

# Transcript of OH-00225

Miel D. Burgee

Interviewed by

Susan Shaffer

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**Southern Maryland Studies Center**

College of Southern Maryland  
8730 Mitchell Road, P.O. Box 910  
La Plata, MD 20646

Phone: (301) 934-7626  
E-mail: [SMSC@csmd.edu](mailto:SMSC@csmd.edu)  
Website: [csmd.edu/smsc](http://csmd.edu/smsc)

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## Typographic Note

- [Inaudible] is used when a word cannot be understood.
- Brackets are used when the transcriber is not sure about a word or part of a word, to add a note indicating a non-verbal sound and to add clarifying information.
- Em Dash — is used to indicate an interruption or false start.
- Ellipses ... is used to indicate a natural extended pause in speech

## Subjects

Charlotte Hall School  
Education  
Military education  
Depressions  
Segregation in education

## Tags

Depression, 1929

## Transcript

Kim Warner? [K]: This is December 16th 1980. Kim Warner and Bob Middleton interviewing Major Burgee at his home in Mechanicsville about Charlotte Hall Military School.

Susan Schaffer [S]: This is January 16th, 1981. Susan Schaffer is interviewing Major Burgee concerning Charlotte Hall Military Academy at his home in Mechanicsville, Maryland.

Miel D. Burgee [M]: Okay yes.

S: Good afternoon Major Burgee.

M: How are you today?

S: Just fine thank you. Major Burgee I noticed when you came to Charlotte Hall you had said in a previous interview that you had been interviewed for your job by Professor Code.

M: Code.

S: And Mr. Crowson.

M: Colonel Crowson yes.

S: Colonel Crowson. Could you tell me about Colonel Crowson?

M: Well Colonel Crowson was—he was a [VMI] man and he was at Charlotte Hall back in the teens. He had a break down and he left Charlotte Hall and went back to [VMI] but then he came back again in 27. A fellow by the name of Bentley took his place. Bentley took his place while he was gone. When he came back in 27 after the fire and he took over and I got started with him in 27.

S: And how about Professor Code? What kind of questions did they ask you for the interview or were you interviewed in person?

W: Well my dear I came down there in 27 looking for a job right out of Maryland. See I had finished Maryland, I was an athlete, and I had a math major, I had a science major, and I had an economics major. I had three majors. I wanted a job somewhere where I could also coach. Weren't many jobs in those days. You couldn't get them see but several places, high schools, offered me a job. Give me a couple hundred dollars to coach if I would coach. So I said, "I'm going somewhere where I can have full charge of coaching." So I came down to Charlotte Hall in 27. We had no building here. The main building there was only about three feet high. They were building after the fire. The old gymnasium was there, front part of the school hall was there, and the old white house was there and that's all. Nothing else and no other buildings. The campus

had broom sage all over it about three or four feet high. I said to myself, "My God why would I want to come to a place like this." But being from a farm, born raised up in Frederick County on a farm I'm used to that kind of stuff see. I said, "Well I'll go down there and try it out." So I went down there and then they had no place for the boys to stay. Only in the gymnasium. We had two rows of cots in the gymnasium. Then they put a teacher in each corner and had sheets around them cordoned off you know. So us teachers stay in that. We had study hall in the gymnasium too. We stayed there until after Christmas and then we got in the new barracks. But, as of 1927—

S: What did Charlotte Hall the town look like in 1927?

M: Oh in 1927, course the old post office was there. The old store next to the post office which we bought, old Mattingly's place, and then the Davis property. Just a few houses, that was all that's there. Of course where the headmasters house—where I put the headmaster's house that was all briar patch and stuff like that. Everything had gone down. It was terrible, terrible looking place.

S: The Professor Code, he had been teaching at the school for some time?

M: Professor Code taught there 50 some years. Yeah he beat me yes. He's one of the finest men I ever met.

S: How long had he been there by the time you came?

M: I taught with him the last 10 years of his life. For 40 some years.

S: He never retired from teaching? He just—

M: No, no he never retired. Well yeah he was. The last year he was supposed to retire and they were gonna give 120 dollars a month. Old Professor Code but you see the—now I have to get into something a little delicate now. I don't know if I should mention this. But let's have this fact. You see Professor Code was [Vice-Pres] for Charlotte Hall for years and years. Never became the headmaster. The reason he didn't become the headmaster was because he was Catholic. Charlotte Hall was very narrow minded when I went down there as far as religion. I don't know what y'all religion is and I'm not going to ask you. When I first went down there the headmaster Crowson he hated the Catholics. Oh God he hated—nobody on the faculty could be. He wouldn't hire a Catholic. Didn't want anything to do with them. Anything happened up at Charlotte Hall school you know we put up a Christmas tree one year [that had the springs] that had all lights on outside tree and somebody sawed it down and took it away. He claimed the Catholics did it. [Laughter] But there were good days that come through I remember them so. Professor Code was a great man, good disciplinarian, wonderful.

S: How had he come to Charlotte Hall? Did he ever tell you?

M: Well his family is from down here. His family was from down here. Old—

S: Had he ever attended Charlotte Hall?

M: I don't believe he did no. He was a Latin and history man you know see. I don't believe he did. The Code family see right across the—right there at the campus was the Code property. He got that on [ground land] and then Professor Code had a cousin, brother rather, who was Senator Code. He also had a boys camp. Professor Code had a boys camp down here in the county.

S: He did?

M: Yeah.

S: He ran that while he worked at Charlotte Hall?

M: Yeah in the summertime. In the summertime he run that. But Professor Code—I'll never forget it—when I came down for the—when I wrote to him about the job course I was in athletics, I didn't know much about anything else then, a few academic subjects. They wanted to meet me in Washington and said where they could meet for an interview. Of all the places I selected was Griffith Baseball Park during the games.

M and S: [Laughter]

M: So I went down there and of course I didn't see. We described each other, Professor Code described himself, I described my—God who could at a baseball game how are you going to meet anybody in that.

S: So you never made it for the meeting?

M: No not that no but I came down to Charlotte Hall then and met down there. When I got below Washington I thought I was out of the State of Maryland. God what a country, what a country road, Oh Jesus.

S: Did you drive down or take a bus to the interview?

M: I drove down. I borrowed a car and drove down for the interview. But what a life that was. I didn't mind the first year out at Charlotte Hall I coached all the sports, had no car, and [they would drive all]—only time we'd get a haircut going athletic trips I'd sneak out when the boys would take a shower or something after the game and get a haircut. They were something but this thing about poor Professor Code you know he never became the headmaster because he was Catholic. I think it was terrible. But then we broadened the field after that. After I became headmaster I had...I didn't care what it was, qualified was qualified, I hired him.

S: I noticed that in the 1920's one of the types of education that you could get at Charlotte Hall was a classical education. Did that continue for very long?

M: Oh yeah. As a matter of fact when I—see I went there with under—one of the reasons they wanted me there too was because I was qualified to teach mathematics in college. First couple then we got started junior college. They were going to start one at Charlotte Hall, a junior college. We had it all planned. The state came down, made a survey and everything else for that. We did, we offered, we gave an extra year of Latin, an extra year of a language, I taught the mathematics, and Professor Code taught the year history, then we had somebody who taught the year of English.

