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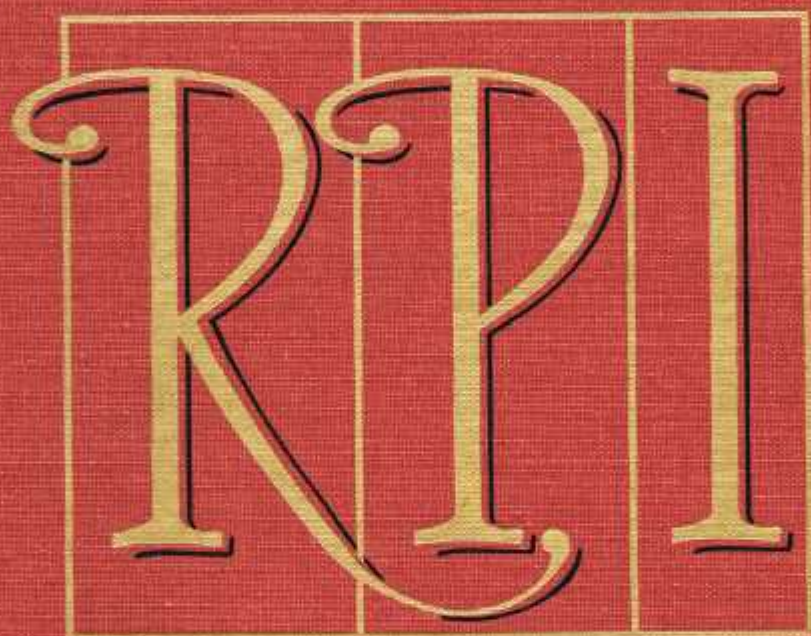
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THE HISTORY OF



RICHMOND PROFESSIONAL INSTITUTE · RICHMOND · VIRGINIA

A History of the Richmond Professional Institute

Henry JS Hobbs

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A HISTORY OF

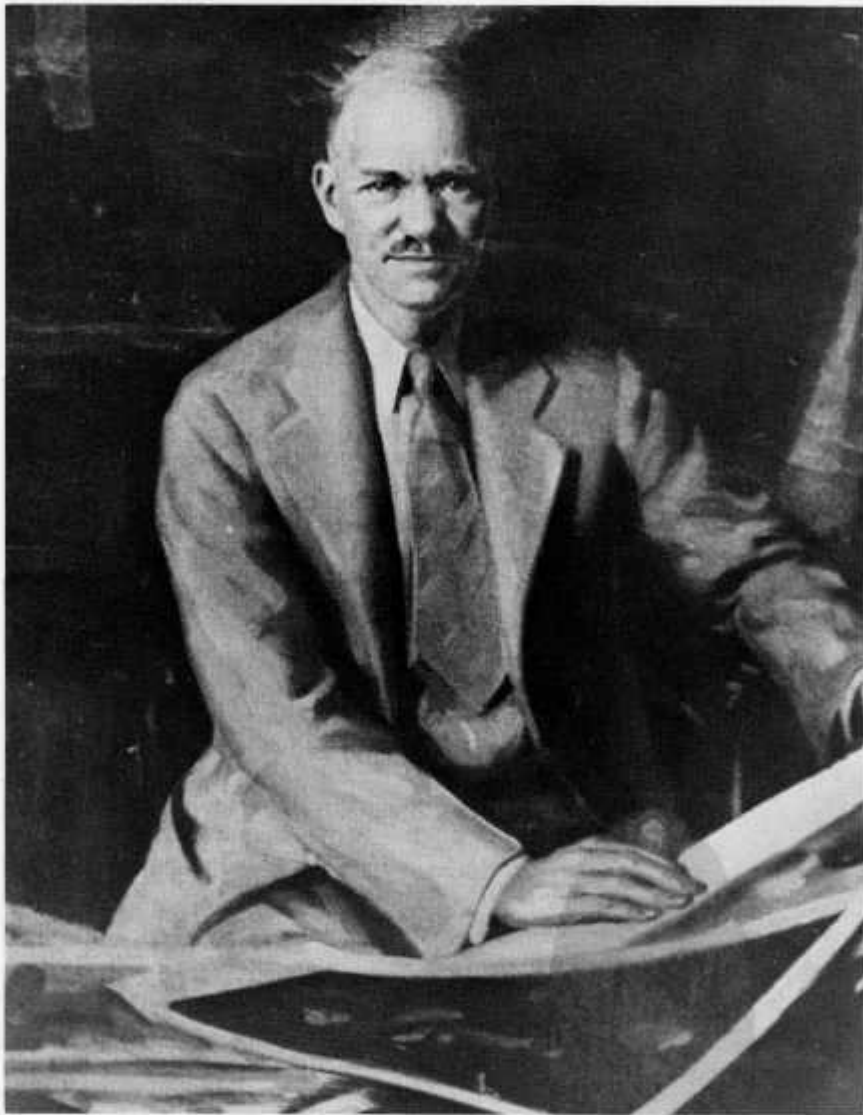
The Richmond Professional Institute

*From its beginning in 1917
to its consolidation with
The Medical College of Virginia
in 1968 to form
Virginia Commonwealth University*

by
HENRY H. HIBBS



Published for the RPI FOUNDATION by
WHITTET AND SHEPPERSON
RICHMOND, VIRGINIA



HENRY HORACE HIBBS

TO
MARY SUE HIBBS DOSS
1925-1964

*Who grew up on the campus
of the Richmond Professional Institute;
attended college there; was President of
the student body in her senior year;
and during World War II was a student in
the School of Social Work.*

Author's Acknowledgements

*This book could not have been written
without the help of many persons.
Appreciative acknowledgment is here made
to former students, faculty, administrators, news media,
the printers, the RPI FOUNDATION, and to
several persons for editorial assistance
in preparing the manuscript for printing.*

HENRY H. HIBBS

Foreword

Dr. Henry H. Hibbs has written this personal account of the Richmond Professional Institute's early history from its modest beginning in 1917. The fact that the school survived is a testimony to the courage, persistence, and vision of its first administrator.

He has reported the facts and happenings out of a remarkable memory with the assistance of his personal notes and the recollection of former students and colleagues. Much of the work was done years ago; however, he has made recent revisions as he approached his 85th birthday in what his friends will continue to recognize as the typical Hibbsonian style.

Dr. Warren W. Brandt, first President of Virginia Commonwealth University, became interested in having these facts and recollections preserved and appointed the undersigned committee to work out the necessary details to ensure their publication. The funds to publish this history have been provided by the RPI Foundation.

The many students, colleagues, and friends of Dr. Hibbs will be pleased to know that he continues to visit and take an interest in the University.

MAURICE BONDS

JAMES L. DUNN

HENRY I. WILLETT, *Chairman*

Contents

DEDICATION

AUTHOR'S ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

FOREWORD

- Chapter I. *THE FIRST YEAR: 1917-1918* 13
- Chapter II. *HOW THE NEW SCHOOL WAS
FINANCED IN SPITE OF
WORLD WAR I* 19
- Chapter III. *THE POST-WAR YEARS, 1918-25* 23
Search for permanent downtown location; 1228 East Broad Street and 17 N. Fifth Street; Affiliation with the College of William and Mary; Recreational leadership department added.
- Chapter IV. *THE MOVE TO FRANKLIN
AND SHAFER STREET; 1925* 27
Founders Hall, the first unit of the campus is bought and paid for by the private citizens group, now named RPI FOUNDATION; Reminiscences of early faculty and students.
- Chapter V. *THE INSTITUTE BEGINS TO GROW* 37
Expansion of the curriculum; New schools and departments added between 1927 and World War II; Name changed to RPI, 1939.
- Chapter VI. *THE RPI FOUNDATION WORKS OUT
A UNIQUE PLAN FOR EXPANDING
THE CAMPUS* 47
How the citizens' board (now the RPI FOUNDATION) from 1930 to about World War II worked out an ingenious plan for expanding the physical plant without state aid; Ginter Mansion, Ritter-Hickok House, Allison House, and other notable buildings bought and paid for.

Chapter VII.	<i>THE LEAN YEARS</i>	57
	What a governor and a senator said; Progress made despite problems; An endorsement from a high place; Some things RPI learned about operating urban colleges in the years when the State gave it little or no support.	
Chapter VIII.	<i>THE GREAT DEPRESSION</i>	63
	The NYA provides student jobs; The WPA remodels buildings; Valuable real estate acquired at low cost.	
Chapter IX.	<i>REMODELED STABLES IN RPI'S HISTORY</i>	69
	How RPI by remodeling and enlarging some old stables was able to win accreditation from the Southern Association of Colleges; And also to build up its art school until it became one of the largest in the country.	
Chapter X.	<i>QUESTIONS ABOUT THE USE OF OLD, CONVERTED BUILDINGS BY URBAN COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES</i>	73
	In the 1950's and 60s, and later, RPI carried on an almost continuous self-survey of the advantages and disadvantages of the use of old, converted buildings; And the extent to which other colleges and universities use them.	
Chapter XI.	<i>RPI ISSUES A PAMPHLET CALLING ITSELF AN ENTIRELY DIFFERENT COLLEGE</i>	83
Chapter XII.	<i>THE GI OR POST WORLD WAR II PERIOD</i>	89
	How the veterans of World War II and the Korean War changed the Institute, made it co-educational, and started it on the road to becoming one of the largest colleges in Virginia; New professional schools added; Physical plant further enlarged.	

Chapter XIII. *HIGH-RISE DORMITORIES,
OLD AND NEW* 101

In the 1940s, 50s, and 60s RPI begins to buy nearby apartment houses and convert them to dormitories—first small ones and then, in 1964, the very large Monroe Terrace; Nineteen-story Rhoads Hall built, 1968.

Chapter XIV. *GROWTH OF STATE SUPPORT* 107

While the State was slow in offering support to urban colleges like RPI, and was hard to convince, once it "caught the idea," State appropriations became generous.

Chapter XV. *THE TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS
ENROLLING AT RPI BECOMES
THE LARGEST IN VIRGINIA* 119

Unique plan worked out by Governor Harrison and President Oliver to increase space to provide for so many students; Why RPI could grow faster than other colleges—because of its mid-city location and the nearness of buildings that could be quickly converted to teaching use.

Chapter XVI. *THE COBBLESTONE CAMPUS* 123

Some questions about mid-city campuses, in Richmond and in some other cities.

Chapter XVII. *RPI WORKS TOWARDS UNIVERSITY
STATUS: 1959-1967* 133

Dr. George J. Oliver is president; School of Arts and Sciences added, 1965; School of Education, 1964; Faculty greatly increased and salaries raised; Administrative staff expanded; Dr. Roland H. Nelson, Jr., is president, 1967-68.

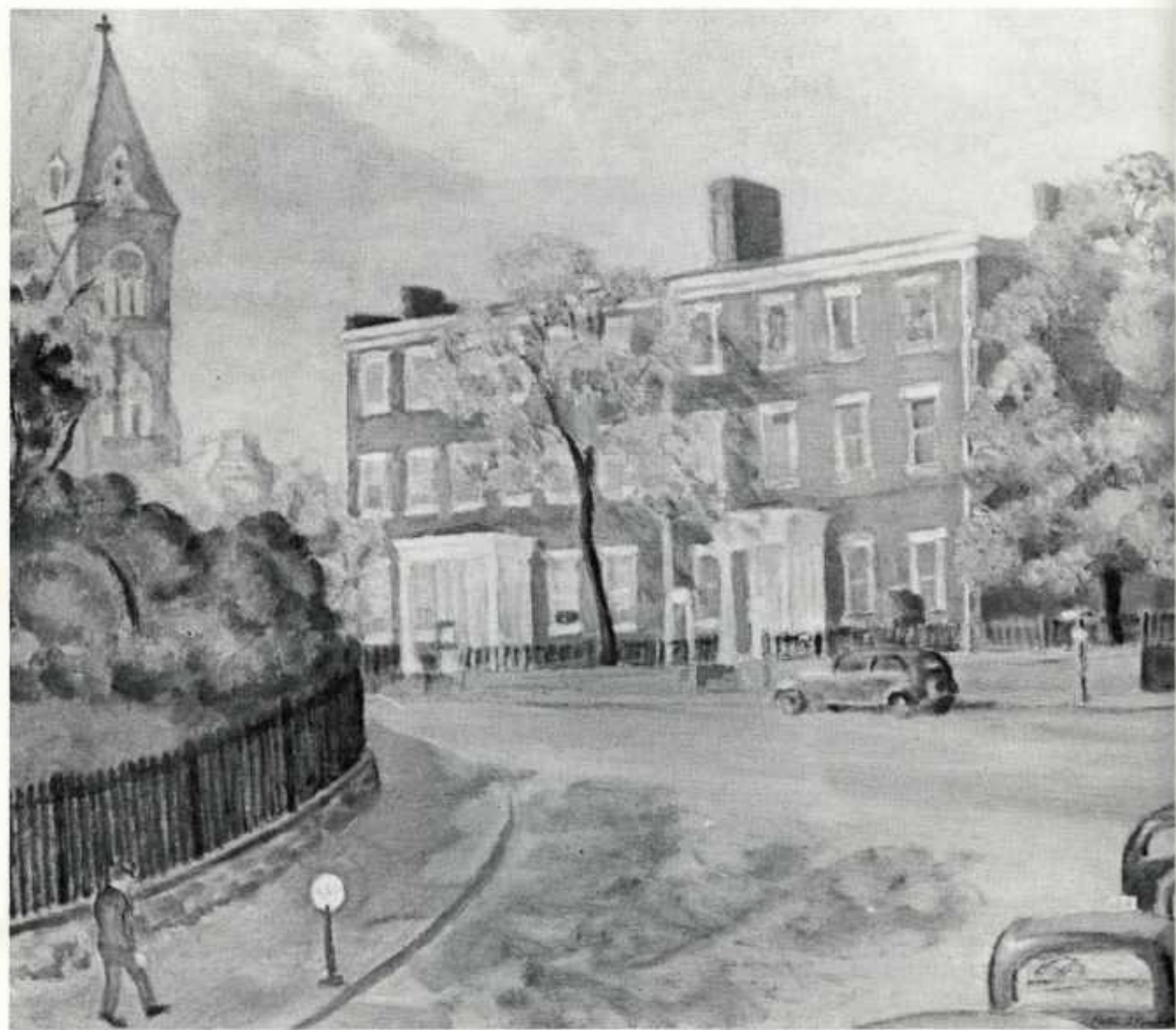
Chapter XVIII. *RPI ATTAINS UNIVERSITY STATUS
BY THE CONSOLIDATION ROUTE* 139

i.e., By consolidation with the Medical College of Virginia to form Virginia Commonwealth University, 1968.

Appendix	<i>A. NOTES ON THE RPI FOUNDATION; OTHER BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS</i>	143
	<i>B. NOTES ON THE AUTHOR by Maurice Bonds</i>	149
	<i>C. VIRGINIA COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY</i>	155
Index		160



The Starting Place: 1112 Capitol Street, from a painting by Miss Belle Worsham.



The First Year

IN July, 1917, Miss Mary Dupuy left her home in Prince Edward County and journeyed to Richmond to learn more about a new kind of urban educational institution. According to announcements she had read in the newspapers, there were plans to open a school in Virginia's capital city for social workers and public health nurses. Such a school, it was said, would be "the first of its kind in the South."

Miss Dupuy wrote some years later, in describing that trip, that she found the school on the third floor at 1112 Capitol Street. It was located in an old red brick residence across the street from the Governor's Mansion. The sign on the porch read, "Richmond Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court."

Nothing in the surroundings suggested a professional school, college or university. No likely students were in sight. In fact, Miss Dupuy continued:

"I encountered a noisy and somewhat ribald assembly of children. As I went in a small boy catapulted out of a door, side-swiping me in his effort to 'rid himself of the law' in the form of a pursuing probation officer.

"I followed the winding stair to the third floor and found three former bedrooms, one little larger than a closet. There were no electric lights but each room was lighted by gas. The two larger rooms had wood-burning stoves for heating."

In the front room Miss Dupuy was received by an auburn-haired secretary, Miss Lou Mayo Brown (now Mrs. B. F. Moomaw of Lynchburg).

In the small, inner room Miss Dupuy wrote that she "met Dr. Hibbs", the director, whom she described as a "be-spectacled and mustached young man who gave me a highly cordial welcome. Answers fell readily from his tongue, and his sales talk was eloquent, so eloquent I enrolled as a student before I left. Later I learned that I was the first enrollee."

"In this humble way," as Miss Catherine Harahan, one of the first college graduates to enroll, wrote in her reminiscences,¹

¹ Mrs. Catherine Harahan Norton, in an article published in the school's first weekly newspaper, *The Atlas*, April 10, 1934.

*An invoice for
some chairs bought to furnish
the three rooms.*

TELEPHONE NUMBER 100

Richmond, Va. 10/3/17-191

Branch of **BROAD STREET AUCTION CO., Inc.**

General Auctioneers

222 E. BROAD STREET

NAME School Social Worker
ADDRESS 1112 Capitol Street
RICHMOND, VA.

207 121

READ AMP. 3rd Floor

7 chairs	7.00
L. O. M.	

“and in these former bedrooms, the Richmond Professional Institute got its start—and begun what some have called that ‘remarkable growth which made it in the mid 1960’s,’ according to statistics collected by the State Council of Higher Education, ‘the largest college or university in the state in respect to the total number of persons enrolled.’”²

Both Miss Harahan and Miss Dupuy recorded that in addition to its “humble origin” this school (which fifty-one years later, when consolidated with the Medical College of Virginia, became Virginia Commonwealth University) met with a good deal of skepticism at first and some downright opposition, especially when it announced it would be located in the downtown section of a city and, also, would make use of city resources in educating students.

The new, and different, school had been incorporated on April 9, 1917, by a board of private citizens.³ This board issued a brief circular announcing it would open the school in March, 1917. However, it was unable to do so by that date because of the lack of an executive officer and the shortage of funds.

In June, 1917, Dr. Henry H. Hibbs was elected director of the proposed school. His salary was set at \$2,000 per year. His first task was to find a place to open the school. By that time the board’s bank balance had shrunk to about \$400.

At the time John Hirschberg was chairman of the Administrative Board of the City of Richmond and in charge of all city buildings. Mrs. Roy K. Flannagan, secretary to the board of directors of the proposed school, knew Mr. Hirschberg and took Dr. Hibbs to see him. Mr. Hirschberg said that the city owned three old residences on Capitol Street opposite the Governor’s Mansion (where the State Library building now stands). He offered rent-free the third floor of one of them, Number 1112, for the new school.

Number 1112 Capitol Street was a beautiful old house with a handsome cast iron side porch, which now is preserved in the Valentine Museum.

As Miss Dupuy’s reminiscences noted earlier, the first and second floors of the building at 1112 Capitol Street, were used by the Richmond Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court. Many of the early students and teachers have spoken of the help and gracious cooperation of Judge J. Hoge Ricks and the court staff in those years.

After available housing was found for the school, the next problem was furniture. F. B. Dunford, treasurer and member of the board of directors, and Dr. Hibbs visited various auction houses on Broad Street to buy second-hand furniture.

Some of the early invoices still exist. One shows that the straight chairs cost \$1 each; an office chair, \$4.75, another chair,

A check paid to an auction house for second-hand furniture.



² By head count, i.e., counting both day and night students.

³ The name used in the charter was “Richmond School of Social Economy, Inc.” In the fall, shortly after the opening date, the name was changed to “Richmond School of Social Work and Public Health.” The name was again changed to Richmond Professional Institute in 1939.

\$2.50, and a typing desk, \$8. The following February, 1918, a half-year after the school opened, a fine second-hand, rolltop desk was purchased for the director for \$25.

The only new furnishings bought were 30 very cheap tablet-arm chairs. Mr. Hirschberg provided one large table from the storeroom of the City of Richmond. (This table still was being used by the Journalism Department as late as 1959).

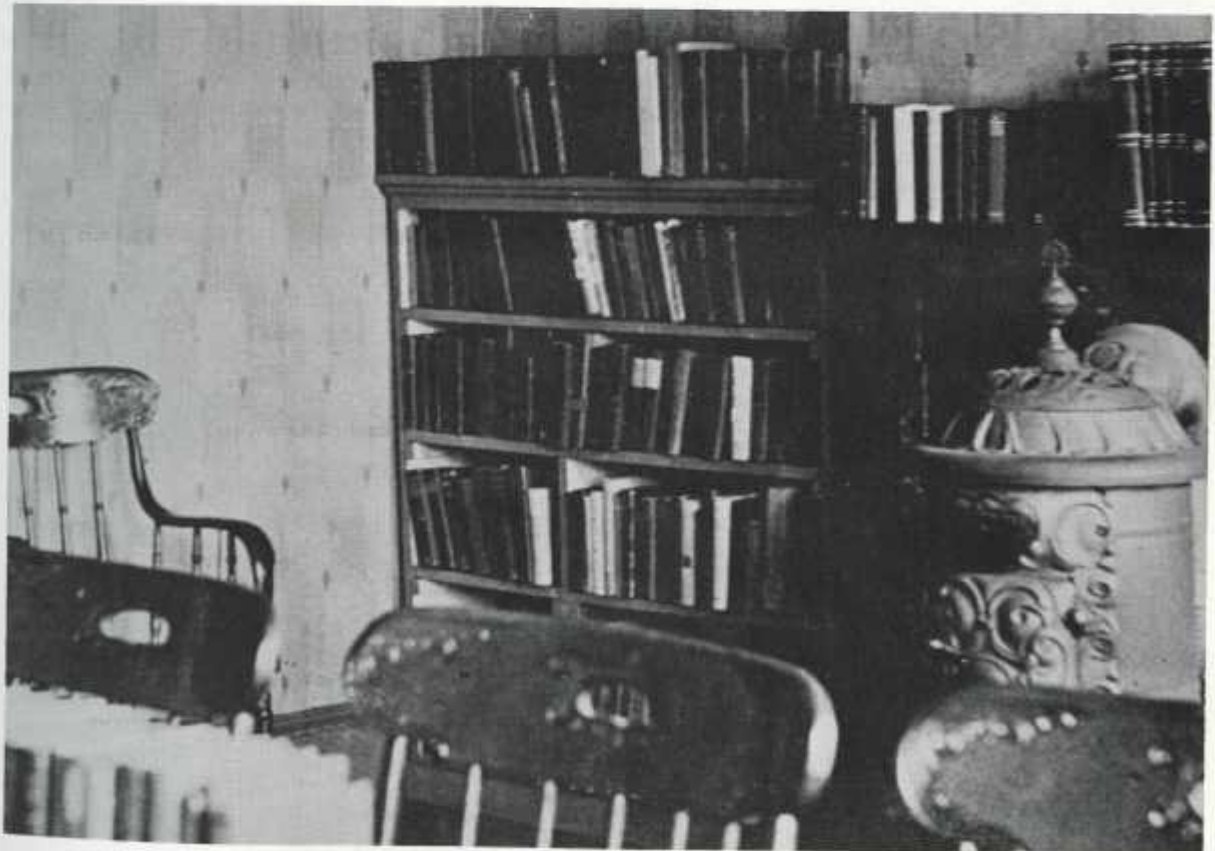
Dr. Hibbs was the only full-time teacher when the school opened in October, 1917. Miss Loomis Logan (later Mrs. Colcord) served on the first faculty as a half-time teacher of social work. In February, 1918, four months after opening, a full-time teacher of public health nursing was added. That position was held by Mrs. Bessie A. Haases for the first half of the semester and by Miss Maude E. Morse for the second half of the semester.

Speaking of the first faculty, Miss Dupuy later qualified somewhat her statement that Dr. Hibbs was at first the only full-time teacher.

"He gave lectures on social theory and the history of social work," she wrote, "when he could get around to it along with the meetings, interviews, fund-raising, buzzing for Miss Brown to take dictation, or sometimes the janitorial work which fell to his one-man administrative lot."

"I have never forgotten Dr. Hibbs' energy," Miss Dupuy continued. "When I returned for my second year he was still

The first library, and one of the three stoves. This picture also shows almost all of the books owned by the school in 1917 when it opened. However, the Virginia State Library was in Capitol Square, just across the street, and it was this library that the students and faculty used primarily.



thinking up expansive plans and pushing the buzzer still faster for his secretary. That was one of the ways in which he gave expression to his energy, foresight and imagination."

All other teachers were part-time lecturers who served without pay. They included Dr. Ennion G. Williams, Commissioner of the State Board of Health; Dr. J. T. Mastin, executive head of the State Board of Charities and Corrections; Dr. Harvey Coghill, Dr. Roy K. Flannagan, Miss Nannie J. Minor, Miss Agnes Randolph and others.

Those part-time lecturers were distinguished community leaders. Dr. Williams, for example, was prominent in the organization of the Virginia State Department of Health, one of the first such departments to be established in the South. Miss Randolph, who lectured on tuberculosis, was a direct descendant of President Thomas Jefferson, and is now buried in the Jefferson family plot at Monticello.

Before the new school actually opened the Reverend J. J. Scherer, Jr., minister of the First English Evangelical Lutheran Church, was elected chairman of the Board of Directors. One of the persons who submitted reminiscences for this book recalls that, in addition to serving as a minister, Dr. Scherer was a board member of numerous religious and social welfare organizations in Virginia. He also was associate or substitute judge of the Richmond Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court, which he had helped to organize in the early 1900's.

About 1918, one of the members of his church gave him an automobile which he drove around the city making his "calls" and frequently offering rides to people he met. A Richmond social worker who submitted some reminiscences for this book wrote that he sometimes accepted Dr. Scherer's invitation to ride but he soon learned not to do so. The trouble, this "reminiscer" wrote, was that "one of Dr. Scherer's greatest skills was in counseling; and in driving around he would frequently meet someone who "vitaly needed counseling" about personal, spiritual, or civic affairs. Such counseling invariably required so much time that "it was much quicker to walk than to ride with Dr. Scherer . . . one of the most gracious, popular and wisest men Richmond ever had."

Dr. Scherer served as chairman of the board of directors (or trustees) until his death in 1956. One of the dormitories of Virginia Commonwealth University (corner of Harrison and Franklin Streets) now bears Dr. Scherer's name.

The school opened on October 11, 1917. Thirty students registered for full-time work during the first year, seven in social work and 23 in public health nursing. Most of the 23 nurses were enrolled during the second semester only. There also were 24 students in the special wartime Red Cross Home Service Institutes which are described in the next chapter.

Miss Dupuy could remember little about the first commencement but others recall that the juvenile court adjourned for the afternoon and allowed its rooms on the first floor to be used for the exercises.

Seated on the ground is Miss Mary Dupuy, the first student to enroll. On the wall: Miss Lou Mayo Brown, the first secretary-registrar. Leaning against the wall: Miss Virginia Pitts of Scottsville, Virginia, a student.



Miss Harahan wrote: "The first class graduated in June, 1918. It included four case workers, 18 public health nurses and 18 Red Cross Home Service workers. The graduates of the first class came from seven states: Virginia, Tennessee, Kentucky, North Carolina, South Carolina, Maryland and West Virginia."

The expenditures for the first academic year, 1917-1918, were \$8,963. Of that \$3,574 was for salaries; \$1,001 for scholarships; \$198 for the library, and the remainder for miscellaneous expenses.

Revenues were: tuition, \$1,133; borrowed money, \$500; donations, \$7,189; other, \$141.95; grand total, \$9,163.95.

The first location of the new school at 1112 Capitol Street, (as well as the second location at 1228 East Broad Street), were very close to the Medical College of Virginia. Why did not the two institutions consolidate then, rather than fifty-one years later when Virginia Commonwealth University was formed (in 1968)?

The answer to this question is that the Medical College in 1917-1919 was a much smaller institution than it later became after Dr. W. T. Sanger became president in 1925. In fact, the Medical College then had only two or three rather small teaching buildings and only one or two nearby teaching hospitals, also both rather small. The Medical College then, too, lacked the state appropriations that came later and had no funds that could be transferred to a new school. At one time the Medical College (through Dean Wortley F. Rudd, of the School of Pharmacy, who was also vice-president of the new school's Board of Directors) offered the use of some of its classrooms for night classes. At that time, however, these were so close to the anatomy laboratories that "the students wouldn't go there." They said "the odors made them sick." In any case, the two institutions of higher education which later became Virginia Commonwealth University in 1968 developed separately for the next fifty years.

Mrs. Emily W. Bennett, a graduate of the first class, 1918. Following graduation Mrs. Bennett became supervisor of midwife education in the State Board of Health. The picture shows her teaching a class of midwives how to wash their hands surgically clean.





Students training for Red Cross "Home Service" in World War I.

How the New School Was Financed in Spite Of World War I

WHEN the new school was established in 1917, the only businessman particularly active on the board of directors was F. B. Dunford, but his interest was in bookkeeping and not in raising money. When the director arrived he asked Miss O. L. Hatcher, a leading member of the board, where money was to come from after the \$400 then on hand was spent. She asked him, with some indignation, if he did not trust the board. The truth was, as Dr. Hibbs stated many years later, he didn't feel fully confident in the ability of the board as then constituted, to raise money since it had so few leading businessmen on it. If the school were to live, he thought, the interest of business leaders was necessary.

There was also the additional problem of the wartime. The school had been organized three months before the United States entered World War I, and it opened in October, 1917, about six months after American participation began. The times made the problem of organization and financing extremely difficult. No new agency could live during a war unless the organizers could clearly show that it contributed to the war effort.

Dr. Hibbs was thirty years old when he was appointed director and was subject to the draft. The United States Secretary of War revealed the interest of the War Department in the new school by assigning him to service in Richmond when his draft call came. This occurred because he was a former student of the Boston School for Social Workers and was deemed qualified to carry out the plans of the American Red Cross for training women to work with the families of soldiers and sailors, Red Cross Home Service workers, as they were called. The Secretary of War also considered a second possibility of war service by the new school.

The newly appointed director had had no experience in public health work, and before coming to Richmond, had met "only one public health nurse in his life." One day after his arrival in Richmond he read a brief newspaper story of the large proportion of doctors in rural communities leaving for military service in World War I and the numbers of rural physicians also

In 1917 when Dr. Hibbs arrived in Richmond, he was given this visitor's card to the University Club. Here he met Wyndham R. Meredith who introduced him to John M. Miller, Jr. "who solved the problem" of how to finance a new college (and later university) in the midst of a world war.



leaving for service in cities. He clipped the article and took it to the office of the State Board of Health and showed it to the Commissioner, Dr. Ennion G. Williams, and his assistant, Dr. Roy K. Flannagan. He asked them if the proposed new school offered short courses of four months to graduate nurses to train them for work in the counties from which the doctors were leaving: would this be regarded as an "essential war service"?

Both gentlemen answered, "Yes!" In fact, both endorsed the idea with genuine enthusiasm and agreed to help carry out such a plan if the necessary money could be raised.

They then were asked if such a slogan as "Training Nurses to Take Doctors' Places" could properly be used in raising money.

Again the answer was "Yes!" Several other prominent physicians also endorsed the use of this slogan.

War-time financial campaigns illustrated a unique handling of the problems of fund raising. At the time Dr. Hibbs lived at the University Club which then was at 827 West Franklin Street (now Founders Hall). Mr. Wyndham R. Meredith, a prominent attorney, was at that time president of the club and when he welcomed the new director as a member, he asked something about his work.

Dr. Hibbs explained to Mr. Meredith what the new school expected to do and some of its problems. For some reason not entirely clear, Mr. Meredith became very much interested and stated that he knew the very man to solve the financial problems.

"If you will meet me tomorrow night," he said, "we will go to this gentleman's home which is nearby on Floyd Avenue."

On their way to the house the next evening, Mr. Meredith explained that his friend was John M. Miller, Jr., a vice president about to be elected president of the First National Bank, the largest in Richmond.

In the men's discussions the purpose of the school was explained to Mr. Miller with emphasis upon the practical way graduates of the departments of social work and public health nursing could promote the health and welfare of the people of Virginia in wartime.

Mr. Miller was very much interested, asked many questions, and considered the matter very thoroughly. At the end of the interview he said that he would accept chairmanship of the Finance Committee and that he would assume entire responsibility for the financial success of the new school. He proposed to appoint T. M. Carrington and I. J. Marcuse as vice chairmen.

Minutes of the Board of Directors show that Mr. Miller and Mr. Carrington attended their first board meeting on December 13, 1917. Later in December of that year they organized and held the first meeting of the Finance Committee.

The methods which Mr. Miller and Mr. Carrington used in raising money for the school were unique and differed radically from the way in which financial campaigns often were conducted. No teams of solicitors were sent to call on prospective contributors in their homes or offices. Instead, invitations signed by Mr. Miller were sent to men of wealth and



JOHN M. MILLER, JR.



This picture played a very important part in the new school's early history. It shows Miss Lila Spivey, a student in public health nursing, working in a county from which most of the doctors left for service in World War I.

influence in the city, inviting them to attend "a meeting of a few people" to be held in the Board of Directors' room at the First National Bank.

At one of these meetings 25 or 30 prominent people were present in addition to Mr. Miller, Dr. Scherer, Mr. Carrington, Mr. Meredith and Dr. Hibbs. Mr. Miller opened the meeting with a short talk on its purpose. He was followed by Dr. Hibbs who made some remarks and then introduced Miss Lila Spivey, a registered nurse and a student at the school. Miss Spivey had worked during the preceding summer as a county nurse in Wythe County, Virginia. Her simple talk (which had been carefully prepared, with Dr. Hibbs' help, and just as carefully rehearsed, together with the appeal of the photographs, which had been enlarged so they could be passed from hand-to-hand), had a marked effect. Everyone present contributed. Two contributions were for \$1,000 each and two for \$500.

At another meeting, in addition to Mr. Miller, Dr. Scherer and Dr. Hibbs, the following persons were present: F. B. Dunford, Dr. Ennion G. Williams, Mrs. B. B. Munford, Bishop D. J.

O'Connell, Wyndham R. Meredith, E. L. Bemiss, Coleman Wortham, T. M. Carrington, E. Strudwick, Thomas L. Moore, W. T. Reade, J. S. Munce, Dr. Roy K. Flannagan, Mrs. Norman Randolph, Morton G. Thalhimer, Dr. H. D. C. Maclachlan, I. J. Marcuse, H. W. Jackson, W. M. Addison, Mrs. F. D. Williams, Waller Holliday, Eppa Hunton III, George Bryan, H. E. Lichford and J. P. Taylor.

Any one who knows the Richmond of that day will note that among the persons attending this meeting were some of the financial "giants" of the Richmond area.

Similar meetings were held from time to time, on to about 1925. Sometimes Mr. Miller invited wealthy persons to see him in his office at the bank where he would retell the story of the plan "to train public health nurses to take doctors' places" in rural communities from which doctors had gone to war; or he would tell "how this new school would train social workers and home service workers" to serve families at home "whose men had joined the army."

Once he invited Miss Grace Arents, an heir of Major Lewis Ginter who built the 901 W. Franklin Street mansion (now the Administration Building), to come to his office. She became interested in the new school and contributed a significant sum toward its future development.

Financial support for the new school during World War I and the post-war years on down to the purchase of 827 W. Franklin Street, depended mainly on Mr. Miller and his associates, and on their unique and highly original methods of raising money. It is also true that these men during World War I and later, made it possible for RPI (and indirectly Virginia Commonwealth University) to develop a campus in the Monroe Park-Franklin Street neighborhood.

In appreciation of the great services of Mr. Miller, Dr. Scherer and Mr. Carrington, an oil portrait of each was authorized. Mr. Carrington and Dr. Scherer permitted theirs to be painted, and the pictures are now in the VCU collection, but Mr. Miller declined to sit. "Leave that 'till I am gone," he said.

The minutes of board meetings show that, during the war and post-war years, Mr. Miller, his committee, and Dr. Hibbs, raised approximately \$73,000 for operating expenses. The War-Work Council of the Y.W.C.A. contributed \$3,000 from its funds. The American Red Cross contributed \$10,000.

So far as the writer knows, the Richmond institution is the only college that can trace its establishment to wartime years.

The Post-War Years

1919-1925

*Search for a Permanent Downtown Location;
1228 East Broad Street and 17 North Fifth Street;
Affiliation with the College of William and Mary Begins;
Recreational Leadership Department Added.*

THE first catalogue, issued before the school had a building or any place to teach, explained that a downtown location was necessary because “the plan of instruction provides that in every department not only lectures, classwork, and laboratory work would be used (as in conventional colleges), but also ‘field work’ and ‘practical’ or ‘clinical’ experience.” Further, it was announced in the first catalogue that there would be on the faculty a number of highly specialized experts who would come directly from their work and teach part-time. Opportunities for students to work part-time in nearby businesses while attending school would also be provided.

