation?

10. Did you have a full-time job before you entered William and Mary?
    ____ no
    ____ yes
    if yes, what was it? ____________________
11. What is your marital status?
   ___ single
   ___ married
   ___ widowed
   ___ divorced

12. If ever married, did you meet your first (or only) husband while you were both students at William and Mary?
   ___ no
   ___ yes

13. If married more than once, had you met any of your other husbands while you were both students at William and Mary?
   ___ no
   ___ yes

14. Did you marry before you graduated? (If you married after your final exams but before graduation, please answer no.)
   ___ no
   ___ yes

Page 2

15. How many children do you have? ______

16. What is your husband's occupation?

17. How much formal education has your husband had?
   ___ none
   ___ eighth grade or less
   ___ some high school
   ___ high school graduate
   ___ some college
   ___ college graduate
   ___ graduate work
   ___ vocational or other post-high school training

18. What was your father's occupation at the time you entered William and Mary?

19. How much formal schooling had your father had?
   ___ none
   ___ eighth grade or less
   ___ some high school
   ___ high school graduate
   ___ some college
   ___ college graduate
   ___ graduate work
   ___ vocational or other post-high school training
20. What was your mother's occupation at the time you entered William and Mary?

21. How much formal education had your mother had?
   ___ none
   ___ eight grade or less
   ___ some high school
   ___ high school graduate
   ___ some college
   ___ college graduate
   ___ graduate work
   ___ vocational or other post-high school training

22. What was your religion when you entered William and Mary?

23. Did you transfer to William and Mary from another college?
   ___ no
   ___ yes

24. What other relatives have attended William and Mary?
   (check as many as apply)
   ___ father
   ___ mother
   ___ brother(s)
   ___ sister(s)
   ___ child(ren)
   ___ grandfather(s)
   ___ cousin(s)
   ___ uncle(s)
   ___ aunt(s)
   ___ niece(s)
   ___ nephew(s)
   ___ other (please specify)

25. Briefly, why did you go to college? (check the most important one, only)
   ___ to prepare for a career
   ___ parents expected me to go
   ___ to enjoy the social life and to meet people
   ___ wanted to be well-educated
   ___ could not think of anything better to do
   ___ other (please specify)

I would also enjoy hearing any of your favorite stories from your college days - funny or sad, about friends, professors, dormitory life, or whatever. Please use the back to write them down. Thank you for taking the time to fill out this questionnaire.
APPENDIX C

The number of cases for each question is given by the equation \( n = \text{some number} \). For most questions, the number of cases was 1338, but this does vary for some questions. Because of rounding, the figures will not always add up to 100%.

1. How important were the following in affecting your decision to attend William and Mary?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>very important</th>
<th>somewhat important</th>
<th>not very important</th>
<th>not at all important</th>
<th>no answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. parents wanted me to attend</td>
<td>34.2%</td>
<td>18.8%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>9.4%</td>
<td>32.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. friends were attending</td>
<td>12.8%</td>
<td>12.1%</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
<td>22.6%</td>
<td>46.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. close to home</td>
<td>21.5%</td>
<td>13.6%</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
<td>17.8%</td>
<td>42.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. academic program</td>
<td>36.1%</td>
<td>17.6%</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
<td>38.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. relative had attended</td>
<td>11.2%</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
<td>24.8%</td>
<td>53.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. other (please specify)</td>
<td>31.4%</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
<td>62.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. How was your education financed? (n=1338)
- 91.9% by parents
- 23.4% with scholarship
- 15.5% with part-time employment and summer work
- 9.0% by other family member
- 6.8% other

3. In what year did you graduate? (n=1338)
- 11.8% in 1918-1929
- 39.5% in 1930-1939
- 32.8% in 1940-1945
- 15.9% in other years, or did not graduate, or year not given

4. Where were you living when you entered William and Mary? (n=1338)
5.0% South outside of Virginia (Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, West Virginia)
2.5% New England (Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont)
26.2% Mid-Atlantic (Delaware, District of Columbia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York)
4.6% Midwest (Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Ohio, Wisconsin)
1.7% West (all other states)
0.5% foreign
57.8% Virginia