S: How long did that continue?

M: For a couple of year and then the Depression came on. Big Depression you know. Yeah we were heading for junior college back in—as a matter of fact we had a little pamphlet put out.

S: That's right.

M: Charlotte Hall yeah, you've probably seen that haven't you?

S: Right.

M: That little pamphlet, Charlotte Hall Junior College.

S: I noticed in the years later that you referred to students as being post graduates.

M: Yes.

S: Was that the same kind of situation or was that?

M: No, no that was a little different. That was special to war when the war came on. World War II we had post graduates then. They were boys who had gone in on the GI bill and come to Charlotte Hall. They were boys who weren't quite ready for college. Didn't have enough subjects or they'd need something else so they'd come to Charlotte Hall for a year. We gave a year.

S: So it was a college preparatory?

M: College preparatory yes it was.

S: These boys must have been quite old if they'd already been through the war.

M: No they hadn't been through the war, they were in the draft days. About 20, 21, 22, yeah we've had them 22.

S: What's the youngest you've ever had at Charlotte Hall?

M: Well the youngest ever had well...during Depression days, during the Depression days we had...I know Colonel Crowson wanted double [boy one numbers] had to have a number of so many to pay the faculty you see. So we hired some—we put in a third grade and fourth grade. Then we had one boy who'd come to Charlotte Hall School. He wasn't scheduled, he was from Baltimore a Russian kid and he came in the third grade. But he'd take third and fourth grade in a

year, fifth and sixth like that. Went to Charlotte Hall and finished Charlotte Hall. Then from Charlotte Hall he went to Maryland and now he's a retired full Colonel in the service.

S: Wow, do you know who that is? Do you remember his name?

M: Nietzsche, yeah Walter Nietzsche.

S: Walter Nietzsche.

M: Walter Nietzsche. He was a good athlete. A hell of a good athlete. He'd go to class with the little kids and play with the big boys. But we had him there. Of course when I came on and to expand the student body we tried a lot and experimented with a lot of things. I thought one time well I'm going to put in industrial arts so I did. Built that building there and added that big room on it. Went up to Pennsylvania and got all the instructions for it and put in industrial arts. Had it a couple years and the war came on. Took my industrial arts instructor and of course you couldn't hire no more. But then I got criticized for that. Some of the parents said, "When I sent my boy to school I don't want him to work with his hands." I said, "My dear listen," I said, "[He'll probably use it before you die] but he'll be glad he did work with his hands some." I [think the thing] because I said, "I have a friend who's a doctor and he says, "Gee what the devil is the use of that." He said, "I go down to my office to work down there a couple hours and have patients and I have a guy that come in to hang a door. He gets more money than I make from these patients." You know, all these stories yeah.

S: In the first couple of years when you were at Charlotte Hall I noticed there was a Doctor Sothoron also there.

M: Oh yeah he was there for a number of years.

S: Was he?

M: L. J. Sothoron, yeah, he was the school doctor.

S: Was he a full time faculty member?

M: No, no, no, no he was just—they called on him if they wanted anybody. He was there when I took over and I became the headmaster. Then I got this three doctors down in Mechanicsville. Mechanicsville Medical Center and they take turns to come up every morning. Every Morning they come around and they talked to the nurse. I had a regular nurse. They would call in and the nurse would call in and say nobodies sick this morning, or five or six boys sick see. [Inaudible phrase] they come up and go around and check or we'd take them down to the office. We preferred the doctor to come to the school see. Course you could have epidemics like Scarlet Fever and Measles and Mumps and things like that you know. Yeah our medical staff was good. Doctor Sothoron was there for number of years. Poor fellow died. He died while he was on duty.

S: He did?

M: Yeah well he was still a doctor you know so yeah.

S: I noticed there was another Sothoron on the staff too. A Colonel—

M: No, no [inaudible] I taught him Norwood Sothoron [inaudible phrase]. He was Commandant.

S: Was he? What were his duties as Commandant?

M: Have charge of all military drilling.

S: And he was full time instructor of military?

M: Yeah. He was quite an athlete. In fact I taught him at Charlotte Hall School. He finished the little school in Mechanicsville. Mechanicsville had a high school in those days. Two grade high school, two grade, that's all they had, or two rooms, two room high school. He finished that and then he came to Charlotte Hall for a couple of years as a postgraduate. Then he went to Maryland and had a scholarship to Maryland and played at Maryland. He is in the lacrosse hall of fame and he's [all Sothoron] full back football. He's quite an athlete.

S: And then he came back—

M: And his father was a trustee?

S: Another...

M: Yeah.

S: So what kind of training did he have to be Commandant?

M: Well he had to be a college graduate and you know have [ROTC]. Course he was Colonel. He served in the service see.

S: Why did you apply to be headmaster?

M: I didn't want it.

S: You didn't?

M: No. The teachers [wanted it to tell you].

S: Do you want to tell me about it?

M: Well, let me see. I was the...I'd taken a year off from going to Columbia University and got my master. I had almost a master before that from Maryland but I said why take it from Maryland. I got my bachelor's degree from Maryland. Everybody in those days in education, Columbia and Chicago, only two schools in the country that meant anything. Rest of them didn't mean anything. So I took a year off and went to Columbia and got my masters [back inaudible]. I taught at Charlotte Hall. I wouldn't have but [inaudible phrase]. I had a lot of jobs offered in Montgomery County and around but I decided well I'd come back to Charlotte Hall. Went back



to Charlotte Hall and taught a year. I was up at the University of Maryland doing work on a doctorate degree then. Then Crowson died, the headmaster died, and someone said, "Are you gonna take it." I said, "Hell no I don't want the job." And they begged me to take it staff. Then a trustee had called in and said, "Well now we don't know about this. Everything you've had you've done well with but we don't know how the staff's going to work with you." And asked me what do you think about it. I said, "Don't worry about that." I said, "If I get it they'll have to work with me." Yeah so that was the reason.

S: I noticed sometimes you were called headmaster and sometimes principal. Did it make a difference?

M: Well yes in private schools you call them headmasters and public schools you call it principals.

S: Okay I noticed the interchanging of the terms in the yearbooks.

M: Yeah, yeah.

S: So it really didn't make any difference to you?

M: No, no, no it's the same, you're the head of the operations you see, but in the private schools, in a private school the headmaster is a term that's more English you know.

S: Charlotte Hall belonged to the Middle States didn't it?

M: Oh yeah.

S: Did that happen while you were there?

M: Oh yes.

S: How did you go about doing that?

M: How'd it go?

S: Did you apply and then go through the accreditation process?

M: Yeah well we went through that and [inaudible]. [That's a question, that's a question] [inaudible phrase] somebody. Said he couldn't understand how I could be past president of the headmaster association for Charlotte Hall when Charlotte Hall wasn't really—see he didn't see a record why I was in the middle states but we were in the middle states.

S: You were also a member of middle states yourself too?

M: Oh yeah, yeah.

S: Do you remember what year the school became a part of Middle States?

M: No I do not. Right off hand I don't know.

S: Okay, Charlotte Hall was also a member of the National Honors Society too. Was there a chapter there?