In other words, the first catalogue stated that the new school would function not like a conventional college or university, but as a strictly urban educational institution which would not only be located in the middle of a city but which would also make every possible use of the resources of the city in the educational process.

The first catalogue also stated the new school would function in many ways as an “educational pioneer,” “the first of its kind in the South.” Carrying out such a purpose made essential a downtown location, near “the cooperating agencies.” The location on Capitol Street met this requirement. It was “near everything” and offered real advantages. But it soon became clear that the new institution would never amount to much in such cramped quarters.

Enrollment after World War I was encouraged through a special plan. After World War I ended the United States government did not appropriate money to send former soldiers and sailors to college as was done after World War II. But the American Red Cross and the War Work Council of the YWCA

worked out a plan whereby army and navy nurses could attend schools of public health in 1918-1923 and have their expenses financed from money raised just before the war ended in what was known as the "United War Work Campaign." The campaign had been quite successful and when the Armistice came these organizations were left with large sums of money. Some of this money allocated to the Red Cross was used to give maintenance scholarships to nurses who desired to come to Richmond and pursue a four-month course in public health nursing.

The plan was continued for two or three years. Over 100 nurses were trained in this way.

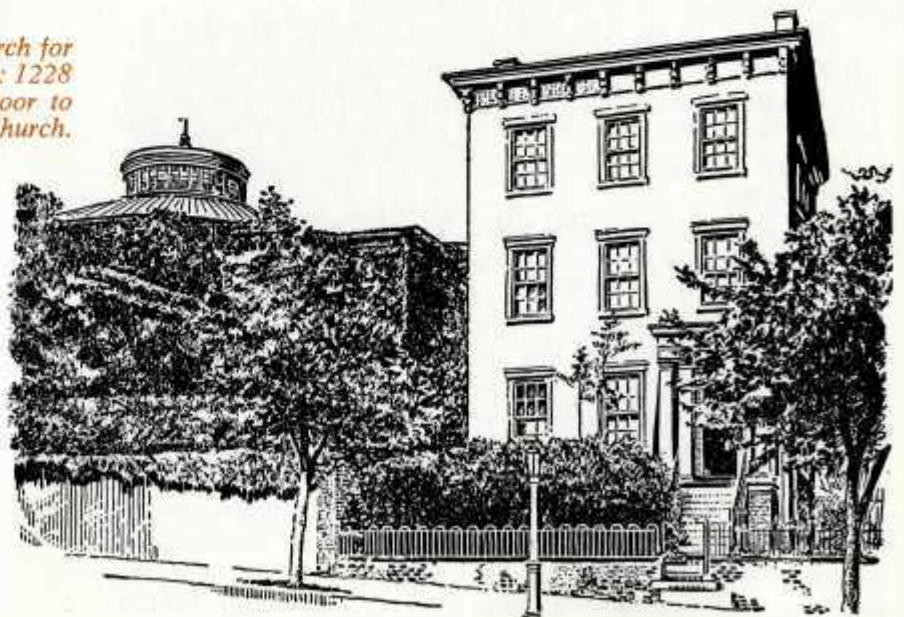
The full-time enrollment was 72 in 1919-20 (the year nurses returned from the war), 36 in 1920-21, 35 in 1921-22, and 41 in 1922-23.

In September, 1919, a Department of Recreation was added to the curriculum. Miss Claire McCarthy, for many years an official of the department of playgrounds of the City of Richmond, was the first student to register for the new course. In her reminiscences she emphasized the advantages of a downtown location and stated that "the recreation and playground course was very practical. I was able to put the first instruction into immediate effect," she said.

"I had every child who came to Seabrooke Playground (where I was assigned for field work) have a bath and inspection and treatment of his hair at the Public Bath House around the corner."

In 1919 the College of William and Mary, which is located at Williamsburg some fifty miles from Richmond, began to offer extension courses in Richmond in the late afternoon and evening hours, the classes meeting in the old John Marshall High School.

The second step in the search for a suitable mid-city location: 1228 East Broad Street, next door to the historic Monumental Church.



In 1920 an affiliation was arranged with the evening extension division. Later this affiliation with William and Mary was broadened to include day work and two or three members of the college faculty at Williamsburg began to offer courses in day school hours in certain academic subjects required in the training of social workers, public health nurses, and recreational leaders. This arrangement also made it possible for students to secure a degree from William and Mary by attending two years in Richmond and two years in Williamsburg.

The affiliation did not affect the independent character of the school or the obligation of the board to provide its entire support. The College of William and Mary assumed obligation only for its extension work, which expenses it paid from student fees.

In the spring of 1919 the vestry of Monumental Church offered the school a "whole building" at 1228 East Broad Street, a three-story residence next door to the church and rent free. The offer was accepted.

Miss Catherine Harahan wrote in her reminiscences: "Anyone who attended school there could never forget it. The building had been renovated; it was clean and neat, but bare. In the basement were two large rooms for the recreational leadership department. On the second and third floors there were classrooms. The small library was on the first floor."

Number 1228 East Broad Street had been built in the era when few houses had indoor bathrooms, and the ones which had these conveniences, often did not locate them in the house itself. Number 1228 was like this. The bathroom was in a separate little addition in the rear, across the porch, "which one had to cross to get there."

Miss Harahan's reminiscences also pointed out with some pride that when she first entered the building she saw "no more stoves." A steam heating plant had been installed. This was the first central heat plant the institution had.

The 1228 location was then rather "slummy". The night students were the first to reject the 1228 East Broad Street area. They said they were afraid to go there. It was too close to the former "red light" district and also only a block, and a short block at that, from "Jail Alley", they complained.

The questions came to be asked: Wouldn't it be better to rent quarters in a better downtown neighborhood? And wouldn't the increased enrollment produce revenue to pay the rent?

In the spring of 1923 another downtown location, an old residence at 17 North Fifth Street, was offered. The rent was \$75 a month and the building was directly across Fifth Street from the YWCA, whose gymnasium and cafeteria could be used. The school moved there in 1923 and stayed two years at its third location. In 1923-24 the full-time enrollment was 49 and in 1924-25, it dropped to 37. There were also several hundred part-time night students.

Miss Lou Mayo Brown was the first secretary.



The Saunders-Willard House, 827 West Franklin Street, in 1925.



The Move to Franklin And Shafer Streets:

1925

Founders Hall, the first Unit of the Permanent Campus is Bought and Paid for by the Private Citizens Board now named the RPI Foundation; Reminiscences of Early Students and Faculty.

THE question of finding a suitable, permanent location concerned officials and friends of the school for many months. Between 1922 and 1925, the minutes of the Board of Directors record many talks with President J. A. C. Chandler about "William and Mary taking over the school entirely."

At a meeting of the Board on June 6, 1924, the chairman of the finance committee, John M. Miller, Jr., gave a report on a conference among Dr. Scherer, Dr. Hibbs, President Chandler and himself. Mr. Miller reported that he had told President Chandler that he felt it was not possible to continue to solicit funds for current expenses year in and year out. For that reason, he said, the school was trying to arrange an amalgamation with some state college which would provide financial support.

President Chandler said that he would recommend to the Board of Visitors of the College of William and Mary the absorption of the school, with the understanding that William and Mary would maintain the institution permanently in Richmond "provided the school acquired a permanent building in a good central neighborhood."

More specifically, it was recommended that the Board of Directors acquire as a "permanent home of the school" the former Saunders-Willard house, on the southeast corner of Franklin and Shafer Streets.

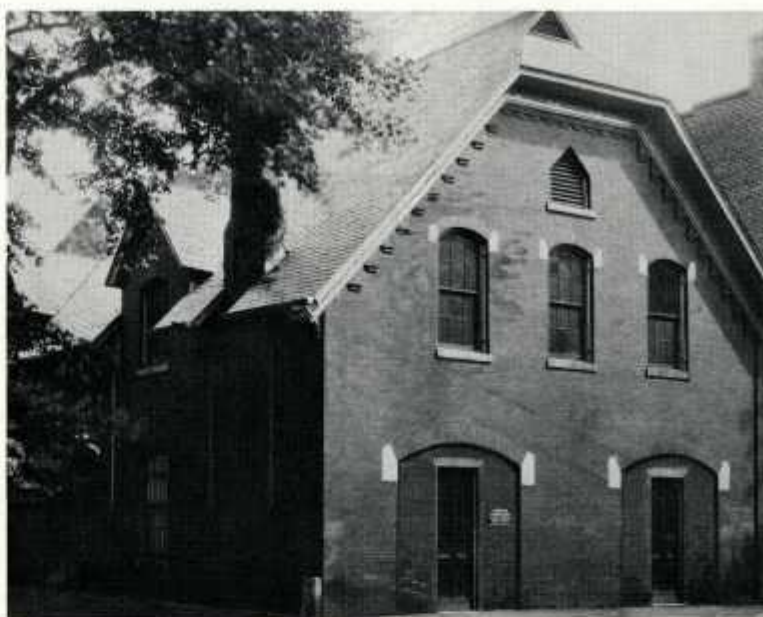
This property consisted of a large three-story mansion numbered 827 West Franklin Street, a small vacant lot on the East side and a stable at the rear numbered 221 Shafer Street.

Number 827 had been built in the 1880's by Mr. and Mrs. E. A. Saunders. Their initials "E.A.S." still are etched in the glass



PRESIDENT J. A. C. CHANDLER
of the
College of William and Mary.

The Saunders-Willard stable in the rear of 827 West Franklin Street. This was converted into a small gymnasium and assembly hall, after the second or "loft" floor was removed.



transom over the main entrance door. The building has a mansard roof and in general appearance suggests the home which Scarlett O'Hara and Rhett Butler of "Gone with the Wind" built in Atlanta about the same time.

After the Saunders family moved from the house, Number 827 was rented to the Honorable Joseph E. Willard when he served as lieutenant-governor of Virginia in 1902-06 and while he served on the State Corporation Commission in 1906-1910. Mr. Willard continued to live at the residence until about 1915, although after 1913 he was abroad much of the time as ambassador to Spain.

After Mr. Willard, Number 827 was occupied by the University Club of Richmond on a rental basis.

In 1925 Franklin Street was chiefly residential, even though it was on the edge of the central section of Richmond and within walking distance of the business district. Many of the old houses still were occupied by members of the original families which built them. However, the Franklin-Shafer Street-Monroe Park neighborhood was changing.

There was some objection to the site as a permanent location for the school. One view held that it was too near the business section and "never could be made to look like a campus." This objection to location in the central part of the city, where no conventional campus was possible, continued through the years.

Two answers primarily were made to this question in 1925. First, it was felt that a good central location would result in an increase in the number of tuition-paying students and would also make possible higher tuition charges. The second answer was that the nature and purpose of the institution was the important factor. The kind of educational work contemplated for the new

institution needed a central city location. A suburb or small town, while fine for a liberal arts college, was not a satisfactory setting for the kind of institution of higher education which emphasized the professions, vocations, occupations or "extension work".

Another factor in 1925 favoring the Franklin Street area was that the Richmond Public Library at 901 West Franklin was then located across from Shafer Street and available to students.

In any case, the kind of neighborhood selected for the permanent location of the new institution was of great importance in the subsequent history of Richmond Professional Institute and of the emerging University. In ways, it is true that the selection of this permanent location for the new type of institution was one of the wisest decisions the founders made.

The purchase price of the Franklin and Shafer Street property was \$73,000, and \$23,000 was needed for repairs, making a total of nearly \$100,000. At a meeting on March 27, 1925, plans were made for a financial campaign to raise this money. T. M. Carrington was appointed chairman, assisted by ten team captains, each of whom had ten team solicitors, in the manner of community fund campaigns.

Meetings of the campaign workers were held every other day in the dining room at the Chamber of Commerce. Usually a graduate of the school spoke of practical aspects of the work. Three of those speakers were Miss Lila Spivey, Miss Lillian Gorton and Mrs. Bessie L. Woolfolk. A young graduate of the social work department, Miss Jean Smith, greatly impressed the campaign workers by describing the humorous side of social welfare work as well as the serious aspects.

The campaign was highly successful. At the meeting of the board on March 19, 1926, the treasurer reported that a total of \$103,925 had been pledged, almost \$4,000 more than the goal.

Possession of 827 West Franklin Street (now Founders Hall) and of the brick stable in the rear was obtained on June 1, 1925. Both buildings were remodeled during the summer at a cost of about \$16,000. The old kitchen in the main house was made into a classroom, and a new kitchen and dining room were installed in the basement.

The director's office and the general office were located in the large sun parlor which then stood on the Shafer Street side of the building. A second classroom was arranged in the rear parlor on the west side, and a third classroom on the second floor rear, above the old kitchen.

The other parlor was used for the library. The second and third floors were used as a dormitory for women.

The old stable in the rear of Number 827 was an unusually fine brick structure of one and one-half stories with a gable roof and dormer windows. There were two rooms on the first floor, the front one for the carriages and buggies and the rear one for the horse stalls. The upper floor contained coachman's quarters in the rear and a hay loft in front. In remodeling this stable all

The Ford, Model T.



the partitions and the entire upper floor were removed and the whole stable made into one large room about 40 x 60 feet. A new maple floor was laid. This made a small gymnasium, with a high ceiling.

Earlier students recall that when the school moved to the Franklin and Shafer Street neighborhood it was not very many years after the coming of automobiles. In 1925 there still were many signs of the horse and buggy era. Charles E. Bolling, Richmond City Engineer, who lived on the corner of Grace and Shafer Streets, was seen almost daily driving a horse and buggy to make his rounds. Most of the houses on Franklin Street still had stone carriage blocks on the front sidewalks. Several of the old stables in the neighborhood were still being used for horses. The stable in the rear of 827 had been used to house saddle horses until a short time before the school bought it. A large metal sign, "Livery Stable" was found in the building when it was remodeled.

In the first year at Franklin and Shafer Streets, when all activities were carried on in the 827 property, the full-time enrollment was 52. There were also 393 part-time students, mostly at night.

The full-time faculty in the first years at Franklin and Shafer Streets consisted of the director and three full-time teachers; one each for social work, public health nursing and recreational leadership. There also were four part-time teachers from William and Mary and five other part-time lecturers in day classes, in addition to the part-time teachers of night classes.

While the classrooms were at 827 West Franklin Street, two other full-time teachers, who served the Institute for many years, joined the faculty: Miss Theresa Pollak, Professor of Art, and Miss Aileen Shane, Professor of Social Work. In September, 1930, Dr. Margaret L. Johnson began her long service on the faculty as teacher and later as Dean of Students.

In September, 1926, Mrs. Virgie A. Chalkley began her service as hostess of Founders Hall. Mrs. Chalkley, as many students recall, also had charge of dances. Many have mentioned her skill, and at least one escort, James B. Bullard, who later married Miss Kathleen Mansfield of the class of 1941, remarked 20 years later how much Mrs. Chalkley impressed him in his "courting days."¹

Some Reminiscences of Early Students and Faculty

A recollection on the lighter side is this: In the rear of Founders Hall there was a porch with a tin roof, on top of which years before someone had laid a wood slat walkway. Ivy had entwined all through this until it was a solid mass of vegetation about a foot thick. That had to be removed in order to paint and

¹ The Governor of Virginia appointed Mrs. Bullard a member of RPI's Board of Visitors in 1962. When Virginia Commonwealth University was formed, she was also appointed a member of that Board of Visitors.

Mrs. Chalkley (center) at the head of a receiving line with Mr. Chalkley and Mrs. Hibbs.





A TEA IN FOUNDERS HALL WHEN IT WAS THE ONLY BUILDING

Mrs. Virgie A. Chalkley, (seated), one of the most important administrative officers in the early years. She came in 1926, one year after Founders Hall opened, and served until 1952. Her title was hostess but her duties in many respects were like that of what is now called a director of student activities. The silver tea set shown in the picture, a gift of students, was a part of Mrs. Chalkley's social accessories "or properties" used first in Founders Hall, when it was the only building. At this time, the students were all women.

repair the roof and, when the task was being done, an opossum was found by a workman, who caught it and took it home to eat.

When the school was at its earlier locations on Capitol Street, East Broad and Fifth Street, there were part-time janitors only. These men worked at night or in early mornings and, therefore, seldom were seen. A full-time position was authorized when the move was made to 827 West Franklin. The man employed was a nice looking person, and his manners were perfect. He had only one fault; he never did much work. No one remembers his name.

The old Saunders-Willard mansion, or Founders Hall as everyone called it after 1925, had a very ornate entrance porch. A drawing once was made of the steps to the porch by Charles W. Smith, a well known Virginia artist who taught art at RPI for a year or two before becoming professor of art at the University of Virginia.

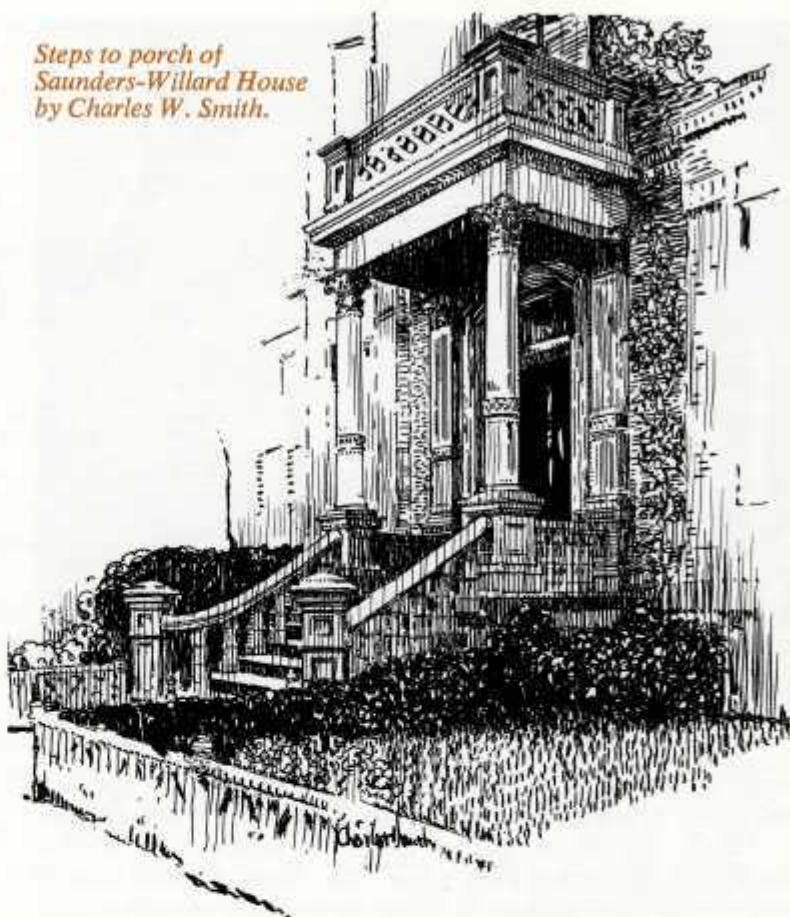
One student in her reminiscences told of an incident involving these steps and the janitor mentioned earlier: One cold winter day ice formed on the steps, and the janitor failed to remove the "slick" before it hardened. He didn't throw any ashes on the steps either. Finally, one of the faculty members arrived and observed the hazard. This teacher was one who, at every opportunity, was inclined to weave into lectures something about mental health (or the lack of it). When she saw the "slick steps", she took action long remembered by other teachers and students.

Having difficulty in removing the ice, the teacher finally got a heavy, sharp pointed, pick-ax, but even with this she succeeded

The Saunders-Willard House (now Founders Hall) in the 1870's, a "Saturday Evening Post" illustration, by Matt Clark, to illustrate Clifford Dowdey's serial "Sing for a Penny."



*Steps to porch of
Saunders-Willard House
by Charles W. Smith.*



*Details of columns at front of
Founders Hall. Photograph from
the November 1972, "VCU Mag-
azine," by Robert Hart.*



only in digging a large number of pits, or holes, in the sandstone steps, which are there until this day.

These same steps figured in RPI's history as the place where the young women students (who lived in Founders Hall for so many generations) said "good-night" to their dates, in such a way as to cause numerous—and persistent—complaints from the heads of old Richmond families who, at that time, lived on Franklin Street in large numbers.

While the Franklin-Shafer Streets-Monroe Park location was sufficiently near the center of the city for an urban institution of higher education, the reminiscences of early students show that some of their field work was outside the city, as it was then.

For example, Miss Virginia Pitts, (Mrs. Shirley Brooks Parler) recalls: "Claire McCarthy and I used to go to the Methodist Orphanage to teach the children games. We rode to the end of the car line and they would meet us there in an antique horse-drawn carriage and we would ride the rest of the way in it . . ."

There was also trouble over field work in rural health. To meet this need, the administration in 1926 or 1927, purchased a second-hand Ford car, Model T., for the use of students in field work in Hanover County.

Miss Byrd McGavock wrote about this car: "This was before the days of closed sedans and the only protection riders had from the weather were old, worn-out curtains. The students, especially those on the back seat, certainly took a lot of punishment, but we went out every day, regardless of weather or roads.

"In bad weather we had to bear in mind that the rural people we were calling on resented our driving on the roads while they were wet because then most roads were dirt and the car wheels made many new ruts, or made the existing ruts and mud holes deeper. In those days we were told when we enrolled that we would be given a practical education—and we got it."

There is now in the rear lobby of Founders Hall a mural painting by Professor Maurice Bonds in which this Model T Ford appears.

Miss McGavock, who lived in Founders Hall when it was the only building, also wrote years later that because of economy in janitor service, "Just about everybody then helped care for the furnace." Miss Rena Johnson, the first cook, verified this in her reminiscences published in the *Proscript* (college weekly) about 1950.

Mrs. Catherine Pettis Cassell, a maid in Founders Hall for many years, recorded in her reminiscences another arrangement at Founders Hall: "In the early days there were no ash trays in the reception rooms, for no one was allowed to smoke."

Mrs. Chalkley, and many others in their reminiscences, recalled that in 1925, when the move was made to Franklin and Shafer Streets, girls wore bloomers and middy blouses for athletics and physical education. A circular issued in 1927 reproduced a picture of girls wearing dark bloomers and white blouses for playing tennis.

A few years later styles began to change, and a new type of gymnasium suit was adopted. A very attractive young woman, Miss Joe Nye of Bristol, who was a student from 1925 to 1928, came to the administrative office and submitted the new costumes for approval. She referred to the part of the costume that replaced the bloomers as "little pants." One of the secretaries years later was reported to have remarked that this was the first time she had heard the word "pants" used in referring to a part of a woman's costume.

The new suits (with the "little pants") won favorable comments. "They certainly were noticed," Mrs. Chalkley remembered, "and we soon after began to receive complaints that the members of a men's club, (which after a fire at its regular location was temporarily occupying 824 West Franklin Street across the street), were sitting on the front porch for the express purpose of looking at our tennis players wearing the new suits."

"A midcity college cannot have the privacy of a rural campus, though it sometimes needs it," said Mrs. Chalkley, who at this time was in charge of women-student activities.

Another story about life in the early days in a midcity college is attributed to Mrs. Chalkley, although she may have

"Bloomer Girls"





The "Little Pants" which began to appear as younger students enrolled.

never told it: "At first the women students who enrolled were older and were not annoyed much by prowlers but when younger women began to come, prowlers and peepers were a source of complaint. To stop this, a tall chainlink fence was built around the side and in the rear of Founders Hall, the only dormitory at that time. This did not stop the prowlers and peepers. Then a circular iron device like a fan, with sharpened spikes, was added. This did not help either, at least not much.

"Finally, a policeman asked the hostess one night to come with him and look up at the windows and notice that none of the shades were pulled down.

"She did so and said: 'I have been neglecting an important item in the education of girls attending a midcity, urban college like ours.'"

Mrs. Chalkley retired in the early 1950's and a few years later passed away. The iron, fan-like device, with its sharpened spikes still may be seen in the rear of the dormitory over which she presided with so much tact and good judgment for such a long time.

In 1929 a Cotillion Club was organized. A student from Maryland was president in 1931. She made a very vigorous effort to restrict membership in the club to persons who were invited by the club itself; in other words, she wished to make membership in the club be by invitation only. The administration positively vetoed this and there was considerable ill-feeling for some time. On the other hand, most of the students agreed that it was in the best interest of a downtown college in Richmond to open all purely social clubs to any qualified person who wished to join. This action prevented the establishment of social fraternities or sororities until about 1963 when five social fraternities were organized.

The first music teacher remembered by any of the early students who submitted reminiscences for this history was Mrs. Helen Fill Rhodes, who came in 1930. Mrs. Rhodes taught voice and is said to have served as a sort of welcoming committee, standing at the front door and greeting students on opening day and there finding out "who wished to take music lessons."

Another story about music that "went the rounds" in the early days was this one: The name "Conservatory of Music" was commonly used to refer to musical studies, as then was the practice of many professional schools in this field. Once RPI used this name in a small brochure.

Soon afterwards a man accompanied by his lawyer called at the office and stated that he had used this name several years ago for "his music teaching" and demanded that RPI pay him for its "misappropriating the name 'conservatory'" for its use when, actually, the name belonged to him. In these days, before State aid began, everything at RPI was on a small scale. When asked to name the amount of the damage done to him by this "appropriation of his name", he answered that he would accept \$25 as full settlement for past damages. This was paid by RPI's treasurer and the name "Conservatory of Music" never was used again.



How the Franklin and Shafer Street neighborhood looked when the institute moved there: corner of Franklin and Shafer Street in 1925.



*The first art studio;
from a drawing by
Miss Theresa Pollak,
the first art teacher.*

The Institute Begins to Grow

*Expansion of the Curriculum;
New Schools and Departments Added
Between 1927 and World War II;
Name Changed to Richmond Professional Institute, 1939*

As was pointed out in Chapter I, at first there were only two schools, Social Work and Public Health Nursing. To these a department of Recreational Leadership was added in 1919 and a night college (or extension division) in 1920. The first important step in the expansion of the curriculum into an entirely new field was the opening in 1928 of the School of Art in a studio constructed in the loft of an old stable.

School of Art Organized

The establishment of the School of Art resulted partly from the encouragement provided by an initial gift of \$1,000 by Colonel A. A. Anderson, a wealthy New York artist; partly from gifts from Richmond citizens of \$24,000; partly from a grant of financial assistance made by the State Department of Education; and partly from the willingness of the first teacher, Miss Theresa Pollak, to work in those early years without a salary guarantee.

About 1928, as stated in another chapter, the board of private citizens, later named the RPI Foundation, bought for \$7,500 another old stable, in the rear of the Saunders-Willard stable on Shafer Street. This stable was well built of brick and concrete and was fireproof. Shortly before this purchase, the wealthy New York artist, Colonel A. A. Anderson, came to Richmond and purchased about 900 acres of land where the Byrd Airport later was built. Learning of Colonel Anderson's interest in art schools, and of his desire to exhibit his own paintings to the people of Virginia, Dr. Hibbs called on him and told him of the purchase of the two old stables and of plans to convert the hay loft on the second floor of one of them into an art studio.

The Colonel was very interested. On his own initiative he offered to contribute \$1,000.¹ Private citizens of Richmond then made additional gifts. The remodeling of the stable was completed in the summer of 1928. The rooms opened to classes in September.

Miss Pollak, the first art teacher, was born in Richmond and received in 1921 the B. S. degree from Westhampton College. She studied art in the New York Art Students' League from 1920-23 and from 1925-26, and then returned to her home in Richmond and proposed to begin teaching drawing and painting on a per hour basis. She was not to receive a regular salary, but to be paid out of fees collected, as was said to have been a common practice at that time in schools of music.

The Richmond *Times-Dispatch*, on March 27, 1949, quoted Miss Pollak as saying that Dr. Hibbs told her frankly that financial conditions at first were such that there could be no art school unless somebody went out and found students.

"Consequently," Miss Pollak said, "until the first session opened in the fall, I was on the telephone every day contacting everyone I knew who evinced the slightest interest in art."

There were eight full-time students the first year and 25 or 30 part-time students. Miss Pollak recalls that the first art student to enroll was Miss Lorimer Fauntleroy.

A few years after the establishment of the art school Dr. G. H. VanOot, director of the Bureau of Trade and Industrial Education of the State Board of Education, ruled that the School of Art was eligible for financial help from state and federal vocational funds, a decision which was an important factor in putting the art school on a sound basis. This ruling made it possible for the School of Art to expand by adding the following departments:

- 1930-36: Department of Commercial Art.
- 1934-36: Department of Interior Decoration, later called the Department of Interior Design.
- 1936: Department of Costume Design and Fashion. Mrs. Hazel Mundy was the first teacher in this department. She served in this capacity and as department head until her retirement about 1965.
- 1947: Department of Art Education. Mrs. Ruth Hibbs Hyland served as head of this department until about 1968, when she retired.²

An early catalogue printed about 1935 contained the following statement about the methods of instruction used in the art school:

¹ This was in 1928. Later, the Colonel contributed an additional \$10,000 to remodel another stable (the Ginter stable) and convert it to an art gallery.

² *VCU Today*, September 20, 1972, announced that "a scholarship fund has been established in honor of Ruth Hibbs Hyland, 20-year member of the University's art education faculty." Initial donors were Mrs. Hyland's husband, F. T. Hyland, and her sister, Mrs. Ferguson Barnes.

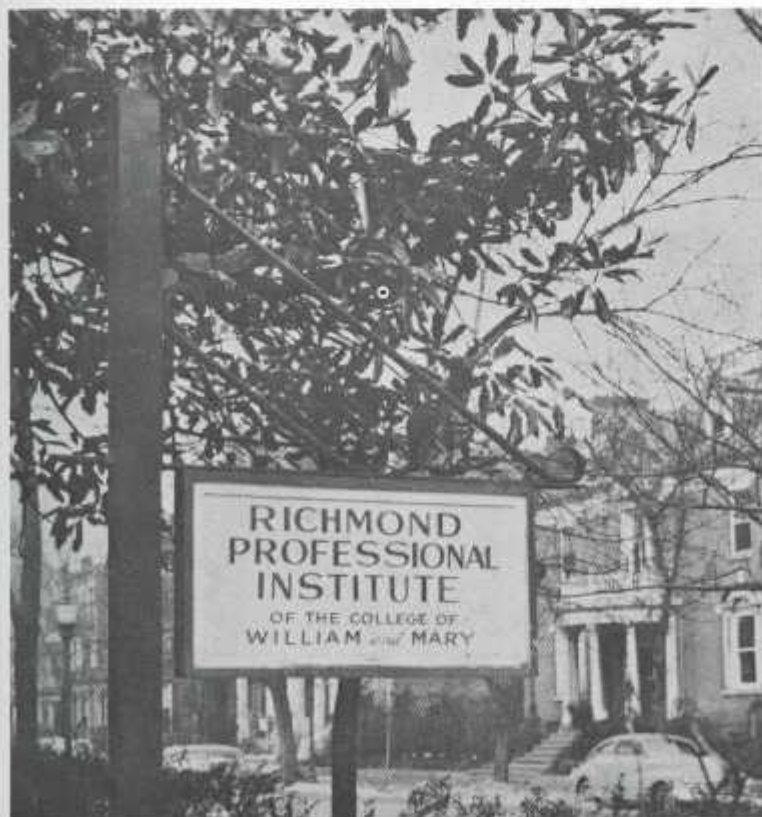
"The School of Art is a distinctly professional institution in which the students devote the greater part of each day to work in the studio with living models. By its location on a college campus, with its dormitories, gymnasium, library, and social halls, and its varied faculty, the school provides both the advantages of the methods of instruction heretofore employed only in the better metropolitan art schools with the advantages of 'college life.'"

"It is one of the few institutions in the South offering highly technical instruction in art in a college atmosphere and environment. Living models both nude and draped are provided in all studio classes when necessary."

Around the 1940's and 1950's the School of Art began acquiring some recognition nationwide. A brochure issued by RPI about 1940 carried two photographs which had been published by *Life* magazine. The school has been for years one of the largest at RPI and its successor, Virginia Commonwealth University. Herbert J. Burgart, who became director about 1966-67 was quoted by the *Richmond Times-Dispatch* on March 23, 1969, as saying that his information was that it is the "largest professional art school in the country, with 1,200 full-time undergraduate students and 75 graduate students."

Writing in a brochure, *An Art School, Some Reminiscences*, Miss Pollak stated: "It is the character of life in the midst of

RPI soon learned that placing signs on residential buildings is detracting and "tends to run down the neighborhood." Signs in the front yards were found to be better.





An RPI art class (from "Life" magazine).

THE SCHOOL OF ART ...

Is a distinctly professional institution. It is one of the few art schools in the country in which highly technical instruction is given in a college atmosphere and environment. It is one of the really important art schools and its work has attracted nationwide attention on several occasions. The picture above was printed in *Life* magazine. The smaller picture on the right shows a student reading the copy of *Life*, which devoted two pages to RPI.



A PAGE FROM A BROCHURE ISSUED ABOUT 1940

the city which to my mind is so largely responsible for the spirit of aliveness that seems to qualify the student of the School of Art of the Richmond Professional Institute."

Miss Pollak retired in 1970 after more than 40 years of service. At this time the newspapers announced the faculty had increased to 72 full-time and 24 part-time teachers.

The new and attractive art school building completed in 1970 is named for that first teacher in the department, Miss Pollak.

School of Distributive Education Organized

After the organization of the School of Art, the next important step in expanding the curricula of the Institute was the establishment of a School of Distributive Education, or School of Store Service Education as it was first called. The story of this important event can be told in fewer words because neither the Institute nor the teachers had to make any salary sacrifice to get this program going. The new subject was, in fact, added to the offerings purely at the suggestion of the State Board of Education, through Dr. B. H. VanOot, head of the Bureau of Trade and Industrial Education. Dr. VanOot not only asked that the new school be established (Dr. Hibbs years later admitted that he had never heard of "distributive education" until Dr. VanOot came to see him), but offered to provide funds to pay two-thirds of the teachers' salaries.

Miss Louise Bernard was the organizer and first director of this new school. The first circular announcing the opening stated:

New Art School Building named for Miss Theresa Pollak; 1970.





Miss Theresa Pollak is shown with Dr. Henry H. Hibbs at a dinner honoring her on the occasion of her retirement.

“Through the aid of funds appropriated by the U. S. Congress under the George-Dean National Vocational Act, there will open on September 22, 1937, a school for the training of men and women for executive positions in department stores, merchantile establishments, advertising and other distributive trades; and also for the training of teachers of retailing and salesmanship in schools, colleges and evening schools, staff training in stores, etc.”

The catalogue explained that Richmond was selected by the Virginia State Board of Education as the location for the new school “because of the existence in Richmond of large progressive department stores and other retail organizations which can be used as laboratories for the students and faculty.”

Miss Bernard continued as full-time director for several years and then on a part-time basis until 1957. After her appointment as State Supervisor of Distributive Education she moved her office to the Capitol. She died in 1969.

The School of Social Work Now An Exclusively Graduate School

When the School of Social Work was established in 1917, the requirements for admission were maturity of age and aptitude for working with people, like most other schools of social work at the time. Some 20 years later the schools of Social Work in the United States, acting through their national association, decided to require college graduation for admission. In Richmond this change occurred about 1939-40.

The School of Social Work has grown greatly since it was

started in 1917 and is now the largest, as well as the oldest, graduate school at the Academic Division of Virginia Commonwealth University. For many years Dr. George T. Kalif was its director until he was succeeded in 1965 by Dr. Richard Lodge. Dr. Lodge resigned in 1972 and was succeeded by Dean Elaine Z. Rothenberg.

Early in its history the school made curriculum changes to attract younger students. Friends often have wondered how the Institute could expand when it received so little support from tax funds. There were several reasons, and the school did not have much choice. It had to expand—or die. Put another way, the Institute had to attract younger students to balance its budget.

It will be recalled that the two original schools were those of social work and public health nursing, both of which were fields of study for mature students at the graduate-professional level. Courses for older, graduate students are more expensive to offer. Such students usually are beyond the age when parents are accustomed to paying college costs. That is to say, the Institute in its early years was not organized like an ordinary college or university, with many freshmen and sophomores and fewer upper classmen. It was organized in exactly the opposite way. There were many graduate and mature students but few younger students.

To solve its financial difficulties, it soon was apparent that the institution must reorganize itself in order to attract younger students which it needed because its legal owner, the Commonwealth of Virginia, was not then able or willing to meet the added costs of graduate work.