Percentage of Virginia students from each region (regional breakdown based on A Hornbook of Virginia History) (n=774)
2% Eastern Shore (Accomack, Northampton);
2.9% Northern Neck (King George, Lancaster, Northumberland, Richmond County, Stafford, Westmoreland)
3.9% Middle Peninsula (Caroline, Essex, Gloucester, King and Queen, King William, Mathews, Middlesex)
18.7% Peninsula (Charles City, Elizabeth City, Hanover, James City, New Kent, Warwick, York, Williamsburg, Hampton, Newport News)
20.2% Tidewater (Nansemond, Norfolk, Princess Anne, Chesapeake, Suffolk, Portsmouth, Virginia Beach)
17.5% Southside and Southern Piedmont (Amelia, Appomattox, Bedford, Brunswick, Buckingham, Campbell, Charlotte, Chesterfield, Cumberland, Dinwiddie, Franklin, Greenville, Halifax, Henry, Isle of Wight, Lunenburg, Mecklenburg, Nottoway, Patrick, Pittsylvania, Powhatan, Prince Edward, Prince George, Southampton, Surry, Sussex, Petersburg, Danville, Lynchburg)
17.8% Central and Northern Piedmont (Albemarle, Amherst, Culpeper, Fauquier, Fluvanna, Goochland, Henrico, Greene, Loudoun, Louisa, Madison, Nelson, Orange, Prince William, Rappahannock, Spotsylvania, Richmond, Fredericksburg, Charlottesville)
3.4% Northern Virginia (Arlington, Fairfax, Alexandria)
2.6% Shenandoah Valley (Upper Valley) (Augusta, Clarke, Frederick, Page, Rockingham, Shenandoah, Warren)
1.1% Central Valley (Allegheny, Bath, Botetourt, Craig, Highland, Rockbridge)
9.4% Southwest (Lower Valley) (Bland, Buchanan, Carroll, Dickenson, Floyd, Giles, Grayson, Lee, Montgomery, Pulaski, Roanoke County, Russell, Scott, Smyth, Tazewell, Washington, Wise, Wythe, Roanoke, Salem)
5. What was your major? (n=1338)
   23.1% social sciences (anthropology, economics, government, history, international relations, psychology, social studies, sociology)
   33.5% humanities (art history, English, fine arts, foreign languages, liberal arts, music, philosophy, religion, theatre and speech)
   15.4% sciences (biology, chemistry, geology, mathematics, physics, science)
   22.6% professional studies (business, communications, education, health, home economics, journalism, law, library science, merchandising, nursing, nutrition, physical education, pre-law, pre-nursing, radio, secretarial science, social work)
   2.9% none

6. What was your minor? (n=1338)
   19.7% social sciences
   32.0% humanities
   15.8% sciences
   14.6% professional studies
   14.3% none

7. Do you have an advanced degree? (n=1338)
   77.8% no
   22.2% yes

   If yes, was it earned at William and Mary? (n=296)
   89.8% no
   10.1% yes

8. What job did you hold immediately after graduation? (n=1338)
   78.6% white collar
   0.3% blue collar
   2.6% unable to determine
   17.6% no job, volunteer work, or housewife

9. What other jobs have you held since graduation? (n=1338)
   70% white collar
   0.1% blue collar
   2.0% unable to determine
   27.6% no job, volunteer work, or housewife

10. Did you have a full-time job before you entered William and Mary? (n=1338)
    94.8% no
5.2% yes
If yes, what was it?
32 teachers
9 secretaries
7 office clerks
6 saleswomen
3 bookkeepers
3 school workers
2 waitresses
2 journalists
1 library worker
1 communications worker
1 writer

11. What is your marital status? (n=1338)
   0.3% no answer
   9.3% single
   60.9% married
   24.1% widowed
   5.1% divorced

12. If ever married, did you meet your first (or only) husband while you were both students at William and Mary? (n=1338)
   86.6% no
   13.4% yes

13. If married more than once, had you met any of your other husbands while you were both students at William and Mary? (n=1338)
   99.7% no, or does not apply
   0.3% yes