M: Oh yeah that's right.

S: Was that during your time?

M: Yeah all that was my time.

S: I noticed that there were a great many literary societies at Charlotte Hall.

M: Yeah well you see at Charlotte Hall we stressed—our program which I really set it up. My philosophy was this: that if a boy—anybody I don't care who he is—if he goes to school and he comes out and he cannot express himself in the world he's lost. Everybody should be able to stand up on their feet and express themselves. So for that reason I put all these things in. We had these debating societies. Kids, everybody have to, every senior had to take part in the declamation contest. They got to stand up and talk, you know, express themselves. It's hard, they don't like it sometimes. Then we also had this, had these literary societies that meet once a week every Wednesday, every Wednesday evening, and teachers were assigned to these societies. At the end of the year or later part of the winter, early spring we had debates. Had cups you know to give prizes. Then I also decided that what good is education if you can't write well. So I put in penmanship. I taught that thing myself. All students had to take penmanship until they became proficient—when you could read their writing. We also had spelling, had spelling bees. Contests the whole school would be in it. Every morning like we'd have penmanship for about ten minutes, 15 minutes, something like that. And then once a week have these spelling bees to see who's the champion speller in the school. We called these the frills of education. The kids may have utilized it and go out to life and use it see.

S: If those were the frills what did you consider the basics?

M: Fundamentals.

S: Arithmetic?

M: Oh yes. Mathematics, English, then I had this. I had this you know here's a scheme I had when I taught. Course I loved teaching, I enjoyed it. I taught English also for a while. I had in assembly in the mornings I talked to the boys every morning in assembly and if I make one mistake at assembly in English grammar or something like that any boy who picks me up I give him so many points or something see, credit. I pick them up too on it see.

S: Did you ever deliberately make mistakes?

M: Oh yeah. Oh yeah I've done that. Teaching in a class of mathematics I would deliberately make mistakes to see if the guys were listening in class. Sure catch them. Yes indeed deliberately. We had fun, the teachers had a lot of fun you know. I taught mathematics, algebra which is a dry subject they say but the kids all loved it. It was competitive. I'd have a class all

arranged with seats all numbered. I arranged the boys. Anybody who is in the number one seat if he had four cross then five down anyone [inaudible] number one seat up here at the time of the examination would not have to take the exam. How would they get it? I'd change their seats maybe every day or at least once a week. I'd call a fellow up here and put a question up and call on a fellow. If he misses then I call on somebody else. I never I guess popped a questions around the class. They all had to keep wide awake. They all liked getting that one seat. If I got a dumb guy in that one seat I wouldn't change the seat much and it made the bright ones angry. They would get angry and say, "Oh my God he's gonna be up there, he's gonna be the one who's not gonna take the exam. We gonna have to take the exam. [Major sir], change the seats. Let's have change." But I wouldn't do it. They'd fight for it. They loved it. The competition every day in class.

S: The whole school sounded very competitive.

M: Oh yeah.

S: So that one particular—

M: Oh we had boxing too. We had one of the best boxing teams in the United States you know. One of the best.

S: That seating arrangement did you make it competitive for seat number one?

M: Oh yeah. That's what it is. Who gets up there if he [misses] a question, see.

S: Then he gets bumped back?

M: He gets bumped back. He may go back to the back of the class.

S: Seat number two would move into place?

M: No, no not necessarily. [Inaudible phrase] maybe the man in the end of seat get it who answered the question, see. Yes sir.

S: The Washington and Stonewall Society—

M: [Well that was a] debating society. Famous. Did you get their [minutes]?

S: Yeah we did.

M: Did you read about the big celebration we had?

S: The bicentennial? or the 200?

M: Yeah the bicentennial.

S: Right I read it.

M: Had all these big people there.

S: The Washington Stonewall Society when you became a member did you stay a member all your life? In other words were there alumni of the Washington—

M: Yeah. Once you became a member once you were a student there you're a member the rest of your life.

S: What were the requirements for membership in the Washington Stonewall Society?

M: The requirements were number one you be able to stand up on his feet and express yourself, speak good English, write well, write good compositions, and have good grades. I'd say a B average, a B average is about.... When I say B average I may confuse you. You see I wrote a paper for this Columbia University on grades. At Charlotte Hall we graded in the percentage basis. You got all kinds of grading systems. You got what I call the algebraic system. The algebraic system is A, B, C, D, and E. You know that's the algebra see. A means so much, B means so much, and C means so much. But at Charlotte Hall I kept it on the percentage basis when [in my survey] showed only about 14 percent of the schools in the country used that system. Most of them about 70 percent of the schools were using the algebraic system, A, B, C, D and some of them used pass/fail and other things. I claimed—I used to argue my case that the reason I used the percentage system is this. If I'm grading a young kid, he comes along and I say what am I gonna give him this quarter, first quarter, I'll say, "[Inaudible] well I think he's above average. Maybe I'm gonna give him 85. I put an 85 on the report card and send it home to the parents. Parents get it. Next quarter, has he improved or has he not improved? If he's improved I'll put 86 or 87 and the parents look at it. Parents know he's improved because all parents can count numbers.

S: That's right.

M: You see. But if you put A, B, C, and D and those things and A is 95, A minus is 90-95 then then [they using algebra then] once they put minus and pluses in that. You can give a guy in a B he got 10 points in that up or down and maybe its dropped. Parents don't know about it see. I still say its the best system.

S: You can see much better how you're doing.

M: You can that's right. Course all everybody could [you know] [figure they could] count. Yes so I used to argue that case. Argued at George Washington University one time too to a professor.

S: Who won?

M: Well I beat him on that. [Inaudible] I said, "All parents can know a little arithmetic."

S: That's right. Major Burgee what was a rat?

M: A rat? Freshman.

S: Freshman? Is that right?

M: Yeah just like you have in college.

S: And rat's rules?

M: Well now you've asked me another one. They had those at Charlotte Hall before I went there. And there when I came there I was of course [I'll give a little bit of] my experience. When I was in college I went through the rat rules. When I became a sophomore they put me on a committee of 10 to handle all these freshman who disobeyed the rat rules. What we had to do, catch them, hold them, and they cut the hair off their heads you know, and beat the hell out of them or something you know. I saw a boy get hurt once and he I think he's probably an invalid today. So I became bitter about the rat rules and I did away with it. So when I came to Charlotte Hall School they had—they was famous there for them like [VMI]. They had—we had a monogram club and they'd had rat rules and take my athletes you know and to get in the monogram club and they had to be beaten. They'd beat on them and everything else so I issued an order absolutely under no condition would any boy be beaten on by a group of boys. If they wanted one for one we'll fix up a boxing match and put them in it see but not that. So we did away with it. No such thing as rat rules. I said if anybody needs help it's a fellow's first year. He's the fellow that needs it. He's away from home. He's [making there his home] up there and you got to make it nice for him, make it friendly for him see. Why subject him to all these rules and regulations and beat on him you know. Course [VMI] you know the college used to be one of the toughest in the United States. You heard about that? Yeah rat rules, it's all rat rules.

S: This was even when you were an instructor before you became the headmaster that you?