The first program of study that attracted younger students was Recreational Leadership which was first offered when the school was at 1228 E. Broad Street, next door to the historic Monumental Church and where the church yard was used by the department. The next department of instruction attractive to younger students of college age was the School of Art. The next was the School of Distribution, which was opened in 1937.

Some success followed this new approach. For example, when training for recreational workers was added to the social work program, the enrollment in that new program, which was open to young freshmen and sophomores, almost immediately became twice as large as it had been in the original social work program. The fees collected from, or on behalf of, those younger students also totaled more than twice as much.

Miss Claire McCarthy, in the reminiscences she wrote before her death, pointed out that when this recreation program was opened it was just after World War I, when there was a large enrollment of graduate nurses returning from war service. She recalled this anecdote on age differences:

“Virginia Pitts, a classmate who is now Mrs. Shirley Brooks Parler, of South Carolina, was about 20 years old when she entered the new course. She was pretty and popular. She and I were sitting in a classroom one day when the door opened and a

line of typical students, including several World War I nurses, entered. They were all much older than we, and were adorned with the first bobbed hair I had ever seen. Virginia whispered to me, 'My goodness, Claire, do we have to look like that to succeed here?'

At that time the school's quarters were so small and inadequate that there was some question whether older and younger students could be accommodated together. However, there were no difficulties, particularly after the move was made to Franklin and Shafer Streets.

When the School of Social Work was made a strictly graduate school, the undergraduate courses in sociology, social science and recreational leadership were placed in a new division of instruction called the School of Applied Social Science.

The word "applied" was added because in the early days of Richmond Professional Institute it seemed necessary to emphasize that this was a professional institute, and to counteract the uneasiness of some liberal arts colleges which feared that "RPI was duplicating their work." However, as in engineering schools, many of the courses offered did not differ from the science and social science courses offered in conventional colleges.

In the early 1930's, courses in chemistry and biology were first offered. Dr. Doris Fales was the first chairman of the department. She came in 1932 and continued until 1952 when Dr. Mary E. Kapp became chairman of the Chemistry Department.

Name Changes to Richmond Professional Institute

In 1939 the name "Richmond Division of the College of William and Mary" was changed to "Richmond Professional Institute of the College of William and Mary". On April 13 of that year a group of William and Mary alumni sent President John Stewart Bryan of William and Mary a clipping from a North Carolina newspaper which referred to students of the Richmond Division of the College of William and Mary as "coeds of the College of William and Mary." This complaint contained the suggestion that no more students or teachers be called William and Mary students or teachers unless they attended or taught in Williamsburg.

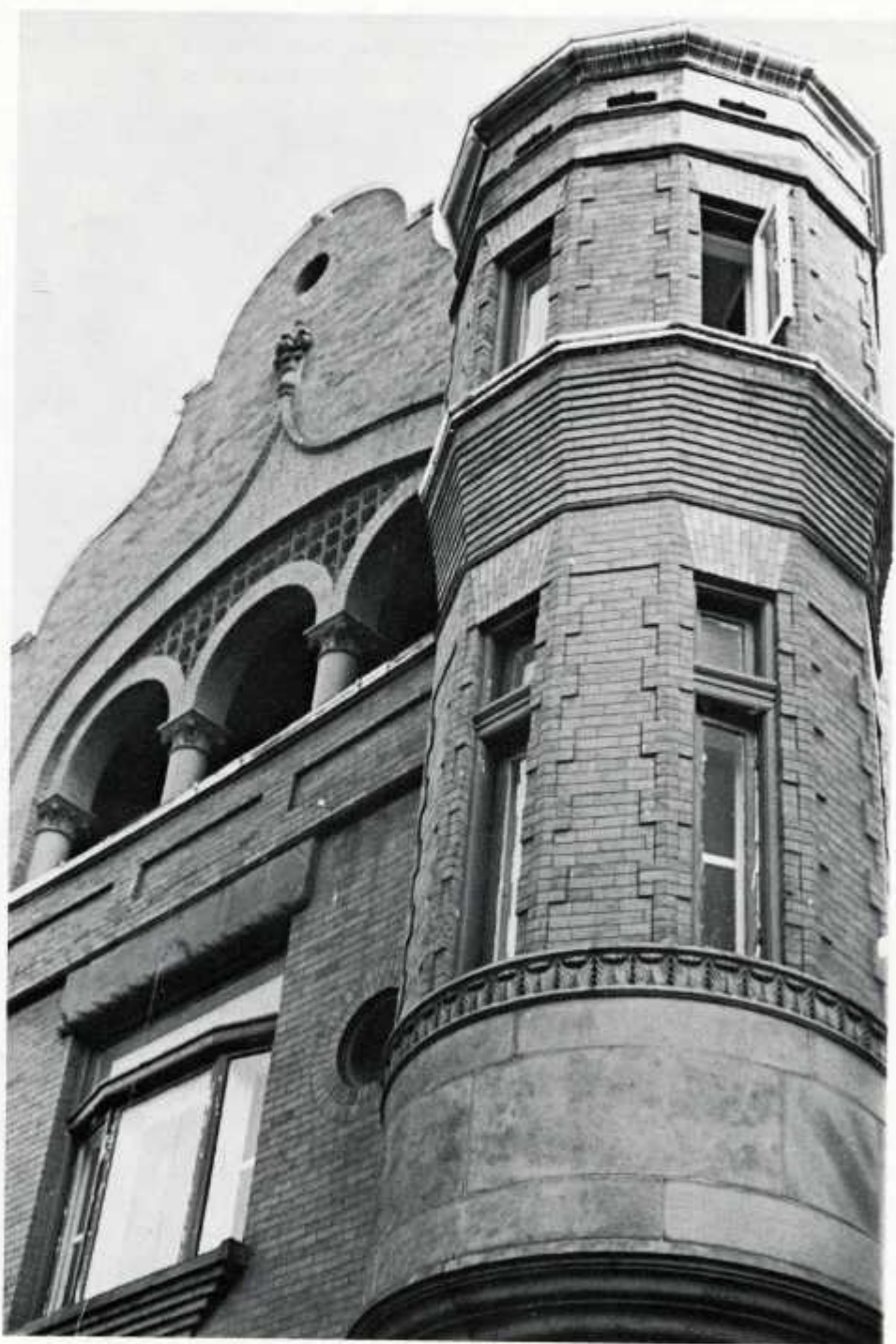
"I agree," President Bryan stated, "with what has been said several times, that in actual fact the institution in Richmond is a different college from the one in Williamsburg and I think that it should have a separate name sufficiently distinctive to cause the public and the newspapers to stop assuming that the students of the Richmond Division of the College of William and Mary are William and Mary students. Since it is a specialized institution whose reputation depends not on work in arts and sciences but, mainly, on education of the occupation, technological or professional type, why not call it the 'Richmond Professional Institute', with the abbreviated name of RPI?" The name change

was then made more or less by executive order.

The change of name stimulated RPI's growth. This and the addition of the new schools and departments described in this chapter made necessary a much larger physical plant than RPI had in the 1930's and 1940's. All efforts to secure a state appropriation for this failed. How the problem was solved is reserved for the next chapter, which describes the thoroughly practical and almost unique organization which the RPI Foundation worked out.

Observers who are in a position to see the entire roof of the Ginter Mansion have remarked that it is "large," "unique," "historic" and "worthy of preservation."





*Millhiser House,
now a
Morrish-inspired
student center,
from the
November
1972, "VCU
Magazine,"
Robert Hart,
photographer.*

The RPI Foundation Works Out a Unique Plan For Expanding the Campus

How the Citizen's Board (now the RPI Foundation) from 1930 to about World War II Worked out an Ingenious Plan for Expanding the Physical Plant without State Aid; Ginter Mansion, Ritter-Hickok House, Allison House, Millhiser House, and other Notable Buildings Bought and Paid For.

As already explained, one of the reasons for selecting the 827 West Franklin Street location in 1924-25 was the fact that the Richmond Public Library was then located directly across Shafer Street where the students could use it both as a source of books and as a place to study. However, in 1928-29 the Public Library announced that it intended to move, and the City of Richmond announced that the building would be sold. This move would make an already inadequate school plant even more inadequate,¹ if not impossible.

The only remedy for the situation seemed to be to somehow secure the Public Library property or "Major Ginter's Mansion,"² as it was sometimes called. This property consisted of the mansion itself (now the Administration Building) and the substantial stable which later became the A. A. Anderson Gallery of Art, which still later, after several additions, became the A. A. Anderson Building. Major Ginter, whose title came from his service in the Confederate army, had constructed the two buildings in 1888 at a cost of \$250,000.

Faced with the reality of no state or city aid, the administra-

¹ A little additional space had been obtained in 1927 by purchasing for \$7,500 an old two-story garage in the rear of the stable, at 221 Shafer Street.

² Paul S. Dulaney, *The Architecture of Historic Richmond*, The University Press of Virginia, 1968: "This solid and imposing mansion of brick and brownstone is probably the best one surviving from its period."

The trees on Franklin Street in 1925 when the first residence in the area was bought and preserved as an example of Post (Civil) War Architecture.



tion felt that there seemed nothing to do except to call again upon the group of private citizens who in 1925 had raised the money to buy and pay for the Saunders-Willard House (Founders Hall).

In 1929 the treasurer had announced that the pledges obtained in the 1925 campaign had been paid, that the property was free of debt and that William and Mary should be given a deed to it and somehow, thereafter, cause the state to assume all further responsibility, as provided in the original agreement. This was good news, but it was offset by the announcement that the Public Library, which the students had been using "as if they owned it," was moving away.

Neither the institution nor the College of William and Mary had the resources to meet such a crisis. The private citizens' board or foundation saw how serious the situation was and wanted to help. The trouble was that this group had promised, when it conducted the \$105,000 campaign, that it would not solicit gifts again, at least in the near future. However, the group still held a clear title to the 827 West Franklin Street property, which gave it some bank credit, or so it was hoped.

The City of Richmond³ offered to sell the Ginter property

The first step in expanding the physical plant: the Ginter Mansion acquired.

The Ginter Mansion: now the Administration Building.

³ The City of Richmond bought the property on April 14, 1924, for about \$125,000.



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securing a loan would be to take out (October 18, 1932) an insurance policy for \$45,000 on the life of the chief administrative officer, Dr. Hibbs.

4. A final factor in establishing the basis for bank credit and for providing funds to repay the loan would be the assurance given and arrangements made as to revenues from rents.

The rental plan was to use all of 827 West Franklin Street as a dormitory and to apply these rents to financing the purchase of the Ginter property. It was also decided to rent all the third floor and attic rooms in the Ginter house to older students and to members of the faculty to help pay off the loans. This plan of enlarging the campus and expanding the physical plant was deemed to be a good one, capable of serving the institution for many years, until the State became interested in urban colleges and universities and was willing to help them.

The plan had one disadvantage. The teaching departments did not immediately obtain all the additional space acquired by the purchase of the Ginter mansion, because all the third floor had to be temporarily rented to older students and to faculty, in order to provide revenues to pay off the mortgages. The *Proscript*, December 2, 1966, quoted Professor and Mrs. Raymond Hodges, who came to RPI in 1940, as saying that they lived on the third floor of the Ginter mansion when their son Barry was one year old.

However, the teaching departments did get more additional space several years later, after all the mortgage notes were paid in full, when the whole building was converted to teaching and administration.

In 1938, James A. Allison, Jr. offered to sell the handsome and very large mansion which his father had built in 1890 at 908-910 West Franklin Street, and which was located directly

*The Allison House,
908-910 West Franklin Street.*



across the street from the Ginter Mansion. Terms of the offer were \$1,500 down and the same amount per year for 29 years. The sale was to be to the private corporation (now the RPI Foundation). No bank loans were required in this instance since Mr. Allison offered to carry the promissory notes himself.

The proposal was accepted. To produce funds necessary to make the annual payments, arrangements were made to use the first two floors of the rear wing and the entire third floor (which has a separate entrance and stairs) as a women's dormitory. Room rents were set so as to produce the \$1,500 per year required to meet the payments.

At first the front and main part of the house, with separate entrance and stairway, and with four large reception rooms, five bedrooms and four baths, was assigned as the official residence of the chief administrative officer, whose first title was dean, and so the mansion was called the Dean's House. Later still it was called the Provost's House and, in the latter part of Dr. George J. Oliver's term (after RPI was separated from the College of William and Mary), it was called the President's House.

The original plan for financing the purchase, as already stated, was to pay for the house in 29 years. However, after several years the revenues of the private corporation increased, and all the notes were paid off at one time to save interest. The dormitory then was closed and all these rooms were used by the Department of Dramatic Art. In this acquisition of the Allison property, RPI obtained one of the finest buildings in the neighborhood by what may be called real estate management.

The Ritter-Hickok House, a notable addition to the RPI campus, was purchased in 1939 and was thoroughly reconditioned by the WPA. Because of the Depression, the price was very low: \$17,500. An illustrated booklet issued in 1944 de-



The Ritter-Hickok House.

scribed the house, and said it was "built in 1855, enlarged about 1900, and restored in 1940," after it was acquired by the Institute. The house still has an attractive lawn, although the original spacious grounds in the midst of which it stood during the days when it was an outstanding antebellum mansion have since disappeared. Its outhouses, kitchens and smokehouses—used during the Civil War as prisons for spies, if a war-time issue of the *New York Herald* is to be believed—also are gone, but the house itself still shows the good taste, both of the "before-the-war" builder and of the owner who enlarged and "improved it in the Gay Nineties."

In the 1930's, 1940's, and 1950's, the Institute bought many other residences and converted them to dormitories to house women students. After 1949, when the number of men enrolled increased greatly, some of the same kind of buildings were bought and converted to men's dormitories.

The campus was extended to Park Avenue in 1940 when the RPI Foundation began to buy property there in the rear of some of the Franklin Street holdings.

The following table lists all the property purchased from 1938 to 1942, with the prices paid and appraised values in 1944:

		<u>Price Paid</u>	<u>Appraised Value in 1944</u>
1938	908 West Franklin	\$ 25,000	\$ 35,000
	813 West Franklin and garage in rear of 816 Park	10,000	15,000
	815 West Franklin	3,500	6,600
1939	819 West Franklin	15,000	20,000
	821 West Franklin	17,500	27,500
1940	816 Park	13,500	17,500
	818 Park	6,250	14,000
	218 Shafer	4,000	10,000
1941	814 Park	7,500	15,000
	900 Park	8,000	18,000
1942	216 Shafer	4,750	10,000
	Total	<u>\$115,000</u>	<u>\$288,600</u>

The beginning of the West Franklin Street historic district; now the historic area of Virginia Commonwealth University academic campus, from the November 1972, "VCU Magazine," Robert Hart, photographer.



Thus, in Depression years, between 1938 and 1942, the Foundation acquired land and buildings for the Institute which more than doubled in value after the Depression ended. They are much more valuable today, of course. The purchases of the above real estate, as previously pointed out, were not paid for by the State, although ultimately the State received a deed to all of it. The purchases were made by the private corporation, with its board of private citizens, the RPI Foundation.

Under such circumstances the terms and conditions of each sale had to be so the income from the property, plus income of the Foundation from other sources, could complete all mortgage payments in a comparatively short time. A "short time"—usu-



Paul S. Dulaney, in his "Architecture of Historical Richmond" wrote that this "imposing mansion" is probably the best one surviving from its period.

Three WPA projects on Shafer Street.



ally ten years—was specified because interest payments on each transaction had to be kept to a minimum. There could not be long term bond issues as a financing measure.

The rules of purchase meant hard bargains had to be driven. A discussion of the purchase of 819 West Franklin Street in 1939 is a good illustration of such bargaining.

A boarding house operator "at the beach", it was said, had bought this property and borrowed a large sum (some said over \$50,000) from a bank to finance the deal. The Depression came and the bank had to foreclose. The trust officer of the bank was positive that normally \$50,000 was the true value and was visibly, and greatly, distressed that RPI's offer was so much less. In reply he was told that the main source of money to pay for the property which the Foundation had was the rents that could

be collected from it and that this must determine what could be offered. Finally the deal went through for \$15,000. The notes were paid when due from income from rents, student activity-building fund fees and revenues accruing to the private corporation.

Negotiations for the purchase of the Ritter-Hickok House at 821 West Franklin Street were another example of how Foundation arrangements determined how much it could pay for real estate during the great Depression.

This historic old house was first offered by one agent for what he said was the ridiculously low price of \$25,000. He was told there were no state funds with which to pay for the property, but that the private citizens' Foundation had authorized the purchase of nearby property, if the price were low enough to be financed by the board's income, especially income from dormitory rents. "Would he ask the owners if \$15,000 would be an acceptable offer?" The agent couldn't or wouldn't try to understand this method of appraising real estate and refused to transmit the offer to the heirs. This happened several times and he still refused because he said "the place was worth much more." This was admitted but that fact did not affect the board's ability to pay, or to liquidate the notes from the rents.

Finally, another agent came in and said that "a relative of the late owner had told him that the heirs in Baltimore would sell for \$17,500." This offer was accepted and the Federal WPA

*TWO MORE FINE OLD
FRANKLIN STREET
RESIDENCES WHICH
RPI BOUGHT AND
PRESERVED.*

*The Meyers-Anderson House, at
913 West Franklin Street.*



remodeled the building, adding several dormitory rooms by finishing the attic. The charges for rent were set so as to pay all costs, including the mortgage notes.

Having bought several of the fine old residences on Franklin Street, the administrative officers began to think of continuing this kind of expansion in the effort to preserve a section of old Franklin Street as a sort of historical monument.

As far back as 1928, the school printed these statements about Central Richmond and Franklin Street: "Franklin Street has been described by many distinguished visitors . . . Thackeray . . . the Prince of Wales . . . Dickens . . . Mencken . . . all speak with feeling of the peculiar charm of old Franklin Street." It was one of the South's great "after the [Civil] War streets," and 827 was, in its day, one of its finest houses.

Some years later, an artist for the *Saturday Evening Post* visited Richmond and made a drawing showing how the Saunders-Willard House (now Founders Hall) probably looked just after Richmond was recovering from the Civil War. The artist took the liberty of including as background the fine old porch of the Allison House on the left of his picture instead of at Number 908-10, where it actually is located.

In the 1970's, three blocks of Franklin Street from Monroe Park to Ryland Street were placed on the Virginia Landmarks Register and the National Register of Historic Places.



The A. D. Williams House on the corner of Franklin Street, Laurel Street and Monroe Park; first house bought with state contributions (one-half paid by the state, one-half paid by the RPI Foundation).



Franklin Street as seen from a window of the Ginter Mansion. A painting by Theresa Pollak which illustrates one of the reasons why the 800 and 900 blocks on Franklin Street ought to be preserved as a "Virginia Landmark" or "Historic Place."

The Lean Years

*What a Governor and a Senator Said;
Progress Made Despite Problems;
An Endorsement from a High Place;
Some Things RPI Learned
About Operating Urban Colleges
in the Years When the State
Gave it Little or No Support.*

THE success of the 1925 campaign to raise \$100,000 to provide the school with a "permanent home" and to induce the College of William and Mary to "take over the school and to maintain it permanently in Richmond" was a long step forward. Everybody was gratified and happy at these achievements, and most people thought that the future was now assured. However, things did not work out quite that way.

State Senator Blake Newton, former president of the State Board of Education, remarked long afterwards: "When the school became a part of the College of William and Mary in 1925, the General Assembly made no provision for its support, and it had the unenviable distinction of being, for 15 years, one of the few state-supported colleges in the United States which operated entirely without state support."¹

This was literally true. From 1925 to 1940, no state-support at all was given and from 1940 to 1952, there was very little. A report of the Southern Association of Colleges stated: "There is probably not another publicly-operated institution of higher education which has been forced to operate under such a handicap for so long a time."

Many have asked the question: "Why was Virginia slow to support its largest truly urban institution of higher education?" The difficulty in obtaining appropriations from the State from 1925 to about 1952 arose mainly from two beliefs that were then widely held in Virginia.

¹ Richmond *News Leader*, June 6, 1955. Many years later, after the State had begun to support the Institute generously, Governor Mills E. Godwin, Jr., quoted this statement, or made a statement to similar effect, in an address dedicating Rhoads Hall, May 14, 1968.

The first belief was that the State "had too many colleges already," and that the greatest care should be exercised to see no more were organized. One governor, in discussing the future of the Richmond Professional Institute with a newspaper reporter, said: "I am definitely opposed to the creation of any additional state institutions . . . The cause of higher education in Virginia can be better served by fewer rather than more institutions."

The second difficulty was that almost all leaders in Virginia at that time appeared to believe that the only proper location for a college or university was in a small town or rural community where room for a park-like campus was available. From 1925 until long after World War II, nobody (except students) seemed to believe in the value of an urban-located or urban-oriented college or university.

Another question in those years was: "Why did not William and Mary give more financial support?" The answer was that William and Mary in those days did not have the money to give. The college was itself receiving inadequate state appropriations.

While William and Mary could not give its branches in Norfolk and Richmond much financial assistance, it rendered great help for many years, allowing its ancient name to be used in the name of each school. William and Mary also allowed its membership and accreditation in the Southern Association of Colleges to apply to the Richmond Institute until independent accreditation was earned in 1953. The connection further lent to the Richmond Professional Institute of the College of William and Mary (to use the full name at that time) an unusual amount of prestige.

It should be remembered, furthermore, that Dr. J.A.C. Chandler, who was president of the College of William and Mary at the time, did provide \$10,000 to aid in the purchase of the Ginter property at 901 West Franklin Street. Dr. Chandler had been superintendent of the Richmond Public Schools before he went to William and Mary. He knew quite well that all the state-supported colleges, universities, professional, vocational or teacher training institutions (with the single exception of the Medical College of Virginia) were located in small towns or suburban or rural areas. The Commonwealth of Virginia did not then give financial support to any general college or university in either of the two largest cities, Richmond and Norfolk.

Many people have asked how the Richmond Professional Institute was able to keep alive during the long period of little or no state support. Surprisingly, the budget not only was balanced each year, but the Institute also made notable advances in many respects. These lean years were not a time of frustration or complaint. Rather they were a time of planning, research, and of developing new methods of doing things by ingenuity and persistent problem-solving. In fact, the period of those two and one-half decades, was a time of great progress, indeed remark-

able progress, along many lines. Four examples are cited:

1. *Campus Extended*—During these “lean years” the campus was extended from one piece of real estate to about 30 city lots with almost as many usable buildings. This was achieved without creating any long-term debt and without issuing bonds, as many colleges did at the time.

2. *Enrollment Increased*—During the years in which the State seemed firm in the belief that there was no place in Virginia for an urban college or university, the enrollment increased from 51 full-time students in the fall of 1925 to 451 in the fall of 1940, and to 1,107 in 1952. Moreover, figures published by the U. S. Office of Education on December 8, 1947, show that the Institute’s growth during the period raised its rank from the bottom of the list of about 40 Virginia colleges and universities in 1925 to the sixth or seventh place in 1947.

3. *Full Accreditation Earned*—It was also during this period of poverty that the midcity, professional institute in Richmond organized itself so effectively that in 1953 it became fully accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges, in its own name and on its own merits. Heretofore, it had been accredited as a part of the College of William and Mary. The “full accreditation” did not mention William and Mary.

4. *Curriculum Expanded*—The majority of the professional and semi-professional schools at the Institute were organized during the time in which the State gave no support or very little. It was in what the writer has been calling “the lean years,” from about 1925 to 1952, that the curriculum was expanded from the two original schools to well over a dozen distinct, professional and semi-professional schools, or divisions of instruction. Moreover, none of these duplicated the work of other colleges in Virginia. All were different, and some were the first of their kind to be offered in the South.

Because of the pressing (and depressing) financial necessities, the school’s administrator traveled a good deal during those years to find and study other schools in other cities which had demonstrated ability to operate without state or city aid. He also studied catalogues of independent professional and vocational schools that operated in this way.

The administrator never believed there was much future for such schools and still had faith that the Commonwealth of Virginia would finally come around to making appropriations to help Virginia students obtain an education in a midtown urban college or university. He, nevertheless, picked up in this research and traveling many ideas and suggestions that helped the Institute survive until the State realized the need for it.

The “traveling” which the administrator did “in these lean years” always served several purposes. The first was to interview prospective teachers, and these were hard to find in view of the lack of money with which to pay adequate salaries. The second purpose was to study curricula, methods of teaching, and subjects taught in other professional, semi-professional, technologi-

cal and vocational schools. The third aim was to study physical plants of universities and colleges located between the central business section of a city and a changing residential area. A fourth goal was to see what such colleges were doing about old residences, apartment houses and other buildings near them. The fifth was to study how to take full advantage of any other features of a downtown location which might help. Finally, calling on prospective students was not neglected—especially out-of-state students who paid the highest fees, and thus contributed more to balancing the budget.

Did all these efforts succeed? In 1939-41, Dean George A. Works of the University of Chicago made a survey of the College of William and Mary and its branches. He called attention to many things at the Richmond Professional Institute which were lacking and then pointed out "the devotion and hard work" that had been put into its organization, "hard pressed financially" as it was. His report concluded that by 1940 the Richmond Professional Institute had *succeeded in "locating" educational opportunities that were genuine and needed, and which the people of Virginia "should be willing to support."*

An editorial in the *Richmond Times-Dispatch* of May 7, 1948, in discussing the same question, concluded that it is "impressive that RPI had directed its work into channels not adequately exploited prior to its development." A report of the Southern Association of Colleges, about 1953, said that the fact that RPI was "willing to be different" explained why it "has been able to survive and grow" in spite of its lack of financial support from the state. Thus, to survive it had to be different and not duplicate the work of other colleges.

On one occasion the school departed from the principle of non-duplication. Results were not satisfactory.

A new program added after "William and Mary took over" in 1925 was a four-year B. S. degree program in which the freshmen and sophomore years were offered "in the Richmond Division and the junior and senior years on the main campus of William and Mary at Williamsburg." The catalogue stated that the classes "will duplicate those offered on the main campus at Williamsburg" so that freshmen "desiring to enter William and Mary may enter either in Williamsburg or Richmond."

This offer fell flat. The program did not attract anything like the number of students expected. This was due, of course, to the fact that there was no need for it at the time. Numerous liberal arts colleges in the state, including the University of Richmond, offered all the work of this kind that was then needed.

Consequently, the program was emphasized less and less until 1938, when all mention of it was dropped from the catalogue.

The failure of this program taught the administration a valuable lesson. The way to build up an institution, if it has limited resources, is not to duplicate the same courses in the same

way as offered by other institutions and fight to "get a share" of the students. Rather, as RPI learned in its research and experimentation from 1917 to 1952, only institutions with abundant resources can afford to duplicate. Those institutions with limited means must find useful fields of study not offered elsewhere in the area.

In those years of no state support, when the young school was on a "do-or-die" basis, some other things were learned which were of great benefit to the administration of a college in an urban setting. Six are listed.

1. *The advantages of a mid-city location are real.*

Such location makes it possible to secure the services of highly qualified teachers on a part-time basis for certain advanced and specialized subjects, just as schools of medicine have done for years. This approach not only saves money, but more importantly, it also builds the morale of advanced students who are quick to recognize the advantages of studying under teachers working daily in their fields.

The number of those specialized teachers at RPI increased from about a dozen in 1917-25 to over 50 in 1942.

2. *Remodeled Buildings Can Be Used.*

RPI suffered greatly during early years from the fact that it had no new buildings and had to do all work in old, remodeled, and "added to" residences. Nevertheless, it learned during this trying period that a reasonable number of old buildings can be economically and efficiently used by an urban school. RPI also learned that many former residences, apartment houses, and other buildings which are to be found near most downtown colleges, can be used to advantage to house students, provide offices and some times even teaching space.

3. *More Efficient Use Can Be Made of a Physical Plant.*

In 1952, RPI first told the governor and the advisory committee on the state budget that, because of its midcity location and methods of organization, the Richmond Professional Institute could in some respects operate more economically and more efficiently than conventional colleges or universities. The administration stated that, if the State would change its policy and assist financially with salaries and new buildings, RPI could more quickly expand its enrollment than other state-supported institutions. About ten years later this forecast was proved to be true by surveys made by the State Council of Higher Education. For example, the Council in 1964 published a report on classroom use which stated that RPI "showed far and away the highest average number of periods each week in which its classrooms were used . . . 33.4 periods per week" in comparison with "an average of 18.9 periods per week" in all state-supported colleges, and 17.0 periods per week in the country as a whole."

4. *Uneconomic Classes Can Be Eliminated.*

In this period of hardship and neglect, the Institute worked out a method of operation which eliminated the necessity for small uneconomic classes. It thus learned how to avoid one of the most serious causes of deficits. In 1948 an editorial in the *Richmond Times-Dispatch* (December 9) described a survey of "uneconomic courses" then offered in Virginia colleges and universities. The editorial survey concluded:

"An excellent example of what can be done toward holding down 'uneconomic' classes is seen at the Richmond Professional Institute where classes hardly ever run below 25 students. It is understood that this policy helps to explain the fact that RPI had . . . (avoided) . . . large deficits."

In contrast with the RPI practice this editorial stated that the "Works' Report," made about this time by the University of Chicago, reported that in a typical college in Virginia a total of 242 classes were offered in 1939-40 which had fewer than 11 students, and that 104 of these had fewer than six students.

In its "poverty years" the Richmond Professional Institute had to find a way to "run a college" without such small, uneconomic classes. Such a simple thing as combining day and night classes was one approach. Staying out of fields of study that required small classes because of small demand was another.

5. Need for Scholarships is Not So Great.

In an urban institution, business establishments can be relied on to provide work opportunities for students, thus reducing scholarship needs.

6. Dormitory Problems Often Can Be Solved.

The Institute found that the problem of providing housing for students could be and was solved without State funds. In this the Institute was helped by the fact of location in the midst of a changing neighborhood where there is usually a supply of old former residences, hotels and apartment houses, both large and small, which can be bought (or rented) for reasonable prices and converted to use for housing students. The school did just that.

Despite all these efforts, there simply were some problems that could not be solved without adequate state aid. RPI soon found that the problem of faculty salaries could not be solved without assistance. The construction of new buildings was another example.

From the very start until long after state aid began, higher salaries were paid in all ranks at the state teacher-training colleges than at the Richmond Professional Institute. Even after the State Personnel Office was established and the so-called "uniform scale of salaries for state-supported colleges" in Virginia was established and published, the Richmond faculty was excluded from its benefits. It was well into the 1950's before the Richmond Professional Institute and the Norfolk Division of William and Mary (now Old Dominion University) were put on the same salary scale as other Virginia state-supported colleges. Indeed, this was not fully achieved until after Dr. George J. Oliver became president.

The Great Depression

*The NYA Provides Student Jobs;
The WPA Remodels Buildings;
Valuable Real Estate Acquired at Low Cost.*

AN editorial writer once attributed the success of the Institute in downtown Richmond, in the early decades when it could get no state support, partly to “iron-jawed . . . stubborn optimism that . . . (even) . . . found blessings in the depression.”

The depression, historians say, may be dated either as having begun in 1929 with the stock market crash, or in 1933 with the closing of the banks. Dixon Wecter in *The Age of the Great Depression* wrote of the period from 1933, when Franklin D. Roosevelt became president:

“In that momentous spring of 1933 . . . , the most urgent problem . . . was the stark one of relief. Upwards of 15 million unemployed, and nearly six million persons on state and municipal charity rolls, clamored for attention. In a message to Congress on March 21, the President proposed: (1) direct relief to feed and clothe the destitute; (2) enrollment of workers by the federal government in enterprises which could be swiftly launched . . . ; (3) a program of durable public works; and (4) a program of student work.”

It was item 4, student work, and item 2, “enrollment of workers by the federal government” in jobs “which could be swiftly launched” in which RPI could participate.

The National Youth Administration (NYA) provided jobs for students in various types of part-time work such as clerical and secretarial, assisting faculty members, operating the switchboard, library service, making inventories of public property, and other similar tasks. The Institute selected the students, supervised them, “kept time,” submitted payrolls and, when the federal checks came, its treasurer gave them to the students.

These checks often were returned to the treasurer in payment of tuition or for books and supplies. The NYA, therefore, benefited the students and RPI, too, as well as the faculty, since their salaries in those days were paid largely from tuition fees.

The "blessings" RPI found in NYA, as the newspaper editor said, also arose from the fact that the NYA program kept the enrollment from dropping; the program even increased it a little. There were 250 full-time students in 1933, the year the banks closed, and 398 in the fall of 1939 when World War II began. This increase in students helped RPI to balance its budget at a time when budgets were hard to balance. Prior to the NYA, the Institute had no scholarship funds of any kind and had not been able to afford an effective plan for providing student work.

There was very little "cheating" or "boon-doggling" about the NYA work. The writer can remember only one project that was of no permanent benefit (except to the young workers). That was a "public property inventory" which consisted of pasting small "labels of property ownership" on furniture. This met the requirements of "social usefulness," since it had always been the practice in Washington to "label" public property.

The project also met the requirement of "permanence" since the stickers were varnished over and rarely came off. In fact, when this writer retired in 1959, almost a quarter-century later, and removed his private possessions from his office to make way for his successor, he found one of these stickers still on the back of one of his family pictures.

There was also an artists' project. On this project a mural painting, still on one of the walls of Founders Hall, was painted by Maurice Bonds, a graduate student and now a professor and chairman of the Department of Art History. The painting shows field work by a student in Hanover County. She is standing beside the second-hand Model T Ford car, which Miss McGavock describes in her reminiscences in Chapter Four.

In December 1933, the newspapers announced that the Federal Emergency Relief Administration had offered to finance small building projects on state or city-owned property, provided that most of the work could be done by unemployed persons on relief rolls and the project could be started in a short time. The federal government would pay the workmen, both skilled and unskilled, and also the foremen, timekeepers, and superintendent.

The federal administrative agency was called "WPA", which meant "Works Progress Administration" and later "Work Projects Administration." The WPA, under the plan, would pay for part of the building materials, provided the sponsor paid for the remainder, and would also pay the wages of any necessary workmen who could not meet the requirements of work-relief.

These work programs offered a rare opportunity to a school so much in need of financial assistance. For a willing

"sponsor" the school looked again to those faithful friends of so many years, the group of private citizens, the RPI Foundation. Again the group responded. The Foundation agreed to sponsor and furnish building materials and to pay any workmen not on relief.

RPI immediately filed an application to start an addition in the rear of Founders Hall (the south wing). This was promptly approved. Work started promptly and in a surprisingly short time, the additions shown in the picture were completed.

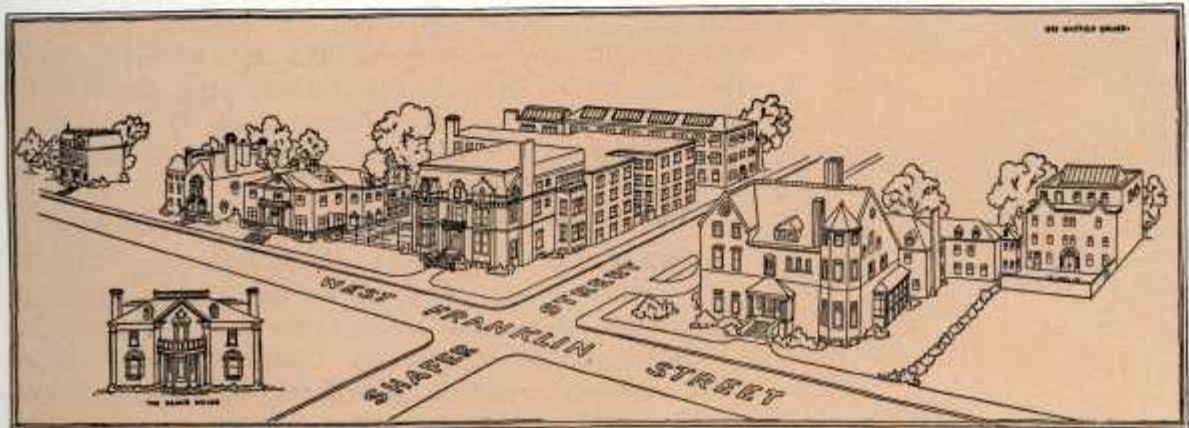
Other WPA projects included the additions to the stable in the rear of 827 West Franklin Street, which are described in Chapter Nine, and the conversion of the attics of buildings at 827, 901, 821, and 910 West Franklin Street into living quarters for students. An addition was made to the Administration Building. A sculpture studio addition was also made to the garage in the rear of 908 West Franklin Street.