14. Did you marry before you graduated? (n=1338)
   94.1% no
   5.9% yes

15. How many children do you have? (n=1336)
   19.9% none
   45.7% one or two
   30.4% three or four
   3.5% five or more

16. What is your husband's occupation? (n=1208)
   77.6% white collar
0.6% blue collar
2.2% farmer
5.2% unable to determine
14.2% none, no answer, retired

17. How much formal education has your husband had? (n=1208)
   0.2% none
   0.8% eighth grade or less
   3.0% some high school
   5.6% high school graduate
   17.3% some college
   28.6% college graduate
   39.6% graduate work
   2.9% vocational training
   1.0% no answer

18. What was your father’s occupation at the time you entered William and Mary? (n=1336)
   70.1% white collar
   0.8% blue collar
   8.6% farmer
   8.7% unable to determine
   11.5% none, no answer, retired

19. How much formal schooling had your father had? (n=1336)
   0.7% none
   12.2% eighth grade or less
   11.9% some high school
   13.9% high school graduate
   16.2% some college
   16.0% college graduate
   18.9% graduate work
   7.5% vocational training
   2.0% no answer

20. What was your mother’s occupation at the time you entered William and Mary? (n=1336)
   8.5% white collar
   0.3% blue collar
   0.3% farmer
   77.9% housewife
   10.3% none, no answer, retired
21. How much formal education did your mother have? (n=1336)
   0.6% none
   7.1% eighth grade or less
   10.4% some high school
   26.1% high school graduate
   24.6% some college
   18.1% college graduate
   2.5% graduate work
   8.9% vocational training
   1.1% no answer

22. What was your religion when you entered William and Mary? (n=1336)
   92.5% Protestant
   2.5% Catholic
   1.8% Jewish
   3.0% none, no answer

23. Did you transfer to William and Mary from another college? (n=1336)
   75.6% no
   24.4% yes

24. What other relatives had (or have) attended William and Mary? (n=1336)
   3.4% father
   0.8% mother
   10.7% brother
   19.8% sister
   14.5% children
   0.5% grandfather
   25.7% cousins
   6.5% uncle
   1.8% aunt
   9.0% niece
   5.8% nephew
   7.7% other

25. Briefly, why did you go to college? (n=1033)
   49.9% to prepare for a career
   20.4% parents expected me to go
   5.1% to enjoy the social life and to meet people
   47.6% wanted to be well-educated
   1.0% could not think of anything better to do
   3.0% other reasons
BIBLIOGRAPHY

A. Primary Sources

Board of Visitors Minutes, 1917 - 1945.

College of William and Mary Catalog, 1888 - 1945.

Colonial Echo, 1918 - 1946.

Flat Hat, 1917 - 1945.

Virginia Gazette, 1918 - 1919.

Williamsburg, Virginia. College of William and Mary. College Archives.

_________ Martha Barksdale Papers, Archives Acc. 1985.54.

_________ Indian Handbooks, 1919 - 1945.

_________ Oral History Collection.

_________ President's Office Papers, Archives Acc. 1979.35. (John Stewart Bryan.)

_________ President's Office Papers, Archives Acc. 1982.45. (Julian Alvin Carroll Chandler.)

_________ President's Office Papers, Archives Acc. 1982.55. (John Edwin Pomfret.)

_________ President's Office Papers, Archives Acc. 1984.19. (Lyon Gardiner Tyler.)

_________ Registrar's Office--Student Permanent Record Cards, Archives Acc. 1981.112.


Williamsburg, Virginia. College of William and Mary. Manuscripts and Rare Books Department. Tyler Family Papers, Group B.

B. Secondary Sources


VITA

Laura Frances Parrish


In July 1981, the author entered the M.A. in history program at the College of William and Mary, serving an apprenticeship in Archives and Manuscripts Collections. After completing the coursework and the apprenticeship, she spent a year travelling and playing, prior to becoming the Assistant College Archivist at William and Mary in August 1983. After spending several years dancing instead of writing, she decided to give up the former and devote time to the latter, in pursuit of her dream of becoming last in her master's class to finish.