M: Oh no I did away with this when I first went there. First year I was there I cut all that out. I was a teacher. Yeah I wouldn't allow it. The boys knew it too, see.

S: I noticed that in October of 1929 yearbook there was a reference to yelling practice . What was that?

M: 1929? Yelling practice.... God could that have been that strike? Maybe that's what it was. We had the boys at one time they went on strike for food. I think that was about it by that time yeah. It would've gotten bad but I was the athletic man, coach, and I called my football team aside and, "Absolutely no part of you taking this or I'm not going to fool with you. I don't want you on my team. I will not waste my time coaching you." And they would holler and scream and not go to formation you know and things like that. So we finally broke that up.

S: Why were they on strike?

M: Food.

S: They wanted more or better or?

M: They wanted a change from having scrapple every day.

[Laughter].

S: Scrapple?

M: I love the stuff. [Inaudible phrase] I was the headmaster [inaudible phrase]. [No sir] yeah I wanted scrapple. As a matter of fact they had to have the trustees in on this. Of course they dismissed some of the boys, the ringleaders. I got ahold of some of my football players and I said, "Listen, I don't want you in on this. Defend yourselves, take care of yourselves. " So they [knocked the living each out of a few boys]. Some boy I know the one day called one of them, yelled and said, "You're yelling for not joining us." He hauled and hit him in the face and knocked his teeth out. But you know the guy who...the ring leaders of that thing, one of them is a famous dentist in Western Maryland now named Ryan and another was a judge who just retired from the bench up here in Prince George, Judge Bowie.

S: Judge Bowie was one of the ring leaders?

M: He was one of them.

S: Do you think I should interview him?

M: No, no, I wouldn't do it. No he's retired now as a judge see.

S: What was the term form? How was that used?

M: [That's] the year of school.

S: Year of school?

M: [Four formed the four] 12th grader, 11th grader see. As a matter of fact you've got to watch that now. In the Maryland system in education say only a few counties—in St. Mary's it was 11. In my county in Frederick County it was 11. Baltimore City had 12 grades. Western Maryland had 12 grades in the school. Your county had 11. And [seven four system] we had. You know what I mean?

S: Went to school seven years and then four years of high school?

M: Yeah, yeah that's right, seven, four. But now at Charlotte Hall they called it forms. First form if you had the first form you're in ninth grade. Second form you're in 10. Third form you're in 11th see it gets transferred that way.

S: You had a lot of South American students.

M: Oh loaded with them and Cubans. We've had high as three in one family South American boys.

S: Really? How did they hear about Charlotte Hall?

M: Oh [it's simple] we had...well [Colon Alfaro] a good friend of mine. Yeah he's ambassador from Ecuador. These ambassadors see Washington has all the embassies. Washington and New York you know. They wanted a school around the district of Columbia. All you got to do is get one or two of them and then they tell the others. We had a lot of Cubans too. As a matter of fact I was going over to Cuba to organize an alumni association just about three months before Castro took over.

S: Wow.

M: Yeah a bunch of Cubans. And a lot of those boys have come to the states already and they're doctors you know. We turn an awful lot of doctors in Cuba. One of them is down in the University of Alabama and another one's down in Miami practicing medicine. Yeah see their fathers went to Charlotte Hall, their grandfathers went there. [Bolot], you take like Doctor [Bolot]. His father went to Charlotte Hall, his grandfather went to Charlotte Hall, uncles went there, and things like that, see. Quite a few of them.

S: In 1929 there were 400 volumes donated to the library in the new brick colonial barracks. Did you help select any of those books? Who?

M: In 29?

S: Yeah.

M: No I would not have in 29 no. Course Crowson ran the whole show. I ran the outside.

S: He ran inside and you ran the?

M: Yeah he ran, he was much older than I was. He was about 20 years older than I. He had a difficulty for discipline. He often called on me for discipline and handling the teachers and things like that, see.

S: I noticed that Mrs. Crowson was a hostess there?

M: Well you see, well it goes back to another. I was the first man in the history of this school to ever come up in the system. I was the first bachelor to ever become the head of it. See I was a bachelor. Course when he died I was a bachelor and she was my hostess there for about two years.

S: Was she paid for that?

M: Oh yeah.

S: What were her duties?

M: What duties? She had charge of the dining room and to meet the people and have parties and things like that. [Inaudible] like a regular hostess, see. But then she's still living you see. She lives right across the road there from it.

S: She does?

M: Yeah. She's still living.

S: Okay then when you got married then your wife became the hostess?

M: Yeah.

S: Did she also run the boarding area?

M: No, no, no my wife, first wife, no. No I had a dietician, professional dietician. No she just ran the social part of it. The dances and stuff like that you know, meeting people.

S: You stated that when you hired a teacher you always wanted to meet his wife.

M: Always.

S: Why?

M: You ask me some damn good questions. Well the first place, if I hire somebody I want to make sure that they're going to be happy with the situation where they are [inaudible]. I take one look at him and figure something, but I want to know whether she wants to be there too. Because if she doesn't want to be there he's not going to be happy. No man is going to be happy if his wife is not happy. [Inaudible] so I want her to be happy in a situation like quarters where they live. See when I first became headmaster, before I became headmaster at Charlotte Hall school they had no place for a married person. There's no facilities for a married teacher. They all had to be single.

S: How did you change that?

M: How did I change it? It was easy to do. I bought houses and made apartments out of them.

S: This was with the Charlotte Hall money?

M: Yeah! Oh yeah with Charlotte Hall money yeah. We made during the year and I bought houses and made apartments out of them and then I built a new dormitory at Charlotte Hall School. Oh I fixed them up really nice and I made quarters for teachers like real quarters that lived there. Bachelorette quarters. They got a little kitchenette with them and they got a bed, a nice living room and [inaudible]. A married couple that have no kids get along nicely.

S: What happens when children came along?

M: When children came along then they get an apartment. I had apartments. See I bought one two three. I bought those as these houses would come up for sale I would advise the board about them and I buy a big house and divide it. Make two apartments out of it. One upstairs and one down. Or split the house in half, an apartment on each side. See things like that. Well I would sell to the headmaster. When I was first headmaster I lived in the attic of the white house.



S: How long did you live there?

M: Lived there until it got burned out in 45. And I [raised inaudible] because I said it was a disgrace. The oldest—all these people I know in all these private schools the headmasters all of them had nice homes and here I'm living in the attic. I said it's like living in a barn. So that's why I built the headmasters house. A nice headmasters house up there it was a beauty. The headmasters house has got one, two, three, four bedrooms upstairs, two baths, all of them got master baths. And on the first floor a full basement and everything.

S: What was Keech Hall?

M: Keech Hall is the building where the swimming pool is. Well that was this. When I went there Colonel F. B. Keech. You're from Charles County then you probably heard something about him. He's a broker, New York. He went to Charlotte Hall as a student. He became a broker. When he finished Charlotte Hall, went to West Point and he came out of West Point and married a rich woman. She wanted to get him out of service, she wanted him out. So he became a broker in a brokers office in New York. Made lickings. One time his estimated worth about 130, 40 million. He died a pauper. He jumped in front of subway in New York City in 1937. That's when I was up there going to school. Worth two million.