The additions to dormitories and the conversion of several former residences to dormitories, increased the dormitory capacity from 68 in the fall of 1933 to 219 in 1943, an increase of over 300 per cent. This improvement program enlarged the struggling institution's ability to serve the State and its students. Furthermore, it greatly increased revenues available to pay expenses of all kinds. In fact, the way in which the WPA and the RPI Foundation worked together to provide permanent revenue-producing assets in the form of dormitory rooms, was in a sense like creating endowment invested in real estate, the net income from which could be used to pay faculty salaries and other operating expenses.

The Auditor of Public Accounts reported that from December 15, 1933, to July 1, 1937, the amount expended on WPA projects at RPI was \$206,593 (of which \$151,675 was federal funds and \$54,918 private funds, i.e., RPI Foundation funds). From July 1, 1937, to the closing of the WPA, the expenditure is estimated as \$291,500, or a total of almost a half-million dollars in the period 1933-42.

All the construction and repair work under WPA had to be

RPI's buildings at the end of the Great Depression (drawing by Whitfield Walker).



carried on during the regular college year at buildings in which classes were meeting or in which students had their dormitory rooms. This was inconvenient at times, both for faculty and students. Many stories were told in those days about this. Among them are some of these recollections:

Mrs. V. A. Chalkley, who was the hostess at Founders Hall for so many years, records that the smudge pots used to prevent freezing of concrete in masonry and to prevent persons from having accidents gave her "the first taste of relief work." She said that these pots made "much RPI food taste oily."

Miss Theresa Pollak wrote in her reminiscences:

"In those early days buildings were constantly being re-modeled. My most vivid building experience was the time I went to one of the studios to teach a night class for which a nude model was to be used. I had just taught in the same studio that morning and found it intact. When I arrived there that night, one complete wall was missing from the room. Needless to say, I didn't use the nude model."

Marion M. Junkin, who taught art at RPI from 1934 to about 1940 or 1942 and for many years thereafter at Washington and Lee University, stated in his reminiscences:

"One time an art student, who was working on a painting of a nude model, stopped at noon to eat lunch and left her painting unprotected. The paint was still wet. During the noon hour, some carpenters began sawing on a board on the floor above. The sawdust fell through the floor, part of which had been removed, and settled on the painting which made the figure of the model look as if it were fully clothed. Mr. Junkin said the faculty went to Dr. Hibbs to protest, but could not protest very vigorously because the incident was so funny."

Miss Byrd P. McGavock, Public Health Nursing, remembers that when she lived in Founders Hall it was impossible to lock the house up at night because additions were continually being built by the WPA workmen.

The writer of this history once said at a convocation: "Carrying on building operations while classes were in session was something that the students of RPI had to put up with for many years. However, it is fair to say that no one was shielded from this. Mrs. Hibbs and I, and our daughters, lived at 910 West Franklin Street while it was being repaired and remodeled. The very day we moved in the plumbing pipes started leaking all over the house, and every bathroom had to be completely rebuilt, an entire new heating plant installed and much other work done, all while we lived there."

Miss Pollak also commented in her reminiscences:

"When teachers complained about hammering," she said, "Dr. Hibbs would say: 'Well, it's just like a major operation—painful while you're going through it but beneficial afterwards.'"

It was the custom during the Great Depression to refer to WPA work-relief programs as forms of "boondoggling." Many people complained that the workers were lazy and worked less

than they should. But those at RPI who worked closely with the WPA, and knew many of the workers personally, did not feel that way. Such reports usually were unjust or greatly exaggerated.

Under the regulations the wages per hour were very high, and the number of hours a man could work per month were very few. From the standpoint of productivity, it would have been a good deal better if workers had been paid lower wages per hour and allowed to work more hours per week. This would have been better for the men and would have reduced the high unit cost of each job; and thus have removed the chief defect in the system, as RPI saw it.

After WPA went out of existence, the labor market changed and labor became very scarce. Then RPI secured from the ranks of the WPA some of the best maintenance workers it ever had. An appreciable number of these were, in 1959, still in the employ of the college, some of them in important maintenance positions.

This discussion of the WPA may be concluded by quoting a paragraph from one of the "chapel talks" which Dr. Hibbs made in 1940:

"I do not know how much you admire the New Deal or President Franklin D. Roosevelt, but I am sure it is a fact that if it had not been for WPA the Richmond Professional Institute, which you are attending, would not have amounted to much. In the days before the legislature made appropriations to RPI the WPA enabled us to survive and even grow a little."

One of the most far-reaching "blessings in Depression" for Richmond Professional Institute was its investment in buildings and land. In the years from about 1935 to 1941-42, when real estate prices were low, the founders had the vision and energy to expand the campus area, even though neither the state nor the city were able to give much help. This was a record that probably could not have been achieved by any college except one located in the downtown section of a city. It is a part of the record of this urban-oriented institution which is fully described in Chapter Six.



Ginter Stable, as the front looked after the first alterations were completed, from a drawing by the artist-donor, Colonel A. A. Anderson, for whom the building was named.

Remodeled Stables In RPI's History

*How RPI, By Remodeling and Enlarging
Some Old Stables,
Was Able to Win Accreditation
From the Southern Association of Colleges;
and also to Build up Its Art School
Until It became One of
the Largest in the Country.*

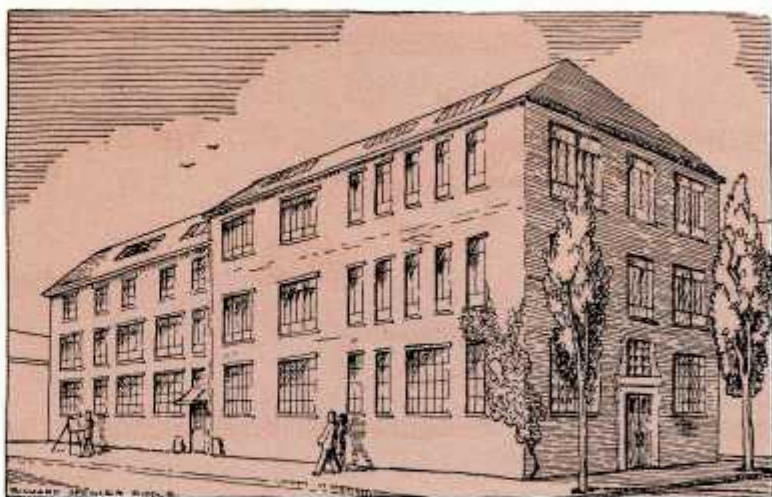
IN 1925, and then in the early 1930's, when the school acquired old mansions on Franklin Street, a stable usually was part of the properties. Some of these stables were quite large, two-story, and well-built, handsome structures. Others were smaller. The latter usually were torn down, but the larger structures were remodeled with some help from the WPA.

As already explained in Chapter Four, the Saunders-Willard House (now Founders Hall) had an especially well-built brick stable which was remodeled for a small gymnasium. About 1930, after all private funds pledged in the 1925 campaign had been paid, it was found that there was a small surplus. This was used to buy another stable building of concrete and brick, directly to the rear of the first stable and with a small horse lot between them. A second major remodeling project then was the construction of an addition to connect the two stables.

The growing school continued to need more space. A third alteration was undertaken during the Depression when WPA assistance could be obtained. Two additional stories were built over the two stables, with the "local" funds to match WPA funds coming from the RPI Foundation organization. These additions produced a three-story building which faced Shafer Street. Practically all of the larger, remodeled structure then was assigned to the School of Art.

Alterations were made to the Ginter stable first to make it an art gallery, then a library and then back to an art gallery.

Third and final alterations to the two stables in the rear of 827 and 821 West Franklin Street. (Drawing by Richard Spencer Biddle.)



At the time the Institute acquired the Ginter Mansion the stable had not been used for several years. The property's renovation was made possible by the gift of \$10,000 from Colonel A. A. Anderson and by an additional \$24,000 given by Richmond citizens through the Foundation.

In converting the stable the only exterior change at first was in the doors. The hay loft, which had a high ceiling, was made into an art gallery. The two first floor rooms were made into a library, at Colonel Anderson's suggestion. At this time the building was named the Anderson Building.

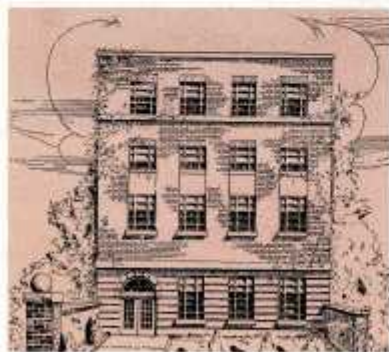
Colonel Anderson, who received the title of "colonel" for service in the U. S. Forest Reserve, in his autobiography, *Experiences and Impressions*, which was published by the Macmillan Company in 1933, tells about the exhibition of his paintings which was held in the Anderson Gallery when it was completed.

In Colonel Anderson's autobiography he mentions that among the visitors to that exhibition was Governor John Garland Polk. This was the first visit of a governor of Virginia to the Institute.

After Colonel Anderson's exhibition, the works of other artists were shown at the gallery up until the time the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts was opened. The room then was used as a combination art-reading room and as an exhibition gallery for some of the school's large collection of prints. A life-size oil painting of Colonel Anderson was hung in the room. Later, as school enrollment increased and more library space was necessary, the former Ginter stable was enlarged a second time. This addition involved one more story in the middle of the building and two stories on the front.

The Southern Association of Colleges continued to press for additional library facilities and space. Once more, additions were made. A five-story bookstack room, with two fireproof stairs, was added to the rear of the building. Another addition

The Anderson Building when completed.



was added to the front. In making these alterations the wooden stairways were replaced by fireproof stairs. Automatic fire alarm and sprinkler systems were also installed.

Those numerous additions and alterations perhaps did not improve the exterior appearance of the old Ginter stable, which had been attractive and quite well designed. It must also be admitted that making so many changes and additions at different times was an expensive way to construct a building. Nevertheless, at the time, it was the only course. The school simply had to get space despite inconvenience, hardship and much "making do" with "what you can get when you can't get what you want."

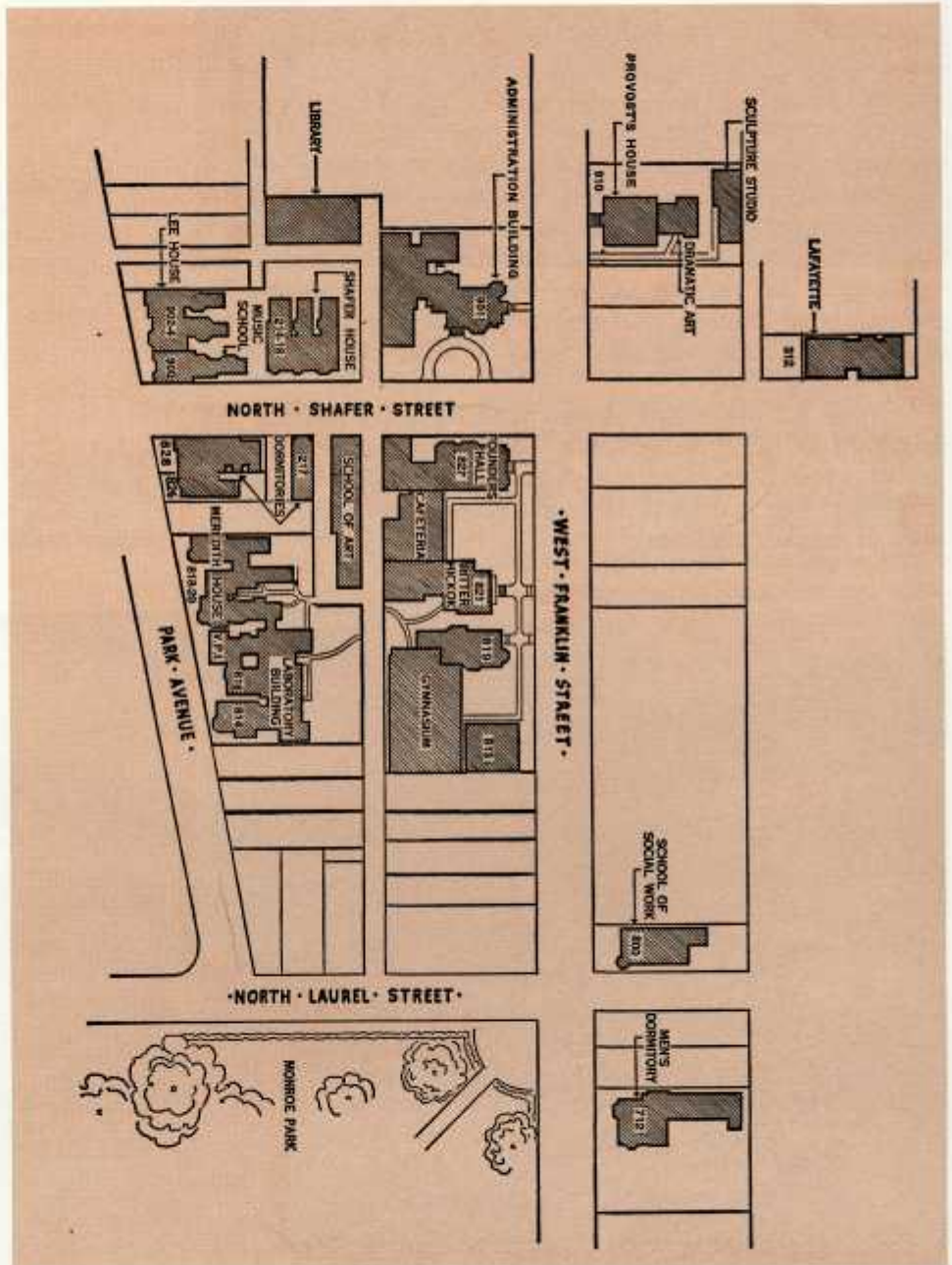
From the early 1930's, when the Richmond Public Library moved to the Franklin Street area, until completion of the James Branch Cabell Library in 1970, the only library facilities on the campus were those provided in the old stable. But these facilities were good, thanks to the numerous additions. The existence of that building and the addition made it possible for generations of students to attend a *fully accredited* institution of higher education, something many of them otherwise could not have done at all.

When the new James Branch Cabell Library building was completed in 1970, the Anderson Building was turned back to the art school. The large, remodeled hay loft again became an art gallery. The portrait of Colonel Anderson was moved downstairs to the building lobby.

Exhibition of painting by A. A. Anderson in the new Art Gallery made from the hay loft of the Ginter Stable.



MAP OF THE GROUNDS AND BUILDINGS OF RPI ABOUT 1952



Twenty-six pieces of real estate shown on this map were former residences and two were former stables in rear of residences. The map also shows the first property bought with state-aid. This was 800 West Franklin Street, which was purchased in 1952.

Questions About the Use of Old Converted Buildings By Urban Colleges And Universities

*In the 1950's and 60's and Later,
RPI Carried on an Almost Continuous Self-Survey
of the Advantages and Disadvantages of the Use
of Old, Converted Buildings; And the Extent
to Which Other Colleges and
Universities Use Them.*

IN 1955 when the Virginia State Capital Outlay Commission, a group of private citizens appointed by the governor, visited the Richmond Institute, they found that its physical plant consisted of 26 buildings. All of them were old, converted structures, although to some of them new additions had been made.

The RPI physical plant in 1955 (before the State began to support urban colleges and universities) included:

Twelve large mansions, to several of which substantial additions had been built in the rear.

Two¹ former stables or garages, both large and substantially built originally; both of which had been enlarged and so remodeled by federal relief agencies that they resembled new buildings somewhat—though each was rather poorly planned.

Three former apartment houses of the three-story type which had been remodeled and converted to dormitories.

Nine smaller three-story residences used as dormitories.

A drawing or map showing the 26 buildings as they were about the time of the Capital Outlay Commission's visit is reproduced on page 72.

¹ Originally there were three stables but in the remodeling two had been combined.

Miss Aileen Shane, who joined the faculty in 1930, when the Institute had no classrooms except former parlors, bedrooms, and kitchens, described in her reminiscences the classroom first assigned to her. It was a former kitchen and butler's pantry from which the partition had been removed to make one room.

She said, "The room was not actually large; it was merely the largest the Institute had at the time."

The first question for any college or university which buys old residences, office buildings, or other structures nearby and converts them to its use, is whether this will make it, or its students, feel inferior; and whether this policy will make the general public discount the institution's worth.

Did the use of such a large proportion of old, converted residences, apartment houses, office buildings and other remodeled structures tend to give the students and faculty of the Richmond Institute a feeling of inferiority? Certainly it gave the general public such a feeling about the Richmond Professional Institute. It also probably made parents think less of RPI than they did of colleges that had new buildings. So did it reduce RPI's prestige among students of other colleges.

The veterans of World War II did not seem to mind the old converted buildings at RPI when they attended in such large numbers.

James L. Dunn, who enrolled as a student at the Institute in the last years of what has been called "The Period of Old, Converted Buildings," also recalled that his early impression was that the administration felt inferior over the fact that the school "had no new buildings as other colleges have." Mr. Dunn said that he sensed this when he attended his first convocation where he heard Dr. Hibbs give a talk with charts and maps about what RPI was certain to be in the future, and, at the same time, tried to keep the students patient with the old and inadequate buildings the school then had.

Bennie L. Dunkum, another student who also attended during this period, said years later that he sensed something like this, too, but that he did not recall that the students who enrolled then felt as unhappy about the building situation as the administration feared.

An editorial in an alumni homecoming issue of the *Proscript*, which was written by a student, stated:

"RPI has a heart of gold . . . but (at present) it is a mass of half-built buildings . . . makeshift living quarters . . . riddled with streets and alleys."

A public opinion survey made by Sidney Hollander Associates of Baltimore reflected some of the same feelings.

"Disappointments connected with attendance at the Richmond Professional Institute . . . focused . . . on buildings, the lack of a campus and unsatisfactory surroundings. Fifty-three percent of the parents and alumni who responded in the survey, listed new buildings as the things the Institute need most."

One of the veterans of World War II who attended when RPI had no new buildings: Bennie L. Dunkum; photo taken in 1971 when he was elected president of the Alumni Association.

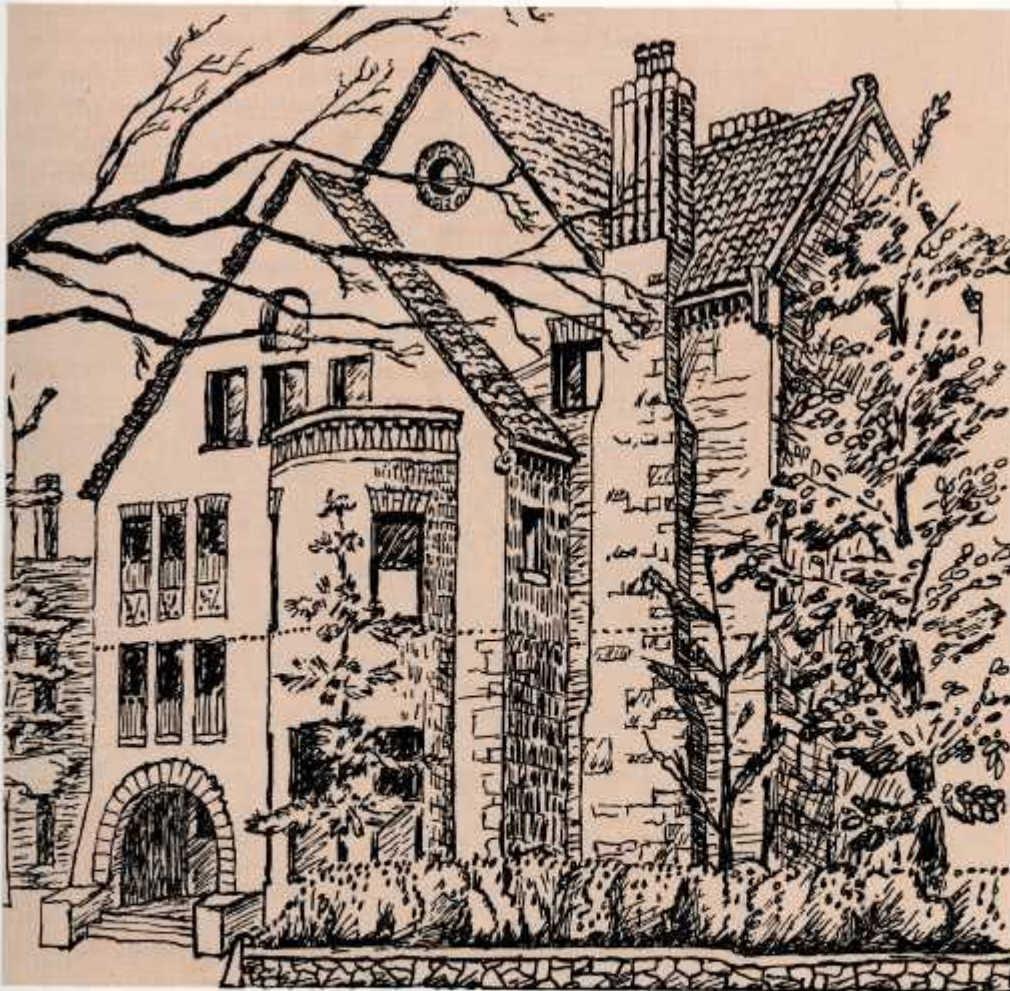


Some alumni have stated in their reminiscences that they did not believe anything like 53 percent of the alumni who attended in the days when the Institute had few or no new buildings "broke down and wept" as one remarked, "because their college had old buildings only—provided they got what they came for."

One disadvantage in the use of old converted structures is the fact that they seldom look like college buildings and this handicaps the college's publicity department in providing suitable pictures. RPI had one old mansion that looked a little "like a college" and a picture of it was used over and over again.

RPI made a survey of the use of old buildings by other colleges. During the darkest days of the history of the professional institute in Richmond, when it seemed that it would never be able to get a physical plant equal to those of older, more conventional schools, the writer visited many colleges and universities. Among them were George Washington University, Temple University, New York University, Brown University, University of Pittsburgh and Western Reserve University. At

When RPI had no buildings except old residences which it had converted to college use, art students preferred this view (south side) of the old Ginter Mansion.



those locations he found many examples of the use of former residences remodeled, attractively furnished and given attractive rear entrances. Nobody was found complaining either.

In short, the RPI surveys showed that the use of some old converted buildings was, and still is, common on urban college and university campuses. Many of the most distinguished universities in the United States are among them. A map issued by one "ivy league" university showed a total of 103 buildings, of which 24 were out-of-date large residences which the university had bought and converted to use as offices, departmental headquarters, dormitories or for other purposes.

One of the top universities in the country was found, as was reported in *Time* magazine, to own about 60 apartment houses and hotels. Another was found to have bought and converted to use as a dormitory, three out-of-date apartment houses and one hotel.

Of the smaller urban institutions visited, a professional institution, showed a total of 20 buildings on its map, ten of which were old, converted structures (most of which were large residences).

In most cases, the old buildings which the institutions visited had converted to educational uses, were small structures which did not furnish a very large proportion of the total space; but this was by no means found to be always true. Sometimes the converted buildings were larger than the new. At Fenn College (which Cleveland State University took over later), the two converted buildings were much larger than the one new structure. In fact, the larger of the two older, converted buildings in which Fenn College operated for many years (and in which Cleveland State University got its start) is about eighteen stories high.

The apartment houses converted to dormitories at the George Washington University and the University of Pittsburgh were found by the RPI investigators to be very large structures. As a part of RPI's continuing research on this question, the writer once visited a professional-technical college in the middle of the central business section of a large eastern city, and found it very difficult to locate because its fifteen buildings looked just like any other buildings in that part of the city and resembled a college, university or educational institute in no way. None of the buildings had anything resembling a campus around them—in fact, none had a front yard, side yard or rear yard. Yet these old and scattered buildings, and the lack of anything resembling a campus, seemed to have had no adverse effect on enrollment, or on the quality of work done. Nor did the converted building this college had been using for many years prevent a national magazine from referring to it as one of the largest and best schools of its kind in the United States.

RPI never had any experience in converting factory buildings to its use, largely because there were no such buildings nearby. There are some factory-type buildings near the state capitol and the Commonwealth of Virginia some years ago pur-

chased one of these, the old Saunders printing plant, and remodeled it for offices for the State Department of Education. This was a building with few partitions and the remodeling of the interior was very successful. The air-conditioned offices turned out to be as good as in a new state office building nearby.

In its surveys of what other institutions were doing about the conversion of old buildings to teaching use, RPI found several examples of the conversion of factories. The best example of this was at Brooklyn Polytechnic Institute. To quote from its catalogue:

"In 1954, after a hundred years of development, Polytechnic had become landlocked in fifteen scattered red brick buildings and rented quarters in the Borough Hall area. The Institute then bought a square block of large factory-type buildings adjacent to the new multimillion dollar Civic Center and converted these buildings for use in teaching, administration and research: at an expenditure of \$5,000,000.

"This gave Polytechnic four buildings varying in height up to seven or eight stories." The interiors were completely changed and the size of the project is indicated by the fact that one building contains 65 classrooms and 83 laboratories, as well as offices, and an auditorium."

The finding of these investigations improved the morale of RPI's administration in many ways. Finding that other highly regarded colleges, universities and professional schools, located in the middle of cities were struggling with the same problems as RPI, and using the same means to solve them, made RPI's goal seem more attainable. The surveys showed that there was nothing wrong with using some old converted buildings. What was wrong at RPI in its early days was in having old buildings only.

What should be the goal of an urban college, university or technical or professional school, as regards buildings? Many would say what the George Washington University, in the District of Columbia, said once in a circular which it mailed to prospective students. After stating that it is located in "the very heart" of Washington, the university described its physical plant as consisting of new and "modern functional classroom buildings side by side, with charming residences," some of which "have been remodeled for university use."

The use of former residences for faculty and administrative offices, or as departmental headquarters, has often proved successful and popular. The writer some years ago asked the opinion of a department head who formerly had his classroom and office in a remodeled residence but had later moved to a new, modern building. He replied that the classrooms in the new building were much better. So were the halls and corridors. But in the new building, he said, the offices were inferior, smaller and more scattered. In many cases, he said, the offices in old converted residences were better.

When Virginia Commonwealth University was formed in 1968, and took over the former RPI campus and buildings, it chose for the new university's central headquarters the old Allison Mansion, which RPI had been using as its President's House. It will be difficult to find anywhere, on any campus, a more suitable (or more luxurious) building to serve this purpose.

The surveys made by RPI in the 1950's revealed all buildings of an urban college, institute or university need not be of the same style of architecture. This is because uniform architecture is not customary in the midst of cities; and might, in fact, look odd. In a city, new structures blend more easily with old buildings than in a suburb or rural setting.

This writer, as a part of the RPI self-survey of the 1950's, visited several professional schools (some would say semi-professional) where the courses of study required the students to be taught a number of handcrafts. In one great university in the midst of a city where land costs were high, all the buildings were new; and so costly that the craft shops had been designed as multipurpose rooms to be used by several teachers and departments. The particular department being visited used, for example, many small handlooms which looked almost like toys. After class these had to be moved from the multipurpose room and stored on shelves in a teacher's office. No student could use this equipment other than during the scheduled class hour, and was never given the opportunity to work with equipment of standard size.

At the Richmond Professional Institute, in contrast, the shops were located in an old, remodeled residence or in a former two-story garage. There was a separate room for each craft and the equipment was all standard size. This was possible because in the old, remodeled buildings space cost less. Moreover,

The Chesterfield apartment house, in the heart of the RPI campus, was never purchased for college use.



students could go in these old shops and work any time they wished. This example, where the high and rising costs of education were kept down and teaching efficiency increased, is at least one illustration of the use of old converted buildings.

It would have been desirable for figures to have been kept comparing the cost of buying and remodeling former residences and apartment houses with the cost of new construction. An attempt was made to do this but, because of bookkeeping procedures, the results were not very satisfactory. The following table, however, shows the cost per student-occupant (often called "cost per bed") of buying and converting a few old residences and a small apartment house in the 1950's and early 1960's:

	<i>To Buy Land and Building</i>	<i>Repairs and Alterations</i>	<i>Total Cost of Purchase and Conversion</i>
1. An old residence rated as in very poor condition when bought: 921 West Franklin Street	\$826	\$1,445	\$2,271
	per bed	per bed	per bed
2. An old residence rated as in very good condition when bought: 1014 West Franklin Street	\$769	\$ 615	\$1,384
	per bed	per bed	per bed
3. An old five-story apartment house rated in very poor condition when purchased (Scherer Hall)	\$800	\$1,000	\$1,800
	per bed	per bed	per bed

The cost figures in this table compare with the average costs per bed of \$3,000 to \$4,000 for new construction at other state-supported colleges in Virginia, *in the same years*.

The repairs and alterations made to these buildings were very thorough. For example, the changes in the last named building, Scherer Hall, included installation of automatic fire sprinklers, automatic fire alarm, front and rear stairs enclosed with masonry, metal-clad doors to stairs installed, almost complete replastering throughout, all new plumbing, several new baths, almost all new electrical wiring and equipment, north wall waterproofing, exterior of other walls repointed, closets built in many rooms to provide one closet per occupant.²

When should a college, university or professional school buy an old apartment house or other nearby building which it needs? The first rule, RPI found, is this: An urban college or university, or a polytechnic or professional institute, which is located in the middle of a city, (or on the borderline between

² Similar cost figures were not kept for the twelve-story Monroe Terrace. However, it may be stated that as soon as the purchase was made students were moved into some of the apartments, without altering the building in any way. The building cost \$300,000 and was estimated to have the "as is" capacity of 350 students. On this basis, the cost per bed of the purchase was about \$850.

the central residence and the central business section), will soon learn that the success of a converting operation almost always requires that the price paid for the old structure be very low. The final decision should turn on the sale price asked for the old structure when reduced to cost per student (per bed). The time to bargain, and firmly, is over the cost per bed.

How long will an old converted building last? Improvements like all new plumbing, new elevators, all new wiring, new and additional closets, automatic fire sprinklers, additional fire exits, brick enclosed metal stairs, new hallways, air conditioning, fire alarms, new furnishing, etc., when installed in a soundly built old building ought to last as long, or nearly as long, as the same items will last in a new building.

Will maintenance costs be larger? Most people think that it costs a good deal more to maintain remodeled and converted buildings than new ones. Probably this is usually true, but there is something to be said on the other side. In the first place, structures built originally for another purpose, if they are properly converted and remodeled are, in many respects, as just stated, not completely old. In many parts they are as new as a completely new building.

Second, an originally well-built and properly remodeled, converted and modernized building, if too much was not paid for it when purchased, will often, if not usually, have to bear a smaller interest cost than a new building financed by bonds. The experience of the RPI Foundation in acquiring and maintaining dormitories showed this. This saving in interest may offset the higher maintenance costs.

Then, too, a college or university cannot permanently have all new buildings. All structures get old sometime, and some begin to have increased maintenance costs before the bonds are paid off.

If the experiences of the Richmond Professional Institute and Virginia Commonwealth University mean anything, the conclusion may certainly be drawn that the use of some, even a large number of old, converted buildings, does not adversely affect enrollment provided good judgment is used. In the fall of 1965, as pointed out elsewhere, the total, head-count of students in attendance at RPI, in its mostly old, converted buildings, was the largest in any college or university in Virginia.

Whether the success of RPI had any influence on the decision or not, it is interesting to note that the Commonwealth of Virginia has used the same plan to enlarge space at the capitol of Virginia. For example, the State, after building several new office buildings, in 1966, purchased and converted to use as a State office building, the former Richmond Hotel, which is just across the street from the main entrance to Capitol Square. Whether the State made this decision because of this question of location or whether the fact that the old building could be acquired and converted in much less time than a new building could be constructed, the writer does not know. A few years

later the State also bought the old Murphys Hotel, about a block from Capitol Square, and converted it to another office building.

(The State, it may be added, gave the furniture in the Richmond Hotel to RPI to be used to furnish some of the bedrooms and reception rooms in its nineteen-story dormitory, Rhoads Hall.)

Downtown businesses often expand in the same way. A walk through the central retail section of most cities will often show as many stores in old, reconditioned buildings, (many of them with new fronts, chiefly) as in new buildings. It is in the suburban shopping centers, as in suburban colleges, that one finds the "new buildings only" prevailing. Anyone who still doubts how very old residences, both large and small, may serve business, when properly converted and restored, should visit the restored areas of Charleston, South Carolina, and Savannah, Georgia.

Some new buildings, well planned and carefully built, are absolutely necessary in college and university growth and service. RPI's history shows this clearly, but recognition of this undoubtedly should not blind us to another fact equally important.

New buildings cannot meet emergencies. During the emergencies of the 1960's, at least two Virginia governors were quoted in the newspapers as distressed about how long it was taking to build the new college and university buildings for which the state had appropriated funds. It began to be recognized that as essential as new structures are for the future, they do not solve the problem of the large number of students who are "looking for a place in college now." How old, converted buildings can help meet emergencies is discussed in chapters nine, ten, and fifteen.

Some institutions dread buying and converting existing buildings. Sometimes some urban colleges and universities may hesitate to buy old structures near them, and convert them to dormitories or other uses, on the grounds that they "will be stuck with the old building forever." The writer noticed some feelings to this effect in the last days of RPI, just before Virginia Commonwealth University was formed. For example, the *Proscript* (college weekly) quoted an official of RPI as saying that the Raleigh (office) Building, which the state bought for RPI in 1966, would be used "only temporarily and is not to be thought of as a permanent addition to the campus." This feeling is understandable, especially in an institution like RPI where the number of completed new buildings was so much smaller than it should have been. However, the question may have to be asked sometimes:

Can urban colleges or universities ever get away from the need to use some converted buildings? An official of a large university located, like RPI, between the central residence section and the central business district of a large city wrote the writer of this book:

"In 1910 a new woman's dormitory was built. In 1919 and again in 1947 and again in 1960 and 1963, the university built other brick dormitories for its women students; but in 1964, former residences surround these buildings and house (our) students unto this day."

The conversion idea has been extended to the public schools. As this chapter was being revised, *Newsweek* magazine (October 8, 1972) published a short article under the title "Schools in the Oddest Places" in which it said:

"In Boston, an old bathhouse . . . now houses 472 ninth grade students. On Chicago's West Side, . . . students are attending vocational school in a converted factory that used to produce Tango candy bars. A onetime lamp factory in Cleveland, a former cannery in Robbinston, Maine, an abandoned railroad station in Baltimore and an old Green Stamp redemption center in Portland, Oregon, are all serving as schools. The cost of such conversions is a lot lower than building a new school. The Chicago Board of Education saved eighteen months and millions of dollars by renovating the Tango factory."

The situation in Richmond has been ideal for building a physical plant consisting of both old converted buildings and fine new structures on the same campus. It is hard to criticize a college, university or professional school for developing a physical plant, or campus, in which there is a considerable number of old, converted structures, provided there are also a sufficient number of new buildings especially designed for educational use. This is particularly true when the old buildings have some historic associations or when a group of them preserve a neighborhood of significant worth. Institutions that do this serve both their students and the general community and will come to be commended by the public instead of criticized, and looked down upon, as RPI was in its early days when it had old, converted structures only.

Moreover, the former RPI campus, as it is being extended south to, and across, Main Street by Virginia Commonwealth University, is emphasizing the new by taking over a whole block at a time, and mainly blocks where few of the buildings were worthy of preservation. Thus, the resulting VCU complex is apt in the future to be a campus in two parts. First, the new section, all new, which will serve an enormous number of students, and second, the older part, where RPI started, which will serve not only the students, but also the community that loves old things and likes, as Richmond does, to preserve some of the past.

RPI issues a Pamphlet Calling Itself an Entirely Different College

IN 1953, the Richmond Professional Institute issued a small but significant pamphlet, "An Entirely Different College." In this, the attempt was made to set out the philosophy of education which RPI worked out in its early days before state aid began.

The pamphlet defined a professional institute as a college or university which arranges most of the programs of study it offers around occupations or professions.

In order to understand the history of the urban, professional institute which was being developed in the 1940's, 50's, and 60's in downtown Richmond, it is essential to remember that most colleges and universities then operated on the theory that there was "a common core of knowledge" or "general education" which could be relied on to turn out "well-rounded" men or women, fully equipped to fill the demands of citizenship and to function satisfactorily in an occupation.

There was some difference of opinion as to what made up this "common core of knowledge" or "general education," but for the requirements for freshman and sophomore years there was substantial agreement among educators as to the nature and even the substance of needed subjects. Furthermore, the view of officials frequently was that those students who did not like the subjects "should be made to take them anyway," or else not go to college.