S: Only worth two million?

M: Yeah pauper.

S: Oh poor thing.

M: If he had all that money [inaudible] [go down] [inaudible]. Well F. B. Keech—you know where Keech land is in Charles County? Yeah that was his old place. He's the one, F. B. Keech. Colonel F. B. Keech.

S: So he built Keech Hall?

M: Well he had a—he put a little money aside every now and then and Charlotte Hall was drawing the interest from it. It amounted about 30—I was treasurer at the time—30 some thousand dollars.

S: A year?

M: No, no, no sum of money. This during the Depression days, dear. [Oh God] 30 thousand dollars during the Depression days could have bought big farms and things. So he decided the thing to do was sell the stock and build something so they did. They sold the stock and built the swimming pool and Keech Hall. That's why it's called Keech Hall.

[Tape Interruption]

S: Would you tell me what it was like at Charlotte Hall during the Depression years? How was Charlotte Hall effected?

M: You mean the big Depression?

S: The big Depression just prior to World War II, the 30's.

M: [What it hurt all was]—it wasn't as bad as you might think because the students in those days paid 500 some dollars a year to go there. Board, room, and all. Teachers got let's see what did we pay them? 900 dollars a year, 11 hundred or 12. They gave me 14 because I coached athletics and was treasurer. The headmaster, Crowson, was making over six thousand a year. Then in 38 when I became headmaster they paid me 36 hundred. So they saved money there for a while, see and I was a bachelor too, see. But Crowson had a wife and two kids of course and the schools [like captain or the] headmasters they get [the perks] you see. The food and everything for the family. But we survived the Depression alright. It was tough.

S: Did it cause declining enrollment?

M: Oh yeah enrollment declined. In 27 when I first went there I had a roll that was about 70. It never got much below that because we would expand. What we would do, we would expand vertically. In other words why you had first seventh grade through twelve. You dropped down one or two to five, four. [Inaudible phrase]. You have to expand accordingly. Vertically, we called it vertically.

S: What were your duties as Secretary to the Board of Trustees?

M: My duties as Secretary to the Board of Trustees were to take notes at the meeting and to take care of all the correspondence that they needed.

S: How often did they meet?

M: Well they under the set up they were supposed to meet four times a year. Sometimes would meet more often. Depends on the condition of things.

S: Were there ever emergency meetings?

M: Emergency meetings? Oh yeah down through the years we had some emergency meetings. We had the time that the Governor appointed 10 trustees to Charlotte Hall School. They all came down for the meeting and the Board refused to see them.

S: When was this?

M: Oh that was back in the 40's, early 40's. The papers called me wanting to know what or why would the trustees of Charlotte Hall defy the Governor? I said, "Well what do you mean?" I said, "You want to know did they defy the Governor?" I said, "They just refused to seat the people." They said, "You're Secretary you ought to know." I said, "Yeah I do know but," I said, "If you put anything in the paper make sure you put in there what's in there is right that's all." No then we had—

S: Why did the Governor appoint 10 more people to the Board of Trustees?

M: Now you get into politics [about that]. Well I'll tell you what. There was a little friction in the alumni association then. The Board of Trustees they had. The alumni thought they ought to have different men on the board. Ought to have more alumni on the board you see. And they didn't have so the alumni thought well what they'll do they'll get some alumni on the board. So they got the government, got a bill through the legislature up here to increase the number of trustees by 10 to be appointed by the Governor. So the bill passed the legislature. The bill passed legislature and the same time Charlotte Hall had a board member who was up in the legislature, Senator Wilmer, but he was asleep during the time and didn't know that the damn thing got through. So the Governor appointed these 10 people. They all came down there and what not for the meeting. I'll never forget that as long as I live and then the members refused to seat them. So then the next legislature they had they ruled that thing out.

S: So those 10 people were never members of the Board of Trustees?

M: No were never members no but some of the fellows who wanted to get on the Board of Trustees when that thing went through, went through the government and got it put their name on that thing. [All then though] we've had [dog] we've had deaths, shootings and stuff like that I think maybe.

S: A shooting?

M: Yeah.

S: When was that?

M: Back in my—I wasn't head then I was athletic man. I was down on the athletic field and they sent for me to come up to the barracks right away. The coach carried a kit, you know, athletic kit see, a medical kit. So I went up there and I looked and they had a boy on the laboratory floor. I looked at him and I knew he was going to die. He'd shot him right in here. What happened was this: A boy from Thurmont, Maryland wanted to have a gun and against the rules and regulations. You can't have a gun at Charlotte Hall School. Only gun you can have is the one you drill with and the firing pin is out of that. See we take them out. So his mother said she'd get him one. So she baked a cake, you know one of these pound cakes you know that's got a hole in it you know in the cake and put the 32 in there with some bullets in that hole. Sent it to him in a box. When he got the [blank] thing he had it up in his room and he was spinning around playing this Russian roulette. You know spinning it around like that and pulled the trigger and it went off and killed the boy. And the [Lambert] trophy—the boy who got killed was his people were big shots at [Woodrow Wilson] Washington. And then we have a trophy there—Lambert trophy. At Charlotte Hall School they give a trophy every year to something purpose.

S: In commemoration of their son?

M: Yeah.

S: That must have caused quite a scandal.

M: Well they had a trial and everything else you know. They had the jury to be there at the school about this boy. Of course the mother was the one that the Sheriff got you know. She of course violated the rules and regulations of the mail [and too you know see]. But that was a funny incident. I knew the guy was going to die as soon as I looked at him.

S: So the boy from Thurmont shot the other boy?

M: Yeah the roommate.

S: Yeah.

M: Playing you know.

S: What was the boy from Thurmont's name?

M: I can't think of his name right off my head.

S: What happened to him?

M: He was dismissed. Nothing happened. Nothing happened.

S: Did the role of the Board of Trustees change through the years?

M: Oh yeah. Yeah at one time it was a real active board. When I was teaching there the board it was a board, really board. Acting outsiders you know having an interest into the school. Then as it went down it went downhill all the way.

S: So essentially you were running the school.

M: Oh yeah. That's right all those years when I became the headmaster up until I ran the school. What distinctions I won I'd tell the board but they've not been in on a lot of things.

S: Like what for instance?