The organizers of Richmond Professional Institute had considerable doubt as to whether there was such a thing as a "common core of knowledge" that could be relied on to meet the diversified needs and desires of all urban students. The history, therefore, of RPI in the 1930's, 1940's, and 1950's, as the reader has probably noticed, is the history of its efforts to find and offer "different subjects of study" that would meet the needs and desires of the highly diversified kind of students who

were "going to college" in large numbers in the central sections of cities.

The principles and practices suitable for an urban, professional institution, RPI believed, were somewhat as follows:

1. The student (unless absolutely impossible) should be permitted to begin the study of his professional or occupational subject as soon as he enters, usually in the freshman year.¹

2. During each of his years in the professional institute, the student should be permitted to devote the greater part of his or her time to the study of that professional subject, usually about three-fourths.

3. The decision as to what classes the student should take in each of his years of study should not be made by a general college or university faculty but by a professional faculty, with the help of professional associations or advisory committees made up of leaders in the profession or occupation concerned.

4. The various programs of study should be made up so that each student would not find it difficult to recognize the necessity or desirability of each subject included; i.e., the factor of the student's motivation should not be disregarded. In terms often used by students themselves, each course of study ought to be such that the student will readily see that "it will do me some good, considering my life plans." Or, to use the term preferred in the late 1960's, the program of study and everything in it should be reasonably "relevant."

These principles or practices, RPI argued, were merely the basic principles and practices of the so-called land-grant colleges or universities which were established in the decades following the passage of the Morrill Act of Congress about 1862. Under that act, provision was made for: (1) a grant of land to each state that would establish an institution where agriculture, engineering, and certain other occupational, technological or professional subjects, then neglected by conventional colleges and universities, would be taught; and (2) taught on the principle, as the president of one of the largest land-grant universities recently expressed it in a news-magazine,² that "*there are certain areas . . . which demand specialized training from the very start of the undergraduates' education.*"

The classic examples of the professional fields that first made this "demand" were engineering, pharmacy and veterinary medicine. What the Richmond Professional Institute did was to extend this principle to many other fields such as art (i.e., really professional training in art), design, music, music education, business, distribution, advertising, accounting, real estate, professional drama and speech, occupational therapy, commercial art, costume design, interior decoration, nursing,³ law enforcement,

¹ In some occupational fields lack of maturity makes this impossible.

² President David D. Henry in the *U.S. News and World Report*, February 1, 1965, pp. 58-60.

³ In cooperation with several hospitals.

dramatic art and other fields of study.

The public opinion survey conducted by the Sidney Hollander Associates, mentioned elsewhere in this book, found that the fact that RPI began in its early years to allow its students to begin the study of their major subject as soon as they entered was "appreciated by parents" and by alumni.

But as observed by Dr. Fred J. Kelly, who served as consultant to the Virginia Advisory Legislative Council in 1951-52, there was also opposition:

"A total state program of higher education ought," he said, "to encompass post-high school education for *all the fields* upon which the state's welfare depends . . . engineering and agriculture . . . after a long struggle, have been accepted. Just now the group of programs taking the brunt of opposition to . . . this broadening of state programs of higher education . . . are those given in an urban community."

Dr. Kelly also said that the kind of work RPI was doing in Virginia "*was the most characteristic modern development in higher education.*" He also commended RPI for "struggling to broaden the scope of the State program of education in Virginia" by establishing its professional programs of study, in spite of the opposition.

There is a place for humanities in a professional or technological institute. As was pointed out repeatedly during these controversies, it was not true that the student in the professional or technological type of college, university or institute gives *no part* of his time to the study of courses in the humanities or in the liberal arts and sciences, as they are often called. A circular which the Richmond Professional Institute sent prospective freshmen until 1965 stated: "Courses in the liberal arts and humanities are provided, in addition to instruction in a specialized field, in order to afford the student a background in general education, as well as specialized training in a particular vocation."

The point to be emphasized, RPI argued, is that the decision as to what courses in the humanities, or in the liberal arts and sciences, the student takes should not be decided by teachers of these liberal arts subjects but by a professional association or faculty.

The 1953 booklet also pointed out how the Richmond Professional Institute in its early years had been influenced by the movement to establish independent private schools of the professional type in the midtown sections of eastern and midwestern cities of the United States. These were schools of art, schools of music, schools of social work, schools of occupational therapy, schools of "expression", dramatic art, costume design, interior decoration, nursing, technology, physical education, shipbuilding and many other subjects.

The principle prevailing in these separate schools (as well as in the land-grant institutions) of offering programs of study in which the student is permitted to spend all, or practically all,

his time on the technical, professional or semi-professional subject he has chosen, was very old; even older than the land-grant colleges; going back in the case of schools of art to the Renaissance. In fact, the practice in some fields is as old, perhaps older, than the opposite principle of education that requires a student before beginning specialized work to complete one, two or more years of general college work in academic subjects.

Many of the separate type of professional schools, which the writer used to visit in the early days when he was working on the organization and the curricula of the Richmond Professional Institute, have since become affiliated with nearby colleges or universities; but some of them continue separate. For example, *Time* magazine recently wrote of one of these separate schools, Webb Institute of Naval Architecture in New York:

"Now located in a stately mansion of Long Island and . . . the first and still the only college in the U.S. devoted solely to naval architecture and marine engineering . . . Webb offers no electives, no languages, and only one (three year) humanities course."

Perhaps one reason Webb Institute has adhered so long to this educational principle is that, *Time* concluded, "Webb graduates almost always wind up at the top of their profession."

In its early days, RPI found motivation an extremely important matter; and that the interest of the student in what he was allowed to study was something that had to be considered if a high rate of drop-outs was to be prevented.

Sometimes the RPI offices were the scene of battles between parents, who wanted their children to get a general college education before studying specialized, professional or vocational subjects, and a son or daughter who wanted to begin studying such a subject as soon as he or she graduated from high school.

Even in fields of study in which the freshman is too immature to enter at once on professional or specialized work, RPI found in its early days that everything possible should be done to meet this very powerful student yearning. Even medical schools which have long been believers in the efficacy of "pre-medical" work, have in the last few years shown an interest in changing their practices a little in order to reduce the number of "drop-outs" in medical schools. For example, to quote the *Richmond Times-Dispatch* of February 14, 1965:

"Most of the students who enter a medical college want to have something to do with sick people," said Dr. Kinloch Nelson; "i.e., with clinical medicine."

"Under the new plan now being put into effect at the Medical College of Virginia, first-year students are being introduced right away to certain aspects of clinical medicine—something that students usually do not become involved with until their third year of medical school. . . . It is too early to evaluate this new approach . . . but so far not one of the original 96 students has dropped out."

Richmond Professional Institute strove from the first to increase the number and variety of programs of study it offered freshmen. The 1938 catalogue listed 31 freshman programs. In the 1960 catalogue this number had increased to about fifty.

In 1965 or 1966, the State Council of Higher Education seemed to agree with some of RPI's early ideas:

"Diversified curriculums for students with various kinds of interests and abilities . . . (are recommended). One who cannot do well in a foreign language may find it useful to transfer to a curriculum in some occupational field where this attainment is not necessary."

The commission also pointed out (as the present writer did on another page), the apparently strange fact that high school and college drop-outs, and sometimes college "transfers", whose trouble seemed to be their inability in such a subject as mathematics or science, "may be discovered to have real ability in mathematics" when it comes to them as a part of a curriculum arranged around an occupation.

While recognizing that the Institute was being criticized because it was said to be willing "to let anybody in," RPI's administrators continued to believe that a state-controlled, urban institution of post-high school education, that organized its curricula around occupations, should offer a very large number of programs so that all earnest students could find a course of study they *could both see the need of and could complete with credit.*

The following "reminiscences" submitted for this book illustrate this point:

"Once an art teacher recommended that RPI adopt and endorse the prestige-building, selective type of admission requirements based on the high school record in languages, mathematics, science and general studies, with no exceptions for talent in art or music. A search of the high school record on file in the art school showed that this same teacher had a very poor record in high school in most subjects except art; and that an exception had to be made "to let him in."

Another example submitted in a faculty "reminiscence" is as follows:

"A social science student made a miserable record in high school in general subjects such as languages, mathematics and the like, and did the same thing in a liberal arts college for two years, until he became a "drop-out." He then applied to the art school and was admitted on the basis of his genuine talent in a specialized subject. He made a decided success both as an undergraduate and graduate student. For several years he has been teaching successfully in a *prestige liberal arts college whose requirements for admission as a student he could never have met.*"

On the matter of accepting students dropped by other colleges, RPI found in its early days that it was often true that an urban college which admits any student who has been

dropped by a conventional college, because he couldn't get interested in "what is offered freshmen," sometimes is severely criticised for "admitting anybody." Sometimes even the student himself will lose respect for the urban, professional or specialized institution that accepts him as a transfer.

However, RPI also found there are many reasons for failure in conventional colleges and sometimes the fault lies with the people who advised the student to enter the program of study or type of college he did. RPI admitted many "drop-outs" from conventional colleges who succeeded afterwards. One was mentioned above. Another, as this is written, was referred to in a newspaper headline: "Dropout Receives Top Award." A great many veterans who made poor records in their freshman and sophomore years in college "dropped-out" to enter the armed forces, but after the war was over, entered a specialized program and did quite well.

RPI pioneered in offering "college life" to specialized students. Another thing that RPI found is while students differ greatly in many respects and require a diversity of "ways of being handled," almost all students of college age desire, and should have the advantages of what is called "college life."

The 1953 bulletin printed the following statement about this:

"The Richmond Professional Institute offers highly specialized professional education in a college atmosphere, with the advantages of college life. There are many professional schools of the separate type in the United States which offer highly specialized education like that given at RPI, but do not maintain a college campus. The Richmond Professional Institute is one of the few technical colleges of its kind in the United States where students may secure the advantages of highly specialized education in a college community where there are dormitories, gymnasium, library, social halls and student activities."



The GI or Post World War II Period

How the Veterans of World War II and the Korean War Changed the Institute, Made it Coeducational, and Started it on the Road to Becoming One of the Largest Colleges in Virginia; New Professional Schools Added; Physical Plant Further Enlarged.

WHEN World War II ended in 1945, returning veterans began to enroll at RPI under the GI bill. All of a sudden enrollment increased enormously. The coming of the veterans also brought great changes.

The first of these significant changes was that the GI's made RPI coeducational. In 1917 when the School began, it was recognized that men would be needed in social work. However, that field, like nursing, was predominantly a profession for women. The new school was open to both men and women, but no men enrolled. The catalogue of 1920 specifically stated that male students were needed in social work and were wanted as students. Still none came. The early catalogues did not list the students by sex, but during the first ten years the names of the full-time students were all women's names.

In 1927 Stephen Stephanean, a member of the staff of the Richmond Community Fund, enrolled as a part-time student for several day classes. He appears to have been the first man studying in day school hours. In 1929-30 another man, George Meffley, enrolled for the second semester, part-time. In 1932 another man enrolled, but he did not stay long enough for his name to be remembered.

On January 18, 1950, a reporter wrote in the *Proscript*:¹

¹ The name *Proscript* means professional writing. The name was used as the title of the RPI weekly until about 1968 when Virginia Commonwealth University was formed. The earliest weekly newspaper was called the *Atlas*.

"One of the staff has been looking through old copies of the college annual to find how many men had enrolled in early years." The first annual published was in the form of a supplement to the *Colonial Echo* of the College of William and Mary in 1922. The pictures showed that none of the students were men. The next annual issued in Richmond was in 1935, ten years after the move to Franklin and Shafer Streets. This issue contained a snapshot of a man labeled "the winner" but it did not say whether he was a student. Other records at that time listed 17 men enrolled but none of them was sufficiently prominent in school activities to have his picture published under his name.

In 1936 the annual included three men in a picture of the graduate students enrolled that year. One of these was Raleigh Hobson who, after graduation with the M.S. degree, served for many years as Director of the Department of Public Welfare in Richmond and later as Director of Public Welfare in Maryland. The picture of the Art Students League in that year's annual included only one man. The drama students in 1936 were all women and, in the plays produced, the men's parts were performed by women. The Glee Club's picture also had no men members. Neither did the picture of the music society.

One of the first men to enroll is immediately drafted for a man's part in a play—previously all men's parts were played by women.



In 1938 there were 28 men enrolled in day classes. As students remember those early days, the growth in enrollment of men students was extremely slow. The few men who did enroll were reported to be self-conscious and not too happy about it.

The 1941 annual indicated by its pictures that the number of men in attendance at RPI had increased somewhat. The cover page pictured four students, one of whom was Jack Creasy of Roanoke. Inside the book were a number of photographs of men students, but on closer examination the reader might be somewhat surprised to observe that the same man's picture often appeared several times.

In 1940 the men students organized themselves into a club which they called the Minority Club. It had 23 members in 1941. At least two of these men later married RPI women.

In any case, men may have been few in number but talent was outstanding.

William Ross Abrams, who enrolled in 1941, painted the picture which received one of the highest awards at the Eighth Virginia Artist Exhibition. To quote the *Times-Dispatch*, "This 20-year-old Richmond art student walked off quietly with top honors in competition with his teachers and many Virginia artists, his seniors both in age and experience."

RPI's pre-World War II men students made a good record as soldiers when the second world war came. The prize-winning art student who received the award mentioned earlier, William Ross Abrams, is an example of how many of the men who attended RPI served the nation in war. He was also awarded the Legion of Merit, the Bronze Star medal, Purple Heart, Combat Infantryman's Badge, Distinguished Unit Badge, and Good Conduct Medal. The first male graduate of RPI to be killed in combat in World War II was Horace A. Bass, Jr. of Roanoke, a member of the class of 1937 (B.F.A.). The Navy Cross for heroism was awarded after his death, and a naval vessel was named for him. The citation by the Navy stated:

"For extraordinary heroism as pilot of an airplane of a fighting squadron in action against enemy Japanese forces in the battle of Midway on June 4, 1942. . . . His superb airmanship and unyielding devotion to duty, maintained at great risk against tremendous odds, were in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service."

Other RPI men who died, or were killed, during World War II included:

Milton Rupert Bierne, who enrolled at RPI in 1941, and was killed in combat in the Italian campaign.

James Henry Boothe, Jr., who graduated with the degree of Bachelor of Fine Arts in 1941, and was killed in action in Western Europe in 1944.

Lee G. Crutchfield, who studied at RPI from 1938-41, and was killed while in training at Fort Ord, California, February, 1942.

**SOME OF THE MEN
WHO BROKE THE ICE
BEFORE WORLD WAR II.**

*John Garber, Asa Watkins,
Everett Stutts, Jack Creasy.*



On June 22, 1944, Congress passed the Servicemen's Readjustment Act, popularly known as the GI Bill of Rights. The first veteran to enroll at RPI under the bill entered in September, 1944, and is thought to have been Earl M. Wood. After receiving his B.S. degree from Richmond Professional Institute, he received the M.A. degree from Teacher's College of Columbia University, and for a time taught personnel administration in the RPI evening college.

After 1944 the number of returning soldiers who became students increased with great rapidity. By 1947, the year in which the enrollment of veterans reached a peak, the total

number of men enrolled full-time was 805 or nearly equal to the 833 number of women, as the below table shows.

<i>Full-Time Fall Enrollment</i>	<i>Men Veterans</i>	<i>Other Men</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Grand Total</i>
1944	1	7	503	511
1945	15	11	629	655
1946	374	84	710	1,168
1947	650	155	833	1,638
1948	630	260	844	1,734
1949	532	345	833	1,710
1950	361	427	750	1,538

These enrollment figures reflect the change at RPI from a chiefly women's college to a coeducational institution with about the same enrollment of each sex.

Dr. Margaret L. Johnson, Dean of Students, who began her long service at RPI in 1930, recalled that during her first ten years with the school, men were present only in the schools of social work and art, chiefly in the latter. The first man to enter another department was Milton Rupert Bierne who, as stated above, was later killed in action in the Italian campaign of World War II. When his application came in 1941 there was some doubt as to the wisdom of accepting him. Some of the faculty felt that it was better to have no men in classes than one or two only. RPI had the kind of work that men, as well as women, wanted. The hard thing was to get enough men enrolled to make them feel at ease. It was the returning of the veterans after World War II that brought large numbers of men under the GI Bill that suddenly solved the problem.

The rapid transformation of the proportion of men to women in the student body was well accepted. Perhaps the reaction of the women of RPI to the coming of men students in such large numbers is best illustrated by a story a speaker told at a student convocation:

"Two young women were sent by their families for treatment in a private sanitarium for mentally ill where (as at RPI before 1946) most of the patients were women."

First young woman: "I like this place well enough, but I would like it a lot better if there were more men here."

Second young woman: "Well, you won't be here much longer anyway for *you are talking sense now.*"

The enrollment of men veterans and non-veterans affected all departments. In the fall of 1949 men outnumbered women in several departments, especially business administration and commercial art.

The change from a women's college to a coeducational college brought problems, some trivial and some very important. Among the trivial was the effect on attendance at official college receptions. Before World War II, most of the students would attend college receptions, but after the men came the number of

either women or men attending such affairs sharply dropped.

Before and during the War the president of the Student Government Association had almost always been a woman. Since then this officer has usually been a man, and the women seem to prefer this arrangement.

As to marriage and dates, the life of the students was affected less than expected. Because of location in the midst of a city, RPI women had always had ample opportunities for dates. The number marrying sweethearts of their student days had always been large, and was not changed particularly when the Institute became coeducational.

Before World War II all of the administrative officers except one at RPI were women, and most of the faculty members were women. When veterans began to enroll in large numbers, the administration began to increase the number of men teachers. There was some concern about what the attitudes of new students might be in regard to female versus male instructors.

There was no problem. In a survey one spring the opinions of senior classmen were asked. The unanimous view reported was that students did not care whether teachers were men or women; only the quality of instruction mattered.

The coming of the veterans also increased the enrollment of non-veterans since, in a sense, the enrollment of veterans brought other students with them, both male and female. The greatly increased enrollment of veterans, and other students with them, as one looks back on it, seems to have been the first step in advancing the Institute along the path of becoming one of Virginia's larger institutions of higher education. Before Pearl Harbor, RPI ranked in enrollment at the bottom, or near the bottom, of the list of about 40 institutions then operating in the Commonwealth. By December, 1947, according to figures from the U. S. Office of Education, the Institute's rank in enrollment had advanced to sixth or seventh place, (such place depending upon whether or not night students were included).

The first of the new professional schools and departments which were organized to serve the GIs and other young people during and after World War II was the School of Occupational Therapy, which was organized during the war. Actually, such a school had been discussed many years earlier during World War I, but it could not be undertaken at that time.

After World War II ended, interest in the subject increased. It was suggested that Richmond Professional Institute develop its school to serve all the southern states. Furthermore, it was proposed that the program be broadened to include work training, not only with disabled servicemen, but also with workers disabled in industrial accidents, by injuries, or by disease.

The first students were enrolled in the fall of 1942. There were nine students then and only 15 the next year. Finding teachers was very difficult and the turnover on the faculty was high. A contract was made with the Army Medical Corps to send students to the school.

In 1941 Miss Elizabeth Messick accepted the position as director of the School of Occupational Therapy. She had been largely responsible during the war for the recruiting and training of occupational therapy personnel in the Surgeon General's office of the U. S. Army. She served at RPI for about 12 years, until her death, and made RPI's occupational therapy work one of the leading schools of its kind in the country.

Miss Messick was a graduate of a school of occupational therapy in Baltimore but was not a college graduate. In spite of her lack of college training, she had risen to the top in her profession and was widely recognized as an able leader and teacher. Her career illustrates how there should be a great difference in requirements for appointment to the faculty of a professional institution and those requirements for a liberal arts college or university.

The development of the School of Business dates from 1946-47 when the veterans began to enroll in such large numbers. Prior to that time there had been a few courses in secretarial study, and in 1941 a full-time teacher had been added to the faculty. Post-war years brought greater demands. In 1949, for example, of the 582 veterans enrolled, about half applied for admission to the School of Business. In 1957-58 the State Department of Education began to assist the School of Business as well as the School of Distribution in carrying on work in business teacher education and in distributive education.

The offering of engineering and architecture courses dates from the coming of the veterans after World War II and the affiliation of RPI and Virginia Polytechnic Institute. C.A.B. Foster was appointed manager. In the programs, students could attend RPI for the first two years and VPI in Blacksburg the last two years. The B.S. degree from VPI then could be conferred.

After the close of World War II, the Richmond Professional Institute began offering courses in drafting for students who did not wish to enroll for the four-year engineering program in cooperation with VPI. There were not many students at first. The organization of the work in Engineering Technology really dates from 1957-58 when the State Department of Education provided funds and when John V. Ankenney became director. The enrollment then increased markedly.

Rehabilitation Counseling instruction had an unusual beginning. In 1955 RPI was able to start a new professional school, not "on a shoestring" as had been the case with most of its earlier schools, but with adequate governmental support from the first.

A representative of the federal government was brought to the RPI office one day, without advance notice, by an official of the Virginia State Board of Education. The visitor said that he had been observing the kind of work Richmond Professional Institute was doing, with little financial help, and had come to admire it greatly. For one thing, he stated, "RPI adapted its methods to the needs of the students and the state and did not require the student to make all the adaptations."

The representative then said that the federal government wanted RPI to start a graduate school to train college graduates to counsel and help injured and disabled persons earn a living or live a satisfactory life. He added that the federal treasury would reimburse RPI for all expenses if RPI would make available the physical facilities it owned.

The proposition was accepted. The School of Rehabilitation Counseling was the second purely graduate school at RPI and its establishment was an enormously important step towards RPI's attaining university status. The Spring, 1972, issue of the *VCU Magazine* gives this information about that school:

1. It was one of the first schools or departments of its kind to be established in the country.
2. Recently the Department of Health, Education and Welfare of the United States rated it "highest honor."
3. Since its establishment by RPI, it has trained 300 graduates, more than any of the 80 other programs of the kind in the country.

RPI's physical plant was enlarged during the GI period. The great increases in enrollment by returning GIs, and the extension of study courses offered them placed severe strain on the physical plant and facilities at Richmond Professional Institute. Even considering the great improvements in RPI's physical plant which have been described in other chapters, the Institute still was very poorly equipped to accommodate the influx of students.

There was still not a single new building that had been designed for teaching. All were former residences, garages, or stables. There were no classrooms large enough to seat the number enrolled, no matter how many chairs were crowded into them. None of the buildings were fire-proof, though in most of them automatic sprinklers and fire escapes had been installed.

The first thing done, about 1946 and 1947, was to borrow the use of some Sunday school rooms in the basement of the nearby Grove Avenue Baptist Church. Those rooms were large enough to seat the larger classes, but the seats were folding chairs which had no tablet arms.

RPI had no funds to construct new buildings, which is what should have been done. Moreover, many people thought that the increase in the number of veterans would be temporary and that enrollment would rapidly fall again when the "wave of veterans receded." So such people said: "Why spend a lot of money to build a new building when you may not need it in a few years?" From necessity again, a way was found to relieve the situation somewhat. This was by the use of what was called "unappropriated special revenue." The tuition and other fees of the GIs were paid by the U. S. Veterans Administration on a very fair and liberal basis. The result was that total tuition collected for those years exceeded budget estimates.

During the period from 1941 to about 1958, a period roughly corresponding to World War II and the Korean War

and the demobilization afterwards, the full-time enrollment fluctuated as the following figures for selected years show:

<i>Fall Term</i>	<i>Full-Time Enrollment</i>
1941 (just before the attack on Pearl Harbor)	428
1943 (two years later)	406
1945 (when the war ended)	655
1946 (when 423 veterans enrolled)	1,168
1949 (when the number of veterans reached its peak)	1,760
1950 (when the Korean War started)	1,538
1952 (when Korean veterans began to enroll)	1,107
1955	1,448
1958	1,825

These fluctuations due to war, demobilization of veterans, and to other causes, made budget estimates submitted to the state very difficult to compile in advance. The more (or fewer) students, the more (or less) tuition collected and deposited with the state treasurer. It was state and college policy to permit any reasonably qualified veteran to enroll. Since servicemen and women (the GIs) didn't know when they would be discharged, the admissions office frequently did not know even a week before registration day what the full-time or part-time enrollment would be.

The result was that in many of these years the tuition fees deposited with the state treasurer greatly exceeded the budget estimates which had been submitted one or two years earlier.

The State Bureau of the Budget, of which J. H. Bradford then was director, permitted Virginia colleges to use some of this money for "non-recurring expenditures." At the Richmond Professional Institute some much-needed projects were financed in this way.

Additions were made in the rear of old residences. For example, a three-story, fireproof addition was made at the rear of 814-16 Park Avenue. This included two chemistry laboratories on the first floor, two biology laboratories on the second floor and a very large drafting room on the third floor. At the same time the front part of both former residences were remodeled by removing partitions. This work was done in 1946, very soon after the first veterans enrolled. The addition in the rear of these two old buildings was permanent; it was retained as a part of the new Science Building constructed by the state in 1963.

Another addition was that to the southwest corner of the Administration Building. This consisted of the classrooms numbered 000, 100, 200 and 300 and the fireproof enclosed stairway which served the new rooms and also that part of the old building.

With the unexpectedly large payments of tuition and fees made by the U. S. Veterans Administration, the Budget Bureau

of the State permitted RPI to enlarge its physical plant by buying the following property:

<i>Year</i>		<i>Price Paid</i>
1945	820 Park Avenue	\$ 9,500
1946	822 Park Avenue	15,000
	Alley between 906 and 908 Park Avenue	1,600
1947	217 Shafer Street	13,500
	828 Park Avenue	25,000
1948	902 Park Avenue	17,800
	904 Park Avenue	18,000
1949	712 West Franklin Street	37,000
1950	The Lafayette, 312 Shafer Street	67,500
1951	812 Park Avenue	20,000

The purchase in 1950 of the Lafayette apartment house and its conversion into a men's dormitory is a very good illustration of how "unappropriated special revenues" were used to buy property. The sale price of this apartment house was \$67,500. The offer to sell was made by the owner's agent in August 1950, just before the 1950-51 session opened. By that time it had become clear that dormitory places would be needed for many more than the 50 students the building would house. This increase in enrollment would, in a very short time, increase collections from rent, tuition and other student fees by more than the \$67,500 cost of the property.

On that basis the purchase was approved by the budget director of the Commonwealth of Virginia. Of course, additional teachers should have been employed for the additional students, but on the date of the transaction, August 24, 1950, about three weeks before registration day, it was too late to employ more full-time teachers. Such additional part-time teachers as could be obtained were employed.

Another important improvement made possible by the fees paid on behalf of the veterans was the addition of fireproof stairs and automatic sprinklers in several of the old residences listed in the above table. Elimination of old chimneys by extending the central heating plant was another fire prevention project financed in the same way.

Removal of partitions in buildings to make larger classrooms to accommodate more students was another method used extensively. For example, in some of the former residential buildings, the partition between the front and rear parlors was removed so as to make one larger classroom. Sometimes, all the partitions in the front of an old house were removed to make one very large room that could be used as a laboratory, drafting room, shop or lecture room.

When an old residence was connected with the central heating plant, the furnace room was no longer needed. Sometimes they could be remodeled to make a classroom when large, new windows were added. Two of these old furnace rooms became favorites, some of the students have recalled, because they were

well lighted and cool in summer and late spring.

This construction work was expensive. It would have been more economical for the state to have built a new structure; but it didn't, so the next best thing had to be done. (Besides, building a new building would have taken too long.) Long after the veterans left, the state did tear down several of the old residences (which had been the mainstay of GI education at RPI) and build a fine new Science Building on the same site. But by the time this was done the "make-do" rooms had been used about 15 or 20 years, so the work in remodeling and fire-proofing was "not too bad."

In review, it seems important to record that it was RPI's mid-city location that enabled the school to expand rapidly to meet the emergency caused by the coming of the veterans or GIs. Expansion of the physical plant of the Institute when the veterans came, and the large numbers of other younger students who came with them, furnished a good example of what may be accomplished by "making do" with what is on hand until something better can be obtained. The state budget office cooperated fully (as long as no tax-derived revenues were involved). The proximity of the Institute to many old residences and apartment houses simplified the task of finding and improvising space for student veterans. In fact, if RPI had not been located in a changing residential area on the edge of a city's central section, it is doubtful whether the veterans and other students who turned to RPI in post-war years in such numbers could have been accepted at RPI at all—or found anywhere else to go. The patience of the GIs and other students with the poor physical plant RPI had at that time should also be mentioned. The ability of some teachers to handle large classes, and to do dis-

It will be noted that "all the students face each other," as well as the teacher, thus making the use of the "discussion method" possible in large classes.



tinguished work with them, should not be forgotten in recording the ways in which RPI helped to meet the obligation of the state to its returning veterans. In this connection the names of several teachers (to mention only those who are now deceased) will be long remembered by students in the overcrowded GI days. For example, the two Davis's, Dr. Howard H. Davis and Dr. Alice Davis (no kin) and J. T. Walker are among those who distinguished themselves in work with very large classes.

Many veterans later told this writer that they would rather be in huge overcrowded classes taught by one of those teachers than in a small class under another less talented teacher. Sometimes it seemed that the veterans attached more importance to good teaching than other students; certainly they were good judges of it.

The first apartment house bought and converted to a dormitory.



High Rise Dormitories Old and New

*In the 1940's, 50's, and 60's
RPI Begins to Buy Nearby Apartment Houses
and Convert Them to Dormitories—
First Small Ones and Then, in 1964,
the Very Large Monroe Terrace.
Nineteen-Story Rhoads Hall Built, 1968.*

THE first apartment house bought was on the corner of Park Avenue and Shafer Street. The date was 1947. The cost was \$25,000. After conversion this building was named for Mrs. V. A. Chalkley, who was hostess of Founders Hall for many years, and is frequently mentioned in Chapter Four.

The second purchase of an apartment was the Lafayette, 312 Shafer Street, for \$67,000. That was in 1950. The name, Lafayette, was retained. Six years later, in 1956, the five-story apartment house on the corner of Franklin and Harrison Streets, then known as the Berkeley, was bought by the RPI Foundation and named Scherer Hall, and converted to a dormitory, first for women and later for men.

When Dr. George J. Oliver was appointed president, the dormitory situation became more acute; and the RPI Foundation began renting nearby residences to house students. The rental plan did not prove to be satisfactory.

Another fine old residence, 1014 West Franklin Street also was purchased. The new acquisition was named Meredith House, in honor of Wyndham R. Meredith, who was the attorney and vice president of the original board of trustees. In 1917, Mr. Meredith lived at 820 Park Avenue where part of the new Science Building now stands.

During Dr. Oliver's administration, in 1964, after long negotiations going back to the middle 1950's, the owner agreed

to sell the twelve-story Monroe Terrace to the RPI Foundation for \$300,000, a price recognized to be substantially below the market value. The Foundation accepted this offer. The purchase was temporarily financed by a bank loan.

On the date of the transaction, July 16, 1964, the *Richmond Times-Dispatch* commented:

"The RPI Foundation board members appeared excited and happy following their vote which represents a landmark in RPI's history.

"Dr. Henry H. Hibbs, who founded RPI in 1917 and served until his recent retirement in 1959, told Dr. Oliver after the meeting that the acquisition of Monroe Terrace was something he always wanted to accomplish in his administration."

Immediately after the purchase, students were moved into Monroe Terrace. No alterations were made at this time because no funds were available. The RPI Foundation also found it difficult to arrange a long-term plan for repayment of the \$300,000 temporary purchase loan. An appeal was made to the office of the Virginia Attorney General who, after investigation ruled that Richmond Professional Institute was a state college, with the same legal powers as other state colleges and, therefore, had the authority and power to buy, build, and operate dormitories in the same way as other colleges in the state system.

As the result of this ruling, when the state next sold revenue bonds to finance the acquisition or construction of dormitories,

**TWO OTHER
APARTMENT HOUSES
RPI BOUGHT
AND CONVERTED
TO DORMITORIES.**

*Five-story Scherer Hall, formerly
the "Berkeley Apartments."*



Richmond Professional Institute was included. A newspaper account of June 25, 1965, recorded:

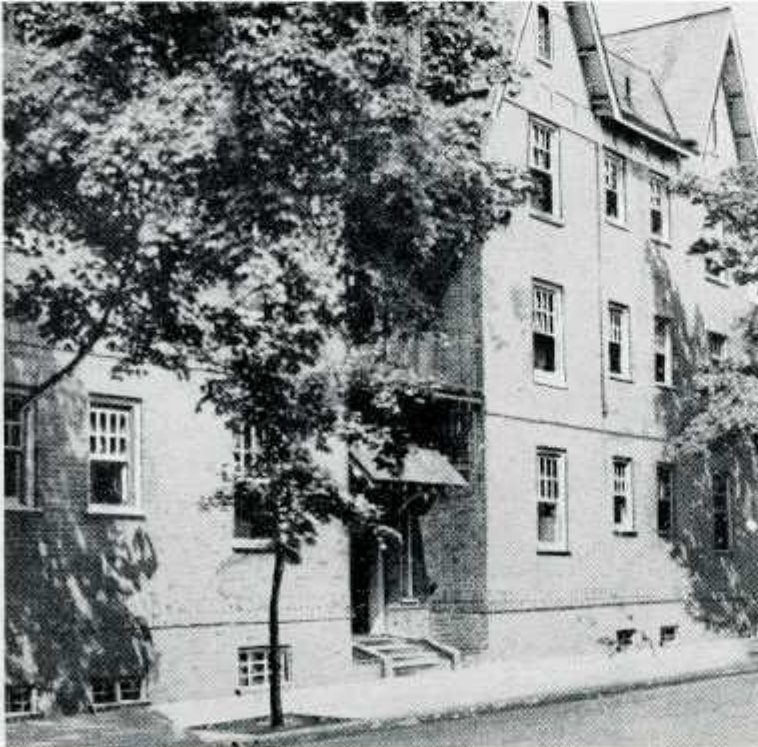
"Twenty bond issues totaling 33.85 million dollars have been sold by 13 state colleges and universities to finance building of dormitories, student centers and other revenue-producing projects. The share of the Richmond Professional Institute in the bond sale was approximately 5.8 million dollars." The larger part of RPI's share of this sum was used to repair and convert Monroe Terrace to a dormitory and to build a new 19-story dormitory.

In view of the new ruling and the successful financing, the RPI Foundation then decided to discontinue operation of dormitories, to go out of the "dormitory business" and to transfer the titles of all dormitory property it owned to the Commonwealth of Virginia, Richmond Professional Institute, at book value. The Foundation would then be in a position to function . . . "in other things to help out RPI . . ."

The effect of this decision and transfer was to increase the endowment funds in the custody of the RPI Foundation by over half a million dollars.

The new name of Monroe Terrace, after work was completed, became the Margaret Leah Johnson Hall, in honor of the first dean of students at Richmond Professional Institute.

During the first fifty years of its existence, all of RPI's dormitories were former residences or apartment houses that had been remodeled for student use.



The Lafayette, an apartment house purchased during the GI period.

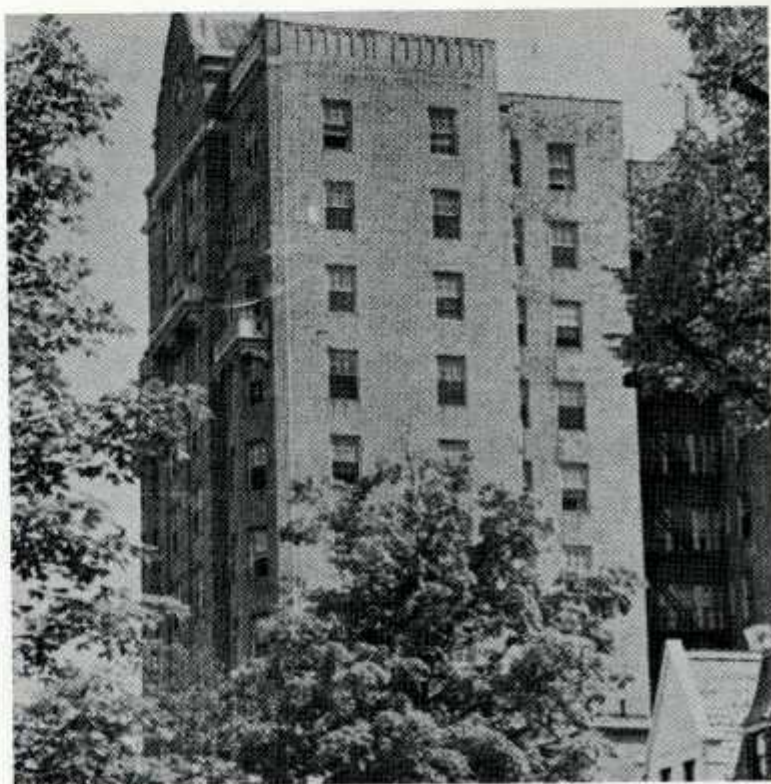
When the rather lengthy negotiations for the purchase of Monroe Terrace were in progress, Richard Maxwell, then president of the RPI Foundation's board of directors, tried to interest local capitalists in constructing a high-rise dormitory for RPI. At that time no one was interested.

Then, in 1967-68, before the Richmond Professional Institute became a part of Virginia Commonwealth University, a nineteen-story building was completed. It was constructed on the northwest corner of Franklin and Laurel Streets, facing Monroe Park. Women students moved into the building about January, 1968. The building was dedicated on May 14, 1968, with Governor Mills E. Godwin, Jr. as the speaker. A plaque was created with this inscription: "Rhoads Hall, Dedicated to the Memory of Webster S. Rhoads, Jr., 1907-1967. A member of the Board of Visitors, Richmond Professional Institute, 1962-1967. A distinguished citizen who gave generously of his time and talents for the improvement of Education in Virginia."

In the 1960's, the trend at RPI and at other urban colleges and universities seemed to be towards tall dormitories. New high-rise dormitories certainly did add to its prestige and improved community respect. It also seems that tall residential buildings in urban areas are easier to administer and protect, especially women's dormitories.

Nevertheless, a word can be said for old buildings of the residential type, especially larger old residences which, unlike smaller "row houses," have light on all four sides, have distinct

Monroe Terrace which, after purchase and remodeling, was named for Dr. Margaret L. Johnson, first dean of students.



advantages. Advantageous as high-rise dormitories may be, the fact remains that these tall buildings are a form of congregate or mass housing.

The enormous growth of colleges and universities has already brought much "bigness" to education, as some students say. Large high-rise dormitories make this "bigness" worse; and personal relations suffer. An example of this point of view was expressed in an editorial which appeared in the *Proscript*, February 25, 1966, entitled "RPI, MCV and Bigness":

"The larger our enrollment becomes, the smaller the individual will feel by comparison. . . . Personal relations suffer as the personal touch is lost . . . Students already are becoming mere numbers on IBM cards."

Students who live at home suffer less from "bigness," because home-life is highly personal. Some people think that the next most fortunate student in "mass education" is the one who, with from thirty to fifty other students, lives in a former residence or small apartment house which has been thoroughly remodeled "like RPI used to do when it was small." The writer thinks that the decision of RPI to acquire or build some large, high-rise dormitories was a wise one, largely because the Institute badly needed at that particular time something which would make people realize what great possibilities it had.

At the same time this writer also sticks to what he wrote about 1942, the year the Ritter-Hickok House was opened as a dormitory for about thirty-five women students. (Some of this has been quoted before but may be repeated here in part):

"There is something to be said in favor of the use of old residences of the Victorian era, when thoroughly remodeled and new bathrooms and closets installed. Certainly the parlors are quite suitable for students—these old buildings all had two parlors, and the larger ones had four.

"It may be that the large, 'congregate' dormitories so common on the campuses of conventional colleges do impress students more favorably at first sight. It is far easier, however, to maintain a happy college life in smaller buildings. . . . They make life in small groups very satisfying."¹



DEAN MARGARET L. JOHNSON

¹ About 1970 there seems to have been a swing away from highrise dormitories. At least the *Proposed Master Site Plans for Virginia Commonwealth University*, which was published about that time, recommended that "new buildings should be three or four stories high, reflecting the scale of surrounding residential areas."



Architects' drawing of RPI's first new dormitory: Webster S. Rhoads, Jr. Hall.

Growth of State Support

*While the State was Very Slow
in Offering Support to Urban Colleges Like RPI,
and was Hard to Convince,
Once it "Caught the Idea",
State Appropriations Became Generous.*

As has been previously pointed out, in 1925, when the College of William and Mary took over the urban college, no definite provision for state support could be made; and for the next fifteen years no help from state tax-derived funds was extended. In 1940, President John Stewart Bryan agreed to transfer to the Institute about \$10,000 per year of William and Mary's own appropriation from the state. But this generous action by William and Mary was still little.

The first help in a substantial amount, which RPI received from state tax-derived funds was more or less unintentional. State help to RPI was not the result of the realization on the part of the Commonwealth of Virginia that an urban college like RPI was a worthy institution which served a very large number of the sons and daughters of Virginia taxpayers. Actually the first help from state tax revenues came as the indirect result of the great changes in the cost of living that came about after the Depression and during and after World War II.

During the Great Depression the salaries of all state employees were cut about twenty per cent due to the decrease in the cost of living. The salaries of the teachers and employees of the Richmond Professional Institute were cut along with those of other state employees, even though at that time the state contributed little or nothing from its tax revenues to pay these salaries. Later, when economic conditions improved and the cost of living returned to nearer the predepression level, the General Assembly of Virginia appropriated to the Governor

sufficient tax-derived funds to "restore" the salary cuts made during the Great Depression; and later still made other "bonus" appropriations in the same way to make up for the rapid increases in living costs during and following World War II.

The significant thing about these "bonus" appropriations is that they were not made to the state's institutions, departments and colleges, as other appropriations were, but were made to the governor's office. This indirect, and unusual, method of appropriating tax-derived funds was of great benefit to the state's urban institutions in Norfolk and Richmond because their faculty and staffs met the requirements of eligibility as "state employees." If the "cost of living bonuses" had been made directly to the various state colleges, universities and institutes, as had always been done before, it is doubtful that the two urban institutions would have been included. In any case these "cost of living bonuses" cannot be regarded as giving evidence of a change in attitude of the state towards urban colleges or universities or as an endorsement of the midcity type of institution of higher education. That did not come until much later.

The total state aid which the Richmond Institute received between 1925 and 1952 is summarized in the following table: (Most of this was in the form of "cost of living bonuses"):

1925-40	\$00,000 per year
1940-42	\$10,000 per year
1942-44	\$17,380 per year
1944-45	\$20,070 per year
1945-48	\$24,000 per year
1948-50	\$62,525 per year
1950-52	\$99,540 per year ¹

Prior to the early 1950's, the Richmond Professional Institute as a branch of the College of William and Mary, could not make requests for financial aid directly to the state. Such requests had to be made by William and Mary, the "mother college." In 1951, Admiral Alvin D. Chandler was elected president of William and Mary and one of his first official acts was to announce that he would support RPI's budget requests to the full.

At this time it was the custom in Virginia for the Governor and his advisory committee on the state budget to visit each institution, hold a meeting, and give the head of the institution the opportunity to present its requests. RPI had never been given this opportunity before, but this time Dr. Hibbs was invited to state the case for the Richmond Institute.

He told the Governor and his budget committee three things: first, that in a recent survey made by the educational expert, Dean George A. Works of the University of Chicago, it had been conclusively determined that the need in Virginia for the educational services RPI was rendering was "evident";

¹ These figures are from the Governor's Budgets. They differ slightly in some cases from those in the appropriation acts.

secondly, the RPI programs often did "not have the quality that should characterize them"; and third, "this lack of quality was due to the fact that Virginia has not been willing to support the educational services at RPI at a creditable level."

It also was pointed out that at the time the Commonwealth of Virginia did not have one uniform salary scale for all the state-owned colleges which the sons and daughters of Virginia taxpayers attended but had two scales: one for RPI and the other urban college in Norfolk, and another for all the other state institutions of college rank.

At this meeting the Governor and the members of the committee sat in a large classroom, at William and Mary at Williamsburg, and listened to the appeals. A chart that made history was exhibited. The newspapers at that time recorded that "Dr. Hibbs presented figures which showed that the appropriations from tax revenues to operate both the Richmond Professional Institute and the Norfolk Division of William and Mary were so far below those made to other similar state institutions that they were highly discriminatory—against some taxpayers, in favor of others."

In fact, at six comparable state colleges, where costs of operation were about the same, the amount put up by the state for operating expenses varied, per student, per year, in an astonishing manner, as this listing shows:

Amount Appropriated Per Year, Per Full-time Student, By the Commonwealth of Virginia From the General Fund (i.e., From State Tax Revenues), For Operating Expenses ²	
Virginia State College	\$788 per student
Longwood College	553 per student
Madison College	434 per student
Radford College	363 per student
Norfolk Division, College of William and Mary	197 per student
Richmond Professional Institute, College of William and Mary	148 per student

These figures were presented on a chart with RPI's \$148 per student and Norfolk's \$197, at the bottom and the rankings of other similar colleges which received \$363 to \$788 per student, per year, at the top.³

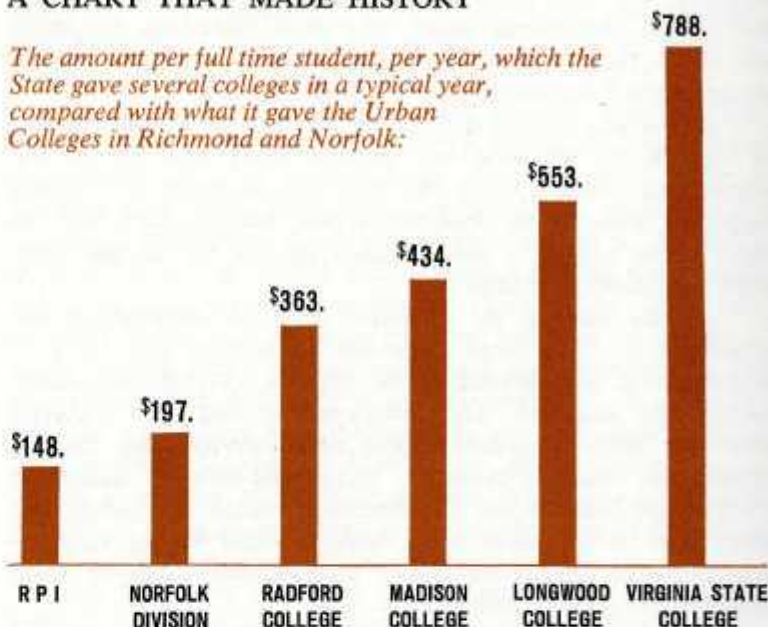
How could the state justify so much lower quality education in some of its colleges than in others? How can lower quality in Richmond and in Norfolk be remedied unless the state gives these two urban institutions as much per student, per year, as it gives to other colleges where conditions are similar? These were some of the questions put to the governor and his committee at the meeting.

² The fiscal year was 1952-53. The number of full-time students was as of the fall of 1952.

³ In compiling this list the University of Virginia, Virginia Polytechnic Institute, Virginia Military Institute and the College of William and Mary were not included, because there were valid reasons why the state might desire to spend more per student at these than at other institutions.

A CHART THAT MADE HISTORY

The amount per full time student, per year, which the State gave several colleges in a typical year, compared with what it gave the Urban Colleges in Richmond and Norfolk:



Governor John S. Battle asked several questions about these figures and took the chart in his hand and studied it carefully. He seemed not to have known about these wide variations. "Do we," he exclaimed, "really do this?"

The *Richmond News Leader*, in an editorial stated that "RPI's first independent budget request" was "plain spoken" and "left no room for misunderstanding." The editor of the *Times-Dispatch* wrote that "the Governor's budget advisors," who had heard so many "smooth pleas" in their tour of state institutions that they had become a little bored, were "bowled over by the facts" presented in the chart. As a result, RPI's appropriation for operating expenses increased seventy-one percent.

This, a newspaper reported, "was the largest increase percentage-wise made to any institution that year."

The following table shows the increase in appropriations from tax revenues to RPI for operating expenses from 1950-52 to 1958-60:

General Fund Appropriations to RPI From Tax-derived Revenues for Operating Expenses⁴

1950-52, average per year in round numbers (most of this originated in cost of living bonuses) . . .	\$ 99,540
1952-54, average per year (an increase of 71 percent)	171,110
1954-56, average per year (an increase of 45 percent)	249,348
1956-58, average per year	302,750
1958-60, average per year	414,413

⁴ These figures are from the Governor's Budgets. They differ slightly in some cases from those in the appropriation acts.

These increases, expressed in terms of percentages, were very large. But it must be remembered that the base on which they were figured was so small that the increases did not come anywhere near raising the appropriation to RPI to the level of state support that prevailed in other state-owned colleges. The discrimination complained of still existed, but not so much as before.

This policy of the state not to aid city-located colleges, of the newer type, by appropriating funds from tax sources to build buildings continued for many years. In the 1950's the state relaxed its policies a little more and built the first half of two new buildings at RPI.

In 1949, when the time came to make up the Governor's budget for 1950-52, the state engineers managed to insert a *conditional* item of \$100,000 to start construction of a modern gymnasium for RPI. Later, towards the end of Governor John S. Battle's term, the chief engineer in the Bureau of the Budget, Fred Q. Saunders, whose duty it was to advise the Governor and Budget Director, suggested that about \$200,000 remaining in one of the governor's discretionary funds, be allocated to RPI to increase the gymnasium fund. Governor Battle approved this recommendation.

This made about \$300,000 which was insufficient to build a complete building, so it was decided to build a one-story and basement structure in the rear of 818-819 West Franklin Street, and to plan it in such a way that a three-story addition could be built later to the front, if and when the state appropriated the additional funds. In 1956, the State General Assembly appropriated \$382,000 for this front section.

Last addition to RPI's first new building, a gymnasium.



The second new building constructed at RPI was built in two distinct stages—first the north section or wing, the part shown on the right of the picture. This was completed in 1958-59.

In 1967, after Dr. George J. Oliver became president, the remainder of the building was completed. A catalogue of RPI issued at this time said:

“The building is named for Dr. Henry H. Hibbs, who in 1917, organized what is now the Richmond Professional Institute and from 1917 to 1959 served as its chief administrative officer. He retired in June, 1959. Indicative of his outstanding service to the institution, to the state, and to the community of Richmond, the University of Richmond conferred upon him the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws in June, 1959.”

Dr. Hibbs retired in 1959 and Dr. George J. Oliver became the chief executive. In Dr. Oliver's first years as president there was not much change in state appropriations. This situation prevailed until about 1963, when more adequate appropriations began, as is shown later in this chapter.

RPI was made a separate state institution in 1962, a step which probably helped Dr. Oliver to obtain more adequate appropriations. To quote the RPI catalogue announcing the change:

“By action of the General Assembly in its 1962 session, Richmond Professional Institute was separated from the College of William and Mary and made an independent state-supported institution, effective July 1, 1962.”

In 1962 the first section of a science building was completed and paid for from a state appropriation of \$563,000. In 1965, a wing was added to the building. This was also paid for by the state.

The Hibbs Building after both wings were completed.



Legislative Battle of 1964

In the fall of 1963, Dr. Oliver submitted budget requests for the biennium 1964-66, including requests for funds for proposed new buildings. When the state budget was presented to the 1964 General Assembly it was found that RPI's requests had been cut drastically, and particularly the requests for capital funds.

Denial of requests for appropriations had happened many times before, but this time a spontaneous wave of public protest arose. The *Times-Dispatch* of March 18, 1964, carried an editorial with the title, "Kicking RPI Around", which stated that while "RPI is more or less accustomed" to that kind of treatment, this time "it is really too much." "RPI has not only been kicked around" but has been "kicked around unmercifully." The editorial concluded, "There is a limit to this; *such treatment can't go on forever.*"

Numerous protesting letters also appeared in the newspapers, a thing that had never happened before. Parents talked or wrote to legislators. The Board of Visitors, which the Governor had appointed a short time before, led by Messrs. Webster S. Rhoads, Jr. and Robert Archer Wilson, with President Oliver, asked the appropriations committee to reconsider. Three legislators who heard this appeal issued a joint statement saying that they thought "*RPI had made out a better case for more capital outlay funds than any other group to appear in the budget hearings.*"

The *Proscript* reported on February 7, 1964: "Mr. Rhoads said that of the 101 classrooms now at RPI, 31 are substantially substandard. He said that only 33 of the 101 had been originally designed as classrooms. He said the library was overcrowded and once had been a carriage house."⁵

Mr. Wilson said that RPI had the smallest campus of any four-year college in Virginia, 6.2 acres. A member of the House of Delegates, Junie Bradshaw, a former student and instructor, told members of the joint Senate Finance and House Appropriations Committee of his experience in teaching a law class "for which the only rooms available were an attic and a wood shop."

One newspaper's education writer commented that "the simple power of clearly stated facts" presented by the Board and President "had a visible impression." Another newspaper columnist wrote that this had impressed him too, and that he had also noticed "facts about RPI that had been known for years, at last seemed to have made something of an impact."⁶

As a result of this appeal to the 1964 legislative body to reconsider the recommendations made in the proposed budget, the Institute (to again quote an editorial in the *Richmond Times-Dispatch*) finally got a break . . . "Nearly \$1.5 million additional was made available to RPI for capital outlays." In addition to

⁵ This was the Ginter stable mentioned in previous chapters.

⁶ Lon Savage in the *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, March 29, 1964.

the 1964 General Assembly of Virginia appropriated a discretionary fund to the governor part of which was released by him to purchase the Scottish Rite Temple, a structure on the corner of Park Avenue and Harrison Street, and to convert it to a teaching building. The amount of \$185,000 was also appropriated for an addition to the Science Building.

The Legislative Session of 1966

In the winter of 1965, RPI again submitted its budget requests to the governor and the General Assembly of Virginia for the years 1966-67, and 1967-68. (This was the last budget submitted by Dr. George J. Oliver before he retired as president.) For the first time in its history, RPI's requests were cut comparatively little, and "RPI administrators," the newspapers reported, "were enthusiastic", especially about the capital outlay appropriations. They were as follows:

Architects' rendering of the James Branch Cabell Library.



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Architects' rendering of the James Branch Cabell Library.



- \$1,390,000 for a physical education addition to the gymnasium building.
- 1,360,000 to build the first half of a new library building. The second half (the upper stories) was to be completed by an appropriation from the General Assembly of 1972 of \$4,500,000.
- 1,900,000 for a new School of Art building on Harrison Street (see Chapter Four).
- 35,000 for extension of campus utilities.
- 17,300 for drawing plans for another large classroom building.

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capital outlay appropriations made by the 1966 General Assembly to RPI doubled the value of its physical plant; which is equivalent to saying that the General Assembly of Virginia did more in 1966 to help its growing urban Institute in Richmond improve its facilities than it had done in the entire period of about forty years before.

In 1966, the U. S. Government aided RPI by appropriating funds to help meet the cost of construction of a cafeteria in the Hibbs Building and for other building projects.

On January 7, 1967, the *Richmond Times-Dispatch* stated that "the Richmond Professional Institute is slated to get \$1,650,000 in federal funds to help construct the library, the School of Art classroom building and the Physical Education addition listed below." The news article continued: "Virginia's Commission on Higher Education Facilities last week recommended RPI, along with 13 other Virginia colleges, for inclusion in federal grants to build education facilities."

In its first forty years the Richmond Professional Institute purchased real estate one lot at a time, as the lots came on the market. In 1966-67, just before RPI was taken over by Virginia Commonwealth University, this policy was changed and the institution began purchasing whole blocks at one time. The building site for the new library was the first such purchase of a whole block, at about the same time. As Comptroller Holmes (later vice-president for finance in Virginia Commonwealth University) stated, there were 21 properties in this block.

The General Assembly of Virginia appropriated the \$1,390,000 for the physical education and gymnasium building in 1966, two years before RPI's fifty-one year life ended. The building was completed by the university, about the end of 1971 and the beginning of 1972.

In his first address to the General Assembly of Virginia in 1966, Governor Godwin was quoted in the newspapers as saying that RPI had "pointed the way":

"Here you can lean on the experience of Richmond Professional Institute and Old Dominion College. Both serve metropolitan areas. Both were separated from their 'mother institutions' four years ago. Both are doing a job of which we are all proud. Last fall, they ranked first and second respectively among Virginia's four-year institutions of higher learning in terms of total students enrolled . . ."

So far as the writer can recall, this was the first public endorsement of the Richmond Professional Institute made by a governor of Virginia. It, of course, had an effect on the Institute's "Growth of State Support," and therefore should be listed in this chapter.

Last Appropriation for RPI: 1968

As the fiftieth year of the Institute (or the university-to-be) drew to a close the administration proposed a \$22,770,000 ex-

pansion plan to the General Assembly and the governor for the biennium of 1968-70. According to the *Richmond Times-Dispatch* of February 24, 1967, the "top priority items for capital outlay" were for expansion and growth:

"At present," the newspaper said, "the fast growing" Institute "has the smallest campus—9.7 acres—and the largest total enrollment of any state-supported institution of higher learning in Virginia."

For land and renovation of existing buildings . . .	\$2,568,000
A 90 classroom building for the School of Business	\$3,917,000
A 40 classroom, four-story building for the School of Science	\$3,660,000
A 25 classroom building for education	\$1,680,000

The appropriations made by the General Assembly of 1968 were the last made to the Richmond Professional Institute under that name, since it was the 1968 session that consolidated RPI and the Medical College of Virginia to form Virginia Commonwealth University.

All this construction, the *Alumni News* said, will have not only a profound effect on RPI; it will also change the face of the lower Fan District of Richmond.

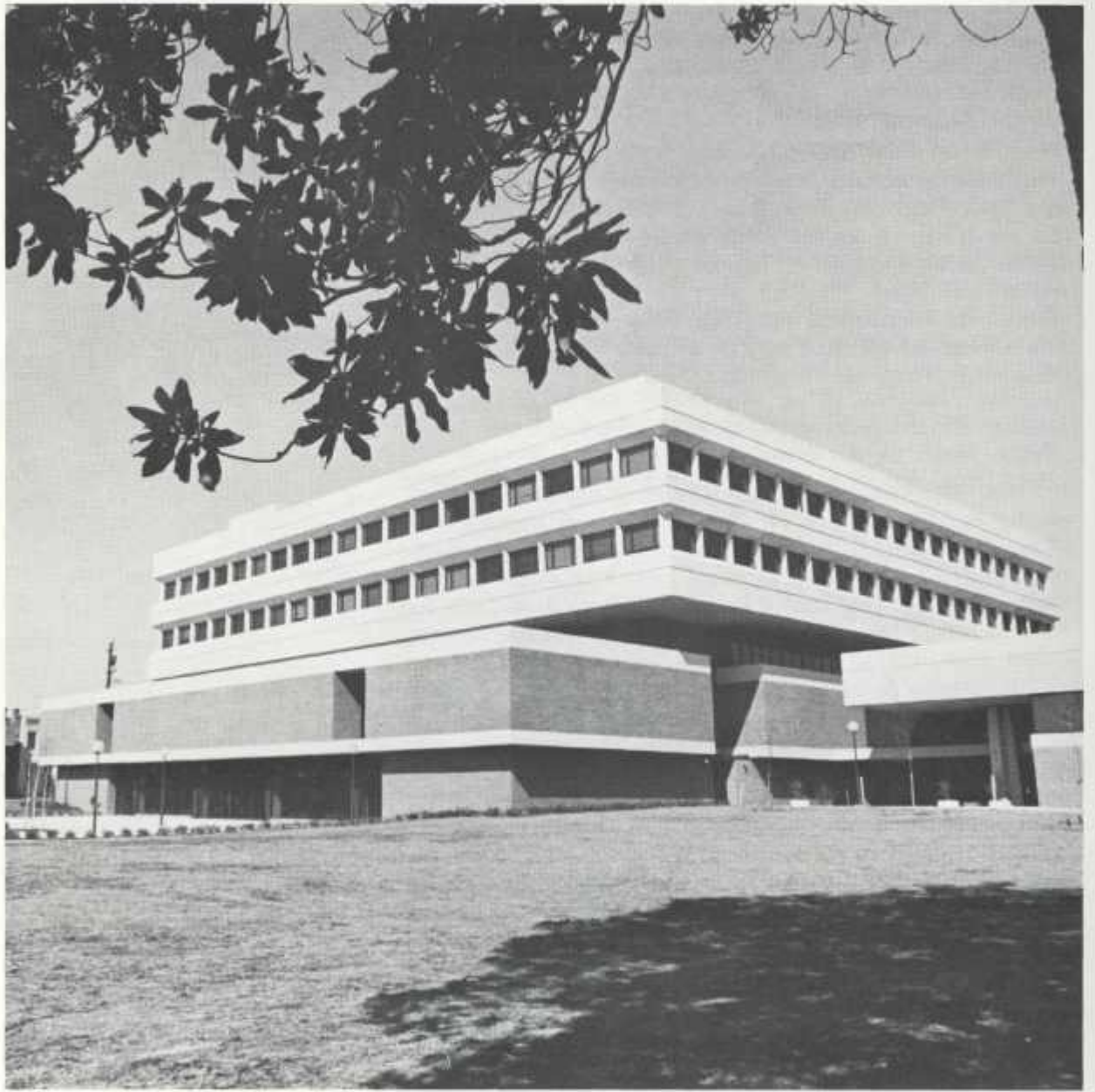
Increase in Appropriations for Operating Expenses: 1960 to 1968

The appropriations for the operating expenses (not including capital outlay) by the Commonwealth of Virginia from its general fund (i.e., from tax-derived revenues) to the Richmond Professional Institute increased from \$430,000 (in round numbers) for the year ending June 30, 1960, to \$1,484,000 for the year ending June 30, 1967, and to \$2,189,000 for the year ending June 30, 1968.

In addition to the above, RPI participated in a fund appropriated to the governor's office for the purpose of raising salaries of the faculty to the country-wide average. This new salary scale removed one of the greatest handicaps under which the Institute had labored since its establishment fifty years before.

The faculty in fiscal 1969 numbered 483 full-time and 287 part-time teachers.





VCU School of Business Building completed in 1972; from "VCU Magazine," May 1972, photograph by Gary Burns.

The Total Number Of Students Enrolling At RPI becomes the Largest in Virginia

*Unique Plan Worked Out by Governor Harrison and President Oliver to Quickly Increase Space to Provide for so Many Students.
Why RPI Could Grow Faster Than Other Colleges—Because of Its Midcity Location and the Nearness of Buildings that Could be Quickly Converted to Teaching Use.*

THE increase in enrollment at RPI, and at the other urban college in Norfolk, was especially large during the emergency of the 1960's, much larger than at the institutions of higher education which are located in the smaller towns and cities of Virginia. The following table shows the increase in RPI's enrollment from its beginning to 1967-68:

	Total En- rollments (Head Count)	Full- Time Enroll- ments	Part- Time Enroll- ments
1. Began in 1917.			
1917-18, first year	55	31	24
Fall of 1925, first year at Franklin and Shafer Street location	445	52	393
2. Then grew until enrollment ranked seventh in the state, in 1947 ¹			

¹The figures for the fall of 1947 are from a bulletin sent to the newspapers on December 6, 1947, by the U.S. Office of Education. Full-time students only were counted. The figures for 1964, 1965 and 1966 were compiled by the State Council of Higher Education. The ranks shown for these years is based on the "head count" and includes both full-time and part-time students.

Fall of 1947	2,149	1,638	511
Fall of 1953	4,303	1,813	2,490
Fall of 1962	5,199	2,085	3,114

3. Continued to grow until RPI ranked fourth in 1964

Fall of 1964	6,439	2,725	3,714
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4. Attained largest total enrollment in Virginia about 1965 or 1966.

Fall of 1965	7,855	3,696	4,159
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Fall of 1967, last year before consolidation with Medical College to form Virginia Commonwealth University; newspapers announce that total head-count enrollment passes 10,000, largest in state. Fall of 1969, Dr. Warren W. Brandt, first president of VCU, in his first letter to the alumni noted that the total head-count enrollment at the new university was 13,734, of which 12,059 was on the former RPI campus and 1,675 at the Medical College.

The reader will note that the writer has not said that these figures show that the Richmond Professional Institute grew until it became *the largest* institution of higher education in Virginia. There are many ways of ranking colleges according to growth or size. One, the "head-count" method used here, counts every student on the same basis. What these figures do show is that before its career changed in 1968, the total number of students of all types attending RPI became the largest in Virginia, a remarkable enough growth, especially when one considers how few students the Institute had in its early years, how few buildings it had throughout its existence, and how little its operation cost the state's taxpayers.

The U. S. Office of Education estimates that the number of students attending college in the U. S. doubled in the 1960's from 3,340,000 in 1961 to 6,840,000 about 1969-1970. Admissions to RPI during the period increased at an even greater rate. At the beginning of the 1960's, RPI had a small collection of old buildings plus a very few new buildings or half-buildings, probably the most poorly equipped institution in the state to help meet the problem that confronted every state at this time.

During the years after Dr. Oliver came, the State of Virginia did not show much interest in appropriating money to help RPI improve its work or enlarge its physical plant to accommodate more students, either by constructing new buildings or converting old ones. However, Dr. Oliver had not been in office very long before the state began to see that building new buildings on the campuses of state colleges and universities, while a very necessary policy for the future, was not a very effective immediate remedy for the predicament in which many high school graduates found themselves in the 1960's. State and college officials both found out that it took so long to plan and construct new buildings that purchase and conversion of more of the larger office buildings, apartment houses and residences standing nearby was the most satisfactory—really the only prac-

Raleigh Office Building.



licable method of *quickly* increasing the physical plant of an urban institution so as to meet the great emergency caused by the enormous increase in the number of students desiring to attend colleges and universities which occurred in the middle 1960's.

A Virginia governor provided money from his state discretionary fund to help RPI quickly expand to meet the emergency. According to the *Proscript* of January 8, 1965, Governor Albert S. Harrison urged Dr. Oliver "to admit more students to RPI" . . . and told him he would help . . . through State funds available to him—"to buy and renovate any buildings the college may need to provide additional classroom space."

The *Proscript* also expressed the opinion that Dr. Oliver's willingness and ability to cooperate with the governor in providing additional facilities quickly put the Richmond Professional Institute in the "best position ever" with the state government. This willingness, but especially the ability to cooperate with the state government in solving a serious problem, opened the eyes of state officials to the possibilities in urban colleges and universities that had not been realized before.

The following is a list of some of the larger nearby buildings which RPI bought in the mid 1960's, and converted quickly to educational use:

1964 . . . A twelve-story apartment house, Monroe Terrace, was bought and converted into a dormitory for women, students moving into some apartments as soon as the deed was signed. While the state did not contribute any money to this purchase it did sell bonds at low interest rates to make the purchase and remodeling possible and less costly.

1965 . . . The large Scottish Rite Temple was bought during the summer and made ready for use when college opened shortly after in the fall. This provided fourteen classrooms for immediate use, and also an additional cafeteria, faculty lounge and various offices.

1966 . . . The Raleigh (medical office) Building was bought during the early part of the summer. The entire four-story building was remodeled with such speed that it was ready for use in the following fall.

1967 . . . Franklin Terrace Apartments at 812-814 West Franklin Street was purchased and, as the *Richmond Times-Dispatch* announced on April 7, "Raymond T. Holmes, Jr., the college's comptroller" exclaimed that the plan is "to convert the four-story structure into a classroom and faculty office building for use beginning in September," about five months after the building was bought.

During these years several residences were also bought in the same way and quickly remodeled.

Statistics collected by the State Council of Higher Education show that from 1962-63 to 1965-66, the enrollment at RPI (in terms of full-time equivalents) increased about 88 percent, while in the total of all state colleges and universities, the increase was only 17 percent.

The Scottish Rite Temple, a former church.



An example of the way the purchase and remodeling of a nearby existing building can help to meet a pressing emergency that a new building can't.

The Cobblestone Campus

*Some Questions About Mid-City Campuses
—in Richmond and in Some Other Cities.*

OF all the criticisms with which Richmond Professional Institute dealt in its fifty-one-year journey, two were made quite frequently. They were that the school did not have a campus like other colleges; and secondly, that it did not look like a college or university. During the early years the writer often felt that those widespread ideas, even though erroneous, had much to do with the slowness of the state and city to realize the potential value of an institution of higher education in mid-city and organized around the resources of a city.

Once a very prominent member of the Richmond City Council wanted to help the Richmond Professional Institute. He said he saw its possibilities, but frankly, the most substantial help he could think of was to advise RPI to move out where it could have a campus like other colleges, with trees, grass and wide open spaces.

A public opinion survey¹ by Sidney Hollander Associates reported that several parents and some community leaders complained that the RPI "campus" in Richmond's central area was entirely unsuitable and implied that an institution so located never could amount to much.

There also was the argument that young students should not have to walk on city streets as other people do but, rather, that they should have shady, tree-lined campus walkways. Certainly, critics said, students should not have to walk through alleys, on cobblestones, or through back yards, as they always

¹ This survey was commissioned by the RPI Foundation on the recommendation of Richard Maxwell, who was then president of the Board of Directors.

had done at the Richmond Professional Institute. Even a student once wrote a Richmond newspaper voicing the complaint that RPI's mid-city campus did not have a "clearly defined area," but that buildings were scattered over several blocks and mixed with private residences, apartment houses, churches and doctors' offices.

While the RPI administration would have liked to have met some of the criticisms, it could not move the school from its urban location. One of the important reasons was that the Institute had to be located in the middle of the city to offer the kind of study and training it was providing. On this matter several early catalogues stated:

"For example, if social work, the first subject taught at the Richmond Professional Institute, could have been offered in Williamsburg or in any other of Virginia's college towns, this might have been done; and what is now Richmond Professional Institute might never have grown from a handful of students in 1917-25 to the number who attend it today."

There was yet another reason why RPI could not move to a suburb or a rural location, where the 2,000 acres one State Higher Education Study Commission said was needed could be found. This reason was that, while the school did have the power to move furniture and equipment, it did not have the power to move the larger number of night school students or the equally large number of day students who had part-time jobs in the city. Nor did it have the power to move the large number of part-time, highly specialized faculty. The Institute feared that if it moved it might well end up with fewer students and become not something unique, but just another third rate, conventional college.

But, while RPI could not bring itself to adopt suggestions that it move out of the city, the administration did worry over the question. Over the years it made several studies and surveys to learn what other urban institutions were doing and what it could do to make its grounds look more attractive. Several of the largest urban universities in the country were visited. Two distinct types of midcity campuses were found in these visits and studies.

First, there was the older type of urban university which had originally been established outside the central city, on a small conventional-type campus; but, which after the passage of years—of many years in most cases—the city had grown around them and changed the site from rural, or suburban, to midcity, or urban.

Secondly, there was the newer type of urban university which (like RPI) had been established in recent times on city streets.

What did the older type of universities, once suburban but now surrounded by city growth, do when, after a hundred years or so, the city grew around them? Did they usually move farther out? Or did they try to extend their rural-like campuses? Or did they expand along city streets?

Examples of this type of urban university are such institutions as the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia, Brown University in Providence, R. I., and possibly Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts. RPI's investigations found that the older type of university actually changed. While it usually had a small, park-like shady and grassy area that once may have been called "the campus", "yard" or "college green"; (and while this campus, or yard or green was often surrounded by an ornamental iron fence) it was found, on closer examination, that *only a portion of the activities today are being carried on within this area*. As the fiscal agent of one of these universities wrote: "The university boundaries" have pushed out beyond its small "campus" in "all directions."

In other words, RPI's studies found that, due to recent growth, many of the oldest universities in the country now have many, and sometimes most of their present buildings outside the fenced or "campus" or "yard" or "green" area; and that these buildings in which many or most of their present activities are actually carried on "are scattered around" and often mixed with privately-owned buildings and city streets just as they are in Richmond. Seldom did the RPI studies find the newer buildings to stand on a park-like campus.

For example, one very old urban university in connection with an anniversary celebration published a pictorial map showing the location and appearance of all its buildings, totaling about 100. From this map the reader gets the idea that only about a fourth of the present university's buildings are now in-



From the "Commonwealth Magazine," published by the Virginia State Chamber of Commerce.

The alleys around RPI were paved with cobblestones years ago. Some of the front and side yards, where student-walking kills grass, are also paved with cobbles.

side the fenced park-like area. Another quarter appear to be located across a street from the fenced, campus-like area. The remaining buildings seem to be farther away and many of these appear to be scattered in about 25 city blocks.

These RPI surveys also showed that some midcity institutions appeared to try to "romanticize" the area in which they were located by adding touches of human interest or historical association. This writer has himself not been above trying to influence the attitude of students toward a midcity campus by



attempting to instill a little sentiment into the question of location.