M: Well one year the—I wanted to increase the library. Library was too small. Course I always claimed the library is the foundation of any educational institution. If they don't have a good library. I bought a lot of books. They thought it was a lot. About 16 hundred dollars' worth of books one year to put in the library. They [blamed] near fired me for that but they were afraid to fire me for that because it would cause a lot of stink. One of the fellows said, "I'm surprised. Here he did that. He's only supposed to spend up to 300 dollars. Beyond 300 dollars he's supposed to get permission from us, but these books cost about 16 hundred dollars." So then we had an argument. I said, "Wait a minute now you said that this thing you got limiting the spending to 300 dollars is stupid." I told him at the meeting. I said, "[Inaudible] to break down here. 300 dollars it won't get a man from Washington down to fix it." You see you got to have some trust and something like that. So we had quite a battle about that. No we used to—and then we argued for years, years I at the board meetings—everybody was afraid of Judge Diggs. They wouldn't say a word to him. I was at his house one night talking to him and I wanted to borrow

money to build an academic building. I said, "You know what I'm getting sick of?" He said, "What's that?" I say, "We're running an educational institution and the poorest building on our campus is the academic building." I said, "It's a disgrace." I beat my hand down and on disgrace. He said, "Alright what are you going to do about it?" "I will build one." "How are you going to build it." "I'll borrow." "Borrow, you don't borrow money." I said, "Listen, let me tell you." See in all this time I [stayed fine] answers and what not. I said, "The government borrows, everybody borrow to mixed success. You deal with it but you got to see your way clear, got to pay it back." So then Judge Diggs's house one night he said, "Would you borrow 300 thousand dollars to put the school in build an academic building?" I said, "Dudley when I can see my ends clear of loans we gonna have an educational institution I want it to be a good one and I'd do it." He said, "I'd never borrow a dollar in my life." And [that's where] he and I hit the edge of things. I said, "Dudley," because I talked to [him] like I would a boy. I said, "Dudley, you were born with a gold spoon in your mouth." [Laughter] He never cared for me since.

S: But you got your academic building?

M: Oh yeah, yeah. The old one was falling down. It's a nice one too all air conditioned and everything.

S: How long did it take to build it?

M: To get it you mean?

S: To get it, let's start there with the getting it.

M: Oh I hopped on there [inaudible phrase]. See when I first became headmaster I hit the board for I wanted homes for teachers. They said, "Why do you want that." I said, "First place you got to have a good faculty and to have a faculty they got to be happy. If you hire these bachelors they're going to get married if they're any good and if they're no good who wants them?" And I said, "You got to have homes for the teachers." So then they said, "You're a spendthrift." And then I got on the idea of getting up things for an academic building. Got to have an academic building and a nice library. I want that you know, see. No, no, no I have to fight them. They couldn't see it, but I got it.

S: What year did you start construction on it?

M: Academic building?

S: Mhm.

M: Really it has been [up long]. [Inaudible phrase] I guess. It's on the building proper.

S: Did you design the building yourself?

M: Oh no, no we hired an architect for that. Then he goes over with me and talks to me you know how they do it. Talked to you what you want first and then you add to it, take from it see.

Course that's the main—that's number one building. I said, "Well here we got this. We got dormitories, we got nice dormitories, we got nice dining hall. One of the best dining halls in St. Mary's County a big one. Nice kitchen, I had all that fixed up you know. Course I built all that too you know see. Got my kitchen and I fixed the kitchen up. I raised [inaudible] I wanted good stuff all stainless steel. I didn't any wood floor or anything like that in it you know. But you have a hard time [selling these old boys].

S: You must have been very irritating to them. [Laughter].

M: Yeah I was yeah. Well I guess that's why they—some of them on there of course these who are on there now weren't on there then during those days. But that's why a couple of them who are dead now, Jack Parran was one, who said to me, said, "Now Major, when the new fellow comes in to take over you're not going to interfere with his running the place are you?" I'm not going to bother him at all as long as it goes right. If it doesn't go right then I'm going to interfere. If it comes to you I'll do something because I can't see it go bad.

S: When did Charlotte Hall become integrated?

M: You mean for the coloreds?

S: Yes.

M: I don't know exact year. Have to find it in the records. I know the case it was. A famous lawyer from Washington was gonna bring his boy down. In the meantime Dudley Diggs he hated negroes. He didn't like them at all you know. This guy knew Dudley was a judge. He was a judge on [inaudible phrase]. So this fellow wrote to him and told him about he had this boy and wanted him to go to military school and whatnot and Dudley had to give in. He was a nice boy too, oh nice kid. And the boy's a big lawyer now I understand.

S: What was his name?

M: Oh I'd have to look him up.

S: Tompkins?

M: Tompkins yeah that's right. His father lost his leg. Yeah Tompkins, that's the boy.

S: So that was the first time that Charlotte Hall had a colored boy attending?

M: Yeah but we had others [apply]. But they were very nice you know. I had one fellow one day came to me, a colored fellow, and I came out I sat down to talk to him in the hall before we had any colored. I said, "Now I want to tell you something. I'm talking to you straight face to face. We don't have any black boys and the thing is this. If you send your boy away to school you want him to be happy. What we want, we want you to be happy too. I want to tell you beforehand. I don't know whether you would be here now whether he would be because he'd be the only one here. But we'll do everything we can to make him happy. If I were you I would not

send him down here." He thanked me for it. Colored boy in Washington, big shot. I told him straight out he's the only one there see.

S: But it took a lawyer to get his son in first?

M: Yeah that's right.

S: After the first boy then did others?

M: Yeah, oh yeah. But the colored were good students. They were bright. All of them went to Princeton.

S: Upper class? Upper income.

M: Echelon, yeah, yeah. One fellow had three down there, three boys.

S: Wow.

M: Imagine how much money he was making. He was making about 45, 50 thousand a year in Washington.

S: Did the white students resent the black ones.

M: No. Whites did not resent.

S: That's super.

M: Yeah.

S: How about the Board of Trustees did they have to vote on black students entering the school?

M: They don't vote on any—well originally to take them in. Yeah they didn't vote on any of the students. They had nothing to do with the students. [Everything's covered in this school you know]. Course the other one was the girl problem and the co-ed, [but] day students.

S: How did that come about?

M: Well some people had boys going there and they wanted their daughter to go there and I sold them on the idea of it too because you know you run the boys school for years and years. Boys sit up there in the barracks all day with nothing to do. Parents come down see them for the weekends and things like that. Any time a girl goes by the window they whistle. Like a whistle at the boys sisters and things like that you know. I told the trustees, I said, "That's a damn shame." I said, "Living in the country like we live and [that has to happen]." "Well what are you going to do about it?" "Let the girl come in as a day student. It's not going to hurt anything." And I said, "They can do a lot of things as well as boys." I said, "As a matter of fact, when I was at University of Maryland the girls rifle team could out shoot the boys rifle team, see. Girls do a lot of things." So then the La Plata—the two girls from La Plata came over. Ken Dixon's daughter

was the first girl to graduate from us, Gayle Dixon. She runs the dancing school up there in Waldorf now.

S: Oh does she? What's the married name?

M: I don't know what the married name is but her father's Ken Dixon. He got a big [place near Fly's Plains and all that you know]. Very nice.

S: How did you select the uniform for the girls to wear?

M: Let the parents make the selection. We just called the parents in. [Tell them] and then got a uniform maker and said, "What do you want? Make a choice." We didn't care so its green you know. Ours were forest green see it's alright.

S: Did the girls find it difficult to adjust?

M: No.

S: Did they have military training for girls like the boys?

M: Oh yeah they drilled and everything in the companies. They fit in nicely. The dining hall and everything was very nice for that too you know see. We did add a little dignity to it you know. Poor thing they didn't want to sit at my table. [Inaudible phrase].

S: Why not?

M: Huh? See I eat in the dining hall all the time too you know see. And we'd take turns to come around and sit around at my table. I see how they eat and all, correct them if they didn't eat properly, a good educational experience.

S: Did the students get grades for dining hall etiquette or deportment?

M: No. Not in itself, separate in itself, but they got marks for how they dressed themselves.

S: How did the demerit system work?

M: Well merits are like—we set it up like: Late to formation one demerit, absent of formation maybe three, something like that. Then if you're late to class you'll get maybe one or two demerits. And a demerit was something you could get it off once you got it.

S: How?

M: Well you got to walk on the track. You walk 50 minutes, rest 10 you get a demerit off. Or you could work it off. You could work in the dining hall with the [wash] substitute or cleaning or something like that you know. We'd give every boy a chance to get rid of the demerits if he wanted to. On weekends he could work them off.

S: What was the maximum number of demerits that you could get?



M: Without getting dismissed?

S: Right. Oh you could get dismissed for too many demerits?

M: Oh yeah. Oh yeah they [can't have too many]. Well you got AWOL. AWOL is about as serious a thing as you could get. That's a way of [inaudible] say you skip out at night, don't come back, they don't find you and the police have to pick you up somewhere. That's very serious. Then I used to dismiss boys. Then I changed as I was the one who gave all the demerits for years. Then I changed that. I said well that's bad. [I right off hand] dismiss the boy. Maybe I'll do this, I'll change that. Course if I dismiss him he's done he can't go to any school. Can't even go to public school, see.

S: Really?

M: No. If they expel him. So what I do I suspend. I put a suspension on him for ten days. That's like you're on probation. Then they have to come back in 10 days and question them, see what they've done, how they've behaved themselves at home, question the parents, what kind of [inaudible] did the parents take on him all that time you know see. [Inaudible phrase].

S: Were the parents supportive of the discipline situations that you had to deal with?

M: Were they?

S: Yeah.

M: They were until you suspended the boy or dismissed him then they became very belligerent. They'd get angry. Well they have to there's nothing else for them to do you know. See they have to.

S: Were you ever sent problem children from home?

M: No. No child to me is a problem. It's the parents. I'd say that I'd make a general statement any time that all my years at Charlotte Hall School I don't have any difficulties with boys. I had all my problems with parents.

S: Did your wife help you with handling the parents?

M: Oh yeah, yeah. Then treasurer I had Michaels was my treasurer. You didn't know him did you?

S: No.

M: You knew Suzy.

S: Right I met Suzy.

M: You met little Suzy [blinky eyed] Suzy. If a man would come in and he was all upset I'd tell Michaels, I said, "Don't you talk to him." I said, "You talk to the women. I want Suzy to talk to the men."

S: Did it work?

M: Sure it worked perfectly. A guy come in there and he's all upset and angry about his bill or whatnot you know Suzy would get up and talk to him and blinking eyes you know. It's the psychology of it boy he's not gonna [get a lot off].

S: He couldn't yell at her.

M: No, no he couldn't stomp his feet. [Inaudible phrase].

S: During World War II there was very strict rationing policy. Did Charlotte Hall get affected by that?

M: Oh my God why mention that. It was really bad because you had this see I was of course head of the school I had a treasurer writing checks [inaudible]. All my checks were countersigned and everything. Even food was rationed. See we had stamps. We had—they'd give you food stamps you know to buy this. The dietician had an awful hard job. You couldn't serve a plate of pork chops all at one meal. Didn't have enough coupons for them. We had part pork chops the other might be fish or something see. It depends on the stamps you had as you could buy the stuff.

S: How did you get the stamps?

M: Well they allot them to you.

S: But never enough for an entire meal?

M: No. Yeah oh yeah sometimes but sometimes you run short. Then the gasoline thing was tough too you know. I was called into to Washington on the gas thing [and Tobin] the head of the all eastern part of the United States were gas rationing you know. He called me in. Somebody had reported me for putting boys on the bus and hauling them on trips and things like that see. So I had my rationing book and I took out my coupon before I went in. I knew they were going to confiscate them. And I asked for [Tobin] the headman. I didn't want to talk to one of the clerks. So he came out. We sat down and talked and he said, "Major, you've been charged with misusing the gas." [The thing I said,] "Now wait a minute sir, let's get this straight. What is the trouble?" He said, "People have reported that you have taken a bus and hauling he boys on trips, out like trips and things like that." I said, "Well now wait a minute now let's get this straight. I got a bus and I use my bus. We got two classes of students in our school. One Catholic and one not. The Catholics we haul them to church in a bus. But now if you want me to make that bus stay at school and tell these Catholic kids they can't go to church you just give me the order and I'll do it." "Oh no, no I'm not going to do that," he said, "I'm not going to do that. I'm not going to do

that he says." I said, "Well St. Mary's Academy down here at Leonardtown they went down to South Carolina with a bunch of sisters [all of us down there]." [Inaudible] "Well you do this," he said, "You go back there. Anything you work out with the ration board's alright with me." He says, "I'm not going to bother you anymore." No but they were hard days yes.

S: You must have had a terrible time getting tires for your bus?

M: Well we didn't use it that much. But it was hard. Hard getting anything you know. You go to Washington and the motor break down to get a motor or something like that they'd send you around and you'd finally end up where you started [the building you know the government].

S: Were the people in the area supportive? Could you buy vegetables from the farmers?

M: Oh yeah, yeah. I used to go up to the market up there to catch some guy who had little potatoes at the end of the market day. He was going back to Baltimore, rather than hauling them back himself he [sold them to me].

S: Now you had a farmer's market in Charlotte Hall too?

M: That's right farmer's market yeah. Then they get a lot of surplus food too.

S: Did Charlotte Hall School ever have any contact with the Amish people who live not too far from it?

M: Oh yeah.

S: How?

M: Well they did some work with us and we'd buy some stuff from them.

S: None of their sons ever wanted to—

M: No, no, no, no, no not at—they got their own schools and education you see. Just like you all have over in Charles County Wesorts.

S: Major Burgee how did the students get their hair cut, buy clothes, things like that when they were isolated down at Charlotte Hall?

M: Very simple. We had a barber come in who had a barber shop there.

S: How often did he come?

M: Oh we had a barber come in at least once in a week, maybe sometimes two or three times depending on when you need it.

S: Who was it?

M: A local barber.

S: Do you remember his name?

M: Oh several of them. John Tyler was one. He works up at Pepco now. He doesn't barber anymore. John Tyler was one. We never took them to the barber shop. We'd always bring the barbers there, had the shop there. And you mentioned about that in that you mentioned that I can tell you a little story. You know when boys come to Charlotte Hall School they first have to get their hair cut. They got to have a haircut. So one guy [from Ohio] when I was up there just a couple years before I quit. He brought his boy in. God his boy had hair down to here you know. He says—He saw Michael the treasurer and wanted to know what he had to do to get him registered. Mike said well first you got to go to a barber shop and get his hair cut. "How much hair to leave on his head?" He said, "Oh no see the Major out there." They came out to see me. I said, "Well just like what I had on mine." I wore my hair crew cut in those days just like I got it. He said, "Oh I can't do that." He said, "It take too much of his hair." He was from Cincinnati, Ohio see. [He took him] out went on back home. So then I walk around one day opening day and check on it and I saw a mother standing outside the barbershop down there, sitting rather, she was crying. I thought oh Christ what's this. This is a problem for the [inaudible phrase]. So I said, "May I help you?" She said, "No, no I don't know. I don't know what Johnny's gonna look like when he comes out of there. He says all the hair he has on his head. I'm afraid he's lost it." I said, "Listen dear you've seen him, you have seen him with less hair if you [inaudible phrase] I guarantee you that." But she was crying [so he] [inaudible]. [Some boy what a long hair down to here]. Cut it all you know. [It looked fine]. But I'll tell you this, boys would come in there God damn these little clothes on they had and [inaudible] and whatnot you know, long hair, come in there and go down to the barber shop and get set up. Come out of that and get into the uniform. [Turned into uniform], changed personality overnight. Not the same kid. It wasn't the same kid the next morning.