A former student, who sent some reminiscences for this history, wrote that the chapel talk made by Dr. Hibbs which "most impressed" her was a sort of reading, with comments, of Henry Carey's lyric poem, "Sally In Our Alley" (included in Palgrave's "Golden Treasury"):

*"Of all the girls that are so smart
There's none like pretty Sally;
She is the darling of my heart,
And she lives in our alley."*

And another verse:

*"When Christmas comes about again
O then I shall have money.
I'll hoard it up, and box it all;
I'll give it to my honey.
I would it were ten thousand pound,
I'd give it all to Sally.
She is the darling of my heart,
And she lives in our alley."*

RPI students liked this lyric because they spent much time walking through the alleys, which run through the area where most of the old and new buildings of the school then were located.

Indeed, as recently as 1970, Miss Mary Ellen Tisdale, vice president of the Student Government Association for 1970-71, recalled that her great-aunt had attended RPI when that poem was quoted to students and that she "had remembered it all these years."

One newspaper reporter, Jack Bilven, used the term "backyard campus" in an article for the *Richmond Times-Dispatch* of November 12, 1950. Another descriptive term was later used about other schools by James M. Hester, president of New York University, in the June 5, 1966 issue of *This Week*, in an article entitled "The Case for the Asphalt Campus."

In old Richmond, alleys were paved with cobblestone. From that, RPI students began to call the area "The Cobblestone Campus." The term came still more into popular use when the May, 1965 issue of *The Commonwealth Magazine*, published by the Virginia State Chamber of Commerce, featured an article on the school entitled "The Cobblestone Campus."

Sometimes, other approaches were used to encourage sentiments for the area through the naming of some buildings. For example, at RPI two old residences at 902-904 Park Avenue had been joined and made into a women's dormitory. This converted structure was called "Lee House." The basis for that name was the fact that the Confederate Cavalry General Fitzhugh Lee (a nephew of General Robert E. Lee) had housed his family at 904 Park Avenue while he served with the U. S. Army during



Examples of additions, with attractive rear entrances facing the middle of the block, made them look more like a campus. Preservation of existing trees, common in many city backyards, also helped.



the Spanish-American War, as well as living there himself for a short time after he returned from that war.

RPI students who lived in the dormitory many years later said that the name of Lee made the building more attractive.

RPI's efforts to try to make surroundings of buildings more pleasing and to look more like a conventional campus were in line with views expressed by some authorities on cities.

One remark in the April 13, 1957 issue of *The New Yorker*, was quoted: "Generally the first step . . . is to eliminate half the streets and to create a system of superblocks, turning the space so saved into gardens, green promenades and play grounds . . . also turning grimy alleys into grass-lined pedestrian malls and extending the open spaces . . . obtained by closing the alleys, by clearing the backyards and removing old fences and garages . . . and adding tree-lined walks."

Another magazine article which impressed the administration was entitled "Can New York Be Saved?", by Peter Blake in the *Saturday Review* of January 23, 1965: "The existence of several city blocks in Manhattan . . . in which backyard space has been pooled to form a single park accessible to all houses facing it . . . suggests that backyards might be one of our many overlooked resources."

**ALLEY IMPROVEMENTS
ON AN URBAN CAMPUS
AN ABSOLUTE NECESSITY.**

On May 1, 1958, the Richmond "News Leader" published these two pictures to show what RPI was trying to do to improve alleys on its campus.

The first is an urban campus alley at its worst, and on the opposite page, an example of how RPI improved an alley-wide space.



In its struggles over this question of improving surroundings, RPI found a fine example of the application of these principles just next door to its Administration Building—the Scott-Bocock House at 909 West Franklin Street.

Old city maps revealed that the late Frederic W. Scott, builder of the house and one of Richmond's leading post-Civil War citizens, and a man of original ideas, formed the campus-like grounds around the mansion *in exactly the way recommended many years later by the experts* quoted above.

When Mr. Scott built his house, there were two alleys running back of it from Shafer Street to Harrison Street. Between the alleys was a horse lot. Mr. Scott asked the City of Richmond to permit him to close one of the two alleys and join the space so obtained to the old horse lot and to his backyard. The result would be the largest park-like area surrounding any private residence in central Richmond. Moreover, Mr. Scott, who was a man of determination, kept at the city authorities until the necessary permission to close the alley was granted. He then, to again quote the present-day urban renewal expert, turned the "grimy alley into gardens, with green, open spaces" and "tree-lined walks."

His daughter, Mrs. Elisabeth Scott Bocock, has continued



(Right) In the Mid-1960's the City of Richmond permitted Shafer Street to be closed to traffic, thus eliminating one of the worst situations on the Cobblestone Campus.

(Below) A student submitted this drawing of what an unsightly alley of the cobblestone campus might be made to look like—but he omitted the cobblestones.



the work to the present day. She also has made an improvement to the Scott-Bocock House that ought to be made on all urban campuses which use some old converted residences. Originally, the Scott House was built with the kitchen and service rooms in the rear. This cut off the best view from the house to the campus-like rear lawns. Mrs. Bocock remedied this by remodeling the rear of the house and the kitchen so as to provide as good access and view from the back of the building as from the front.

In connection with its studies, RPI was impressed with what had been done in Philadelphia and some other cities to improve the surrounding of college and university buildings by alley and street closings. When Dr. George J. Oliver was president of RPI the Richmond City Council gave permission to close Shafer Street between Park Avenue and Franklin Street. Later still, when the entire block between Park Avenue, Floyd Avenue and Cathedral Place was bought to form a site for the Cabell Library, all alleys in the block were closed.

The *Richmond News Leader* once published a map showing what RPI hoped to do to improve the surroundings of the 800 and 900 blocks between Franklin Street and Park Avenue. The candid historian must admit that not much was actually accomplished at that time. The newspaper did publish some pictures that may have some historical value, however, in showing what the RPI administration was trying to do to enhance the landscape of its mid-city location.

**THE OLD AND THE NEW
STOOD SIDE-BY-SIDE
ON THE RPI CAMPUS.**

The building on the right of this picture is the Ritter-Hickok House, built in the early 1850's. Next is the new Gymnasium Building built in the contemporary style about 1950. On the extreme left is the twelve-story, former Monroe Terrace apartments, built about 1912 and now a women's dormitory (Johnson Hall).



GEORGE J. OLIVER
President of RPI
1959-1967



RPI works Toward University Status: 1955-1967

*Dr. George J. Oliver is President;
School of Arts and Sciences Added, 1965;
School of Education, 1964;
Faculty Greatly Increased and Salaries Raised;
Administrative Staff Expanded;
Dr. Roland H. Nelson, Jr., is President, 1967-68.*

MR. HIBBS retired in 1959 and was succeeded by Dr. George J. Oliver, who at that time was Coordinator of Branch Activities, head of the Department of Education and Director of Extension for the College of William and Mary. When Dr. Oliver came to RPI it was a professional institution. When he retired in 1967 it had become a comprehensive college, working towards university status.

Admiral Alvin Duke Chandler, a former president of the College of William and Mary in 1951 remarked, sometime later after he had become acquainted with it, that the Richmond Professional Institute "seemed to be organized more like a university than a college." Dr. Oliver, in his first interview with the press in 1959, was quoted as saying that "he expects RPI in its organization to compare with New York's Columbia University, eventually."

The difference in the two types of organization is important from the standpoint of the history of the Richmond Professional Institute. In a typical college control is normally by a general faculty and a general dean. It is they who plan the courses of study and decide what subjects a student shall study. It is true that in the college form of organization there are departments and department heads, but these are not autonomous or independent of the general faculty. In the university type of organization, on the contrary, instruction and administration are more

or less controlled by specialized faculties and deans, which are autonomous and independent. The Directory of Higher Education published by the U. S. Office of Education for 1960-61 confirmed this distinction when it observed that universities are normally divided into schools which are organized with a dean or director in charge. The Richmond Professional Institute was organized in schools from the very beginning. This simplified its growth to university status.

The first newspaper editorial to note and endorse the growth of the Richmond Professional Institute "towards university status" was published in the *Richmond News Leader*. Part of this editorial has been quoted already. The remainder, written with a light touch, may be printed here to dilute a rather heavy discussion:

"Those who live in Richmond's Fan District . . . are aware of RPI's vitality. Others may have failed to realize what is going on there. *The red-headed stepchild of Virginia's higher education program is leaping toward university status.* . . . Today RPI offers educational opportunities not duplicated anywhere in Virginia . . . The time is not far off when RPI will be able to offer the doctorates that Richmond is now powerless to provide. . . .

"There are times when RPI", the editorial continued, gets "a little too beatnik for the local taste, and there are times—especially when homeowners in the Fan are searching for a place to park—that RPI gets to be a headache. But these are small irritations against a vast amount of good. RPI is doing its necessary job superbly."



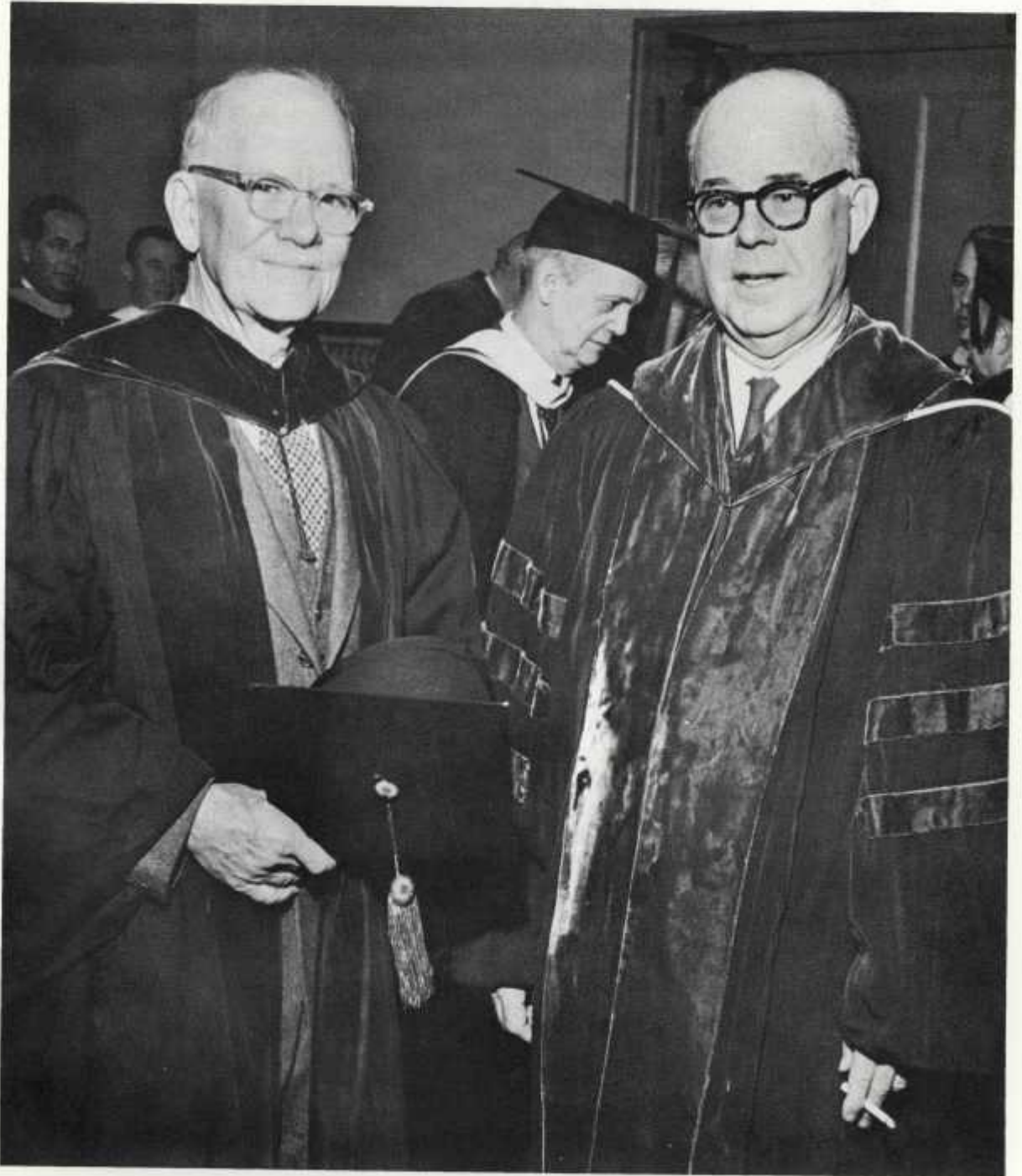
Dr. and Mrs. Oliver served with dedication as the "first family" of RPI from 1959 until 1967.

Expansion of the curriculum was a step needed in order to attain university status. For the school's first forty years there was strong sentiment that the Richmond Professional Institute should not duplicate the work of other colleges and universities in the state, but should confine its work to professional fields of study not offered by other colleges or universities, public or private. More particularly, it was believed that the Richmond Professional Institute should stay out of the field of arts and sciences and concentrate on occupational and professional education.

In 1952 the General Assembly of Virginia caused a legislative commission to be appointed to study the "proper place" of RPI "in the state-supported scheme of higher education." It was generally thought that this action was requested by some of the liberal arts colleges and universities in the state which believed that the Institute at that time should not, in spite of requests from students, expand into the fields of liberal arts or teacher education. This 1952 commission did not make a report probably because it found that the administration at RPI was perfectly willing at that time to respect the requests of its sister colleges about offering liberal arts degrees and degrees in education.

After 1959, when Dr. Hibbs retired and Dr. George J. Oliver succeeded him, the situation in Virginia changed radically

Dr. Hibbs (left) chats with Dr. Oliver (right) on the occasion of his inauguration on December 9, 1959.



and pressure arose from accreditation officials, state officials and others for RPI to expand into both these forbidden fields. Put in another way, when the population explosion of the 1960's became acute, there was a scarcity of places in general colleges and universities and a break in the decades-long opposition to a school of liberal arts and sciences came. About 1964-65 the State Council of Higher Education and a study committee of the Southern Association of Colleges recommended that a School of Arts and Sciences be added to the offerings of RPI.

In November, 1965, accordingly, the RPI Board of Visitors approved the recommendation to establish such a school. On January 7, 1966, the president's office announced that the Board of Visitors, on the recommendation of Doctor Oliver, had also created two new administrative positions: Dean of the new School of Arts and Sciences, and Dean of Graduate Work.

In 1961 and again in 1963, the State Council of Higher Education recommended that the time had come for the Richmond Professional Institute "to broaden its teacher-education programs" to the dimensions of a full-fledged School of Education. In March, Dr. Oliver's office announced that this recommendation had been accepted and that a director of the new school would be appointed as soon as possible. This was done and the new school opened September, 1964.

The Richmond *Times-Dispatch* of March 20, 1964, recorded: "RPI now prepares teachers of art, physical education, business, distributive education, drama, music, and elementary education. The new school will co-ordinate these programs and add programs in such secondary-school fields as English, mathematics, science, and social studies.

As the result of these additions the organization of the Richmond Professional Institute, just before the formation of Virginia Commonwealth University, included these schools and programs of study:

Two exclusively graduate-professional schools open to college graduates only: Social Work, Rehabilitation Counseling.

Eleven professional schools or departments, each of which offers the Bachelor's Degree and several of which offer the Master's.

One school of Engineering in cooperation with Virginia Polytechnic Institute.

One school (or College) of Arts and Sciences, with a dean in charge, and with the usual departments.

Several two-year semiprofessional or junior college programs of study.

The candid observer must see from this list that the Richmond Professional Institute long before 1968 had more professional schools and departments than many institutions of higher education which have been accepted as universities for years.

Accomplishments of the Oliver administration, each of which

improved and broadened the work of the Richmond Professional Institute and also carried the Institute farther toward university status, included:

1. During the Oliver administration, by act of the General Assembly in its 1962 session, Richmond Professional Institute was separated from the College of William and Mary and made an independent state-supported institution.

2. During the Oliver administration the administrative staff of RPI was greatly enlarged by the appointment of additional officers. During the period when the state gave very little support, there were far too few officers of administration at the Institute. Dr. Oliver and the Board of Visitors, with the cooperation of the state which provided the necessary funds, improved this situation greatly by adding the following positions:

A dean and assistant dean, in addition to the president.

A dean of the graduate school

A dean of men and a dean of women

A comptroller (in addition to the bursar and auditor)

A director of development

A director of alumni

Two assistant directors of the Evening College

A chief of police and two additional police officers

A data processing department with a supervisor

The Directory of the Administrative Staff circulated on November 1, 1965 (including secretaries, clerks, hostesses, managers, accountants, deans and assistants) contained more than 129 names, many more than in 1959 when the Oliver administration began.

3. During the Oliver administration the faculty and full-time teaching staff increased from about 123, as listed in the 1960 catalogue, to 222 in 1967.

4. The number of students increased, from a total of 4,303 in the fall of 1959 to 7,855 in the fall of 1965 and, counting both day and night students, to over 10,000 in the fall of 1967.

5. The Oliver administration found, and in many cases "created" the additional space required to teach this enormous increase in enrollment.

6. During Dr. Oliver's eight-year term of office, the Richmond *Times-Dispatch* estimated that the value of the physical plant at RPI increased to \$18 million (including buildings under construction or for which appropriations had been made).

One educational authority in 1967 wrote that whatever happens to RPI in the future, the historian must record that the Oliver administration is the one during which the construction of new buildings at RPI began in a big way. Of course, as Dr. Oliver remarked in his inaugural address, RPI had constructed two new buildings before he came in 1959, but in the first six or seven years after he came nine new buildings (most of them large) had been built, were under construction or had been authorized.

Though these advances and others made during the Oliver administration moved RPI closer towards university status, Richmond Professional Institute did not attain this status in the way many professional or technical institutions did. This is to say, RPI did not attain the status of university by developing into a university and changing its name to university. On the contrary, it attained this status by the route of consolidation with the Medical College of Virginia.

After serving as chief administrative officer from 1959 to 1967 (as provost until 1962 and after 1962 with the title of president) Dr. Oliver retired, effective July 1, 1967. He was succeeded by Dr. Roland H. Nelson, Jr., who served as president of Richmond Professional Institute for one year until July 1, 1968 when RPI and the Medical College of Virginia were joined to form Virginia Commonwealth University.

Dr. Roland H. Nelson, Jr. (center), who succeeded Dr. Oliver (right) as president of RPI, and Dr. Hibbs.



RPI attains University Status by The Consolidated Route

*i.e., By Consolidation with
the Medical College of Virginia to Form
Virginia Commonwealth University,
1968.*

IN 1965 a state Higher Education Study Commission made its report in which, among other recommendations, it suggested that an urban university be established by consolidating the Richmond Professional Institute and the Medical College of Virginia.

In 1966 the General Assembly of Virginia authorized the appointment of a special committee to study the matter thoroughly and make recommendations. Edward A. Wayne was appointed chairman of this fifteen-member commission and the group became known as the Wayne Commission.

In the latter part of 1967 the commission filed its report which recommended that the consolidation be made, and that the new university be named Virginia Commonwealth University, and that it have two campuses. One, the RPI campus, which should be extended immediately south to Main Street, and as soon as possible, and, when needed, on south through Oregon Hill towards the James River. The second campus would be the existing campus of the Medical College of Virginia which would retain its name and become the Health Sciences Division of Virginia Commonwealth University.

It was also recommended that the effective date of the establishment of the university be July 1, 1968.

It was proposed that the new university not simply be located in the central section of Richmond but that it be urban-oriented and concentrated on "meeting the needs of an urban population living and working in an urban environment." The

report called attention to the fact that no such urban university "now exists in Virginia."

The recommendations of the commission were adopted by the Board of Visitors of the Medical College of Virginia on December 8, 1967, and by the Board of Visitors of Richmond Professional Institute on December 22, 1967. Legislation supporting the recommendations was introduced in the General Assembly on January 18, 1968. On February 2, 1968, the House of Delegates approved a bill providing for establishment of the new university by an 89-0 vote. The Virginia Senate approved the bill on February 13, 1968, by a vote of 39-0.

On March 1, 1968, Governor Mills E. Godwin, Jr., signed into law the legislation creating Virginia Commonwealth University. On July 1, the new university began operating.

What did RPI contribute to VCU? A Summary.

Like the other party to the consolidation, the Medical College of Virginia, the Richmond Professional Institute made substantial contributions to Virginia Commonwealth University. The first was in the very large enrollment it had built up over the years. Not many new universities start, as VCU did, with over 10 thousand students.

As to location, when RPI and the RPI Foundation, years ago, made the decision to develop an institution of higher education, not in a suburb, or a small town or small city or country place, but in the midst of a large city—perhaps by this decision RPI made its greatest contribution to Virginia Commonwealth University. Perhaps if RPI had not developed as it did and where it did, VCU might have been established in a suburb of Richmond. Perhaps it would not have turned out to be an urban centered university at all. This is speculation. One can also speculate that a lesser professional emphasis at RPI in its early days would have resulted in a different kind of Virginia Commonwealth University today and in the future.

As to buildings and grounds, there is no satisfactory photograph or drawing that shows the contribution RPI made to the physical plant of the new university. The nearest representation is a drawing made for VCU a few years after it was established. This drawing is reproduced on page 159.

As to faculty, another contribution of RPI to the new university was in the teaching staff it provided. Most new enterprises have to devote much more time to recruiting and training a staff than VCU did.

RPI provided the new university with about 12,500 loyal alumni who believed in what the retiring RPI had done in its fifty-one years of history and in what VCU, which adopted them, and made them its alumni, would do in the future.

Signing into law the bill which created Virginia Commonwealth University are, standing, from left: former state Senator Lloyd C. Bird, Delegate Eleanor P. Sheppard, Delegate D. French Slaughter, Jr.; seated: Governor Mills E. Godwin, Jr.





FRANCIS J. BROOKE
Academic Affairs



RAYMOND T. HOLMES, JR.
Finance

TWO RPI OFFICERS
WHO BECAME VICE-PRESIDENTS
OF
VIRGINIA COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY

Notes On the R.P.I. Foundation

RELECTING on the years of development for Richmond Professional Institute, Dr. Hibbs wrote: "As one looks back on the history of the Richmond Professional Institute and notes how it developed from a small professional school in 1917 until Virginia Commonwealth University was formed in 1968, nothing appears more certain than, without the aid of this group of private citizens, now bearing the corporate title RPI FOUNDATION, what was accomplished would never have come about."

Throughout the history of Richmond Professional Institute, Dr. Hibbs has illustrated how the Foundation served the institution.

The Foundation was organized as a non-stock, non-profit corporation in 1917. In 1925 the Board of Trustees reached agreement with the College of William and Mary to accept the Richmond school as a part of that institution, thus ending the years that the Foundation board was responsible for the management of the institution. It was at that time that the institution became a part of the state system of higher education and ceased operation as a private college.

Changes in the corporate title as recorded in the records of the State Corporation Commission have occurred six times since the original Richmond School of Social Economy, Inc. The SCC recorded entries and the date on which they occurred are:

April 9, 1917	Richmond School of Social Economy, Inc.
April 13, 1923	The Richmond School of Social Work and Public Health, Inc.
July 29, 1944	Richmond School of Social Work and Public Health of the College of William and Mary, Inc.

May 16, 1951	The Endowment Association of the Richmond Professional Institute of the College of William and Mary, Inc.
November 1, 1956	Citizen's Foundation of the Richmond Professional Institute of the College of William and Mary, Inc.
August 16, 1962	Citizens' Foundation of the Richmond Professional Institute, Inc.
May 27, 1964	RPI FOUNDATION

From its founding in 1917 until the College became associated with the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, tuition income and monies raised by the Foundation provided the sole support of the institution.

The Foundation has been led by only four presidents of the Board of Directors. The first president was the Reverend J. J. Scherer, Jr., minister of the First English Evangelical Lutheran Church, who served from 1917 until his death in 1956. He was succeeded by Alvin Duke Chandler from 1957 to 1962; Richard Maxwell from 1962 to 1964; and Alan S. Donnahoe from 1964 until the present time.

Dean Wortley F. Rudd, Wyndham R. Meredith, I. J. Marcuse, Mrs. Roy K. Flannagan and Harris Hart have served the Foundation as vice-presidents. While president of Richmond Professional Institute, Dr. George J. Oliver served the Foundation as executive vice-president. Dr. Warren W. Brandt, president of Virginia Commonwealth University currently fills that position on the Foundation board of directors.

Officers and members of the board of directors for the year beginning July 1, 1972, are:

Alan S. Donnahoe, *president*

Warren W. Brandt, *executive vice-president*

Ernest V. Woodall, *secretary-treasurer*

Fitzgerald Bemiss	Wyndham B. Blanton
Andrew J. Brent	H. Hiter Harris
Henry H. Hibbs	W. Stirling King
Wade G. McCargo	George J. Oliver
John W. Riely	W. Harry Schwarzschild, Jr.
William B. Thalhimier, Jr.	

Available records from the archives of the James Branch Cabell Library about the Foundation indicate the following individuals have served on the board of directors:

Col. A. A. Anderson	1930-1941
Frank Bane	1924
E. L. Bemiss	1918-1922
Fitzgerald Bemiss	1963-present
Dr. Karl S. Blackwell	1924-1940

Dr. Wyndham B. Blanton	1972-present
J. Gordon Bohannon	1943-1944
Dr. Warren W. Brandt	1968-present
Andrew J. Brent	1963-present
J. Malcolm Bridges	1960-1971
Rev. E. E. Brosnan	1922-1924
John Stewart Bryan	1940-1945
Mrs. James B. Bullard	1951-1954
Dr. E. N. Calisch	1917-1918
T. M. Carrington	1917-1935
Adm. A. D. Chandler	1954-1962
Dr. J. A. C. Chandler	1918-1936
Miss Helen D. Christian	1917-1926
Dr. C. C. Coleman	1943-1949
Dr. M. S. Colonna	1917-1918
R. E. Cunningham	1924-1930
Virginius Dabney	1968-1970
Carlisle R. Davis	1963-1964
Alan S. Donnahoe	1963-present
Charles J. Duke, Jr.	1944-1954
F. B. Dunford	1917-1923
R. T. English, Jr.	1956-1962
Mrs. C. H. Fentress	1932-1943
Mrs. Roy K. Flannagan	1917-1951
J. Vaughn Gary	1917-1919
Rev. Churchill J. Gibson	1939-1963
Mrs. Helen Stevens Gravatt	1921-1927
Miss Catherine Harahan	1937-1941
W. J. Harahan	1928-1939
Rev. Charles Harrigan	1917-1921
H. Hiter Harris	1971-present
Dr. Harris Hart	1920-1962
Dr. O. L. Hatcher	1918-1925; 1928-1947
Miss Katherine H. Hawes	1917-1918
Robert Henley	1925-1928
Miss Cathryn Henna	1937-1944
Dr. Henry H. Hibbs	1926-present
Rev. W. E. Hill	1928-1939
Raleigh Hobson	1954-1963
Dr. J. Shelton Horsley	1925-1947
Judge John L. Ingram	1928-1939
Mrs. Ralph H. Johnson	1917-1918
Mrs. W. C. Jones	1933-1943
W. Stirling King	1947-present
Mrs. D. A. Kuyk	1918-1923
R. A. Lancaster, Jr.	1930-1941
Dr. H. D. C. Maclachlan	1917-1929
I. J. Marcuse	1918-1949
Dr. Harry T. Marshall	1917-1922
Dr. J. T. Mastin	1917-1924

Richard Maxwell	1956-1964
Wade G. McCargo	1951-present
Miss Claire McCarthy	1956-1963
Dr. F. T. McFadden	1917-1918
Miss Virginia S. McKenney	1917-1919
Harry M. Meacham	1956-1962
William S. Meacham	1941-1947
Wyndham R. Meredith	1918-1940
D. R. Midyette	1925-1928
Robert W. Miles	1917
J. M. Miller, Jr.	1918-1945
Miss Nannie J. Minor	1930-1933
F. G. Mitchell	1928-1943
Dr. S. C. Mitchell	1921-1928
R. Walton Moore	1918-1928
Mrs. W. W. Morton	1917-1920
John S. Munce	1918-1922
Mrs. B. B. Munford	1917-1928
E. Wright Noble	1930-1932
Frank H. Nott	1928-1939
Rev. Walter Nott	1925-1933
Bishop D. J. O'Connell	1917-1927
Dr. George J. Oliver	1959-1973
A. K. Parker	1920-1944
Mrs. T. Nelson Parker	1951-1956
J. Scott Parrish	1928-1932
John L. Patterson	1922-1935
John Edwin Pomfret	1943-1954
Mrs. Frank W. Pratt	1930-1932
Dr. Frank W. Pratt	1917-1920
Mrs. J. Baldwin Ranson	1917-1918
John W. Riely	1963-present
Dr. Benjamin H. Rosebro	1917-1918
Rev. L. A. Rowen	1933-1945
F. S. Royster	1922-1924
Wortley F. Rudd	1917-1951
J. F. Ryland	1925-1932
J. J. Scherer, Jr.	1917-1956
Mrs. P. E. Schools	1936-1947
W. Harry Schwarzschild, Jr.	1963-present
Judge Oscar L. Shewmake	1951-1954
H. H. Sisson, Jr.	1954-1962
Dr. T. Claggett Skinner	1917-1918
Miss Gene Smith	1933-1941
Dr. James H. Smith	1917
George W. Stevens	1917-1920
Charles Straus	1917-1929
E. Strudwick	1918-1923
E. B. Sydnor	1928-1932
John M. Taylor	1919-1924

William B. Thalhimer, Jr.	1956-present
Mrs. Frances Salter Toone	1936-1947
Rev. Beverley D. Tucker	1930-1939
Dr. Beverley Tucker	1917
Miss Julia Waddill	1924-1933
Dr. H. Hudnall Ware, Jr.	1951-1973
Mrs. Thomas S. Wheelwright	1921-1924
Dr. Ennion G. Williams	1918-1933
Lewis C. Williams	1954-1959
Robert A. Wilson	1971-1972
John Dana Wise	1947-1951
E. V. Woodall	1960-present
Coleman Wortham	1919-1928

PORTRAITS OF TWO EARLY OFFICERS
OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
OF THE RPI FOUNDATION
WHICH WERE PAINTED FOR THE
A. A. ANDERSON GALLERY OF ART
BY NICHOLAS BREWER

THE REVEREND J. J. SCHERER, JR.
*Chairman of the Board from
1917 to his death in 1965.*



TAZEWELL M. CARRINGTON
*Served as Chairman and Vice-chairman
of the Finance Committee
from 1917 to 1924.*



Dr. Hibbs in 1917 when he organized the Institute.

Notes

On the Author

Henry Horace Hibbs

BY MAURICE BONDS, '40

IN this era of concern for flexibility in education and educational opportunities for the many, Henry H. Hibbs' stature as a pioneer assumes considerable significance.

His concept of the "downtown" university involved not only the cooperation of business and community leaders and of private citizens but of students benefiting from and participating in the many civic, social and artistic organizations offered by the city. Thus, "field work" or direct and immediate involvement of the freshman college student in a professional or vocational area was a part of his concept, although against usual academic procedure. Dr. Hibbs constantly questioned accepted university curricula and insisted that education meant many things and that the usual classical orientation in the humanities was not necessarily the best one for every student. He, therefore, readily adapted curriculum to the student instead of forcing the student to adapt to a preconceived educational formula.

He believed in students who were motivated strongly toward a career, and he had some contempt for the usual tests and scores as accurate evaluations of ability for many professions. He was opposed to all snobbishness and exclusiveness, and he firmly believed that education was for and could benefit nearly everyone.

He insisted on professionalism in his faculty and generally employed those actively engaged in a profession. Although the faculty was often poorly paid and worked under harrowing physical conditions, most believed in the Institute and remained because they were given the complete academic freedom rarely possible in more staid colleges and universities. He invited experimentation and innovation in the classroom and frequently defended his staff and students against conservative outrage.

Dr. Hibbs has been described as aggressive and always ready to take the initiative. He also is said to have had bull-dog tenacity of purpose. His history of R.P.I. not only shows this but also that he patiently undertook a job which most would never have begun. He built the largest college in the State from a handful of students in a few rooms of an old house. In doing so he never spared himself. In the early days he could be seen leaving a conference in his office to direct the hanging of a door or to supervise repairs to faulty plumbing. He loved the old buildings and did much to retain and preserve a fine section of Richmond which otherwise would certainly have fallen to progress. All in the college community knew that he loved and took special interest in every cobblestone on the campus.

Henry H. Hibbs, Jr., was born on November 25, 1887, in a little village called "The Point" in Western Kentucky where the Cumberland River runs into the Ohio. His grandfather owned the land up and down the two rivers for several miles and also the ferry which crossed the Cumberland to Smithland, the county seat of Livingston. The family historian, Mrs. Cora Hibbs Grant, noted that the only method of travel to that part of the state was by steamboat and that this was "in steamboat days." Mrs. Grant also wrote that young Hibbs' father was a Baptist clergyman who held pastorates in Kentucky at Carrolton, May's Lick (the "Daniel Boone" region of Kentucky), and Williamsburg (where young Hibbs continued his education through junior college), as well as in Murfreesboro, Tennessee, and Birmingham, Alabama.

Young Henry frequently returned to "The Point" in summer with his family, where he and his brother, David, rode the seldom-used ferry. There they often accompanied an uncle, a livestock buyer, on horseback rides across the county. Riding, boating, swimming, and fishing remained favorite hobbies.

Eight children were born to The Reverend Henry H. Hibbs, Sr., and his wife, Susie Adams Hibbs. The two older boys, David and Henry, were followed by two girls, two younger boys, and finally two little girls. The youngest, Mrs. Ruth Hibbs Hyland, for many years chaired the Department of Art Education at R.P.I.

During the Cleveland administration and the depression following the "Panic of 1893," the Hibbs family knew some material poverty since the farming community had no money to pay the preacher. It did, however, provide turkeys and plenty of other food for the family. A bachelor uncle, an orthopedic surgeon in New York, sent old suits which Mrs. Hibbs ripped apart and made into well-designed clothing for the little boys. Dr. Hibbs later recalled that he did not realize the desperate poverty of his family. Young Henry began his early education during this period in a small two-room public school at May's Lick.

The financial problem subsided when The Reverend Hibbs moved his family to Williamsburg, Kentucky, in the Cumberland Mountains. The town was situated in coal fields which today

mark a wealthy industrial community. Wise investments made in the mines by The Reverend Hibbs yielded large dividends for many years, enabling him to educate his eight children.

Here in Williamsburg, Kentucky, Henry attended a private school, The Williamsburg Institute, for nine months each year. The public schools in the county only operated two or three months. Here, too, he and his three brothers traversed the rivers and mountains, rowing and walking from Williamsburg to Cumberland Falls, now a state park but then wild and inaccessible. At this time, too, Henry became a professional magician, practicing this trade in partnership with one Henry Manning. Renting a horse and buggy, they traveled through the mountain villages, Manning showing motion pictures with a primitive projector and young Henry performing feats of magic.

Williamsburg offered little by way of cultural activity or amusement, and Dr. Hibbs has recalled with pleasure an occasion upon which he met a citizen of Richmond for the first time. Mr. Polk Miller, a Confederate veteran and founder of the drug company which still bears his name, gave Chautauqua programs in which he played the banjo and told Civil War stories. At a performance in Williamsburg, Kentucky, young Hibbs clapped so loud and laughed so often that Mr. Miller ended the evening with an encore which, he announced, "was for the young man on the front row." Later, in 1909, Hibbs came to Richmond for the first time. He stayed for several days visiting historic sites and indulging in "veritable worship of the city and its memories."

After being graduated from the Williamsburg Institute, he was enrolled by his father in Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island. The Reverend Hibbs chose a city university for his son, feeling that it would somewhat compensate for his having lived in small towns and remote country places.

Although Hibbs spent two very happy years at Brown as a major in sociology, he felt some disappointment that his courses were not as strongly related to the life of the city as they might have been. It seemed to him odd that a university located in the midst of a large city should make so little use of the city's resources in the educational process, and that it should do so little to bring its students into contact with those aspects of city life that might help broaden their education. He, therefore, requested his department chairman to arrange some contacts for him with civic and social agencies of Providence. In this way he obtained his first experience with a form of education which was to become an integral part of programs at the Richmond Professional Institute—field work. In 1910, he was graduated from Brown with the A.B. degree and a major in sociology. The following summer was spent on a bicycle tour of Europe. He earned passage to and from Europe by working on a cattle boat.

Hibbs was awarded a fellowship to the School for Social Workers in Boston, Massachusetts, and attended the school from 1910 to 1912. During the first year there he also registered at Brown University for the Master of Arts degree *in absentia*.

This experience in independent study and research strengthened his belief that college and university education should be more practical and that the student should depend more on himself and less on the professor.