S: Did the parents like that?

M: Well some did and some didn't. The parents [and harder] the parents than anything else [they did] changed overnight.

S: During the 60's there was a lot of turmoil. Anti-military and—

M: Well that was a Vietnam thing.

S: Yeah the Vietnam thing. Was Charlotte Hall effected?

M: Not much no had not much effect on us. Course our kids they wanted the wanted the military, they wanted it you know. Had good things for them.

S: Did they ever feel the strain of being the only people when they went back home with short hair?

M: Well I think probably they did with the [clan] they'd associate with you know see. Felt a little bit out of place. But that was [their job]. God I'm telling you. Barber first day of registration whack them off.

S: Did you require the incoming students to come a day or so earlier to?

M: No, no we had two days registering new boys [old kids]. Take the clothes [or not].

S: Did you have any requirements for the girls for hair length?

M: No. We had requirements for the dress, dress outfits you know. But had this talk with the mothers and whatnot and then we had honor regulations you know too see and they looked that over and work with the commandant. It was very satisfactory. All of—the [easiest were women].

S: Charlotte Hall was a member of Junior ROTC wasn't it?

M: Junior ROTC.

S: Okay ROTC. When did that happen and why?

M: Well that happened I changed that. See for years and years we operated our own military see and had our own uniform maker to make them for us. But then I felt this about the kid going to Charlotte Hall school then they leave there they go to college and you have to take [at most of] the college's was two years ROTC. Some of them liked it. Then on top of that some of them maybe when they left Charlotte Hall wanted to go into service they could get a commission quicker so we joined the Junior ROTC. That's [inaudible phrase] [fresh all] uniforms see.

S: Oh really? Everything?

M: All uniforms. And you get a lot more stuff from the [government] through all that. That's why I went into it. A lot of things see other thing you have to pay for you the government give it to you.

S: What for instance?

M: Oh ammunition shooting and stuff like that you know. Junior ROTC.

S: Did you have to hire any new people to handle the ROTC?

M: Oh no, no, no, no. No I had a retired colonel. Colonel [Inaudible] he was the last one who had that. Then had a drill sergeant. Sergeant [Inaudible] in charge of all the uniforms and everything.

S: So the government provided the uniforms and provided ammunition. Is there anything else they provided under that program?

M: Well they paid part of the Commandant's salary and the drill master's salary, part of the salary. We supplemented it see. It was a big asset. I wish we'd had it before.

S: It would've saved the school a lot of money too.

M: Oh yeah it would sure that's right.

S: Did Charlotte Hall have any endowment money or was it operating on tuitions?

M: Well now that's you seldom get a question with yes or no but I'm going to answer yours with a yes and answer with a no. Charlotte Hall operated on the tuition, but Charlotte Hall did have some funds set up for certain purposes see. That's what I was—like a friend of mine who was into athletics old Hopkins fund he had about 40, 50 thousand dollars in it for scholarships we used for scholarships for good athletes we wanted. Used at my discretion. And then we had Maddox M. Key fund 35, 40 thousand dollars was there.

S: What was that one used for?

M: That was used for usually scholarship educational purposes and awards and things like that. Then you had Wallace Bond's wife left 50 thousand to the school. You know Wallace? His wife left 50 thousand to the school to use but Dudley got that back out again and fixed it so that he kept hold of it or something I don't know.

S: So there was no purpose for which that was donated?

M: No, no, no. Well I think the reason she did she liked me and Wallace. See Wallace and I were in lodge together. Masons and whatnot. She wanted to make sure the money went for a good purpose. Then we had some others. They were all small you know, but no real endowment. But we made some money some years. Some years we made 60, 70, 80 thousand dollars, 100 thousand dollars clear.

S: What did you do with the extra money?

M: What did we do with it? We would invest it. We buy securities and then we'd pay off debts and save for buildings you know see. You must understand that since I've been there we've built the—I bought the two pieces of property, three, three pieces of property. Bought the old store, Mattingly's store, and the house, and the [Davis] house, the Thomas house, and then the Dyson house, and brought down there for the headmaster, [assistant headmaster's in], built the headmaster's house, built the new dormitory of cost almost a half a million, about a half a million, built the academic building about three or four hundred thousand dollars, built new dining hall, built a new kitchen all that was done all new, and built the back end of the school hall and teach hall. Oh we spent several million dollars there on buildings.

S: Fantastic.

M: In those years.

S: You mentioned the Mattingly store?

M: Yeah that what's used to be [inaudible phrase].

S: Is that right?

M: Yeah—no it was a store and then he had a store there and a house. So when he left to move to Mechanicsville we bought it.

S: How long had it been a store?

M: Oh way before I went there.

S: Was that a student hang out?

M: Yeah. Students used to go—there no store for them to go to. They go across the road. They have to get permission to cross the highway to go you see. Well then we also built up the X building. That was a good little building for the boys where they didn't have to go off campus to get ice cream or anything like that. Right on the campus and go out there and get it. Had a jukebox in there too you know.

S: This was in the PX?

M: PX yeah.

S: Were girls permitted to join the Washington and Stonewall Society?

M: Nothing against it.

S: So they—

M: They could yeah. Girls could.

S: Were there any girls in the Washington Stonewall Society?

M: I don't whether any girls went in it or not afterwards my last time. Probably they could have gone yes. See you had the Washington Stonewall Society, you had the Lincoln and Lee Literary Society. They were two big ones. Then we had the Junior Literary Society. That was all rest of the students in the student body were taken together. Then we had another one...but that's one thing we stressed, debating. Stand up and on your feet express yourself.

S: Who was Captain Bentley?

M: Colonel Bentley.

S: Colonel Bentley.

M: He was the headmaster there before Crowson came.

S: In the early 20's?

M: Well he—yeah I think about 21, 2, 3, 4, 5.

S: I noticed in 1922 the year book was dedicated to him.

M: Yeah. See you had a big fire in 27. Burnt the barracks down. He was there then when they had the fire see. Then he went—when he left Charlotte Hall he went up here to Laurel and formed a school, Bentley School, for little kids of elementary school.

S: Well Major Burgee is there anything I have neglected to ask you or something that you want—

M: Oh yeah a lot of things you missed but we'll get them sometimes. I'll tell you if you think about anything like that anytime at all you give me a call or something like that and I over at La Plata I'll drop in there for an hour or so and give you information on it because I know you're trying.

S: Thank you very much.