His fellowship in Boston involved research on the problem of infant mortality in slum areas of cities. This research was aided by a grant from the Russell Sage Foundation. The material gathered in this study was later published in article form in several scientific journals and finally published under a single title, "Infant Mortality: Its Relation to Social and Industrial Conditions," by the Russell Sage Foundation. Later, this work was accepted as his thesis at Columbia University where he was awarded the Ph.D. degree in 1916.

While attending Columbia, Dr. Hibbs met Miss Jessie Rowe Persinger, a candidate for the M.A. in mathematics. They were married one year after he came to Richmond. He noted that "the marriage was an unusually successful and happy one, both for him and for the Richmond Professional Institute." Indeed, Mrs. Hibbs will long be remembered as the gracious and friendly hostess of the Provost's House and as the devoted grandmother of seven. Their footsteps and laughter could often be heard throughout the old mansion at 910 West Franklin Street. She herself was an accomplished equestrienne who gave her time without compensation to generations of students who wished to learn the art.

Dr. and Mrs. Hibbs had two children: Jessie, who married Nathaniel J. Hawke, and Mary Sue, who married James V. Doss, Jr. Jessie attended Westhampton College and Duke University and was later a graduate student in R.P.I.'s School of Social Work. Mary Sue attended R.P.I. In her senior year she was president of the Student Government Association. Later she received the M.S. degree in Social Work at Simmons College in Boston.

Through the years, as Dr. Hibbs worked to build the Richmond Professional Institute, he also collected fine prints and engravings. His portrait by David Silvette, now hanging in the Hibbs Building, depicts him as a collector. His old prints of Richmond are now in the collection of the Valentine Museum and the others, many of which are rare and valuable, form the basis of the permanent art collection of the University and are housed in its Anderson Gallery.

Upon his retirement in June, 1959, Dr. Hibbs was interviewed by columnist Robert Andrews of the Richmond *Times-Dispatch* who wrote, "For the lifetime of the school he fought to make R.P.I. a great urban center of learning; and today at 5:00 p.m. he retired and his job was over." "The job isn't finished though," the reporter quoted him as concluding, "Progress has been right slow—I think R.P.I. is just on the verge of a great expansion in the future."

Reporter Andrews also wrote that in the late afternoon of that last day Dr. Hibbs seemed astonished at the large number

of things that had been written about him in newspapers and magazines and at the many letters he had received. He seemed surprised at his honorary LL.D. degree from the University of Richmond, and at such comments as one in a *Times-Dispatch* editorial which stated that his retirement "terminates the career of one of the most remarkable figures in Virginia education." Andrews also noted at this interview that Dr. Hibbs' desk was cleared except for a dictionary and several reference books, one of which had the title, "10,000 Jokes and Stories for All Occasions." The reporter asked about this book, and Dr. Hibbs said something about using it to prepare talks for student assemblies. "With this," the reporter wrote, "he put on his battered straw-hat and strolled out of the quiet building for the last time."



Dr. and Mrs. Hibbs in 1959 when he retired.



Virginia Commonwealth University

SELDOM is a locality and a geographic region presented with the opportunity of a major institution of higher learning being established literally in their midst. Seldom does the new university become the state's largest within five years of its inception. And seldom does the locality not have to wait several years before the full impact of the new academic community is appreciated by the economic, cultural, health, and educational scales determining the value of the institution upon the community.

VCU has such an influence upon Virginia's capitol city.

Since July 1, 1968, when the formerly separate state-aided schools of the Medical College of Virginia and Richmond Professional Institute were merged to create Virginia Commonwealth University, this university's significant influence has benefited the people of metropolitan Richmond and Virginia as a whole.

By increasing numbers, students from other states seek admission into both divisions of VCU, and with a sustained perseverance do VCU's admission officers hold to the preferential acceptance of Virginians. On the Academic Campus (composed primarily of the former RPI campus), some 87 percent of each incoming class are residents of the Commonwealth. Comparable statistics hold true on the MCV Campus with individual school quotas of Virginia acceptances ranging from 80 to 95 percent.

Education is only a portion of a more comprehensive goal employed by VCU, which seeks the betterment of human life as its ultimate commitment. As an urban citadel of thought with this comprehensive goal of improving life through education and through educated people, this university becomes a positive force for progress.

In his inaugural address as VCU's first president, November 10, 1970, Dr. Warren W. Brandt itemized some of VCU's special educational benefits to the urban community which it serves as a responsive citizen:



DR. WARREN W. BRANDT
First President VCU, 1969

1. provide special programs for those working on urban problems.
2. teach how to live more effectively in the urban environment.
3. offer special material to make students aware of urban problems.
4. provide a faculty with expertise in a wide variety of relevant specialties.
5. furnish a large group of dedicated volunteer workers: faculty, students, and staff.
6. provide health care to large number of residents of Richmond and most of Virginia.

Three years later, Dr. Brandt echoed this commitment:

We are striving to be a strong institution with significant emphasis on being an urban university—serving the city, the state, and other institutions. We're not trying to be an elitist institution, but to be an institution which meets the needs of the urban community by accepting a wide range of students into a variety of programs.

Indeed, even prior to the actual merger of the two schools—one a renowned health sciences center and the other a widely respected professional institute—the Wayne Commission foresaw the possibilities of, and need for, such a university in the Richmond area:

... a university is a living, evolving institution which must continually review its role if it is to serve effectively the society of which it is a part.

Rarely has any university been accorded a more timely opportunity to confront on an intellectual and practical level the social environment which surrounds it.

But in fulfilling a goal of service, the university does not regard its role to be that of a community problem solver. Instead it is the catalytic agent, the means for training leaders who will assume this responsibility.

First the urban university must have sound educational programs and objectives. Then it may add that marginal degree of extras which go into achieving eminence. Through its twelve academic schools, a full-time faculty of 1,061 and part-time of 928, VCU has worked toward this goal of academic excellence. From the groundwork of innovative programs at both divisions of the university, other challenging courses have been pursued. And throughout these offerings run a unifying theme of involvement—involvement of not only 9,600 full-time day students at the Academic Campus, or the 1,854 on the MCV Campus, but the 4,500 part-time students of varying ages and academic ambitions

in the Evening College. Whether the student is a housewife taking the non-credit "Woman at the Crossroads," a full time English major struggling with "Introduction to Linguistics," or the Ph.D. candidate completing a dissertation in microbiology, VCU accommodates them with determination.

Each of the twelve academic schools finds little satisfaction with the status quo and continually strives to discover the unknown and then relates the finding to the student. VCU is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools with many of the individual schools holding additional memberships in accrediting associations. The twelve schools are:

- Allied Health Professions
- Arts
- Arts and Sciences
- Basic Sciences and Graduate Studies
- Business
- Community Services
- Dentistry
- Education
- Medicine
- Nursing
- Pharmacy
- Social Work

As the dental school placed recruiting emphasis on women of minority races within Virginia, the School of Medicine rejuvenated the family practitioner as a medical specialty; the Schools of Education and Arts and Sciences joined together in a pilot program for elementary educators, and the School of Nursing established Virginia's first master's degree in the field.

Social Work participated in the Council of International Programs, Community Services in the Model Cities Program, and Pharmacy in resident practicum semesters. The School of Business established a chair of real estate; Basic Sciences and Graduate Studies maintained an animal research farm; the Arts sponsored a summer art workshop for all ages; Allied Health Professions trained supportive health specialists.

Research and the resulting establishment of sickle cell anemia and Tay Sachs clinics serve the people of Richmond. Other forms of health research lead to the capability of MCV/VCU surgeons to perform heart transplants and to achieve notoriety in the medical field by having the longest surviving heart transplant recipient. Cancer research abounds and makes significant headway in the handling of this disease. Extensive renovation of many existing facilities combined with a new hospital provides a major health facility of 1,058 beds.

The Anderson Gallery sponsors a painting biennial for artists of six states. The Management Center offers a continuous series of seminars, institutes, and programs for area business leaders. Students may earn college credit for work having been accomplished

outside the classroom through the College Level Examination Program. Basketball wins and swimming national champions comprise a portion of the growing athletic program on the Academic Campus.

Continuing education programs, the university libraries, and the career placement service are available for alumni use with the alumni activities office serving as a nucleus for the 23,000 known alumni from both university divisions.

VCU employees find the services of the Day Nursery readily available and many undereducated employees eventually pass high school equivalency exams through VCU's Adult Learning Center.

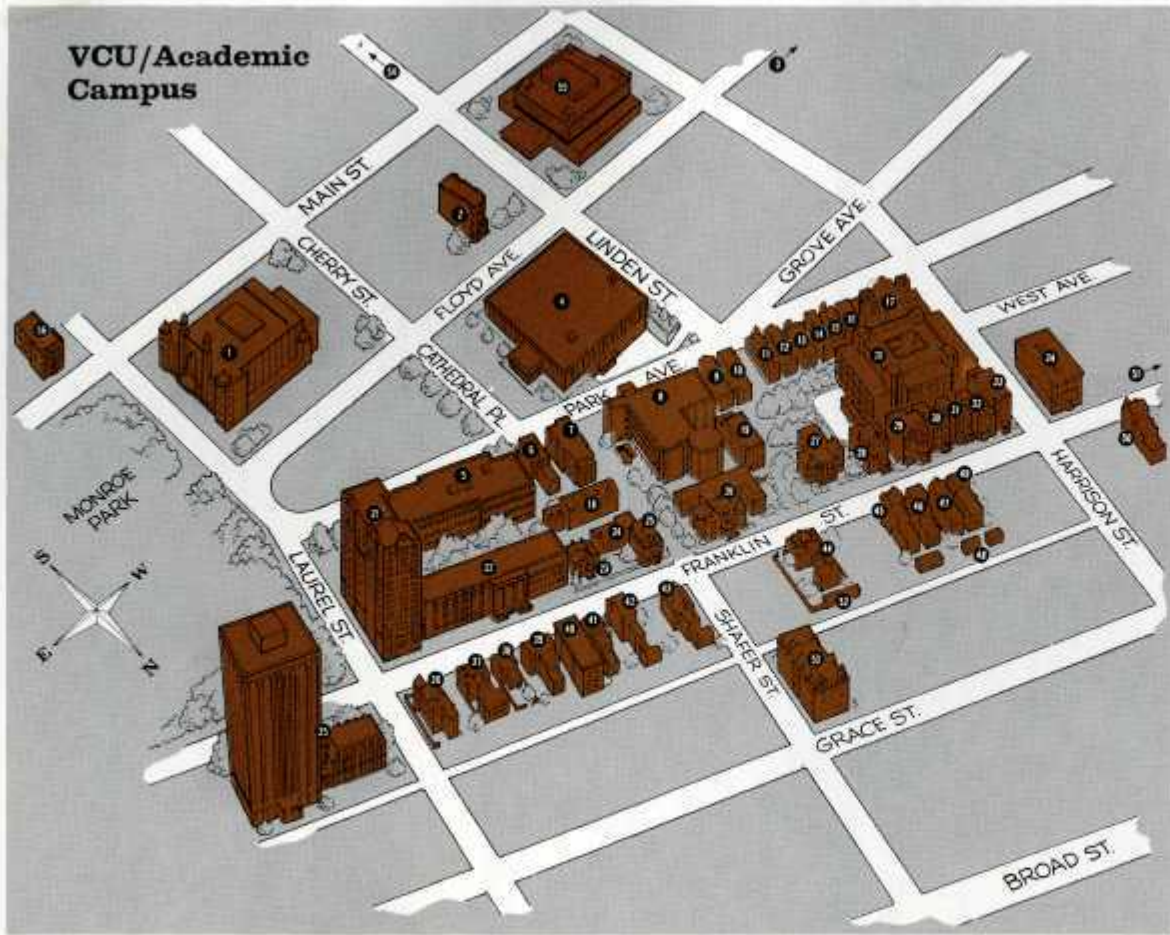
Whatever the audience for whatever the justified cause, VCU has a level of response.

To accommodate its community of over 24,000 (based on 16,000 students, 2,000 faculty, 5,400 staff, and 750 hospital patients), VCU approved a University Master Site Plan in 1971 which set the stage for the physical development of both campuses. Not only were all members of the university community given the opportunity to interact with the planning and to inject their own plans, but area residents, business and community leaders were also contacted. The VCU physical plant helps achieve the awareness that this is one university which is a part of its community in many ways, and does not demonstrate the academic aloofness of the isolated college campus. In short, the urban university acquires even the look of such, as well as a determination to act as such.

VCU's future will continue to offer the leadership essential in an urban setting by adhering to innovative and flexible educational programs. By so doing, this university moves from the traditionally alien role of an interested bystander to that of an involved, active participant within the system in which it exists.

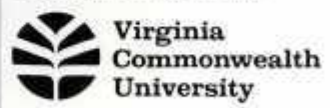
With a student growth potential approaching 23,000 by 1982, VCU will be continually renewing itself through the combination of self-evaluation, flexibility, and experimentation. Such an approach will yield a product of invaluable service to the individual student and to the welfare of the community and the nation.

VCU/Academic Campus



INDEX VCU/ACADEMIC CAMPUS

- 1 Messing
- 2 Art Studios—Floyd Ave. and Morris St.
- 3 Towers—English Department, Catholic School—English Department, Cathedral High School—School of Education
- 4 James Branch Cabell Library
- 5 Science Building
- 6 Physical Plant—828 Park Ave.
- 7 Chalkley House—828 Park Ave.
- 8 Hibbs Building and Cafeteria—900 Park Ave.
- 9 Student Organization Building—512 Park Ave.
- 10 School of Education, English Department—314 Park Ave.
- 11 & 12 School of Education—918 - 20 Park Ave.
- 13 Music Studies—924 Park Ave.
- 14 History and Political Science—928 Park Ave.
- 15 Dormitory—928 Park Ave.
- 16 Faculty Offices—930 Park Ave.
- 17 Temple—Sawright Theater and Cafeteria
- 18 Slater Street Playhouse and Crafts Department
- 19 Anderson Gallery—School of the Arts
- 20 Theresa Pollak Building—School of the Arts
- 21 Margaret L. Johnson Hall—801 W. Franklin St.
- 22 Symposium Building and Classrooms—817 - 13 W. Franklin St.
- 23 Niter-Holck—821 W. Franklin St.
- 24 Crafts Department
- 25 Founders' Hall—827 W. Franklin St.
- 26 Administration Building, Academic Center, 901 W. Franklin St.
- 27 Dormitory—900 W. Franklin St.
- 28 Anderson House—913 W. Franklin St.
- 29 Student Services, Housing, Financial Aid—915 W. Franklin St.
- 30 & 31 Music Department—917 - 19 W. Franklin St.
- 32 & 33 Scherer Halls—923 W. Franklin St.
- 34 Raleigh Building—Social Work and Occupational Therapy
- 35 Rhoads Hall—710 - 16 N. Franklin St.
- 36 Psychology Department—800 W. Franklin St.
- 37 Dormitory—806 W. Franklin St.
- 38 Dormitory—824 W. Franklin St.
- 39 Psychology Department Offices—810 W. Franklin St.
- 40 Franklin Terrace—Community Services and School of the Arts
- 41 Community Services—818 W. Franklin St.
- 42 Sociology Department—820 W. Franklin St.
- 43 Philosophy and Religious Studies—826 W. Franklin St.
- 44 University Relations, Development—828 W. Franklin St.
- 45 VCU Administrative Offices—500 W. Franklin St.
- 46 Student Center—816 W. Franklin St.
- 47 420 Police Department—918 W. Franklin St.
- 48 Admissions and University Services—920 W. Franklin St.
- 49 Sculpture Studio
- 50 Art History—822 W. Franklin St.
- 51 Meredith House—1014 W. Franklin St.
- 52 Learning Resources Center, School of Education—1617 Monument Ave.
- 53 Sculpture Studio
- 54 Lafayette Hall—312 N. Shaler St.
- 55 Physical Plant Warehouse and Shops—4 S. Linden St.
- 56 School of Business—2000 W. Main St.
- 57 Psychology Department—711 - 13 W. Main St.



INDEX

A

Abrams, William Ross, 91
Academic Division, 43, 156
Addison, W. M., 22
Administration Building, 22, 47, 48, 65, 97, 129
Adult Learning Center, 158
Allied Health Professions, School of, 157
Allison House, 47, 50, 51, 55, 78
Allison, James A., Jr., 50
Alumni
 activities office, 158; association, 74; *News*, 117;
 director of, 137; RPI, 141
American National Red Cross, 16, 17, 19, 22, 23, 24
Anderson, A. A., 37, 68, 70-71, 144
 biography, 70
Anderson Building, 70-71
Anderson Gallery, 47, 70, 147, 152, 157
Andrews, Robert, 152
"An Entirely Different College" (pamphlet), 83-85
Ankenney, John V., 95
Appropriations
 state, 59, 107-117
 cost-of-living bonuses, 108
"Architecture of Historical Richmond,"
 (Dulaney), 47n
Arents, Grace, 22
Army Medical Corps
 RPI contract with, 94
 Occupational Therapy, 94-95
Art Education, department of, 38, 150
Art History, department of, 64
Arts and Sciences, School of, 133, 136, 157
Art School Building, 116
Art, School of, 37-41, 43, 69, 115
Art Students League, 38, 90
Atlas, The, 13, 89n.

B

Bane, Frank, 144
Barnes, Mrs. Ferguson, 38n
Basic Sciences and Graduate Studies, School of, 157
Bass, Horace A., 91
Battle, John S., 110, 111
Bemiss, E. L., 22, 144
Bemiss, Fitzgerald, 144
Bennett, Emily W., 17
Berkeley Apartments, 101, 102
Bernard, Louise, 41

Biddle, Richard Spencer, 70
Bierne, Milton Rupert, 91, 93
Bilven, Jack, 127
Bird, Loyd C., 141
Blackwell, Karl S., 144
Blake, Peter, 128
Blanton, Wyndham B., 144, 145
Bocock, Elisabeth Scott (Mrs. John H.), 129, 131
Bohannon, J. Gordon, 145
Bolling, Charles E., 30
Bonds, Maurice, 33, 64, 149
Boothe, James Henry, Jr., 91
Boston School for Social Workers, 19
Bradford, J. H., 97
Bradshaw, Junie, 113
Brandt, Warren W., 144, 145, 155-56
Brent, Andrew J., 144, 145
Bridges, J. Malcolm, 145
Brooke, Francis J., 142
Brooklyn Polytechnic Institute, 77
Brosnan, Rev. E. E., 145
Brown, Lou Mayo, (Mrs. B. F. Moomaw), 13, 16, 25
Brown University, 75, 125, 151
Bryan, George, 22
Bryan, John Stewart, 44, 107, 145
Bullard, James B., 30
Bullard, Mrs. James B., 30n, 145
Bureau of Trade and Industrial Education, 38
Burgart, Herbert J., 39
Burns, Gary, 118
Business, School of, 95, 117, 118, 157
Byrd Airport, 37

C

Cabell, James Branch, 131 (see Library)
Calisch, E. N., 145
Campus, 123-26
 academic, 155-156
 mid-city, 123
 MCV, 155
 cobblestone, 127, 130
Capital Outlay Commission, 73
Capitol Square, 80
Carey, Henry, 127
Carrington, E. Strudwick, 22
Carrington, Tazewell M., 20, 29, 145, 147
Cassell, Catherine P., 33
Chalkley, Virgie A., 30, 31, 34, 66, 101

- Chandler, Alvin Duke, 108, 133, 144, 145
 Chandler, J. A. C., 27, 49, 58, 145
Chesterfield, The, 78
 Christian, Helen D., 145
 Citizens' Foundation of RPI of the College of William and Mary, Inc., 144
 Clark, Matt, 31
 Cleveland State University, 76
 Cobblestones, 123, 126
 Coghill, Harvey, 16
 Coleman, C. C., 145
 College Enrollment
 RPI, 59, 80, 91-94, 96-98, 119-120, 137
 of students in U. S., 120
 at Medical College of Virginia, 120
 VCU, 120, 156, 157, 158
 College Level Examination program, 158
 College of William and Mary, 24, 25, 27, 30, 48, 49, 51, 57, 58, 59, 60, 62, 107-109, 109n, 133, 137, 144
Colonial Echo, The, 90
 Colonna, M. S., 145
 Columbia University, 133, 152
 teachers college, 92
 Commercial Art, department of, 38
Commonwealth Magazine, 125, 127
 Community Services, School of, 157
 Conservatory of Music, 35
 "costs per bed," 79, 79n (see also Appropriations)
 Costume Design and Fashion, department of, 38
 Cotillion Club, 34
 Council of International Programs, 157
 Creasy, Jack, 91, 92
 Crutchfield, Lee G., 91
 Cunningham, R. E., 145
- D**
- Dabney, Virginius, 145
 Davis, Alice, 100
 Davis, Carlisle R., 145
 Davis, Howard H., 100
 Dean's House, 51
 Dentistry, School of, 157
 Depression years, 52 (see Great Depression)
 Distribution, School of, 41, 43, 95
 Distributive Education, 42
 Donnahoe, Alan S., 144, 145
 Dowdey, Clifford, *Sing for a Penny*, 31
 Dramatic Art, department of, 51
 Duke, Charles J., Jr., 145
 Dulaney, Paul S., 47n, 53
 Dunford, F. B., 19, 21, 145
 Dunkum, Bennie L., 74
 Dunn, James L., 7, 74
 Dupuy, Mary, 13, 16
- E**
- Education Building, 117
 Education, School of, 133, 136, 157
 Endowment Association of RPI of the College of William and Mary, Inc., 144
 Engineering and Architecture affiliation with VPI, 95
 Engineering, School of, 136
 Engineering Technology, 95
 English, R. T., Jr., 145
 Enrollment, VCU, 156, 157, 158
 (see College Enrollment)
 Evening School (night college), 37
 "Experiences and Impressions," (Anderson), 70
- F**
- Fales, Doris, 44
 Fan District, 117, 134
 Fauntleroy, Lorimer, 38
- Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA), 64
 Fenn College, 76
 Fentress, Mrs. C. H., 145
 Finance Committee, 20
 First English Evangelical Lutheran Church, 16
 First National Bank, 20, 21, 49
 Flannagan, Mrs. Roy K., 144, 145
 Flannagan, Roy K., 16, 20, 22
 Foster, C.A.B., 95
 Founders Hall, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 55, 64, 65, 66, 69, 101
- G**
- Garber, John, 92
 Gary, J. Vaughn, 145
 General Assembly, 57, 107, 111, 112, 113-114, 116-117, 139, 140
 1952 Study Commission, 134
 (see also Appropriations)
 George Washington University, 75, 76, 77
 Gibson, Rev. Churchill J., 145
 GI's, 97, 99
 Ginter, Lewis, 22, 47
 Ginter Mansion, 45, 47-49, 50, 51, 56, 70, 75
 Ginter property, 48, 58
 Ginter stable, 49, 68, 69, 70, 71, 113n
 Glee Club, 90
 Godwin, Mills E., Jr., 57n, 104, 116, 140, 141
 Gorton, Lillian, 29
 Governor's Mansion, 13, 14
 Graduate School, 136
 Gravatt, Helen Stevens, 145
 Great Depression, The 51, 53, 63, 65-67, 107, 108
 "Blessings in Depression," 64, 67
 Grove Avenue Baptist Church, 96
 Gymnasium Building, 111, 131
- H**
- Haases, Bessie A., 15
 Harahan, Catherine, 13, 25, 145
 Harahan, W. J., 145
 Harrigan, Rev. Charles, 145
 Harris, H. Hiter, 144, 145
 Harrison, Albertis, S., 119, 121
 Hart, Harris, 145
 Harvard University, 125
 Hatcher, O. L., 19, 145
 Hawes, Katherine H., 145
 Health Sciences Division, 139
 Henley, Robert, 145
 Henna, Cathryn, 145
 Henry, David D., 84n
 Hester, James M., 127
 Hibbs Building, 111, 112, 116, 152
 Hibbs, Rev. Henry H., Sr., 150
 Hibbs, Jessie Rowe Persinger (Mrs. H. H., Jr.), 152
 Hibbs, Susie Adams (Mrs. H. H., Sr.), 150
 Hill, Rev. W. E., 145
 Hirschberg, John, 14
 Historic Landmarks, Register of, 55, 56
 Hobson, Raleigh, 90, 145
 Hodges, Barry, 50
 Hodges, Raymond, 50
 Hodges, Mrs. Raymond, 50
 Holliday, Waller, 22
 Holmes, Raymond T., Jr., 116, 142
 Horsley, J. Shelton, 145
 Hunton, Eppa III, 22
 Hyland, F. T., 38n
 Hyland, Ruth Hibbs (Mrs. F. T.), 38n, 150
- I**
- Ingram, John L., 145
 Interior Decoration, department of, 38

J

Jackson, H. W., 22
 Jefferson, Thomas, 16
 John Marshall High School, 24
 Johnson Hall, 103, 131
 Johnson, Margaret Leah, 30, 93, 103, 105
 Johnson, Mrs. Ralph H., 145
 Johnson, Rena, 33
 Jones, Mrs. W. C., 145
 Journalism Department, 15
 Junkin, Marion M., 66

K

Kalif, George T., 43
 Kapp, Mary E., 44
 Kelly, Fred J., 85
 King, W. Stirling, 144, 145
 Korean War, 89, 96
 Kuyk, Mrs. D. A., 145

L

Lafayette Apartments, 98, 101, 103
 Lancaster, R. A., Jr., 145
 Lee, Fitzhugh, 127
 Lee House, 127
 Lee, Robert E., 127
 Library Building, 115
 Lichford, H. E., 22
 Library, James Branch Cabell, 71, 131
 Life Magazine, 39, 40
 Lodge, Richard, 43
 Logan, Loomis (Mrs. Colcord), 15
 Longwood College, 109

M

Maclachlan, Rev. H. D. C., 22, 145
 Madison College, 109
 Management Center, 157
 Mansfield, Kathleen, 30
 Marcuse, I. J., 20, 22, 145
 Marshall, Harry T., 145
 Master Site Plan, 105n, 158
 Mastin, J. T., 16, 145
 Maxwell, Richard, 104, 123, 144, 146
 McCargo, Wade G., 144, 146
 McCarthy, Claire, 24, 32, 43, 146
 McFadden, F. T., 146
 McGavock, Byrd, 33, 64, 66
 Meacham, Harry M., 146
 Meacham, William S., 146
 Medical College of Virginia, 14, 17, 58, 86, 117, 138, 140
 consolidation with RPI, 155
 Medical Research, MCV/VCU, 157
 Medicine, School of, 157
 Meffley, George, 89
 Meredith House, 101
 Meredith, Wyndham R., 20, 22, 101, 144, 146
 Messick, Elizabeth, 95
 Meyers-Anderson House, 54
 Midyette, D. R., 146
 Miles, Robert W., 146
 Miller, John M., Jr., 20, 21, 22, 27, 49, 146
 Millhiser House, 46, 47
 Minor, Nannie J., 16, 146
 Minority Club, 91
 Mitchell, F. G., 146
 Mitchell, S. C., 146
 Model Cities Program, 157
 Monroe Park, 22, 28, 32, 55, 104
 Monroe Terrace, 79n, 101, 102, 103, 104, 121, 131
 Monumental Church, 24, 25, 43
 Moore, Thomas L., 22
 Moore, R. Walton, 146

Morrill Act (land grants for education), 84
 Morse, Maude E., 15
 Morton, Mrs. W. W., 146
 Munce, John S., 22, 146
 Mundy, Hazel, 38
 Munford, Mrs. B. B., 21, 146
 Murphy's Hotel, 81

N

National Youth Administration (NYA), 63
 National Register of Historic Places, 55
 National Vocational Act, 42
 Nelson, Kinloch, 86
 Nelson, Roland H., Jr., 133, 138
 New Deal, 67
 New University, 139, 140, 141
 Newsweek Magazine, 82
 Newton, Blake, 57
 New Yorker, The, 128
 New York Herald, 52
 New York University, 75, 127
 Noble, E. Wright, 146
 Norfolk Division, William and Mary, 62
 Nott, Frank H., 146
 Nott, Walter, 146
 Nursing, School of, 157
 Nye, Joe, 33

O

O'Connell, Bishop D. J., 22, 146
 Occupational Therapy, School of, 94-95
 Old Converted Buildings, 61, 62, 63, 69-74, 76, 78, 81, 82, 100-105, 120-122
 Old Dominion University, 62
 Old Franklin Street, 55
 Old stables, 37 (see Stables)
 Oliver, George J., 51, 62, 101-102, 112, 113, 114, 119, 131, 132-137, 144, 146

P

Parker, A. K., 146
 Parker, Mrs. T. Nelson, 146
 Parler, Mrs. Shirley Brooks, 43
 (see also Virginia Pitts)
 Parrish, J. Scott, 146
 Patterson, John L., 146
 Pearl Harbor, 94, 97
 Pharmacy, School of, 17, 157
 Physical Education Building, 115
 Pitts, Virginia (Mrs. Shirley Brooks Parler), 16, 32, 43
 Pollak, Theresa, 30, 36-39, 41-42, 56, 66
 Pollard, John Garland, 70
 Pomfret, John Edwin, 146
 Pratt, Frank W., 146
 Pratt, Mrs. Frank W., 146
 President's House, 51, 78
 Proscript, The, 50, 74, 81, 89n, 105, 113, 121
 Provost's House, 51
 Public Health Nursing, 15, 19, 20-22
 School of, 37

R

Radford College, 109
 Raleigh Building, 81, 121
 Randolph, Agnes, 16
 Randolph, Mrs. Norman, 22
 Ranson, Mrs. J. Baldwin, 146
 Reade, W. T., 22
 Recreation, department of, 24
 Recreational Leadership, 23, 37, 43
 Rehabilitation Counseling, 95
 Graduate School of, 96, 136

Rhoads Hall, 57n, 81, 101, 104, 106
 Rhoads, Webster S., Jr., 104, 106, 113
 Rhodes, Mrs. Helen Fill, 35
 Richmond, City, 13, 15, 19, 22, 29, 34, 38, 42, 44, 47, 48n, 55, 58, 62, 83, 108, 117, 123, 129, 139
 Richmond Chamber of Commerce, 29
 Richmond Department of Public Welfare, 90
 Richmond Hotel, 80, 81
 Richmond Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court, 13, 14, 16
Richmond News Leader, 57n, 110, 128, 131
 Richmond Professional Institute, (RPI):
 name change to, 44
 Richmond Public Library, 29, 47, 71
 Richmond School of Social Economy, Inc., 14
 Richmond School of Social Work and Public Health, 14n
Richmond Times-Dispatch, 38, 39, 60, 61, 86, 91, 102, 110, 113, 113n, 116, 117, 136, 137, 152-153
 Ricks, J. Hoge, 14
 Riely, John W., 144, 146
 Ritter-Hickok House, 47, 51, 105, 131
 RPI Foundation, 45, 47, 49, 51-52, 54, 65, 69, 70, 101-104, 123n, 140, 144
 corporate titles, 143-144
 Roosevelt, Franklin D., 63, 67
 Rosebro, Benjamin H., 146
 Rothenberg, Elaine Z., 43
 Rowen, L. A., 146
 Royster, F. S., 146
 Rudd, Wortley, F., 17, 144, 146
 Russell Sage Foundation, 152
 Ryland, J. F., 146

S

Sally in Our Alley (Carey), 127
 Sanger, W. T., 17
Saturday Evening Post, 31, 55
Saturday Review, 128
 Saunders, E. A., 27
 Saunders, Mrs. E. A., 27
 Saunders, Fred Q., 111
 Saunders-Willard House, 26, 27, 31, 32, 48, 55, 69
 Saunders-Willard stable, 28
 Savage, Lon, 113n
 Scherer, Rev. J. J., Jr., 16, 21, 22, 27, 144, 146, 147
 Scherer Hall, 79, 101, 102
 Schools, Mrs. P. E., 146
 School for Social Workers, Boston, 151
 School of Store Service Education, 41
 Schools, (VCU), 156-157:
 Allied Health Professions
 Arts
 Arts and Sciences
 Basic Sciences and Graduate Studies
 Business
 Community Services
 Dentistry
 Education
 Medicine
 Nursing
 Pharmacy
 Social Work
 Schwarzschild, W. Harry, Jr., 144, 146
 Science Building, 97, 99, 100, 101, 112, 114, 117
 Scott, Frederic W., 129
 Scott-Bocock House, 129, 131
 Scottish Rite Temple, 114, 121, 122
 Seabrooke Playground, 24
 Servicemen's Readjustment Act (GI Bill), 92
 Shane, Aileen, 30, 74
 Sheppard, Eleanor P., 141
 Shewmake, Oscar L., 146
 Sidney Hollander Associates, 74, 85, 123
 Silvette, David, 152

Simmons College, 152
Sing for a Penny (Dowdey), 31
 Sisson, H. H., Jr., 146
 Skinner, T. Claggett, 146
 Slaughter, D. French, 141
 Smith, Charles W., 31, 32
 Smith, Gene, 146
 Smith, James H., 146
 Smith, Jean, 29
 Social Work, School of, 37, 42, 44, 136, 157
 Southern Association of Colleges, 57, 58, 59, 60, 69, 70, 136, 157
 Spanish-American War, 128
 Spivey, Lila, 21, 29
 Stables, 29, 38n, 47n, 69, 70, 71, 73n
 Stephanean, Stephen, 89
 Stevens, George W., 146
 Strudwick, E., 146
 Student Government Association, 49, 94, 127
 Stutts, Everett, 92
 Sydnor, E. B., 146

T

Taylor, J. P., 22
 Taylor, John M., 146
 Temple University, 75
 Thalheimer, Morton G., 22
 Thalheimer, William B., Jr., 144, 147
Time magazine, 76, 86
 Tisdale, Mary Ellen, 127
 Toone, Frances Salter, 147
 Tucker, Rev. Beverley D., 147
 Tucker, Beverley, 147

U

University Club, 19, 20, 28
 University of Chicago, 60, 62, 108
 University of Pennsylvania, 125
 University of Pittsburgh, 75, 76
 University of Richmond, 112, 153
 University of Virginia, 31, 109n
 U. S. Department of Health Education and Welfare (HEW), 96
 U. S. Forest Reserve, 70
 U. S. Office of Education, 59, 94, 119n, 120, 134
 U. S. Veterans Administration, 96, 97
U. S. News and World Report, 84n
 United War Work Campaign, 24

V

Valentine Museum, 14, 152
 Van Oot, G. H., 38, 41
 Virginia Commonwealth of:
 Advisory Legislative Council, 85
 Board of Charities and Corrections, 16
 Board of Education, 41, 42, 57, 95, 96
 Department of Education, 37, 77, 95
 Board of Health, 16, 17, 20
 Bureau of the Budget, 97
 State Corporation Commission, 28, 143
 Virginia Higher Education Study Commission (Wayne Commission), 139-140, 156
 Virginia State Council of Higher Education, 14, 61, 87, 119n, 121, 136
 Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU), 14, 16, 17, 22, 38n, 39, 43, 78, 80, 81, 82, 116, 117, 140, 155
 Academic Division of, 43
 Health Sciences Division of, 139
 enrollment of, 156
 formation of, 139-41
 schools of, 156-157
VCU Magazine, 32, 46, 96, 118

INDEX

Virginia Military Institute, 109n
Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, 70
Virginia Polytechnic Institute, 109n
Virginia State Chamber of Commerce, 125, 127
Virginia State College, 109
Virginia State Library, 14, 15

W

Waddill, Julia, 147
Walker, J. T., 100
Walker, Whitfield, 65
War Department, 19
Ware, H. Hudnall, Jr., 147
Washington and Lee University, 66
Watkins, Asa, 92
Wayne, Edward A., 139
 Commission, 139-140, 156
Webb Institute of Naval Architecture, 86
Wecter, Dixon: "The Age of the Great
 Depression," 63
Western Reserve University, 75
Wheelwright, Mrs. Thomas S., 147

Williamsburg (Ky.) Institute, 150
Williams, Ennion G., 16, 20, 21, 147
Williams, Mrs. F. D., 22
Williams House, 55
Williams, Lewis C., 147
Willard, Joseph E., 28
Wilson, Robert A., 113, 147
Wise, John Dana, 147
Woodall, Ernest V., 144, 147
Woolfolk, Bessie L., 29
Work Projects Administration (WPA), 51, 53, 54, 64,
 65, 66, 67, 69
Works, George A., 60, 108
Works Progress Administration, 64
World War I, 19, 21, 22, 23, 43, 44
World War II, 23, 58, 64, 74, 96, 107
 veterans of, 89, 93-94
Worham, Coleman, 22, 147

Y

YWCA, 25
 War Work, Council of, 22, 23

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